

[Trial Programme of Using Contraceptive Drug on Feral Pigeons launched \(with photos\)](#)

With a view to reducing the nuisance caused by feral pigeons, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (September 17) launched a two-year Trial Programme of Using Contraceptive Drug on Feral Pigeons at three spots in Central and Western District, Kowloon City District and Sai Kung District respectively where they congregate, in an attempt to control the fertility of feral pigeons by feeding them contraceptive drug-coated feed.

"The Trial Programme of Using Contraceptive Drug on Feral Pigeons aims to evaluate the effectiveness of feeding feral pigeons with the contraceptive drug in reducing the nuisance caused by them. The programme is implemented at congregating spots of feral pigeons near Exit A of MTR Kennedy Town Station, Ma Tau Wai Road/ Ma Hang Chung Road Rest Garden, and Exit A of MTR Hang Hau Station," an AFCD spokesman said.

The AFCD commissioned a service contractor to feed feral pigeons daily at a specific time with contraceptive drug-coated feed. Staff of the contractor wearing reflective vests labelled "Contractor of AFCD" will post signs at the feeding spots to remind the public that the programme is under way. They will monitor the whole drug administration process to prevent non-target animals from ingesting the contraceptive drug-coated feed, while any left-over feed will be cleared.

Natural maize kernels coated with the contraceptive drug are used as pigeon feed in the programme. The active ingredient in the contraceptive drug is Nicarbazin. Overseas studies have shown that no obvious side effects are observed in birds (including feral pigeons) after consumption of the contraceptive product. The fertility of birds will recover after the oral contraceptive drug is withdrawn. According to World Health Organization studies, only substantial consumption of the contraceptive product may pose potential hazards to human health. Therefore, proper use of the drug is safe. In addition, Nicarbazin will decompose in the natural environment and the impact on the environment is insignificant.

The AFCD spokesman appeals to the public for their co-operation to avoid approaching the feeding spots while feeding is under way. For enquiries, please call 1823.

The AFCD has appointed the City University of Hong Kong as the consultant who is responsible for related data collection, study and evaluation. The AFCD will decide the way forward, including whether or not to continue the programme and to conduct the programme at other congregating spots of feral pigeons, according to its effectiveness and actual circumstances. The progress of this trial programme will be announced in due

course.

