

FEHD strives to crack down on sale of chilled or frozen meat disguised as fresh meat (with photo)

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has all along been committed to combating the sale of chilled or frozen meat disguised as fresh meat, and in a blitz operation today (July 14) raided one licensed fresh provision shop (FPS) and one unlicensed FPS in Sai Kung District suspected of selling chilled meat as fresh meat.

During the operation, FEHD officers raided the abovementioned two premises at Tong Ming Street, Tseung Kwan O, and marked and sealed around 1 135 kilograms of suspected chilled meat for further investigation. Samples were also collected for testing for preservatives, and prosecution will be initiated if there is sufficient evidence. The licensee of the licensed FPS is suspected of breaching the licensing condition for the display and sale of chilled meat as fresh meat, and the FEHD is proceeding with the cancellation of its FPS licence. FEHD officers also initiated prosecution against the proprietor of the other premises for operating an unlicensed FPS business.

In addition, FEHD officers also initiated prosecution against the operator of the licensed FPS for dirty food premises. A verbal warning was also given to the operator for non-compliance with the relevant licensing condition for failing to provide delivery notes for inspection.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "Selling of chilled or frozen meat disguised as fresh meat breaches the licensing condition and causes food safety problems. Also, the operation of these profiteers is unfair to other shops that comply with the requirements."

The spokesman added, "Anyone selling chilled or frozen meat without permission commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment on conviction. The department will continue to conduct regular inspections at licensed FPSs and market meat stalls, and will actively handle the complaints received. In detecting any irregularities, the FEHD will carry out an immediate investigation and take appropriate enforcement action. In addition, the FEHD also proactively investigates suspected violations from time to time and conducts surprise inspections and enforcement action as necessary. If there is sufficient evidence, prosecutions will be initiated and follow-up action will be taken on the breach of licensing conditions or tenancy agreements. The licences of fresh provision shops breaching the licensing conditions may be cancelled, while the tenancies of market meat stalls breaching the tenancy agreements may be terminated."

In addition, under section 31(1)(d) of the Food Business Regulation (Cap. 132X), any person who carries on any food business which involves the sale of fresh, chilled or frozen beef, mutton, pork, reptiles, fish or

poultry must obtain a FPS licence granted by the FEHD. Any person who operates a food business without a licence commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months, and an additional daily fine of \$900 should the offence persist.

The spokesman stressed that the FEHD is very concerned and has been committed to combating the sale of chilled or frozen meat disguised as fresh meat by taking stringent enforcement action against the violations.

