

Government responds to media enquiries on fresh food supply from Mainland

In response to media enquiries about the fresh food supply from the Mainland, a Government spokesman gave the following response today (February 6):

The Food and Health Bureau (FHB) together with the Transport and Housing Bureau and other relevant bureaux/departments have been maintaining close communication with the Mainland authorities on the impact on importation of vegetables to Hong Kong as a result of cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers being tested positive in COVID-19 nucleic acid test undergone in the Mainland. It is learnt that an individual cross-boundary goods vehicle driver has gone to places which have not been reported to the Mainland prior to his entry. As a consequence, the Mainland authorities needed to handle the incident seriously and conduct contact tracing in order to prevent the virus from spreading in the community. Some drivers were thus required to stay in the hotel for isolation.

Currently, apart from individual cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers who have been defined as close contacts and are still subject to isolation in the hotels, the rest of the drivers were released from the hotel to resume their normal operation. The Transport Department has also sent letters to the cross-boundary goods vehicle trade yesterday (February 5), reminding the drivers to strictly follow the anti-epidemic and health management measures under the joint prevention and control mechanism agreed between the Governments of Hong Kong and Guangdong.

On the supply of vegetables, it is understood that in consideration of the importance of fresh food supply to Hong Kong, the Mainland authorities have already made flexible arrangements to allow transportation of vegetables to Hong Kong by other registered drivers deployed by the industry. At 9am today, some 20 goods vehicles were awaiting to cross the boundary at Man Kam To. They were released back to Hong Kong subsequently. The vegetable supply at the Vegetable Marketing Organization and Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market today is of similar level as usual while the overall supply of vegetable in Western Wholesale Food Market experiences a drop. Nevertheless, the overall supply remains stable. Also, the supply of chilled pork, poultry and eggs from the Mainland is at a normal level. The FHB will continue to maintain contact with relevant bureaux/departments and the industry and keep a close watch on the food supply.