

**The Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap.132AK)
will come into operation on 5 December 2015**

Introduction

In 2014 and 2015, there were outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza (AI) in Europe, the American continents and different parts of Asia. Such outbreaks are expected to occur from time to time. The World Organization for Animal Health has recommended that an international veterinary certificate should accompany the import of eggs for human consumption for control of AI. Such import requirement is in place in many jurisdictions including the European Union, the United States of America and Singapore.

With an aim to better protect Hong Kong from the threat of AI, the Government has amended the Imported Game, Meat and Poultry Regulations, Cap. 132AK to strengthen the control of the imported eggs.

Legal Requirement for Import of Eggs

When the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations, Cap. 132AK, (the Regulations) come into operation on 5 December 2015, no person shall import eggs into Hong Kong unless they produce a health certificate issued by an issuing entity from the place of origin recognized by the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (DFEH) to certify that the eggs are fit for human consumption; and obtain a permission in writing from a health officer of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) by providing information required by the Regulations. Fully cooked eggs and eggs that constitute one of the ingredients of any compounded food item are however excluded by the Regulations.

Application for Permission in writing for Import of Eggs

The import of eggs requires permission in writing under the Regulations.

Egg means an egg of a bird belonging to a type of bird sold or offered for sale for human consumption or any edible part of such an egg —

- (a) whether such an egg or edible part—
 - (i) is shelled or unshelled;

- (ii) is raw or partially cooked;
 - (iii) is salted, preserved or otherwise processed;
 - (iv) is in frozen, liquid or dried form; or
 - (v) contains any functional ingredient; but
- (b) excludes such an egg or edible part that—
- (i) is fully cooked; or
 - (ii) constitutes one of the ingredients of any compounded food.

Application Procedure

Importers of eggs can download the application form FEHB 270 or use e-FORM 270 from FEHD or Centre for Food Safety (CFS) website to apply for the permission in writing. In making an application for approval, importers should provide the health officer with the following information:

- (a) the type and quantity of the eggs to be imported;
- (b) the expected date of arrival of the eggs in Hong Kong;
- (c) the means of transport used for the import of eggs;
- (d) if the eggs are containerized, the container number;
- (e) any other information the officer considers essential to enable the officer to trace the eggs imported.

The completed application form can be sent to the Food Import and Export Section of the CFS by post (43/F, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong) or by fax (2521 4784).

Upon receiving acceptable documents, the CFS will approve the application and issue the permission in writing within 5 working days.

The permission in writing will be posted to the applicant or be collected at the Food Import and Export Section of the CFS.

No fee will be charged for application of permission for import of eggs.

Validity of Permission in writing

The permission in writing is valid for six months from the date of issue. Application for Import Licence for import of eggs is not required. During the validity

period, the permission in writing can be used for more than one shipment provided the quantity of eggs not exceeding the declared amount.

Food Safety Ordinance

The permission in writing for import of eggs will only be issued to importers registered under the Registration Scheme for Food Importers and Food Distributors (the scheme) or food traders exempted under the Food Safety Ordinance, Cap.612 (the Ordinance) (Food importers or food distributors who have already registered or have obtained a licence under other ordinances listed at Schedule 1 of the Ordinance). Hence, importers should first register with the DFEH under the Ordinance if they intend to import eggs. For more details about the scheme and the registration procedures, please refer to the “Guide to the Registration Scheme for Food Importers and Food Distributors” available at the designated website (www.foodsafetyord.gov.hk).

Enquiries

For enquiries, please call our Clerical Officer (Food Surveillance and Control) at 2867 5577.

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department