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**EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK THROUGH FOOD SAFETY NETWORKING:
THE PHILIPPINE EXPERIENCE**

by

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Food safety has emerged as the major consumer concern in both developed and developing countries. Foodborne diseases do not only pose tremendous threats to consumer health but they can also cause serious economic damages. In this regard, risk analysis has become an integral part in ensuring food safety. In the Philippines, government continues to encourage the involvement and participation of the stakeholders and members of the academe, scientific community and consumer groups through the use of effective risk communication and feedback mechanism. With consideration to factors that serve as an obstacle to risk communication, other popular media channels are utilized in order to gather comments, opinions and suggestions from the stakeholders. The conduct of consultation meetings for the drafting of country position papers regarding food safety concerns is a very good example of effective feedback mechanism as exemplified by the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards, a government unit mandated to protect the welfare of the consuming public through the formulation, harmonization and adoption of safety and quality standards for foods.

However, given the efficient feedback mechanism to ensure the involvement of stakeholders, more efforts remain to be done in facing new challenges posed by the occurrence of trans-national food safety emergencies. This can only be done if the country continues to strive to strengthen the commitment of the stakeholders because ensuring safe food from farm to plate is a shared responsibility not only of the government and industry sector but also of the consuming public.