

### **SFA's statement on Insects for human consumption**

Insects are part of the natural diet for many animals that are reared for human consumption, such as feed for poultry or fish. While the use of insects for direct human consumption is relatively new in Singapore, several species of edible insects have traditionally been consumed in parts of Asia. For example, insects such as silkworm pupae and crickets are traditionally consumed in Korea and Thailand respectively.

In recent years, the commercial farming of insects for human consumption and animal feed has been promoted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and has received commercial interest. SFA keeps abreast of such developments in food production and innovations and has received industry queries on the import of insects as food or animal feed. There is currently interest from more than 10 companies in insect food product imports or insect food farming.

SFA has taken reference from the European Union and countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Korea and Thailand which have allowed the consumption of certain insect species as food as well as conducted a thorough scientific review and assessed that specific species of insects with a history of human consumption can be allowed for use as food.

To safeguard food safety, we will put in place requirements which companies intending to import or farm insects for human consumption or livestock feed have to meet.

These include:

- Providing documentary proof that the imported insects are farmed in regulated establishments with food safety controls and ensuring that the substrate used for rearing or feeding insects is not contaminated with pathogens or harmful contaminants.
- Insect species without a history of human consumption are considered novel food and companies would be required to conduct and submit safety assessments for SFA's review in line with our novel food regulatory framework before they can be allowed for sale.
- As with other food available in our market, insect products would be subjected to food safety testing. Food that is found to be non-compliant with our food safety regulations will not be allowed for sale.

SFA is thus seeking feedback from the food and animal feed industry, as well as interested parties, on the import conditions and additional pre-licensing requirements for insects and insect products. The public consultation started on 5 Oct and will end on 4 Dec 2022. As the insect industry is nascent, we will review the regulatory approach regularly based on new scientific developments.

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