

Frequently Asked Questions on Food Supply of Hong Kong

Q1 : Which region(s) / countries does the food in Hong Kong come from?

A1 : 90% of the total food supply in Hong Kong is imported food. The Mainland is our most important food source, especially for fresh food. 94% of fresh pork, 100% of fresh beef, 92% of vegetables and 66% of eggs in Hong Kong come from the Mainland. As for fresh fruits, our major sources of import are the United States, the Mainland, the Philippines and Thailand.

Apart from fresh food, Hong Kong also imports chilled and frozen food from many other countries, e.g., chilled and frozen pork and beef from Brazil, salmon from Norway, and fruits from the Philippines and Thailand, etc, so as to maintain a stable supply.

The major sources of imported food in Hong Kong in 2010 are summarised in the table at **Annex**.

Q2 : How many Japanese food products does Hong Kong import? Does any of them come from the areas affected by the nuclear crisis or possibly exposed to radiation? Does the Administration conduct checks on fresh food imported from Japan?

A2 : Currently, food from Japan only constitutes a small part of our total imports, and consists mainly of meat, aquatic products, milk, frozen confections, vegetables and fruit. The total import of the above foodstuffs amounted to 380 tonnes in 2010, with market shares ranging from below 1% (e.g. vegetables and fruits) to 5% (e.g. meat, milk and frozen confections). Import of poultry and poultry eggs from Japan has been suspended since the outbreak of avian influenza last year.

Fresh food is more prone to be contaminated by radiation when there are nuclear incidents. The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) has, since 12 March, stepped up surveillance and has tested the radiation level of fresh food imported from Japan, including vegetables, fruits, and milk. CFS

uses hand-held radiation detector and radiation contamination surveillance system to test the radiation level of the surface of the whole consignment and the radiation level in the food samples of the sampled food consignments respectively. As at 5:30 pm on 18 March 2011, CFS has tested 151 food consignments and all results are satisfactory. None of these samples was consigned from Sendai or Fukushima.

Q3 : Will the food supply of Hong Kong be affected by the Japan nuclear plant incident?

A3 : Since the Mainland is the most important food source of Hong Kong, the overall food supply has not been affected by the Japan nuclear incident. The Central People's Government has always placed much emphasis on maintaining the stability, quality and safety of agricultural products supplied to Hong Kong. To ensure the stable supply of fresh agricultural food products to Hong Kong, the Mainland authorities have established an emergency working mechanism whereby supply could be adjusted to respond to unforeseen circumstances.

According to our liaison with the food importers/suppliers, local food supply is not affected by the explosion of the nuclear plant in Japan at the moment. Also, the food trade usually stocks up for a month as an operational practice to fulfil sudden market demand. We will continue to keep in close contact with the food retail and wholesale sector.

Q4 : Does the Administration have any measures to stabilise the food supply?

A4 : Since food from Japan only constitutes a small part of our total imports, there is not much impact on the overall food supply. In our liaison with major food suppliers, we understand that there is no shortage in food supply. The public is advised not to have undue worries. The Food and Health Bureau will closely monitor the situation.

Information on food safety of imported food from Japan can be found at CFS' website : <http://www.cfs.gov.hk/eindex.html>

Major sources of major imported food in Hong Kong in 2010

Food type	Source of import (% of total import)	Volume of retained imports in 2010
Fresh pork	Mainland (100%)	112 175 tonnes
Chilled pork	Mainland (97%) Thailand (0.41%)	14 825 tonnes
Frozen pork	Brazil (32%) Mainland (49%) USA (6%) Germany (2%)	130 298 tonnes
Fresh beef	Mainland (100%)	8 317 tonnes
Chilled beef	Australia (40%) USA (16%) New Zealand (8%) Brazil (27%)	5 541 tonnes
Frozen beef	Brazil (38%) USA (21%) Mainland (10%) Argentina (4%)	87 475 tonnes
Live chicken	Mainland (100%)	4 990 tonnes
Chilled chicken	Mainland (99%)	47 515 tonnes
Frozen chicken	Mainland (65%) Brazil (12%) USA (23%)	95 338 tonnes
Live freshwater fish	Mainland (97%) India (2%)	51 650 tonnes
Chilled fresh water fish	Mainland (83%) Philippines (7%)	268 tonnes
Frozen freshwater fish	Mainland (64%) Singapore (17%)	522 tonnes
Live marine fish	Brought in by Hong Kong fishing fleets (26%) Indonesia (22%) Thailand (21%) Philippines (17%) Mainland (15%)	13 340 tonnes
Chilled marine fish	Mainland (51%) Norway (39%)	31 374 tonnes

Food type	Source of import (% of total import)	Volume of retained imports in 2010
Frozen marine fish*	Mainland (68%) India (30%)	8 431 tonnes
Fresh vegetables	Mainland (92%)	635 557 tonnes
Fresh fruits	Thailand (8%) USA (32%) Mainland (21%)	536 050 tonnes
Fresh chicken eggs	Mainland (67%) USA (19%) Thailand (7%)	1.75 billion pieces

*: calculated based on amended trade data