



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR ASIA**

Nineteenth Session

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COMMENTS OF PAKISTAN

Question 1: Strengthening National Food Control Systems

Please describe any significant developments/actions taken in your country to improve national food control systems. These may include actions relating to: National food law and regulations; food control management e.g. food administration structures, initiatives to improve multi-sectoral collaboration; inspection services; laboratory infrastructure and activities; information dissemination; training. Please also describe priority food safety issues to be addressed nationally and regionally.

Legislation

- a. Pakistan is a federating unit with four provincial governments and a federal government. Three out of four provinces have enacted food safety acts to regulate food business within the territorial limits of their respective province and to apply and enable application of national standards in coordination with the federal regulatory authority.
- b. A bill for the establishment of national food safety, animal and plant health regulatory authority has been submitted to the cabinet division for establishment of a statutory regulatory body to oversee all food safety animal and plant health issues.
- c. The existing standards of quality of agricultural products are being reviewed to update them, wherever necessary.

Laboratory infrastructure and activities:

- a. Laboratory infrastructure has been improved by providing high tech equipments and advanced facilities to undertake prescribed tests necessary to evaluate quality of product.
- b. It has also been emphasized to assure the quality of testing results given by these labs. For this purpose the laboratories were highly encouraged to adapt the standard of ISO 17025. As a result most of the laboratories involved in research and testing of food quality and safety parameters have been accredited.

Capacity building and trained manpower

- a. Training of the scientific and technical staff to enhance their skills and capacity.
- b. On job training is being provided to officials of the regulatory bodies engaged in SPS management and official controls.
- c. With the assistance of UNIDO three universities in the country has introduced post graduate diploma course in Food Safety.

Inspection and surveillance activities

- a. A number of inspection agencies have acquired national/ international accreditation status.
- b. Registration of orchards of fruits and vegetables for maintaining the quality of product at farm level.
- c. Rigorous inspection of exportable food commodities.

Information dissemination

- a. Participation in e- working groups on food related issues has been increased.
- b. Field trainings on food safety and quality aspects are the regular feature for the improvement in existing practices of growers.

- c. A number of joint ventures of public and private sector have been launched for information sharing to strengthen the national food control system.

Question 2: Strengthening Codex at the national level

Please describe:

- i) Any significant actions that your country has taken to strengthen Codex at the national level and to promote more effective participation in Codex;
- ii) Any specific actions aimed at strengthening the Codex Contact Point, i.e. consultative structures and processes on Codex matters, including promoting increased involvement and participation of consumers and other stakeholders.

National Animal Plant Health Inspection Services (NAPHIS) - The Codex contact point of the country has been designated to coordinate codex activities with the national stake holders. Major responsibility of the authority is to ensure safety of foods, animal and plant health through a network of accredited laboratory testing facilities supported by an effective inspection and certification system.

Furthermore, the NAPHIS has been designated as SPS enquiry point of the country.

Question 3: Codex Standards national priorities and interests

Please describe:

- i) Which specific Codex standards and related texts (currently under development or already in existence) are of most importance and interest to your country;
- ii) What are the current priority areas for setting national standards; and
- iii) Use and relevance of Codex standards at national level.

The priority areas of the country are follows:

- a. Measures to reduce presence of mycotoxins in food products e.g rice, nuts, and dried fruits
- b. Implement code of practice for reduction of pesticide in agro based product.
- c. Heavy metal reduction in agricultural commodities, fish and fishery products.

Most of them are already under consideration of codex committees like:

- a. Maximum levels of arsenic in rice
- b. Standards for the prevention and reduction of arsenic contamination in rice and aflatoxin in peanuts and spices