

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 3

CX/EURO 04/3

## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME FAO/WHO REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE

Twenty-fourth Session  
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### ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WHO COMPLEMENTARY TO THE WORK OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

#### INTRODUCTION

1) This paper describes FAO/WHO activities implemented since the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Codex Committee for Europe, which are complementary to the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, and relevant to member countries in Europe.

- Part 1. Matters related to Scientific Advice
- Part 2. Capacity Building in Food Safety and Advice

#### PART I: MATTERS RELATED TO SCIENTIFIC ADVICE

##### A. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE FAO/WHO CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON PROVISION OF SCIENTIFIC ADVICE TO CODEX AND MEMBER COUNTRIES

- 2) The review of the FAO/WHO programs providing scientific advice to Codex and member countries is ongoing, as requested by the Codex Alimentarius Commission<sup>1</sup> and in response to recommendations of the Codex Evaluation<sup>2</sup>.
- 3) Progress to date includes the completion of the two of the three planned steps in the review process, namely an electronic forum<sup>3</sup> held in the second half of 2003, and an FAO/WHO Workshop on the Provision of Scientific Advice to Codex and Member Countries was held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 27-29 January, 2004<sup>4</sup>.
- 4) The Workshop resulted in a set of recommendations on 1) essential principles, definitions and scope governing the provision of scientific advice, 2) management issues and 3) procedures and mechanisms. Due regard was given to enhancing the participation of developing countries in the provision of scientific advice.
- 5) The executive summary and the recommendations of the Workshop report were circulated through the Codex Contact Points to member countries and international observer organisations in March 2004 soliciting official comments to be submitted to FAO and WHO. Comments received and steps undertaken by FAO and WHO since the implementation of the Workshop were made available at the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (ref. CAC/27 INF 3A).

<sup>1</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> Codex Alimentarius Commission, ALINORM 01/41, paras 58-62

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Evaluation of the Codex Alimentarius and other FAO and WHO Food Standards Work, Rome, 2002

<sup>3</sup> The report of the e-forum can be found on this FAO webpage: [http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/proscad/forum\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/proscad/forum_en.stm).

<sup>4</sup> The report of the Workshop is available on the websites of FAO ([http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/proscad/index\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/proscad/index_en.stm)) and WHO (<http://www.who.int/foodsafety/en/>).

- 6) Activities prioritised by FAO/WHO to enable implementation of the workshop recommendations include the following:
- Elaborate a *Procedural Guideline* that would compile all written procedures followed by FAO and WHO in the provision of scientific advice;
  - Establish an *Internal FAO/WHO Task Force* to review the management options for the provision of scientific advice and consider improved coordination;
  - Prepare *Review Papers* to address procedures for the selection of experts, to consider factors associated with enhanced openness of meetings, and to improve procedures on use of data;
  - Convene a *Workshop* (brain-storming session) to explore new approaches to enhance the participation of experts and use of data from developing countries in the international scientific advice activities.
- 7) In addition to the review process described above, specific projects are ongoing to strengthen the working procedures of certain aspects of scientific advice by FAO and WHO. Results and recommendations of these parallel review processes will be considered by FAO/WHO.

FAO/WHO work sharing activities with national governments and regional authorities for the evaluation of pesticide residues and toxicology

8) A pilot project on work sharing was initiated in response to the request from the CCPR on ways to improve the timeliness of the recommendations of the JMPR in establishing MRLs. One substance has been identified for this pilot project and will be evaluated at the 2004 JMPR, using national and regional evaluations as a basis. The 36<sup>th</sup> Session of the CCPR was advised that the purpose of this worksharing pilot project was to investigate the feasibility of using national and regional evaluations to expedite JMPR evaluations and make better use of the resources available, increase the transparency of the evaluation process, facilitate the international acceptance of JMPR evaluations by governments and facilitate the submission of dossiers by the industry. The results and experience of the worksharing pilot project will be summarised in an evaluation report and will be presented to the 37<sup>th</sup> Session of the CCPR.

Follow-up on the implementation of the York and Zoning reports

9) The 36<sup>th</sup> Session of the CCPR was informed that the JMPR had already been using the recommendations of the York and Zoning reports whenever possible but that JMPR needs further information from the national governments before their full utilization. The York workshop implemented in 1999 focussed on “Developing minimum data requirements for the estimation of MRLs and import tolerances”. The “Zoning meeting” (2001), concluded that the impact of climate on the behaviour of residues of some foliar applied pesticides on certain crops is negligible, and residue trials could be extrapolated from one place to another when good agriculture practices and agronomical factors were similar.

10) Recognizing that practical experience would be necessary to see how recommendations could be implemented, the JMPR agreed to pilot test the practical applicability of the principles with one pesticide scheduled for evaluation by JMPR in 2004. A survey on the issues raised at the York and Zoning meetings, on which consensus was not achieved at that time, have been considered in the survey and distributed to member governments of the CCPR and the OECD for comments by the end of May 2004. The results would be improved transparency of pesticide evaluation at national and international level.

**B. REQUESTS FOR SCIENTIFIC ADVICE FROM CODEX SUBSIDIARY BODIES**

11) FAO and WHO have presented the current list of requests<sup>5</sup> for scientific advice, received from Codex subsidiary bodies and direct from member countries, at the Fifty-Third Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission held in Geneva, Switzerland on 4-6 February 2004<sup>6</sup>. The Executive Committee following the request of the 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission considered the large number of requests for scientific advice with a view of their prioritization, including a preliminary set of criteria to establish priorities.

12) As part of this prioritisation exercise, FAO/WHO advised that the current budget of FAO and WHO available for the provision of scientific advice would not allow for a timely response to all these requests. Adequate funding from Regular Budgets and from extra budgetary sources need to be secured to ensure the provision of scientific advice in a more sustainable manner.

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<sup>5</sup> CX/EXEC 04/53/4

<sup>6</sup> ALINORM 04/27/3, paras 55-85

13) Further discussion on this matter took place at the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission<sup>7</sup> and the Commission agreed that priority for the provision of scientific advice should be given to requests coming from Codex subsidiary bodies rather than from Member governments and that the work plan of Codex shall take into account the availability of relevant scientific advice. The Commission noted the view that priority should also be given to the concerns of developing countries, the decisions of the Commission and prioritised requests by Codex subsidiary bodies.

14) The Commission noted that in the absence of Codex criteria for setting priorities for the provision of scientific advice, FAO and WHO would continue planning expert meetings and consultations considering the following criteria: a) clear scope of the advice requested; b) urgency of the advice requested, c) availability of required data or commitment of countries to provide such data; and d) availability of financial resources.

15) With regard to specific requests for scientific advice, member countries at the Commission agreed that Codex requests for scientific advice related to functional foods, active chlorine and transport of fats and oils in bulk for scientific advice should not be considered as cancelled but be retained. Some delegations proposed to give a higher priority to the Codex request from the 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Coordinating Committee for Asia, to evaluate the safety and regulatory issues related to functional foods, given their importance to developing countries. Other delegations indicated that the Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses gave priority to the evaluation of upper limits of vitamins and minerals and that there was no international definition of functional food and no work was being undertaken by the Codex in this area and that from a legal point of view functional foods could be considered as common foods or foods for special dietary uses.

16) A FAO/WHO Workshop is planned to provide information on the characteristics and use of functional foods, and to provide a venue to exchange information on the status of functional foods in selected countries in Asia.

17) The Commission noted that the Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants and the Committee on Food Hygiene were preparing the draft Terms of Reference for the proposed expert consultation on safety of active chlorine used in and on foods.

18) In relation to the request regarding the evaluation of the safety of acceptable previous cargoes, the Commission confirmed its earlier request to FAO and WHO to convene an expert consultation, preferably before the next Session of the Committee on Fats and Oils. The Delegation of the United States stated that future work by the Committee on Fats and Oils should concentrate on criteria but not on the list.

## **FAO/WHO EXPERT MEETINGS AND CONSULTATIONS**

### ***Residues of veterinary drugs without ADI/MRL***

19) In July 2003, the 26<sup>th</sup> Session the Codex Alimentarius Commission discussed a request from Thailand to assess the issue of “Risk Analysis for Substances with No ADI and/or MRL” and took note of FAO’s proposal to examine, at a technical consultation, the regulatory issues, including zero tolerance and *de minimis* limits and risks associated with substances at the limit of detection or *de minimis* levels. The Joint FAO/WHO Technical Workshop on Residues of Substances without ADI/MRL in Foods from 24-26 August 2004, Bangkok, Thailand shall provide FAO, WHO and Codex with a first analysis of the disruptions in food trade that occurred in 2001/2002, identify the scientific, technical and regulatory problems related to them and discuss, if possible, any appropriate follow-up steps. The analysis of several case studies to be provided by exporting and importing countries shall allow emphasis to be placed on “lessons learned”. The identification of possible gaps within the current framework of JECFA and Codex shall lead to the development of preliminary recommendations for further actions by FAO, WHO and Codex. The final report including working papers and case studies will be submitted to FAO, WHO and the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

### **Outputs from Completed Meetings**

#### ***Risk assessments of food additives and contaminants***

20) In June 2003, the Sixty-first meeting of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) evaluated twenty-three food additives, 7 of them for specifications only, and revised the levels for arsenic and heavy metals for an additional 39 additives. JECFA also evaluated 144 flavour agents in 7

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<sup>7</sup> ALINORM 04/27/10G

different groups applying the decision tree approach and prepared specifications for an additional 101 flavours. The Expert Committee also evaluated a water treatment agent (sodium dichloroisocyanurate NaDCC) and a nutritional source of iron (ferrous glycinate). JECFA assessed cadmium and methyl mercury as contaminants. For cadmium, the new data did not provide a sufficient basis for revising the provisional tolerable weekly intake (PTWI), therefore, the PTWI of 7 µg/kg of BW was maintained. In the case of methyl mercury the Expert Committee considered a variety of new data from human studies and derived from them a lower PTWI of 1.6 µg/kg BW, down from 3.3 µg/kg BW. The Summary Report is available at [http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/jecfa/works\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/jecfa/works_en.stm); the report is available as WHO Technical Report Series No 922; the specifications were published as Addendum 11 to the Compendium of Food Additives Specifications.

21) In June, 2004, the sixty third meeting of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) evaluated twenty-one food additives, nine of them for specifications only and revised the levels for arsenic and heavy metals for an additional eighty-four additives. JECFA also evaluated 178 flavour agents in 8 different groups and prepared specifications for an additional 21 flavours. A suggested intake of 100 mg per day was proposed for Glycyrrhizic acid, a natural food constituent. The summary report is available at [http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/jecfa/whatisnew\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/jecfa/whatisnew_en.stm), and the meeting of the report will appear in the WHO Technical Report Series. New and revised specifications will be published in the FAO Food and Nutrition Paper Series 52, Addendum 12.

#### ***Risk assessments of residues of veterinary drugs***

22) In February 2004, the sixty second meeting of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) evaluated eleven veterinary drugs and their residues in foods. In addition, the Committee concluded that it is not appropriate to establish an ADI for chloramphenicol and that it was unlikely that chloramphenicol was an environmental contaminant. The Expert Committee also considered several general issues that relate to the risk assessment of residues of veterinary drugs in foods among them a risk assessment policy proposal from CCRVDF. The Summary Report is available at [http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/jecfa/works\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/jecfa/works_en.stm); the report and the toxicological monographs will be published by WHO and the residue monographs by FAO.

#### ***Risk assessment of pesticides residues***

23) In September 2003, a Joint Meeting of the FAO Panel of Experts on Pesticide Residues in Food and the Environment and the WHO Core Assessment Group (JMPR) evaluated 23 pesticides, including four new compounds and nine compounds that were re-evaluated within the periodic review programme of the CCPR for toxicity or residues, or both. The Meeting estimated 179 MRLs and recommended 98 existing MRLs for withdrawals for pesticides under the periodic review programme of the CCPR. There were 26 exceedances of the acute RfD based on estimated short-term intake for acephatate, dimethoate, fenitrothion, methamidophos, methoxyfenozide and phosmet. The Report is available at <http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/FAOINFO/AGRICULT/AGP/AGPP/Pesticid/Default.HTM>. Publications of the detailed toxicological evaluations and evaluations of pesticide residues in food will be prepared by WHO and FAO, respectively.

24) The 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the CCPR requested the JMPR (ALINORM 03/24A) to consider probabilistic approaches for refining the dietary intake estimates when the results of point estimates exceed the acute reference dose (acute RfD). In principle, the 2003 JMPR agreed to adopt a tiered approach to estimating short term dietary intake in which the second tier would be the probabilistic modelling e.g. considering the model that would be developed by the Working Group led by the Netherlands.

#### ***Antimicrobial resistance resulting from non-human usage of antimicrobials***

25) In response to a recommendation from the 48<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee, FAO, WHO and OIE organized a two-step multidisciplinary expert consultation process to advise the Commission on possible directions to be taken on the issue of antimicrobial resistance.

26) The first Workshop on Non-human Antimicrobial Usage, held in December 2003 in Geneva conducted a preliminary scientific assessment considering all non-human uses of antimicrobials in animals (including aquaculture) and plants, and their role in antimicrobial resistance, based on the available scientific information. Based on the outcome, the second Workshop in Oslo considered the broad range of possible risk management options and included the participation of all major stakeholder groups. In particular, it focused on potential directions of future Codex, FAO, OIE and WHO work in this area, in order to prevent and minimize antimicrobial resistance at the global level. The reports of both workshops were published by WHO and are available on the web pages of all three participating organisations (e.g.:

<http://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/micro/en/>).

### ***Risk assessment of microbiological hazards in food***

#### **Pathogen-commodity risk assessments**

27) The risk assessment on *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat foods, undertaken following the requests of the 32<sup>nd</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup> sessions of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) has now been completed. The technical report and the interpretative summary are now available on the FAO webpage ([www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/risk\\_mra\\_riskassessment\\_listeria\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/risk_mra_riskassessment_listeria_en.stm)). In response to the requests of the 32<sup>nd</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup> sessions of the CCFH risk assessments on *Vibrio* spp in seafood and *Campylobacter* spp. in broiler chickens have been undertaken. These are currently undergoing a peer-review. A summary of the findings of each of these risk assessments was made available to the last sessions of the CCFH, the Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene (CCMH) and the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP). These risk assessments will be finalised by the end of 2004.

#### **FAO/WHO meeting on *Enterobacter sakazakii* and other microorganisms of concern in powdered infant formula**

28) The Codex Committee on Food Hygiene is revising the International Code of Hygienic Practice for Foods for Infants and Children. FAO/WHO held an expert meeting on *Enterobacter sakazakii* and other microorganisms of concern in powdered infant formula on 2 - 5 February 2004 to provide scientific advice to Codex to facilitate the revision process. In continuing to support the revision process, FAO/WHO will further develop and use the risk assessment model to evaluate the efficacy of various risk mitigation strategies. For this purpose, FAO/WHO have issued a new call for data specifically related to aspects of the manufacture, preparation and use of powdered infant formula as well as data on the characteristics of potential consumers. The report is now available on the FAO webpage ([www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/risk\\_mra\\_entero\\_report\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/risk_mra_entero_report_en.stm)).

#### **FAO/WHO guidelines on exposure assessment and risk characterization of microbiological hazards in food**

The above mentioned guidelines will be completed during 2004 and will complement the guidelines on hazard characterization for pathogens in food and water presently available (FAO/WHO Microbiological Risk Assessment Series. No. 3).

#### **Risk assessment on biotoxins in bivalve molluscs.**

29) At its 25<sup>th</sup> Session, the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP) asked FAO and WHO to provide scientific advice on biotoxins in conjunction with its work on Proposed Draft Standards for Live and Processed Bivalve Molluscs. The CCFFP, at its 26th Session, specifically requested advice to enable the establishment of maximum levels in shellfish for shellfish toxins (PSP-, DSP-, ASP-, AZP- and NSP-toxins, and YTXs and PTXs), advice on methods of analysis for each toxin group as well as on monitoring of biotoxin-forming phytoplankton and bivalve molluscs, and information on geographical distribution of biotoxin-forming marine phytoplankton.

30) An FAO/IOC/WHO workshop held at the Food Safety Authority of Ireland in Dublin, 22-24 March 2004, established three working groups to address the questions posed by Codex with regard to setting up maximum levels of biotoxins and reference analytical methods for the Draft Standards for Live and Processed Bivalve Molluscs, and to provide scientific information that can be used for Section 7 - Live and [raw] bivalve molluscs - of the Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products with respect to hazard identification and to technical guidance for classification and monitoring of growing areas.

Technical working papers prepared by these working groups will be reviewed at the forthcoming joint FAO/IOC/WHO expert consultation from 27 September to 1 October 2004 in Norway. Further information will be posted on both WHO (<http://www.who.int/foodsafety/chem/meetings/biotoxin/en>) and FAO websites ([http://www.fao.org/es/esn/food/risk\\_biotoxin\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/esn/food/risk_biotoxin_en.stm)) as it becomes available.

#### ***Safety assessment of foods derived from genetically modified animals***

31) A joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on the safety assessment of foods derived from genetically modified animals (GM animals), including fish, was held from 17 to 21 November 2003. The consultation indicated that the food safety assessment of GM animals and derived products can largely be performed along the lines that have already been established for the evaluation of GM plants and derived products on a case-by-case basis. This means that the initial step of the food safety assessment will be a comparative safety assessment of the GM animal with its conventional counterpart, including a food intake assessment, followed where appropriate, by a full risk characterization. The Consultation also concluded that rigorous

pre-market safety assessment of foods derived from GM animals should provide sufficient safety assurances.

The final report of the expert consultation is now available from: [ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/gmanimal\\_report\\_en.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/gmanimal_report_en.pdf). The report will also be available in French and Spanish and in print format as an FAO Food and Nutrition Paper in the future. The working papers and executive summary are also available from: [http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/risk\\_biotech\\_animal\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/risk_biotech_animal_en.stm)

## **OTHER FAO AND WHO ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE PROVISION OF SCIENTIFIC ADVICE**

### ***Guidance document on Obstacles to the Application of HACCP, Particularly in Small and Less Developed Business (SLDBs) and Approaches to Overcome them.***

32) The 35<sup>th</sup> session of the CCFH (27 January - 1 February 2003) accepted the offer of FAO/WHO Representatives, to elaborate a guidance document on “Obstacles to the Application of HACCP, Particularly in Small and Less Developed Business (SLDBs) and Approaches to Overcome Them” using as a basis the CCFH discussions, in particular those related to discussion of paper CX/FH 03/4-Add.1 (December 2003). An electronic working group has been established by FAO/WHO to contribute to this document which will be available for the next session of the CCFH. FAO has also supported the preparation of four case studies on application of HACCP in Brazil, Chile, India and Thailand. The information obtained will also be considered in the preparation of the guidance document.

### ***Preparedness for response to nuclear emergencies.***

33) FAO has established a network of technical experts on preparedness for response to nuclear emergencies in relation to food and agriculture. This group is charged with 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.

34) WHO's Radiation and Environmental Health Programme (RAD) has established a network of collaborating centers on Radiation Emergency Medical Preparedness and Assistance (RENPAN), that includes 14 institutions. Additionally, 13 more institutions are currently undergoing the WHO Collaborating Centre designation process. According to the Conventions on Early Notification and Assistance, regarding public health aspects of radiation emergency, WHO and IAEA co-operate closely in order to provide any requesting Member State or State Party with verified information on real or perceived risks to public health. Jointly with the IAEA, RAD is developing a document on public health guidance for preparedness and response to radionuclear accidents.

### ***Expert consultation on community based veterinary public health***

35) FAO held an Expert Consultation on Community Based Veterinary Public Health (VPH) in Rome on 27-28 October 2003 with OIE and WHO participation. Among the recommendations, the experts suggested that FAO should provide support to countries for identifying and solving problems especially relating to endemic, persistent zoonoses and food borne diseases with specific recommendations for prioritization of such VPH hazards based on risk analysis, burden assessment and socio-economic factors. Zoonoses and other VPH hazards should also be considered in the context of poverty alleviation. Support should include the development of practical guidelines for the delivery of VPH services at the community level to support new or existing human and animal health services.

### ***Guidelines for Good Agricultural Practices***

36) FAO is developing guidelines for Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) along the food-chain in the context of Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD). To this effect, an Expert Consultation was held in Rome from 10 to 12 November 2003, to obtain advice on the relevance, validity and next steps of the proposed Good Agricultural Practices Approach. Participants discussed examples of application and methodology of a GAP approach based on stakeholder priorities with a focus particularly on developing country settings. The meeting resulted in initial strategies for implementing the GAP approach and the design of several pilot activities for testing the approach. There has been a joint initiative with Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária (EMBRAPA), Brazil, to define GAPs for a number of animal production systems within selected agro-ecosystems which resulted in a publication.

## **PART II: CAPACITY BUILDING IN FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY**

### **A. NEED FOR CAPACITY BUILDING**

37) A new international food and agriculture trade environment has emerged as a result of the Uruguay round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations and subsequent agreements on the application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures and on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT).

38) Members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) are required to base their domestic technical regulations or standards on standards developed by international organisations. These organisations include the Joint FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission for food safety; the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) for animal health; and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) for plant health.

39) The evolution of the conditions for international trade in relation to food and agriculture affects numerous cross-cutting sectors in every country, including human, animal and plant health, environmental welfare and economic development. The regulatory systems and infrastructure needed to conform to the new international trading environment are weak in many developing countries. This puts these countries at a competitive disadvantage in the international trade arena and constitutes a major limitation to the effective participation of these countries in the discussions and decisions taken at the level of international standardisation bodies.

40) Both the SPS (article 9) Agreement and the TBT (article 12) Agreement make specific reference to increasing the capacity of developing countries and remaining cognisant of the unique needs of developing country Members. Specifically section 12.3 of the TBT states “Members shall, in the preparation and application of technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures, take account of the special development, financial and trade needs of developing country Members, with a view to ensuring that such technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures do not create unnecessary obstacles to exports from developing country Members”. Reinforcing these views, the Executive Heads of FAO, WHO, WTO, WB and OIE, in a joint statement issued at the occasion of the WTO Ministerial Meeting held in Doha in November 2001, expressed their commitment to strengthening the capacity of developing countries to meet the requirements of the SPS agreement.

41) In keeping with these mandates, FAO and WHO engage in diverse capacity building activities designed to assist developing countries to improve their food safety and plant and animal health systems. Together with international organisations, national governments, international and regional financial institutions and NGOs, various capacity building and technical assistance initiatives have been undertaken. This often involves a review and analysis of the institutional set up for food control: evaluating its effectiveness, identifying main weaknesses, and formulating recommendations and proposals for the establishment of technically sound food control systems which are harmonised with current international standards. Specific activities falling within the realm of capacity building include, training of food control officials and technical staff (food control managers, food inspectors, food analysts) in the form of seminars, workshops and study tours to broaden in-country skills and increase the ability of local governments to implement comprehensive food control systems, enhancement of food control laboratory capabilities, preparation of training manuals and guidelines, support in establishing and strengthening National Codex Committees, policy advice and establishment of regulatory frameworks. This report will focus on capacity building activities undertaken in part or in whole by FAO and WHO since September 2002.

### **B. RECENT AND ONGOING CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES AT GLOBAL LEVEL**

#### ***International Events***

42) FAO and the Institut de Recherché pour la Developpement (IRD) held a conference in Jaen, Spain, from 6 to 8 September 2004 to address the issues of food-borne pathogens, anti-nutritional and toxic factors in fermented foods produced in small-scale producing units. The conference promoted sharing of information and viewpoints between scientists and experts from Africa, Europe and the Mediterranean countries on progress in scientific and regulatory knowledge of small-scale units. More details are available from: [www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/meetings\\_fermented\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/meetings_fermented_en.stm)

43) FAO co-sponsored the xi international IUPAC symposium on mycotoxins and phycotoxins from 17 to 21 May 2004 in Bethesda, Maryland, USA. The symposium assessed progress or advances made since the previous symposium in 2000 in relation to overall goals of the series and the evolving global perspective of food safety. Topics addressed included: advances in methodology; the value of risk assessment and its regulatory use; laboratory quality assurance and quality control, accreditation and method validation, particularly in developing countries. Advances in genomics for detection and evaluating the impact of

mycotoxins and phycotoxins on human and animal health, as well as control strategies were also discussed. More information on the symposium is available from: [www.aoac.org/meetings1/iupac/main.htm](http://www.aoac.org/meetings1/iupac/main.htm)

44) FAO and WHO, in collaboration with ILSI facilitated a workshop on 5 March 2004 on the Detection of Protein and/or DNA in Foods Derived from Modern Biotechnology. The workshop was held in the same venue and immediately prior to the 25th Session of CCMAS and was attended by 23 participants from 9 countries. The purpose of this workshop was to give an introduction to the tools, information and experiences available to test for protein/DNA from foods derived from modern biotechnology to the CCMAS delegates and other interested parties. Emphasis was placed on similarities and differences among chemical analytical methods available, with particular attention to how biological factors can affect measurement results. Current efforts in methods development, standardization and validation, including those within ISO, were described. The complete workshop programme can be accessed from:

[www.fao.org/es/esn/food/capacity\\_workshops2004\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/esn/food/capacity_workshops2004_en.stm)

45) FAO held a Ministerial Round Table on 3 December 2003, on the occasion of the 32<sup>nd</sup> session of the FAO Conference, on the Dimension of Food Safety in Food Security. The background document and final report for this round table discussion can be accessed from:

[www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/meetings\\_mrt\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/meetings_mrt_en.stm)

46) FAO and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) jointly facilitated a workshop on the subject of: "Strengthening Capacities for Implementing Codex Standards, Guidelines and the Recommended International Codes of Practice for Control of the Use of Veterinary Drugs" from 20-24 October 2003 in Vienna, Austria. Technical training courses for scientists/ technicians/ laboratory managers to complement these workshops have also been held in various regions of the world. More information on this workshop and training courses can be found at [www.iaea.org/programmes/nafa/d3/index.html](http://www.iaea.org/programmes/nafa/d3/index.html).

47) FAO is involved in a number of events relating to Good Agricultural Practices and food safety. These include: a Food-Feed Safety Conference jointly with the International Feed Industry Federation (IFIF) in Rome, from 29 to 31 October 2004; an International Symposium on Dairy Hygiene and Safety with the International Dairy Federation (IDF), in South Africa, 2-5 March 2004; and an International Workshop on Good Practices for the Meat and Livestock Sector in Windhoek, Namibia from 6 to 8 April 2004. A workshop related to Echinococcosis was held in Morocco on the 19 September 2003 and another on Fasciolosis, diagnostics and control in Egypt on the 12 of January 2004. A presentation on Cysticercosis: FAO perspectives - FAO support possibilities, was presented on the 19th International Conference of the World Association of Veterinary Parasitology (WAAVP), USA on the 12 August 2003.

48) FAO and WHO jointly facilitated an international seminar on *Acrylamide in Food: Current State of Affairs* in Arusha, Tanzania on 16 March 2003, held immediately prior to the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants. This seminar provided for the exchange of views, an update on ongoing research, and identification of gaps in the area of acrylamide in foods. Presentations were given by representatives of FAO/WHO, the US, JIFSAN, the EU, Australia, Japan, and Norway and are available for viewing from FAO's website at: [www.fao.org/es/ESN/jecfa/acrylamide\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/jecfa/acrylamide_en.stm).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

49) As a follow-up to the successful first Global Forum of Food Safety Regulators and with the support and approval of the FAO and WHO member countries, FAO and WHO are facilitating the Second Global Forum of Food Safety Regulators (GF-2) in Bangkok, Thailand from 12-14 October 2004, under the main theme of: "Building Effective Food Safety Systems". In order to allow greater focus during discussions, and to promote practical and pragmatic actions, the topics to be discussed will be limited in scope, namely under the two following sub-themes: 1) Strengthening official food control services and 2) Epidemio-surveillance of foodborne diseases and food safety rapid alert systems. Many countries are providing financial and in-kind support to FAO and WHO to assist in the organization of GF-2. More information on the First and Second Global Fora can be found at: [www.foodsafetyforum.org/index\\_en.htm](http://www.foodsafetyforum.org/index_en.htm)

50) Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, in cooperation with WHO will implement an International Symposium on Food Safety Systems on 15 October 2004 in Bangkok immediately after GF-2. This symposium is entitled "In Search of Better and More Effective Food Safety Systems: Thailand towards the Kitchen of the World". It aims to utilize the outcomes from the GF-2 as a thought starter and a stimulator of improvement in food safety systems, taking Thailand as an example. Participants will have an opportunity to discuss with the GF-2 delegates, Thai and international food sector personnel involved in food safety, and



those who need further research direction for the next steps. More information on the symposium is available from: [www.ahs.chula.ac.th/foodsafety2004/](http://www.ahs.chula.ac.th/foodsafety2004/)

### **Global Projects**

51) An FAO- implemented global project for the Enhancement of Coffee Quality through the Prevention of Mould Formation started in December 2000, and is due to end in June 2005. This project is being carried out in Brazil, Colombia, Ivory Coast, India, Indonesia, Kenya, and Uganda, with ongoing collaboration from the Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD) and the Institute for Scientific Information on Coffee (ISIC), and earlier collaboration with the University of Surrey, U.K. The project is funded by the Common Fund for Commodities and the Dutch Government. An additionally funded component for training and dissemination of best practice in ochratoxin A (OTA) control in Ecuador was incorporated, and completed in 2002.

52) The project approach emphasises capacity building in coffee-producing countries, with the aim of formulating codes of practice for the coffee industry. Key initial activities under the project involve defining mould formation mechanisms, identifying critical control points, evaluating optimal drying conditions, and developing the necessary tools (e.g. GAP, GMP and HACCP) to control and monitor both mould formation and OTA production. Specifically, the project builds capacity at the national level within the industry and responsible government agencies in the application of internationally-agreed principles of food hygiene and a HACCP-based approach to food safety throughout the coffee production and processing chain. The project also builds the analytical capacity and capability required to support national programmes for prevention and control of OTA contamination of coffee.

53) As part of a two-year project initiated in 2002, FAO has recently conducted a series of sub-regional training courses in Latin America and the Caribbean to improve the safety and quality of fresh fruits and vegetables. Sub- regional workshops have been held in the Southern Cone Region (17-21 March 2003), Central American and Spanish Speaking Caribbean Countries (21-26 July 2003), Andean Countries (22-27 March 2004), and the Caribbean Region (24-28 May 2004). Through this project, a training manual and database of resources available in the area have been prepared and are now freely available on the FAO web pages or as a CD-ROM, in English, French, and Spanish. The project's main objective is to improve access and availability of information, through provision of resource materials and training activities, to countries desiring to improve the quality and safety of their fresh produce. More information is available from:

[www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/foodandfood\\_fruits\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/foodandfood_fruits_en.stm)

### **Global Initiatives**

54) FAO, WHO, OIE, WTO, and the World Bank established a Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) in 2003 to coordinate the capacity building efforts of these organizations in the areas of food safety, plant, and animal health and to provide a funding mechanism for countries and stakeholders to improve in meeting WTO SPS standards. The STDF has already and will continue to facilitate or support information exchange, development of databases, tool kits, and learning materials on trade-related SPS issues. It facilitates consultations to better coordinate inter-agency capacity building projects and funding of projects in capacity building in individual countries or through regional initiatives, including activities involving both public and private sectors. The specific projects supported with funding by the Facility are identified by partner institutions in consultation with the developing countries concerned. An FAO/WHO project to assist the low income countries of Asia and the Pacific in Developing Food Standards within a Risk Analysis Framework was approved for funding from this Facility in early 2004 and will be implemented in late 2004. Interested countries and stakeholders are encouraged to propose projects and submit them to the STDF for consideration. More information on the STDF is available from: [www.standardsfacility.org](http://www.standardsfacility.org)

55) In February 2003, FAO and WHO launched a Project and Trust Fund for Enhanced 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 ability to participate in the establishment of global food safety and quality standards, as well as improve their capacity to implement those standards in their own countries. Thanks to the generosity of several donors, the minimum threshold of US\$ 500 000 was reached at the beginning of March 2004, allowing the Fund to become fully operational. Over eighty applications from all Codex regions were received by April 2004, with delegates from Ghana, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea already benefiting from the Fund. More information and

application forms are available from [www.who.int/foodsafety/codex/trustfund/en/](http://www.who.int/foodsafety/codex/trustfund/en/) in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

56) In early 2004, FAO and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) launched a joint initiative entitled a “Global Framework for the progressive control of Transboundary Animal Diseases” (GF-TADs). Some of the diseases addressed in GF-TADs are of public health interest and the FAO-OIE activities will have a global objective of re-enforcing Veterinary Services.

57) In response to resolutions of the World Health Assembly calling for enhanced communication between WHO and its Member States on matters of food safety, WHO, in collaboration with FAO, is now establishing an official International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) to be used for targeted and rapid distribution of various information for the protection of public health. One part of INFOSAN will be dedicated to food safety emergency situations (INFOSAN EMERGENCY) where imminent risk of serious injury or death is present.

58) WHO also manages a global network of laboratories and individuals involved in surveillance, isolation, identification and antimicrobial resistance testing of *Salmonella* (Global Salm-Surv). The network, which links around 800 members from nearly 500 institutions in 138 countries, is currently being extended to include other major foodborne pathogens, e.g. *Campylobacter*. The Global Environment Monitoring System/Food Contamination Monitoring and Assessment Programme (GEMS/Food) has now been introduced to 13 francophone countries, mainly from Africa, through the Third International Total Diet Study Workshop and Training Course held in May 2004. The workshop presented the latest developments in methods and technology which continue to make total diet studies the most cost-effective exposure assessment tool available for assessing human exposure to chemicals in food.

### **Global Tools Available**

59) Apart from the direct implementation of activities in the area of food quality and safety in developing countries, FAO and WHO elaborate guidance and technical materials to be used by other implementing agencies working in these areas. This ensures broader and more sustainable impact of the technical assistance provided in the tools. Several tools are also under development. Some of the tools developed on food quality and safety include:

60) FAO, often in collaboration with WHO, convenes *Expert Consultations/ workshops* to provide guidance and advice to the Codex system and to national governments on specific issues such as Safety Assessment of Foods from Genetically Modified Animals ([www.fao.org/es/esn/food/risk\\_biotech\\_animal\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/esn/food/risk_biotech_animal_en.stm)), Non-human Antimicrobial Usage and Resistance ([www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/meetings\\_antimicrobial\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/meetings_antimicrobial_en.stm)), the use of a Good Agricultural Practice Approach ([www.fao.org/prods/GAP/gapindex\\_en.asp](http://www.fao.org/prods/GAP/gapindex_en.asp)), and Pathogens of concern in powdered infant formula ([www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/risk\\_mra\\_riskassessment\\_entero\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/risk_mra_riskassessment_entero_en.stm)). Some of these Expert Consultation reports are available electronically from the FAO website and printed copies of most are available in multiple languages from the FAO publications page: [www.fao.org/es/ESN/publications/publications\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/publications/publications_en.stm).

61) FAO and WHO publish a series of guidelines on topics related to *Microbiological Risk Assessments*. For example, the third publication in this series, Hazard Characterization for Pathogens in Food and Water guidelines, (MRA Series No. 3) endeavours to provide a practical framework and a structured approach for the characterization of microbiological hazards. It is aimed at assisting governmental and research scientists in identifying the points to be addressed, the methodology for incorporating data from different sources, and the methodology of dose-response modelling. These guidelines are available from: [www.fao.org/es/esn/food/risk\\_mra\\_hazard\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/esn/food/risk_mra_hazard_en.stm)

62) FAO and WHO have jointly prepared and published (2003) *Assuring Food Safety and Quality - Guidelines for Strengthening National Food Control Systems* to enable national authorities, particularly in developing countries, to improve their food control systems. This publication replaces the previous (1976) guidelines. The guidelines seek to provide advice on strategies to strengthen food control systems to protect public health, prevent fraud and deception, avoid food adulteration and facilitate trade. In addition to national authorities, the guidelines will also be of assistance to a range of other stakeholders including consumer groups, industry and trade organizations, farmer groups and any other groups or associations that influence national policy in this area. The guidelines are now available electronically in English ([www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/control\\_FCS\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/control_FCS_en.stm)) and Spanish ([ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/guideFCS\\_es.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/guideFCS_es.pdf)) and will soon be available electronically in French and Arabic. Printed copies can be ordered in English, French, Spanish, and Arabic from: [www.fao.org/es/ESN/publications/pub\\_control\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/publications/pub_control_en.stm).

63) An example of a possible *structure of a food law* has been developed by FAO and WHO and is based on a number of food laws currently in force in developed and developing countries. Since different countries place responsibility for food control with different Ministries or agencies, the draft has been prepared in a general way so that it can be adapted to local conditions. It has been reviewed and endorsed by Joint FAO/WHO meetings of countries of the Africa and Asia regions and is available from FAO's website at: <ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/foodlaw.pdf>

64) *Food Quality and Safety Systems - A FAO Training Manual on Food Hygiene and the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System* is available electronically in English (<http://www.fao.org/docrep/W8088E/W8088E00.htm>),

French ([ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/HACCPManual\\_fr.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/HACCPManual_fr.pdf)),

Spanish ([ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/HACCPManual\\_es.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/HACCPManual_es.pdf)), and

Russian (<http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/006/W8088R/W8088R00.HTM>) or as a printed publication in these four languages from: [http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/publications/pub\\_quality\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/publications/pub_quality_en.stm).

65) *FAO/IAEA Manual on the Application of the HACCP System in Mycotoxin Prevention and Control* is available electronically in English ([ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/mycotoxin\\_manual.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/mycotoxin_manual.pdf)) or as a printed publication (in En, Fr, Es) from: [http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/publications/pub\\_quality\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/publications/pub_quality_en.stm). The manual will soon be available electronically in Spanish and French as well.

66) Training manuals and guides on *food safety in the street food sector* are also available in multiple languages in publication format from the FAO publications page:

67) [http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/publications/publications\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/publications/publications_en.stm). A *Training of Street Food Vendors didactic guide*, materials designed for training courses are available electronically in English and Spanish from: [www.rlc.fao.org/prior/segalim/accalim/Guias/faoguias.html](http://www.rlc.fao.org/prior/segalim/accalim/Guias/faoguias.html)

68) FAO has also published many *manuals on food inspection*, including a series of fourteen Manuals on Food Quality Control. Printed copies of these manuals are available in multiple languages from the FAO publications page: [http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/publications/publications\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/publications/publications_en.stm).

69) FAO has developed a *training manual as well as a database of resources* available in the area of *Improving the Safety and Quality of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables*, which are freely available from FAO web pages or as a CD-ROM in English, French, and Spanish from: [http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/foodandfood\\_fruits\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/food/foodandfood_fruits_en.stm)

70) FAO and WHO provide a platform for the exchange of current information on the topic of Acrylamide through an electronic *Acrylamide InfoNet*, which is operated by the Joint (United States Food and Drug Administration and the University of Maryland) Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN). The Research Database now lists more than 100 projects and a "Call for Data on Levels of Acrylamide in Food and the Total Diet" was issued in July 2003. The Infonet is available from [www.acrylamide-food.org/](http://www.acrylamide-food.org/)

71) FAO has prepared a series of *fact sheets on trade-related issues* for the 2003 WTO Cancun Ministerial Conference. Sheet # 14 in this series deals with the prevalence of non-tariff measures, such as food standards, and FAO's activities to assist countries in dealing with these measures. The entire series of fact sheets is available from: [www.fao.org/docrep/005/y4852e/y4852e00.htm](http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/y4852e/y4852e00.htm)

72) In January 2004, FAO, jointly with IDF, published a *Guide to Good Dairy Farming Practice*. FAO is finalizing the publication of a "*Manual on Good Practices for the Meat Industry*", with funding from the private sector. The manual will provide practical guidelines for primary producers and is also intended to guide managers of abattoirs and the meat industry. The manual takes a risk analysis approach and will be of value to veterinarians, with their supervisory roles in meat hygiene. The book covers topics such as application of risk management principles to the meat sector, meat hygiene applying to primary production, animals transport, handling, stunning, traceability and control of processing operations.

73) In an effort to allow users to access complete information on international standards, national regulations, scientific evaluations, and other supporting official information on sanitary and phytosanitary measures from a single source, FAO is leading an interagency initiative to develop and maintain an internet-based portal - *the International Portal on Food Safety, Animal and Plant Health*. This portal allows users to by-pass secondary (interpreted) information, as well as material which may be out of date – both of which can be found using typical internet search tools - and focus on the definitive official sources across the three main disciplines of food safety, animal health and plant health.

74) As of September 2004, the portal contains references to over 15,000 items, drawn from the three SPS-recognized standard setting bodies, as well as from CBD, FAO, WHO, and WTO. It also includes demonstration 'nodes' of nearly 400 items each from the US and the EU, and smaller data sets from selected developing countries. Version 1.0 of the portal was formally launched on 25 May 2004, on the occasion of the FAO/WHO Regional Conference on Food Safety for Asia and the Pacific (Seremban, Malaysia). It is now freely accessible from the FAO Biosecurity PAIA webpage ([www.fao.org/biosecurity](http://www.fao.org/biosecurity)) or directly from [www.ipfsaph.org](http://www.ipfsaph.org). Interested users are invited to utilise the portal, share the link with other users, and provide feedback to the FAO project team on the portal content and usability. Work is now underway to include more detailed information from the current sources, including from Codex, JECFA and JMPR, as well as data from additional countries. A capacity building programme related to the portal is also planned. More information on the portal project is available in CAC27/INF/4.

75) In an effort to improve information exchange and communication with stakeholders in food safety and quality, FAO distributes a monthly electronic newsletter, the *Food Safety and Quality Update*, to over 2,500 subscribers to provide information on recent developments and upcoming activities of FAO and Codex that are related to food safety and quality. Other parties interested in receiving the newsletter can also subscribe by following the simple instructions listed in the newsletter itself. The current newsletter and an archive of past newsletters are available from: [http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/fsqu\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/es/ESN/fsqu_en.stm). WHO also periodically sends an electronic newsletter, the *Food Safety News*, to interested parties regarding the activities of WHO in food safety, available from: <http://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/newsletter/en/>.

### **Global Tools Under Development**

76) Work has commenced with the newly created IDF/ISO/AOAC lactic bacteria action team on *methods for the assessment of probiotic microorganisms* as a follow up of the recommendations of the FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Health and Nutritional Properties of Powder Milk with Live Lactic Acid Bacteria, held in Cordoba, Argentina 2001.

77) FAO/WHO are in the process of finalising a CD-ROM training package on *Food Safety Risk Analysis*, which includes a framework and overview manual, a training module presentation, case studies in risk analysis, and access to FAO/WHO resources related to food safety risk analysis. A workshop was held in Bali, Indonesia on 4 March 2004 to introduce the package to some potential users and to provide participants with practical tools for risk analysis. The workshop report is available from the following: [ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/meetings/bali\\_report\\_mar04.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esn/food/meetings/bali_report_mar04.pdf)

78) In order to assist countries in *Evaluating Capacity Building Needs for Food Control*, FAO and WHO are preparing a joint publication on the subject to assist countries to identify and prioritise the areas where capacity building is needed.

79) FAO and WHO are currently developing a training manual on *Improving Participation in the Work of Codex*, designed to strengthen national food safety and quality systems through enhanced participation in the Codex process. It has been field-tested in Africa and the Pacific and it is expected to be available in final form in late 2004. The manual provides information on the Codex process and the development of national Codex programmes. It should serve both as a reference document for those involved in national Codex activities and as a training tool for national/regional training courses on Codex. In addition, the manual is an important capacity building tool within the ongoing FAO and WHO programmes to increase effective participation in Codex activities, and it is anticipated that it will be of great support when used in conjunction with direct participation in Codex meetings of increasing numbers of countries through the funds of the FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund.

80) As part of a field project on the safety of street foods, FAO is in the process of preparing a *Training of Trainers Manual in Street Food Safety* to assist countries in improving the safety of this important source of nutrition for many cultures.

81) FAO is finalizing publications on the following topics:

-A manual on the *Prudent Use of Antimicrobials*.

-A manual on *Marine Biotoxins*

-*Worldwide Regulations for Mycotoxins in Food and Feed in 2003*

82) In recent years, WHO has elaborated rules to promote the production and handling of safe food, the *Five Keys to Safer Food*: keep clean, separate raw and cooked food, cook food thoroughly, keep food at safe temperatures and use safe water and raw material. WHO is now developing a food safety training manual

based on the Five Keys to Safer Food. The purpose of this manual is to facilitate implementation of the Five Keys at country level. The manual will provide relevant food safety information when disseminated.

83) All these materials, once finalized, will be issued in multi-lingual form for wider use by member countries.

### **C. RECENT AND ONGOING CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES AT REGIONAL LEVEL**

#### **Capacity Building Activities in Europe**

##### **REGIONAL ACTIVITIES**

###### ***Regional Workshops***

84) FAO and the Slovak Agricultural University jointly held a workshop for delegates from Eastern and Central European countries on Internet Portal on Food Safety- Communication Systems to Strengthen Food Safety and Build Consumer Confidence in Nitra, Slovakia on 23-26 March 2003. The workshop discussed the following systems to facilitate communication in food safety: 1) International Portal for Food Safety, Animal and Plant Health; 2) Rapid Alert System of the EU; 3) Emerging Risk Identification System developed by the Netherlands; and 4) Agroweb Information System for Central and Eastern Europe. The workshop report is available from: [www.nitranet.org/conference/papers/nitrafinalreport.pdf](http://www.nitranet.org/conference/papers/nitrafinalreport.pdf)

85) FAO and WHO jointly held a sub-regional workshop for the Development of National Food Safety Strategies in South Eastern Europe (SEE) in Brijuni, Croatia from 5-7 July 2004. This workshop was organized as part of the Food Safety Project of the SEE countries within the framework of the Stability Pact Initiative for social cohesion in the Balkans. The main objectives of the workshop included: a) Discussion of the needs assessment for the development of a national food safety strategy; b) Drawing up of guidelines to support national authorities in developing their respective food safety strategies, incorporating new approaches in Food Safety within FAO/WHO and the European Commission; c) Strengthening intersectoral collaboration between the Ministries of Health and Agriculture to promote food safety; and d) Provision of a platform for discussion on how to better coordinate current capacity building initiatives in food safety with other international agencies.

86) FAO and the Hungarian Food Safety Office in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development of Hungary held an "International Workshop on the Development of National Food Safety Strategies" in Budapest, Hungary, from 6 to 8 September 2004. The workshop was held to a) Review responses to the Food Strategy Evaluation Questionnaire to provide information on country experiences, obstacles and progress related to the development of their national food safety strategies; b) Provide guidance to participants through expert lecturers, technical material and discussions on the development of food safety strategies regarding accessibility requirements; the role of food technology in food safety; how the HACCP system works in practice; the role of Codex standards and National Codex Committees in strengthening food safety; in a Food Safety Office; risk assessment; the EU Rapid Alert System; approaches to food safety such as the whole food chain approach; and, an update on the development of the World Food Safety Internet Portal; c) Provide on-site demonstrations of the HACCP system in food processing plants and retail establishments; the daily operation of HFSO and approaches to improve involvement of consumer organizations in food safety issues; d) To identify activities in which Central and Eastern European countries, FAO and the expert community can cooperate in ensuring that the recommendations of the Pan-European Conference on Food Safety (PEC) and Quality, endorsed by the 23rd and 24th FAO Regional Conference for Europe, are followed-up/implemented.

###### ***Regional Projects***

87) An FAO project on Sub-regional *Training on Meat Inspection and Meat Technology* for Albania, Croatia, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia was approved in October 2000. The overall objective of this project is to enable increased market access for the participating countries to lucrative meat and meat product markets. This will be accomplished by improving national capacities for the production of higher quality and quantity meat and meat products, which meet European Union standards. A core of 30 persons trained as trainers will carry out national training in meat inspection and relevant technology including the HACCP system. Each country will develop a training program and plan of action for improving the standards of the meat sector. A final workshop will provide both a forum and a mechanism for discussing a co-ordinated regional approach for access to the broader European Market.

88) The WHO Food Safety Programme in Europe has been assisting Member States in the development of *National Food Safety Strategies* within the framework of the development of the Food and Nutrition Policy and Action Plans in Europe, which integrates a food safety strategy, a nutrition strategy and a sustainable food supply strategy.

89) The WHO Food Safety Strategy in Europe aims to develop and strengthen National Food Safety Programmes through the development of modern food legislation, strengthening of surveillance of foodborne disease and monitoring of food contamination for the provision of data for risk assessment, and the promotion of risk based food control systems.

90) The WHO Nutrition, Food Security and Food Safety European Programmes have prepared the book "*Food and Health a Basis for Action in Europe*" which promotes the development of food and nutrition policies which protect and promote health and reduce the burden of food related diseases, while contributing to socioeconomic development and a sustainable environment  
<http://www.euro.who.int/eprise/main/WHO/Progs/FOS/Home>.

91) The WHO Regional Office for Europe is implementing a project to "Strengthen Food Safety and Nutrition Services in South Eastern Europe (SEE)" in the framework of the Stability Pact Initiative for Social Cohesion in the Balkans. Beneficiary countries include Albania, Bosnia & Hercegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Moldova & Serbia and Montenegro. A subregional workshop for the development of Food Safety Policy and Legislation for the SEE was organized by the WHO Food Safety Programme in Europe in collaboration with FAO and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) among others in Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro 2003. As a follow up there have been organized several activities for the countries in SEE in collaboration with the FSAI such a study tour to the Authority in 2003 and the organization of a satellite panel for SEE within the Conference on Food Control organized by FSAI in Dublin 2004.

92) The WHO Food Safety Programme in Europe completed in 2003 a multi-country public health initiative for *training Food Safety Officers of the Central Asiatic Republics* in collaboration with the Kazakhstan School of Public Health and other international organizations and agencies including FAO and CDC among others. Five training modules have been organized on this project: food policy and legislation, surveillance and epidemiology of foodborne diseases, microbiological and chemical contamination monitoring on foods and HACCP as a tool for risk management. Basic texts and standards of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission are being translated into Russian in order to enhance regional food safety legislation.

93) The WHO Surveillance Programme for Control of Foodborne Diseases in Europe published, in 2003, the web version of 8th Report of the Surveillance Programme in Europe: [http://www.euro.who.int/eprise/main/WHO/Progs/FOS/Surveillance/20031127\\_1](http://www.euro.who.int/eprise/main/WHO/Progs/FOS/Surveillance/20031127_1) The WHO Surveillance Programme has been publishing quarterly Newsletters in English and Russian which are distributed to more than 1500 institutions. The FAO/WHO Collaborating Center for Research and Training in Food Hygiene and Zoonoses in Berlin has organized the 5th World Congress Foodborne Infections and Intoxications. A 1<sup>st</sup> level course of the WHO Global Salmonella Surveillance (GSS) network was organized for ten Russian speaking countries in the Russian Federation in 2003 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> level course of the WHO GSS was organized for eighteen Central, Eastern and South Eastern countries in Poland in 2004. A 2<sup>nd</sup> level course is being organized for these countries in Saint Petersburg this year.

94) The Global Environmental Monitoring Systems for Food Contamination Programme in Europe organized a training for the Baltic countries in 2003 on the preparation of databases on food contaminants and specific training on the Operational Programmes for Analytical Laboratories for electronic submission of data to GEMS/Food. European data on exposure and intake of chemical food contaminants have been published online at the Summary Information on Global Health Trends (SIGHT) database: [http://www.euro.who.int/eprise/main/WHO/Progs/FOS/Chemical/20040728\\_1](http://www.euro.who.int/eprise/main/WHO/Progs/FOS/Chemical/20040728_1)

95) The WHO Food Safety Programme in Europe has been collaborating with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission in the organization of courses on the detection of Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in food and in the publication of a manual for the Analysis of Food Samples for the Presence of Genetically Modified Organisms  
[http://www.euro.who.int/eprise/main/WHO/Progs/FOS/Assistance/20020417\\_1](http://www.euro.who.int/eprise/main/WHO/Progs/FOS/Assistance/20020417_1).

## NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

### *Field Projects*

- 96) An FAO TCP project to improve the diversification of value-added production and certification in environmental farming systems in Croatia was approved in April 2003 and is scheduled for completion in late 2004. The project is being jointly facilitated by the Food Quality and Standards Service and the Environment and Natural Resources Service of FAO.
- 97) An FAO TCP project to strengthen the Food Quality and Safety System of Turkey was approved in April 2003 and is scheduled to be completed in late 2004.
- 98) The WHO Food Safety Programme in Europe provided technical assistance to Tajikistan on the prevention of major foodborne diseases and on microbiological contamination monitoring of food and water.

### UPCOMING ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS

- 99) There are a number of projects currently in the formulation and approval phases:
- 100) The government of Azerbaijan has requested technical assistance from FAO in the area of food safety. A proposal is now under consideration.
- 101) The government of Bulgaria has requested to 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 and funded by the government of the Netherlands.
- 102) A regional project to improve food safety in Armenia and Georgia is being developed by FAO at the request of these 2 national governments.
- 103) The government of Croatia has requested FAO assistance in strengthening Codex activities in that country. A project formulation mission is planned for 2004.
- 104) Requests for technical assistance have been received by FAO from the governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova and Romania. A project with the title "Strengthening food safety in South East European countries – a regional approach to food legislation and control" is being prepared. 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).
- 105) The government of Serbia and Montenegro requested technical assistance from FAO to assess the food safety situation in this country. After the initial project formulation mission, substantial changes in the governmental and institutional structure of the country took place, which has made follow-up activities very difficult to undertake as the relevant persons had changed positions or employment. A project proposal has been prepared, but needs to be endorsed by the present government.
- 106) After becoming a member of FAO in December 2003, the government of the Ukraine requested in technical assistance from FAO to improve the laboratories of safety and quality of food and agricultural products. A project formulation mission to the Ukraine was undertaken in July 2004 and a project proposal is being prepared.
- 107) In September 2003, an informal request by a food control laboratory in Hungary near the border to Romania and Serbia has been sent to the FAO for technical assistance to enlarge the existing Hungarian lab to service Romania and Serbia as well. The food safety officer of the sub-regional FAO Office in Budapest, Hungary will consider this request with the Hungarian authorities.
- 108) Biannual Collaborative Agreements to develop National Food Safety Strategies have been signed between the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the Ministries of Health of Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Russian Federation and Uzbekistan for the period 2004-2005.
- 109) The WHO Food Safety Programme in Europe will continue the implementation of the project to "Strengthen Food Safety and Nutrition Services in South Eastern Europe (SEE)" in the framework of the Stability Pact Initiative for Social Cohesion in the Balkans.