

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)058

(Question Serial No. 1694)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Donald NG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The number of food complaints handled by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has increased for 3 consecutive years, with 8 685 complaints handled last year. Please set out:

- I. the numbers of food complaint cases, substantiated and unsubstantiated cases after investigation, and prosecutions initiated in the past 3 years, with a breakdown by type of complaints;
- II. the respective numbers of complaints in relation to online sale and electronic delivery platforms and the numbers of prosecutions initiated by the Department in the past 3 years, with a breakdown by type of complaints; and
- III. the Department's manpower for handling the food complaint cases, with a breakdown by grade, and the expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 43)

Reply:

- I. The numbers of food complaint cases handled by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, substantiated and unsubstantiated cases after investigation, and prosecutions initiated in the past 3 years (from 2023 to 2025) are tabulated as follows:

Type of complaints	Year											
	2023				2024				2025			
	Complaint cases	Substantiated cases	Unsubstantiated cases	Prosecuted cases	Complaint cases	Substantiated cases	Unsubstantiated cases	Prosecuted cases	Complaint cases	Substantiated cases	Unsubstantiated cases	Prosecuted cases
Excreta/body parts of animals or insects in food	1 101	626	475	28	1 127	474	653	41	1 290	1 081	209	52
Foreign substances in food	875	383	492	24	999	353	646	37	1 185	725	460	52

Type of complaints	Year											
	2023				2024				2025			
	Complaint cases	Substantiated cases	Unsubstantiated cases	Prosecuted cases	Complaint cases	Substantiated cases	Unsubstantiated cases	Prosecuted cases	Complaint cases	Substantiated cases	Unsubstantiated cases	Prosecuted cases
Mouldy food	191	78	113	3	196	76	120	0	193	154	39	3
Inadequately cooked food	236	66	170	1	282	60	222	1	375	130	245	6
Food labels	259	80	179	59	357	69	288	48	354	104	250	64
Unwholesome food	2 937	83	2 854	1	3 428	38	3 390	2	3 352	124	3 228	6
Deteriorated food	613	58	555	0	684	38	646	0	1 004	101	903	5
Sale of food beyond the expiry date	92	28	64	3	130	24	106	0	152	49	103	0
Chemicals in food	101	6	95	0	125	9	116	2	178	14	164	1
Others	498	4	494	4	584	5	579	2	602	9	593	0
Total	6 903	1 412	5 491	123	7 912	1 146	6 766	133	8 685	2 491	6 194	189

II. The respective numbers of food complaints in relation to online sale and electronic delivery platforms handled by the Department, as well as the numbers of substantiated and unsubstantiated cases after investigation, and prosecutions initiated in the past 3 years (from 2023 to 2025) are tabulated as follows:

Type of complaints	Year											
	2023				2024				2025			
	Complaint cases	Substantiated cases	Unsubstantiated cases	Prosecuted cases	Complaint cases	Substantiated cases	Unsubstantiated cases	Prosecuted cases	Complaint cases	Substantiated cases	Unsubstantiated cases	Prosecuted cases
Excreta/body parts of animals or insects in food	67	48	19	1	105	56	49	0	159	151	8	0
Foreign substances in food	38	17	21	2	84	40	44	1	117	98	19	1
Mouldy food	7	1	6	0	11	3	8	0	16	13	3	0
Inadequately cooked food	9	5	4	0	17	9	8	0	36	29	7	1

Type of complaints	Year											
	2023				2024				2025			
	Complaint cases	Substantiated cases	Unsubstantiated cases	Prosecuted cases	Complaint cases	Substantiated cases	Unsubstantiated cases	Prosecuted cases	Complaint cases	Substantiated cases	Unsubstantiated cases	Prosecuted cases
Food labels	18	6	12	0	33	8	25	8	34	12	22	12
Unwholesome food	84	11	73	0	73	5	68	0	41	1	40	0
Deteriorated food	30	3	27	0	33	3	30	0	52	17	35	2
Sale of food beyond the expiry date	4	1	3	0	3	1	2	0	4	2	2	0
Chemicals in food	3	0	3	0	4	1	3	0	9	0	9	0
Others	4	1	3	0	7	1	6	0	11	2	9	0
Total	264	93	171	3	370	127	243	9	479	325	154	16

Upon receipt of food related complaints from public, the Department will conduct investigations and take follow-up actions according to the nature and particulars of the case. Where sufficient evidence is established, the Department will proceed with prosecution in accordance with prevailing procedures. Unsubstantiated cases involved a number of factors, including the complainants' unavailability to provide any exhibit or unwillingness to testify in court, or satisfactory test results of exhibits.

III. Staff of different sections of the Department would assist in handling food complaint cases. As the staff concerned are also tasked with other duties, the Department does not keep a breakdown of the overall manpower and expenditure involved in handling food complaint cases.

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