#### Refined Regulatory Framework for Pesticide Residues in Food in Hong Kong – Progress Update

Technical Meeting 30 March 2012





#### **Outline**

- Background
- Public consultation 2011
- Finalising the regulatory framework
- Way forward





### Background





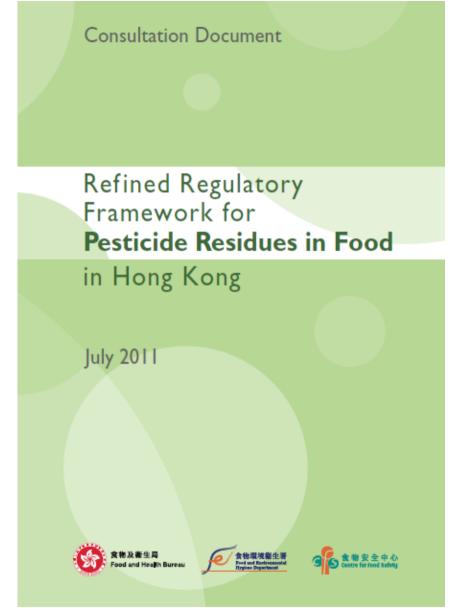
#### Background

- Refined Regulatory Framework for Pesticide Residues in Food in Hong Kong
  - Jul 2011: LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
    - Panel members indicated support in principle
  - Jul Sep 2011 : 2-month Public Consultation
    - A consultation document was issued













#### **Public Consultation 2011 (1)**

- Received 27 submissions from individuals and organisations:
  - Mostly trade associations and consulates general
- Also received views through various other channels:
  - LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
  - The Retail Task Force under the Business Facilitation Advisory Committee
  - The Federation of Vegetable Marketing Co-operatives Societies Ltd.
  - Regular Trade Consultation Forums organised by CFS
  - Special technical meetings with the food trade





#### **Public Consultation 2011 (2)**

- The trade and the public expressed support of a regulatory framework for pesticide residues in food, to strengthen food safety
- Majority of views received:
  - Comments on specific pesticide residue limits in food in the Preliminary List of MRLs/EMRLs
  - Sought clarification on the operational details of the framework
- A summary of opinions and written submissions have been uploaded onto the websites of FHB and CFS





# Finalising the Regulatory Framework





#### Key features of the refined regulatory framework

- to define "pesticide" and other related terms in a way consistent with Codex;
- to provide a list of MRLs/EMRLs, to adopt MRLs/EMRLs recommended by Codex as the backbone as well as the Codex's classification of foods;
- to only allow the import and sale of food with pesticide residues for which no MRL/EMRL has been specified if consumption of the food concerned will not be dangerous or prejudicial to health;
- to provide a list of exempted pesticides;
- to accept proposal of new / revised MRLs/EMRLs and exempted pesticides;
- to dovetail the proposed Regulation with the registration of pesticides for use on food crops under the Pesticides Ordinance (Cap. 133); and
- to commence the proposed Regulation after a two-year grace period.



#### MRLs / EMRLs for Foods in a Dried, Dehydrated or Concentrated Form and for Compounded Food

- Regulatory control of pesticide residues in foods in dried, dehydrated or concentrated form and in compounded food
  - Taken reference from practice in other places, e.g., Australia, New Zealand, European Union, and the United States
- Main factors for consideration
  - Change in water content
  - Proportion of a food ingredient in a multi-ingredient product





## Documents and Data Required for Proposal of New / Revised MRLs/EMRLs and Exempted Pesticides

- Concerns on accessibility by importers/food trade to relevant information (e.g. supervised field trial data) generated and owned by pesticide companies
- For MRL/EMRL or exempted pesticide adopted by Codex or in force in other places:
  - May provide evaluation reports (JMPR or other competent authorities) to support the proposal
- Field trial data desirable but not essential except for establishing a brand new MRL currently not in force anywhere in the world



### Dovetailing with Registration of Pesticides for Use on Local Food Crops

- The Pesticide Ordinance (Cap. 133) requires pesticides for use in Hong Kong be registered by the DAFC
- To ensure that a newly registered pesticide for use on local food crops under Cap. 133 is properly regulated under the proposed Regulation -
  - ◆ DAFC would require the applicant to provide information about the MRL(s) of the pesticide concerned in Schedule 1 to the proposed Regulation or whether the pesticide concerned is an exempted pesticide in Schedule 2 to the proposed Regulation.
  - If not available, the applicant should first propose to DFEH for related MRL(s) or exempted pesticides before submitting the application to DAFC under Cap. 133



#### The Current Proposed Schedules (1)

- The MRLs/EMRLs list update:
  - Latest available standards (as of April 2011) of Codex, the Mainland, USA and Thailand
  - Comments received during the consultation exercise
  - Pesticide-food pairs of local concern, as advised by DAFC
- Risk assessment based on local food consumption patterns
  - To ensure adequate protection of public health in Hong Kong
- The current list of MRLs / EMRLs consists of 360 pesticides and residue limits for over 7 000 pesticide-food pairs
  - Covered food items commonly found in the local diet





#### The Current Proposed Schedules (2)

- The Exempted Pesticides List update:
  - latest development in the international communities
  - views received during the consultation exercise
- The current list of exempted pesticides consists of 78 pesticides





#### **Way Forward**

- Finalising the proposed Pesticide Residues in Food Regulation
  - For tabling in LegCo within the current session
- During the two-year grace period, provide technical support to facilitate the trade in complying with the proposed Regulation
  - Guidance documents, briefings, or workshops, etc.
- Guidance documents under preparation
  - Food classification for applying MRLs/EMRLs
  - Proposal for adding/revising MRLs/EMRLs and exempted pesticides





#### **End**



