



# IMPROVING FOOD SAFETY ALONG THE FOOD CHAIN

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

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

► FAO teams involving Food safety and Plant Production specialists work with national institutions to develop guidelines/codes of practice

integrating food safety considerations into Good Agricultural Practices. Long-term impact is ensured by careful selection of

local/national/regional partners who continue adapting and implementing training as required.



*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 sprouts with E. coli in Europe caused outbreaks of illness with more than 3900 reported cases and hundreds millions of USD lost in the EU vegetable market.*



*Farmer Field schools (FFS) have been shown to be an effective vehicle for enabling farmers to understand and adhere to good practices. FFS are developed to fully integrate food hygiene issues with production issues such as integrated pest management techniques.*



*FAO works 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 contaminants monitoring.*



**FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY  
PROGRAMME**

**Safe food  
benefits everyone.**



## Focus on Fish and Fishery Products

**Capacity Development through Partnerships**

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 for fish inspection and for promoting the application of good practices 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 which ensure sustainable delivery of effective training beyond the FAO intervention.



## Focus on Livestock

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

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 is better understood and opportunities for achieving better food safety management through non-regulatory measures such as technical support/training programmes, public education are optimized.

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 unit work together to ensure a science-based and integrated approach to managing food safety risks related to foods of animal origin, including Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR).



## ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR)

Antimicrobial drugs play a critical role in the treatment of diseases of food producing animals and their use is essential for both animal and human health. While their availability is critical in livestock and aquaculture sectors, contributing to the livelihoods of farmers and economic development, inappropriate use of antimicrobials also constitutes an important risk factor for selection and dissemination of AMR microorganisms to humans via food. FAO, together with WHO and local institutions, designed whole food chain studies to assess microbial contamination and AMR, in order to identify the critical stages at which prevention and control measures could be implemented most effectively. These studies illustrate the importance of locally-led research to generate data to inform and influence national/regional policy to address AMR.

