

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)087

(Question Serial No. 0421)

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:

1. It is mentioned in paragraph 135 of the Budget Speech that the Centre for Food Safety will waive the fees related to the certification of food products for 2 years to facilitate the expansion of local food products into the Mainland and international markets. Please advise this Committee of the following:
 - (a) What is the estimated expenditure to be involved in the above initiative?
 - (b) What are the expected outcomes and how many local food enterprises are expected to benefit?
 - (c) As it is mentioned in paragraph 130 of the Budget Speech that a cross-sectoral professional services platform covering testing and certification will be set up to support enterprises in going global, is there any plan to combine the above 2 initiatives to extend the application scope of the testing measures to Mainland food products, thereby facilitating Mainland brands' expansion to the Hong Kong and international markets? If yes, what are the details? If no, what is/are the reason(s)?
 - (d) Is there any plan to establish mutual recognition of testing and certification systems with the Mainland so as to achieve "certified once, and results accepted by both places"?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

- (a) & (b) The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will waive the fees related to the certification of food products for 2 years. The number of certificates applied for and issued is expected to increase. The waiver can also promote the development of Hong Kong's food industry and encourage more local food enterprises to expand their export business. The exact number of local food enterprises that will benefit is contingent upon the market's response. The waiver per se will not incur any additional government expenditure. CFS will keep in view the situation in relation to the application of certificates and allocate extra manpower resources in a timely manner to cope with the additional workload.

- (c) According to the information provided by the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, following the announcement in the 2025 Policy Address that a one-stop platform would be established by mobilising Hong Kong's overseas offices, including those under InvestHK and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, as well as Hong Kong offices in the Mainland, a cross-bureau, cross-departmental and cross-agency Task Force on Supporting Mainland Enterprises in Going Global (GoGlobal Task Force) has been set up to proactively encourage Mainland enterprises to go global via Hong Kong. The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development steers the work of GoGlobal Task Force and coordinates with various bureaux, departments and agencies in providing customised and comprehensive support services based on the needs of Mainland enterprises to support their overseas expansion through Hong Kong. It was further announced in the 2026-27 Budget that a cross-sectoral professional services platform would be set up under GoGlobal Task Force, bringing together Hong Kong's professional services providers in the fields of legal services, accounting, financial services, testing and certification, marketing, etc. to support enterprises going global, including Mainland food enterprises with such plans.
- (d) Regarding testing and certification under Recommendation on Food Manufacturer Registration and the Advance Release Arrangement, CFS has obtained consent from the Mainland authorities that, under the food safety testing and certification system, trade members who wish to enjoy facilitation of customs clearance may arrange to have the relevant food products tested by laboratories accredited for food testing services under the Hong Kong Laboratory Accreditation Scheme or the China National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment. The arrangements have been implemented smoothly.

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