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cc: (bcc: Jeannie LEE/MTI/SINGOV)
Subject: (EMBARGOED) Speech by Mr Yeo Cheow Tong, 31 Dec, 11.30am

Singapore Government PRESS RELEASE

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**SPEECH BY MR YEO CHEOW TONG,
MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND MINISTER FOR THE
ENVIRONMENT,
AT THE OPENING OF NTUC FOODFARE'S FOODCOURT
AT ADMIRALTY,
ON THURSDAY, 31 DECEMBER 1998, AT 11.30 AM**

I am happy to join you here today for the opening of Admiralty Foodcourt. When Mrs Yu-Foo telephoned to invite me to do the opening, she told me this is the largest food court set up by NTUC Foodfare so far.

NTUC Foodfare

Size is indeed important in the case of food courts, because patrons can enjoy a wide range of food. But it is equally important that the food court has a clean eating environment, and sells food that offers good value for money.

Singaporeans enjoy a high standard of living today. Consequently, gone are the days when we are prepared to put up with wet and slippery floors, and dirty and oily tables.

I am glad that NTUC Foodfare recognises this. It has organised courses on food preparation for its staff and operators, and ensured that the housekeeping is excellent. As a result, my Ministry has given its outlets "A" grading for their cleanliness, housekeeping and hygiene. This is commendable since only 37% of the eating establishments in Singapore have achieved a "B" grading and above.

Keeping food prices stable

NTUC Foodfare is poised to become a significant player in the foodcourt business. In doing so, it will be able to do for the cooked food sector what NTUC Fairprice has done for the supermarket sector, and that is, help to stabilise prices.

Mrs Yu-Foo has assured me that the food sold in NTUC Foodfare outlets will be reasonably priced, and consumers can get good value for money. I would strongly urge stallholders in other food courts and hawker centres to do likewise, and price their food reasonably too. Singaporeans are today facing tough economic times, and are now more cost conscious. They are therefore likely to avoid hawkers who increase their prices for no good reason. Hawkers who wish to retain their regular customers and attract new ones should therefore look seriously into how they can give their customers better value.

Concluding remarks

NTUC Foodfare is operating in a highly competitive industry – competing with numerous hawker centres, food courts and coffee shops. There is no magic formula for success. What the management and staff of Foodfare must do is to keep on looking for better ways to provide clean and healthy food at reasonable prices.

With that, let me conclude by wishing NTUC Foodfare and Admiralty Foodcourt all success in their operations. It is now my pleasure to declare the

NTUC Foodfare Admiralty Foodcourt open.