

Government provides financial relief to local primary industries

As the business and operation of the wholesalers operating in the fresh food wholesale markets, and local primary producers have been considerably affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government will provide financial relief under the sixth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund. In addition, a one-off interest-free loan repayment deferral for a period of one year to loan borrowers of the Fisheries Development Loan Fund (FDLF) is also provided.

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said today (February 20) that a subsidy of \$100,000 will be provided to each marine fish wholesaler in Fish Marketing Organization (FMO) markets; \$20,000 to each of other kind of fresh food wholesalers operating in public or private wholesale markets (including fresh marine fish, freshwater fish, vegetable, fresh fruit, and egg but excluding live poultry and frozen meat) (but the total amount of subsidy is capped at \$100,000 for wholesale traders that operate multiple stores under the same registration); \$20,000 to the owners of each fishing vessel or fish collector vessel with Mainland deckhands; and \$10,000 to each local primary producer (including owners/operators of vegetable farms, hydroponic farms, flower farms and nurseries, marine fish culture farms, pond fish farms, fishing vessels and fish collector vessels without hiring Mainland deckhands, but excluding those of livestock farms).

The spokesman expected about 11 000 fresh food wholesalers and local primary producers would be benefitted under the sixth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund.

Moreover, the Government will provide one-off interest-free deferral of loan repayment for a period of one year to loan borrowers under the FDLF. The AFCD will issue a letter together with a confirmation slip to all borrowers.

The application for the subsidies to local primary industries under the sixth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund will start tomorrow (February 21). The deadline of applications for fresh food wholesalers and local primary producers, namely owners/operators of vegetable farms, hydroponic farms, flower farms and nurseries, marine fish culture farms and pond fish farms is April 4 while that for owners of fishing vessels or fish collector vessels is May 20. The AFCD will notify eligible applicants by post or phone and application forms will be sent by email, fax or post, or through the AFCD and FMO/Vegetable Marketing Organization (VMO) wholesale markets or concerned organisations. Application forms can also be downloaded from the AFCD website (Agricultural sector: afcd.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/what_agr/what_agr.html; Fisheries sector: afcd.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/what_fis/what_fis.html).

The loan borrowers of the FDLF must send the acceptance confirmation slip back by April 25 by fax, post or WeChat.

Enquiry numbers are as follows:

Sector	Hotline
Vegetable and hydroponic farms, flower farms and nurseries	2670 1161
Vegetable wholesale traders in VMO markets	2710 0930
Live marine fish wholesale traders and fresh marine fish wholesale traders in the FMO markets	2150 7103
Freshwater fish/vegetable/fruit/egg wholesale traders in AFCD wholesale food markets or private wholesale markets	2150 6709
Owners of fishing vessels and fish collector vessels	2150 7109/ 9308 5022
Loan borrowers of FDLF	2150 7095/ 2150 7145
Marine fish culture farms	2150 6802
Pond fish culture farms	2471 9567