

**Centre for Food Safety**  
**Food and Environmental Hygiene Department**  
**Notes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Trade Consultation Forum**  
**held on 22 July 2009 at 2:30 p.m.**  
**in Conference Room at Room 102, 1/F, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong**

**Present**

**Government Representatives**

Dr. Y. Y. HO	Consultant (Community Medicine) (Risk Assessment & Communication)	(Chairman)
Dr. Anne FUNG	Principal Medical Officer (Risk Assessment & Communication)	
Mr. C. W. TAM	Senior Superintendent (Centre for Food Safety)	2
Mr. Y. K. LAI	Superintendent (Food Surveillance)	2
Mr. K. M. LIU	Superintendent (Import/Export)	3
Dr. Stephanie MA	Senior Food Toxicologist	
Dr. Anna TANG	Scientific Officer (Technical Publication)	1
Mr. Nicky HO	Scientific Officer (Programme Planning)	2
Mr. K. W. CHUNG	Chief Health Inspector (Food Labelling)	
Mr. H. M. WONG	Superintendent (Risk Communication)	(Notes-taker)

**Trade Representatives**

Ms. Cactus LAI	A.S. Watson Group (HK) Ltd.
Mr. WOO Lun	Association of Restaurant Managers
Ms. LAM Wing Sze	Association of Restaurant Managers
Mr. Stephen LEE	Bayern Gourment Food Co. Ltd.
Ms. Tracy CHAU	BC Quality Management Consultants
Mr. CHEUNG Hiu Ming	Campbell Soup Asia Ltd.
Mr. KI Wing Yun	CHAN YEE JAI
Mr. Alain YIP Wai Ching	CHAN YEE JAI
Mr. Garick CHAU	Chewy International Foods Ltd.
Mr. T. F. CHAN	Chinese Cuisine Management Association
Mr. LEUNG Chun Wah	Chinese Cuisine Management Association
Ms. Grace YEE	City Super Ltd.

Mr. Denis CHAN	City Super Ltd.
Mr. Raymond ON	City Super Ltd.
Ms. May KAN	Coca-Cola China Ltd.
Ms. Caroline HO	Coffee Concepts HK Ltd.
Ms. YAN Wing Hei	Dah Chong Hong Ltd.
Ms. Emily LAM	Dah Chong Hong Ltd.
Mr. Tony LUNG	EDO Trading Co.
Mr. WOO Chu	Federation of Hong Kong Restaurant
Mr. Nick LAU	Four Seas Merchantile Ltd.
Mr. Joseph CHAN	Four Seas Merchantile Ltd.
Mr. Stephen L. T. CHOI	FSSI
Ms. Wendy KONG Po Yan	Hong Kong Federation of Restaurants & Related Trades
Mr. LOCK Kwok On	Hong Kong Federation of Restaurants & Related Trades
Dr. Vicki L. Y. FONG	Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education
Dr. Stanley SIU	Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education
Ms. Frenda WONG	Hong Kong Suppliers Association Ltd.
Mr. Joshua SUEN	Hong Kong Suppliers Association Ltd.
Mr. Gary LO	Hong Kong Yakult Co., Ltd.
Ms. Corine LIU	Hong Kong Yakult Co., Ltd.
Mr. CHAN Chi Hung	Hop Kee Grinding Factory
Mr. TSANG Yuet Sin	Kiu Fung Hong Ltd.
Mr. LEE Kwong Lam	Kowloon Chamber of Commerce
Mr. LEUNG Kam Tong	Kowloon Chamber of Commerce
Mrs. LEE LAU Suk Ching	Lee Chun Food Ltd.
Mr. LEE Sheung Sau	Lee Chun Food Ltd.
Mr. Philip KWAN	LEE KUM KEE
Ms. Daphne KWOK	Lucullus Food & Wines Co., Ltd.
Ms. Kate NG	Lucullus Food & Wines Co., Ltd.
Ms. Michelle KWAN	Mannings
Ms. Gloria LIU	Maxims Catering Ltd.
Mr. Raymond YAM	Maxims Catering Ltd.
Mr. KU Kai Leung	MC Marketing & Sales (Hong Kong) Limited
Ms. Ada LEE	MC Marketing & Sales (Hong Kong) Limited
Mr. Eugene WONG	McDonald's Restaurants (HK) Ltd.
Ms. LEE Shuk Ting	MUJI (HK) Co., Ltd.
Ms. Irene NG Shuk Kuen	MUJI (HK) Co., Ltd.
Ms. Doris CHAN	Nestle Hong Kong Ltd.
Mr. Chris LAN	Ng Fung Trading Co. Ltd.

Ms. Summer LAM	Ng Fung Trading Co. Ltd.
Ms. Nancy CHOW Lai Sze	Niken's Japanese Food Co., Ltd.
Ms. Mabel LEUNG	ParknShop Supermarket
Mr. Chris CHAN	Pat Chun Int'l Ltd.
Mr. Leo CHAN	Ping Shan Foods Co., Ltd.
Ms. Susanna CHING	Ping Shan Foods Co., Ltd.
Ms. Grace YU	Procter & Gamble Hong Kong Ltd.
Ms. Stephanie SHAM	Saint Honore Holdings Limited
Ms. Nicole CHAN	SGS Hong Kong Ltd.
Mr. George WONG	SGS Hong Kong Ltd.
Mr. Wellock LO	Sims Trading Co., Ltd.
Mr. K. C. WONG	Swire Coca-Cola HK
Mr. Victor KOK	Taipan Bread & Cakes Co. Ltd.
Mr. James HO Kwok Ying	The Asia Provisions Co., Ltd.
Mr. Allen PANG	The Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong
Ms. Nicole LO Cheuk Ting	The Dairy Farm Co., Ltd. (7-Eleven)
Mr. Justin WONG	The Dairy Farm Co., Ltd. (7-Eleven)
Mr. Allen HO	The Dairy Farm Group
Mr. CHENG Chung Tak	The Garden Co., Ltd.
Mr. LAW Chi Sang	The Garden Co., Ltd.
Mr. TONG Lap Kei	The Garden Co., Ltd.
Mr. Samuel CHAN	The Garden Co., Ltd.
Mr. Simon LEE Pui Nin	The Garden Co., Ltd.
Ms. Caroline YUEN	United States Department of Agriculture
Mr. WONG Yiu Kau	UNY (HK) Co., Ltd.
Mr. CHAN Chi Kong	Vitasoy Int'l Holdings Ltd.
Ms. May LO	Wellcome Fresh Food Centre
Ms. Wendi CHAN	Wellcome Fresh Food Centre
Ms. Mimi LO Yee Ni	Wellcome Supermarket
Ms. Amelia YEUNG	YHS Hong Kong (2000) PTE Ltd.

### **Opening Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed all trade representatives to the 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**

### **Matters Arising from Notes of Last Meeting**

#### **Draft Guidelines on the Use of Aluminium-containing Food Additives**

3. The Chairman informed the meeting that the draft guidelines on the use of aluminium (Al)-containing food additives had been finalized after incorporating comments of the trade. The finalized guidelines were being printed and would be available in August 2009 for distribution. These were now available on the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) website ([http://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme\\_rafs/files/Guidelines\\_on\\_the\\_use\\_of\\_Al\\_additives\\_e.pdf](http://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/files/Guidelines_on_the_use_of_Al_additives_e.pdf)) for reference.

4. The Chairman said that the CFS had contacted a local main supplier of bakery powder. That supplier advised that Al free bakery powder had been made available and was being tested by manufacturers to assess the result. Besides, the CFS had also contacted the food trade to find out the progress of reducing Al in food in the trade. Some traders advised that they had modified the formula of products with Al-free food additives. The results were promising. However, some others were not yet successful. Interested traders might contact staff of CFS for particulars of the supplier who had Al free bakery powder on sale.

#### **Food Safety Charter 2009**

5. Mr. Nicky HO briefed the meeting on the latest plan of the Food Safety Charter (FSC)

2009. The FSC aimed at gearing up community efforts to promote the “Five Keys to Food Safety” (5 Keys) and to enhance food safety through tripartite collaboration among the Government, food trade and consumers. Food trade associations and licensed food premises would be invited to become signatory to the FSC 2009. There were three missions for a signatory, namely to promote and practise the 5 Keys, to set a good example for the food trade to help build a food safe city, and to build a good image to the signatory. The obligations of signatories of licensed food premises / supermarkets / convenience stores would be different from those of food trade associations. Signatories of licensed food premises / supermarkets / convenience stores were expected to undertake the following activities between August 2009 and July 2010:

- a) practise 5 Keys in their food premises;
- b) display “FSC 2009” and “FSC 2009” sticker(s) in their food premises;
- c) display the CFS’s 5 Keys publicity materials in their food premises; and
- d) provide training to their staff on food safety/hygiene.

For signatories of food trade associations, they were expected to undertake the following activities between August 2009 and July 2010:

- a) display “FSC 2009” and “FSC 2009” sticker(s) in their premises;
- b) display the CFS’s 5 Keys publicity materials in their premises;
- c) encourage their members to sign up to the FSC 2009; and
- d) encourage their members to promote and practise the 5 Keys.

6. Mr. Nicky HO said that, similar to the FSC 2008, signatories would enjoy the following

benefits:

- a) their name, address and major type of cuisine served to be listed on the designated “FSC” webpage of the CFS;
- b) to be provided with a Charter for display in the respective premises, so as to build a good image to the signatory;
- c) to be provided with publicity materials to facilitate the promotion of 5 Keys; and
- d) to be invited to attend the food hygiene seminars organised by CFS.

In addition, signatories to FSC 2009 would enjoy additional benefits as follows:

- a) to be included into the signatory list on the FSC webpage where a more user-friendly search function would be added to facilitate the public searching on the signatory list;
- b) to enjoy the publicity of the signatory list that would be displayed at the exhibition venue during the roving exhibitions between September and December 2009 where computer would also be set up for the public to locate signatories near their homes or workplaces;
- c) signatories of food trade associations would be invited to attend the FSC Presentation Ceremony cum Food Safety Seminar for Trade scheduled for 17 September 2009;
- d) to be provided with “FSC 2009” sticker and badge to inform their patrons their active participation in ensuring food safety; and
- e) their food handlers in kitchen would be invited to attend two tailor-made food hygiene seminars that would provide in-depth illustration of the 5 Keys where

certificate would be awarded to participants who attained a satisfactory result in the voluntary assessment to be conducted after the seminar.

7. Mr. Nicky HO continued that there was a new recognition scheme with the FSC 2009 to recognise the continuous support of food trade associations and licensed food premises. In the recognition scheme, food trade associations who had signed up the FSC for three consecutive years and had successfully encouraged their members to sign up the FSC for three consecutive years would be offered “Star Award” in the FSC and sticker. For licensed food premises who had signed up the FSC for three consecutive years and had met the food safety and hygiene requirements in the past two years would be offered “Award” in the FSC and sticker. The food safety and hygiene requirements were that there was no history of the following incidents:

- a) Suspension or cancellation of licence under the Demerit Points System of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD);
- b) Suspension or cancellation of licence due to breach of FEHD’s licensing conditions/requirements;
- c) Closure of food premises ordered by the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene; or
- d) Food poisoning cases occurring in the food premises as recorded by the CFS.

If food premises failed to comply with any of the food safety and hygiene requirements upon being a signatory or receiving the Award, their signatory status or Award would be withdrawn and their name would be removed from the Signatory List on the CFS website. Mr. Nicky HO also briefed the meeting on the application procedures and the work plan of the FSC

2009.

8. The Chairman said that the FSC would be an event to last 3 consecutive years and encouraged food trade associations / licensed food premises to render their support to the event as long as they could as the new recognition scheme would be applied to signatories who had participated in the event for 3 consecutive years. Licensed food premises were welcomed to provide their websites to the CFS, which would be expected to hyperlink to the FSC webpage, so as to facilitate their patrons to visit. In response to suggestions from trade representatives, Dr. Anne FUNG undertook to consider the feasibility of extending the deadline for application now set on 7 August 2009. She mentioned that the application forms would be individually sent to food trade associations and licensed food premises starting the next day and also available in the CFS website. The Chairman remarked that the deadline for participation in the FSC 2009 was to tie in with the Food Safety Seminar for Trade scheduled to be held on 17 September 2009, which would be a major event on food safety in 2009.

#### **Small Volume Exemption Application**

9. Mr. Y. K LAI briefed the meeting on the Small Volume Exemption (SVE) application under the Nutrition Labelling (NL) Scheme. Views of the trade had been taken into account in finalizing the SVE law enforcement and operation. In this connection, CFS would not revoke an exemption if the breach was rectified within the time specified in the warning letter. Besides, exemption label affixed on any conspicuous position on the food package, including the top, sides and bottom, would be acceptable. On the general enforcement aspect, the trade would normally be allowed 14 days to submit relevant information for the



CFS to follow up and investigate on cases relating to food labels that did not match the test results with CFS. Flexibility would be adopted for cases with satisfactory information provided during the 14-day investigation period, such as test report by accredited laboratory or documentation showing that appropriate indirect analysis method had been used, i.e. flexibility of 14 days plus 30 days for traders to change label while they continued selling the product. This arrangement would be reviewed after 1 year.

10. Mr. Y. K LAI said that the CFS would set up a Working Group under the Expert Committee on Food Safety to examine the sampling strategy on taking fair samples for testing nutrients. The CFS would also take into account the tolerance limits and any defences when considering enforcement action. According to the amendment regulation on nutrition labelling, any nutrition claim on the label of SVE products was not allowed. The CFS might include the relevant message in its public education.

11. Mr. Y. K LAI advised that it was considered not feasible to issue guidelines on acceptable methods to blacken the claims to suit all scenarios due to the principle that the claims should not be seen. From 1 July 2010 onward, all pre-packaged food products sold in the market must comply with the NL requirements as it was not feasible to take out enforcement action based on the manufacture date due to the law did not mandate the marking of such date on pre-packaged food. The suggestion of further extending the grace period was found not appropriate as the commencement date of the NL Scheme was the result of careful deliberations by stakeholders and had been endorsed by Legislative Council. Besides, the community also urged to implement the requirements as soon as possible. At the same time, the CFS had been taking a series of measures to facilitate the trade in meeting the requirements under the NL Scheme. For retailers who had set the deadline that food

products should comply with NL requirements on 1 January 2010, traders might consider negotiating with their business partners for flexibility in order to observe the legal requirements.

12. Mr. Y. K LAI continued that, on the SVE operation, the CFS would simplify the application procedures as far as possible. Guidance notes on the application would be provided on the application form. As SVE was intended to cover products with annual total local sales volume in Hong Kong not exceeding 30,000 units, counting the sales volume of grantees individually was against the spirit and principle of the system. Such arrangement did not comply with the law and was also liable to abuse. Grantees were responsible to keep in view the total sales volume of the product and be prudent in making import order. If large sales volume was expected, traders should not apply for SVE.

13. Mr. Y. K LAI said that, in addition to the measure of alerting the grantee when the sales volume reaches 70% or 21,000 units, the CFS would allow public access to the monthly update on the aggregate sales of the SVE product, and to issue another alert when the total sales volume reaches 90%. The grantee would be notified of the intention and reason to revoke the exemption and be allowed to submit representation within 21 days. The CFS would decide on the need of revoking the exemption as soon as possible after receiving the representation, say around 7 days. If revocation of the exemption was decided, it would take place 30 days after the decision was reached. The trader would be allowed a total 58 days to prepare for the revocation. At the same time, the CFS would allow retailers to continue selling products for 30 days which exemption was revoked after the revocation took effect. In other words, there was a total of 88 days: 21 days for representation, 7 days for decision, 30 days of statutory allowance, and 30 days flexible arrangement, for traders to

clear the stock. This arrangement would be reviewed after 1 year.

14. Mr. Y. K LAI said that the revocation decision would be notified on the CFS website so that retailers and the public were aware of the revocation. The law provided that if the annual sales volume exceeded 30,000 units in any one of the last two years, SVE application would not be considered. The annual exemption fee of \$345 aimed at recovering cost and was provided in law, hence exemption fee for products with sales volume below 10,000 could not be waived. Pre-packaged food sold by a charitable institution exempted from tax under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112) for charitable purposes was already exempted from NL requirements. Under the amendment regulation on NL, there was no exemption for pre-packaged food sold by social enterprise.

15. Mr. Y. K LAI advised that, on the laboratory testing aspect, “Method Guidance Notes on NL and Nutrition Claims” was issued in July 2008. The CFS would work with Hong Kong Accreditation Service to provide more information and guidance to private laboratories, including a workshop for laboratories on 29 July 2009 and another round of inter-laboratory comparison exercise for private laboratories in September 2009.

16. Mr. C. W. TAM briefed the meeting about the draft application form under SVE item by item. The draft application form comprised of 9 pages but only page 2 to page 5 would require completion. The draft application form would be refined and finalized after incorporating comments of the trade. The finalized application form would be available in mid-August 2009 from the CFS website and main offices of CFS, such as office at Fa Yuen Street Municipal Services Building, Queensway Government Offices, 4 Hospital Road, Middle Road Carpark Building, etc. Application for SVE might be submitted commencing

1 September 2009. Applications submitted before 31 October 2009 would be processed on or before 18 December 2009. Commencing 1 July 2010 when the NL Scheme would take effect, it was targeted to complete processing of each application for SVE within 14 working days. The draft application form would be uploaded to the page of Trade Consultation Forum on the CFS website for ease reference of traders. Further comments on the draft application form should be conveyed to the CFS before mid-August 2009 when the form would be finalized.

17. Trade representatives enquired about the anticipated duration for CFS to reply traders on the need of replacing label for cases of food label that did not match CFS's test results and the possibility of allowing a longer period for submitting relevant information and arranging the replacement of label. They anticipated that 14 days would not be adequate for submitting relevant information, for laboratory to carry out test again and for them to prepare new labels for such products. Mr. C. W. TAM replied that the duration for investigation would depend on the information provided by traders for the investigation and undertook to consider whether the 14 days of investigation period and the allowance of 30 days for traders to change label might be extended. The Chairman supplemented that traders should pay attention to sampling method as the number of samples and how they were taken could affect the accuracy and acceptance of the test result. Traders should also note that the allowance of 30 days to continue selling products while changing label was for retailers to clear their stock of products with incorrect label. The traders should not take advantage of that allowance to procure new stock and sell them during that window period .

18. Mr. C. W. TAM and Mr. K. W. CHUNG answered other questions raised by trade representatives as follows:

- a) Only importer and manufacturer, not retailer, of product would be eligible to submit SVE application for the product;
- b) Traders should submit fresh application for product that was re-packed or changed in pack size;
- c) Traders should inform CFS of alterations to the product granted with SVE including change of graphics and wordings on the package for CFS to decide whether fresh application is required;
- d) Traders should submit application as early as possible during peak seasons of sales when there were many varieties of product for sales, such as food festival, for timely processing by CFS to meet the timing;
- e) Traders should submit attachment to electronic application in popular software format to facilitate CFS processing the application without the need of seeking further information from applicant;
- f) Traders would only require to report to CFS the actual monthly sales volume by email, by post or by fax. They would not be required to provide the estimated sales volume prior to application;
- g) Provision of particulars and contact information of applicant on each application would not be required if such information had been provided in previous applications. Communication between CFS and applicant would be based on this information;
- h) An information technology system with online function was being developed for processing SVE application. Traders would be provided an account to log in this system to facilitate them in reporting the monthly sales volume. If this was implemented, particulars and contact information of applicant would not be

required for each and every application;

- i) Traders should provide the address of manufacturer and/or packer of the product in the application form irrespective of whether such information was provided on the package;
- j) The format of the exemption number for SVE product was being designed. It might be in the format of “YY–XXXXX”, where “YY” stands for the last two digits of a year and “XXXXX” stands for serial number counting from 00001 to 99999; and [Post-meeting Note: The proposed format has been decided to be adopted.]
- k) Letter on revocation of exemption would be faxed to the trader according to the fax number provided on the SVE application in addition to notification by post.

19. The Chairman added that the SVE application system had been modified significantly with the incorporation of comments and suggestions from the trade. He encouraged traders to try their best to comply with the procedures in the system and wished the system of SVE application would facilitate the trade to operate smoothly under the NL Scheme.

## **Agenda Item 2**

### **Ethyl Carbamate in Local Fermented Foods**

20. Dr. Anna TANG briefed the meeting about the risk assessment (RA) study on Ethyl Carbamate (EC) in Local Fermented Foods. EC was a contaminant formed naturally in fermented foods and alcoholic beverages during the fermentation process or during storage. The level of EC in foods depended on the amount of precursors, such as cyanate, urea and its break-down products. With elevated temperature, presence of light and duration of storage, the level of EC would increase. The concerns of EC in foods on public health was relating

to its carcinogenic potential. EC was considered a genotoxic multisite carcinogen in experimental animals. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) (2007) had upgraded the classification for EC from Group 2B “possibly carcinogenic to humans” to Group 2A “probably carcinogenic to humans”. In 2005, the Joint Food and Agriculture Organization/World Health Organization Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) evaluated EC. Based on the risk assessment results, JECFA concluded that the intake of EC from food, excluding alcoholic beverages, would be of low health concern. However, there was potential risk to health when EC was taken from both food and alcoholic beverages. In view of the findings of the JECFA evaluation in 2005 and the absence of similar data in Hong Kong, there was a need to conduct the RA study.

21. Dr. Anna TANG said that the RA study aimed at examining the level of EC in local fermented foods and alcoholic beverages, assessing the associated health risk posed to the population through dietary exposure to EC and formulating health advice based on the measured EC levels and estimated dietary exposure in commonly consumed fermented foods and beverages. It focused on local fermented foods and beverages, both prepackaged and non-pre-packaged. There were nine food groups covered in the study as follows:

- a) fermented cereals and grains products (bread/rolls/buns & crackers)
- b) legumes (fermented soy products)
- c) preserved/dried vegetables
- d) meat products (fermented pork products)
- e) fermented dairy products
- f) fermented fish products
- g) condiments and sauces

- h) non-alcoholic beverages
- i) alcoholic beverages

22. Dr. Anna TANG explained the process and details of the study. In the study, the Margin of Exposure (MOE) was adopted to assess the risk of EC in foods in the study. A MOE to EC at or higher than 10,000 was of low concern whereas a MOE to EC smaller than 10,000 would pose a potential risk. It was noted that results of the RA study indicated that EC might be present in varying amounts in different local fermented food and beverage items. Among the food groups covered in the study, the food group “alcoholic beverages” was identified as the main dietary source of EC, followed by the “fermented cereals and grains products (bread/rolls/buns and crackers)” and “legumes (fermented soy products)”. When consumed in small to moderate amounts, these food and beverage items were unlikely to pose health concern to consumers. Nevertheless, EC might pose health concern for humans with high consumption of alcoholic beverages.

23. Dr. Anna TANG remarked there were limitations with the study due to small sample size. Besides, some foods/beverages containing EC, such as some imported alcoholic beverages, might not have been included in the sampling. Moreover, consumption data for some food items and alcoholic beverages were not available in food consumption survey. The proportion of bread/rolls/buns and crackers fermented by yeast was not known and there was no ingredients breakdown. Lastly, individual consumption data for Western distilled spirits, such as brandy, whisky, rum, vodka, gin, and other alcoholic beverages, such as sake, cider, fortified wine, were not available.

24. Dr. Anna TANG advised that consumers should maintain a balanced diet and avoid



overindulgence of fermented foods and alcoholic beverages. They should store fermented foods and beverages in a cool place under low light conditions and avoid stocking up excessive fermented foods and beverages to minimise the duration of storage. Manufacturers should follow good manufacturing practice, develop mitigation measures to reduce the levels of EC in fermented foods and beverages, such as identifying and reducing the amount of precursors, use proper containers to protect fermented foods and beverages from light exposure. For shippers, distributors, wholesalers and retailers, they should minimise heat and light exposure during transportation and storage of fermented food products, keep stock according to the first-in-first-out principle and obtain fermented food ingredients from reliable suppliers.

25. The Chairman pointed out that the risk of EC would be high only when food consumption gave a low MOE value, such as high consumption of alcoholic beverages over an extended period. A trade representative enquired about the corresponding actions that the food trade in Hong Kong might take out to cope with EC in local fermented foods in view that the absolute majority of alcoholic beverages for sale in Hong Kong were imported products and the level of EC in these products could only be controlled by overseas producers. The Chairman advised that, according to the corresponding actions undertaken in other countries on similar studies, the findings of the study would alert consumers on the risk of EC in foods to their health. In Hong Kong, the findings of the RA study provided a useful reference to consumers with high or average consumption of alcoholic beverages but there was no plan for the time being to regulate EC in foods for the reason that there was no uniform international standard for regulation. Nevertheless, importers might inform their overseas export trading partners to observe the local standards in their own countries on EC in fermented foods where those were available.

26. The Chairman said that report on the RA study would be released in mid-September 2009. On the suggestion of a trade representative, Dr. Anna TANG undertook to include the distribution of the levels of EC among individual types of alcoholic beverages in the report. The Chairman remarked that wine traders would be invited to a meeting to discuss on the ways to reduce EC in alcoholic beverages. Interested trade representatives were welcomed to register their interest on the meeting to staff of CFS and they would be included on the invitation list for this meeting.

### **Agenda Item 3**

#### **Any Other Business**

#### **Workshops on Nutrition Labelling Scheme**

27. The Chairman reminded the meeting that an advanced workshop on NL Scheme would be held on 29 July 2009. In addition, another basic workshop organized jointly with Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Hong Kong would be held on 5 August 2009 at Hong Kong Central Library. This workshop would be conducted in English with provision of simultaneous interpretation service in Japanese and Cantonese. Traders of Japanese food were welcomed to join this workshop. Priority of enrolment would be accorded to members of JETRO Hong Kong.

#### **Survey on Nutrition Labelling Scheme**

28. In view of the concern of the food trade on the impact of the NL Scheme on the food

market, the Chairman advised that a market survey would be conducted to assess the compliance of prepackaged foods with the NL Scheme before implementation of the scheme and the impact of the scheme on the food market after implementation of the scheme. The survey would be conducted by MVA. He appealed to traders for their support and necessary assistance to MVA.

### **Food Safety Seminar for Trade**

29. The Food Safety Seminar for Trade in 2009 would be held on 17 September 2009. The Chairman invited trade representatives to participate in this major event on food safety for the food trade.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

30. Trade representatives would be notified of the date of next meeting.

31. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.