

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Notes of the Twelfth Meeting of the Trade Consultation Forum held on
27 August 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in Conference Hall, 3 Edinburgh Place, Central, Hong Kong

Present

Government Representatives

Dr. Y. Y. HO	Consultant (Community Medicine)	(Chairman)
	(Risk Assessment & Communication)	
Mr. Y. K. CHU	Scientific Officer (Standard Setting)	1
Miss Janny MA	Scientific Officer (Food Additive)	
Mr. Nicky HO	Scientific Officer (Programme Planning)	2
Ms. LEUNG Yuen Sheung	Superintendent (Import/Export)	2
Mr. K.W. CHUNG	Chief Health Inspector (Food Labelling)	
Mr. H. M. WONG	Superintendent (Risk Communication)	(Notes-taker)

Trade Representatives

Ms. Lucilla LEUNG	Abbot Laboratories Ltd.
Ms. LEE Ka Ka, Maggie	AIC Merchandising (Japan) Ltd.
Mr. KEUNG Chi Wai	Arts & Design Consultancy Ltd.
Mr. KWAN Wing So	Arts & Design Consultancy Ltd.
Ms. Becky CHEUNG	Best Key Consultants
Mr. TO Edward	California Red Limited
Ms. May KAN	Coca-Cola China Ltd.
Mr. Allen HO	Dairy - Farm Group
Ms. NG Mei Fung, Jenny	Fairwood Fast Food Ltd.
Ms. YU Wai Man	Ferrero Asia Limited
Ms. Sandy FUNG	Ferrero Asia Limited
Ms. Yvonne CHAN	General Mills Hong Kong Ltd.
Ms. Grace CHAN	GlaxoSmithkline Ltd
Mr. Jackie LIU	GlaxoSmithkline Ltd
Mr. Mookhuam Damrongsak	Koon Thai Hai Nam Chicken
Mr. LI King Chung	Koon Thai Hai Nam Chicken
Mr. Stephen CHOI	Lee Kam Kee International Holdings Ltd.

Mr. Philip KWAN	Mead Johnson
Ms. LAI Sin Man	ParknShop
Mr. WONG Kam Chuen	Swire Coca-Cola HK Ltd.
Mr. LEUNG Sze Kwok	Tai Hing Worldwide Development Limited
Mr. AU Kwong Yu	Tai Hing Worldwide Development Limited
Mr. LI Chi King	Tai Hing Worldwide Development Limited
Mr. HO Lin	The Asia Provisions Co., Ltd.
Mr. LAU Kwong Choi	The Association For Hong Kong Catering Services Management, Ltd
Ms. Maple CHAU	The Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong
Ms. LO Kar Man, May	The Dairy Farm Company Limited
Mr. Kinnie HO	The Food Safety Laboratories Limited in association with Hai Kang Life Corporation Limited
Ms. Sharon YOU	The Food Safety Laboratories Limited in association with Hai Kang Life Corporation Limited
Mr. LAU Yiu Fai	The Hong Kong Food Council Ltd.
Mr. LEUNG Ho Wing	The Hong Kong Health Food Association
Mr. CHUNG Yue Lung	Watami (China) Limited Company
Mr. LAM Chun Wai, Rave	Watami (China) Limited Company
Mr. NG Chi Keung	Wing Wah Restaurant

Opening Remarks

1. The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and introduced Government Representatives attending the forum.

Agenda Item 1

Confirmation of the Notes of Last Meeting

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

Agenda Item 2

Microbiological Quality of Poached Chicken for Sale at Retail Outlets

3. Miss Janny MA briefed the meeting about the findings of the risk assessment study on the microbiological quality of poached chicken for sale in retail outlets. The purposes of the study were (i) to determine the microbiological quality of poached chicken for sale and sauce for soaking and/or dressing poached chicken in retail outlets; (ii) to identify the critical control points in poached chicken production process and (iii) to make appropriate recommendations to the food trade and consumers to ensure food safety. Results of this study showed that the microbiological quality of the majority of poached chicken samples (>90%) was satisfactory and acceptable. To ensure food safety, members of the trade and the public should always observe good personal and food hygiene.

4. A trade representative enquired whether the microbiological quality of complimentary 'prepackaged' sauce for poached chicken was included in the study.

5. Miss Janny MA, in response to the enquiry, replied that the study only examined the microbiological quality of sauce for soaking and/or dressing poached chicken in retail outlets.

6. The Chairman advised that after consulting the food trade, the report would be uploaded to the CFS website on 10 September 2008 tentatively.

Agenda Item 3

Standards and Texts adopted at the 31st Session of Codex Alimentarius Commission

7. Mr. Y. K. CHU introduced to the meeting the Codex Alimentarius, the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and the 31st Session of the CAC held in early July 2008.

He advised that, in this session, a range of standards and related text was adopted. He quoted some new guidelines and Codes of Practice as examples:

- a) reduction of 3-monochloropropane-1, 2-diol (3-MCPD) during the production of Acid-hydrolyzed Vegetable Protein (Acid-HVPs) and from products that contain Acid-HVPs;
- b) prevention and reduction of aflatoxin contamination in dried figs;
- c) powdered formulae for infants and young children;
- d) processing and handling of quick frozen foods; and
- e) amendments to Sections 3.2 and 6.3.2 of the Codex Standards for natural mineral waters.

8. Mr. Y. K. CHU also introduced to the meeting the web site of CAC for searching further information and topics that were of interest to the food trade.

9. The Chairman assured that the food trade would be consulted in advance if there were Codex Standards that would be introduced into Hong Kong.

Agenda Item 4

Publicity Campaign on “5 Keys to Food Safety” and Nutrition Labelling Workshop

10. Mr. H. M. WONG reported to the meeting on the publicity activities for “5 Keys to Food Safety” as follows: a Food Safety Day 2008 held on 29 June 2008 at Tuen Mun Town Plaza, a Food Safety Charter (FSC) signing ceremony held on 3 July 2008 at MegaBox, Kowloon Bay, exhibition booth at the Food Expo 2008 from 14 to 18 August 2008 organized by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and 23 food hygiene seminars from July to September 2008.

11. On the FSC signing ceremony, more than 70 food trade associations and their member licensed food premises attended the signing ceremony. By now, 20 trade associations and more than 350 licensed food premises had signed up to the FSC. The list of signatories, together with their main cuisines served, would be uploaded to the web site of CFS. Moreover, letters to all licensed food premises had been issued in July inviting them to join the FSC. 450 applications received were now under processing. Mr. H.M. WONG expressed thanks for the support from trade.

12. Mr. H. M. WONG continued to report that the “Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) (Amendment: Requirements for Nutrition Labelling and Nutrition Claim)

Regulation 2008” (Amendment Regulation) was enacted by the Legislative Council on 28 May 2008 and would come into effect on 1 July 2010. In order to assist the food trade and laboratory service providers to understand and comply with the Amendment Regulation, the CFS had organized three workshops on the Nutrition Labelling Scheme since July 2008. More than 300 representatives from the food trade participated in these three workshops. Three more workshops would be held on 2, 23 and 24 September 2008. Such workshops would be held regularly in future. Details on future workshops would be announced on the web site of the CFS.

13. The Chairman reminded the meeting that the FSC was still open for application. He appealed to the meeting to participate in the activity. Taking this opportunity, the Chairman expressed his appreciation to Tai Hing Worldwide Development Limited for demonstrating the “5 Keys to Food Safety” at their kitchen as part of activity in the FSC signing ceremony.

14. A trade representative praised the CFS for taking efficient and effective action to successfully organise these activities even in such a short period.

Agenda Item 6

Application of “5 Keys to Food Safety” on Preparation of Sashimi and Sushi

15. Mr. Nicky HO introduced to the meeting on the application of the “5 Keys to Food Safety” to the production and processing of Sashimi and Sushi in the following manners:

- a) Purchasing – choose hygiene and fresh materials from reliable importers and conduct quality inspection upon purchase;
- b) Storing – keep the storage for Sashimi and Sushi at or below 4°C and frozen food at or below -18°C, and store raw and cooked food in separate refrigerators;
- c) Preparing – prepare food in good personal hygienic manner and label utensils with different colours, e.g. Red for raw materials, Blue for cooked food and Green for ready-to-eat Sashimi and Sushi;
- d) Cooking – thoroughly cook food that required cooking and check that its core temperature reaches at least 75°C; and
- e) Serving – deliver prepared Sashimi and Sushi to customers quickly.

16. The Chairman encouraged the food trade to adopt the “5 Keys to Food Safety” when producing and processing Sashimi and Sushi to promote food safety in the community.

17. A trade representative observed that employees in the food trade were confused over the classification for Sashimi and Sushi. They were not sure whether Sashimi and Sushi should be handled as raw materials or cooked food. The confusion had caused previous food incidents of cross contamination. She considered that Sashimi and Sushi should be classified in a 3rd food group different from raw and ready-to-eat food. They should be stored independently and processed with different utensils clearly separated from those for raw materials and cooked food.

18. Ms. LEUNG Yuen Sheung clarified that licensed food outlets selling Sashimi and Sushi were required to store Sashimi and Sushi in refrigerators independently and process them with utensils that were designated for handling such food. Employees engaged in producing Sashimi and Sushi were also required to be supervised by trained Hygiene Manager/Supervisor which had been awarded certificate to prove their capability in this respect. Due advice would be given to outlets not observing the licensing conditions and rules by Health Inspectors during their inspections to the food outlets.

19. The meeting noted that the food trade was aware of the high risk in the process of producing Sashimi and Sushi. Many food outlets that were not able to comply with the safety measures required for handling Sashimi and Sushi had withdrawn from selling such food.

Agenda Item 7

Any Other Business

Genetically Modified Food Labelling

20. A trade representative noted that the scheme for voluntary labelling genetically modified (GM) food was being evaluated. He enquired about the progress on the legislation for mandatory labelling GM food.

21. The Chairman noted the practice in the food trade in labelling GM food varied. He replied that there was not yet any consensus within the CAC on mandatory labelling of GM food. It was therefore considered not a mature time to introduce a mandatory scheme on labelling GM food in Hong Kong. The Legislative Council (LegCo) had been briefed of the situation and noted the latest situation. In light of the recent legislation on nutrition labelling scheme, LegCo members were well aware of the trade impact. Although they considered that there was no pressing need to introduce a mandatory labelling scheme for GM food, LegCo passed a motion to urge the government to introduce a mandatory

labeling scheme as soon as possible.

22. In response to LegCo's suggestion to conduct regular survey on GM food, the Chairman said that CFS would give it due consideration.

Revised Inspection Regime for Licensed Food Premises

23. A trade representative commented on the implementation of the revised inspection regime for licensed food premises introduced in January 2007. Under this regime, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department implemented a set of Revised Procedures (the Scheme) for licensed food premises that had fully implemented the food safety management system under ISO 22000 and obtained the ISO 22000 certification. Food premises recognised under the Scheme were subject to a revised inspection regime and excluded from the Demerit Points System. She said that CFS should have a discussion with the food trade prior to the implementation of the Scheme.

24. The Chairman clarified that the implementation of the Scheme did not come under the purview of CFS. Therefore, he was not exactly sure what kind of consultation exercise had been conducted. Nevertheless, her views would be conveyed to the Environmental Hygiene Branch (EHB) of FEHD, i.e. the branch dealing with this issue.

25. A trade representative said that EHB had conducted a meeting with the trade in December 2006.

Date of Next Meeting

26. The next meeting would be held in late September 2008.

27. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.