

Bird's nest exporters get 'no tag' note

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FEDERATION of the Edible Bird's Nest Merchants Association has received official notification from Veterinary Services Department (VSD) that the radio frequency identification (RFID) tag is not compulsory for bird's nest to be exported to China.

This has given rise to the hope that bird's nest can be exported to China before the Mid-Autumn Festival.

The Chinese government last July banned bird's nest from Malaysia after it found high level of nitrate in the "red bird's nests", claiming that it had contravened China's health standards.

Federation president Datuk Tok Teng Sai said its representatives will call on Chinese Ambassador to Malaysia Chai Xi

to convey the traders' wish to see the issues surrounding the ban resolved before the Mid-Autumn Festival, which falls on Sept 30 this year.

Tok told *Oriental Daily News* on Saturday that the federation on Friday received official notification from the VSD director-general on the lifting of the RFID requirement.

"The next thing we will do is to visit the Chinese Embassy. We will brief the ambassador on the latest development, and to seek their assistance to overcome the problem we encountered on the export of bird's nest to China as soon as possible," he said.

He said bird's nest merchants hoped that the delicacy can hit the Chinese

market again before the Mid-Autumn (Mooncake) Festival as bird's nest products had been a popular gift item among the mainland Chinese during festive occasions.

On the remark by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon on Saturday that the Chinese government has not imposed the RFID tag requirement, which contradicts Deputy Agriculture, Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Chua Tee Yong earlier statement, Tok said he did not want to waste time dwelling into the past.

What is important is to resolve the problems at hand to get bird's nest exported to China again as soon as possible, he said.