

KEYNOTE SPEECH**PRECELES H. MANZO**

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**Seminar-Workshop on the Development and Strengthening of Food Recall System for APEC
Member Economies
May 4-6, 2010**

It is my pleasure and distinct honor to welcome you all in the Philippines on behalf of Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and the men and women of the Department of Agriculture headed by Atty. Bernie G. Fondevilla to this three day Seminar-Workshop on the Development and Strengthening of Food Recall System for APEC Member Economies.

We, at the Philippine Department of Agriculture – through the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS) – extend our sincerest gratitude to APEC for favorably considering our proposal to serve as host of this important activity.

In time with different current events happening left and right around the globe, food safety concerns somehow manage to be a headliner. Despite its increasing popularity, majority of the world's population are still unaware, if not, are still on the stage of being nonchalant on the issues, not grasping the importance and gravity of its effect on one's life. With growing concerns on this predicament come along different campaigns regarding health awareness. These are being offered on the market by government and non-government organizations hoping to minimize if not totally address the problem.

Recently, several dramatic incidences of food accidents and outbreaks, like Melamine tainted milk and peanut butter contaminated by *Salmonella*, were observed which led to raise concerns about effectiveness of current food control systems in protecting consumers and sparked increasing attention to the regulatory frameworks that govern food safety and food trade. These discomfort over microbiological and chemical contaminant of food chain as well as heightened consumer interest in diet-related health issues, have contributed to the augmentation of the profile of food safety control systems.

In return, such occurrences led to improvement and strengthening of risk management actions requiring constant vigilance from the government bodies as well as different industries and consumers.

In relation to this, sharing the fame of food safety concern and considered part of food control system, is the food recall which presently being carried out to remove from the market the food that poses risk to public health and safety. This action should be given importance as this offers significant impact in trade, locally and internationally, requiring effective implementation.

With this three-day seminar workshop, it is aimed to give focus on the issue, help improve one's awareness on the topic and develop a competent strategy on implementation of food recall.

It is a challenging job indeed, but as what they say, challenges make life interesting, overcoming them makes life meaningful. Again, a warm welcome to all you. I wish you all a good stay in the country, and may you have a productive seminar ahead of you. Thank you for this privilege Mabuhay!