

# **APEC Food Safety Cooperation Forum (FSCF)**

### Partnership Training Institute Network (PTIN)

### June 2017 Newsletter

#### Upcoming FSCF PTIN Events:

- October 11-13, 2017: Workshop on Facilitating Trade through the Strengthening of Food Safety **Emergency Systems of APEC** Economies (Santiago, Chile)
- October-November 2017 (TBD): Workshops on Harmonization of Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) Setting Process in the Asian Region through Pesticide Residue Evaluation (Malaysia and Thailand)

See details on the next page

Past workshop materials are available on the PTIN website:

#### fscf-ptin.apec.org





FSCF PTIN: The APEC Food Safety Cooperation Forum (FSCF) Partnership Training Institute Network (PTIN) helps APEC Member Economies anticipate, prevent, and manage incidents, and thus better assure the safety of the food chain and grow food trade in the Asia Pacific region. Working across borders, the PTIN engages the food industry and academics with regulators, to provide capacity building in food safety. The goal is to facilitate trade and protect public health by building the capacity of stakeholders in the supply chain in the use of international standards and best practices in food safety management from production to consumption, specifically in five areas: incident management, supply chain management, laboratory capacity building, regulatory systems, and risk analysis.

#### **Ongoing Work on Hand Hygiene**

Hand hygiene improves food safety along the entire production and distribution chain. However, hand hygiene practices are inconsistent since there is no internationally recognized hand hygiene protocol. The FSCF/PTIN is working to identify these gaps in protocol and to improve hand hygiene compliance.

There is an increasing awareness of the fundamental role of good hygiene practices in ensuring food safety. However, guality assurance surveys of hand hygiene practices in food processing facilities have shown low compliance with best practices leading to increased food safety risk.

Kimberly-Clark Professional (KCP), a global hygiene leader, conducted a FSCF PTIN project to test hand hygiene compliance in a food processing facility in an APEC economy. The study was developed to help guide food preparation facilities and workers on the most effective hand hygiene protocol with minimal cost and highly informed training. This project examined the use of behavioral science to drive change in hand hygiene habits and showed the necessity of cultivating work culture that emphasizes the importance of good hand hygiene habits.

As part of global efforts to see that food safety measures are developed in a science-based manner, APEC economies should take into account lessons from behavioral science as essential to driving an improvement in hand hygiene compliance. People can wash and dry their hands, but they must understand why they are washing and drying their hands.





#### Upcoming APEC FSCF PTIN Events:



#### October 11-13, 2017: Facilitating Trade through the Strengthening of Food Safe Emergency Systems of A PEC Economies (Santiago, Chile)

Chile is conducting a workshop on strengthening food safety emergency systems considering FSCF priorities on food safety and its previous work in this regard. The workshop will focus on sharing APEC economies ' experience through the exchange of approaches to coping with food safety emergencies, as well as sharing protocols and guidelines. The outcome will be to collect data from APEC economies on their food safety emergency system, and to promote a better understanding of similarities, differences and needs to strengthen the capacity to prevent and respond to an emergency within APEC region. Participants will establish a set of recommendations to guide best approaches to food safety emergencies in the region.

As part of the workshop there will be an electronic working group (eWG) which will act as a coordinating mechanism to keep all APEC economies updated on the development of the workshop. The eWG will also be the means by which information will be collected to build a cooperation plan for strengthening food safety emergency systems in the region and provide a platform for future projects, dialogue and cooperation to address food safety emergencies. Participation is open to public and private sector representatives

Nominations or questions about the eWG should be directed to Project Overseers Mr Diego Varela (<u>diego.varela@achipia.gob.cl</u>) with copy to Ms Constanza Vergara (<u>constanza.vergara@achipia.gob.cl</u>) and Mr Juan Ortuzar (<u>juan.ortuzar@achipia.gob.cl</u>).

#### <u>October-November (TBD): Harmonization of Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) Setting Process in the Asia Pacific</u> <u>Region through Training on Pesticide Residue Evaluation (Malaysia and Thailand)</u>

Safe and efficacious pesticides are indispensable for ensuring stable supply of foods of plant origin. Such pesticides are
also useful for improving the quality of food commodities.

The Global Joint Review (GJR), developed in relation to the OECD Pesticide Program, provides a better way to access new and safer pesticides. A limited number of economies have participated in GJR due to the limited availability of evaluation capabilities. It is therefore necessary to build the capacity to evaluate pesticide residues using scientific and globally harmonized methodology.

This project provides training, targeting regulatory officials, on residue evaluation. Expedited registration of new pesticides and establishment of comparable MRLs is expected to promote public health, and grow agricultural production and trade in the region.

#### May 2017 APEC FSCF and PTIN Food Safety Meetings in Hanoi, Viet Nam

### Export Certificate Workshop, May 9th-10th

The PTIN is working to streamline, consolidate, and eliminate unnecessary export certificates in the region to facilitate trade of safe food products. This workshop, led by the United States and continuing work ongoing since 2009, aimed to reduce duplicative certificates and certificates not essential for food safety, with the goal of lowering compliance related costs affecting both industries and governments. Workshop participants acquired critical tools to consider when deciding whether to require certificates, such as principles of certification, fundamental good regulatory practices, use of risk based criteria for products, and model certificates are increasing dramatically and there has been an increase in requirements not related to food safety. The workshop fostered commitment to reduce unnecessary requirements for agricultural products and to appropriately eliminate requirements not based on science or not essential to ensuring food safety. Participants left knowing the importance of trust and confidence between economies, employing science and risk-based principles in food safety system development (especially through legislation), and the importance of strong cooperation amongst industry and government.

To learn more about the effort to streamline export certificate requirements, good practices, and useful resources, take a look at the *Export Certificate Brochure*.







#### Modernization of Food Safety Control Systems Workshop, May 11<sup>th</sup>

China organized a one-day workshop to look at APEC economy experiences, initiatives and recommendations related to the process of modernizing food safety systems. This workshop was inspired by the recent regulatory and industry-led actions undertaken by many APEC economies to improve food safety control systems by shifting focus toward preventative and risk-based efforts, thereby facilitating safe food trade. Workshop sessions included: an exploration of the challenges that APEC economies face when attempting to achieve an effective food safety system; a review of outcomes and lessons learned from past and ongoing FSCF initiatives and areas for future collaboration; and a discussion of the tools available to the sector when putting various principles into practice, such as: equivalency, harmonization, capacity building, and partnership facilitation.





A key outcome from the workshop was the identification of the need for trust and confidence when attempting to leverage another economy's resources, as is experienced when establishing equivalence, systems recognition, and other verification programs. In situations where such types of partnerships are not appropriate, other tools and assurances can be applied, such as third party certification, international training, and improved communication networks. Another workshop outcome was recognition of the importance of employing science and risk-based principles in the development and implementation of new legislation to modernize food safety systems— from preventive controls, to surveillance, to response and recovery strategies. And finally, another key outcome was the establishment of the importance of cooperation and collaboration between industry and government, not just during the rulemaking process but throughout implementation of best practices and guidance dissemination.

#### Workshop on Future Perspectives on Harmonization of MRLs, May 12<sup>th</sup>

Australia hosted a half day workshop on future perspectives of harmonization of import MRLs (Maximum Residue Levels). During the event discussion focused on gaps in the harmonization of MRLs for pesticides and how to encourage implementation of the MRL Guideline for Pesticides. However, significant amounts of training are still needed. Data requirements are a major challenge to facilitating this work as data collection is complicated and costly. Australia also reported out on the February 2017 workshop where economies made recommendations for advancing this work which included developing an APEC Point of Contact (POC) list for requesting an MRL and creating a template for MRL requests. Economies were requested to consult with national authorities on the POC list that would be posted on the APEC website. Japan also has an MRL work program. Train the trainer workshops have been and continue to be conducted in the region. The next training sessions will take place later this year in Malaysia and Thailand. ASEAN member states reported that to date they had harmonized more than 900 MRLs with the support of senior officials in the region.





### **FSCF PTIN Steering Group Meets**

The Partnership Training Institute Network Steering Group met for its biannual convention on May 12. The PTIN is a public private partnership that was initiated by the United States in 2008 with the goal of delivering food safety capacity building in the region. The PTIN Administrators from the United States presented outcomes from a biannual progress review of work which noted that the PTIN has held 37 capacity building workshops and trainings from 2009-2017 benefiting over 2,000 people in the areas of supply chain management, food safety regulatory systems/export certificates, laboratory capacity building, incident management, and risk analysis. There have also been curricula and modules developed in the priority areas to further disseminate training. In addition a network of over 700 food safety professionals from the public and private sector has been developed to share information and encourage dialogue on food safety issues. The industry and academic Steering Group members noted the importance of the PTIN to be able to interact with regulators and target and



address capacity building needs in the region.

There was a robust discussion about how to better promote the PTIN's work. Steering Group members also endorsed the development of additional food safety resources to be developed and posted to the PTIN web site by the end of 2017.





## **Tenth Anniversary of the Food Safety Cooperation Forum**

The Food Safety Cooperation Forum had its sixth meeting during the Second APEC Senior Officials Meeting (SOM 2) in Hanoi. APEC food safety regulators convene at the FSCF once every two years. The Hanoi meeting marked the tenth anniversary of the FSCF, a milestone noted by Australia (FSANZ) and China (AQSIQ) which have led the FSCF since its inception. Delegates heard progress reports on the regulatory roadmaps for export certificates and pesticide MRLs, two significant food trade barriers. There were reports from Chile, China, Japan and the United States on work completed over the past two years on laboratory capacity building, hand hygiene, antimicrobial resistance, harmonization of pesticide maximum residue limits and industry regulator cooperation. The FSCF agreed to send an assessment of hand hygiene practice, as well





as offer recommendations on best practices of hand hygiene for the food sector, to the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene as an information resource.

The FSCF is a very active forum and there's more work on the schedule for 2017-18 led by a number of different economies. It was suggested that future work be undertaken connecting risk to policy and standards development as well as on antimicrobial resistance. The United States shared recent capacity building efforts of the PTIN as well as input received from Steering Group on future efforts on outreach, sustainability of the work, building partnerships and metrics. The FSCF agreed on the Hanoi Statement which captures commitments for continuing work to ensure a safe regional food supply in the least trade restrictive manner.

# The Role and Value of Industry Associations

The 2015 Cebu FSCF PTIN Roundtable on Effective Industry/Regulator Cooperation emphasized the critical role that industry plays in developing food safety regulation. At that Roundtable, participants agreed on the value of having a document providing guidance on how associations can engage in policy development. Subsequently, the Grocery Manufacturers Association (United States) and the Australian Food and Grocery Council developed the document: "Food Industry Associations: Their Role and Value in Policy & Regulation." Please refer to the helpful guidance in this document which is also being translated into Spanish and will be posted to the PTIN website shortly.



### **Gap Analysis of International Food Hygiene Protocol**

There is an increasing awareness of the fundamental role of good hygiene practices in ensuring food safety. However, both compliance with best practice and the efficacy of current hygiene standards are open to question. Quality assurance surveys of hand hygiene practices in food processing facilities have shown low compliance with best practices leading to increased food safety risk. In September 2016, the APEC Ministers Responsible for Food Security called for a gap analysis of hand hygiene standards and guidance for the food sector currently in force internationally.

The gap analysis was conducted under FSCF PTIN and the objective was to establish a baseline understanding of global guidance (Codex Alimentarius), global guidance promulgated by other bodies such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and to determine which APEC Economies and other countries have hand hygiene standards or guidance in regulation.

See the complete gap analysis on the PTIN website.

### Free FDA-iRISK 4.0 Webinar, July 6<sup>th</sup>

There will be a relaunch of FDA-iRISK® as version 4.0 on July 6th and an associated free launch webinar on July 6th, at 11:00am to Noon (EDT). This webinar will highlight key features of FDA-iRISK® 4.0, the latest, enhanced version of the free, web-based risk-assessment system developed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. This innovative tool enables users to quickly rank and quantitatively compare risks from multiple foodborne microbial and chemical hazards, and predict effectiveness of various prevention and control measures. It can foster opportunities for synergy among risk assessors through sharing.

This event is helpful for:

- Food-safety stakeholders (e.g., risk assessors, risk managers, academia, industry, government, consumers) interested in access to the newest version of a free, Web-based tool that facilitates the development of quantitative risk assessment models.
- Those who might not have extensive mathematical modeling experience, but are interested in applying a quantitative risk assessment approach to microbial and chemical hazards in food.
- Those interested in a tool that is capable of simultaneously and separately considering variability and uncertainty.

If you would like to know more information please visit <a href="http://jifsan.umd.edu/posts/view/2444">http://jifsan.umd.edu/posts/view/2444</a> for more information and for the registration link.

#### **Presentations from the May Meetings**

- APEC Export Certificate Workshop (9-10 May) (M CTI 03 2012A) led by US
- Workshop on Modernization of Food Safety Control Systems (11 May) (CTI 07 2016T) led by PRC
- Wine Regulatory Forum Technical Meeting (11-12 May) (M CTI 01 2013A) led by US
- Maximum Residual Limit Meeting (12 May) (SCSC 03 2016S) led by Australia
- PTIN Steering Group convention (12 May) led by US
- 6th Conference of FSCF (13 May) led by AUS and PRC



For More Information

For more information on the APEC FSCF PTIN including links to past workshop materials and training materials, please visit:

fscf-ptin.apec.org

