

Help available to illegal street hawkers facing financial difficulties (The Straits Times, 1 June 2023)

We refer to the letter, “Illegal hawkers can be helped and not just fined” (May 10), by Mr Foo Sing Kheng.

The Singapore Food Agency (SFA) agrees with Mr Foo that some of these illegal street hawkers require financial assistance, and we work closely with the Ministry of Social and Family Development and its network of partner social service agencies and community partners to assist those facing genuine financial difficulties.

Those who are assessed to be best served through a street hawking licence and can obtain approval from the relevant land agency for a specific operating location are permitted to sell food items, including roasted chestnuts.

We also agree with Mr Foo that illegal hawking of food poses food safety risks to consumers. This is why SFA holds a serious view of illegal hawking activities and takes the necessary enforcement actions against illegal hawkers.

SFA took enforcement action against Mr Tan Hee Meng as he had illegally hawked food in various locations between May 2019 and March 2023.

SFA had repeatedly engaged him and advised him to seek assistance from social service agencies. Mr Tan unfortunately refused and continued to engage in illegal hawking activities despite numerous verbal warnings and reminders.

Siti Suriani Abdul Majid

Senior Director

Joint Operations Division

Singapore Food Agency

Replies

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