

Far Ocean and its Chief Financial Officer sentenced to \$223,000 and \$155,000 respectively for multiple offences under the Wholesome Meat and Fish Act

On 20 October 2023, Far Ocean Sea Products (Private) Limited (“Far Ocean”), a food processing company and food retailer, was convicted on 32 charges under the Wholesale Meat and Fish Act (“WMFA”). Other than the 32 charges Far Ocean was convicted on, they faced another 97 charges that were taken into consideration for the purpose of sentencing. On 20 November 2023, Far Ocean was sentenced to \$223,000 for the 32 proceeded charges. In total, the 129 charges which Far Ocean faced spanned across four main categories:

- i. Failing to mark and date label meat, fish and seafood products with their expiry dates;
- ii. Labelling meat, fish and seafood products which were in its possession for the purpose of sale with misleading labels – namely, by labelling these products with expiry dates that had been extended from the original expiry date, which would mislead customers into believing that the extended expiry date had been approved by the Director-General of Food Administration (“Director-General”) when such extension had not in fact been sought from or approved by the Director-General;
- iii. Operating an unlicensed food processing room; and
- iv. Obstructing authorised officers in the execution of their duties.

2 Quok Ruiming, Jordan, one of Far Ocean’s Directors at the material time, faced a total of 128 charges under the WMFA (i.e., the same charges as Far Ocean except for the obstruction charge). He was convicted on 31 of these charges and sentenced to \$155,000 as he was a Director of Far Ocean at the time of Far Ocean’s commission of the offences and oversaw Far Ocean’s Production and Logistics Departments which dealt with the meat, fish and seafood products concerned.

Case details

3 In July 2019, officers from the Singapore Food Agency (“SFA”) inspected Far Ocean’s premises and found approximately 5.88 metric tons of assorted meat, fish and seafood products which subsequently formed the subject matter of 127 charges. Meat, fish and seafood products which had not been marked and date labelled with their expiry dates were found at the premises. Expired meat, fish and seafood products, including those that had been expired for more than three years, were also found at the premises. These expired products had been stored together with unexpired products in the same

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room. Investigations revealed that Far Ocean had also misleadingly labelled meat, fish and seafood products, including those which had already expired, with extended expiry dates.

4 In addition, Far Ocean operated an unlicensed food processing room. Although SFA officers sealed the room for further inspection it was found that Far Ocean tampered with the said room, and had washed and cleaned up the room to prevent detection that it had been unlawfully used as a food processing room.



Tampering of unlicensed food processing room: Equipment rearranged and wrapped with plastic covers, and the room washed and cleaned up after it had already been sealed off by SFA officers. (Photo: SFA)

Labelling requirements

5 Under the Wholesome Meat and Fish Act, every pack of meat, fish and seafood product must be labelled in the prescribed manner and must not be labelled with any information that is false, inaccurate, or misleading. Offenders are liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both and, in the case of a second or subsequent conviction, to a fine not exceeding \$100,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years or to both.

Authorised use of premises

6 All SFA-licensed premises shall conduct activities within the licensed premises in accordance with the conditions of the licence. Any unauthorised use of the premises is prohibited unless prior approval is given by the SFA. Any person found guilty shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term not

exceeding 12 months or to both.

Obstruction of justice

7 Any person who obstructs, hinders or impedes authorised officers in the execution of their duties shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both.

8 Members of the public who come across such illegal activities are encouraged to provide feedback via our online feedback form (www.sfa.gov.sg/feedback) or to call our SFA Contact Centre at 6805 2871 with details for our follow-up investigations.

**Issued by the Singapore Food Agency
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