

SFH to visit Beijing

The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, will depart for Beijing tomorrow evening (October 28) to foster closer ties and enhance exchanges with the relevant Mainland authorities in respect of matters relating to food safety and the supply of agricultural food to Hong Kong.

Professor Chan will meet with officials from the General Administration of Customs, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, the Ministry of Commerce and the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council on October 29. She will also sign a protocol with the General Administration of Customs on the importation of bird's nest products into the Mainland.

Professor Chan said, "The Mainland is the major source of agricultural products, especially live and fresh food. The Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government and the relevant authorities in the Mainland have all along established a close liaison mechanism to safeguard the quality, safety and stable supply of food to Hong Kong. Regarding the import of bird's nest products to the Mainland, we have been following up with the General Administration of Customs on the implementation arrangements since the signing of the draft arrangements for the inspection and quarantine of the import of bird's nest products from Hong Kong in December last year. The formal signing of the protocol will help foster the trade of bird's nests between the Mainland and the SAR, and will be welcomed by the trade of the two places. On behalf of the Hong Kong SAR, I appreciate the strong support of the General Administration of Customs."

Officials accompanying Professor Chan on the visit include the Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food), Mr Philip Yung; the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation, Dr Leung Siu-fai, and the Controller of the Centre for Food Safety, Dr Ho Yuk-yin.

Professor Chan will return to Hong Kong in the evening on October 29. The Under Secretary for Food and Health, Dr Chui Tak-yi, will be the Acting Secretary for Food and Health during her absence.