

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)079****(Question Serial No. 0160)**Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not specifiedProgramme: (1) Food Safety and Public HealthControlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Donald NG)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

With regard to the testing of imported Japanese food by the Centre for Food Safety of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, please advise this Committee of:

- (1) the types and total quantity of food tested, and the proportion of tested samples to the total quantity of food imported from Japan in the past 3 years;
- (2) the expenditure and staff establishment involved; and
- (3) the average time taken for testing. Will the Department consider increasing its manpower to expedite the process?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)Reply:

- (1) The types and total quantities of imported Japanese food tested for radiation in the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Type of food	Total number of samples of imported Japanese food tested for radiation		
	2022	2023	2024
Live, chilled or frozen aquatic products	4 002	16 408	55 164
Chilled or frozen game, meat, poultry and poultry eggs	689	1 093	1 671
Fruits	99	1 230	1 683
Vegetables	244	915	1 136
Milk, milk beverages and milk powder/dried milk	4	237	1 370
Frozen confections	119	108	93
Drinks and others	5 743	22 169	24 373
Total:	10 900	42 160	85 490

In response to the Japanese Government's unilateral decision to discharge nuclear-contaminated water from the Fukushima nuclear power station into the sea, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has, since mid-June 2023, stepped up the testing of radiation levels of imported Japanese food to cover all aquatic products imported from Japan. As for other types of food and live, chilled or frozen aquatic products imported from Japan before mid-June 2023, as CFS does not keep records of the quantities of all food imported from Japan or their breakdowns, the proportion of food samples tested for radiation to the total quantity of food imported from Japan cannot be calculated.

- (2) The majority of staff responsible for radiation monitoring of imported Japanese food are also tasked with the control work of other imported food. CFS does not have a breakdown of the manpower deployed for radiation monitoring of imported Japanese food. The overall expenditure and staff establishment for the aforementioned work in the past 3 years are set out below:

Year	Staff establishment (number of staff)	Overall expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	102	58.13
2023-24	102	65.11
2024-25 (revised estimate)	103	65.71

- (3) To increase the manpower so as to cope with the testing work for imported Japanese food flexibly, CFS employed 8 non-civil service contract staff for its Radiological Monitoring Team in 2023-24 in support of its work on radiation monitoring of imported Japanese food.

With the stepped-up radiation testing in place, the time required for the testing of most imported Japanese aquatic products is essentially the same as it has been in the past. Generally, the whole clearance process, including testing, can be completed within 3 to 4 hours. The duration of the entire clearance process depends on many factors, such as clarity and completeness of the related documents or information, the number of imported consignments, and whether multiple consignments of goods arrive at the same time and need to be queued for inspection. CFS will continue to keep in view of the situation and make suitable manpower deployment to meet operational needs.

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