

Watching Over Local Vegetable Farms

Meet Pang Jing Ren, a Senior Executive Manager in the Plant Section of the Agri Establishment Regulation Group in AVA. Jing Ren is part of a surveillance, inspection, and monitoring team that ensures local vegetable farms are producing safe and pest-free crops at an optimal level.



Hi, I'm Jing Ren!

What exactly do you do at work?

My teammates and I inspect vegetable farms to ensure compliance with farm licensing conditions, as well as food safety and plant health requirements. We collect samples which are sent to the laboratory for testing, to ensure that the vegetables are safe for consumption and to keep pest infection at bay. We also track important farm data such as productivity figures and pesticide usage.

Tell us about a memorable project you worked on.

In 2016, there was a Diamondback Moth (DBM) outbreak in several local vegetable farms. Despite our heavy workload, my team took on the additional role of assisting the affected farmers. We handed out DBM pheromone lure traps to these farmers and collected them on a weekly basis to monitor the effectiveness of the traps. Our hard work paid off. The traps developed by AVA worked well and the pest problems were substantially alleviated.

In addition, I was in a task force that worked closely with a local farm to resolve its pest problems. The task force helped to monitor and facilitate the farm's pesticide regime via the rotational use of pesticides. Vegetables were also sampled and tested during production to ensure pesticide residue levels were within safe limits. It was an invaluable experience for me to work alongside the farmer and AVA's senior officers in the task force.

In what ways do you work with other AVA Groups, public agencies, and AVA's customers?

We conduct joint investigations with other public agencies, including the Singapore Land Authority, Ministry of Manpower, and National Environment Agency on various farm issues. For example, we work together to ensure that farms do not use their premises for illegal purposes such as earthworks or workers' quarters. We also look out for any potential surface run-off discharge that may enter our public drains.

Share some lesser-known facts about your job.

When I tell people that AVA inspects vegetable farms, most readily assume that I am referring to traditional outdoor farms. What many do not know is that we are beginning to see more high-tech indoor farms in Singapore, and we conduct inspection and sampling at these farms too!

What do you find enjoyable or satisfying about your work?

I find the work I do satisfying because we help to ensure that our locally produced vegetables are safe for consumption. Job satisfaction also comes from the way I contribute to food supply resilience in Singapore. Our assistance and expertise help farmers to control plant pests, which can adversely impact farm productivity.



Jing Ren inspects an indoor vegetable farm to ensure compliance with farm licensing conditions as well as food safety and plant health requirements.