

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Notes of the Thirty-third Meeting of the Trade Consultation Forum
held on 23 February 2012 at 2:30 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. Y. Y. HO	Consultant (Community Medicine) (Risk Assessment & Communication)	(Chairman)
Dr. Allen CHAN	Senior Medical Officer (Risk Assessment)	
Mr. Wilson FOK	Assistant Secretary for Security Bureau (Narcotics)/Security Bureau	
Mr. C.W. LEE	Senior Chemist (Controlled Drugs A Section)/Government Laboratory	
Ms. Janny MA	Scientific Officer (Microbiology)	
Ms. Melissa LIU	Scientific Officer (Nutrition Labelling)	
Mr. C. L. CHIU	Chief Health Inspector (Food Labelling)	
Mr. Y. H. MA	Chief Health Inspector (Import/Export) 4	
Ms. S. W. CHUNG	Superintendent (Risk Communication)	(Secretary)

Trade Representatives

Ms. YIP Yuk King	A Top Consultants Ltd.
Ms. Caroline YUEN	American Consulate General Hong Kong Agricultural Trade Office
Mr. WONG Kai Man	Calbee Four Seas Co. Ltd.
Mr. TSANG Wah Him	Calbee Four Seas Co. Ltd.
Ms. CHEUNG Ming	Campbell Soup Asia Limited
Mr. Dennis CHAN	City Super Limited
Ms. Grace YEE	City Super Limited
Ms. Lewis TSANG	CMA Testing and Certification Laboratories
Ms. May KAN	Coca-Cola China Ltd.
Ms. Sally CHENG	Consulate General of France

Ms. KWONG Tin Ki	Consulate General of France
Ms. CHEUNG Chui Chui	Dairy Farm Company Ltd. (7-11)
Mr. HOU Kwun Wing	Eurofins Hong Kong Limited
Ms. NG Wai Kee	Fairwood Fast Food Ltd.
Mr. Freddy FONG	Foodscan Analytics Ltd.
Ms. Yvonne CHAN	General Mills Hong Kong Ltd.
Ms. Ramon AU	Glaxo Smith Kline Limited
Ms. LEUNG Suet Ying	Godiva Chocolatier (Asia) Limited
Ms. B. HO	Gourmet House Limited
Ms. HO Ngar Yin	GS 1 Hong Kong
Mr. Allen PANG	Home of Swallows Ltd.
Mr. Allen WONG	Hong Kong Food Science and Technology Association
Mr. WONG Sau Yeung	Hong Kong Labware Co., Ltd.
Mr. Peter Johnston	Hong Kong Retail Management Association
Ms. Frenda WONG	Hong Kong Suppliers Association Ltd.
Mr. Albert TANG	Hong Kong Suppliers Association Ltd.
Mr. Gary LO	Hong Kong Yakult Co., Ltd.
Mr. Takuro Mori	Hong Kong Yakult Co., Ltd.
Ms. Corine LIU	Hong Kong Yakult Co., Ltd.
Ms. Ida CHAN	Kjeldsen & Co. (Hong Kong) Ltd.
Ms. Cheryl WU	Kraft Food Ltd.
Ms. Cathy ZHANG	Kraft Food Ltd.
Ms. Alice WONG	Lee Kum Kee Int'l Holding Ltd.
Ms. Michelle KWAN	Mannings
Ms. Stephen LAM	Mannings
Mr. NG Chun Yin	Marks & Spencer
Ms. Winnie AU	Marks & Spencer
Ms. Eva POON	McDonald's Restaurants (HK) Ltd.
Ms. Karen NG	Mead Johnson Nutrition (HK) Ltd.
Ms. Amy XU	Mead Johnson Pediatric Nutrition Institute (China)
Ms. Bex LAW	MUJI (Hong Kong) Company
Mr. Joseph MA	Nestle Hong Kong Ltd.
Mr. HUI Yiu Kai	Nissin Foods Co., Ltd.
Ms. WONG Yuk Kwan	Pappagallo Pacific Ltd.
Ms. Cactus LAI	ParknShop
Ms. Mabel LEUNG	ParknShop
Ms. Tracy TAM	Pat Chun International Ltd.
Mr. Tony CHOW	Pfizer Corporation HK Limited

Ms. Amy FU	Pfizer Corporation HK Limited
Mr. Jeffrey BAI	Red Bull Asia Fze
Ms. Caroline HO	Starbucks (Coffee Concepts HK Ltd.)
Ms. May LO	The Dairy Farm Company Ltd.
Ms. WONG Lee Na	The Dairy Farm Group
Mr. Douglas CHENG	The Garden Co Ltd.
Ms. Tess WONG	The Garden Co Ltd.
Ms. Kammy YEUNG	The Hong Kong Standards and Testing Centre Ltd.
Ms. Candy HON	The Hong Kong Standards and Testing Centre Ltd.
Mr. Attlee LAU	URC Hong Kong Co Ltd.
Mr. CHAN Chi Kong	Vitasoy International Holdings Ltd.
Ms. Susanna CHING	Vivaitalia Int'l Deli & Wine Cellar
Mr. WONG Shu Kwan	Vivaitalia Int'l Deli & Wine Cellar
Mr. KWAN Yee Kin, Kenneth	Watami (China) Co. Ltd.
Mr. Tommy TONG	Wellcome Company Ltd.
Ms. Wendy CHAN	Wellcome Company Ltd.
Mr. CHAN Wai Lun, Willem	Winner Food Products Ltd.
Mr. Philip KWAN	Wrigley Asia Pacific Ltd.
Mr. HUI Hon Man	五行副食品關注組召集人(No English Name)

In Attendance

Ms. Gillian LAM	Assistant Secretary for Food & Health (Food) 2/Food and Health Bureau
-----------------	---

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all trade representatives to the meeting and introduced government representatives.

Confirmation of the Notes of Last Meeting

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

Agenda Item 1

Progress of Small Volume Exemption Application

3. Mr. C. L. CHIU reported that, for the period of 1 January to 3 February 2012, about 435 applications for Small Volume Exemption (SVE) were received. Among these applications, 403 had been approved and 0 rejected. There were eight applications withdrawn. As at 3 February 2012, there were 24 applications pending processing. On the same day, there were 19,465 SVE products for sale in the market.

Agenda Item 2

Control of Gamma-butyrolactone under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Cap. 134)

4. Mr. L. S. FOK introduced to the meeting a proposed legislative amendment concerning gamma-butyrolactone (GBL). GBL is a dangerous drug (DD) subject to strict control on the trafficking, manufacturing, possession, supply, import and export under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Chapter 134) (“the Ordinance”) by virtue of its being an “ester” of gamma-hydroxybutyric acid (GHB), which is commonly known as “Rape Water” and is a DD specified under the First Schedule to the Ordinance. The import and export of controlled substances under the First Schedule to the Ordinance require a licence from the Director of Health. The proposed legislative amendment is to specifically list GBL as a DD in the First Schedule to the Ordinance to dispel doubt and draw the attention of the public to the harmful effects of intake or consumption of GBL. GBL was a substance possessing psychoactive characteristics and was liable for abuse as a DD. It was as harmful to health as other drugs. After being taken inside the human body, GBL can be quickly converted into GHB. The adverse effects of GBL could be similar or even identical to those of GHB.

Some jurisdictions have already imposed different levels of control over GBL. Recognising the fact that GBL may be used for food flavouring agents, the Administration recommended that exemption be allowed for the use at a level reasonably safe for human consumption of GBL in food.

5. Trade representatives sought advice on what food was GBL added to as a flavouring agent as it might be added to raw materials of food and not to food itself. They reminded that it was not known to trade representatives whether GBL was added to food as the formulation of food flavour was a highly secretive and commercially sensitive issue. It was impossible for food manufacturers to know the individual components of food flavour and they certainly did not add GBL intentionally in food for its harmful effect. The level set for the regulation of this substance should therefore be reasonable after taking into account the advice of food flavour manufacturers on the level of GBL that was added to food flavour. They also reminded that the analytical equipment used for testing minimal amount of GBL in food should not be the same as that for testing high concentration of drugs in their pure form as the result would not be accurate. It was suggested that food flavour trade associations should be consulted on the level of GBL added in food flavour to prepare a careful ground work for the regulation so as to prevent any disruption to the supply of food in view that it was not clear the extent of adding GBL to food flavour.

6. The Chairman replied it was known that GBL containing flavouring agent could be added to bakery and drinks. When GBL was added to food as a flavouring agent, the amount was small and would not lead to a food safety issue. Mr. L. S. FOK advised that GBL had been subjected to control as a DD since 2001. The proposed legislative amendment was to list GBL as a DD explicitly and considered to provide an exemption of not more than 0.1% of GBL calculated by weight or by volume, aiming to strike a balance

between the harmful effect of GBL and the need of food industry using GBL as a flavouring agent. Mr. C.W. LEE advised that suitable analytical equipment and good testing methods would be adopted to detect the presence of GBL. The testing methods would include sample pretreatment such as dilution or pre-concentration to produce the right concentration level for testing by the equipment. The methods were sensitive enough to make sure trace amount of GBL would be detected.

7. A trade representative sought advice on whether the maximum presence of GBL in food allowed at 0.1% was adequate to uphold food safety and whether there was accumulation of the substance in human body after continuous consumption of this. The Chairman advised that from the food safety point of view, the level of 0.1% did not cause a food safety issue under normal consumption. On the other hand, it would certainly be a hazard to health if GBL was abused. He recommended that trade representatives should review their food to find out if the presence of GBL exceeded 0.1%. If the level of GBL exceeded 0.1%, traders had to apply for import licence from the Department of Health. He would provide information on food flavour trade associations to Mr. L. S. FOK to consider the suggestion of consulting them on this matter.

[Post-meeting note : Below is the information from Narcotics Division (ND): ND had, based on the list of relevant food flavouring agents from FEHD, issued letters to the concerned companies for comments on the proposal. And, by the given deadline on 9 March 2012, none of these companies had raised any objection.]

Agenda Item 3

Full Implementation of Food Safety Ordinance from 1 February 2012

8. Mr. Y. H. MA reminded that the grace period of Food Safety Ordinance (FSO) had ended on 31 January 2012. With effect from 1 February 2012, it would be an offence to carry on a food importation or food distribution business without registration as a food importer/ food distributor or without keeping records of food movement. In the first six months after full implementation of FSO, food traders who were found violating the registration or the record-keeping requirements of the FSO would be warned, and would be prosecuted if they failed to comply within a specific period afterwards. He urged food traders who had not yet registered should apply for registration under FSO as soon as possible.

9. Mr. Y. H. MA continued that Centre for Food Safety (CFS) would conduct visits to various shops and companies of food trade to ascertain whether they carried on food importation or distribution businesses and had registered under FSO. Furthermore, CFS would also check on the record keeping on movement of food by inspecting the related invoices and records. Necessary assistance would be provided to traders for their compliance with the requirements of the legislation. He pointed out that records to be kept and maintained were quite simple and straight forward, in light that there was template for use in keeping and maintaining records. Traders could make reference to the Code of Practice on Keeping Records Relating to Food published by the CFS.

10. Trade representatives sought advice on whether licence holders of FEHD licences were exempted from registration under FSO and the suitable form for these exempted traders to provide contact information to the CFS, the way of providing updated information to CFS for registered/ exempted traders, and what was the number of traders registered with CFS so far.

11. Mr. Y. H. MA advised that holders of food-related permits or licences issued by the

FEHD were exempted from the registration requirement of the FSO. CFS would send a letter together with supplementary information sheet to them for completion which was to be mailed back to CFS for record. The supplementary information sheet therefore was not available on CFS website. The information to be completed in the supplementary information sheet was similar to the registration form which were essential information, such as contact information, to facilitate communication in case of food incident. CFS would provide log-in identity and password to a registered trader and exempted traders for future updating of their particulars online via CFS website. He pointed out that food retailers who sold their food directly to ultimate consumers were not required to register but they were still required to keep local acquisition records. Regarding the number of registered traders, he advised that there were now more than 5,000.

12. The Chairman advised that this issue was brought up as reminder to trade as it was observed that many food traders were not yet registered. Upon full implementation of FSO, the public expectation from food trade and government on the traceability of food would rise.

Agenda Item 4

Trade Guidelines on Preparation of Legible Food Label

13. Ms. Melissa LIU briefed the meeting on the latest situation of the Trade Guidelines on Preparation of Legible Food Label and recapped the three principles for legible food label: suitable font size, good contrast and enough spacing:

- a) Suitable Font Size – For example, type size of 8 point (~2.8mm in height) or above was considered easily readable and type size of 5 point (~1.8mm in height) was acceptable when it was not practical to use larger fonts;

- b) Good Contrast – To use all black or single dark colour type, printed on white or other single light colour contrasting background whenever practical (vice versa acceptable as long as words are clearly shown); and
- c) Enough Spacing – Words and characters should never touch each other or the lines/borders surrounding/separating the information.

She shared with the meeting requirements on font size in Chinese and English of other jurisdictions: Mainland, Taiwan, Canada, European Union, Australia, and United States of America.

14. Ms. Melissa LIU said that views from trade on the draft Trade Guidelines on Preparation of Legible Food Label had been received. In general, traders welcomed the establishment of guidelines and agreed that there was the need of legible food label, which was important. They agreed with the principles of “good contrast” and “enough spacing” but there was reservation if font size of 8 point (about 2.8mm in height) and 5 point (about 1.8mm in height) were set as mandatory minimum font size requirements. Individual traders suggested that a single set of requirement should be adopted for all products. Relevant suggestions included:

- a) minimum font size ranging from 0.9mm (~2.5 point) to 2mm (~5.5 point);
- b) separate requirements for English and Chinese fonts, for example, 4 point (~1.4mm) for English and total height 1.8mm for Traditional Chinese; and
- c) use of fonts not smaller than 2 mm (~ 5.5 point) for a bilingual food label.

15. Ms. Melissa LIU continued that there were individual traders who suggested that separate requirements for different package sizes should be adopted. In this regard,

suggestions included:

- a) 2mm font size (~ 5.5 point) for package with total surface area $>200\text{ cm}^2$ or 1.2mm font size (~ 3.5 point) for package with total surface area $<200\text{ cm}^2$; and
- b) “x-height” of English characters should be $\geq 1.2\text{mm}$ (roughly point 6.5 to point 9, depending on the font type), or $\geq 0.9\text{mm}$ (roughly point 4.5 to 6.5 point, depending on font type) when the largest surface of the package was less than 80cm^2 .

16. Ms. Melissa LIU also conveyed views of consumer group who suggested the following:

- a) font size should be specified;
- b) words should be clearly shown;
- c) enough spacing should be provided between words and lines; and
- d) good contrast should be built between the type and the background, for example, appropriate coloured background could be added to the label area when food label was printed on transparent plastic bag.

17. Ms. Melissa LIU advised that, after reviewing requirements of other countries and considering various views, the need of revising the draft trade guidelines was considered on the basis of principles of ensuring the labels were legible, making reference to practice and experience of other jurisdictions, as most of the prepackaged food products in Hong Kong were imported, and taking views of traders and consumers into consideration. The following would be considered in the revision:

- a) Measurement in terms of millimeter (x-height for English and total height for Chinese) to tally with common practice of other jurisdictions, to avoid confusion

(different height of character of different font type even with the same type size) and to respond to views from consumer group. Tables on samples of different type sizes were tabled at the meeting for reference of trade representatives;

- b) To consider setting minimum font size for English and Chinese characters for meeting the legibility requirement, with reference to overseas experience; and
- c) To encourage traders to use larger fonts whenever practical, in order to facilitate consumers using food label to make informed food choices and enhance satisfaction of consumers on the product.

18. Trade representatives sought advice on whether the colour of words should all be in one single black, instead of different colours, to assist consumers with colour blindness or colour vision deficiency in reading, whether there was a date for implementing the content in the trade guidelines and whether it was an offence for an English word smaller than 0.8mm.

19. The Chairman advised that it was ideal to take into consideration of the need of consumers with colour vision deficiency when preparing food label though the enforcement of legible food label would take reference to the normal vision of an average person. On the effective date of the trade guidelines, he advised that they might take immediate effect once finalized but their implementation would depend on the actual circumstances of individual traders as the requirements were established in the form of trade guidelines and a grace period for the implementation was not required. Traders are strongly recommended to observe the three elements of legible food labels (i.e. suitable font size, good contrast and enough spacing) when preparing food labels for their prepackaged products in order to comply with the legibility requirement of the food labelling regulation. CFS will make reference to the guidelines in assessing the legibility of nutrition label of the prepackaged products during their surveillance. CFS will take appropriate enforcement action if

prepackaged food is not legibly marked or labelled under the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap. 132W). Mr. C. L. CHIU supplemented that there was no prescribed standard on the size of words in the regulation. In determining whether there was any offence and in assessing the legibility of a label, its overall appearance would be taken into account and labels on other similar products would be compared with.

20. Trade representatives sought advice on what was the minimum height for x-height, whether the trade guidelines would be enacted as legislation, whether the largest surface area, principal display surface area and front of pack would be adopted, whether there was any conversion for total surface area to be equivalent to largest surface area, and whether there was special arrangement for special package, such as cap of recyclable glass bottle.

21. The Chairman advised that there was not yet any decision on the minimum height for x-height. The matter would be discussed at the meeting of Working Group (WG) on Nutrition Labelling (NL) in the first instance before a decision would be reached. He did not wish to see the minimum height becoming a trade barrier to trading partners of Hong Kong. Its determination would take reference to the minimum requirements adopted by trading partners and international practice. He pointed out that the examples of font size requirements tabled at the meeting for reference were collated from known information. He welcomed trade representatives to provide information on other minimum requirements and special arrangements for reference before deciding the minimum height in the final trade guidelines. Meanwhile, it was not advisable to introduce other requirements, such as largest surface area and principal display surface area or other new terms and definitions, as CFS had no experience in enforcing these.

22. The Chairman advised that the trade guidelines would be discussed in depth at the next

meeting of WG on NL planned to be held later that year. It was intended to finalise the draft trade guidelines by April 2012 and to discuss at Trade Consultation Forum again before the final version of the trade guidelines would be determined. Views on the trade guidelines should be provided as soon as possible.

[Post-meeting note : CFS has consulted Consumer Council and Consumer Liaison Group on the Trade Guidelines on Preparation of Legible Food Label.]

Agenda Item 5

Nutrition and Health Claims on Prepackaged Food Products

23. Ms. Melissa LIU briefed the meeting about the concerns of trade over nutrition and health claims on prepackaged food products. She said that while traders had been reminded that nutrition claims covered by the NL Scheme must satisfy conditions as stipulated in the NL regulation and other claims were regulated by Section 61 of Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance, Cap. 132 (Cap.132) that they must be factual and not misleading, they would like to seek more information concerning the regulation of claims not covered by the NL regulation, such as nutrition claims and health claims made on formula and food for children under the age of 36 months, and health claims made on various types of prepackaged food.

24. Ms. Melissa LIU advised that in order to satisfy the requirement of Section 61 of Cap. 132, claims of prepackaged food should only be made when there was substantiation on its truthfulness based on two principles:

- a) When a claim was made on the function of specific substance(s), the quantity of

the substance(s) in the food product must be sufficient to provide the said function;
and

- b) The claim should be based on scientific substantiation and scientific consensus.

25. Ms. Melissa LIU continued that in the evaluation of claims, CFS will make reference to decisions and information from renowned authorities and organizations, such as World Health Organisation, Food and Agricultural Organisation, European Union, etc. She elaborated the various scenarios of evaluation as follows:

- a) When a certain claim was rejected by a renowned authority / organisation or an overseas jurisdiction, and the claim had not been accepted by another renowned authority / organization or another overseas jurisdiction, this claim was generally considered as not factual and/or misleading. It was generally not acceptable in Hong Kong.
- b) When a certain claim was rejected by a renowned authority / organization or an overseas jurisdiction, but a similar claim had been accepted by another renowned authority / organization or an overseas jurisdiction, it might be difficult to draw a clear conclusion. In this respect, CFS did not encourage the use of such claims. Subject to thorough scientific assessment, CFS might consider enforcement action on such claims if required.

26. Ms. Melissa LIU further explained that in the evaluation of claims, CFS would keep in view of international development on the regulation and scientific assessment of nutrition and health claims. The evaluation result of claims might change in response to the availability of new evidence or authoritative opinion on the claims. Nevertheless, CFS would follow up cases of suspected misleading nutrition and health claims on prepackaged

foods detected during surveillance check and under food complaints / referrals. CFS would consider enforcement action if there was insufficient substantiation on a claim. In case of uncertainty, traders would be requested to provide relevant information to facilitate our evaluation, such as whether similar claims had been accepted / rejected by overseas jurisdictions / authority and other supporting documents.

27. Ms. Melissa LIU continued that CFS strongly recommended traders to avoid using claims that were controversial, even if these claims had been supported by individual studies. Such claims might confuse consumers and might lead to complaint and criticism. Besides, traders should note the international development on regulation and scientific assessment on nutrition and health claims made on their products. She tabled internet addresses of examples of renowned authorities / organisations and overseas jurisdictions for reference of trade representatives.

28. Trade representatives sought advice on whether registration with or approval from an overseas jurisdiction for a product that was manufactured in this jurisdiction would be taken as acceptance of claims on the product, whether nutrients that had undergone studies in either an overseas or local academic institute would be accepted in claims on the product manufactured with these nutrients, whether claims on product that were allowed tacitly in the country of origin would be accepted in Hong Kong, whether there was any intention to enact principles other than the two discussed above as legislation, whether health claims covered ingredients containing allergen.

29. The Chairman advised that the highest priority to CFS in regulating nutrition and health claims was those that were rejected by a renowned authority / organization or an overseas jurisdiction whereas those that were controversial should be the priority of trade. Claims

that were accepted by renowned authority / organization or overseas jurisdiction were not a concern to CFS. There were lists of approved claims available on websites of the renowned authorities / organisations tabled. However, claims taking reference to these approved claims must be specific with no embellishment. He stressed that nutrition claims that came under the NL Scheme must satisfy the requirements of NL regulation whereas claims that fell outside the NL Scheme and other existing legislation should observe the two principles discussed above. He told the forum that there was no plan to enact new legislation but he did not rule out such a move in future. Mr. C. L. CHIU added that traders would be allowed 21 days to provide sufficient information to substantiate a claim.

Agenda Item 6

Amendment to Microbiological Guidelines for Ready-to-eat Food

30. Ms. Janny MA briefed the meeting about the amendment to Microbiological Guidelines for Ready-to-eat Food. In Hong Kong, Cap. 132 provided the legal powers and instruments for the enforcement of microbiological safety of food. According to Cap. 132, it was an offence to sell food that was unfit for human consumption. Cap. 132 also provided general protection for purchasers of food when the food was not of the nature, substance, quality demanded by the purchaser. In addition, microbiological standards for some specified foods such as frozen confections and milk were stipulated in the subsidiary regulations.

31. Ms. Janny MA continued that microbiological criteria for ready-to-eat food were also established in the Microbiological Guidelines for ready-to-eat food (the Guidelines) issued by the CFS. The Guidelines were first established in 2002 and were subsequently revised in 2007. The supplementary information to the Guidelines was adopted in 2009 to provide the recommended microbiological criteria for bottled waters, edible ice and non-bottled drinks.

As part of Government's ongoing efforts to enhance food safety for the protection of public health and consumer interest, CFS conducted regular review on microbiological standards and guidelines while taking the development of the international standards and local situation into consideration.

32. Ms. Janny MA explained that an ad hoc WG on Microbiological Safety of Food was formed in 2011 under the Expert Committee on Food Safety (ECFS). The ad hoc WG consisted of academics, professionals, representatives from Government Departments and members of the ECFS. It provided advice on the review of the Guidelines. She said that the WG had held three meetings so far and had recommended several amendments to the Guidelines. The main proposed amendments, including the change of title of the Guidelines to "Microbiological Guidelines for Food", were as follows:

- a) Dividing the guidelines into three chapters, after making reference to the microbiological criteria stipulated by Codex Alimentarius Commission and other national authorities, and taking the local situation into account;
- b) First chapter was on microbiological criteria for ready-to-eat food in general;
- c) Second chapter on microbiological criteria for specific food items, covering bottled waters, edible ice, non-bottled drinks, powdered infant / follow-up formulae, ready-to-eat spices, etc.; and
- d) Third chapter on microbiological criteria for bivalve molluscs, including both intended for direct consumption and for consumption after cooking.

33. Ms. Janny MA advised that CFS would like to hold technical meetings with trade to seek their suggestions on the proposed Guidelines recommended by the ad hoc WG, aiming to finalise the Guidelines by 2012. She invited interested trade representatives to join the

technical meeting to be held in mid April 2012 tentatively.

34. A trade representative enquired whether there would be a review on the microbiological criteria for milk which were stipulated in the local regulation. The Chairman advised that the microbiological criteria for milk covered by existing regulation would not be covered under the current amendment exercise but such revision might be conducted in the future if there were concrete scientific evidence and other views suggesting the need to do so. He invited the trade representative to submit their views for CFS's consideration.

Any Other Business

Regional Symposium

35. The Chairman informed the meeting that a regional symposium was being organised. It was planned to hold this regional symposium in October 2012 to share with trade practice and regulation of other countries regarding claims on prepackaged food products.

Proposed Regulatory Framework for Pesticide Residues in Food in Hong Kong

36. A trade representative sought advice on the progress of the proposed regulatory framework for pesticide residues in food in Hong Kong. The Chairman advised that the progress was ideal. It was expected to table at the Legislative Council (LegCo) in April 2012 and to hold a technical meeting before tabling the bill to LegCo.

Date of Next Meeting

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

38. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.