

## Import of poultry meat and products from areas in Belgium, Pakistan and Italy suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (December 10) that in view of notifications from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) about outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in Antwerp Province in Belgium and Rimini Province of Emilia-Romagna Region in Italy, and an outbreak of highly pathogenic H5 avian influenza in Peshawar District and Bannu District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province in Pakistan, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the above-mentioned areas with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that Hong Kong currently has an established protocol with Pakistan for the import of poultry eggs but not for poultry meat. According to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 1.34 million poultry eggs from Pakistan, about 25 tonnes of frozen poultry meat from Belgium, and about 770 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 77 000 poultry eggs from Italy in the first nine months of this year.

"The CFS has contacted the Belgian, Pakistani and Italian authorities over the issues and will closely monitor information issued by the OIE and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreak. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.