

MAF- FAO workshop on Fruits and Vegetables for Health

Seoul, IHC, Tuesday 15 August 2006

Aide mémoire of working group 1 (DRAFT)

Participants and countries: (Korea); (Vietnam); (Singapore);
(Thailand); (Malaysia) (Philippines)

(The name list of the participants and observers is available as annex to this aide-mémoire)

Assignment of WG 1:

After an introduction on the scope and objectives of the WHO-FAO initiative, the participants agreed to open a debate on “understanding” of the “GAP” concept. **What are good agricultural practices ?**

In several countries are of the opinion that it is extremely difficult to impose GAP because it is associated and perceived as EUREPGAP. Participants commented that EUREPGAP was far too restrictive and had a high cost which made it difficult to adopt. Countries are moving towards developing local “GAPs” as “light formulas” of the EUREPGAP. Simultaneously there is a regional consultation going on to elaborate an “ASIAN GAP”.

This interesting exchange of views and experiences provide the opportunity for FAO to inform the audience about it’s working group on GAP and the current “guiding principles” based on the four pillars:

1. Product quality and safety
2. Environmental sustainability
3. Economic feasibility
4. Socio-ethical and general hygiene aspects

There was a consensus that the countries would consider two types (kinds) of GAP.

A) The generic GAP concept that would be promoted by the public sector to the benefit of all the consumers and producers. The generic GAP is based on the 4 guiding principles of the FAO and can be aimed at in order to ensure the supply of quality and safe food to the consumers (pillar 1) , while adopting the necessary measures to meet the other three criteria.

The minimum but sufficient product quality and safety standards are those defined in the Codex Alimentarius, reviewed and regularly updated by an international commission under the auspices of FAO and WHO.

In order to ensure the generic GAP is applied, there is need for proactive interventions on behalf of the public sector in relation to: dissemination of information, training, advocacy and capacity building.

The countries also agreed. Traceability of GAP is needed and certification system could be set up. Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Korea, Vietnam have also started to set up national GAP.

B) One or more specific market driven GAPs in light of special requirements dictated by interest groups, market niches. That will be a contract between producers, wholesalers or retailers

Based on this common understanding of GAP, the following 8 points were reviewed and commented.

1. How advocate/ implement GAPs ?

1.1 At producers level

- Intensify national training that has already started and is on-going in the different countries
- Ensure that GAP is cost effective
- Work through farmers association
- Introduce a GAP-Farmers registration system, at individual level or through association: course, training, traceability
- Information: technical support
- Introduce labeling (brand name) procedure to ensure

traceability and gain added product value

1.2 At consumers level

There is still a large proportion of the consumers that don't care of the quality and origin of the product and are not informed about the GAP process.

Recommendations:

- Sell labeled products to create client fidelity and product "distinctiveness".
- Need for consumer education/ information on what correspondents to GAP products

2. Policy intervention requirements :

Most countries are already working on GAP.

Recommendations:

It would be adequate to refine and intensify the planning of training and advocacy related to GAP.

It would be appropriate to have at regular intervals a regional consultation meeting on the opportunities and constraints to GAP.

3. Scientific knowledge base:

There is not that much research on GAP going on in the region, although interesting progress has been made to apply different production methods as IPM, ICM, IPP,.... and only recently GAP as a more comprehensive approach.

Recommendations:

- Need for exchange of experience: organize a regional workshop, to share experiences and learn from the IPM

approach

- Need to establish a regional GAP network (informal working group) on GAP research and development to exchange information and foster coordinated research and development on GAP
- Ensure strong and immediate interaction between research and development at early stage

4. Capacity building and resources development :

Most of the countries do not have sufficient staff trained in GAP and the economic assessment is not always available

Recommendations:

- Training of trainers is required
- Make economic assessments of the proposed GAP procedures
- Adopt a participative training and demonstration approach (Farmers'Field School Approach) to effectively involve the farmers (farmers empowerment) and involve the private sector (NGOs and pesticide dealers)

5. Who are the stakeholders?

As support: Public sector: Ministry of agriculture, agricultural research, extension

As drivers: Private sector: farmers/ champions, consumers, retailers, wholesalers, input suppliers, certification/ auditing network

6. National coordination

It was clarified that the implementation of the Kobe framework for action does not aim at establishing yet another programme at Ministerial level. The idea is to enhance “action” supported by an “ interdisciplinary task-force” that would drive and monitor the implementation of specific

interventions. According to the countries the coordinating function would be assigned to one or the other of the lead stakeholders either from :

- Public institutions as in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Korea...: department of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Pesticides registration office
- or from
- Private sector: Farmers association; 5-a-day movement

7. Data collection needs for monitoring and evaluation

Most of the countries have information available on GAP, but it is often not compiled in the form of baseline study. The countries agreed to set the baseline in order to facilitate the assessment of future progress and the possible impact on farmers' livelihood

Recommendations:

- Need for baseline study at individual country level
- Starting at registration of GAP- farmers

Among the parameters to register in the baseline the following were mentioned:

- At public and private support level: Staff involved in the GAP program
- At the marketing level: GAP products available for sale
- Pesticides use: trends, current figures and future decrease.