

June 2006

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



JOINT OFFICE: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME Tel: 39 06 57051 www.codexalimentarius.net Email: codex@fao.org Facsimile: 39 06 5705 4593

ENGLISH ONLY

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Twenty-ninth Session

International Conference Centre, Geneva (Switzerland), 3-7 July 2006

**FAO/WHO CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY
COVERING PERIOD JULY 2005 – JUNE 2006
(Prepared by FAO and WHO)**

Introduction

1. During the past year various initiatives have been undertaken or continued by FAO and WHO, in collaboration with relevant partner organizations and institutions, to:

- further enhance the respective roles of the agriculture and health sectors in ensuring the quality and safety of the food supply,
- strengthen FAO's and WHO's role in convening neutral fora for negotiation and for exchange of information and experiences in the field of food safety and quality;
- further strengthen cooperation and collaboration between the two organizations and with other partners in the field of food safety and quality; and
- to upgrade the capacity of developing member countries in food safety and food quality assurance and support their effective participation in Codex work.

2. In the achievement of the overall objectives of FAO, an important reorganization has taken place in 2006 in the area of food and food safety. The Food and Nutrition Division, recently renamed the Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division, which hosts the Codex Secretariat, JECFA Joint Secretariat, JEMRA Joint Secretariat and the staff working in the field of food quality and safety, has been moved from the Economic and Social Department to the Agriculture, Biosecurity, Nutrition and Consumer Protection Department. This move is in line with the farm-to-table approach to nutrition, food safety and consumer protection and the important role that operators in the food chain play in this field. This should provide new opportunities for cooperation between all units involved in the production, processing, handling, storage and distribution of food products, as well as in food safety control and standards development.

3. Similarly in WHO, the Food Safety Department has been renamed Department of Food Safety, Zoonoses and Foodborne Diseases following the merger of the units covering zoonoses and food-borne disease previously under the Department of Communicable Diseases with the Department of Food Safety.

The new Department illustrates the existing WHO strategy of addressing food safety issues along the entire food chain continuum from primary production to consumers.

4. Information on FAO's and WHO's main capacity building activities in food safety and quality during the reporting period is provided below.

FAO/WHO Regional Conferences on Food Safety

5. FAO/WHO jointly convened the Regional Conference on Food Safety for Africa (Harare, Zimbabwe, 3-6 October 2005) and the Regional Conference on Food Safety for the Americas and the Caribbean (San José, Costa Rica, 6-9 December 2005).

6. These two events were the last in a series of regional conferences organized by FAO and WHO at the request of member countries to meet their needs for policy guidance and capacity building in food safety. Both conferences made a number of recommendations to member countries, to FAO/WHO, other relevant organizations and to donor governments. The reports of both conferences, complete with CD ROM containing the report, the working documents and conference room documents, are being made available to the Commission (consult document desk).

7. The FAO/WHO Regional Conference on Food Safety for Africa also adopted a Resolution and a Recommended Five-Year Strategic Plan for Food Safety in Africa which was subsequently used to prepare a project proposal for consideration by potential donors. This project proposal will be discussed during the Commission at a briefing session with the African Group of delegates. FAO and WHO are working to attract sufficient extra-budgetary resources to assist the African countries in the implementation of the Five-Year Plan of Action.

FAO/WHO Global Forum of Food Safety Regulators

8. A preparatory meeting for a possible third FAO/WHO Global Forum of Food Safety Regulators was held at FAO Headquarters on 3 May 2006 in order to have a preliminary discussion on the objective, format, content and funding of a possible third Global Forum. This meeting recommended that further discussion be held on this subject in conjunction with the current session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. A meeting has therefore been scheduled for the morning of Friday, 7 July 2006 to discuss this matter.

Funding Mechanisms to Improve Food Safety and Quality

9. FAO, WHO, OIE, WTO and the World Bank established a Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) to coordinate the capacity building efforts of these organizations in the areas of food safety and plant and animal health and to provide a funding mechanism for countries and stakeholders to undertake their activities in these areas. The STDF is both a financing and a coordination mechanism. Grant financing is available for private and public organizations in developing countries seeking to comply with international SPS standards and hence gain or maintain market access. The STDF provides funds for two types of grants: project preparation grants and project grants. Project preparation grants, up to US\$20,000, aim to act as a bridge between the identification of technical assistance needs and the development of coherent project proposals. Project grants typically range between US\$300,000 and US\$600,000. At present, 12 project grants and 15 project preparation grants have been approved for the food safety component (see list in the Annex of Document CAC/29/INF 5). Interested countries and stakeholders are encouraged to propose projects and submit them to the STDF for consideration.

10. Further information on the STDF, including the exact deadlines for submission of proposals and meeting dates, the Business Plan, application forms and information on projects approved can be found at the STDF website www.standardsfacility.org.

11. FAO and WHO have established a Trust Fund for Participation in Codex to increase the participation of developing countries and countries in transition in the vital work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The fund provides financial support to increase their capacity to implement those standards in their own country. The seventh progress report on the FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund covers activities for the first part

of 2006 and follows on from the information contained in the 2005 Annual Report. For the period January to December 2006 it is expected that 132 delegates from 93 countries will be supported to attend 16 Codex meetings and working groups. The breakdown of participants is expected to be: 57% from lower income countries; 26% from lower middle income countries; and 17% from upper middle income countries. Following the success of the December 2005 Codex Training Course initiated by the Codex Trust Fund, further expenditures on training and the wider dissemination of the Codex Training Package is envisaged in 2006.

Technical Assistance and Supporting Material for Capacity Building

12. FAO and WHO are engaged in a programme of technical assistance activities and projects at national, regional and international levels. The areas covered include training of food control officials and technical staff (food control managers, food inspectors, food analysts), provision of fellowships for future food regulators, enhancement of food control laboratory capabilities, implementation of risk analysis, risk assessment of microbiological hazards in food, support in establishing national Codex committees, policy advice and establishment of regulatory frameworks. Furthermore, fresh fruits and vegetables quality and safety, mycotoxin prevention and control, implementation of the FAO/WHO Guidance to Governments on the Application of HACCP in Small and/or Less Developed Businesses, HACCP in aquaculture, traceability of fish and fish products, good practices for the feed industry, prevention of BSE and other zoonotic diseases and others are included.

13. WHO is involved in supporting food and clinical laboratories in the America's region through the INFAL (Inter-American Network of Food Analysis Laboratories) and PulseNet (fingerprinting of food-borne disease-causing bacteria by pulsed-field gel electrophoresis (PFGE)) networks.

14. FAO is presently conducting a programme for improving the quality and safety of fresh fruits and vegetables, which focuses on the application of good practices (GAP, GMP, and GHP) to prevent hazards at appropriate points in the fresh fruits and vegetable chain (production and post-harvest stages - *food chain approach*). Subregional workshops have been held in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Near East (Egypt and Morocco) and are planned for other parts of the world (China, June 2006). Activities for awareness raising and training at the national level have also been initiated through the implementation of National Action Plans. Four case studies on the implementation of quality and safety schemes are under preparation. FAO has prepared a Training Package (available in CD-ROM and printed format), providing information that can be used by countries to develop training programmes and implement safety and quality requirements to suit their specific needs and thus enhance their capability to apply the Codex guidelines and standards, meet importers requirements, as well as improve the quality and safety of fresh produce on the domestic market. An on-line database (also produced as a CD-ROM) with over 800 documents related to the safety and quality of fresh fruits and vegetables is also available. See also www.fao.org/ag/agn/index_en.stm

15. In May 2006 FAO completed implementation of a global project to address the problem of mycotoxin contamination of coffee and protect the health of coffee consumers. Initiated in 2000, the project, "Improvement of coffee quality through the prevention of mould formation", was formulated in collaboration with the International Coffee Organization (ICO) and the European coffee industry, and was executed by FAO in Brazil, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, India, Indonesia, Kenya and Uganda. Financing was provided by the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), with co-financing from the Government of the Netherlands and the Institute for Scientific Information on Coffee (ISIC). For more information on the project, training resources and guidelines on the prevention of mould formation in coffee, visit www.coffee-ota.org.

16. FAO and WHO have recently been engaged in the development of a number of manuals, guidelines and training materials that should facilitate the capacity building effort. Most of these materials are developed jointly except for a few which are prepared under specific field projects operated either by FAO or WHO. These materials include the following:

- Improving the Safety and Quality of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables training manual and resource database (available from FAO web pages or as a CD-ROM in English, Spanish, French and Chinese - see further description above);

- “Food Safety Risk Analysis – A Manual for National Food Safety Authorities” and accompanying CD-ROM training pack: a joint FAO/WHO publication under finalization;
 - The FAO tool “Strengthening the capacity of national food control systems: Guidelines to assess capacity building needs” was pilot tested under the framework of AGNS and STDF projects in Benin, Cameroon and Myanmar, and positive feedback received. The Guidelines have been published in hard copy and on CD-ROM, and posted on the AGNS web site. A complementary, condensed version of these Guidelines “A quick guide to assess capacity building needs” is currently being finalized;
 - FAO, together with WHO and ICD, have developed a basic Awareness Course on Microbiological Risk Assessment (MRA). The primary objective of this course is to acquaint governments with the general concept of Risk Analysis and how MRA fits into the framework of Microbiological Risk Management (MRM). This course was used as a basis for a training course for South-East European countries in September 2005. In addition, a one day workshop on this issue was implemented in Sydney, Australia targeting participants from the Asian Pacific region. A further training course is being planned for Spanish speaking Latin American and Caribbean countries in October 2006 and one for South-East Asia in November 2006. A preliminary version of the course material (English) is now available on CD-ROM;
 - Enhancing Participation in Codex Activities - An FAO/WHO Training Pack designed to strengthen national food safety and quality systems through enhanced participation in the Codex process. It should serve as reference document for those involved in national Codex activities and as a training tool on Codex. A CD-ROM containing the visual aids and relevant reference documents will be included in the manual. It is available in several languages at: www.fao.org/ag/AGN/food/capacity_codex_en.stm . An electronic web-based training course is under active preparation based on this Training Pack;
 - FAO/WHO guidance document for governments on the application of HACCP, in small and less developed businesses (SLDBs) was finalized. The document will soon be available at http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/food/quality_haccp_en.stm.
 - FAO and WHO have been engaged in preparing a standardized training package to assist countries in implementing relevant Codex texts related to the food safety assessment of products derived from modern biotechnology. This training package may include a pilot training manual package containing both theory and practical examples of risk assessments of foods derived from modern biotechnology and a guide for training regulators;
 - WHO has issued "A Guide for Healthy Food Markets", which contains an annex on measures to reduce transmission of avian influenza in wet markets in developing countries. The publication is available at www.who.int/foodsafety/capacity/healthy_marketplaces/en/
 - WHO has completed the development of the GEMS/ Food Consumption Cluster Diets, which will be used by JECFA and JMPR in estimating long-term exposure to chemicals in food. The diets are available at www.who.int/foodsafety/chem/gems/en/
17. All these materials, once finalized, will be issued in multi-lingual form for wider use by member countries.

Information Exchange Mechanisms

18. The International Portal on Food Safety, Animal and Plant Health (www.ipfsaph.org) - a joint initiative with IPPC, OIE, Codex and WTO - has continued to develop during its second full year of operation. Numbers of page requests to the website on a monthly basis regularly exceed 400 000; numbers of unique visitors per month are typically in excess of 35 000. The portal is adding a number of new data sets on pesticides and food additives and now contains over 25 000 records, while collaboration has been strengthened with the EU through contacts with DG Trade's Exports Helpdesk. Two particular initiatives worth highlighting are:

- the regional portal in Latin America (the Portal regional de inocuidad y sanidad agroalimentaria or PRISA), accessed at <http://prisa.fao.org> which was launched at the regional conference in Latin America in April 2006. In addition to the official data on food safety, animal and plant health, PRISA contains other information which users in the region have been requesting, such as information on training events, courses and other capacity building activities, as well as more detail on unofficial contacts in countries (research institutes, agencies, certifying bodies, export promotion boards) and information on private sector, or "voluntary" standards. This regional portal may provide a model which could be adopted in other regions such as Southern Africa, West Africa, or the countries of the ASEAN grouping; and

- the ongoing work to develop a low bandwidth version of the portal to facilitate access from developing countries which has been made available progressively from April 2006.

19. With funding from the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), work is now proceeding to reinforce the technical system which underpins the portal, while STDF-funded projects are actively encouraged to make use of the portal as a resource, and consider possible further national data sets for inclusion. The portal is also included as one of the key tools on training in the effective use of Codex-related information systems which is taking place through regional workshops in Central Africa, Central Europe and the Far East due to be completed during 2006. More information on the portal project is available in the information paper CAC/29 INF/8.

20. INFOSAN, the International Food Safety Authorities Network, developed and maintained by WHO in collaboration with FAO, was inaugurated in October 2004. Since then it has received wide support from Member States. Identified as a priority need by both the Codex and the World Health Assembly, 150 Member States have joined the network as of May 2006. INFOSAN is an information network for the dissemination of important global food safety information and serves as a vehicle for food safety authorities and other relevant agencies to exchange food safety information and improve collaboration among them. Since its creation, INFOSAN has responded to requests for information for Member States by providing 11 INFOSAN Information Notes on timely food safety topics including avian influenza and genetically modified foods. INFOSAN EMERGENCY, the emergency arm of the network, has so far investigated 11 incidents of contaminated food in international commerce and issued to INFOSAN Emergency alerts. INFOSAN EMERGENCY is intended to complement and support the existing WHO Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network ([GOARN](#)) which includes a Chemical Alert and Response component.

21. The WHO International Health Regulations (IHR) have recently been updated to cover agents causing serious health risks connected to food in international trade. The adapted IHR version will come into effect by June 2007.

22. In 2004, WHO inaugurated its new Strategic Health Operation Centre (SHOC). The SHOC is a shared information and communications centre designed to facilitate collaboration and problem solving in order to better improve health outcomes in countries. The SHOC both virtually and physically supports WHO Operations at HQ, Regional and Country Office levels in responding to crises in public health. INFOSAN EMERGENCY is part of the operational support structure of SHOC.

23. FAO also supports the development and maintenance of FishPort, a web-based system for dissemination of scientific and technical information on fish safety and quality.

Preparedness for response to nuclear emergencies

24. FAO has established a network of technical experts on preparedness for response to nuclear emergencies in relation to food and agriculture. This group is responsible for the implementation of the cooperative arrangements between IAEA and FAO. Ongoing activities include the development of an on-line information system (including data on soil types, nutrition patterns, land use etc.), setting up an internal crisis management team to deal with nuclear emergencies affecting agriculture, and strengthening working relations with IAEA on this issue.

Guidelines for Good Agricultural Practices

25. FAO is developing an approach to support the implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) along the food-chain. GAP work focuses on information, technical assistance and capacity building to help developing countries cope with changing and globalizing food systems and the proliferation of requirements on GAP from the food industry and others, while not compromising their sustainable development objectives. FAO's approach on GAPs is one that is non-prescriptive, and would not lead to the development of new international standards or codes. Furthermore, it should not affect the definition or scope of good agricultural practices as they appear in existing texts, for example the Codex Alimentarius. Instead, in the GAP work that FAO is implementing, local level GAPs defined by concerned stakeholders would support farmers and governments to adopt agricultural practices that help them comply with international regulatory

frameworks such as the IPPC, Codex Alimentarius and OIE, as well as implement GAP that generate environmental, economic and social sustainability in different local settings. Upon request by members, FAO is undertaking technical assistance and capacity building activities on GAP for crops, fruit and vegetables, meat, milk or feed in different countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

Joint activities in the Fisheries area

26. FAO/FII is carrying out the following activities in the area of capacity building:

- Support to the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery products, especially follow-up on advice for setting up maximal limits for biotoxins;
- Co-organization of the FAO/WHO/OIE expert consultation on antimicrobial use and antimicrobial resistance in aquaculture;
- Support to the FAO/WHO work on weighing risks and benefits of consuming fish and fishery products, in particular in relation to the methylmercury issue;
- Training in developing countries on the application of HACCP, risk assessment and traceability in fisheries;
- Building national fish control capacity in developing countries, especially the least developed countries.

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR FOOD QUALITY AND SAFETY: SELECTED ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WHO, JULY 2005 - JUNE 2006

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

27. The FAO Animal Production and Health Division and the International Feed Industry Federation held a “Global Food and Feed Congress” in Sao Paulo, Brazil from 11 to 13 July 2005. Further information is available from the Congress website: www.globalfeed-food.com

28. The FAO/IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) Training and Reference Centre for Food and Pesticide Control held a training workshop on “Introduction to Quality Assurance/Quality Control Measures in Pesticide Residue Analytical Laboratories”. The workshop took place at the FAO/IAEA Agriculture and Biotechnology Laboratory, IAEA Laboratories, Seibersdorf, Austria from 12 September to 7 October 2005. More detailed information on the course can be found at: www.elearning.iaea.org/ATutor/bounce.php?course=34.

29. FAO/AGNS is on the advisory committee for a MYCO-GLOBE (Integration of Mycotoxin and Toxigenic Fungi Research for Food Safety in Global System) Conference on “Learning from the EU: Reducing the Impact of Mycotoxins in Tropical Agriculture with Emphasis on Health and Trade in Africa”. The conference took place in Accra, Ghana from 13 to 16 September 2006. More information on the project and the conference is available from the conference website: www.iita.org/mycotoxinconf/index.htm

30. FAO/AGNS also organized a parallel symposium on food safety, as well as one on Community nutrition and intervention programmes at the “18th International Nutrition Congress” in Durban, South Africa, from 19 to 23 September 2005. The Congress was organized by the International Union of Nutritional Sciences. More information is available from the Congress website: www.puk.ac.za/fakulteite/voeding/iuns/scientific%20programme.htm#PS

31. FAO held a workshop on “Genetically Modified Food Safety” at FAO Headquarters from 13 to 14 October 2005. The purpose of this workshop was to expose FAO professional staff to a range of expert opinions on selected questions related to the safety of GM foods. Further information on this workshop can be obtained from: www.fao.org/ag/AGN/food/meetings_workshops2005_en.htm.

32. The FAO Expert Consultation on Biosafety (Rome, 28 February to 3 March 2006) considered a number of present and future applications of new biotechnologies in various sectors with the aim of seizing opportunities for consolidating future activities on Biosafety for sustainable agriculture and food production, within a *Biosecurity* context. Discussion focused on three issues: governance for Biosafety, cooperation for

Biosafety, and technical grounds for Biosafety. Within these, the Consultation made several recommendations on establishing a coherent interdisciplinary approach on Biosafety, strengthening the policy and legislative frameworks for Biosafety in food and agriculture, technical assistance and capacity building, cooperation with external partners, information capacities and data sharing, and research.

33. A joint FAO/WHO/OIE Expert Consultation on Antimicrobial Use in Aquaculture and Antimicrobial Resistance was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea from 13 to 16 June 2006. The Consultation addressed all aspects related to regulation, marketing, distribution and use of antimicrobials in aquaculture, the magnitude of their use in aquaculture and the public health impact of such use. For more information on this consultation please visit: http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/food/risk_antimicrobial_en.stm.

Global projects

34. The Government of Norway has recently signed a Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with FAO, with the overall objective of supporting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in developing countries through the work of FAO, for the period 2005-2006. One of the principal objectives of this project is "Improved Food Safety and Quality at National Level and along the Food Chain". Activities are planned to take place during the second half of 2006 in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Cambodia, Laos, Nicaragua and Burkina Faso. Outcomes to be reached include: acceptance and use of Good Agricultural Practice (GAP); capacity building and awareness raising for integrated natural resource governance and management (SARED), support to food quality and safety and Codex related work and guidelines, advice and instruments related to small-scale/artisanal fisheries implemented/developed.

35. Under the same Programme Cooperation Agreement, Norway is also supporting a series of activities aimed at strengthening FAO's earlier work on the integration of food safety, animal health, plant health and biosafety under the Biosecurity framework. The activities include application of the biosecurity framework at national level, development of additional tools and guidelines, as other practical guidance material.

Global tools under development

36. FAO conducted an expert panel from 2 to 4 November 2005 in Rome to peer review two of the tools designed to assist countries in their effort to integrate *Biosecurity*-related disciplines and activities, namely the Manual on Risk Analysis in the Field of Biosecurity and the Biosecurity Capacity Needs Assessment Guidelines. These tools will now undergo pilot testing and will then be made widely available. More information on FAO's approach to and work in the area of *Biosecurity* is available from: www.fao.org/biosecurity.

37. FAO/AGNS is preparing a manual on food inspection and auditing of food safety management systems.

CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA

FAO REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

38. FAO and the Tanzanian Bureau of Standards held a five-day subregional workshop for English-speaking African countries in Arusha, Tanzania, from 10 to 14 October 2005 on "A practical approach to improving the quality and safety of fresh fruits and vegetables". Further information on the workshop is available from the FAO website: www.fao.org/ag/agn/meetings_workshops2005_en.stm

39. FAO implemented a two-day training workshop on "Food safety risk analysis" for the North African countries in Tunis, Tunisia from 25 to 26 November 2005. Further details may be found on the FAO website www.fao.org/ag/agn/meetings_workshops2005_en.stm.

WHO REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

40. With WHO cooperation, a draft Strategy on Food Safety for the African Region was prepared and will be discussed at the Fifty-seventh Regional Committee for Africa in 2007. Benin and Mali were

supported to organize training workshops on the Codex Alimentarius and several countries strengthened their National Codex Committees. Gabon, Guinea and the Democratic Republic of the Congo conducted national food safety surveys and national strategies/action plans were prepared by Gabon, Mali and Rwanda.

41. With WHO cooperation, the Government of the Seychelles organized training courses in food inspection and handling through collaboration with FAO and UNIDO. Niger organized two seminars on food safety and safety of meat and Kenya organized three workshops on food-borne disease surveillance and principles of HACCP. The fourth Francophone training courses on food-borne disease surveillance were held in Yaoundé, Cameroon in December 2005. Benin, Senegal and the Republic of Congo conducted activities to strengthen surveillance and microbiological monitoring of foods. At the request of the Ministry of Health, Mozambique was supported to strengthen the National Food and Water Hygiene Laboratory.

42. WHO prepared a Regional Guide for the African region for development, revision and implementation of food law. Kenya was supported to train nationals in prosecution procedures, to strengthen food law enforcement. Benin implemented school food safety programmes and Gabon, Guinea and the Democratic Republic of the Congo sensitized street food vendors/food handlers on safe food handling.

43. WHO supported implementation of the Five Keys for Safer Food in Mozambique, the Republic of Congo and Botswana, Lesotho and Guinea. The Five Keys Manual, *Bringing Food Safety Home* was adapted for African schools. WHO promoted environmental health and food safety in low-income urban schools in Angola, Cameroon, Mali and Mozambique.

FAO Field Projects

44. Under its Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), FAO has implemented numerous projects on critical aspects of food control in many countries. FAO/TCP is designed to assist Member Nations in solving their most pressing development needs. In the field of food safety these include: strengthening of national food control systems, enhancing laboratory facilities and analysis capacities and improving the ability of member countries to comply with new trade regulations. TCP projects are generally of one to two year duration, with the possibility for a second phase of funding if warranted. Projects have also been implemented from other funding sources as indicated.

45. FAO/AGNS has also implemented a project to improve the quality of street foods in Benin. The expected project outputs were mainly to reduce the negative impact of urban pollution on consumer health and to improve the food safety at all the production-to-consumption levels. This project was conducted between May 2004 and October 2005. This project contained an important training component to horticulture producers, wholesale and retail food vendors and to food inspectors. A national strategy was drawn to define the actions to be taken by the relevant governmental institutions to ensure the sustainability of the project outcomes.

46. An FAO/AGNS project was approved in May 2004 to support the implementation of a strategy to control and monitor the quality and safety of food products in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The project is scheduled to continue until April 2006.

47. An FAO/AGNS project to Support the Informal Food Sector in Guinea began in June 2003 and was completed in July 2005. The objective of the assistance was to help the Government to define the strategies necessary to improve the quality of food prepared and sold on the street. The project carried out surveys and pre-test feasible actions to improve the safety and quality of food sold on the street. Consumers received information on associations and other institutions working to protect the safety and quality of food.

48. FAO/AGST has coordinated a training of trainers for extension staff in Kenya to raise awareness of mycotoxin contamination and develop appropriate post-harvest practices for its control. To ensure sustainability, trainees were mandated to sensitise farmer groups and facilitate development of action plans for aflatoxin control at farm level. The action plans are intended to serve as pilot projects that can be replicated in other communities. A second phase of the project targeting other stakeholders was on-going in 2005.

49. At the request of the National Food Research Institute of Botswana a project proposal was prepared for FAO assistance in strengthening its national food safety system. This project was developed by AGNS in collaboration with the FAO subregional office for Southern and Eastern Africa and was approved in 2005.

50. A project was implemented in Senegal in May 2003 to assist in the control of pesticide residues in fruit and vegetable products for export. The project was led by FAO's Plant Production Division, in collaboration with AGNS.

51. FAO/AGNS commenced work on an FAO TCP project in early 2006 to assist in the control of mycotoxins in South Africa. The objective of the project is to carry out a preliminary assessment of the level of contamination by mycotoxins (mainly OTA and DON in selected commodities) and to enhance the government's capabilities in the sampling, monitoring, prevention and control of mycotoxins in foodstuffs with a view to ensure maximum consumer protection and promote international trade in foodstuffs. The proposed activities are currently centred on data generation and analysis, with a view to improve monitoring and control activities, perform scientific based risk assessment with local data, as well as to feed in the network of information exchange in SADC countries.

Direct cooperation with developing countries

52. At the request of the Government of Cameroon, FAO is providing advice and support to the Centre Pasteur du Cameroon, Laboratoire de Chimie de Hygiène Environnement, for the implementation of a study on exposure of the inhabitants of Yaoundé to pesticide residues using a total diet study (TDS) protocol which considers FAO/WHO recommendations on this matter.

FAO UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

53. A subregional training of trainers course on the application of good hygiene practices throughout the coffee chain will be held in Zambia in July 2006 and will include participants from Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia. This training course is the final activity under a CFC-funded project on "Improving coffee quality through the prevention of mould growth" which started in 2001.

54. FAO/WHO will be holding an informal meeting with delegates from the African region attending the 29th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in Geneva in order to discuss follow-up to the FAO/WHO Regional Conference on Food Safety for Africa and also current and future capacity building activities in the region.

55. During 2006 FAO/AGNS will be providing direct assistance to the Government of Mozambique in the establishment of a national Codex committee. FAO/AGNS will also be assisting in the organization of a stakeholders consultation and workshop.

56. FAO/AGNS will be providing direct assistance to the Government of Djibouti during the second half of 2006 in the organization of a national Codex committee.

57. FAO/AGNS will be organizing a regional workshop in Botswana on testing approaches for HACCP application in SLDBs during the second half of 2006 as a follow-up to national action plans.

58. FAO/AGNS, jointly with the Institute of Sciences and Food Inspection, Bari, Italy, is contributing to a national survey on mycotoxin contamination of food in Nigeria.

59. A request to FAO (AGNS) has been received from the Government of Cote d'Ivoire to formulate a project to strengthen the food control system. This project is in the formulation stage.

60. A request has been received from the Government of Rwanda to address the Hygienic Handling of foods of animal origin. This project is in the formulation stage. The request was submitted to the FAO Animal Production Service, in collaboration with AGNS.

61. The Government of Senegal has requested assistance from FAO/AGNS in strengthening and supporting Quality Assurance Systems in Food Safety Laboratories. The request is currently in the approval process.
62. Funding is currently being sought for a subregional programme proposal developed by FAO/AGNS to facilitate trade in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states through food standards and food safety management.
63. Following a request from the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) to AGNS, a TCP project for strengthening the capacity for improving the safety and quality of fresh fruits and vegetables produced in Tanzania is currently under formulation.

CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN ASIA

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

64. FAO/AGNS, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture of Thailand, organized a regional workshop on “Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables” in Bangkok, Thailand from 14 to 16 September 2005.
65. FAO and WHO implemented a five-day pilot regional training course on the development of food standards within a risk analysis framework for selected countries of Asia in Bangkok, Thailand, from 12 to 16 December 2005.
66. FAO and the UNESCO Microbial Resource Centre for Marine Biotechnology (MIRCEN) held a workshop on “Molecular Techniques in Aquaculture and Seafood Safety” in Mangalore, Karnataka, India, from 13 to 17 February 2006. The purpose of this workshop was to introduce researchers from 8 countries in Asia to various molecular techniques as applied to aquaculture and fish safety assessment.
67. FAO/AGNS collaborated with the Heilongjiang Provincial People's Government, the American Food Safety Consortium and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development of Alberta, Canada, in the joint organization of the “International Forum on Food Quality and Safety China 2006”, which was held in Harbin, China, from 15 to 18 June 2006. The aim of this forum was to strengthen food quality and safety and promote international exchange and cooperation in food science. Further details on this forum may be obtained from: www.hljagri.gov.cn/IFFQSC2006.
68. FAO/WHO/OIE organized a joint Expert Consultation on “Antimicrobial Use in Aquaculture and Antimicrobial Resistance” from 13 to 16 June 2006 in Seoul, Korea. The Consultation addressed all aspects related to regulation, marketing, distribution and use of microbials in aquaculture, the magnitude of their use in aquaculture and the public health impact of such use. Further information on this consultation may be obtained from: www.fao.org/ag/agn/foodrisk_antimicrobial_en.stm.
69. WHO’s guidance materials on ‘Five Keys for Safer Food’ have been translated in regional and local languages and are currently being used to produce adapted manuals for awareness and training purposes, in all countries of South East Asia.

NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

FAO Field Projects

70. A two-year FAO/AGNS TCP project on Strengthening Testing Capability for Food Safety which was requested by the Government of China, began in late 2004. The overall objective of the project is to protect the health of consumers and to enhance the competitiveness of their fresh produce in the international market through strengthening the country’s capabilities for inspecting, testing and monitoring fresh produce for pesticide residues and contaminants. The project has strengthened laboratory facilities and trained analytical staff. It has improved the monitoring capabilities through introducing Multi Residue Screening Methods. In addition, the project has also raised the awareness of different actors through food chain about

quality and safety requirements and harmonization of national regulations in Codex, and enhanced the extension services with the pesticide related information and the appropriate use of pesticides.

71. An FAO/AGNS TCP project for Mongolia to Strengthen Food Import Control commenced in November 2002 with Phase 2 of the project starting in August 2005. The objectives of the project are to establish and strengthen the national system of control of food import quality and safety. This is extremely important for Mongolia as over 80% of the food consumed in Mongolia is imported. Specifically, the project addressed the institutional set-up for the control of food import in Mongolia, provides training to food inspectors, strengthening laboratory facilities and training analytical staff associated with border food control. It also raised awareness of national authorities of the work of Codex internationally, the relevance of this work nationally and the importance of full stakeholder participation in food control matters. During Phase 2 of the project a food inspection guidance document is under preparation and training for food analysts is being undertaken.

72. An FAO/AGNS TCP project on strengthening SPS compliance for fresh fruits and vegetables commenced in Thailand in December 2003. The project was requested by the Government of Thailand given the great potential in Thailand for exporting fresh and processed fruits and vegetables. Project activities focus on management of programmes for the prevention and control of microbiological hazards in these products, technical capabilities of food producers, training on food safety and quality assurance systems for producers, processors and government officers responsible for the implementation of these systems. In addition, the overall export inspection and certification system of fruits and vegetables will be improved. A second phase of the project is being processed to finalize project activities.

73. An FAO TCP project to improve coffee quality in Thailand began in June 2004 and was completed in February 2006. Activities under this project included training in GHPs along the coffee chain to reduce mould growth and mycotoxin formation in green coffee. It provides training in monitoring and analysis of ochratoxin-A and in mycological analysis. The project was led by the Industrial Crops officer of the FAO regional office for Asia and the Pacific in collaboration with AGNS

74. An FAO-executed trust fund project funded by NZAID commenced in May 2005. This project, "Improving food safety and its management in Viet Nam, Lao PDR and Cambodia" aims to help the participating countries to develop or improve national food safety policy, strengthen the legal framework for food control and build the technical capacities required to enforce food safety requirements. The project also includes components on food safety education and food-borne disease surveillance that will be implemented in collaboration with the WHO Regional Office for Asia.

75. A 3-year project to be funded by the Government of Japan and for execution by FAO is presently under formulation. This 3-year project will aim to improve food safety in the ASEAN countries through the strengthening of national food inspection systems.

Direct advice to developing countries

76. FAO is also assisting the Government of Malaysia in its efforts to enhance their current capabilities on risk assessment of chemicals in food, in particular food additives.

77. In addition, FAO provided assistance to India through the FAO/UNESCO Microbial Resource Centre for Marine Biotechnology (MIRCEN) for the organization of an ASM/FAO/UNESCO International Workshop on Molecular Techniques in aquaculture and seafood safety. This activity will facilitate efforts of institutions from 8 countries from the region to enhance the current activities on this field and to contribute to fill some data identified by JEMRA that are relevant for those countries.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS

78. FAO/WHO will be holding an informal meeting with delegates from the Asian and Pacific region attending the 29th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in Geneva in order to discuss follow-up to the FAO/WHO Regional Conference on Food Safety for Asia and the Pacific and also current and future capacity building activities in the region.

79. During 2006 FAO/AGNS will be providing direct assistance to the Government of the Philippines in the establishment of a national Codex committee.

80. The Government of Myanmar has requested assistance from FAO/AGNS in assessing the exact needs of the country in the area of food safety and quality in order to improve the national food control system in a comprehensive manner. The matter is under active consideration of FAO (AGNS), with a consultant mission planned for late 2005.

81. The Government of Myanmar has also requested the support of FAO/AGS to formulate an "Oil Crops Development Project", within the framework of the Government's cooperation arrangements with the OPEC Fund for International Development. The project will support the enhancement of institutional agro-industrial capacity for edible oil processing and quality assurance, including the turn-key establishment of new processing plants and the development of national edible oil standards and strengthening of national capacity for oil quality control. This project formulation phase has been finalized and its implementation commenced in the second half of 2005.

82. The Government of Pakistan has requested assistance from FAO (AGNS) for building national capacity for Food Quality and Safety. Specifically, the Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Livestock (MINFAL) is seeking assistance in reviewing and revising national SPS laws, remodelling animal and plant quarantine services, enhancing the capabilities of reference laboratories, forging technical linkages and fostering cooperation with developed economies. The request is still in the initial formulation phase.

83. The Government of Pakistan has also requested assistance from FAO (AGNS) in the area of improving the safety and quality of fresh fruits and vegetables. The request is in the formulation phase.

84. The Government of Sri Lanka has requested assistance from FAO (AGNS) in the area of training in food safety and quality and certification. The request is in the formulation phase.

WHO NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

85. As a result of WHO's support to Bangladesh, the national authorities amended the 1959 "Pure Food Ordinance Act", constituted a National Food Safety Advisory Council and established the Pure Food Courts in each district of the country.

86. WHO Bhutan, provided support to enable the Ministry of Health, in close collaboration with the agricultural sector, to acquire and install the capacity for microbiology testing at the Public Health Laboratory.

87. Since 2004, WHO has provided continuous support to India through a consultant, to strengthen the Food Adulteration Act, especially in the issuance of Notifications. In 2005, a number of training manuals on HACCP, GMP GHP were developed, covering the catering sector, and the fruits and vegetables, dairy, bakery, meat and poultry sectors.

88. In Indonesia, WHO supported the National Agency for Drug and Food Control to establish a food safety information system linked to a national network, including a mechanism for microbiological risk assessment. Seven training modules on risk assessment were developed for this purpose. Since 2005, significant support to Indonesia has been provided by WHO Jakarta to the Ministry of Health to develop food safety based awareness and training materials to prevent and control the spread of the avian influenza virus in live animal markets. More information is available at: http://www.searo.who.int/en/Section23/Section1001/Section1110_11528.htm

89. WHO's collaboration with Nepal has allowed the issuance, in 2005, of several specific HACCP and GMP guidelines.

90. Following the 2004 tsunami, WHO Maldives supported the Department of Public Health and other national authorities in establishing the basis for setting up the national integrated food safety system, based on risk analysis principles. Specific training was given to food inspectors in close collaboration with the catering sector.

91. WHO is currently collaborating with the Asian Development Bank and the State Food and Drug Administration of China to strengthen that Administration's coordination capacity and to review the current food control situation in China. At the same time WHO is committed to building the capacity of health authorities to effectively implement their responsibilities in relation to food safety in China.

CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN EUROPE

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Regional Workshops

92. An FAO/WHO/ICD "Basic Awareness Course on Microbiological Risk Assessment" was held in Ljubljana, Slovenia from 27 to 29 September 2005. The objectives of this course were to acquaint governments with the general concept of Risk Analysis and how MRA fits into the framework of Microbiological Risk Management (MRM) and to assess the feasibility and usefulness of establishing an informal network for microbiological risk assessment in the region. The workshop was attended by 15 participants from the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo (Serbia & Montenegro), Moldova and Romania.

93. FAO/WHO-EURO held a three-day regional training course on Codex in Vilnius, Lithuania from 25 to 27 October 2005. The objectives of this training course were to enhance the capacity of countries from the region to participate actively in Codex activities in general, and to increase their participation in the activities of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO). This training course served as preparation for the next (25th) Session of the CCEURO, to be held in the last quarter of 2006. The workshop was attended by 25 participants from the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Romania, Kosovo (Serbia & Montenegro), Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

94. A subregional training course "Enhancing participation in Codex" took place from 21 to 23 March 2006. The host organization was the Croatian National Institute of Public Health, Zagreb and representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, FYR Macedonia, Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro) attended the training course.

Regional Projects

95. An FAO project in the South Eastern European subregion (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania) on "Strengthening food safety in South East European transition countries – A regional approach to food legislation and control" was approved in December 2004. Project activities are ongoing. The overall objective of the assistance is to assist these transition countries in establishing a modern food safety and control system and is being implemented by AGNS and the FAO Legal Service. The project plans to convene several workshops to assist in the development of national food safety policies, including inspection, control and legislation. Additionally, two training courses are planned to train food inspectors in modern approaches to food inspection and food industry experts in food hygiene (HACCP, GMP).

96. An FAO/AGNS TCP project to improve food safety in Food Quality and Safety System of Armenia and Georgia was approved in early 2005. The main objectives of the project are to strengthen the priority components of the system for strategic planning and coordination of food control activities, harmonization of

food standards, inspection programmes and laboratory networks, and quality assurance programmes in agro-processing sectors.

97. An FAO/AGNS TCP project to provide assistance in improving a laboratory of safety and quality of food and agricultural products in the Ukraine was initiated in March 2005 and is scheduled to be completed in September 2006. The project aims to a) provide on-site technical advice in planning and organizing the new Ukrainian Laboratory for Quality and Safety of Food and Agricultural Products; b) provide assistance in preparation for accreditation of this laboratory according to ISO 17025; c) build capacities of laboratory technical staff in specific advanced analytical techniques; and d) create awareness and develop effective dialogue about food safety related issues among all stakeholders.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS

98. A bilateral project between Albania and Italy, with FAO (AGNS) as the implementing agency, is currently in the final stages of approval. The project seeks to strengthen the Albanian national food control system, in particular the laboratories.

99. The Government of Bulgaria has requested the Ministry of Agriculture of the Netherlands to establish a food safety training centre for food inspectors, laboratory staff and food industry experts. This project may be implemented by FAO (AGNS) and funded by the Government of the Netherlands.

100. The Government of Croatia has requested FAO (AGNS) assistance in strengthening Codex activities in that country. The project is in the initial formulation phase.

101. The Government of the Czech Republic has requested FAO (AGNS) assistance to non-governmental organizations of Central and Eastern Europe related to implementation of food safety guarantee policy. The project is currently in the formulation phase.

102. A regional training course "Enhancing participation in Codex" will take place in Tajikistan during the second half of 2006. It will be organized in collaboration with Tajikstandart, with participants attending from Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

103. The Government of Azerbaijan has requested technical assistance from FAO in the area of food safety. The project document is under appraisal.

CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Regional Workshops

104. As member of the scientific committee, FAO made a presentation at the Mycoglobe project Mycotoxin Conference for South America, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 15-17 March 2006. FAO also sponsored the participation at this conference of several participants from developing countries. Further information on this Conference is available at www.argentinamycoglobe.com.

105. FAO and the Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Pesca y Alimentos of Argentina, as the Codex Contact Point for Latin America and the Caribbean, organized a seminar on traceability for the countries of Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean from 21 to 23 March 2006 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Further details may be obtained from the FAO website: www.fao.org/ag/AGN/food/meetings_workshops2006_en_stm.

106. A workshop on "Enhancing participation in Codex" was held immediately prior the FAO/WHO Regional Conference on Food safety for the Americas and the Caribbean, from 4-5 December 2005 using the FAO/WHO package developed on this matter by FAO/WHO.

107. FAO organized a Subregional Training Course on “Enhancing Participation in Codex” Antigua and Barbuda, from 6 to 9 June 2006. The objective of this course was to strengthen national Codex activities in the region and to enhance participation in the standard setting work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. Further information may be obtained from the FAO website: www.fao.org/ag/AGN/food/meetings_workshops2006_en_stm

Regional Projects

108. Two FAO subregional projects to strengthen the analytical activities, laboratory quality assurance and capacity building of the Interamerican Network of Food Analytical Laboratories (INFAL/RILAA), were approved in December 2004 (countries are assigned into one of the two projects in Central America or South America, based on geographic location). The main objective of these projects is to assure that the laboratories provide reliable analytical results for the national food control system, as well as for the certification of food imports and exports. The project’s activities attempt to facilitate the product conformity assessment through harmonization or establishing the equivalence of the analytical results at the international level. The main activities to be undertaken by the project include the implementation of training activities and the elaboration of national action plans for strengthening the technical, analytical and administrative skills for laboratory analysis of microbiological and chemical contaminants. A total of nineteen countries from the Latin American and Caribbean Region are benefiting from the implementation of these projects. The project is implemented by the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and AGNS.

109. A subregional project to strengthen the analytical activities, quality assurance and capacity building in the English-speaking countries in the Caribbean is currently in the approval stage,

Other Regional Activities

110. With FAO’s support, the Latin American Food Composition Network (LATINFOODS) continued working on the update of the Regional Food Composition Table which is available from: www.fao.org/Regional/LAmerica/bases/alimento/default.htm . A CD-ROM with this table was published and distributed.

NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

111. FAO is supporting the Instituto de Ciencias Biomedicas, Universidade de Sao Paulo, Brazil, in the implementation of a study on Biomass, phenotypical and genotypical characterization of *V. cholerae*, *V. parahaemolyticus* and *V. vulnificus* isolated from water, zooplankton and bivalves samples from Sao Paulo Coast, SP that will contribute to the filling of some gaps identified by JEMRA.

112. From June 2006 FAO/AGNS will be providing advice to Costa Rica on harmonization of standards based on risk assessment for additives and contaminants, as well as advice to the national Codex committee of Costa Rica and to the Central American region.

113. FAO, with the collaboration of the National School of Biological Sciences, Mexico, will implement a training course on application of risk analysis at international level in August 2006.

Field Projects

114. The Ministry of Agricultural Development in Panama has requested FAO (AG) assistance in the area of food safety, animal and plant health. The project is currently in the formulation stage with implementation scheduled to commence in May 2006.

115. The Government of the Dominican Republic has requested FAO (SLC/AGNS) assistance to strengthen the food trade sector. The project is currently in the formulation stage with implementation scheduled to commence in June 2006.

116. An FAO project to strengthen the biosecurity framework in Belize was initiated in April 2006 and is scheduled to continue until early 2007. The objectives of this project are: (a) support the up-dating of the

biosecurity legal framework and b) strengthen the national capacity for effective implementation of biosecurity approaches and system. The project is led by the FAO Development Law Service, with AGNS providing technical support.

117. An FAO/AGNS TCP project on the prevention of mould formation (Ochratoxin A-OTA) in coffee in Ecuador started in July 2004 and is expected to be completed in December 2006. The project is being implemented with the participation of the public and private sectors. The main objective is to create awareness at the national level of the effect that mould formation in coffee, due mainly to Ochratoxin A, could have on public health, as well as the subsequent economic and social implications. The project's activities include the identification of cost-effective control systems and the implementation of a HACCP-based training programme targeting the actors involved. One of the outputs of the project will be a National Action Plan for the prevention and control of mould formation in coffee, which will be elaborated by consensus among the food chain actors and disseminated at the national level.

118. An FAO TCP project to provide technical assistance to the nutmeg industry in Grenada was approved in March 2004 and was scheduled for completion in April 2006. Activities under the project suffered delays due to the widespread disruption caused by Hurricane Ivan in September 2004. A phase 2 has therefore been requested to allow completion of the project activities. The objective of the project is to enhance farmer returns from the production of nutmeg and mace, through improving the overall quality of these products and their oil extractives for international trade and minimizing the environmental contamination due to nutmeg processing by-products. The immediate objectives are to: a) upgrade harvesting, post-harvest handling, treatment, processing of nutmegs and mace; b) strengthen the capacity to support a quality assurance programme for the nutmeg and mace industry; and c) build capacity in by-product processing. The project is implemented jointly by AGNS and the FAO Agricultural and Food Engineering Technologies Service.

119. FAO/SLAC has been assisting in the Establishment of a National Codex Committee in Jamaica and will assist the Jamaica Bureau of Standards in preparing its Plan of Action for the Codex National Committee.

120. An FAO project to strengthen the food control system of Suriname continued through early January 2006. The main objective of the project is to strengthen the National Food Control System through providing training, upgrading laboratory facilities and supporting the functioning of the National Codex Committee and its Working Groups. The expected project outputs include amended national food laws, regulations and standards which comply with international guidelines, improved food inspection service which applies modern quality assurance and HACCP principles, improved laboratory facilities capable of contamination monitoring in primary agricultural products and processed foods and a plan of action on food safety, conforming to Codex Commission recommendations. The project is being implemented by AGNS and the FAO subregional office for the Caribbean.

121. An FAO/subregional project on "Improving the food safety of street foods through establishing a food inspection system based on the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system in Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) countries" commenced in September 2005.

122. Based on the results of several studies to identify the main safety and quality issues in the production and marketing chains for a range of fruits, vegetables, spices and oil crops in Latin America and the Caribbean countries, a Regional Workshop was organized by FAO/AGS and the FAO Regional Office. This late 2005 workshop was aimed at awareness creation and identifying the issues to be addressed, as well as the planning and initiation of specific programmes.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS

123. FAO/WHO will be holding an informal meeting with delegates from the Americas and the Caribbean attending the 29th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in Geneva in order to discuss follow-up to the FAO/WHO Regional Conference on Food Safety for the Americas and the Caribbean and also current and future capacity building activities in the region.

Field Projects

124. A TCP project on **Strengthening the Food Control System in Guyana**: Development and Delivery of a Communication and Education Pilot Programme on “Food Safety” in Guyana was completed in May 2006. This TCP dealt not only with food trade matters, but food issues and the development of a food safety programme to support the food control system in Guyana.

125. The Government of **Argentina** has also requested assistance from FAO (ESNS) to assist the city of Buenos Aires in training in food hygiene and nutrition. The project is in the formulation phase.

126. The Government of **Dominica** has requested assistance from FAO in the area of coffee production development. The project is currently in the formulation phase.

127. A TCP project has recently been approved to complement the development of a sub-component on food safety in strengthening the national food control system in the **Dominican Republic**. The project will be implemented with the assistance of the FAO subregional office for the Caribbean in the upcoming months.

128. A regional project for capacity building in **Latin American consumer organizations** is being prepared by FAO and Consumers International Latin American Regional Office.

129. The Government of **Nicaragua** has requested assistance with the prevention of OTA in coffee. The project is currently in the formulation phase.

130. FAO/AGS is currently formulating a project in **Uruguay** on strengthening the agri-food chains suppliers to national food and nutrition programs, with emphasis on those directed to primary schools. One of the objectives of the project is to improve the quality and safety of foods delivered to schools, including nutritional quality, as well as those properties of benefit to children’s health.

CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN THE NEAR EAST

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

131. FAO and the Food Safety Information Centre in Egypt held a five-day subregional workshop in Cairo, from 20 to 24 November 2005 for the English-speaking Near East countries. The role of the workshop was to provide a practical approach to improving the quality and safety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Further information on the workshop can be obtained from the FAO website: www.fao.org/ag/agn/food/meetings_workshops2005_en.htm.

132. WHO in the Eastern Mediterranean area provided assistance to Member States by facilitating national training activities covering areas such as:

- increase capacity for food safety awareness campaigns;
 - safe food production techniques using HACCP;
 - draft comprehensive harmonized food legislations;
 - strengthening surveillance system of foodborne disease outbreaks;
 - inter-laboratory seminars on analytical quality;
 - national strategy on control of high risk products;
 - food quality management system using ISO system and consumer food safety information centres.
- WHO awarded fellowships in the field of risk assessment, and in the area of materials in contact with food and water and surveillance of pesticides residue in food.

133. In the Eastern Mediterranean area WHO assisted Member States in activities such as:

- assessment of the food safety legislations, standards, and responsibilities;
- detection of radiation contamination of food and setting national standards for radiation;
- establishment of food quality management system and training food inspectors on risk assessment, food microbiology laboratory improvement.

134. FAO implemented a two-day training workshop on food safety risk analysis for the North African countries (Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia) in Tunis, Tunisia, 25-26 November 2005. Over 40 technical staff participated in this training programme which involved 4 international speakers including one from OIE covering the interface between animal health and food safety risk analysis. More details on this workshop can be found on the FAO website.

NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

135. In 2006 FAO/AGNS provided support to Algeria, Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates in the organization of their national Codex committees. Support was also provided to Qatar and UAE in the review of its food control system and the formulation of a series of recommendations towards a restructuring of the systems for more efficiency and to reflect modern approaches to food safety management.

National Seminars/Workshops

136. FAO, in collaboration with the Libyan Standards and Specification Centre, held a workshop for regulators and senior technical staff working in the areas of food safety and standards. The workshop took place in Tripoli, Libya, from 12-13 February 2006. More information on this workshop can be found at www.fao.org/ag/agn/food/meetings_workshops2006_en.htm.

Field Projects

137. As a follow-up to the above workshop, FAO/AGNS has received a request from the Government of Libya for assistance in the area of food safety and harmonization of standards. The project is in the formulation stage.

138. An FAO/AGNS project to assist the Government of Algeria in setting up and strengthening of a National Codex Committee (NCC) was approved in May 2004 and was scheduled to be completed in March 2006. Besides implementing a fully functional and active NCC, the project aims at reviewing national food standards and proposing an action plan for their harmonization with international standards, mainly Codex standards.

139. The second phase of an FAO/AGNS project to support the Management and Control of Pesticides, Animal Drug and Chemical Residues in Foodstuffs in Iran commenced in 2002. The objective of the project is to promote the application of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) in the use of pesticides and Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP) in the use of prescribed animal drugs and to enhance the government's capabilities in the monitoring and control of residues (pesticides, animal drugs and other chemical residues) in foodstuffs. The objectives of the project are met through a series of training activities, improvements in the capability of national laboratories to detect pesticide and veterinary drug residues in foods and establishment of National Maximum Residue Limits that take into account Codex recommendations on these matters.

140. An FAO/AGNS TCP project to assist in the Analysis of the Control and Management of Mycotoxins in Foodstuffs was initiated in Iran in April 2003 and was scheduled to be completed in late 2005. The objective of the assistance is to enhance the government's capabilities in the prevention, monitoring and control of mycotoxins in foodstuffs with a view to ensure maximum consumer protection and promote international trade in foodstuffs.

141. An FAO/AGNS project to Strengthen National Food Control Systems and Establish a National Codex Committee in Yemen was approved in early 2004 and continued through September 2005. The objectives of the project are to improve the coordination between the institutions involved in food control in the country and to set up a fully operational NCC.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS

142. FAO/WHO will be holding an informal meeting with delegates from the Near East region attending the 29th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in Geneva in order to discuss follow-up to the

FAO/WHO Regional Meeting on Food Safety for the Near East and also current and future capacity building activities in the region.

143. In collaboration with the Agence Nationale de Contrôle Sanitaire et Environnemental des Produits FAO/AGNS and RNE will be organizing a subregional workshop in Hammamet, Tunisia from 11 to 16 September 2006. The workshop is intended for the French speaking countries in the Near East and will provide capacity building using the recently developed training pack on “Improving the quality and safety of fresh fruits and vegetables”.

144. The Government of Afghanistan has requested FAO (AGNS) advice on food control activities. A project formulation mission was carried out in February 2005, different financing options are being considered to support a project proposal in the formulation stage.

145. The Government of Egypt has requested assistance from FAO (ESNS) in Strengthening Quality Control Systems for Cereals and Groundnuts. The request is in the review stage.

146. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries have requested assistance from FAO (AGNS) in establishing a regional risk assessment body and in reorganizing the food control system. The project proposal is currently in the review and formulation stage.

147. The Government of Morocco has requested assistance from FAO (ESNS) in the area of consumer affairs and food safety. The project has just been approved and will start operation shortly.

148. An FAO (AGST/AGNS) project on the Development of Food Industries Division at the National Agricultural Research Centre in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been formulated and is currently under consideration for funding under UTF arrangement.

CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

FAO-SAPA/RAP Activities

149. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat approved a Regional Trade Facilitation Project to Strengthen the Capacity of the Pacific Forum Island Countries (FICs) to Establish and Enforce Harmonized Food Legislation and Standards to Promote Trade, to be implemented by the University of the South Pacific, FAO and WHO. The project aims to strengthen the capacity of FICs to establish and enforce internationally recognized food laws, standards and inspection procedures to promote unhindered trade in safe and wholesome food. Project activities commenced in September 2005.

150. An FAO Regional Programme for Food Security in the countries of the Pacific plans to undertake the following activities related to food quality and safety: (1) Needs Assessment and Situation Analysis (NASA) studies on Trade Facilitation and Agriculture Policies focusing on the following (a) Food Safety and Standards; (b) Bio-Security and Quarantine; (c) Commodity Studies; (2) A regional workshop to present and endorse findings of the NASA Studies. In addition, the workshop will further prioritize, discuss and endorse an implementation plan for the implementation of findings clearly distinguishing their regional and national significance; (3) Training Program on Food Standards and Food Safety/Bio-Security and Quarantine; and (4) Training Programme on Commodity Study. These activities will be implemented in the upcoming months.

151. The Government of Malaysia has requested FAO assistance to facilitate a Regional Training Programme on Strengthening National Capacities on Risk Assessment and Traceability in the Seafood Trade for the South West Pacific Region. The request is being addressed by the FAO Fish Utilization and Marketing Service, in collaboration with AGNS and is currently in the formulation stage.