

FOOD SAFETY AND THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA (PNG)
"SHORTCOMINGS AND THE WAY FORWARD"

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Introduction

- PNG food laws
 - Fragmented
 - Cover only certain aspects of the food chain
 - Jurisdictions vary along the chain
 - No clear controls/ incomplete
 - Therefore not implemented
 - Food testing lab lacks capacity
 - HACCP Principles are non binding

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Current National Food Law

- The Food Sanitation Act (1991)
 - *comes under the auspices of the Food Sanitation Council (Department of Health). Oversees food processing, preparation, packing, distribution and sales component only.
- Supported by Food Sanitation Regulation (2007),
- Non binding instruments (standards, food safety codes, policy documents, etc

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Deficiencies of Legislation

- Scope and purpose of legislation too narrow
- Does not cover basic principles of food legislation
 - * Risk Analysis – as defined by Codex Standards
 - * integrated farm to table approach
 - * transparency -Decision making process to be transparent for better implementation
 - * producer liability- FBO not registered, responsibilities not well defined
 - * protection of consumers- not clearly stated

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Engagement of European Union (EU) Food Law Expert

Serious drawback for Food Safety & international - engaged a EU Food Law Expert to among other things to;

- * Examine existing Food Laws
- * Define problems in the national Food Safety System
- * Devise improvement mechanisms
- * Make recommendations for implementation

Fig1.0 Beef ready for processing



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Recommendations for new /Amended Act

- Scope of the Act- Amended /new Law should cover both food and feed or ingredient.
- Guarantee of food chain. Whole food chain should be guaranteed from production to processing and distribution
- Integrated approach- Include basic principle of food law from “farm to fork. E.g. Packing/handling

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Recommendations

- ❑ Risk Analysis-risk analysis to be the pillar of all food law. Risk include, risk assessment, risk communication, & risk management
- ❑ Food Safety Requirements- Laws for producers on putting unsafe food on the market should be explicit which may also include storage or transportation.
- ❑ Basic Hygiene Requirements – The Food Safety Code (2003) and Food Safety Management Code (2009) which includes the HACCP principles to be mandatory

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Recommendations -

- ❑ Traceability- A food Safety and control framework to include provision for traceability needs to be included.
- ❑ Official Control- Needs provisions for inspections, which will define admin structures of the new framework
- ❑ Coordination/Cooperation-Amended Law should unit all agencies who collectively could decided on functions, composition, or role each could play. E.g. National Food Safety Council

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Action Plan

- ❑ Recommendations accepted for implementation
- ❑ Action plan prepared . Process to be based on internationally accepted principles.
- ❑ Hope to learn from our colleagues in this room on their Food Safety Systems and thus Risk Benefit Analysis of Food, the subject of this workshop.

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Animal Health/Veterinary Public Health & Food Safety

- ❑ The National Agriculture Quarantine Inspection Authority (NAQIA) is a Quarantine & Biosecurity organization.
- ❑ Provides & regulates the Veterinary service in PNG (Veterinary Authority)
- ❑ Better placed to play a major role in animal origin food safety legislation & its implementation including risk benefit analysis.
- ❑ Carries out Meat Inspection, License slaughter houses, and slaughtermen

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NAQIA Roles..

- ❑ Ensure standards in Animal Welfare and hygiene and sanitation are adhered to.
- ❑ NAQIA regulates the Meat inspection Act (Chapt 238) 1958, Animals Act (Chapt 329) 1952, & Animal Disease Control Act (Chapt 206) 1952.
- ❑ Meat Inspection - NAQIA responsibility starts once animals are unloaded to the time the carcasses leave the chillers in quarter form for processing.
- ❑ After carcass leaves chiller it comes under the jurisdiction of the Food Sanitation Act.

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NAQIA Roles cont....

- ❑ NAQIA has no role in food safety in the production phase (farm).
- ❑ Controlling hazards (animal origin) at point of source not monitored. Hazards include, chemical, biological, & physical agents in meat which may have the potential to cause adverse health effects in humans whether or not it causes disease in animals.

Fig 2.0 Cattle Markham farm




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Actions for Food Safety of Animal Origin

- Based on the recommendation and also as part of our functions as a regulatory authority we are;
 - Revising & developing a quality assurance system based on HACCP principles for animal slaughter and meat inspection (equivalent best practice)
 - Reviewing /drafting procedures and guidelines meat safety in the farm to control hazards at point of source
 - Train staff on food safety standards

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- Opened dialogue & communication with organizations (Dept Health, National Institute of Standards (NISIT) etc) on post slaughter meat handling and distribution



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Fig 3.0 Ramu Beef quartered form in the cool room ready for processing

Summary

- Shortfalls noted
- Recommendations noted
- Action plans put in place
- We will build our food safety systems
- Need support from our colleagues from the member countries

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Food laws- The basis for Risk Analysis

One can not talk about Food Safety risk benefit analysis without having a working legal Framework on Food Safety to implement them.

I have therefore presented to you a candid assessment of PNG's current food safety systems or lack of it.

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- Material for the Animal Health Section and NAQIA's proposals are from the former Chief Veterinarian, Dr. Nime K. Kapo who is now a private consultant. He will review the animal origin food safety component of food processing (farm to fork) and current legislation to accommodate the ambiguous nature of the current laws.

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