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DOH hopes to discuss Chinese medicine in cross-strait talks

TAIPEI, Taiwan -- Taiwan hopes to include the regulation of Chinese medicine and animal feed safety in the next round of cross-Taiwan Strait consultations on food safety, Department of Health (DOH) Minister Yeh Chin-chuan said yesterday.

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Yeh made the remarks while reporting to a legislative committee on a cross-strait agreement on food safety signed last month in Taipei.

In its inspection of food products from China, the DOH in recent years has found levels of bleachers, artificial sweeteners, preservatives, residual pesticides and animal drugs in excess of allowable standards in Taiwan, Yeh said.

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“The government will communicate with China on these issues within the framework of the cross strait food safety agreement,” he added.

Around 90 percent of all Chinese medicines imported by Taiwan are from China, 80 percent of which are usually consumed by the public, he said.

The DOH will select some of these medicines for priority consultations, he added.

He also said that animal feed could also end up in the systems of people via the food chain and could pose a public health hazard if it is tainted.

As for the issue of adulterated milk imported from China recently, 19 Taiwan importers have asked for the DOH's assistance to seek compensation from China, he added.

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