

Frozen Meat destined for Hong Kong from overseas temporarily stored in Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area of Shenzhen before its importation into Hong Kong

5 October 2016

Signing Co-operation Agreement

- The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and the Shenzhen Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau (SZCIQ) signed a co-operation agreement on 27 April this year
- Allowing overseas frozen meat/poultry (frozen meat) imported to Hong Kong to be stored temporarily in Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area (QBPA) of Shenzhen before its importation to Hong Kong in batches, so as to meet the business development and demand of the Hong Kong trade

Background

- Since 2012, Hong Kong importers of frozen meat had been liaising with the Government about the inadequate availability of cold stores in Hong Kong to meet the demand of the trade
- In view of the growth in frozen meat imports, importers of frozen meat suggested that frozen meat destined for Hong Kong from overseas be allowed to store temporarily in the QBPA of Shenzhen for subsequent delivery to Hong Kong by batches

Background

- Following consultation with the trade and the relevant Mainland authorities, FEHD and SZCIQ entered into a co-operation agreement in April 2016
- On the premises that food safety is upheld, frozen meat destined for Hong Kong from overseas may be stored temporarily in QBPA of Shenzhen for subsequent delivery to Hong Kong by batches. This would enable the trade to leverage on the cold storage facilities available in Qianhai to cater for their business and development needs

Temporary stored in Qianhai, imported to Hong Kong by batches

- This arrangement is intended to provide the trade with an added option for storage of frozen meat. It helps facilitate trade and intensify the co-operation between the Mainland and Hong Kong in inspection, quarantine and business development, without compromising any of the existing statutory requirements for or food safety standards on imported food

Temporary stored in Qianhai, imported to Hong Kong by batches

- Same as the arrangement for frozen meat directly imported into Hong Kong, the consignment must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by an issuing entity from the place of origin recognised by the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene for import
- The extent to which the trade utilises the arrangement is a commercial decision of individual operators. The Government is not minded to intervene

Information about Co-operation Agreement

- According to the Co-operation Agreement, the transhipped frozen meat through Qianhai should come from those countries/areas which have exporting protocol with Hong Kong, and at the same time are allowed exporting to Mainland China the corresponding kinds of meat
- Mainland authorities will be responsible for inspection and quarantine of frozen meat transhipped through Qianhai, including monitoring the facilities and temperatures of registered cold stores in which the frozen meat is kept, thereby ensuring hygiene and safety

Information about Co-operation agreement

- In line with the requirements on transhipped meat/poultry as provided under the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap 132AK), every consignment of frozen meat that had been stored in Qianhai, upon entry into Hong Kong, must be accompanied by the health certificate mentioned above and a transshipment certificate issued by the Qianhai authorities
- certifying that the said meat/poultry was properly imported into Qianhai and did not suffer any spoilage or deterioration during their stay there

Arrangement of Importing Transhipped Frozen Meat

- Hong Kong importer is required to obtain an import licence from FEHD for each batch temporarily stored in QBPA of Shenzhen then imported to Hong Kong
- Lorries transporting the frozen meat from QBPA must enter Hong Kong via Man Kam To Boundary Control Point for inspection by FEHD staff at the Man Kam To Food Control Office (MKTFCO). The staff of FEHD may also inspect the sealed container of imported frozen meat at the importer's cold store

Arrangement of Importing Transhipped Frozen Meat

- Each batch of frozen meat imported to Hong Kong during transportation should be kept at -18°C or below
- Upon arrival in Hong Kong, FEHD shall inspect the frozen meat and may take samples for testing or detain the frozen meat for the test results

Arrangement of Importing Transhipped Frozen Meat

- Upon arrival in Hong Kong, FEHD shall inspect the frozen meat and may take samples for testing.
- If the frozen meat is found to fail to meet the required standard, FEHD will act in accordance with relevant regulations by requesting the importer to either surrender the frozen meat to FEHD or export it to its place of origin. Under no circumstances the consignment in question be returned to Mainland.
- Relevant information will also be conveyed to Qianhai authorities for concerted action

Commencement on 11 July 2016

- As agreed between FEHD and SZCIQ, the co-operation agreement has commenced on 11 July this year. Guidance of relevant implementation arrangements has been uploaded at the webpage of FEHD Centre for Food Safety for trade reference
- Both FEHD and SZCIQ will continue to maintain communication, optimise the relevant procedures and strictly implement the co-operation agreement to safeguard food safety and public health

Thank you