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Hong Kong

FAIRS Subject Report

Chemicals Allowed in Hong Kong Food Regulations 2008

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Report Highlights:
This report replaced HK#6016 as a result of the amendment of Hong Kong's Preservatives Regulation, which became effective July 1, 2008. The amended Preservatives Regulation adopted a food category system based on Codex's GSFA (Codex General Standard for Food Additives) and incorporated those preservatives and antioxidants, as well as their permitted levels of use, in GSFA. This report provides a link to Hong Kong's permitted preservatives and their maximum permitted levels under the newly adopted food category system. The Hong Kong government (HKG) also removed Red 2G from the permitted coloring list under the Coloring Matter in Food Regulations effective December 1, 2007. The permitted list of coloring matter contained in this report reflects this change. For easy reference, this report provides a list of permitted or banned chemicals in foods as dictated by other food regulations in Hong Kong.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
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Summary

This report replaced HK#6016 as a result of the amendment of Hong Kong's Preservatives Regulation, which became effective July 1, 2008. The original preservatives regulation allowed a list of preservatives with maximum permitted levels in specific food products. In contrast, the amended regulation adopted a food category system based on Codex's GSFA (Codex General Standard for Food Additives) and incorporated those preservatives and antioxidants, as well as their permitted levels of use, in GSFA. This report provides a link to Hong Kong's permitted preservatives and their maximum permitted levels under the newly adopted food category system.

The Hong Kong government (HKG) also removed Red 2G from the permitted coloring list under the Coloring Matter in Food Regulations effective December 1, 2007. The permitted list of coloring matter contained in this report reflects this change. The HKG's action of removing Red 2G from the permitted list was based on European Commission's decision to suspend the use of Red 2G in food because of safety concern. HKG's amendment to this Coloring Matter in Food Regulations should have no effect on U.S. trade because this coloring is not allowed for food use in the United States.

Other sections of this report except the one on Preservatives Regulation and Coloring Matter in Food Regulations remain unchanged from report HK#6016.

For easy reference, this report provides a list of permitted or banned chemicals in foods as dictated by other food regulations in Hong Kong.

The basic food law in Hong Kong is laid down in Part V (Food and Drugs) of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap.132). The main provisions cover general protection for food purchasers, offences in connection with sale of unfit food and adulterated food, false labeling and advertisement of food, food hygiene, and seizure and destruction of unfit food. In addition, a series of regulations provided in the subsidiary legislation of the Ordinance govern specific areas of food safety control. These food regulations are as follows:

1) Abattoirs Regulation
2) Coloring Matter in Food Regulations
3) Dried Milk Regulations
4) Sweeteners in Food Regulations
5) Food Adulteration (Metallic Contamination) Regulations
6) Food and Drugs (Composition and Labeling Regulations)
7) Food Business Regulation
8) Frozen Confections Regulation
9) Harmful Substances in Food Regulations
10) Imported Game, Meat and Poultry Regulations
11) Milk Regulation
12) Mineral Oil in Food Regulations
13) Preservatives in Food Regulations
14) Slaughterhouses Regulation
15) Smokeless Tobacco Products (Prohibition) Regulations

Of all these food regulations, some regulate the use of chemicals including preservatives, sweeteners, etc. Most food regulations in Hong Kong are based on positive lists. Those chemicals not mentioned on the lists are assumed not allowed in Hong Kong. This report is to list out the chemicals which are allowed in various food regulations. A list of prohibited chemicals is provided under the Harmful Substances in Food Regulations.

While every means is attempted to ensure the accuracy of the report, the lists below provide a guideline. The decision and interpretation of all food regulations rest with Hong Kong Food and Environmental Hygiene Department.

Hong Kong's food laws can be obtained from - http://www.legislation.gov.hk/eng/home.htm

Coloring Matter in Food Regulations

Schedule 1 – Permitted Coloring Matter

Part I – Coal Tar Colors

Common Name of Colour	Scientific Name	Colour Index Number (1982)
Allura Red AC	disodium salt of 6-hydroxy-5-[(2-methoxy-5-methyl-4-sulphophenyl)-azo]-2-naphthalene-sulphonic acid.	16035
Amaranth	trisodium salt of 1-(4-sulpho-1-naphthylazo)-2-naphthol-3: 6-disulphonic acid.	16185
Black PN (Brilliant Black BN)	tetrasodium salt of 8-acetamido-2- (7-sulpho-4-p-sulphophenylazo-1-naphthylazo)-1-naphthol-3: 5-disulphonic acid.	28440
Brilliant Blue FCF (Brilliant Blue FD & C No. 1)	disodium salt of 4-(4-(N-ethyl-p-sulphobenzylamino)-phenyl) -(2-sulphoniumphenyl)-methylene-(1-(N-ethyl-N-p- sulphobenzyl)-2, 5-cyclohexadien-imine).	42090
Brown FK	a mixture consisting essentially of the disodium salt of 1:3-diamino-4:6-di-(p-sulphophenylazo) benzene and the sodium salt of 2:4-diamino-5-(p-sulphophenylazo) toluene.	—
Carmoisine	disodium salt of 2-(4-sulpho-l-naphthylazo)-l-naphthol-4 -sulphonic acid.	14720
Chocolate Brown HT	disodium salt of 2:4-dihydroxy-3:5-di-(4-sulpho-l-naphthylazo) benzyl alcohol.	20285
Erythrosine (BS)	disodium or dipotassium salt of 2:4:5:7-tetra-iodo-fluorescein.	45430
Green S	sodium salt of di-(p-dimethylaminophenyl)-2-hydroxy-3:6- disulphonaphthylmethanol andydride.	44090
Indigotine(Indigo Carmine)	disodium salt of indigotin-5:5'-disulphonic acid.	73015
Lithol Rubine BK	disodium salt of 3-hydroxy-4-[(2-sulpho-p-tolyl)azo]-2- naphthoic acid.	15850
Patent Blue V	calcium salt of (4-[x-(p-(diethylamino) phenyl)-5-hydroxy-2, 4-disulphobenzylidene]-2, 5-cyclohexadien-1-ylidene) diethyl -ammonium	42051

	hydroxide inner salt.	
Ponceau 4R	trisodium salt of 1-(4-sulpho-l-naphthylazo)-2-naphthol-6:8- disulphonic acid.	16255
Quinoline Yellow	disodium salt of disulphonic acid of 2-(2 quinolyl)-1,3-indandione.	47005
Sunset Yellow FCF	disodium salt of 1-p-sulphophenylazo-2-naphthol-6-sulphonic acid.	15985
Tartrazine	trisodium salt of 5-hydroxy-1-p-sulphophenyl-4-p-sulphophenylazo-pyrazole-3-carboxylic acid.	19140

Part II - Other Colors

Description	Colour Index Number (1982)
Caramel	-
Cochineal (Carminic acid)	75470
Colouring matter natural to edible fruits or vegetables or their pure colouring principles whether isolated from such natural colours or produced synthetically and including- (a) Annatto (b) Vegetable Black (c) Carotenes (d) Beta-Apo-8'-carotenal (e) Beta-Apo-8'-carotenoic acid ethyl ester (f) Chlorophylls and Chlorophyllins including Copper complexes (g) Saffron (h) Tumeric (Curcumin)	75120 — 75130 40820 40825 75810 75815 75100 75300
Iron Oxides	77491
Titanium dioxide	77891
Silver, Gold and Aluminium in leaf or powder form solely for external colouring of dragees and decoration of sugar-coated flour confectionery	—
The Aluminium or Calcium salts (lakes) of any of the scheduled water-soluble colours	—

Sweeteners in Food Regulations

Permitted Sweeteners

1. Acesulfame Potassium
2. Alitame
3. Aspartame
4. Aspartame-acesulfame Salt
5. Cyclamic Acid (and Sodium, Potassium, Calcium Salts)
6. Saccharin (and Sodium, Potassium, Calcium Salts)
7. Sucralose
8. Thaumatin

Food Adulteration (Metallic Contamination) Regulations

Schedule 1 - Maximum Permitted Concentration of Certain Metals Naturally Present in Specified Foods

A Metal	B Description of food	C Maximum permitted concentration in parts per million
Arsenic (AS_2O_3)	Solids being fish and fish products Solids being shellfish and shellfish products	6 10

Schedule 2 – Maximum Permitted Concentration of Certain Metals Present in Specified Foods

A Metal	B Description of food	C Maximum permitted concentration in parts per million
Antimony (Sb)	Cereals and vegetables Fish, crab-meat, oysters, prawns and shrimps Meat of animal and poultry	1 1 1
Arsenic (AS_20_3)	Solids other than- (i) fish and fish products; and (ii) shellfish and shellfish products All food in liquid form	1.4 0.14
Cadmium (Cd)	Cereals and vegetables Fish, crab-meat, oysters, prawns and shrimps Meat of animal and poultry	0.1 2 0.2
Chromium (Cr)	Cereals and vegetables Fish, crab-meat, oysters, prawns and shrimps Meat of animal and poultry	1 1 1
Lead (Pb)	All food in solid form All food in liquid form	6 1
Mercury (Hg)	All food in solid form All food in liquid form	0.5 0.5
Tin (Sn)	All food in solid form All food in liquid form	230 230

Food and Drugs (Composition and Labeling) Regulations

Schedule 1, Part III – Additives in Certain Milk Products

Division 1

Additives in sweetened condensed or evaporated milk, sweetened condensed skimmed or separated milk and unsweetened condensed or evaporated milk

Item	Additive	Maximum Level
	Firming Agents	
1.	Potassium chloride	2 grams per kilogram singly or 3 grams per kilogram in combination, expressed as anhydrous substances
2.	Calcium chloride	
	Stabilizers	
3.	Sodium citrates	2 grams per kilogram singly or 3 grams per kilogram in combination, expressed as anhydrous substances
4.	Potassium citrates	
5.	Calcium citrates	
	Acidity Regulators	
6.	Calcium carbonates	2 grams per kilogram singly or 3 grams per kilogram in combination, expressed as anhydrous substances
7.	Sodium phosphates	
8.	Potassium phosphates	
9.	Calcium phosphates	
10.	Diphosphates	
11.	Triphosphates	
12.	Polyphosphates	
13.	Sodium carbonates	
14.	Potassium carbonates	
	Thickener	
15.	Carrageenan	150 milligrams per kilogram
	Emulsifier	
16.	Lecithins	Limited by good manufacturing practice

Division 2

Additives in butter

Item	Additive	Maximum Level
	Acidity Regulators	
1.	Sodium phosphates	2 grams per kilogram
2.	Sodium carbonate	Limited by good manufacturing practice
3.	Sodium hydrogen carbonate	
4.	Sodium hydroxide	
5.	Calcium hydroxide	

Division 3

Additives in cream

Item	Additive	Maximum Level
	Stabilizers	

1. Calcium carbonates 2. Sodium lactate 3. Potassium lactate 4. Calcium lactate 5. Sodium citrates 6. Potassium citrates 7. Calcium citrates 8. Calcium sulphate	Limited by good manufacturing practice
9. Sodium phosphates 10. Potassium phosphates 11. Calcium phosphates 12. Diphosphates 13. Triphosphates 14. Polyphosphates	2 grams per kilogram, whether the additives are used singly or in combination, expressed as phosphorus pentaoxide (P_2O_5)
Acidity Regulators	
15. Sodium carbonates 16. Potassium carbonates 17. Lactic acid (L, D, and DL-) 18. Citric acid	Limited by good manufacturing practice
Thickeners and Emulsifiers	
19. Lecithins	Limited by good manufacturing practice
20. Alginic acid 21. Sodium alginate 22. Potassium alginate 23. Ammonium alginate 24. Calcium alginate 25. Agar 26. Carrageenan and its sodium, potassium and ammonium salts 27. Carob bean gum 28. Guar gum 29. Gum Arabic 30. Xanthan gum 31. Gellan gum	
32. Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan monolaurate 33. Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan monooleate 34. Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan monopalmitate 35. Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan monostearate 36. Polyoxyethylene (20) sorbitan tristearate	1 gram per kilogram
37. Pectins 38. Cellulose	Limited by good manufacturing practice

39. Methyl cellulose	
40. Hydroxypropyl cellulose	
41. Hydroxypropyl methyl cellulose	
42. Methyl ethyl cellulose	
43. Sodium carboxymethyl cellulose	
44. Mono- and diglycerides of fatty acids	
45. Acetic and fatty acid esters of glycerol	
46. Lactic and fatty acid esters of glycerol	
47. Citric and fatty acid esters of glycerol	
48. Potassium chloride	
49. Calcium chloride	
50. Monostarch phosphate	Limited by good manufacturing practice
51. Distarch phosphate esterified with sodium trimetaphosphate; distarch phosphate esterified with phosphorus oxychloride	
52. Phosphated distarch phosphate	
53. Acetylated distarch phosphate	
54. Starch acetate esterified with acetic anhydride	
55. Acetylated distarch adipate	
56. Hydroxypropyl starch	
57. Hydroxypropyl distarch phosphate	
58. Starch sodium octenyl succinate	

Harmful Substances in Food Regulations

Schedule 1 – Maximum Concentration of Certain Substances Present in Specified Foods

A Item	B Substance	C Description of substance	D Description of food	E Maximum concentration
1.	Aflatoxin	Group of bis-furanocoumarin compounds and	Any food other than peanut or its products	15 micrograms per kilogram of the food.

	includes aflatoxin B_1, B_2, G_1, G_2, M_1, M_2, P_1 and aflatoxicol	Peanuts or peanut products	20 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
2. Amoxycillin		Muscle, liver and kidney of all food animals Milk	50 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 4 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
3. Ampicillin		Muscle, liver and kidney of all food animals Milk	50 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 4 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
4. Bacitracin		Muscle, liver and kidney of bovine, porcine and poultry Milk	500 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 500 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
5. Benzylpenicillin		Muscle, liver and kidney of all food Animals Milk	50 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 4 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
6. Carbadox	Quinoxaline-2-carboxylic acid	Muscle of porcine Liver of porcine	5 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 30 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
7. Ceftiofur	Desfuroylceftiofur	Muscle of bovine and porcine Liver of bovine and porcine Kidney of bovine and porcine Milk	1000 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 2000 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 6000 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
8. Chlortetracycline	Sum of the parent drug and its 4-epimers	Muscle of all food animals Liver of all food animals Kidney of all food animals Milk	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 300 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 600 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.

9. Cloxacillin		Muscle, liver and kidney of all food animals	300 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Milk	30 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
10. Colistin		Muscle and liver of bovine, porcine and poultry	150 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Kidney of bovine, porcine and poultry	200 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Milk	50 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
11. Danofloxacin		Muscle of bovine and poultry	200 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Muscle of porcine	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Liver of bovine and poultry	400 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Liver of porcine	50 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Kidney of bovine and poultry	400 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Kidney of porcine	200 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
12. Dicloxacillin		Muscle, liver and kidney of all food animals	300 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Milk	30 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
13. Dihydro-streptomycin	Sum of dihydrostrepto-mycin and streptomycin	Muscle and liver of bovine, porcine and poultry	500 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Kidney of bovine, porcine and poultry	1000 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Milk	200 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
14. Dimetridazole		Muscle, liver and kidney of porcine and poultry	5 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
15. Doxycycline		Muscle of bovine, porcine and poultry	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Liver of bovine, porcine and poultry	300 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Kidney of bovine,	600 micrograms per

		porcine and poultry	kilogram of the food.
16. Enrofloxacin	Sum of enrofloxacin and ciprofloxacin	Muscle of bovine, porcine and poultry	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Liver of bovine	300 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Liver of porcine and poultry	200 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Kidney of bovine	200 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Kidney of porcine and poultry	300 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Milk	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
17. Erucic acid	The fatty acid cis-docos-13-enoic acid	Any food to which oil or fat or a mixture thereof has been added	5 per centum by weight of their fatty acid content of all the oils and fats in the food.
		Any oil or fat or any mixture thereof	5 per centum by weight of their fatty acid content.
18. Erythromycin		Muscle, liver and kidney of bovine, porcine and poultry	400 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Milk	40 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
19. Flumequine		Muscle and liver of bovine, porcine and poultry	500 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Kidney of bovine, porcine and poultry	3000 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
20. Furaltadone		Muscle of porcine and poultry	0 microgram per kilogram of the food.
21. Furazolidone		Muscle, liver and kidney of bovine, porcine and poultry	0 microgram per kilogram of the food.
22. Gentamicin		Muscle of bovine, porcine and poultry	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Liver of bovine and porcine	2000 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Kidney of bovine and porcine	5000 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Liver and kidney of poultry	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Milk	200 micrograms per

			kilogram of the food.
23. Ivermectin	22, 23-Dihydro-avermectin B1a (H2B1a)	Liver of bovine Liver of porcine	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 15 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
24. Josamycin		Muscle and liver of poultry Kidney of poultry	200 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 400 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
25. Kitasamycin		Muscle, liver and kidney of porcine and poultry	200 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
26. Lincomycin		Muscle of bovine, porcine and poultry Liver of bovine, porcine and poultry Kidney of bovine, porcine and poultry Milk	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 500 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 1500 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 150 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
26A. Malachite green	Sum of malachite green and leucomalachite green	Any food (including live fish, live reptiles and live poultry)	0 microgram per kilogram of the food.
27. Metronidazole		Muscle, liver and kidney of porcine and poultry	0 microgram per kilogram of the food.
28. Neomycin		Muscle and liver of bovine, porcine and poultry Kidney of bovine, porcine and poultry Milk	500 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 10000 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 500 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
29. Oxolinic acid		Muscle of bovine, porcine and poultry Liver and kidney of bovine, porcine and poultry	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 150 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
30. Oxytetracycline	Sum of parent drug and its 4-epimer	Muscle of all food animals Liver of all food animals	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food. 300 micrograms per kilogram of the food.

		Kidney of all food animals	600 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Milk	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
31. Sarafloxacin		Muscle of poultry	10 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Liver and kidney of poultry	80 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
32. Spectinomycin		Muscle of bovine, porcine and poultry	500 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Liver of bovine, porcine and poultry	2000 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Kidney of bovine, porcine and poultry	5000 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Milk	200 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
33. Streptomycin	Sum of dihydro-streptomycin and streptomycin	Muscle and liver of bovine, porcine and poultry	500 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Kidney of bovine, porcine and poultry	1000 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Milk	200 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
34. Sulfonamides	Sum of all substances belonging to the sulfonamide group	Muscle, liver and kidney of all food animals	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Milk	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
35. Tetracycline	Sum of parent drug and its 4-epimer	Muscle of all food animals	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Liver of all food animals	300 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Kidney of all food animals	600 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Milk	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
36. Tiamulin	Sum of metabolites that may be hydrolysed to 8-alpha-hydroxymutilin	Muscle of porcine and poultry	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Liver of porcine	500 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
		Liver of poultry	1000 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
37. Trimethoprim		Muscle, liver and kidney of bovine,	50 micrograms per kilogram of the food.

	porcine and poultry	
	Milk	50 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
38. Tylosin	Muscle, liver and kidney of bovine, porcine and poultry	200 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
	Milk	50 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
39. Virginiamycin	Muscle of porcine	100 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
	Liver of porcine	300 micrograms per kilogram of the food.
	Kidney of porcine	400 micrograms per kilogram of the food.

Schedule 2 – Prohibited Substances

1. Dienoestrol ((E,E)-4,4'-(diethylideneethylene) diphenol) including salts and esters thereof.
2. Diethylstilboestrol ((E)-B-diethylstilbene-4,4'-diol) including salts and esters thereof.
3. Hexoestrol (meso-4,4'-(1,2-diethylethylene) diphenol) including salts and esters thereof.
4. Avoparcin
5. Clenbuterol
6. Chloramphenicol
7. Salbutamol

Preservatives in Food Regulations

Hong Kong's amended Preservatives Regulation became effective July 1, 2008. Compared to the original regulation, there is one preservative (propyl para-hydroxybenzoate) no longer allowed for use, and eleven additional preservatives permitted in the new standard, as listed below:

Guaiac resin
Isopropyl citrates
Stannous chloride
Tertiary butylhydroquinone (TBHQ)
Thiodipropionic acid
Dimethyl dicarbonate
Ferrous gluconate
Formic acid
Hexamethylene tetramine
Lysozyme
Pimaricin

Another change brought about by the regulation amendment is the adoption of a food category system based on Codex's GSFA (Codex General Standard for Food Additives). The amended regulation also incorporated those preservatives and antioxidants, as well as their permitted levels of use, in GSFA.

To help trade better understand the amended regulation, the HKG issued a “User Guideline”, which provides the definition of each food category of the newly adopted food category system. Also, the Guidelines include some questions and answers pertaining to the amended regulations. The full Guidelines are available at the following website: http://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/whatsnew_fstr/files/User_Guideline_e.pdf

Hong Kong’s Preservatives Regulation adopts the principle of a positive list. In other words, Hong Kong does not allow any preservatives or antioxidants in foods if they are not expressly permitted by the Preservatives Regulation. The list of permitted preservatives and their maximum permitted levels may be retrieved from the following website: http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/subleg/negative/ln085-08-e.pdf

More information on the amended preservatives Regulation, pleases see gain reports HK#7018 and HK#8021.