

**Guide to Frozen meat destined for Hong Kong from overseas
temporarily stored in Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area of Shenzhen
before its importation into Hong Kong in batches**

Purpose

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and the Shenzhen Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau (SZCIQ) signed a co-operation agreement in Shenzhen on 27 April 2016, under which frozen meat/poultry (frozen meat) intended to be imported into Hong Kong from overseas would be allowed to be stored temporarily in Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area (QBPA) of Shenzhen before its importation to Hong Kong in batches. This arrangement will facilitate the trade and cater for their business and development needs.

Background

Since 2012, some importers of frozen meat and cold store operators 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, there were suggestions 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 in batches. Following consultation with the trade and the relevant Mainland authorities, FEHD and SZCIQ, on the premises that food safety is upheld, entered into a co-operation agreement in April 2016. Under the agreement, frozen meat destined for Hong Kong from overseas may be stored temporarily in QBPA 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 Storage in Qianhai for Subsequent Import into Hong Kong in Batches

This arrangement is intended to provide the trade with an added option for storage of frozen meat. It helps to 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. Same as the arrangement for frozen meat directly imported into Hong Kong, when the frozen meat that has been temporarily stored in

Qianhai arrives in Hong Kong, the consignment must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by an issuing entity of the place of origin recognized by the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (DFEH). The extent to which the trade would utilise the arrangement is a commercial decision of individual operators. The Government is not minded to intervene.

Co-operation Agreement and Legal Requirement

According to the co-operation agreement, the frozen meat transhipped through Qianhai should come from overseas countries/places which have already established import protocols with Hong Kong and are allowed by the Mainland to export the corresponding types of frozen meat. The 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.

According to the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap 132AK), any person who imports meat or poultry into Hong Kong should produce a health certificate issued by an issuing entity of the place of origin recognized by the DFEH.

To be in line with the requirements on transhipped meat/poultry under 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 transhipment 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 their stay there. Besides, Qianhai authorities will issue a deduction table by auditing the quantity of the transhipped frozen meat to be imported into Hong Kong and the remaining frozen meat in the cold store. Original copies of deduction table and transhipment certificate should be kept by the importer.

Arrangement of Importing Transhipped Frozen Meat

The importer is also required to obtain an import licence from FEHD for each batch of transhipped frozen meat. Lorries transporting the transhipped frozen meat cargoes 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. Each batch of transhipped frozen meat importing into Hong

Kong should be accompanied with import documents including the following:

- (a) health certificate issued by issuing entity of the place of origin recognized by the DFEH (photo copy)*;
- (b) transshipment certificate (original copy) and deduction table (photo copy) issued by the Qianhai authorities*;
- (c) import licence issued by FEHD;
- (d) bill of lading;
- (e) permission in writing issued by FEHD (if applicable)

*Importers are required to keep the original copy of health certificate and deduction table for not less than 2 months from the date of completion of the whole consignment of frozen meat into Hong Kong.

Each batch of transhipped frozen meat 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. If the frozen meat is found unfit for human consumption, 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. Relevant information will also be conveyed to Qianhai authorities for concerted action.

Briefing to the Trade and Implementation of the Agreement

FEHD briefed the importers of frozen meat/poultry on 20 and 23 June 2016 about the co-operation agreement and relevant implementation arrangements. FEHD and SZCIQ have agreed after discussion to implement the arrangements starting 11 July 2016.

Joining the Arrangement of Importing Transhipped Frozen Meat

Interested importers of frozen meat/poultry may contact Chief Health Inspector (Import/Export)¹ at 2867 5570 for further details of the relevant arrangements including the contact point of Qianhai authorities.

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Frequently Asked Questions

Frozen meat from overseas to be stored temporarily in Qianhai before its importation into Hong Kong

1. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and the Shenzhen Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau (SZCIQ) signed a co-operation agreement in Shenzhen on 27 April 2016, under which frozen meat/poultry (collectively known as frozen meat) intended to be imported into Hong Kong from overseas would be allowed to be stored temporarily in Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area of Shenzhen before its importation into Hong Kong in batches. Any arrangement on food safety aspect?

This agreement allows frozen meat imported to Hong Kong from overseas temporarily stored in Qianhai Bonded Port Area (QBPA) of Shenzhen before its importation to Hong Kong in batches, so as to meet the business development of the trade. On food safety aspect, according to the co-operation agreement, the 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. Same as the arrangement for frozen meat directly imported into Hong Kong, when the frozen meat that has been temporarily stored in Qianhai arrives in 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.

2. How can the agreement facilitate trading between the Mainland and Hong

Kong, and how does it benefit Hong Kong business? Besides cold storage business, which kind of business will benefit from it?

The arrangement not only facilitates the business operation of the Hong Kong trade, but also leverages on the service functions of Qianhai Bonded Port Area to establish a regulatory mode of 'shop in front, warehouse at back' for transshipment of frozen meat, which in turn enhances the inspection and quarantine co-operation between the Mainland and Hong Kong, and creates a more convenient and efficient business environment for the Hong Kong trade.

3. FEHD how to monitor the storage of frozen meat intended to be imported into Hong Kong in the cold stores located in QBPA, including the conduct of sampling tests to examine if the frozen meat meets the relevant hygiene standards as prescribed in Hong Kong legislation?

According to the co-operation agreement, the 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. Besides, to be in line with the requirements on transhipped meat/poultry 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, as well as a health certificate issued by an issuing entity from the place of origin recognised by the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene, a transshipment certificate and a deduction table issued by the Qianhai authorities. The importer is also required to obtain an import licence from FEHD.

In addition, lorries transporting the transhipped frozen meat cargoes from QBPA must enter Hong Kong via Man Kam To for inspection by FEHD staff at the Man Kam To Food Control Office. FEHD will take samples for testing on a risk-based principle. FEHD's routine food surveillance programme adopts a risk-based approach, under which food samples (including frozen meat) are taken at the import, wholesale and retail levels for testing to ensure that they are in compliance with Hong Kong's statutory requirements and fit for human consumption.

4. Is frozen meat stored in QBPA under this new arrangement allowed to be delivered and sold in the Mainland?

Under the new arrangement, all the frozen meat temporarily stored in Qianhai is required to be delivered to Hong Kong and is not allowed to be sold in the Mainland.

5. Is there a list of designated or specified cold stores in QBPA for temporary storage of the imported frozen meat?

The designated cold stores for temporary storage of frozen meat from overseas in the new arrangement are required to register with SZCIQ. At present, there is only one such cold store. Interested importers of frozen meat/poultry may contact Chief Health Inspector (Import/Export)¹ at 2867 5570 for further details of the relevant arrangements including the contact point of Qianhai authorities.