



**AGRI-FOOD & VETERINARY AUTHORITY  
AND  
IMMIGRATION & CHECKPOINTS AUTHORITY**

**JOINT NEWS RELEASE**

**Two fined for smuggling embryonated duck eggs into Singapore**

26 July 2017: A 40-year-old man, Lea Soon Lio @ Mohd Syukri Bin Sabri Lea, was fined \$5,000 for illegally importing 148 cooked embryonated duck eggs, commonly known as 'balut', into Singapore. Another 30-year-old woman, Ramiscal Quenny Dela Cruz, was fined \$2,500 for abetting the offence.

2 On 30 April 2017, Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers detected 148 'balut' eggs concealed in two suitcases inside the boot and spare tyre compartment of a car, driven by Lea, upon arrival at Tuas Checkpoint. The case was referred to the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA) for investigation.



*148 illegally imported 'balut' eggs were concealed in suitcases within a car and were detected at Tuas Checkpoint (Photos: AVA)*

3 AVA's investigations found that Lea had smuggled the eggs into Singapore for sale and Ramiscal was one of the buyers. The eggs were seized and subsequently destroyed.

#### **Public advisory**

4 The import of food, including meat and eggs, and their products, are regulated for animal health and food safety reasons. Meat, eggs, and their products, can only be imported from accredited sources in approved countries that comply with our food safety standards and requirements. Currently, there are no approved sources of 'balut' eggs. The maximum penalty for importing meat products (including balut) from unapproved sources is \$50,000 and/or imprisonment of up to two years.

5 Smuggled food products are from unknown sources. Apart from food safety concerns, AVA has to remain vigilant to prevent diseases such as bird flu from being introduced into Singapore. While Singapore is free from bird flu, the disease is endemic in the region. Smuggled food products, which may not have undergone the necessary heat treatment to inactivate the virus, is a risk for public and animal health.

6 Our borders are our first line of defence in safeguarding Singapore's security. The security checks are critical to our nation's security. The ICA will continue to conduct security checks on passengers and vehicles at the checkpoints to prevent attempts to smuggle in undesirable persons, drugs, weapons, explosives and other contrabands. The AVA will also continue to safeguard food safety and ensure animal health through our integrated food safety system, which includes strict import regulations and enforcement, and work closely with border control agencies to deter illegal import across borders.

7 The ICA and AVA would like to remind travellers against bringing meat products into Singapore without a proper licence. The public can refer to AVA's [website](#) or download AVA's mobile app, SG TravelKaki (available free-of-charge from [iTunes](#) and the [Google Play store](#)), for more information on travellers' allowances for meat products from overseas travels.

**Issued by the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority and Immigration & Checkpoints Authority**

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