



**Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations**



**World Health  
Organization**

## JOINT FAO/WHO EXPERT MEETING ON MICROBIOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENT (JEMRA)

Call for Experts on Risk Assessment of Microbiological Hazards related to Food Safety

Issued on 30 November 2016

Application Deadline: 31 March 2017

### Background

The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA) began in 2000 and is an international scientific expert group that is administered jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The purpose of JEMRA is to provide scientific advice on microbiological hazards including expert advice on risk management options that are aimed at improving food safety. In addition, JEMRA aims to make risk assessment approaches equally available to both developing and developed countries.

To date, JEMRA has developed 10 full pathogen-commodity risk assessment documents for microbiological hazards (*Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Vibrio* spp., *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Enterobacter Sakazakii*), foodborne parasites, and viruses. JEMRA has also published several guidance documents on microbiological risk assessment and risk management strategies for the control of pathogens in food.

JEMRA meetings are convened on an ad-hoc basis, depending on the request from Codex, in particular the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene. As seen from the previous work, JEMRA covers a diverse range of foodborne pathogens and related risks and requires expertise from multiple sectors and perspectives.

The objective of this call is to develop an expert roster of qualified scientists willing to serve as JEMRA experts.

According to the procedures described in the FAO/WHO framework for the provision of scientific advice on food safety and nutrition, the FAO/WHO JEMRA Secretariat establishes a list of experts (appointments are for a period of five years). Experts are selected from the list referred to as the *roster* of experts, for each meeting of JEMRA to serve as members of the expert meeting or to assist the Secretariat with preparatory work.

### Basic and essential qualifications of experts

Undertaking microbiological risk assessment and related activities as the basis for providing scientific advice on microbiological food safety hazards and risks is a multidisciplinary exercise that involves, among others, specialists in identification and characterization of hazards, exposure assessment, and risk characterization. Experts are expected to have a high level of expertise and experience within their scientific area in one or more of the components of the risk assessment process as

demonstrated in the peer-reviewed literature or contribution to relevant national or international meetings and/or reports. The mutual respect and understanding between scientists from various disciplines is a key element of success in reaching a consensus based on the best available science. An understanding of the overall food safety risk analysis process would be of advantage.

Qualified experts will be selected from the roster for each meeting depending on the expertise required, and are then requested to review the literature and prepare background papers in advance of the meeting. Meetings are conducted in English and participation in the meeting is required for the whole duration, usually five days. Cost of participation is covered by FAO/WHO, however, honoraria are not provided.

Successful candidates should meet most or all of the following qualifications:

- a. Advanced university degree(s) in microbiology, food technology, food science, food hygiene, epidemiology, public health, veterinary medicine, bioinformatics, or related fields;
- b. Scientific publications in peer reviewed journals or proven experience in delivering scientific opinions on food microbiology, food safety, and/or risk assessments at national, regional or international level;
- c. Experience in food safety/risk analysis related to microbiological hazards in foods
- d. Ability to converse in and write documents in English
- e. Ability to prepare documents and spreadsheets in electronic format;
- and
- f. Leadership or invited participation in national or international scientific bodies, committees, etc. that are pertinent to the above disciplines and described tasks.

## Specific Expertise and resources required

FAO and WHO are seeking experts from across sectors (i.e. research, academia, food industry, regulatory, etc.) who will be capable of supporting in identifying, sourcing, and using the best scientific evidence in the following tasks/fields:

- Food Microbiology (e.g. expert on foodborne parasites, bacteria, and/or viruses, their occurrence, behavior, pathogenicity, emerging traits e.g. antimicrobial resistance etc.)
- Food science ( e.g. physical, chemical and biochemical nature of food and principles of food processing)
- Microbial behavior in particular food and food production/processing environments (microbiological risk along food production chains)
- Epidemiology (e.g. food source attribution, outbreak analysis)
- Risk assessment methodology (data collection, analysis and modelling, e.g. dose-response modelling, exposure modelling, model validation, etc.,)
- Biostatistics (e.g. uncertainty and sensitivity analysis, meta-analysis, etc.)
- Risk ranking and risk profiling
- Design and implementation of sampling plans, use of data for monitoring and surveillance programs
- Systematic review methodologies and their application
- Control and management of foodborne microbiological hazards (e.g. assessment of efficacy of potential control options)
- Monitoring programs and inspection systems.

- Laboratory methods in food microbiology including molecular methods and genomic tools for identification and characterization of pathogenic microorganisms.

## Criteria and process for the selection of experts

The criteria for the selection of experts are the basic and essential qualifications together with the proven competence and expertise in various tasks related to risk assessment and microbiological food safety as described above. The *curriculum vitae* of applicants will be reviewed based on the criteria stated above by a selection panel consisting of three or more individuals including at least two independent, internationally recognized external experts appointed by FAO and WHO. The qualified individuals that are selected by the panel will be placed on the roster that will be used by FAO and WHO to invite experts to JEMRA meetings.

Appointments to the roster will be for a period of 5 years. The names, affiliations, and area of expertise of those placed on the roster will be published on the FAO and WHO websites together with the eligibility period of each expert.

## Updating of roster

Qualified experts will remain on the roster for a period of five years. After that time they will be removed from the roster and will need to apply again if they want to be considered for inclusion on the roster for another term.

The roster will be updated on an annual basis. Applications received from 1 April to 31 December 2017 will be reviewed and considered for inclusion in the 2018. Similarly applications received in 2018 will be considered for the 2019 version of the roster. If at any point during their term an expert wants to step down from the roster they should write to the secretariat and they will be removed during the next revision.

## Appointment of Experts for JEMRA meetings

Experts will be selected from the roster for individual meetings. Additional experts can be recruited if required to address specific questions at certain meetings.

During the selection process, diversity and complementarities of scientific backgrounds, and balanced representation from geographic regions including developing and developed countries as well as gender will be considered.

The experts will be invited to participate only in their individual capacity on the basis of their expert knowledge to give advice on specific topics. The term "personal capacity" means that the expert is expressly expected to serve in his/her capacity as an independent expert rather than a representative of his or her employer. The views of the independent expert would not necessarily be reflective of any views and positions of his or her employer.

Before participating in meetings, experts will be required to declare any potential interests associated with the subject of the meeting that will be evaluated through completion of a standard Declaration of Interest form adopted by FAO and WHO. They will be asked to indicate in writing any interest on their part or their spouse.

## Application

Interested applicants should submit their *curriculum vitae* including a description of their education, work experience, two personal references that have knowledge of their professional qualifications

and a list of peer reviewed publications relevant to the factors above (please do not include reprints in your submission unless specifically requested at a later date).

## Deadline

In order to be considered for the expert roster 2017-2022, applications, indicating the main area of expertise for the application, should be sent electronically or post-marked by 30 March 2017 to FAO and WHO JEMRA Secretariat to the addresses below.

Food Safety and Quality Unit Attention: <b>Dr Blaise Ouattara</b> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153 Rome, Italy Telephone: +39 06 570 55 636 Email: <a href="mailto:jemra@fao.org">jemra@fao.org</a>	and	Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses Attention: <b>Dr Rei Nakagawa</b> World Health Organization 20, avenue Appia 1211 Geneva 27 Switzerland Telephone: +41 22 791 3640 Email: <a href="mailto:jemra@who.int">jemra@who.int</a>
---	-----	---