

Import of poultry meat and products from areas in Netherlands and South Africa suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (November 1) that in view of notifications from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) about outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza in Flevoland Province in the Netherlands and in Emnambithi-Ladysmith Local Municipality and Mtubatuba Local Municipality of KwaZulu-Natal Province in South Africa, 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 South Africa for the import of poultry meat but not for poultry eggs. According to the Census and Statistics Department, no poultry meat was imported from South Africa in the first nine months of this year, while about 730 tonnes of frozen poultry meat were imported from the Netherlands to Hong Kong.

"The CFS has contacted the Dutch and South African 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.