

**Capacity Building Training
on Food Safety Risk Communication for
APEC Developing Member Economies
Project No. CTI 33/2008T**

23-27 June 2008
The Malayan Plaza Hotel, Manila, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

A project on Capacity Building Training on Food Safety Risk Communication for APEC Developing Member economies, herein after referred to as the Training, was organized by the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS), Department of Agriculture (DA), Philippines on 23-27 June 2008 at the Malayan Plaza Hotel, Ortigas Center, Manila. This undertaking was sponsored by the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Organization.

There were 32 participants from 13 member economies. Representatives were from Brunei Darussalam; China; Chinese Taipei; Indonesia; Korea; Malaysia; Mexico; Papua New Guinea; Peru; the Philippines; Singapore; Thailand; and Viet Nam.

Technical experts from various government agencies namely, the United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA), New South Wales Food Authority (NSWFA) of Australia, Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ), Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) of the Philippines; from the academe such as University of Maryland (UM) College Park, University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman; and from a non-government organization (NGO) Foundation for the Advancement of Food Science and Technology, Incorporated (FAFST) served as resource speakers.

The project overseer was Director Gilberto F Layese of the BAFPS and the consultants were Dr Sonia de Leon of FAFST, and Dr Dario Sabulase of FPA.

The list of the participants, resource speakers, and project team can be found in **Appendix 1** of this document.

The Training was conducted to enhance capabilities of principal government officials of member economies on risk communication through assessment of current infrastructure and communication capacity. This was aided by lectures of technical experts, sharing of other economy experiences, case study analyses, problem solving activities, development of action plans through focus group discussions and generation of interim workshop reports. Indirect benefit of the exercise was firming up of network of the project implementers and participants.

It also explored the complexity of risk communication from different perspectives, including a review of some of the recent theory on risk communication with focus on food risk and science-based communication. The training framework was anchored in providing baseline understanding of risk communication, aimed at bridging gaps with respect to risk communication and aspects of risk management and to improve member economies risk communication strategies and activities. Since there is no one form of risk communication that will satisfy all audiences, it is possible to align theory in a predictable way that will build an effective communication strategy.

The Training was comprised of four main components namely theoretical aspects of risk communication, its application, case study and evaluative examination and economy presentation or experiences. The four components are fully integrated and are designed to enable participants to gain the theoretical and practical application of food safety risk communication.

It was delivered using the following mechanisms: lectures and open forum, discussion groups and workshops, evaluative examination and case study, and economy presentations. The major topics revisited during the five-day training were risk analysis concepts and framework, theoretical aspects of risk communication encompassing elements and guiding principles, barriers and strategies, aspects of science-based communication, food recall and different risk communication activities and strategies on emerging health concerns. The program of activities is in **Appendix 2.**

OPENING CEREMONIES

In behalf of the Honorable Secretary of the DA Arthur C. Yap, Director Gilberto F. Layese of the BAFPS formally welcomed the delegates and opened the ceremony.

He cited that due to the need of penetrating and surviving in the export market, it has become imperative for the countries to strictly observe and comply with the acceptable set of international standards on various products, most particularly food and other agricultural and fishery commodities. Adherence to standards is a means of maintaining and continuously improving food quality and keeping the food-related risks to the minimum.

Secretary Yap, in his speech, also recognized the difficult and challenging task of communicating to stakeholders what food safety standards and risks are all about. He further challenged the participants that the responsibility of effectively communicating the so-called “A-to-Z” of food safety standards and risks remain on them.

The full text of the Welcome Speech of Secretary Yap is shown in **Appendix 3.**

The Training proper was set off by the presentation of training detail mechanics by Mr Israel dela Cruz, overall coordinator of the project. Mr dela