



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

STDF Working Group Meeting, 29-30 October 2018

FAO Information on SPS-related activities and capacity development materials

FAO Food Safety and Quality Unit, HQ

Codex Pesticide MRLs: an analysis of the extent of harmonization

For many years, countries have highlighted trade problems linked to differences in regulatory limits for pesticide residues imposed by different countries. In light of these concerns, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) decided to carry out a study that could systematically assess the level of harmonization with Codex Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for pesticides in major markets. In light of the very limited overall alignment observed, the analysis is now continuing to investigate the underlying reasons that could lead to divergent decisions concerning MRLs (e.g. differences in the risk assessment process; risk management policy/decision, timing of MRLs adoption etc.). In parallel, the analysis is also looking at the impact that non-harmonization with Codex MRLs might have on international trade and on developing countries' economies in particular.

FAO work on reducing antimicrobial resistance from food chain perspective

FAO recognizes that to implement the Global Action Plan on AMR and the FAO Action Plan on AMR, a collaborative approach including multiple sectors and political and economic entities and disciplines is essential. Therefore, FAO works closely with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) in tripartite initiatives as well as with other partners (private sector, academia, civil society, financial institutions). FAO provides assistance to countries in regulating and monitoring the use of antimicrobials and in preventing and minimizing the development of antimicrobial resistance across different sectors and disciplines (aquatic and terrestrial animal health, welfare and production; food and feed safety; crop production and protection; water and land stewardship; legal affairs) at world, regional and national levels. There is also much work conducted that relates to AMR but has broader impacts by controlling disease at the source including animal contact-related zoonoses, transboundary animal diseases, and foodborne diseases. Challenges for addressing awareness include establishing data-gathering mechanisms for a global baseline and tracking changes in awareness and practices as indicators of progress towards implementing the Global Action Plan on AMR. FAO is currently exploring options for a global survey with potential collaborators and service providers and proposed to seek funding for global polls in 2020, 2025, and 2030. FAO works with a wide range of stakeholder groups to improve awareness of AMR, focusing more in-depth efforts on two priority stakeholder groups on animal-food production side: animal health workers and food producers. Current work targets both top-down and bottom-up actions to drive change. On top down track, FAO supports national authorities (policy makers, regulatory bodies, AMR steering committees /NAP working groups), motivating civil

society to encourage national authorities to cultivate a more enabling environment for improved governance, surveillance and data collection, and for implementing safe, sustainable and progressive changes in animal health and agriculture. Resources on AMR are available to national authorities to incorporate related actions into national and regional programs. The bottom-up "FAO boots on the ground" efforts on AMR, which are heavily dependent on extra-budgetary project funds, target food producers and animal health workers to promote good practices and responsible antimicrobial use. This work is focused particularly on capacity building in low- and middle-income countries in Africa and Asia, where funding has been granted and there is a disproportionate burden of infectious disease and vulnerability to the consequences of AMR. FAO welcomes support to meet increasing demand for educational assistance, and encourages IACG and other partners to join forces in mapping existing programs where there may be opportunities to collaborate to increase resource efficiency with a focus on good practices where elements on antimicrobial use and AMR can be incorporated.

FAO guidance on risk-based inspection

FAO is in the process of updating existing and producing new guidance on risk based inspection. Besides the recently published "Risk based imported food controls" (available in English (<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5381e.pdf>), French (<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5381f.pdf>) and Spanish (<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5381s.pdf>), work is ongoing on: - the design and implementation of modern risk-based meat inspection systems, - risk based fish inspection (update of an earlier publication)

New work was initiated in September 2018 on risk categorization approaches as a support to inspection planning. The objective is to review current approaches used by member countries and propose a set of principles, supported by practical examples suitable to different contexts, given varying capacities to access, collect and analyse relevant data, to encourage gradual improvement of planning and data collection processes.

FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment Tool

FAO and WHO have worked jointly to offer Member Countries a tool to assess, in structured, transparent and measurable ways, the performance of their food control system throughout the entire food chain, identify priority areas for capacity development, and measure and evaluate progress over time. FAO and WHO have finalized the content and approach of the food control system assessment tool. To date, the tool has been tested in ten countries in Africa, Asia and the Near East. The experiences and feedback from field-testing have been incorporated in an updated version, which is currently in press and expected for release in 2018. Translation in Arabic, French and Spanish are also in process. This tool will be supported by a package allowing meaningful use for self-assessment. Following its publication, it is expected that the tool will be regularly reviewed and updated based on feedback received from users in countries or directly by FAO and WHO. To facilitate widespread use of the FAO/WHO Assessment Tool, training is envisaged to develop a pool of reliable facilitators

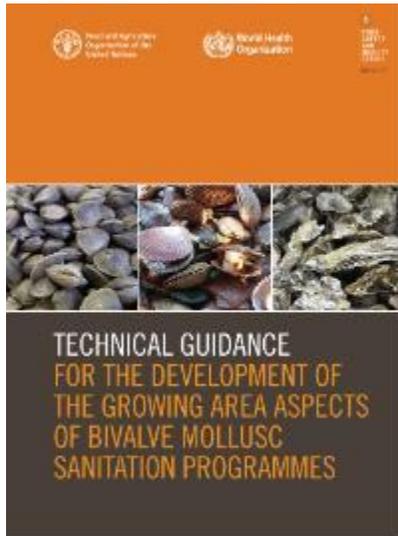
Strengthening chemical and microbiological risk assessment capabilities of English-speaking Caribbean countries

AGFF held a series of three workshops in 2018/2019 to strengthen the chemical and microbiological risk assessment capabilities of English-speaking Caribbean countries.

AGFF has embarked on a programme of collaboration with COMESA with a focus on harmonization of food safety regulations. Within that context, the establishment and implementation of Microbiological Criteria (MC) for foods and their harmonization (on the basis of science) among its member states has been identified as priority. A 3-part training series was held (20-24 March, 2-7 June, 1-5 October 2018) on microbiological risk management (MRA), including risk profiling and MC, with the aim of enabling COMESA countries to appropriately establish, implement and interpret MC. It is envisaged that the workshop would be followed by national level follow up and then by a second phase in 2019 to determine whether COMESA would move ahead with harmonized regulations. Additional activities to cover other food safety issues of key importance to the region are also being planned.

New publication

Technical guidance for the development of the growing area aspects of Bivalve Mollusc Sanitation Programmes *Food Safety and Quality Series No. 5*



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Serial Title: [Food Safety and Quality Series](#);
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Agrovoc: [Bivalvia](#); [mollusc culture](#); [fish products](#); [fishery products](#); [international trade](#); [microbiological analysis](#); [health hazards](#); [codex alimentarius](#); [standards](#); [guidelines](#);

SDG: 02. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture;

Abstract:

International trade has been the main driving factor for the rapid growth of the bivalve mollusc production industry during the last six decades, growing from nearly one million tonnes in 1950 to 16.1 million tonnes in 2015. In recognition of the extensive trade of this commodity the Codex Alimentarius Commission has developed a Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscs as well as guidance in the Codex Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products on the steps needed to be taken at all stages of food chain in order to produce a product that meets the Codex Standard. However, to facilitate implementation of the Codex guidance, countries identified the need for more information on how to implement Codex guidance in their specific context and specifically how to establish and monitor a bivalve mollusc growing area.

This FAO/WHO Technical Guidance for the Development of the Growing Area Aspects of Bivalve Mollusc Sanitation Programmes aims to address that need. The focus of the guidance is the primary production of molluscs for consumption as live or raw bivalves and in particular how to manage

microbiological hazards at this stage. Acknowledging that managing chemical hazards, toxin phytoplankton and biotoxins also presents big challenges, reference has also been provided to relevant Codex standards and other international guidance.

The guidance was developed from a technical and scientific perspective and using a risk based approach. It has been driven by the intent and experience of existing programmes, rather than the details of these programmes and in line with the requirements of the Codex Code of Practice. The guidance is primarily aimed at the authorities responsible for the development, implementation and application of a bivalve mollusc sanitation programme, while highlighting the collaboration and agreements required between different partners including local authorities, regulatory agencies and laboratories to implement such a programme.

- PDF URL: <http://www.fao.org/3/CA1213EN/ca1213en.pdf>

- Card page: <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/CA1213EN>

Food Safety work in the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Normative work

- Development of food safety indicators (2017-19)
 - Regional consultation completed (<http://www.fao.org/3/i9459en/I9459EN.pdf>)
 - Pilots for validation of selected indicators in progress in 4 countries

Capacity building

- **Risk-based import control¹ (2017-18)**
 - Capacity building of relevant organizations in 4 countries completed (<http://www.fao.org/3/ca0286en/CA0286EN.pdf>)
- **Enhancing participation in Codex food standards formulation (2016-21)**
 - 5-year project funded by MAFF, Japan
 - Participating countries : All 10 ASEAN member states
 - Two training workshops: National (Lao PDR) and Regional (in December)
 - Technical collaboration with ASEAN Risk Assessment Centre established
- **Improving food safety through a One Health approach in three countries (2018-19)**
 - Nepal
 - Upgrading the food safety policy and legislation (<http://www.fao.org/3/bu682en/BU682EN.pdf>)
 - Piloting the SAARC GAP regional standard for horticulture crops
 - Papua New Guinea
 - Reducing veterinary drug use in livestock and fish value chains
 - Assessing the technical capacity for SPS measures
 - Vietnam
 - Building legal capacities on crop production and SPS
 - Optimizing pesticide use through a clean agriculture approach
- **Development of standards and scheme for GAP implementation and certification (2018-19)**
 - Country of implementation : Cambodia
 - Baseline assessment for GAP conducted

¹ Developed around the risk-based imported food control manual (FAO, 2016; <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5381e.pdf>)

- National GAP domain identified
- Training activities to be implemented in 2019

Food Safety work in the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia Addressing Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in Europe and Central Asian countries

The critical role of antimicrobial drugs in food and agriculture and threats arising with their misuse are recognized by European and Central Asia countries. FAO is working with Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan under the project entitled “Reducing the advance of Antimicrobial Resistance in food and agriculture” funded by Russian Federation to support the countries in the development and effective implementation of National Action Plans. The project focuses on improving awareness, regulatory frameworks and technical capacities on AMR and AMU with a multi-sectoral approach on food, agriculture and the environment. An inception workshop for the project was hosted by Russian Federation in Moscow on 18-19 September 2018 with the representatives from the beneficiary countries. During the workshop details of the project, status of the National Action Plans, legal approach to AMR, and practical considerations for AMR surveillance were discussed.

At the regional level, FAO is collaborating with WHO-Euro and OIE to strengthen capacities, knowledge and understanding of AMR issues, and actions needed, in the food and agriculture sectors. Promoting close cooperation and multi-sectoral collaboration with health professionals and assisting the countries to develop National Action Plans on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) are central elements.

The upcoming World Antibiotic Awareness Week, 12 – 16 November, 2018 will presents important opportunities for information dissemination, and FAO-REU will support countries with a tripartite (FAO/WHO/OIE) statement and a resource information pack on AMR.

Strengthening official food safety controls and standard-setting in the Central European and Central Asian region

Work is ongoing to respond to countries requests for support to strengthen official food control systems, and strengthen regulatory systems to protect consumers and enhance market access opportunities. The range of country driven requests cover a range of priority issues, including, food safety risk assessment, risk-based food inspection, GMO surveillance, strengthening border inspection posts and controls, building laboratory capacity, food safety risk management and institutional framework, registration and control of veterinary drugs. Currently, support is being provided to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Tajikistan, Republic of Moldova, Kazakhstan, and discussions are ongoing in other countries. These activities are implemented in close cooperation with concerned national Ministries, and with other partners, and UN agencies active

Addressing capacity development needs to ensure effective participation in Codex and uptake of Codex standards is also an important priority. The Codex Secretariat, FAO and WHO will support a Regional Technical Workshop for National Codex Contact Points in Kazakhstan, 7 – 9 November 2018. The objective of this workshop is to support skills and knowledge development to increase practical capacity and ability of staff working in national Codex systems to operate successfully in the Codex international

standard setting environment. It is also an occasion to discuss matters of interest to the region ahead of the next FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee session and to provide input from the region to the 2020-2025 Codex Strategic Plan (SP).

Through the FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are being supported to strengthen their national Codex programmes and capacities for more effective participation in Codex standard-setting work.

**Two international FAO/WHO initiatives and events under the theme:
“The Future of Food Safety - Transforming knowledge into action
for people, economies and the environment”**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12-13 February 2019
Geneva, Switzerland, 23-24 April 2019**

Two interconnected international food safety events to be held in early 2019 are organized by the FAO and WHO in close collaboration with the African Union Commission and the World Trade Organization under the theme **“The Future of Food Safety - Transforming knowledge into action for people, economies and the environment”**.

Despite a growing recognition of the fundamental role food safety plays in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the main objectives of the UN Decade on Action on Nutrition, efforts to strengthen capacities for food safety remain fragmented and the gains, particularly in many developing countries, have been well below expectations. Adding to this challenge are the impacts of climate variations and extremes, new technologies, as well as evolving food production and supply systems. The safety of food sources depends on our collective ability to anticipate and be prepared for the future challenges. The priority issues identified by this Conference and its call for concerted, multi-sectoral actions will reinforce global collaboration and help ensure that no one is left behind.

The opening event, **“The First FAO/WHO/AU International Conference on Food Safety”**, to be held on 12-13 February 2019 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, organized in collaboration with the African Union Commission will engage around 600 participants and will include a Ministerial segment. The objective is to raise awareness, discuss and identify key actions and strategies to address current and future challenges to food safety emerging globally and to strengthen commitment at the highest political level to scale up food safety in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with significant contribution to several UN Sustainable Development Goals (2, 3, 8, 12, 13 and 17) and to UN Decade on Action on Nutrition.

The concluding event, **“The FAO/WHO/WTO International Forum on Food Safety and Trade”**, to be held on 23-24 April 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland, in collaboration with the World Trade Organization, will address the trade-related aspects and challenges of food safety.

The two meetings will result in a high-level political statement advocating for increased and better-coordinated collaboration and support to improve food safety globally. The meetings will engage participants representing various sectors in governments with relevance for food safety, including food and agriculture, health and trade at the level of ministers and senior policy makers. Representatives from the United Nations and other international and regional agencies, development partners as well as

representatives of non-State actors representing food producers, consumers, research and academia are encouraged to participate.

Further information can be obtained from (<http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/future-food-safety>).
On-line registration will be set up further.

FAO LIVESTOCK TECHNICAL NETWORK

Series of Webinar/Seminars on Animal Health Risk Analysis

27 October - 2 November - 7 November 2016, from 12.00 am - 13.00 pm (GMT +2)

Online access to the webinar: http://fao.adobeconnect.com/risk_analysis/