

Import of poultry meat and products from areas in Hungary and Italy suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (November 18) that in view of notifications from the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) respectively about outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in Bács-Kiskun County in Hungary and in Brescia Province of the Lombardy Region in Italy, 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 has currently established a protocol with Hungary for the import of poultry meat but not for poultry eggs. According to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 730 tonnes of frozen poultry meat from Hungary 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 Hungarian and Italian authorities over the issues and will closely monitor information issued by the OIE and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.