

**Centre for Food Safety**  
**Food and Environmental Hygiene Department**  
**Notes of the Fifty Fifth Meeting of the Trade Consultation Forum**  
**held on 5 October 2016 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. HO Yuk Yin	Consultant (Community Medicine) (Risk Assessment & Communication)	(Chairman)
Dr. Forest LAM	Senior Medical Officer (Risk Communication)	
Ms. Michelle CHAN	Scientific Officer (Food Additive)1	
Ms. Joan YAU	Scientific Officer (Standard Settings)2	
Ms. Janny MA	Scientific Officer (Standard Settings)3	
Ms. Sonia CHAN	Chief Health Inspector (Communication & Response)	
Ms. Fiona FONG	Research Officer (Standard Settings)2	
Mr. WONG Cheuk Ho	Superintendent (Risk Communication)	(Secretary)

**Trade Representatives**

Mr. Terence YUEN	A.S. Watson Industries
Mr. Andrew WONG	Abbott Laboratories Limited
Ms. Caroline YUEN	American Consulate General Hong Kong
Ms. Rebecca MAK	Amoy Food Ltd.
Ms. LI Suk Yee	Bureau Veritas Hong Kong Limited
Ms. Vincci KO	Café de Coral Holdings Limited
Mr. TSANG Wah Him	Calbee Four Seas Co. Ltd.
Mr. Jacky LO	Castco Testing Centre Ltd.
Ms. Jessica OU YANG	Catalo Natural Health Foods Ltd.
Ms. Leona WONG	Cerebos (Hong Kong) Ltd.
Mr. Ryan CHAN	CFSS Co., Ltd.
Mr. Chi WONG	China Dragon Inspection & Certification (HK) Ltd.
Ms. Grace YEE	City Super Ltd.
Mr. Dennis CHAN	City Super Ltd.
Ms. Patience CHOI	CMA Testing & Certification Laboratories

Ms. Christin HU	Coalition on Tobacco Affairs
Ms. May KAN	Coca-Cola China Ltd.
Ms. Maria LAI	Comvita HK Ltd.
Mr. Houston WONG	Consulate General of Canada
Mr. Philip KWAN	Danone ELN HK
Mr. James WONG	EDO Trading Co.
Mr. Kenneth LAM	Enviro Labs Ltd.
Ms. CHAN Sok Meng	Fairwood Fast Food Ltd.
Mr. Henry CHENG	Fonterra Brands (Hong Kong) Ltd.
Mr. Freddy FONG	Foodscan Analytics Ltd.
Ms. CHAN Miu Ling	Fresh-cut Produces Ltd.
Ms. Doris CHAN	FrieslandCampina (Hong Kong) Limited
Ms. Noel HO	Garden Heart Food Ltd.
Ms. Yvonne CHAN	General Mills HK Ltd.
Ms. Amanda WONG	Glee Foods Ind. Ltd.
Ms. Wing LAU	Godiva
Mr. Samuel LEUNG	Gourmet House Limited
Mr. CHEUNG Kim Fung	Green Box Health Factory
Mr. Anson POON	GSI Hong Kong
Mr. Kevin CHAN	Havi Freight Management Ltd.
Mr. CHEUNG Chun Ho	Herbalife Asia Pacific Service Ltd.
Ms. CHEUNG Tin Yan	HK Elements Ltd.
Mr. Ken YIU	HKTVM Shopping Network Co., Ltd.
Ms. Peggie YAU	Hong Kong Health Food Association
Mr. Peter Johnston	Hong Kong Retail Management Association
Mr. Gary LO	Hong Kong Yakult Co., Ltd.
Ms. Sim FUNG	Hop Fat Company
Mr. WONG Yiu Yan	Horizons Management Co., Ltd.
Ms. Katrina NG	Hutchison China Meditech Ltd.
Mr. Ray SIN	Intercontinental Grand Stanford Hong Kong
Ms. Yolanda CHOW	International Food Safety Association
Ms. Katherine LEUNG	International Food Safety Testing Centre Ltd.
Mr. Alan FUNG	Intertek Testing Service H.K. Limited
Ms. AU Wing Sum	Island Shangri-La
Mr. WONG Wai Ho	Julius Chen & Co., (HK) Ltd.
Ms. KOH Mui Lee	Kong Chin Trading Co.
Ms. Claudia WONG	Lee Kum Kee Co., Ltd.
Mr. Yang SONG	Lee Kum Kee International Holdings Ltd.
Ms. Faye LEUNG	Mannings

Ms. Kathy KOK	Matrade Hong Kong
Ms. CHAN Yuen Han	Maxim's Food Factory
Ms. Wendy CHAN	McDonald's
Ms. Amy CHU	Mead Johnson Nutrition (HK) Ltd.
Ms. Susana MUNOZ	Ministry of Economy of Mexico
Mr. Joseph MA	Nestle Hong Kong Ltd.
Ms. CHUI Yuk Lung	New Soka International (Hong Kong) Ltd.
Ms. Vien POON	New Zealand Focus (HK) Ltd.
Mr. Herbert LEE	Nissin Foods Co., Ltd.
Ms. Ophelia HO	Nova Trading & Marketing Co. Ltd.
Mr. WONG Yil Fung	Ocean Prime Co., Ltd.
Ms. Laureen CHAN	Orient EuroPharma Co., Ltd.
Ms. German CHEUNG	Pappagallo Pacific Ltd.
Ms. Catherine KONG	ParknShop (HK) Ltd.
Mr. CHAN Ka Tsun	Pat Chun International Ltd.
Ms. WONG Sheung Ling	Pizza Hut Management Hong Kong Ltd.
Ms. LAW Lai Ling	Polybrands International Ltd.
Mr. Sidney CHAN	Prince Ramen
Mr. WONG Wing Hong	Quality Management Services (HK) Ltd.
Ms. LO Hou Yi	Saison Food Service Ltd.
Ms. Mona LIU	SFB Ltd.
Ms. Janice LAM	SGS Hong Kong Ltd.
Mr. Nick LEUNG	Snow Brand HK Co., Ltd.
Ms. Antonia Martinez Ferreras	Spanish Trade Commission
Mr. WONG Kam Chuen	Swire Coca-Cola HK Ltd.
Ms. CHEN Tian Tian	Testing Centre of CIC
Mr. POON Kuen Fai	The Association for Hong Kong Catering Services Management Ltd.
Mr. LAI Sing Hin	The Association for Hong Kong Catering Services Management Ltd.
Ms. Leona HO	The Dairy Farm Company, Limited - IKEA
Ms. LEUNG See Man	The Dairy Farm Group
Mr. LING Tsun Kit	The Garden Company Limited
Ms. Anita LAI	The Hong Kong Food Council Limited
Ms. Kammy YEUNG	The Hong Kong Standards and Testing Centre Ltd.
Mr. LEUNG Chi Wang	The Luxe Manor
Ms. Abby WONG	Tingyi-Asahi Beverages Holding Co., Ltd.
Ms. Carol LAI	Truth & Faith International Ltd.
Mr. Keith WU	Tsit Wing (Hong Kong) Ltd.

Ms. Wing CHEUNG	Unilever Hong Kong Ltd.
Mr. Timothy TAM	Vita Green Pharmaceutical Ltd.
Mr. CHAN Chi Kong	Vitasoy International Holdings Ltd.
Mr. CHAN Ching Man	Welcome Marine Co., Ltd.
Ms. Clara LAM	Wellcome
Mr. LAM Tsz Mau	Winner Food Products Ltd.

### **Opening Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed all trade representatives to the 55<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**

#### **Reducing the Use of Aluminium-containing Food Additive**

3. Ms. Michelle CHAN briefed the meeting on reducing the use of aluminium-containing food additives. In a Risk Assessment Study on Aluminium (Al) conducted by the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) in May 2009, it was found that aluminium-containing food additives were widely used in the production of steamed bread / bun / cake (mean Al content : 100-320 mg/kg), some bakery products such as waffle (mean Al content : 180 mg/kg) and jellyfish (ready-to-eat form) (mean Al content: 1200 mg/kg). In June 2009, the Guidelines on the Use of Aluminium-containing Food Additives were issued to the trade. The basic principles established in the Guidelines were that the use of aluminium-containing food additives should

be reduced or replaced with other alternatives in preparing food as far as possible, and that alternative techniques for food processing should be developed to reduce the use of aluminium-containing food additives. Since then there had been publication for the trade and forums/seminar with the trade on this issue. Ms. Michelle CHAN then informed the meeting of the Codex's latest development. In response to the latest revision of Provisional Tolerable Weekly Intake (PTWI) for aluminium to 2 mg/kg body weight by Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) in 2011, there was a need to review the provisions for aluminium-containing food additives in the Codex General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA) to ensure that their maximum use levels were compatible with the PTWI. In this connection, the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) recommended that all provisions for aluminium-containing food additives should be numerical and expressed on an aluminium basis. Moreover, provisions and draft provisions for some aluminium-containing food additives should be revoked and discontinued respectively. Maximum levels (MLs) had also been lowered for some aluminium-containing food additives. In Hong Kong, the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) stipulated that all food for sale in Hong Kong had to be fit for human consumption. The Food & Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap. 132W) stipulated that if a prepackaged food contained a food additive, including aluminium-containing food additive, such additive should be specified on the label accurately in the prescribed manner stipulated in the Regulations, by listing out the specific name or International Numbering System for Food Additives (INS), and functional class of the food additives being used. Links to websites providing more information on the issue including the international standards and standards in Mainland China were then provided to the meeting.

4. The Chairman remarked that the result of the last study indicated that the levels of aluminium detected in steamed bread/bun/cake, waffle and jellyfish were much higher than

the MLs recommended by the Codex. He understood that the trade had taken action to reduce the use of aluminium-containing food additives in those products and some made encouraging progress. He appealed to all concerned to continue with the efforts to reduce the use of such additives to protect public health. The CFS would conduct further study on the subject and would revise the Guidelines if considered necessary. In the long run, a set of local standards would be established based on international standards and standards of the Mainland.

5. Two trade representatives shared with the meeting their views and experience in replacing aluminium-containing food additives in the processing of relevant products. Ms. Michelle CHAN also reported that she noticed certain restaurants in Hong Kong had already used baking powder without aluminium-containing food additives in preparing steamed buns. The Chairman added that the Mainland had also tightened the regulation on the use of aluminium-containing food additives. He understood that other than for ready-to-eat jellyfish, there would not be much technical difficulties for implementation in other products. Members of the trade who were still using such additives in producing their products were encouraged to take action to reduce their use by making reference to the Codex and Mainland standards.

## **Agenda Item 2**

### **Indication of Durability for Prepackaged Food**

6. Ms. Janny MA briefed the meeting of the current regulations on ‘Indication of Durability for Prepackaged Food’. According to the Food & Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations, Cap. 132W, prepackaged food shall be legibly marked or labelled with the appropriate durability indication. The mark or label should use either the words “best

before” (此日期前最佳) or "use by" (此日期或之前食用), as the case might be, followed by the date up to which specific properties of the food could be retained or recommended for use, and a statement of any storage conditions which needed to be observed. The specific formats of the wordings were explained. “Best before” date was related to food quality, for example taste, texture, aroma and appearance. “Use by” date referred to food safety. From the microbiological point of view, the food was highly perishable and would therefore likely after a short period constitute an immediate danger to human health. Under the Food & Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations, Cap.132W, it was an offence to sell any food after its “use by” date. Any person who, not being the food manufacturer or packer or without their written authorization, altered, removed or obliterated any particulars on the label required under the Regulations also committed an offence.

7. The Chairman supplemented that the CFS would also conduct checks on the products sold in the market. If it was discovered that certain food products were not fit for human consumption, the parties concerned would be prosecuted. With the above information provided, the trade could answer some general enquiries from the public.

### **Agenda Item 3**

#### **Regulation of Arsenic under Food Adulteration (Metallic Contamination) Regulations**

8. Ms. Joan YAU briefed the meeting of the Food Adulteration (Metallic Contamination) Regulations, Cap. 132V (the Regulations) which regulated the level of metallic contaminants in food and prescribed the maximum permitted concentration of seven specified metals present in specific food types. The seven specified metals were antimony, arsenic, cadmium, chromium, lead, mercury and tin. Arsenic ( $\text{As}_2\text{O}_3$ ) referred to inorganic arsenic because: (a) it is the chemical formula of arsenic trioxide, which belongs to inorganic arsenic compounds;

and (b) inorganic forms of arsenic are more toxic to humans than its organic counterparts. Oyster sauce was considered as liquid food in the measurement of arsenic level, the maximum permitted concentration was 0.14ppm of inorganic arsenic ( $\text{As}_2\text{O}_3$ ). The current Regulations had already contained provisions which explicitly prohibited the import, manufacturing and sale of any food containing any metal in such amount as to be dangerous or prejudicial to health. Offenders would be liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment up to six months.

9. One trade representative wondered why oyster sauce was classified as liquid food under Cap. 132V as it was very viscous. She understood that it was classified as a solid product under the nutrition labelling regulation. She also questioned whether the existing law was outdated as regulations should not be determined by the state of the substance. Depending on whether oyster sauce was classified as 'liquid' or 'solid' product, the difference in maximum permitted concentration was ten times. She considered that the level of maximum permitted concentration should be determined by the qualities of the product itself but not its state of existence. The Chairman said that it was understood that as time went by, it was necessary to make some improvements to our existing legislations. Revision of the regulations on heavy metals was one of our priorities. It was planned that public consultation on the revision would be commenced next year and feedbacks and suggestions from the trade would be most welcome. At the same time, CFS would also explore whether the services provided by commercial testing laboratories could tie in with the new requirements as proposed in the revised legislations. As regards the difference in classification of oyster sauce as 'liquid' and 'solid' product under Cap. 132V and the nutrition labelling regulation, he said that it was the result of different consideration under different regulations with different emphasis, and also modelled on overseas experience.



10. Another trade representative enquired whether it was necessary for the trade to separately test for the organic and inorganic arsenic levels of their products. Ms. Joan YAU explained that the current maximum permitted concentrations for arsenic in specified foods under Cap. 132 were made reference to the levels of inorganic arsenic ( $\text{As}_2\text{O}_3$ ). The trade might first test the total arsenic level of their products. If the level was found lower than the permitted concentration, then there would be no need for further testing of the inorganic arsenic level. If the level was found higher than the permitted concentration, then the trade might consider separately testing the level of inorganic arsenic ( $\text{As}_2\text{O}_3$ ) in their products. In response to a further enquiry from the trade representative, the Chairman informed that some of the larger testing laboratories would be able to perform separate analysis of the levels of total and inorganic arsenic.

11. Concerning the classification of liquid and solid state of a product, another trade representative suggested using a scientific definition, depending on the viscosity of the substance. An alternative was to generalize the standard and to treat all substances as solid. The Chairman remarked that the suggestion could be further discussed in the coming review. Currently the definitions of 'liquid' and 'solid' were based on the elaborations in dictionaries. In response to an enquiry from another trade representative, Ms. Joan YAU elaborated that the addition of salt and flavours to oyster sauce would not in general affect the state of the substance and the interpretation of being a 'liquid' food under the Regulations.

12. In response to an enquiry from a trade representative, the Chairman noted that in some countries, the products were classified into more detailed food categories but not simply classified into solid or liquid. He commented that the matter would be considered in the coming review. In response to an enquiry from another trade representative on how to assess dried food products, Ms. Joan YAU remarked that as explained in the past, a conversion factor could be applied to products which had been dehydrated or concentrated,

depending on individual cases, during the interpretation of the maximum permitted concentration under the regulations. Dried shrimps could be classified as shellfish products.

13. One trade representative remarked that the conversion factor mentioned was only available for a few products, and enquired how CFS would handle the other unlisted products. The Chairman said that the quoted examples were obtained from relevant literatures and/or laboratory studies. He welcomed the trade to provide the relevant figures for the products they specialised in.

#### **Agenda Item 4**

##### **Foodborne Parasites in Fish Intended for Raw Consumption**

14. Ms. Fiona FONG briefed the meeting of the topic ‘Foodborne parasites in fish intended for raw consumption’. In August 2016, a woman in Japan was found to have multiple anisakis larvae invading her stomach wall. Parasites were generally passed to human through consumption of raw, minimally processed or inadequately cooked products that contain infectious parasites. “Treatment for killing parasites as safety measures for fishery products to be eaten raw” was previously discussed at the 51<sup>st</sup> Trade Consultation Forum. Parasites were more likely to be present in wild-caught fish and certain aquaculture fish if the fish was not exclusively fed on diets free of parasites. Using raw fish as feed for aquaculture and contaminated source of water used for aquaculture fish farming could be risk factors for parasitic infections. The environment of wild fish could not be controlled. To ensure food safety, appropriate measures had to be taken at a later stage of the food chain, e.g. processing, for fish that would be consumed raw or minimally cooked. On the other hand, for aquaculture fish, a good parasite control programme could reduce the risk of parasitic infection. European Food Safety Authority stated that freezing and heat treatment remained the most effective processes guaranteeing the killing of parasitic larvae, under well-defined

conditions. The Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) recommended to freeze the fish intended for raw consumption at -20°C or below for seven days or freezing at -35°C for about 20 hours. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan advised the trade to freeze at -20°C for not less than 24 hours to kill anisakis in fish. As regards the European Union (EU), the Commission Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 stipulated that fishery products intended to be consumed raw should undergo a freezing treatment in order to kill viable parasites that may be a risk to the health of the consumer. For parasites other than trematodes, the freezing treatment had to consist of lowering the temperature in all parts of the product to at least: -20°C for not less than 24 hours or -35°C for not less than 15 hours. No freezing treatment would be required for certain fishery products, e.g. those derived from fish farming, cultured from embryos and had been fed exclusively on a diet that could not contain viable parasites that presented a health hazard, and had been exclusively reared in an environment that was free from viable parasites. In Hong Kong, the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance, Cap. 132 stipulated that all food intended for human consumption for sale in Hong Kong, whether imported or locally produced, had to be fit for human consumption. The trade was advised to obtain relevant licence / permit from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) for manufacturing and/or sale of sushi and sashimi, and to obtain fishery products from reliable sources with health certificates issued by relevant authority of the exporting countries. The Chairman remarked that the trade might consider posting the relevant licence/certificates at the food premises for the information of the public.

15. In response to an enquiry from a trade representative on whether the freezing treatment just mentioned would be useful for parasites other than anisakis and their eggs, Ms. Fiona FONG replied that the treatment recommended by CAC would be applicable in general to all parasites in fish. The trade representative further enquired on how to ensure that 'live fish

sashimi' served at restaurants was free from parasites, and whether a source certificate or health certificate was required for sale of the product. The Chairman replied that no freezing treatment would be required if the live fish was reared in fish farms with parasites control measures, and there was currently no special requirement of producing such certificates regarding the sale of the product. If health certificates of the concerned product could be obtained, it would represent that the food had undergone proper treatment. In the long run, it was hoped that regulation in this aspect could be strengthened.

16. In response to an enquiry from another trade representative, Ms. Fiona FONG replied that the above proposed measures were applicable to fish. Treatment of other kinds of seafood might need to be separately considered. Further information was required.

17. Another trade representative asked what kinds of enforcement action would the FEHD take if parasites were found in fish. The Chairman advised that it depended on whether the product was to be eaten raw or cooked, whether it would cause sickness to humans, and whether it met the requirements for food safety.

18. The Chairman concluded that most of the countries exporting salmon fish to Hong Kong could produce the relevant health certificates. The trade importing relevant items should check with those countries on whether such certificates could be provided.

#### **Agenda Item 5**

#### **Frozen Meat Destined for Hong Kong from Overseas Temporarily Stored in Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area of Shenzhen before Its Importation into Hong Kong**

19. Ms. Sonia CHAN introduced to the meeting the current arrangement of temporary storage of overseas frozen meat destined for Hong Kong in Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area

(QBPA) of Shenzhen before its importation into Hong Kong. Since 2012, Hong Kong importers of frozen meat had voiced out to the Government regarding the inadequacy of cold stores in Hong Kong to meet the demand of the trade. Importers suggested that frozen meat destined for Hong Kong from overseas be allowed to be stored temporarily in QBPA for subsequent delivery to Hong Kong by batches. Following consultation with the trade and the relevant Mainland authorities, the FEHD and the Shenzhen Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau (SZCIQ) signed a Co-operation Agreement on 27 April 2016 to allow overseas frozen meat / poultry for import to Hong Kong to be stored temporarily in QBPA before its importation into Hong Kong in batches. Same as the arrangement for frozen meat directly imported into Hong Kong, the consignment had to 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. According to the Co-operation Agreement, the transshipped frozen meat should come from those countries / areas having exporting protocol with Hong Kong, and at the same time are allowed exporting corresponding kinds of meat to Mainland China. Mainland authorities would be responsible for inspection and quarantine of frozen meat transshipped through Qianhai, including monitoring the facilities and temperatures of registered cold stores in which the frozen meat was kept. In line with the requirements on transshipped 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, had to 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. Besides, Hong Kong importer was required to obtain an import licence from FEHD for each batch of these meats. Lorries transporting the frozen meat from QBPA had to enter Hong Kong via Man Kam To Boundary Control Point for inspection by FEHD staff at the Man Kam To Food Control Office. Each

batch of frozen meat imported to Hong Kong should be kept at -18°C or below during transportation. Upon arrival in Hong Kong, staff of FEHD might also take samples for testing or detain the frozen meat for the test results. If the frozen meat was found unfit for human consumption, FEHD would 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. The Co-operation Agreement came into effect on 11 July 2016. The guide of relevant arrangement had been uploaded to the webpage of CFS for the trade's reference. Both Hong Kong and the Mainland would continue to maintain communication, optimize the relevant procedures and strictly implement the Co-operation Agreement to safeguard food safety and public health.

20. One trade representative asked whether the Hong Kong Government would accept the idea of splitting containers of frozen meat stored in Mainland China, that is, with part of the meat offloaded in the Mainland and part of the meat coming to Hong Kong. After opening of the container, the part of the meat to come to Hong Kong could be inspected and re-sealed by China Inspection and Quarantine (CIQ) with a CIQ chop. This would maximize the usefulness of the QBPA. The trade representative remarked that the problem was that there were two jurisdictions and each demanding the container seal unbroken and with health certificate. He suggested that the opened and re-sealed container could be re-inspected at the border of Hong Kong. The new arrangement would greatly facilitate the business of the trade as it would be more cost effective and convenient to have one central point of import before distribution to both Mainland China and Hong Kong markets. The Chairman remarked that the CFS would need to check out this issue and respond in the interim.

[Post-meeting note: The proposal does not tally with the Co-operation Agreement signed between Mainland and Hong Kong. Under this Agreement, frozen meat destined for Hong Kong from overseas temporarily stored in Qianhai will be subsequently delivered to Hong

Kong in batches. All the frozen meat temporarily stored in Qianhai will all be delivered to Hong Kong and will not be allowed to be sold in Mainland.]

21. Another trade representative concurred with the proposal and said that it would enhance the logistical flow of food trade engaging in frozen meat business in both Mainland China and Hong Kong. He also asked whether there were lists of designated or specified cold stores in QBPA to facilitate the trade to temporarily store the imported frozen meat. The Chairman replied that the CFS would check whether there was such a specified list and answer altogether.

[Post-meeting note: The designated or specified cold stores are required to be registered with SZCIQ. At present, there is only one such cold store. Interested importers of frozen meat/poultry may contact Chief Health Inspector (Import/Export)<sup>1</sup> at 2867 5570 for further details of the relevant arrangements including the contact point of Qianhai authorities.]

22. Another trade representative said that the container of frozen meat should have been opened by CIQ at QBPA for checking. He enquired whether the whole lot was re-sealed in the container before dispatch to Hong Kong. He also enquired whether the current agreement with the Mainland would be extended to other chilled or room temperature foods in the future. The Chairman replied that the CFS would check out the relevant working procedures and answer altogether.

[Post-meeting note: According to the Co-operation Agreement, the Mainland authorities will be responsible for inspection and quarantine of frozen meat transshipped through Qianhai, thereby ensuring hygiene and safety. The frozen meat will be temporarily stored in registered cold store in Qianhai prior to delivery to Hong Kong by batches via Man Kam To Boundary Control Point in sealed container. Given that this is a new arrangement between Mainland and Hong Kong, the CFS has no intention to change its content in near future.]

23. Regarding the transshipment of overseas frozen meat from QBPA to Hong Kong, another trade representative enquired whether the original health certificate issued by the exporting country was still valid. The Chairman remarked that CIQ would issue another health certificate for products transshipped to Hong Kong. Ms. Sonia CHAN said that the health certificate issued by the Mainland should have reference indicating the origin of the transshipped products.

[Post-meeting note: To be in line with the requirements on transshipped frozen meat 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 issued by the exporting country and recognized by the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene, and a transshipment certificate issued by the Qianhai authorities certifying that the frozen meat was properly imported into Qianhai and did not suffer any spoilage or deterioration during its stay there.]

#### **Any Other Business**

24. A trade representative suggested that the current mechanism of public announcement of food safety issues be enhanced. He pointed out that there were differences in the degree of severity of different food safety issues which should be reflected in the announcement to the public and the media. He quoted that errors in nutrition labelling of products might not be as serious as other issues such as food poisoning, and suggested the issue of a 'yellow' warning as against a 'red' warning for the serious cases. He also enquired whether there would be any revision to the regulation of cadmium in food products. The Chairman remarked that currently the CFS had already differentiated announcements for different food safety issues. It would be explored to see whether further enhancement to the mechanism could be adopted. As regards the regulation of heavy metals, he informed that currently there were seven heavy metals under regulation. The issue of cadmium, together with other heavy metals, would be



considered in the coming revision exercise.

25. Another trade representative commented that for a product that was banned from import, it was difficult to trace when the ban was lifted. She suggested that in addition to the press release, the information of the product and the dates of effecting and lifting the ban should be tabulated for the trade's information. She also wondered why some rapid alerts issued to the trade involved products which met the regulations in Hong Kong. The Chairman welcomed her suggestion and replied that the CFS would explore the feasibility of listing information of banned products in a table form and uploading onto the webpage. As regards rapid alerts, he remarked that there were cases where the products concerned were recalled overseas but the products did not contravene the regulations in Hong Kong. Sometimes rapid alerts would be issued for those products and the trade requested to remove them from sales. This was in order to safeguard public health and to allay concerns of the media and the public. The request for removal sent to the trade was advisory, not necessarily compulsory. Most of the trade were co-operative in such incidents.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

26. The next meeting would be held in November 2016 and the date was to be determined.

27. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.