

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

**Date:** November 08, 2021

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**Report Name:** Hong Kong Detects COVID-19 Virus on Frozen Seafood Imports from Malaysia

**Country:** Hong Kong

**Post:** Hong Kong

**Report Category:** Agriculture in the News, Agriculture in the Economy

**Prepared By:** Caroline Yuen

**Approved By:** Jennifer Clever

**Report Highlights:**

Hong Kong authorities reported a detection of COVID-19 virus on imported frozen cuttlefish from Malaysia. Detections were identified on the slice surface and its inner packaging during precautionary testing at the point of entry.

On November 3, 2021, the Hong Kong Center for Food Safety (CFS) announced testing results for samples of imported frozen cuttlefish slice surface and its inner packaging as positive for COVID-19. The positive samples were among the 12 samples collected at the point of entry on November 2, 2021, from a sea shipment imported from Malaysia. The shipment had 390 boxes of frozen cuttlefish slice weighing 3,100 kg.

As part of its precautionary testing program, the CFS is applying hold and test measures by which shipments are detained until test results are available. Thus, the Malaysian shipment has been kept in the importer's warehouse and has not yet been released for distribution. Upon instruction by the CFS, the warehouse operator has conducted thorough cleaning and disinfection of the warehouse and the importer has disposed of the cuttlefish slice of the same batch. The CFS assured the public that they will step up the sampling of similar products for testing.

The Hong Kong government has launched random and intelligence-based precautionary COVID-19 testing on imported chilled and frozen foods since mid-2020. This was the second finding of positive result on samples. The last finding happened in August this year concerning three seafood shipments from Indonesia. (Details on the findings on the Indonesian shipments and Hong Kong's virus testing program are available in this [GAIN](#) report.) As of October 2021, the CFS has collected and tested over 20,000 samples of foods and their packaging for the COVID-19 virus.

As of the date of this report, the local media's reaction to the Malaysian shipment incident has been measured. In addition, no major public reactions about the safety of imported frozen foods have been reported. Currently, the pandemic situation in Hong Kong is under control with daily single digit of imported cases. Approximately 65.9 percent of the total population has completed two doses of the vaccine and the Hong Kong government has initiated arrangements for booster vaccinations for high-risk groups.

During the first nine months of 2021, Hong Kong's global imports of seafood totaled \$2.6 billion, a rise of 24 percent compared to the same period last year. China was the largest supplier, providing 36 percent of imports while the United States supplied 2 percent. Traditionally, Malaysia has not been a significant supplier of seafood products to Hong Kong, exports to this market were negligible during the first nine months of 2021.

#### **Attachments:**

No Attachments.