

Subsidies from Anti-epidemic Fund to local primary producers and fresh food wholesalers progressively disbursed and loan repayment deferral and interest waiver for Fisheries Development Loan Fund borrowers being rolled out smoothly

In view of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on local primary industries, the Government, under the sixth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund, is providing subsidies to local primary producers and wholesalers operating in the fresh food wholesale markets. Subsidies are being disbursed progressively. The interest-free loan repayment deferral arrangement for loan borrowers under the Fisheries Development Loan Fund (FDLF) has been rolled out smoothly as well.

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said today (March 29) that a subsidy ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000 depending on the trade, will be provided to owners of each fishing vessel or fish collector vessel with Mainland deckhands; and each local primary producer (including owners/operators of vegetable farms, hydroponic farms, flower farms and nurseries, marine fish culture farms, pond fish farms, fishing vessels or fish collector vessels without hiring Mainland deckhands, but excluding those of livestock farms); each marine fish wholesaler in Fish Marketing Organization (FMO) markets; and each of other kinds of fresh food wholesalers operating in public or private wholesale markets (including fresh marine fish, freshwater fish, vegetable, fresh fruit, and egg but excluding live poultry and frozen meat). As of today, a total of about 5 900 applications have been received with some 2 400 approved.

Moreover, borrowers of 121 loans under the FDLF confirmed participation in the arrangement of a one-off interest-free deferral of loan repayment for a period of one year as of today.

Applications for the subsidies to local primary industries under the sixth round of the Anti-epidemic Fund are still open. The deadline of applications for local primary producers, namely owners/operators of vegetable farms, hydroponic farms, flower farms and nurseries, marine fish culture farms and pond fish farms, and fresh food wholesalers is April 4, while that for owners of fishing vessels or fish collector vessels is May 20.

The AFCD has notified eligible applicants by post or phone and sent application forms by email, fax or post, or through the AFCD and

FMO/Vegetable Marketing Organization wholesale markets and concerned organisations. Application forms can also be downloaded from the AFCD website (agricultural sector:

www.afcd.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/what_agr/what_agr.html; fisheries sector: www.afcd.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/what_fis/what_fis.html).

Completed application forms for the above schemes and copies of the required documents must be submitted to the AFCD as stated on the forms. After vetting of applications, subsidies will be disbursed to successful applicants as soon as possible.