

MESSAGE

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Magandang umaga sa inyong lahat. Good morning everybody and welcome to Manila.

There have been recent and growing programs established to strengthen different national food safety systems among APEC member economies.

This seminar-workshop in Manila on the Development and Strengthening of the Food Recall System for APEC Member Economies is another step forward.

During the November 2008 APEC Ministerial Meeting in Lima, Peru, a joint statement was issued which expressed support for the APEC Food Safety Cooperation Forum (FSCF).

The statement likewise gave recognition to the efforts and commitment of APEC member to pursue more cooperation in relation to product safety.

And during the succeeding 6th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting held also in Peru, we further "reaffirmed our commitment to improve food and product safety standards and practices to facilitate trade and ensure the health and safety of our populations."

As we all know, instituting the appropriate food recall process goes hand-in-hand with any food safety program.

Today's exercise will help us individually and as a group in developing recall protocols for a food industry that is widely perceived to be very diverse, unique and sometimes even exotic.

The sharing of experiences by the more advanced economies with established and effective recall systems will be useful in streamlining existing and established food recall processes.

This will save us time, effort and resources.

More importantly, it is a means to a more open trade regime that will promote and ensure food safety.

With your enthusiasm and active support, this seminar-workshop in Manila will help us get there.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!