

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

**Date:** October 25, 2021

**Report Number:** MC2021-0038

**Report Name:** COVID-19 Testing of Imported Foods and their Packaging

**Country:** Macau

**Post:** Hong Kong

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

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**Report Highlights:**

Seeking to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus through imported foods, the Macau government has been testing chilled and frozen foods and their packaging. After one year of monitoring, Macau did not identify any virus-contaminated shipments.

Following reports on China’s finding of COVID-19 virus-contamination in imported frozen foods or their packaging in mid-2020, Macau started testing various types of cold chain food imports and their packaging at the point of entry from different countries/regions.

The Macau government adopts a three-pronged approach in minimizing the risk of imported shipments spreading COVID-19. First, operators at inspection centers are required to sanitize the outer packaging of all imported cold-chain shipments before shipments enter and leave the inspection centers. Second, the food safety authority, Municipal Affairs Bureau, collects samples from the inner packaging for random checking. The Macau government will not allow shipments to be released until results are available. Reportedly, results are available between one to two days. Thirdly, in cases of known contaminated shipments from a specific plant confirmed by any foreign food safety authority, the Macau government will temporarily suspend shipments from the plant in question.

The Macau government reported that the Bureau on average collects 250 daily samples for COVID-19 testing. The outer packaging of over 70,000 boxes of cold-chained foods is sanitized per week. Between June 2020 and July 2021, the Municipal Affairs Bureau, collected and tested about 50,000 samples of food and packaging. All samples showed negative COVID-19 test results.



Source: IAM Macau - Macau government official taking samples



Source: IAM - Disinfection at inspection center



Label showing outer packaging "has been disinfected"

**Attachments:**

No Attachments.