PTIN Food Safety Incident Management Workshop

Big Sky, Montana, USA
14-15 May 2011

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)
Food Safety Cooperation Forum (FSCF)
Partnership Training Institute Network (PTIN)
Aims and objectives of INFOSAN

INFOSAN
International Food Safety Authorities Network

FSCF PTIN Food Safety Incident Management Workshop, APEC
15 May, 2011
Big Sky, Montana
Dr. Andrea Ellis
**Background**

- The rapid globalization of food production and trade has increased the potential for international incidents involving contaminated food.
- Dealing with these events requires rapid exchange of food safety information at both the national and international level.
- By sharing experiences between countries food safety issues can be managed more effectively and efficiently.
- It is therefore important to have a mechanism in place to facilitate collaboration between countries.

To provide such a mechanism, INFOSAN was launched in 2004 and has been growing ever since.
What is INFOSAN and its Purpose?

- A voluntary network of food safety authorities from around the world managed jointly by WHO and FAO

- Aims to prevent international spread of contaminated food and foodborne disease and strengthen food safety systems globally, by:
  - promoting the rapid exchange of information during food safety events
  - sharing information on important food safety issues of global interest
  - promoting partnership and collaboration between countries
  - helping countries strengthen their capacity to manage food safety risks
INFOSAN Structure and Links to Key Partners

- **FAO & WHO Programs (including Regional Advisors)**
- **Other Networks (i.e. GLEWS, RASFF, etc.)**
- **WHO IHR Focal Point**
- **National IHR Focal Point**

**INFOSAN Focal Points** (In various sectors at the national level, i.e. Health, Agriculture, Environment, Trade, etc.)

**INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points** (In the national authority responsible for coordination of national food safety emergency response)

**Counterparts across the farm to table continuum**

**FAO/WHO INFOSAN Management Group**
- Secretariat in WHO & Focal Point in FAO

**Advisory Group**
Focal Point Roles and Responsibilities

• Disseminates INFOSAN notes, FAO/WHO guidelines, and other important food safety information from INFOSAN within their agency, as appropriate

• Provides comments to INFOSAN on information products disseminated to the Network

• Engages in sharing information with the INFOSAN Secretariat and other members on food safety issues that may be relevant at the international level and beneficial to all members, such as but not limited to: risk assessments on emerging hazards, lessons learnt, identified good practices, etc.

• Collaborates with INFOSAN Emergency Contact point on emergency events involving their respective agency
Emergency Contact Point Roles and Responsibilities

- Reports urgent food safety events of potential international significance to the INFOSAN Secretariat
- Collaborates with their IHR National Focal Point on food safety events that fall under the IHR
- Assists the INFOSAN Secretariat in the verification and assessment of events by providing all necessary information, and reviews INFOSAN Alert messages pertaining to an event in their country
- Requests international assistance through the INFOSAN Secretariat to respond to a food safety incident or emergency, as necessary
- Takes action on INFOSAN Alerts and disseminates information accordingly
- Carries out functions outlined for Focal Points within their Agency
Emergency Activities

• INFOSAN identifies, verifies and shares information on food safety-related events which involve contaminated foods in international commerce, and foodborne illness outbreaks, not limited to one country.

• INFOSAN Secretariat provides technical assistance to national governments in managing food safety and food production-related events or emergencies.

• INFOSAN secretariat coordinated information exchange between countries and will facilitate technical assistance in the field, if requested.
Japan Nuclear Crisis

- INFOSAN's response to food contamination concerns
A 9.0 magnitude earthquake occurred 11 March 2011 in Japan. The quake triggered a tsunami that devastated the northeast coastal areas.

Damage sustained at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, has led to radioactive emissions.

Japanese authorities have been monitoring radioactivity in foods from 17 prefectures and preventing the distribution and consumption of foods found to be above the established provisional regulation values.

A number of Member States have implemented import controls on Japanese foods.
Aims and objectives of INFOSAN

25% of Japan's rice production is from 6 prefectures in east Japan.

60% of spinach in central market in Tokyo is subject to radio nuclear regulation.

60% of milk for 13 prefectures in east Japan come from Ibaraki and Fukushima.

15% of milk for 13 prefectures in east Japan come from Ibaraki and Fukushima.

Production facilities in affected areas make up for 60% of national share of processed fish.

Egg prices increased by 40%.

80% of the national wakame share comes from Sanriku region (affected by tsumani).

41% of the national share of mackerel pike come from affected areas.

Source: Nikkei Business (18 Apr 2011)
Pathways of Radioactive Contamination to Agricultural Products

1. Air Contamination
   - Surface contamination of plants and animals
   - Inhalation by animals

Radioactive fallout

2. Water Contamination
   - Rainfall carries radioactive fallout to surface water
   - Fishery products contaminated
   - Plants and animals contaminated through water uptake

3. Soil Contamination
   - Plant and feed uptake of contamination
   - Animal ingestion of contaminated soil and plants

Figure 1. The pathways of radioactive contamination to food and agriculture

Source: FAO/IAEA
INFOSAN Actions

- Close collaboration with INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point in Japan MHLW (food monitoring data, actions undertaken)

- Collaboration with Member States importing food from Japan (imported food monitoring data, controls put in place)

- Assistance to countries (laboratory information, provision of technical input, development of a Technical Information Note)
INFOSAN information exchange

• Daily updates from Japan

• Active updates from members on control measures

• Regular synthesis of data from Japan

• All information provided on secure website
INFOSAN Progress Report 2004-2010

- First report the activities of the INFOSAN Network
- Reviews the structure and function of the Network and highlights key milestones
First Global Meeting – Dec 2010

Closed, technical meeting in Abu Dhabi, UAE
150 participants from 65 different countries
Aims and objectives of INFOSAN

First Global Meeting – Dec 2010

Meeting outcomes:

• an improved sense of community among members

• practical recommendations to enhance communication and collaboration

• identification of opportunities to strengthen core capacity at country and regional level which promote participation in INFOSAN
The Way Forward

- Continue fostering a true community of practice
- Enhance member engagement in the Network
  - develop regionally based strategies for enhancing participation in INFOSAN
- Improve national coordination
  - identify capacity building and training needs and link with partners to meet them
- Develop effective methods for exchanging ideas in a secure environment (for both emergency and routine communication)
  - improve secure web-based communication platform
- Seamlessly interact with other global networks and initiatives
  - formalize agreements
- Develop a resource mobilization plan to ensure sustainability
Event Introduction
17 March 2011

Following the nuclear accident in Japan, many questions have been raised with respect to the potential impact on food safety. The INFOSAN Secretariat will continue to share new information about the event as it becomes available via the INFOSAN Secure Website. If you have general questions about this situation that may be of interest to other INFOSAN members, please pose them using the discussion forum. Otherwise, you can contact the INFOSAN Secretariat directly at infosan@who.int.
Welcome to the INFOSAN European Regional Group

Administrator: Dr. Hilde Kruse

About this Group:

The INFOSAN European Regional Group has been established to facilitate horizontal communication among regional authorities and stakeholders involved in food safety.
Opportunities for collaboration with APEC FSCF Food Safety Incident Network

• Collaborate in build capacity for countries to better contribute to international food safety incident management

• Strengthen INFOSAN by ensuring all the right players are represented

• Use new INFOSAN secure site (under development) as a platform for exchange among APEC FSIN members
Thank you for your attention!
Event Detection and Action

Information Sources:
- Media/Internet Searches
- WHO Alert and Response Operations (ARO)
- WHO Regional Food Safety/IHR Contacts
- INFOSAN Contact and/or Focal Points
- Other Partners i.e. RASFF, GLEWS, etc.

Internal Assessment and Verification:
- <12hrs
  - WHO Programs
  - WHO Regional Food Safety/IHR Contacts
  - Outside partners

Is follow up needed?
- No
  - Monitor if needed
  - Close File
- Yes
  - Send information request to INFOSAN emergency Contact Point
  - Assessment
    - No further action
      - Close File
    - Further info needed
      - Alert to network (consult with country)

Post Alert to Network
- Consider lessons learned to be shared
  - Close File
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