

FAO combines expertise in a range of food production and food safety disciplines to identify sources of food safety risk and to develop measures to prevent or minimize these risks at the most appropriate stages of the chain. FAO works with concerned stakeholders at national and local levels from both public and private sectors in identifying weaknesses in the management of food safety in specific sectors and in formulating strategies that promote the application of Good Hygienic Practices and ensure compliance with national and international food safety requirements.

Focus on **Fresh Produce**



Chemical residues and microbiological contamination continue to pose public health risks and lead to trade disruptions with substantial economic and social cost. Recent contamination of spinach and lettuce with E coli in North America caused outbreaks of illness and cost over \$US 100 million.

FAO raises awareness of key stakeholders in member countries of food safety problems associated with fresh fruit and vegetables. In many cases this has led to nationally driven programmes to improve food safety management within the sector.

Effective food safety systems are based on **prevention**

FAO teams involving the Food Quality and Standards Service (AGNS) and the Plant Production and Protection Division (AGP) work to improve food safety practices in primary production by ensuring that food safety considerations are integrated into Good Agricultural Practices. Farmer Field schools have been shown to be an effective vehicle for enabling farmers to understand and adhere to good practice. Good practices must be applied at all stages of the chain: FAO works with national institutions to develop guidelines/codes of practice for all categories of food chain operators. Long-term impact is ensured by careful selection of local/national/ regional partners who continue adapting and implementing training as required.



West Africa

Improving farmers' practices - Farmers Field School curricula are developed to fully integrate food hygiene issues with production issues such as integrated pest management techniques.

Lao PDR

FAO is working with national institutions to build their capacities to design and implement programmes to improve food safety in the primary production of fruit and vegetables. This includes programmes focusing on good practices on farm as well as on pesticide and other contaminant monitoring.

Capacity Development through **Partnerships**

Focus on **Fish and Fishery Products**

Improving fish safety and quality requires interventions at various stages of the value chain. Many countries call on FAO Fisheries and Food safety experts to assist in developing the capacities of Fish Inspection and Food Safety authorities to ensure that good practices are applied by all operators in the Fisheries sector: fisher folk, fish farmers, fish handlers and processors. FAO uses participatory approaches to assess training needs and to design and implement Training of Trainer programmes to ensure that individual actors in the public and private sectors have the skills required to effectively perform their roles.

Capacity Development in Food Safety and Food Quality

▶▶ Improving Food Safety along the Food Chain



China

A Technical Cooperation project takes an integrated approach to strengthening the system of aquaculture.

Cambodia

Histamine is a naturally occurring contaminant associated with some fishery products. A Codex maximum limit for histamine in fish sauce is being developed.

At the request of the Government of Cambodia, FAO is working with concerned agencies to assess the sector, to develop guidance for processors and to provide the necessary oversight to ensure compliance.

Improving Food safety means **shared responsibility** among Stakeholders

Focus on **Livestock**

FAO recognises the importance of utilising both regulatory and non-regulatory measures to improve food safety practices at all stages of the food chain. Through participative processes, the nature of problems are better understood and opportunities for achieving better food safety management through non-regulatory measures such as technical support/ training programmes, public education etc.

Improving the safety of foods of animal origin involves guidance on good practices in animal feeding, animal husbandry, slaughter and handling and processing of animal products. FAO teams from Animal production, Animal health and Food safety units work together to ensure a science-based an integrated approach to managing food safety risks related to foods of animal origin, including zoonoses.



Uganda

In collaboration with a national University, competent authorities, producers and other stakeholders one ongoing project aims at identifying and ranking food safety risks in the poultry chain and at developing a national strategy for improving poultry product safety.

Working with the Private Sector

A manual on "Good practices for the meat industry" was developed in collaboration with a multi-national private sector partner and has been used to train local industry operators in many countries.



For further information, contact:
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