

SANITARY & PHYTOSANITARY MARKET SYSTEMS

I. BACKGROUND

Sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) systems are a necessary and integral part of any agricultural development strategy. As a country's agricultural sector achieves greater production efficiencies and improved physical infrastructure food yields and domestic food security will increase. Sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) systems and regulations must be in place to ensure food is safe and wholesome for domestic consumption. SPS systems and regulations must also be in place to ensure that increased agricultural productivity will translate into higher farm incomes and reduced hunger in the form of local, regional, and international market access. To be able to trade, domestic regulatory systems must first harmonize with international standards; with harmonization comes regional food security, as food is able to flow from areas of excess to areas of need.

SPS capacity building

- assists countries to adopt science-based regulatory systems to ensure that domestic food supplies are safe;
- harmonizes domestic regulations with international standards;
- improves a country's ability to trade regionally and globally; and
- assists countries to understand and to adhere to WTO accession requirements, where applicable

II. SPS SYSTEMS

SPS capacity building is generally a government-to-government interaction and recognizes that countries must commit to regulatory frameworks governing animal health, plant health, and food safety. To be successful, country commitment must be reflected in their national agendas and priorities.

SPS capacity building is guided by the three inter-governmental standard-setting bodies to protect animal health (World Organization for Animal Health, OIE), plant health (International Plant Protection Convention, IPPC), and food safety (Codex Alimentarius). These areas contribute to the productivity of agriculture and the overall safety of food and hence support food security and public health.

Animal Health

Animal health relates to all aspects of veterinary science and its supporting regulatory systems. This system recognizes the importance of disease control for food security, economic stability and market access as well as the fundamental need for healthy animals as they enter the food chain to ensure safe animal origin food products and public health. Components of a viable animal health system include:

- Veterinary infrastructure, including
 - disease monitoring and surveillance
 - prevention, eradication, control
 - Foreign Animal Diseases (FADs) outbreak response and bio-security enhancement

- quarantine facilities/system and corresponding procedures to quarantine birds and livestock entering the country
- Internationally compatible authority, laws, and regulations to support
 - animal disease eradication and exclusion programs
 - quarantine systems for animals and farms in pursuit of animal disease eradication programs, FADs outbreaks, etc
 - national system of veterinary accreditation.
- National veterinary diagnostic laboratory or access to a regional laboratory
- An adequate budget
- Adequate Animal Health Surveillance System that
 - trained personnel to conduct the investigations for the surveillance system.
 - industry support to conduct surveillance investigations in a cooperative manner
 - has the mechanisms in place to elicit and respond to calls from the public reporting sick birds/livestock.
- Entry point inspection systems with standard operating procedures
- National animal identification and animal health records systems
- National Animal Health Indemnity Program

Plant Health

Plant health relates to overall plant protection to ensure the health of commodity crops and horticultural products as they grow. As with animal health, food security, economic stability, a safe food supply, and market access depend upon healthy production of plant crops. Components of a viable plant health system include:

- Plant quarantine and inspection system with well trained, government inspectors that can identify and monitor
 - pest and disease surveillance, eradication, control
 - imported and exported products and transit materials capable of introducing plant pests
- Defined and comprehensive procedures for carrier and commodity inspection
 - post entry quarantine
 - pesticide residue levels that do not exceed internationally recognized maximum levels
- Internationally compatible authority, laws, and regulations to support plant quarantine and inspection systems, including
 - means of issuing rules, regulations, proclamations and orders
 - application of treatments
- National plant diagnostic laboratory or access to a regional laboratory
- Pest Risk Analysis that
 - demonstrates potential pest status
 - determines need to assess risk
 - determine pest quarantine status
 - characterizes risk from pest(s).
- Treatments to prevent quarantine pests and diseases from entering the country
- Phytosanitary Certification that
 - ensures imported commodities are clean and free of problems
 - promotes the exportation of clean, un-infested commodities that will not be refused or destroyed once they reach their destination.

Food Safety

Food safety takes into account the safety of animal and plant products as they enter the food chain for domestic populations as well as export. Components of a viable food safety system include:

- Internationally compatible food safety regulatory enforcement and a supporting legal framework
- Standard Sanitation Operating Procedures (SSOPs)
- Implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs)
- National Maximum Residue Level (MRL) legislation is in place, indicating how MRLs would be established or adopted. Pesticide MRLs for all food uses are effectively monitored
- National food safety laboratories and diagnostics for pathogens, residues, and other contaminants) or access to a regional laboratory and personnel with the expertise to collect samples and run appropriate tests
- National monitoring system (such as a food market or basic food basket analysis)
- Official inspection laws governing
 - slaughterhouses and meat processing plants (hides, fleece, cheese, etc.)
 - horticultural products processing and food establishments (tree nuts, dried fruits/vegetables, juices, etc.)
- An adequate system that includes official inspectors in all exporting plants as well as a national residue plan and laboratory to carry out sample diagnostics
- National pesticide legislation, regulations, monitoring and enforcement of pesticides, including:
 - pesticide registration and labeling requirements for all pesticide products (as defined by Codex, including household and antimicrobial products); establishments (formulators, dealers, distributors)
 - complete pesticide registration packages for all products and is able to manage information for all registered products, including public availability for information.
- Pathogen reduction/Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (PR/HACCP) systems