

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

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (February 21) that in view of notifications from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs of Korea about outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in Prato Province in the Tuscany Region in Italy, and Nonsan-si in Chungcheongnam-do Province in Korea, 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 according to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 950 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 100 000 poultry eggs from Italy, and about 20 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 840 000 poultry eggs from Korea last year.

"The CFS has contacted the Italian and Korean 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.