Country Report of Sri Lanka

TECHNICAL TRAINING ON RISK ANALYSIS FOR SAARC COUNTRIES
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Objectives of the National Food Control System in SL

1. Ensuring human safety & Health
   Ensure supply of safe & wholesome food.
   Ensure availability of food standards, regulations.
   Deal with issues related to irradiation, genetic engineering.

2. Ensuring Proper & good hygienic practices
   Prevent microbiological/chemical contamination
   Prevent adulteration & fraudulent practices in sale of food
   Rational use of chemical additives such as antioxidants, preservatives, emulsifiers, stabilizers, colours and flavours
   Eliminate wrong practices, using colours, flavours, preservatives to make stale / decayed food appear fresh or of good quality
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3. Ensuring adequate public health controls
   Food is grown and harvested from safe unpolluted areas
   Food is protected from insects, rodents and contaminants
   To control zoonoses - meat inspection and dairy services, sanitary slaughter houses
   Rational use of pesticides (Use of insecticides, fungicides and herbicides was increased at the rate of 11.2 per year)

4. Implementation of food control programme
   To protect export trade (Earn foreign exchange)
   To protect from imports of inferior / substandard or unfit food.

   National Food Control System should ensure that the food reaching the consumers should be safe in every respect on the farm to the table basis.
Food control system consists of ...

Basic food law - to protect consumers against health hazards.

Regulations to ensure that
- Sound hygienic practices are followed in the production, preparation, processing, transportation, storage and distribution of foods.
- Establish food standards.
- Prescribe safe conditions of use of food additives, pesticides and irradiation of food.
- Require informative labeling which will not mislead consumers.

Strong organizational structure to administer these laws and regulations, to ensure public and other stake holder participation.
Who implements food act?

Department of Health
Department of Agriculture
Department of Animal Production and Health (DAPH)
Department of Customs and Ports Authority
Department of Import and Export Control
Department of Police
Department of Wild Life and Zoological Gardens.
Responsible Officers

Chief Food Authority (CFA) in the ministry of health should supervise, guide and co-ordinate the work of all food authorities.

Authorized officers are

Medical Officer of Health (MOH),
Food and Drug Inspector (FDI),
Food Inspector (FI),
Public Health Inspector (PHI)
and State Veterinary Surgeon (SVS).

Every Authorized officer shall exercise the powers of a police officer in terms of criminal procedure Act, No. 15 of 1979, for the purpose of discharging his functions under Food Act and under this act food safety regulations issued by minister of health from time to time in consultant with the Food Advisory Committee (FAC).
Main Food Safety Concerns

Rice - Heavy metals (Arsenic, Mercury, Cadmium).

Leafy vegetable - Pesticides residues - due to indiscriminate use of pesticides.

  Pathogenic E. coli - use of fecal matter contaminated water.

Beef - BSE/CJD, Pathogenic E. coli, Enterococcus.

Chicken & Chicken products - HPAI, Salmonella spp, Nitrofurans & Chloramphenicol residues.

Milk & Milk products - Pathogenic E. coli, Raw milk adulterated with water and flour and Melamine in imported milk powder.

Pond/lake fish - Heavy metals (Mercury, Cadmium).

Street food - Pathogenic E. coli, Environmental pollutants, excessive food additives, colorings, flavours, preservatives like formalin.

Animal feed - Mycotoxin (aflatoxin B₁), dioxins - accumulate in food chain, soft tissue carcinoma, lung cancer.
Risk management

Risk of hazarders in food can be managed by proper monitoring for prohibitions given in Food Act, No. 26 of 1980.

If pesticides were detected in a food, Regulation is Control of pesticides act 1980 and food safety standards are given in Residue levels 1986. Responsible agent is Department of Agriculture.

Plant establishment profile and quality assurance programme should be approved by the respective licensing authority and industries should fulfil all the terms and conditions of those documents.

According to Food Act, no person shall manufacture, prepare, preserve, package, store or sell any food in any premises unless such premises has been licensed by the relevant food authority who shall be the licensing authority.

If a person convicted for an offence, court can cancel the licence.
Food Safety Emergency Response (FSER) Plan for BSE

Immediately after BSE suspected
Identification and trace back of animal herd.

Placing the farm with infected animal under movement of control.

Epidemiological investigation for the source of infection.

Visit to all cattle farms surrounding that suspected farm for examination.

Prevent cross contamination through feed and analyse feed samples.

Slaughter and compensation for herd destruction.
Problems in FCS

Insufficiency of staff officers.
Lack of training for responsible officers on food safety / food analysis.
Lack of infrastructure facilities.
No contented consumer awareness programme.
Delayed and inadequate response for complaints on public health issues.
Slow response in emergency situations.
Lack of coordination among responsible authorities and stakeholders.
Lack of coordination with international organizations.
Low priority for surveillance programmes on food borne hazards.
No efficient and effective rapid alert system for food and feed.
Factors to be considered to improve existing FCS

Increasing the number of carder positions and recruit officers.
Conducting a continuous education programme on skill development.
More exposure on this field for responsible officers.
Opportunity for them to exchange information, technologies, food analysis procedures and experiences with other countries.
Improvement of infrastructure facilities.
Introduction of latest technologies for reference laboratories.
Harmonize food standards and regulations with Codex standards.
Thank You