



Woman charged in court for illegal import of quail meat from Malaysia

Issued on 4 September 2013

A woman was charged in court today for illegally importing quail meat from Malaysia. If convicted, she could face a maximum fine of \$50,000 or an imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or both.

2. On 19 June 2013, the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) had received feedback from the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) on the detection of an illegal import of quail meat from Malaysia. Following the feedback, AVA seized 168 packets of frozen quail, weighing 218.40 kg, which were concealed in black plastic bags and stored in the rear space of the car as well as under the floorboard mat of both the front and back passenger seats. Further investigation showed that the woman had imported the quail meat for sale at her poultry stall in Geylang Serai market. She was previously issued a compound of \$300 for selling illegally imported frozen quail meat in June 2012.

Continued Vigilance by AVA to Retain Bird Flu-Free Status

3. AVA regulates the import of food, including meat and meat products, into Singapore for animal health and food safety reasons. Meat and meat products can only be imported from accredited establishments/farms in approved countries which comply with our bio-security requirements. Only live quails and quail meat products from bird flu-free zones are allowed. Malaysia is not an approved source for the import of live quails and quail meat.

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4. Apart from food safety, AVA has to remain vigilant on the potential risk of the introduction of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) or bird flu into Singapore through illegal imports. Illegal imports which are not from accredited establishments or approved sources carry the risk of bird flu, which is a highly infectious viral disease of birds that can spread rapidly among poultry. Singapore is free from bird flu. However, the disease is endemic in the region. Bird flu outbreaks in other countries have led to massive deaths and culling of poultry and birds. Singapore has several poultry and bird farms which are put at risk from such illegal imports.

5. It is important that Singapore maintains its bird flu-free status for trade and public health reasons. We will 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 ICA to deter illegal import across borders. We would like to remind the public that meat and meat products can only be brought back from approved sources. An import permit is required if someone brings in more than 5kg of meat or meat products into Singapore from overseas.

6. The public can refer to our website (www.ava.gov.sg) for information on bringing back food, animals or plants from overseas travel.

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