Food Safety Cooperation
Working Group

Inaugural Meeting

12–13 April 2012
Canberra, Australia
The Food Safety Cooperation Working Group (FSCWG) was proposed for establishment in 2010, during discussions of the World Health Organization's 'Expert Meeting on a Western Pacific Regional Food Safety Strategy'. It was recognised that various international organisations in the Asia Pacific region are involved in promoting and advancing food safety in the region. It was also recognised that there was an opportunity to improve cooperation between these organisations, to share knowledge and expertise, and to pool resources in order to meet common objectives.

The FSCWG inaugural meeting was held in Canberra on 12–13 April 2012 and was attended by representatives from the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Food Safety Co-Operation Forum (APEC FSCF), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

At this meeting, the FSCWG discussed and shared capacity building experiences in regard to the following topics: food control management; food law and regulations; inspection services; laboratory services, food monitoring and epidemiological data; information, education, communication and training; food safety emergency response planning (including traceability, food recalls and food complaint systems) and ways of improving collaboration and information sharing.

The FSCWG agreed that significant work has, and is, being carried out by various international organizations, but was of the view that there is an opportunity and need to improve working arrangements between their organizations and share experiences and leverage from each other’s work.

The FSCWG identified a number of upcoming projects which may present opportunities for collaboration, and suggested the following actions to progress a number of key work activities over the next 12 months.

- Note that FSANZ will provide secretariat support for the next 12 months.
- For the next 12 months, explore possibilities for the sharing of information through a portal or other means. The portal could include documents such as:
  - An inventory of training activities
  - A calendar of events
  - A list of publications
• Identify areas of common interest and priorities where collaboration would enhance delivery of food safety outcomes

- FAO/WHO Chemical Risk Analysis Workshop in Beijing, December 2012
- Regional Meeting on Developing National Food Safety Emergency Response Plans - Sharing Experiences and Lessons Learnt, Bangkok, Thailand, 27 & 28 June 2012
- Agricultural food production food safety focal point meeting in Tokyo, October 2012
- APEC FSIN Seminar in margins of APEC 2013, Indonesia
- Possible regional INFOSAN meeting in September 2012
- Possible future collaboration on development of food safety indicators
- Possible future Symposium on “food safety” on a relevant subject

Draft Purpose Statement

The FSCWG aims to meet and compare processes and programs for food safety capacity building with the view to leveraging off each other with respect to resources, experiences and expertise, and enhance collaboration in future where appropriate. Through this ongoing process, synergies will be developed, creating new opportunities to improve food safety in the Asia Pacific Region.

Draft Working Principles

• Given resources constraints and complexities, a step wise or phased approach should be taken to identify common priorities on food safety
• Activities should address a whole of food chain approach
• Sharing information, resources and learning from global, regional and national experiences in food safety capacity building
• Recognise the value of ongoing dialogue between various international organizations to facilitate meeting the purpose/objectives of the group.
• Enhance inter-organisational coordination of food safety activities

Noting these can be achieved by:

• Identifying areas of common interest in food safety
• Improving resource mobilization through cooperative/collective applications
• Sharing experiences, information and resources of activities in member states/ member economies/countries
• Establishing a portal or links to organisation websites and finding simple ways of sharing information on the activities of each organisation and possible areas of collaboration.
• Inviting members to meetings, workshops, seminars or activities, where relevant
• Meetings to be organised in collaboration with, or back-to-back with, regional events to minimise costs