



**APEC Food Safety Cooperation Forum
Big Sky Statement 2011**

Demonstrated progress and an ongoing commitment to improving food safety

On 17 May 2011, the APEC Food Safety Cooperation Forum (FSCF), a group of food safety regulators from APEC member economies, as well as key international stakeholders, met face to face for the third time since its establishment in 2007; in Big Sky, Montana, the United States of America, in the margins of SOMII. In reviewing the significant progress made towards meeting its goals, the FSCF restated its commitment to work together to strengthen food safety systems; and progress towards a safe food supply and harmonisation of food standards with international standards, as recommended in the World Trade Organisation's SPS/TBT Agreements. This commitment is made with a view to improve public health and to facilitate trade in the APEC region.

1. We, the members of the FSCF, acknowledged gratefully the support and direction given by the APEC Sub-Committee for Standards and Conformance; the Committee for Trade and Investment; the Ministers Responsible for Trade; and the APEC Economic Leaders, since our establishment in 2007 and throughout 2009 and 2010, since we last met.
2. We welcomed the progress that has been made since the FSCF last met in Singapore in 2009, across a range of areas, particularly in: raising the profile of food safety in the region, resulting in increased support for related activities; improving communication and information sharing, including the establishment of the FSCF and its PTIN websites; advances made to food safety standards and systems both within economies, where standards and systems have been advanced as a result of FSCF activities; and across the region, including in the areas of food safety incident management, recognising standards for pesticide maximum residue levels, supply chain management and export certificates.
3. With respect to food safety capacity building, we recognised the range of activities that have been undertaken to address identified priority areas. Since the FSCF was established in 2007; and the FSCF Partnership Training Institute Network in 2008; 35 capacity building activities have been undertaken, with participants from 21 member economies, held in 11 economies throughout the APEC region. This capacity building response has been coordinated across APEC member economies through the FSCF and its PTIN; and has involved food safety stakeholders from an expanded network involving government, private sector, academic, international government organisations and donor body participants. We endorsed the FSCF PTIN Review of Progress and its reviewed Terms of Reference. In addition, the first on-line food safety training module is now available through the FSCF PTIN website. We recognised the critical role of industry in progressing the work of the FSCF PTIN.
4. We supported the revised FSCF *Operating Principles*; the agreed *Food Safety Capacity Building Priorities*; and the revised FSCF *Record of Activities and Implementation Plan 2007-2011*, recognising the extent to which member economies are already working in partnership on capacity building projects and welcoming the growing numbers of APEC member economies participating in the work of the FSCF. In addition, we welcomed the opportunity to advance our collaboration on food safety capacity building with international organisations, such as the World Bank.

5. We welcomed the endorsement of the World Bank/APEC FSCF Memorandum of Understanding. With regard to this agreement, we explored opportunities for deepening the working relationship with the World Bank, as reflected in the Discussion Paper *Taking Food Safety Capacity Building for the Asia Pacific Region to the Next Level* and we also committed to working with the Bank to operationalize the agreement.

To build on our success to date and to address areas of challenge, we agreed on the following recommendations that would form the basis of our work for the next two years:

Recommendations for future action from 2011 – 2013

1. Build on already established communication networks and processes, specifically by:
 - a. Continuing to promote access to FSCF/PTIN documents, reports of food safety capacity building activities and, where appropriate, training materials via the FSCF and FSCF PTIN websites;
 - b. Sharing information on emerging food safety issues and during food safety emergencies, particularly by supporting the newly established FSCF Food Safety Incident Network;
 - c. Engaging all member economies more fully in the work of the FSCF and its PTIN.
 2. Continue to strengthen the coordination and implementation of food safety capacity building activities that support sustainable learning outcomes, utilising a broad range of government, industry and academic stakeholders. To advance this, the FSCF PTIN will develop a 2-3 year strategic work plan, to be implemented with its partners, including the World Bank.
 3. Continuing to focus on priority food safety capacity building needs, consistent with the agreed FSCF Capacity Building Priority Areas, particularly in the areas of:
 - a. food inspection and certification systems;
 - b. risk analysis;
 - c. laboratory capacity; and
 - d. identifying and addressing gaps in economy level food safety systems.
 4. Work towards a sustainable resource base for implementing capacity building activities through collaboration with relevant international and regional organisations, with donor organisations and with the private sector.
 5. Support the implementation of the agreed recommendations regarding the pilot project for promoting harmonization of pesticide maximum residue limits in the APEC region; reduce unnecessary certificate requirements and advance harmonization of export certificates to Codex Guidelines; and identify additional areas where convergence on food safety standards and systems can be progressed.
6. We agreed to regularly review the direction of the FSCF and the FSCF PTIN to ensure that the longer-term benefits achieved by the FSCF and the FSCF PTIN will continue to be realised.
 7. We look forward to our next meeting of the FSCF in Indonesia in the margins of SCSC2 in 2013.



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