Policy-makers speak up
For safer food in Asia and the Pacific
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It is estimated that unsafe food causes 420,000 deaths annually, mostly affecting low- and middle-income countries. Food safety has always been highlighted globally as an important topic. However, the number of casualties indicates that few countries have been able to sufficiently invest in prevention measures. One reason is that food safety cases are often invisible: they are rarely recorded in disease surveillance and food monitoring systems. When the problem is invisible, it is often mistakenly considered as a low priority. That leads to various negative consequences affecting public health, trade and the economy.

In order to emphasize the importance and impact of food safety, and its strong relevance to food security, various high-level officials and policy-makers in Asia and the Pacific have spoken out about the issue. A total of ten countries have discussed why food safety is important for their contexts, how they have improved their situations, and how they have collaborated with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). FAO strives to continue providing assistance to countries to promote food safety, which significantly contributes to achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals.

THE VOICES FROM POLICY-MAKERS

“FAO has been instrumental in introducing food safety in the country and building the Bhutan Agriculture and Food Regulatory Authority as a food safety agency, right from its inception.”

Dasho Rinzin Dorji
Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture and Forests

https://youtu.be/Qaukq0shC54
The Chinese Government attaches great importance to food safety. President Xi Jinping has pointed out that whether people can be satisfied with food safety is a major test of the country’s governing ability.

With the support of FAO, Farmers were trained on the importance of improving soil health in order to increase the tolerance of their plants to pest and diseases.

Cheng Jingen
Counsel
Department of Agro-product Safety and Quality
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs

William John Wigmore
Director of Crop Research
Ministry of Agriculture

https://youtu.be/Ze-IqoPPIMA

https://youtu.be/CVsnDBz9M1I
We are promoting the concept of Green Rice Landscape. This is not only for food safety, but also for conservation of the agrobiodiversity of the rice fields. Together, FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry have developed the Strategic Framework for Green and Sustainable Agriculture.

Rita Teaotia
Chairperson
Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

The Republic of India

https://youtu.be/wOOBQnflyoU

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Linkham Douangsavanh
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

The Lao People’s Democratic Republic

https://youtu.be/fwOjYmnD510
“We are working in very good coordination with FAO. An example is the integrated pest management programme that we have worked on together. Through Farmer Field Schools, it has improved the production process by reducing pesticides in vegetables and other crops.”

Hari Bahadur K.C.  
Joint Secretary  
Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development

“Food safety goes along with our vision of helping Filipino food producers. Food trade of frozen chicken meat, pork and fish are very important in our economy.”

William Dar  
Secretary  
Department of Agriculture

https://youtu.be/nZRT0fz3lfQ

https://youtu.be/NsdrRR_AIfU
“We have partnered with FAO in the ongoing national capacity development of our staff and officers, because we want to strengthen our food safety measures and systems.”

Pauline McNeil
Secretary
Ministry of Health and Medical Services

https://youtu.be/4Ok6h2OrvCk
Thailand has set a goal to become one of the ten food production centres of the future. We aspire that, not only is ‘food’ our culture, but ‘food safety’ will be our culture as well. Thailand works with FAO in food safety information exchange and in coordination with the International Food Safety Authority Network.

Pisan Pongsapitch  
Secretary-General  
National Bureau of Agricultural Commodity and Food Standards  
Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives

The government declared 2004 ‘Food Safety Year,’ and approved a roadmap for food safety. Since then, the roadmap has been implemented in the supply chain. We also participate in the Codex Standards setting by providing comments and data.

Kiattiphum Wongrajit  
Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Public Health

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https://youtu.be/IL5m76c0ung

The Kingdom of Thailand

https://youtu.be/IL5m76c0ung