



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

The Second Global Meeting of the FAO/WHO International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN)

9-11 December 2019, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Ensuring food safety is a shared responsibility that must be addressed through close collaboration across sectors at national level and with the establishment of functional links between food safety authorities around the globe. This is especially important in our increasingly globalized world, where a local outbreak of foodborne illness can rapidly evolve into a global food safety crisis.

At the request of Member States through various fora, the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) was developed and launched in 2004 by the World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The purpose of INFOSAN is to ensure rapid sharing of information during food safety emergencies to stop the spread of contaminated food from one country to another or limit the public health impact of outbreaks. In the face of constantly changing global factors affecting food safety, actions taken through INFOSAN reduce the burden of foodborne diseases globally. INFOSAN also facilitates the sharing of experiences and tested solutions in and between countries to optimize future interventions to protect the health of consumers worldwide.

The first global meeting of INFOSAN members was held with great success in 2010 and was attended by 150 participants from 65 countries. The meeting resulted in several important recommendations which have since been implemented to improve the Network, including the design and launch of the INFOSAN Community Website and the development and implementation of strategies for strengthening INFOSAN in different regional contexts.

As the Network has increased both in membership and in level of activities, and new challenges and opportunities are facing national food safety authorities, the timing is right to host the second global meeting of INFOSAN members.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE 2nd GLOBAL INFOSAN MEETING

The second global meeting of INFOSAN members will serve as a unique opportunity to bring together national food safety managers from more than 100 countries in order to:

- Provide a global overview of INFOSAN to highlight progress and challenges faced during the past 15+ years;

- Ensure participants have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities as INFOSAN Members and the obligations under the International Health Regulations (2005);
- Illustrate the important links between INFOSAN and other regional networks and discuss ways to improve collaboration across sectors and between programs to strengthen the various initiatives to better manage food safety events;
- Provide opportunities for regional break-out sessions for participants to engage in facilitated discussion to identify regional-specific challenges and solutions for enhancing participation in INFOSAN;
- Provide a forum for members to share their experiences and tested solutions with respect to identifying emerging foodborne hazards and assessing food safety risks; interacting across sectors and between institutions nationally and also internationally;
- Deliver a series of high-level technical sessions on new developments and challenges in the area of food safety;
- Provide an opportunity to share initial experiences on current and emerging challenges for food safety managers such as but not limited to handling food frauds, regulating and tracing back products from online trade, use of whole genome and next generation sequencing data in outbreak investigation, modern risk assessment and risk management, prevention and management of antimicrobial resistance, and others;
- Inspire innovative actions to tackle upcoming food safety challenges, which will be faced in the coming decade.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Increased number of active INFOSAN Members with a strengthened sense of a trusted community and willingness to collaborate and share information during food safety emergencies
- Increased understanding of INFOSAN members' roles and responsibilities and interaction with other networks, including their counterparts in health (i.e. National IHR Focal Points) and agriculture/animal production
- Practical recommendations for the on-going improvement of the INFOSAN Community Website and other procedures within INFOSAN to facilitate communication and a more efficient management of food safety events
- Raised awareness about emerging food safety issues of global significance and description of recently developed tools/methods to tackle such problems
- New perspectives on communication during food safety event management in an increasingly connected world
- Sharpened understanding of the use of risk assessment and risk management and the potential benefit of big data, artificial intelligence and whole genome sequencing data for improved investigation of outbreaks and sporadic cases of foodborne diseases
- Increased international recognition of INFOSAN as the global environment for the management of food emergencies and recognition of the INFOSAN Global Meetings as a trusted and unique forum for food safety managers for exchanges and decisions.

MEETING PROGRAMME

DAY 1 ----- 9 December 2019

08:30-09:30

REGISTRATION

09:30- 11:45

OPENING SESSION (including break and group photo)

Welcome and Meeting Objectives	Peter Ben Embarek and Markus Lipp for the FAO/WHO INFOSAN Secretariat
Keynote Speech	Steven Jaffee, University of Maryland, USA
Opening Ceremony	<p>Welcome remarks by His Excellency the Minister of Climate Change and Environment of the United Arab Emirates</p> <p>Bukar Tijani, Assistant Director-General Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department, FAO HQ</p> <p>Naoko Yamamoto, Assistant Director-General, Healthier Populations Division, WHO HQ (by video)</p>

SESSION 1 – Global Overview of INFOSAN

OBJECTIVES: Provide a global overview of INFOSAN to highlight progress and challenges faced during the past 15+ years; Ensure participants have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities as INFOSAN Members

11:45-12:15	Looking back – INFOSAN in Review: 2004-2019	Carm Savelli, INFOSAN Secretariat WHO
12:15-12:45	Looking forward – INFOSAN Strategic Plan: 2020-2025	Peter Ben Embarek, INFOSAN Secretariat WHO
12:45-13:00	Q&A	

13:00-15:00 LUNCH BREAK

14:00-15:00	Practical drop-in Session with INFOSAN Secretariat (Q&A)	Raul Garcia, INFOSAN Secretariat WHO Kosuke Shiraishi, INFOSAN Secretariat FAO
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OBJECTIVE: Provide an opportunity for INFOSAN members to speak one-on-one with members of the INFOSAN Secretariat from FAO and WHO

15:00-15:30	The updated INFOSAN Members' Guide: reviewing processes and procedures	Adam Bradshaw, INFOSAN Secretariat WHO
15:30-16:00	The new INFOSAN Community Website	Raul Garcia, INFOSAN Secretariat WHO
16:00-16:15	Q&A	

SESSION 2 – INFOSAN in Action

OBJECTIVES: Demonstrate the utility of INFOSAN during international food safety events involving multiple countries around the world, showcasing different response systems

16:15-17:45	Panel to discuss INFOSAN in Action during recent major food safety events with international implications: Spotlight on <i>Listeria Monocytogenes</i> Q&A	Penny Campbell, National Department of Health, South Africa; INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point Alicia Mazagatos, Spanish Agency for Consumer Affairs, Food Safety and Nutrition; INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point Jan Baele, SANTE RASFF, European Commission; INFOSAN Advisory Group Member Alexandre Leclercq Institut Pasteur, France; WHO-CC for <i>Listeria</i> Facilitated by Vittorio Fattori, INFOSAN Secretariat FAO
17:45-18:00	Day 1 Wrap-Up	Cornelia Boesch, INFOSAN Secretariat FAO
19:00 – 21:00	GROUP DINNER	

DAY 2 ----- 10 December 2019

08:00-09:00 **Morning Mix and Mingle (Networking Coffee)**
OBJECTIVE: Informal networking opportunity to mix and mingle with other delegates over morning coffee at standing tables with different conversation starters

SESSION 3 – INFOSAN as a Network of Networks

OBJECTIVE: Illustrate the important links between INFOSAN and other regional networks and discuss ways to improve collaboration across sectors and between programs to better manage food safety events

09:00-09:10	Introduction and overview	Peter Ben Embarek, INFOSAN Secretariat WHO
09:10-09:30	European Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)	Jan Baele, SANTE RASFF, European Commission; INFOSAN Advisory Group Member
09:30-09:45	GCC RASFF	Saad Al Onaig, Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA)
09:45-10:00	Arab RASFF	Owaimer Al Dossary, SFDA
10:00-10:15	ASEAN Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed	Wipada Saengkhum, ARASFF coordination
10:15-10:30	EFSA's Emerging Risks Exchange Network (EREN)	Caroline Merten, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA); INFOSAN Advisory Group Member
10:30-11:00	Q&A	

11:00-11:30 **BREAK**
SESSION 4 – Country Showcase: sharing food safety information between sectors and across borders using INFOSAN

OBJECTIVE: Provide an opportunity for members to share their experiences and tested solutions with respect to sharing information during food safety incidents nationally, between sectors and internationally

11:30-11:50	Canada's food recall notification procedure with INFOSAN	Isabelle Laberge, Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA); INFOSAN Advisory Group Member
11:50-12:10	Investigation of foodborne diseases and outbreaks in Abu Dhabi, UAE	Mariam Al Mulla, Department of Health, Abu Dhabi, UAE
12:10-12:30	Australian experience on sharing information on international recalls through INFOSAN	Patricia Blenman, Department of Agriculture, Australia; INFOSAN Focal Point
12:30-12:45	Q&A	

SESSION 5 – Regional Focus: Group Work

OBJECTIVES: Provide opportunities for regional break-out sessions for participants to engage in facilitated discussion to identify regional-specific challenges and solutions for enhancing participation in INFOSAN

12:45-13:00 Introduction and instructions Cornelia Boesch, INFOSAN Secretariat FAO

13:00-15:00 LUNCH BREAK

14:00-15:00 Speed Networking Event
 Practical Drop-in Session with INFOSAN Secretariat (Q&A)
 Raul Garcia, INFOSAN Secretariat WHO
 Kosuke Shiraishi, INFOSAN Secretariat FAO

OBJECTIVE: Provide an opportunity for participants to meet multiple other INFOSAN members in 3-minute meetings.
OBJECTIVE: Provide an opportunity for INFOSAN members to speak one-on-one with members of the INFOSAN Secretariat from FAO and WHO

15:00-17:30 6 regional break-out groups
 Facilitated by INFOSAN Advisory Group Members + Regional Food Safety Advisors

17:30-17:45 Day 2 Wrap-Up Vittorio Fattori, INFOSAN Secretariat FAO

DAY 3 ----- 11 December 2019

08:00-09:00 Morning Mix and Mingle (Networking Coffee)

OBJECTIVE: Informal networking opportunity to mix and mingle with other delegates over morning coffee at standing tables with different conversation starters.

SESSION 5 (continued) – Regional Focus: Feedback from Groups

09:00-09:10 Introduction Markus Lipp, FAO

09:10-10:00 Panel discussion with facilitators from each regional group INFOSAN Advisory Group Members

10:00-10:15 Q&A

SESSION 6 – Sharing best practices and lessons learnt related to food safety event alert and response

OBJECTIVE: Provide an opportunity for members to share their experiences and tested solutions with respect to food safety event alert and response activities

10:15-10:35 Food Safety Management in the Republic of Korea Sol Kim, Ministry of Food and Drug Safety, Republic of Korea; Emergency Contact Point

10:35-10:55 Rapid Alert System (comprehensive approach) in Abu Dhabi, UAE Fadi Al Natour, Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority (ADAFSA)

10:55-11:15 Lessons learned from a national INFOSAN workshop to strengthen the food safety alert system in Ghana Jocelyn Lamptey, Food and Drugs Authority, Ghana; INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point

11:15-11:35 Q&A

11:35-12:05 BREAK

SESSION 7 – Examples of INFOSAN members strengthening the global INFOSAN community

OBJECTIVE: Provide an opportunity for members to share their perspectives about supporting the global INFOSAN Community

12:05-12:25 How the USA actively participates in INFOSAN Stic Harris, Food and Drug Administration, USA; INFOSAN Advisory Group member

12:25-12:45 How New Zealand is supporting INFOSAN Jenny Bishop, Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), New Zealand; INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point

12:45-13:00 Q&A

13:00-15:00 LUNCH BREAK

14:00-15:00 Speed Networking Event
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SESSION 8 – Facilitated “Hard Talk” Expert Panel

OBJECTIVE: Provide an opportunity to hear from a group of top experts discussing a range of emerging and important technical topics related to food safety

15:00-16:30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use of WGS to revolutionize outbreak investigations and food safety 2. Food Fraud 3. Artificial Intelligence and big data impact on future risk assessment and risk management 4. Challenges associated with food safety and eCommerce 5. Risk Analysis 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annie Locas, CFIA, Canada 2. Alan Reilly, University College Dublin, Ireland 3. Peter Ben Embarek, WHO 4. Ray Ellard, Food Safety Authority of Ireland 5. Khaled Al Marzooqi, ADAFSA, UAE <p style="text-align: right;">Facilitated by Jenny Bishop, MPI, New Zealand</p>
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SESSION 9 – Closing Ceremony

OBJECTIVE: Reflect on the past three days and inspire innovative actions to tackle upcoming food safety challenges which will be faced in the coming decade

16:30-16:45	Moving forward together: Next steps	Peter Ben Embarek and Markus Lipp for the FAO/WHO INFOSAN Secretariat
16:45-17:00	Closing Remarks	Mouza al Muhairi, Policy and Regulation Executive Director, ADAFSA