

Building Food Safety Capacity through Public-Private Partnerships in Thailand and Viet Nam

STDF



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This project gave SIAM-MAKRO the tools to launch a new comprehensive food safety management programme. With this system in place, we've seen a downward trend in detection of contaminants and product rejections. And we're more confident to buy from small-scale farmers and processors.



Mr Phan Quoc Manh Hung,
Former Owner, Hung Phat Joint
Stock Company, Viet Nam

Being part of the STDF project was a game changer for my company. It was the springboard to get HACCP and ISO22000:2005 certification. This enabled us to export fruit and vegetables to the EU, Japan and the US.

The why In Thailand and Viet Nam, small-scale producers, processors and exporters involved in fresh fruit and vegetable value chains saw opportunities to access higher-value domestic and export markets but struggled to meet international food safety standards. Support from the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) was the catalyst for a public-private partnership to develop effective food safety management systems based on Codex standards. Under the project, Michigan State University (MSU) teamed up with Kasetsart University (Thailand) and Can Tho University (Viet Nam), together with farmers, processors, cooperatives, retailers and government agencies. The project ran from 2011 to 2013, with a total budget of US\$719,275 (including US\$581,665 from the STDF). The goal was to strengthen food safety capacity for primary production and manufacturing, using the structured, step-by-step approach that is at the heart of the **GFSI Global Markets Programme**. The training modules developed continue to be updated and used today.

The How

MSU developed and delivered tailored education and training programmes on fresh and processed fruit and vegetable value chains, based on GFSI's Global Markets Protocol and checklist of requirements, together with Kasetsart and Can Tho Universities and other local partners. These included basic and intermediate competency-based modules for Good Agriculture Practices (GAPs) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs). E-learning and e-resources in local languages were used to boost knowledge and skills development and to promote an inclusive and scalable approach. Face-to-face training and mentoring was provided to benefit rural stakeholders with limited internet access.

Strong and lasting partnerships and regional linkages were built with major food businesses and government authorities. Cost-sharing helped to expand the uptake of training. Thai retailer, SIAM-MAKRO, integrated the GMP modules into its comprehensive food safety management programme. The Ministry of Agriculture,

Thailand incorporated the GAP training modules into its extension services. In Viet Nam, the Southern Horticultural Research Institute integrated the GAP and GMP modules into its training programmes targeted at public and private sector partners.

Partnerships with academia, industry and government created the foundations for sustained and scalable food safety capacity development and ongoing improvements after the end of the project. Two food safety e-learning platforms, with standardized content in Thai, Vietnamese and English, are freely available to all interested stakeholders. Companies in Thailand and Viet Nam have made the training modules available at no cost to their suppliers. Kasetsart and Can Tho Universities continue to maintain and update learning materials, and both have leveraged additional resources to scale-up food safety capacity building, reaching more farmers, processors and potential exporters.

The Benefits

Reduced rejections, increased sales and access to new domestic and export markets were key results.

An independent evaluation in 2015 found the project had "significant and lasting impact on enhancing management of food safety risks within fruit and vegetable chains."

For instance, in Viet Nam:

- Fruit and vegetable exporter, Hung Phat JSC gained ISO 22000:2005 certification, opening up new markets (EU, Japan, US).
- Women in Vinh Chau Onion cooperative had 50% fewer produce rejections and increased incomes.

- Several cooperatives were certified to international schemes (e.g. GlobalGAP) opening up new markets for seedless lemon (The Netherlands, US) and dragon fruit (EU).

In Thailand:

- SIAM-MAKRO increased its supply from small-scale farmers and processors and offered a premium of up to 15% for improved food safety compliance.
- Wang Nam Khiao cooperative obtained the Organic Thailand certification. Its customer base increased by 10%. Sales rose by 18%. Post-harvest losses dropped from 20% to 5% by volume.



Figures

More than 1,500 producers and food manufacturers achieved basic and/or intermediate level training.

Close to **100% of participants** stated that the training had improved their knowledge on food safety, was useful for their companies and they would recommend it to colleagues.

