

Imported Food Control Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: Can a member of the public bring game, meat, poultry or eggs into Hong Kong?

A1: According to the Import and Export Ordinance (Cap. 60), any person who imports chilled or frozen meat or poultry shall obtain an import licence issued by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD). Offenders will be prosecuted and shall be liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years. In addition, according to the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap. 132AK), if any person imports or brings game, meat, poultry or eggs into Hong Kong, such foods shall be accompanied by a health certificate issued by the concerned authority of the place of origin or an import permission issued by the FEHD. Offenders will be prosecuted and shall be liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months.

Q2: Is bringing raw meat (including game, meat and poultry) packaged in vacuum, in aluminium foil or stored in a frozen state into Hong Kong regulated by law?

A2: Bringing raw meat (including game, meat and poultry) into Hong Kong in any form of packaging (including vacuum, aluminium foil or freezing, etc.) is regulated by relevant legislations, which means such foods must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by the concerned authority of the

place of origin, or an import permission issued by the FEHD at the time of import into Hong Kong.

Q3: Is bringing partially cooked or blanched game, meat, poultry and poultry eggs (such as hot spring eggs) into Hong Kong regulated by law?

A3: Unless otherwise specified by law, game, meat, poultry and poultry eggs that have not been thoroughly cooked (e.g., partially cooked or blanched) are all regulated under the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap. 132AK), while the aforesaid meat and poultry are also regulated under the Import and Export Ordinance (Cap. 60). That means such foods must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by the concerned authority of the place of origin, or an import licence or an import permission issued by the FEHD at the time of import into Hong Kong. The FEHD investigates suspected illegal cases to ensure food safety.

Q4: Is bringing fully cooked meat or poultry eggs into Hong Kong not regulated by law? Are there any examples to make reference to?

A4: The import of fully cooked meat and poultry eggs, such as roasted pork, barbecued pork, roasted ducks, deep-fried pigeons and braised eggs, is not regulated under the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap. 132AK) or the Import and Export Ordinance (Cap. 60), and does not require to be accompanied by a health certificate issued by the concerned authority of the place of origin, or an import

licence or import permission issued by the FEHD at the time of import. However, travellers bringing such foods into Hong Kong for sale or other business purposes are required to register with the FEHD as food importers in accordance with the Food Safety Ordinance (Cap. 612) and ensure that the foods comply with food safety standards in local legislations. In addition, travellers should pay attention and make sure that such foods are stored properly during the journey to avoid bacterial growth.

Q5: Is bringing lime preserved eggs or salted eggs into Hong Kong not regulated by law?

A5: The import of preserved eggs or salted eggs is regulated under the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap. 132AK). That means such foods must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by the concerned authority of the place of origin and an import permission issued by the FEHD at the time of import into Hong Kong. However, poultry eggs that have been fully cooked are not regulated under Cap. 132AK. Travellers bringing fully cooked poultry eggs into Hong Kong for sale or other business purposes are required to register with the FEHD as food importers in accordance with the Food Safety Ordinance (Cap. 612) and ensure that the foods comply with food safety standards in local legislations. In addition, travellers should pay attention and make sure that such foods are stored properly during the journey to avoid bacterial growth.

Q6: Is bringing compounded food, such as dumplings, wonton, ham and preserved sausages, into Hong Kong regulated by law?

A6: The Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) stipulates that all food for sale and intended for human consumption in Hong Kong must be fit for human consumption. In general, compounded food (such as dumplings, wonton, ham and preserved sausages), which is not regulated under the Import and Export Ordinance (Cap. 60) or the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap. 132AK), does not require to be accompanied by a health certificate issued by the concerned authority of the place of origin, or an import licence or import permission issued by the FEHD at the time of import. However, food safety standards in Hong Kong laws still apply to all kinds of food. Travellers bringing such foods into Hong Kong for sale or other business purposes are required to register with the FEHD as food importers in accordance with the Food Safety Ordinance (Cap. 612) and ensure that the foods comply with food safety standards in local legislations. In addition, travellers should pay attention and make sure that such foods are stored properly during the journey to avoid bacterial growth.

Q7: What is “game” under the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap. 132AK)?

Q7: According to the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap. 132AK), “game” means the fresh or frozen

carcass, flesh or other edible part, including edible viscera and offal, of an animal (such as deer, crocodiles, soft-shelled turtles, pigeons, quails and frogs) **other than** meat derived from cattle, sheep, pigs, calves or lambs and poultry derived from chickens, ducks, geese or turkeys.

Q8: Are aquatic products regulated under the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap. 132AK)?

A8: Food safety standards in Hong Kong laws apply to aquatic products (such as fish, shrimps, crabs and shellfish), but the import of such foods is not regulated under the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap. 132AK) or the Import and Export Ordinance (Cap. 60). Travellers bringing such foods into Hong Kong for sale or other business purposes are required to register with the FEHD as food importers in accordance with the Food Safety Ordinance (Cap. 612) and ensure that the foods comply with food safety standards in local legislations. In addition, travellers should pay attention and make sure that such foods are stored properly during the journey to avoid bacterial growth.

Q9: Is bringing dairy products, such as milk, cheese and yogurt, into Hong Kong regulated by law?

A9: With regard to the import of specified dairy products such as frozen confections (e.g. ice-creams) under the Frozen Confections Regulation (Cap. 132AC) and milk and milk beverages (e.g. milk) under the Milk Regulation (Cap. 132AQ) for sale, importers are required to obtain an import

permission issued by the FEHD before such foods can be imported into Hong Kong. No application to the FEHD is required for bringing or importing other dairy products (e.g., cheese, yogurt) into Hong Kong. Nevertheless, food safety standards in Hong Kong laws apply to all dairy products.

Travellers bringing such foods into Hong Kong for sale or other business purposes are required to register with the FEHD as food importers in accordance with the Food Safety Ordinance (Cap. 612) and ensure that the foods comply with food safety standards in local legislations. In addition, travellers should pay attention and make sure that such foods are stored properly during the journey to maintain food quality and avoid bacterial growth by, for example, using chiller bags and ice packs to carry ice-creams.

Q10: Does the import of food into Hong Kong require registration with the FEHD?

A10: The Food Safety Ordinance (Cap. 612) requires any person who carries on a food importation business to register with the FEHD as a food importer. A food importer means a person who carries on a business which brings or causes to be brought any food into Hong Kong by air, land or sea. However, food importers who have already registered or have obtained a licence under other ordinances are exempted from the registration requirement. They include holders of various food-related permits or licences issued by the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene, marine fish farmers licensed with the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation, owners of Class III vessels licensed with the

Director of Marine, and stockholders of rice registered with the Director-General of Trade and Industry.