

Vegetable chain stall in Yau Ma Tei convicted again for causing noise annoyance when playing promotional recordings

Farmer House Food Company Limited, which operates a chain of vegetable stalls, was prosecuted again for causing a noise annoyance to nearby residents with loudspeakers, persistently playing promotional recordings at a stall on Reclamation Street in Yau Ma Tei. The company was convicted and fined \$6,000 at the Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (April 14) for contravening the Noise Control Ordinance (NCO), while its director also held personal criminal liability for repeated offence and was fined \$3,500.

A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said that upon receiving a public complaint, EPD staff conducted a blitz inspection along Reclamation Street and Saigon Street in Yau Ma Tei on September 14, 2021, and found the stall concerned persistently playing loud promotional recordings with loudspeakers. After assessment, the relevant noise was considered to cause annoyance to nearby residents. The department thus initiated prosecutions against the company and its director under the NCO. The company had also been prosecuted for committing a similar offence in 2019 and was fined \$5,400.

The spokesman added that the EPD has been very concerned about the situation of noise annoyances caused by shop peddling. In addition to stepping up routine inspections and strengthening enforcement against shops with contraventions, the department also collaborated with relevant departments, including the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Police, to take joint actions at black spots where shops cause noise while peddling goods. The department will continue to monitor closely the situation of shops causing noise while peddling goods, and take continual enforcement action with a focus on shops with repeated contraventions, with a view to improving the noise environment in various districts.

The spokesman reminded the responsible persons of retail shops and market stalls that they should not use street cries or broadcast promotional recordings in public places to attract customers, so as to avoid causing noise annoyance to nearby residents. Any persons contravening the NCO are liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000. For repeated offenders, the relevant operators will also be criminally liable for the offences once convicted.