



**AGRI-FOOD & VETERINARY AUTHORITY
AND IMMIGRATION & CHECKPOINTS AUTHORITY
JOINT NEWS RELEASE**

Woman fined \$7,000 for smuggling embryonated duck eggs into Singapore

63-year-old Le Thi Ung was fined \$7,000 for illegally importing 490 pieces of embryonated duck eggs into Singapore.

2 In September 2018, Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers detected 490 eggs, weighing a total of 78.4kg, in two styrofoam boxes while conducting checks on Le's baggage upon her arrival at Changi Airport. The case was referred to Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) for investigation.



*490 illegally imported duck eggs were concealed in styrofoam boxes at Changi Airport
(Photos: AVA)*

3 AVA's investigation found that the eggs contained developing duck embryos, commonly known as 'balut'. Le had purchased the embryonated duck eggs from a wet market in Vietnam. She had contravened the Wholesome Meat and Fish Act for importing duck eggs from non-approved sources.

4 The import of food, including meat and eggs, and their products, are regulated for animal health and food safety reasons. Meat and eggs, and their products, can only be imported from accredited sources in approved countries that comply with Singapore's food safety standards and requirements. Currently, there are no approved sources of 'balut' eggs. Any person who illegally imports meat products from unapproved sources is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and/or imprisonment of up to two years or to both for first conviction. In the case of a second or subsequent conviction, the offender is liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000 or to imprisonment of up to three years or to both.

5 Illegally imported 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 through such food products. While Singapore is free from bird flu, the disease is endemic in the region. Illegally imported 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 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.

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