

New measures to strengthen control of cats for sale

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has implemented the Licence Conditions and Code of Practice for cat trading since April 1, to ensure that cats put up for sale by animal traders should be obtained from approved sources and microchipped.

A spokesman for the AFCD said today (April 2) that the newly introduced Licence Conditions and Code of Practice were aimed at tightening the control of cats offered for sale by animal traders, to safeguard public health and animal welfare.

In view of the Licence Conditions and Code of Practice, the AFCD conducted consultation with stakeholders including animal traders and the Animal Welfare Advisory Group.

To allow the animal trade to familiarise itself with the new requirements and make necessary preparation, the AFCD issued letters to licensed animal traders last year to explain to them in details of the implementation of the Licence Conditions and Code of Practice.

The newly introduced Licence Conditions stipulate that all cats for sale by animal traders must be from the following sources:

- * legal imports into Hong Kong;
- * other licensed animal traders; and
- * private pet owners.

"All animal traders are required to keep all documents detailing the sources of cats acquired and make them available for inspection by the AFCD or authorised agencies. The AFCD will continue to step up liaison with veterinarians in private practice to facilitate their understanding of the new arrangements," the spokesman said.

The AFCD will step up inspection of animal traders. If any animal trader is found to be in breach of the Licence Conditions or Code of Practice, he is liable to a fine and/or suspension of their licences.

The AFCD reminds the public that all cats sold by licensed animal traders must be microchipped. The implementation arrangements of the Licence Conditions and Code of Practice have been uploaded to AFCD's website (www.pets.gov.hk/english/highlights/COP_Cat_Traders.html). Members of the public can also call 1823 for enquiries.