

**Centre for Food Safety**  
**Food and Environmental Hygiene Department**  
**Notes of the Sixty Fourth Meeting of the Trade Consultation Forum**  
**held on 5 June 2018 at 3:00 p.m.**  
**in Conference Room at Room 102, 1/F, New Wan Chai Market,**  
**258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong**

**Present**

**Government Representatives**

Dr. Samuel YEUNG	Consultant (Community Medicine) (Risk Assessment & Communication)	(Chairman)
Dr. Tony CHOW	Senior Medical Officer (Risk Management)	
Dr. Queenie AU	Senior Medical Officer (Risk Assessment) <sup>2</sup>	
Mr. Peter TSANG	Superintendent (Import&Export) <sup>3</sup>	
Ms. CHOW Shuk Man	Scientific Officer (Biotechnology)	
Mr. Kenneth YIP	Scientific Officer (Nutrition Labelling)	
Dr. Ken CHONG	Scientific Officer (Nutrition Labelling Education)	
Ms. Joan YAU	Scientific Officer (Standard Setting) <sup>2</sup>	
Mr. KWAN Chi Wai	Acting Superintendent (Risk Communication)	(Secretary)

**Trade Representatives**

Ms. May LAU	A & W Food Service Ltd.
Ms. NG Hin Yan	A-1 Bakery Co., (HK) Ltd.
Ms. Lilian TANG	Aeon Topvalu (Hong Kong) Co., Limited
Ms. Rita KU	ALS Technichem (HK) Pty Ltd.
Mr. Timmy LAU	Australian Trade and Investment Commission
Ms. Peggie YAU	Brand's Suntory (Hong Kong) Limited
Mr. Kenrick CHU	Bureau Veritas Hong Kong Ltd.
Ms. Silvana FUNG	China Dragon Inspection & Certification (HK) Ltd.
Mr. Chi WONG	China Inspection Co. Ltd.
Ms. Maggie LEUNG	China Resources Vanguard (Hong Kong) Co., Ltd.
Ms. LEUNG Wing Shan	City Super Limited
曹會忠先生	Coils Electronic Co., Limited

(No English name is provided)

徐小續先生 Coils Electronic Co., Limited

(No English name is provided)

Mr. Houston WONG Consulate General of Canada  
Ms. Clara.Cheng Danone Nutricia ELN (HK) Ltd.  
Ms. LEUNG Kwan Yee DCH  
Mr. Carlo Catingan Dole Hong Kong Ltd.  
Ms. Kacila LEUNG Enviro Labs Limited  
Ms. Wing CHEUNG Eurofins Food Testing Hong Kong Limited  
Ms. Carol LAW Fonterra Brands (Hong Kong ) Limited  
Mr. Freddy FONG Foodscan Analytics Ltd.  
Ms. Karen CHIU Friesland Campina (Hong Kong) Ltd.  
Ms. Noel HO Garden Heart Food Ltd.  
Mr. Chris CHAN General Mills Hong Kong Ltd.  
Ms. WU Ying Yi Health & Happiness (H&H) Hong Kong Limited  
Ms. CHEUNG Tin Yin HK Elements Ltd.  
Mr. CHAN Wing Kei HK Elements Ltd.  
Mr. Evan LEUNG Hong Kong Disneyland  
Mr. Gary LO Hong Kong Yakult Co., Ltd.  
Ms. Chloe LAU Hong Kong Yakult Co., Ltd.  
Mr. CHAN Chi Ming Hop Hing Oil Factory Ltd.  
Ms. Mandy CHENG Intertek Testing Services Hong Kong Ltd.  
Ms. May KAN International Food Safety Association  
Mr. Coleman TSE International Food Safety Association  
Mr. TANAKA HIROYUKI Japan External Trade Organization  
Mr. CHOW Tin Yam Japan External Trade Organization  
Ms. Alice WONG Lee Kum Kee International Holdings Ltd.  
Ms. Caroline HO Maxim's Caterers Ltd.  
Mr. WONG Chi Ngai Michael Wah Hing Co Ltd.  
Mr. Elton CHEUNG Miummi International Food Company Ltd.  
Ms. Eva POON Nestle Hong Kong Ltd.  
Mr. Tina CHUI NewSOKA International (Hong Kong) Ltd.  
Mr. Fujinawa Toshimichi Nissin Foods (H.K.) Management Co. Ltd.  
Ms. Doris LO Nu Skin Enterprises (HK) LLC  
Ms. German CHEUNG Pappagallo Pacific Ltd.  
Ms. Catherine KONG Parknshop (HK) Limited  
Ms. Pauline NG Plaza Premium Lounge Management Limited  
Ms. Launita CHAN Polybrands International Ltd.  
Mr. Kenneth LAM Prominent International (Env) Ltd.

Mr. Thomas YEUNG	Reckitt Benckiser HK Ltd.
Mr. Benjamin KWOK	Saraya (Hong Kong Sales) Co., Ltd.
Mr. Nick LEUNG	Snow Brand Hong Kong Co., Ltd.
Mr. WONG Kam Chuen	Swire Coca-Cola HK Ltd.
Mr. Victor KOK	Tai Pan Bread & Cakes Co., Ltd.
Mr. Richard POON	The Association for Hong Kong Catering Services Management Ltd.
Ms. Faye LEUNG	The Dairy Farm Group
Mr. LING Tsun Kit	The Garden Company Limited
Ms. Kammy YEUNG	The Hong Kong Standards and Testing Centre Ltd.
Ms. Abby WONG	Tingyi-Asahi Beverages Holding Co., Ltd.
Mr. CHAN Chi Kong	Vitasoy International Holdings Ltd.
Ms. Clara LAM	Wellcome
Mr. LAM Tsz Mau	Winner Foods Products Ltd.
Ms. Kitty LAI	SGS Hong Kong Limited

### **Opening Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed all trade representatives to the 64<sup>th</sup> meeting and introduced government representatives to the meeting.

### **Confirmation of the Notes of Last Meeting**

2. The notes of last meeting were confirmed without amendments.

### **Agenda Item 1**

#### **Food Safety and People with Lower Immunity**

3. Dr. Ken CHONG shared with the meeting the discussion topic of “Food Safety and People with Lower Immunity”. Immunity was one's ability to defend against infection.

There were groups more susceptible to foodborne disease due to their lower immunity: including pregnant women, young children and infants, the elderly, and people suffering from immunological disorders. In particular, pathogens that were ‘superbugs’ were more dangerous to the susceptible populations as antimicrobials that were effective in treatment would be limited. It was understood that raw or undercooked foods were more likely to carry microorganisms, including ‘superbugs’, than thoroughly cooked foods. In order to reduce the risk of foodborne illness, susceptible populations should strictly observe food safety and hygiene, and pay attention to the five keys to food safety: (a) Choose (choose safe raw materials); (b) Clean (keep hands and utensils clean); (c) Separate (separate raw and cooked food); (d) Cook (cook thoroughly); and (e) Safe Temperature (keep food at safe temperature). For susceptible populations, high risk foods such as raw / undercooked foods, unwashed fruits and vegetables, and refrigerated ready-to-eat foods with long shelf life, etc. should be avoided. To facilitate the choice of consumers at risk, the trade should have product labels which included information on safe handling practices and storage, and was recommended to provide additional warning or information for people with lower immunity. For example for cheeses products, it was recommended to provide clear label for consumers to know whether the cheese was made from raw milk. The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) ’s advise to susceptible populations on choosing cheese products had been shared for reference by the trade. For raw seafood, traders were recommended to provide warning to the at-risk population for consumption of such foods like raw oysters. For salads, susceptible groups were advised not to eat pre-prepared or pre-packaged salads in general. If salad was wanted, they were advised to prepare their own salad and consume it as soon as possible. For egg products, the at-risk populations should choose pasteurized eggs or egg products or dried egg powder for preparing dishes with raw egg ingredients. The trade should include a warning to susceptible populations for raw egg ingredients, if any. For all raw or undercooked foods, consumer advisory on the risk of consuming raw or undercooked foods should be provided,

for example, in brochures, deli case or menu advisories, label statements, table tents, placards, etc. Consumers should be allowed to make informed choices appropriate to the individual's health status and to avoid the risk of acquiring foodborne illness. The trade was encouraged to make reference to the relevant articles published by the CFS on the concerned food safety subjects.

4. The Chairman remarked that food safety was equally important for both the people with lower immunity and the general population. In addition, the antimicrobial resistance highlighted in the slides was also one of concerns with regards to food safety. To combat the occurrence of 'superbugs', the Government had launched the Hong Kong Strategy and Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance last year. The food trade could participate in the action plan such as through increase of awareness of food handlers through education and training, and increasing consumers' awareness through appropriate advice provided in food labels and menus, in relation to the risk of raw or undercooked foods.

5. One trade representative enquired whether the CFS would add targets and indicators for special groups of the population to the existing Microbiological Guidelines for Food. The Chairman remarked that the existing Guidelines had catered for all groups of the population. Dr. Ken CHONG added that the at-risk population was advised to avoid the consumption of raw and high risk foods and it was considered not appropriate to establish a set of more stringent criteria of food for them.

6. Another trade representative asked, with regard to the advice that refrigerated ready-to-eat foods with long shelf life of over five days should be avoided, whether prepackaged food items be included. Dr. Ken CHONG replied that only prepackaged food items which needed to be refrigerated were referred to. Those products that could be stored

in room temperature were excluded. The Chairman supplemented that the food items concerned included salads and cold-cut meat which could be stored in the refrigerator for a longer period of time. Some bacteria like *Listeria monocytogenes* could survive under refrigeration temperatures (i.e. 4 °C or less), although with a slower growth rate. If the food containing the bacteria was stored in the refrigerator for a long period of time (say over 5 days), the *Listeria* bacteria present in the food might grow to a sufficient amount to cause infection. Dr. Ken CHONG remarked that products received heat treatment, such as pasteurised milk, had eliminated the presence of *Listeria monocytogenes* and would be safe to consume.

## **Agenda Item 2**

### **World Health Organisation (WHO)'s Target on Trans Fats**

7. Mr. Kenneth YIP briefed the meeting of the latest advice made by WHO on the target of dietary intake of trans fats. There were two types of dietary trans fats: natural trans fats and artificial trans fats. Sources of natural trans fats included milk and fat products of cattle and sheep. Sources of artificial trans fats were industrial hydrogenation of oils (Partially Hydrogenated Oils) (PHOs) to increase shelf life and improve food texture. The main dietary source of trans fats was industrially-produced trans fats coming from the intake of food made with PHOs or cooked with PHOs, such as fried food and bakery products. PHOs were the primary source of trans fatty acids (TFAs). TFAs would raise the level of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol (the “bad” cholesterol), lower the level of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol (the “good” cholesterol), and increase the risk of heart disease, which was one of the leading causes of death in Hong Kong. The WHO had advised that TFAs consumption should be limited at 1% of the daily energy intake, which should be less than 2.2g / day of TFAs in a 2,000-kcal diet. The most effective and

consistent way to reduce TFAs in the food supply was through legislation and regulatory action. On 14 May 2018, WHO released REPLACE, a step-by-step guide for the elimination of industrially-produced TFAs from the global food supply. REPLACE stood for review, promote, legislate, assess, create and enforce. WHO expected that by the end of 2018, 23 countries would have set mandatory limits on industrially-produced trans fats or banned PHOs. Locally, according to the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap. 132W), the content of trans fats in prepackaged food should be listed on the nutrition label. The CFS had published the “Trade Guidelines on Reducing Trans Fats in Food” in 2008 for the reference of the food trade. The CFS had announced four risk assessment study results on trans fats content in food from 2007 to 2012, including studies conducted jointly with the Consumer Council, covering bakery products, deep fried foods and margarine spreads. In the comparison of results of the study conducted in 2012 with previous ones, the mean trans fats content in food samples decreased, reflecting the trade’s effort in reducing trans fats levels in their products. Trans fats contents in some individual samples had reduced dramatically whilst similar saturated fats contents had been maintained, showing that it was feasible for the trade to reduce trans fats in food without raising the saturated fats contents. The following advice was provided to the trade in on food production and preparation: (a) replace trans fats by healthier alternatives such as monounsaturated fats (e.g. canola oil and olive oil) and polyunsaturated fats (e.g. soybean oil and corn oil); and (b) reduce the total fat content in food by choosing ingredients with lower fat contents and provide dishes by using low fat cooking methods. The trade was also informed that the approach of regulatory control in the USA was to regulate PHOs as a kind of food additive, and in some of the European countries (e.g. Denmark) their approaches of regulatory control were to limit the TFAs in food products. The CFS would examine from time to time the need to regulate the use of PHOs / TFAs, in the light of the latest international developments, including the regulatory approaches and recommendations of other countries /

regions.

8. The Chairman informed that WHO had set a target to eliminate the use of industrially-produced TFAs in the food chain by 2023 and replaced by healthier alternatives, thus reducing the level of artificial trans fats in food. In Hong Kong, it was noted that with the nutrition labelling requirement and the issue of relevant trade guidelines the level of trans fats in foods had been reduced in recent years. He thanked the trade's efforts and sought their comments and feedbacks regarding WHO's target of eliminating the use of industrially-produced TFAs by 2023. Mr. Kenneth YIP remarked that PHOs were usually found in bakery products like bread and biscuits, in deep fried foods like French fries and fried chicken, and in puff pastry.

9. One trade representative asked whether the CFS could provide a questionnaire for them to seek the views and comments from food handlers on replacing PHOs / TFAs, and remarked that some of the concerned oils were not named under the title PHOs and the food handlers might not know how to identify them. The trade would also like to know the extent and degree of the regulatory control. The Chairman remarked that the way forward in regulatory control in Hong Kong was yet to be determined.

10. Another trade representative asked whether Fully Hydrogenated Oils (FHOs) were also a matter of concern. Mr. Kenneth YIP remarked that FHOs were saturated fats and not categorized as trans fats. The trade representative further asked how to test for PHOs. Mr. Kenneth YIP replied that the trade could test the trans fat isomers.

11. One trade representative asked, with regard to WHO's recommended limit of trans fats intake of less than 2.2g / day of TFAs in a 2,000-kcal diet, whether it was a revised recommendation or original recommendation in the past. The Chairman replied that it was



not a new recommendation.

### **Agenda Item 3**

#### **Study on Dioxins in Food**

12. Ms. Joan YAU informed the meeting that to further understand the local situation of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs (DL-PCBs) in food, particularly foods of animal origin other than hairy drabs, the CFS would commence a study starting from June 2018. Dioxins included PCDDs and PCDFs. DL-PCBs were PCBs that exhibit toxicological properties similar to dioxins. Dioxins and DL-PCBs were persistent and ubiquitous in the environment. They arose naturally or as by-products of industrial activities, e.g. metal smelting, molding, burning of chlorine containing organic chemicals such as plastics. They were fat soluble and not easily broken down. They tended to accumulate in the food chain, mainly in the fatty tissue of animals. Dietary intake from foods such as meat, milk, egg and seafood was by far the most important exposure. They were human carcinogens and would have toxic effects on the endocrine system, immune system and developing nervous system. At present, Codex had not set any Maximum Limits (MLs) for dioxins in foods, taking into account the lack of technical expertise in many member nations for measuring dioxins and the expensive testing cost and other considerations. Nevertheless, a Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Dioxin and DL-PCB Contamination in Foods and Feeds was adopted in 2006, with an aim to achieve long-term dioxin reductions by identifying and eliminating pathways from the environment to food supplies. Statutory limits for dioxins and DL-PCBs in specified foods had only been established in economies including the European Union (EU), Korea and Taiwan. Currently in Hong Kong, there was no specific statutory safety standard for dioxins and DL-PCBs in food. Section 54 of the Public Health and Municipal Service Ordinance (Cap. 132) required that foods for sale and intended for human

consumption should be fit for human consumption. The CFS had been monitoring dioxins in foods as part of its routine food surveillance programme since 1999. An action level of 1 pg WHO-TEQ (PCDD/F)/g sample had been adopted. In 2016, the CFS established action levels of 3.5 pg TEQ/g food sample (wet weight) for dioxins and 6.5 pg TEQ/g food sample (wet weight) for dioxins and DL-PCBs respectively in edible portion of hairy crabs for the purpose of food surveillance. Results of the First Hong Kong Total Diet Study indicated that dietary exposures to dioxins and DL-PCBs were 21.92 and 59.65 pg toxic equivalent (TEQ)/kg bw/month for average and high consumer of the population, which were less than the provisional tolerable monthly intake (PTMI) of 70 pg/kg bw/month for PCDDs, PCDFs and DL-PCBs expressed as TEQ established by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) in 2001. Hence, the general population was unlikely to experience major undesirable health effects of dioxins and DL-PCBs. Nevertheless, having considered their carcinogenic risk, efforts should be made to reduce the dietary exposure to dioxins and DL-PCBs of the population. The major food contributors were fish and seafood and their products. The current study would span about 2 years with a testing of nearly 200 food samples for dioxins and DL-PCBs in foods of animal origin including various aquatic animals except hairy crabs, edible offal of animal, edible fats, etc. Under this study, the CFS would conduct risk assessment for food samples detected with relatively high levels of dioxins and DL-PCBs and the management measures to be taken would depend on the conclusion of risk assessment.

13. One trade representative remarked that the most concerned sector would be the hairy crab traders. The Chairman replied that hairy crabs would be separately tested and not included in the current study. The trade representative remarked that the test for dioxins and DL-PCBs had to be conducted overseas and the cost was around \$12,000 to \$18,000, depending on the urgency of result delivery. He wondered whether there were laboratories

which could conduct the test in Hong Kong. The Chairman replied that only the Government Laboratory could conduct the test in Hong Kong. Upon the trade representative's further enquiry on how to conduct the test, Ms. Joan YAU informed that the test would check for the levels of both dioxins and DL-PCBs. The Chairman supplemented that the laboratories had the relevant expertise and would make reference to the toxic equivalency factors (TEF) scheme adopted by WHO in interpreting the sum of dioxins and DL-PCBs in food.

14. One trade representative was interested to know how the testing result was to be announced and public panic as in last year should be avoided. He remarked that announcement in the form of a press conference would catch the trade unprepared. He wondered whether the CFS could first inform and discuss with the trade before releasing the result. The Chairman remarked that the way of announcement of the result would be the same as in the past.

15. Another trade representative asked whether there were action levels for food products other than hairy crabs. The Chairman remarked that there was an action level of 1 pg WHO-TEQ (PCDD/F)/g sample for dioxins remained. The CFS would make reference to the tested level and perform risk assessment to see whether there would be public health concern before considering further follow-up action.

16. Another trade representative asked whether the CFS would consider accepting non-government organizations to conduct surveillance at the site of origin of the food product. The Chairman remarked that the current study on dioxins and DL-PCBs only aimed at foods sold in Hong Kong. He welcomed the trade to undertake testing and improvement work at the origin of food production.

## **Agenda Item 4**

### **Imported Food from Japan**

17. Mr. Peter TSANG informed the meeting of the proposed revision of import control measures on Japanese food subsequent to the Fukushima nuclear incident in 2011. The prime consideration was to safeguard food safety in Hong Kong. Other factors considered included local surveillance results, assessments of international expert organizations, surveillance results of the Japanese Government, latest position of other economies' import control over Japanese food, and public concern. Currently vegetables, fruits, milk and milk beverages, and dried milk coming from the five prefectures (i.e. Fukushima, Chiba, Gunma, Ibaraki and Tochigi) were all prohibited from import. Chilled or frozen game, meat and poultry, poultry eggs, and live, chilled or frozen aquatic products from the five prefectures were allowed to be imported if accompanied with radiation certificate. The proposed revision was to allow the import of vegetables, fruits, milk and milk beverages, and dried milk from Chiba, Gunma, Ibaraki and Tochigi on condition that they were accompanied by exporter certificate and radiation certificate. There would be two levels of gatekeeping to safeguard food safety under the proposed arrangement. On the part of the Japanese Government, they would exercise export control to ensure that every consignment of the concerned food come from Ibaraki, Tochigi, Chiba or Gunma, and not Fukushima and that the food could be for sale in Japan (exporter certificate). They would provide certification on originating prefecture and that radiation levels of the subject food do not exceed the Codex Alimentarius Commission's standards (radiation certificate). On the part of the CFS, we would exercise import control and continue to conduct radiation test on every consignment of imported Japanese food before being released to market. The CFS would also strengthen sampling of vegetables, fruits and milk products from the above-mentioned four prefectures for testing radiation levels. In addition, the CFS would strengthen communication with the

Japanese Government in exchange of information and intelligence. The trade was encouraged to keep the original label of Japanese food, or provide information of the originating prefecture upon repackaging to facilitate checking by the customers.

18. One trade representative appreciated that the CFS had put in much resources and efforts in upholding the safety of foods imported from Japan. He asked, with regard to the radioactive Caesium (Cs) (aggregate of Cs-134 and Cs-137) level, whether the trade could sell products which had radiation levels below the Codex standard of 1000 Bq/kg. Some retailers reflected that they were requested by staff of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) to remove from shelf for products with a radiation level much lower than the Codex standard. Mr. Peter TSANG replied that the CFS would make reference to the Codex standard. For products found with radiation level below the Codex standard, FEHD would only advise retailers to remove them from sale if it was found after risk assessment that the radiation level concerned might cause health problems. The trade representative remarked that some retailers reflected that products with radiation levels as low as 10 – 20 Bq/kg were requested to be removed voluntarily. He wondered whether a written confirmation of the enforcement criteria could be provided. Dr. Tony CHOW remarked that the CFS has updated the web site regularly and provided information to the public (including the issuance of press release) on the detection of foods from Japan with radionuclides even its level was lower than the Codex standard. In response to the enquiry of the trade representative, Dr. CHOW informed that the CFS would not disclose the name of the trader concerned in the press release and web site if the detected level was lower than Codex standard. The trade representative remarked that the name of the trader should not be disclosed as the radiation standard had not been exceeded. He further asked whether such products could be put on sale. The Chairman remarked that as long as the Codex standard was not exceeded, the trader could determine whether the product should continue to be put

on sale. The trade representative asked what were the new requirements to Japanese food importers for importing vegetables, fruits, milk and milk beverages, and dried milk from the four prefectures. The Chairman said that the imported food had to be accompanied by a radiation certificate which certified the originating prefecture and that the radiation level of the food concerned had met the Hong Kong standard which was equivalent to the Codex standard. Also, the importer had to provide an official exporter certificate which certified that the food could be sold in Japan, that is, meeting the Japanese standard.

19. One trade representative asked whether Japanese foods imported from places other than the five concerned prefectures would need to be reported to FEHD for testing. Mr. Peter TSANG replied that every consignment of food imported from Japan had to be tested, irrespective whether they came from the five concerned prefectures. Another trade representative enquired if radiation certificate and exporter certificate were required to be issued by Japanese Authority. The Chairman replied that they had to be issued by Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (農林水産省).

20. One trade representative commented that the public might not understand that the CFS had been conducting radiation tests on every consignment of food products imported from Japan. He suggested CFS to enhance communication with the public so that they could know what CFS was doing. The Chairman agreed to continue to strengthen publicity and communication with the public in this aspect. He also encouraged the retailers to provide information of the originating prefecture on the Japanese food labels. Upon the enquiry of another trade representative, the Chairman commented that the retailers should be able to obtain information on the originating prefecture from suppliers. Supermarket/retailer had the information down to prefecture level but the actual labelling would be considered on a case by case basis. The Chairman again encouraged the trade to label down to prefecture

level.

21. A trade representative said there was possibility that food produced in the four concerned prefectures might be transported to other prefectures and sold to Hong Kong. He would like to know how CFS would prevent such situation. He understood that the exporter certificate was to be obtained by the importers themselves but not the Government. Mr. Peter TSANG replied that the Government was concerning about the originating prefecture but not the exporting prefecture. Moreover, the exporter certificate was issued by the Japanese Government but not the exporter themselves. When the food was imported into Hong Kong, CFS staff would check the concerned certificates and other import documents to ensure that everything was in order before release.

22. Another trade representative asked when the proposed import control measures would be implemented. The Chairman remarked that the implementation date had yet to be fixed , but the issue would be discussed in the coming meeting of the LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on 12 June 2018.

23. One trade representative asked if each consignment should be accompanied by the exporter certificate. Mr. Peter TSANG confirmed that her understanding was correct. She would also like to know if one exporter certificate would suffice if the same batch of food was distributed in several consignments. Mr. Peter TSANG replied that the certificate was required for every shipment / consignment.

24. A trade representative understood that CFS would strengthen inspection and testing on vegetables, fruits and milk products from the four prefectures. He expressed concern about the lag time for sample testing at border and asked if CFS would put more resources on testing of food imported from Japan. Mr. Peter TSANG replied that additional resources

would be provided so as not to increase the time required for checking and sample testing of the foods concerned.

### **Any Other Business**

25. One trade representative informed that her company had all along imported natto from the four concerned prefectures of Japan. Recently they were informed by FEHD officers that the product could not be imported as it was categorized as vegetables. She considered that natto was a kind of processed food. Mr. Peter TSANG replied that as there was no available information at hand, he would separately follow up the trade's enquiry after the meeting.

[Post-meeting note: Natto is not classified as vegetables and it is allowed to import. The trade representative was informed accordingly.]

26. Another trade representative remarked that regarding the proposed amendment to the Food Adulteration (Metallic Contamination) Regulation, food additives were not included. He wanted to know if there was any indicator to check whether the content of heavy metals in food additives met the standard in Hong Kong. The Chairman remarked that not all kinds of foods had established a maximum limit under the proposed amendment. He suggested that reference could be made to the food additives specifications published by the JECFA to check the level of heavy metal contaminants in food additives.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

27. The date of next meeting would be decided later.



28. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:58 p.m.