

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

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (June 30) that the FEHD has all along been committed to combating the sale of chilled or frozen meat disguised as fresh meat, and has raided some fresh provision shops (FPS) in Wan Chai District suspected of selling chilled meat or frozen meat as fresh meat in a blitz operation today. The FEHD will continue to take stringent enforcement actions against violations and urges all relevant shops to abide by the law.

During the operation, FEHD officers raided six FPS in Wan Chai District in the blitz operation, marked and sealed about 450 kilograms of suspected chilled meat, frozen meat and frozen poultry in four of the shops for further investigation. The licensee of the four FPS is assisting the FEHD's investigations of suspected violation of the Food Business Regulation. Prosecution will be taken out if sufficient evidence is collected. During the operation, FEHD officers also initiated two prosecutions against one of the operators for dirtiness at the premises and preparation of pig offals on floor by its staff, which involved risk of food contamination. In addition, the four shops abovementioned and another FPS were found unable to provide delivery notes for inspection. Verbal warnings were issued to the FPS operators for non-compliance of relevant licensing condition.

An FEHD spokesman said, "Selling of chilled or frozen meat disguised as fresh meat for profit contravenes the local legislation, causes food safety problems and poses unfairness to other shops which comply with the requirements."

A spokesman for the FEHD supplemented, "Anyone selling chilled meat 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 FPS and market meat stalls, and will actively handle the complaints received. In detecting any irregularities, the FEHD carries out immediate investigations and takes appropriate enforcement actions. In addition, the FEHD also proactively investigates suspected violations from time to time and conducts blitz inspections and enforcement actions as necessary. If there is sufficient evidence, prosecutions will be initiated and follow-up actions will be taken on the breach of licence conditions or tenancy agreements. The licences of fresh provision shops breaching the licence conditions may be cancelled, while the tenancies of market meat stalls breaching the tenancy agreements may be terminated."

From March this year till now, the FEHD has conducted three blitz operations against four FPS in Central and Western District, Mong Kok District and Sham Shui Po District. Around 1 200 kilograms of suspected

chilled meat and frozen meat was marked and sealed, and prosecution was initiated against one of the FPS suspected for selling of frozen meat without permission. In addition, prosecution was initiated against the remaining three FPS suspected for breaching the requirements under the Food Business Regulation (Cap. 132X) and Summary Offences Ordinance (Cap. 228) (related to dirty food room, storage and preparation of pork in an open space and obstruction of public places). Relevant investigation is ongoing.

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 actions against the violations.

