



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

2021/SOM2/SCSC/FSCF/011

Agenda Item: 7.1

Project Update - Trade Facilitation Through the Development of APEC Food Safety Risk Communication Framework

Purpose: Information
Submitted by: Australia



**8th Food Safety Cooperation Forum
28-29 May 2021**

Trade Facilitation through the Development of APEC Food Safety Risk Communication Framework

Progress Update

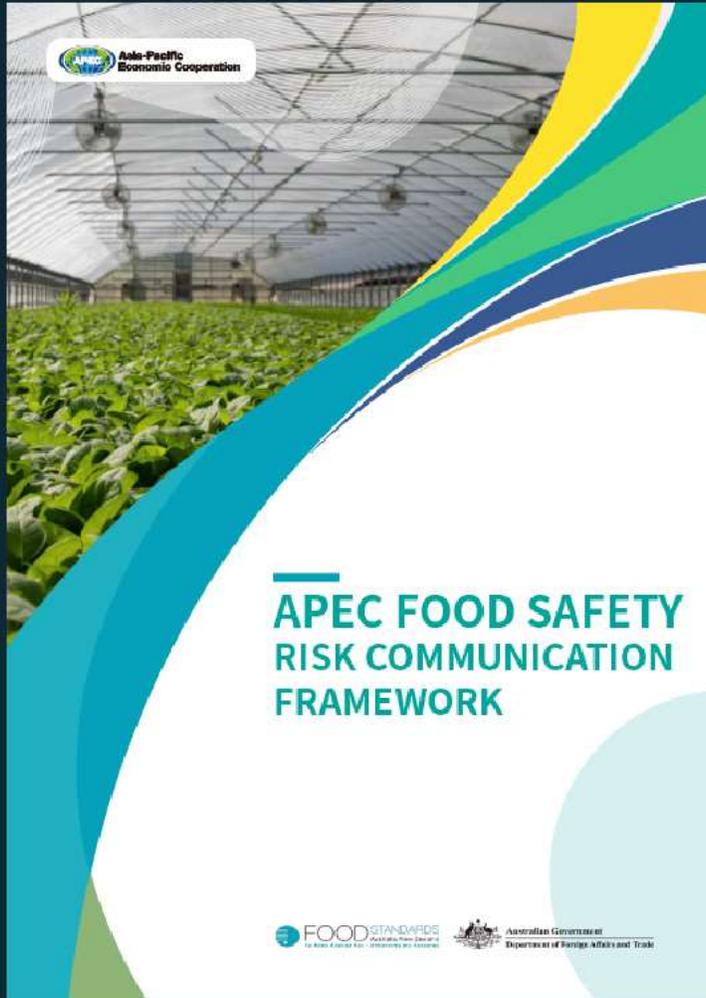
To the 8th APEC FSCF Conference

Hong Jin

- Project initiated in February 2020 in collaboration with Food Industry Asia
- Addressing member economies' needs by providing guidance to member economies on effective food safety risk communication (FSRC), and through which to enhance the public's trust and confidence in the economies' food safety regulatory systems leading to a safer food supply and trade facilitation
- The APEC FSRC Framework (the Framework) distils and describes international best practices in effective FSRC
- Workshop 1 (July 2020) established concepts on **Purpose, Scope, Principles**, and **Structure** (Part A)
- Part A was drafted in August/Sep 2020 and three rounds of consultation were conducted between Sep and Nov 2020
- Workshop 2 (December 2020) refined Part A of the Framework, and established **Content and Structure** of 6 supporting guidelines
- Guidelines were drafted in January and February 2021 and 2 rounds of consultation were conducted between March and May 2021, and Workshop 3 (May 2021) refined the guidelines
- **Excellent support received from 18 member economies, the FAO and WHO's WPRO**
- **Tremendous achievements in less than 11 month under COVID-19 situation**
- **Further work:** 1-2 rounds of further consultation, leading to a final **SHOWCASE WORKSHOP** planned to be held at the end of October 2021 and subsequent publication of the entire package on APEC website



Design page preview



APEC Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

APEC FOOD SAFETY RISK COMMUNICATION FRAMEWORK

FOOD STANDARDS Australia's National Food Standards Body
Australian Government Department of Families, Housing and Community Services

APEC FOOD SAFETY RISK COMMUNICATION FRAMEWORK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Public communications from member economies' food safety regulatory authorities¹ play an important role in maintaining the public's trust² and confidence³ in the safety of the food supply and the food safety regulatory systems within the member economies.

Recent history indicates that communications during a food safety incident or emergency present significant challenges to authorities involved in food safety regulation (Textbox 1). Often competent authorities find themselves underprepared or hesitant in making risk communication decisions despite the best intention to assure the public that the food supply is safe. Such challenges arise primarily from the difficulties associated with communicating uncertainties associated with the food safety hazard including:

- its origin,
- the transmission routes,
- the extent of the exposure to the hazard,
- the populations susceptible to the food safety hazard, and
- the severity of the negative health effects

Textbox 1 Examples of failed communication during a food safety incident or emergency

- 1990** To assure the public British beef is safe to eat during the mad cow disease crisis in the late 1990s.
- 2006** Incorrect attribution of the source of the contamination to tomatoes in the early stage of the investigation of the outbreak caused by *Salmonella* Saintpaul in 2006.
- 2011** Incorrect attribution of the source of the contamination to cucumbers imported from Spain during the initial stages of the investigation of the outbreak caused by *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 in 2011.

¹ Hereafter "food safety regulatory authorities" are referred as "competent authorities".

² Defined by the Oxford Dictionary, trust refers to "the belief that someone/ something is good, sincere, honest, etc. and will not try to harm or trick you". Cited by Mackenzie et al. (2020) 6, that is "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another".

³ Defined by the Oxford Dictionary, confidence is "the feeling that you can trust, believe in and be sure about the abilities or good qualities of someone/ something". Cited by Mackenzie et al. (2020) 6, confidence is "an evidence- or experience-based belief that certain future events will occur as expected".

INDUSTRY VIEW

Risk communications should not be reactive and should take into consideration the risk to trust in the food sector and how to manage the risk.

PRINCIPLE 7

COMMUNICATIVE, CONSISTENT, SYSTEMATIC AND PREVENTATIVE
 Industry should be transparent, collaborative and should not limit the role of competent authorities. It should apply a risk-proportionate approach by using Principle 1, 7, and reviewing the relevant evidence in a proactive manner.

1. What will be responsible for setting out the message to consumers?
2. What will be the key messages to consumers?
3. How will the information be disseminated to consumers?
4. How will the information be disseminated to consumers?
5. What will be responsible for setting out the message to consumers?
6. How will the information be disseminated to consumers?

APEC FOOD SAFETY RISK COMMUNICATION FRAMEWORK

- 2010: The Australian Government's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) issued a recall for ground beef. The recall was based on the presence of *E. coli* O157:H7 in the ground beef. The recall was based on the presence of *E. coli* O157:H7 in the ground beef.
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APEC FOOD SAFETY RISK COMMUNICATION FRAMEWORK

The scope of the framework is to facilitate international and cross-border food safety risk communication. It is intended to be used by public and private sector entities and between competent authorities, the public and food industry. It is a non-binding framework that provides a set of principles and guidance for risk communication. It is intended to be used by public and private sector entities and between competent authorities, the public and food industry. It is a non-binding framework that provides a set of principles and guidance for risk communication.

- providing a clear and consistent message
- providing a clear and consistent message
- providing a clear and consistent message



APEC FOOD SAFETY RISK COMMUNICATION FRAMEWORK



PRINCIPLE 5
FOOD SAFETY IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY
SPECIFIC ROLE OF VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS
IN RISK COMMUNICATION

Industry should be transparent, collaborative and should not limit the role of competent authorities. It should apply a risk-proportionate approach by using Principle 1, 7, and reviewing the relevant evidence in a proactive manner.

- industry
- government
- consumers
- food safety regulatory authorities
- food industry
- food safety regulatory authorities
- food industry
- food safety regulatory authorities
- food industry
- food safety regulatory authorities