

INTERNATIONAL FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITIES NETWORK (INFOSAN)

INFOSAN
ACTIVITY
REPORT 2013



World Health
Organization



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

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FOREWORD

For both FAO and WHO, 2013 has been a year balanced by reflection on past successes and forward thinking to the years ahead as we face new challenges and navigate between different priorities at the international level.

The new WHO Strategic Plan for Food Safety 2013-2022 supports the WHO's 12th General Programme of Work 2014-2019. It provides a coherent framework for tackling priority issues in the area of food safety and foodborne zoonoses for the coming years. Facilitating the rapid exchange of information among INFOSAN members and providing technical support to improve response to international foodborne outbreaks and food safety emergencies are important strategic actions identified in this plan. Other priority actions will support INFOSAN through efforts to improve core capacities required for the establishment of cross-sectoral linkages among human and animal surveillance systems to minimize duplication in monitoring, reporting and delivery systems and to facilitate integrated risk assessments.

The new FAO Strategic Objectives, published in 2013, will drive the activities of the organization to battle against hunger, malnutrition and rural poverty. As food safety emergencies can impact each of these factors, increasing the resilience of livelihoods to disasters, including emergencies in the food chain, is named as one of five strategic objectives. This emphasizes the emergency component of INFOSAN as an important tool for dissemination of information to network members that should continue to engage with the FAO EMPRES Food Safety program to provide early warning of food safety threats.

In 2014, INFOSAN will celebrate its 10-year anniversary. While this is an admirable milestone, it should also serve as a check-point to take stock of what has been working well and what can still be improved as we adjust and adapt to an ever changing global environment. Actions and priorities for INFOSAN will remain aligned and supportive of broader global strategies for FAO and WHO to improve food safety and mitigate the burden of foodborne disease around the world.



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Table of Contents

ACRONYMS.....	7
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	8
INTRODUCTION.....	10
NETWORK MEMBERSHIP.....	11
INFOSAN ACTIVITIES.....	13
Network Building Activities.....	13
Emergency Activities.....	16
Special Activities.....	23
THE RISING PROFILE OF INFOSAN.....	24
INFOSAN in the Scholarly Literature.....	24
Making Headlines Around the Globe.....	25
INFOSAN at International Conferences and University Training Courses.....	26
CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS.....	27
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	29
APPENDIX – INFOSAN EVENTS 2013.....	30
CONTACT INFORMATION.....	36

ACRONYMS

Acronyms

AFRO	WHO Regional Office for Africa
AMRO	WHO Regional Office for the Americas
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AU-IBAR	African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources
AUFMCM	African Union Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
EMPRES	Emergency Prevention System Food Safety
EMRO	WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean
EURO	WHO Regional Office for Europe
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FOS	Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses, World Health Organization
FSCF	Food Safety Cooperation Forum
FSIN	Food Safety Incident Network
Hong Kong SAR	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
HQ	Headquarters
IACRNE	Interagency Committee for Response to Nuclear Emergencies
IHR (2005)	International Health Regulations (2005)
INFOSAN	International Food Safety Authorities Network
OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health
RASFF	Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed
REC	Regional Economic Community
SEARO	WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
USA	United States of America (the)
WHO	World Health Organization
WPC	Whey Protein Concentrate
WPRO	WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific
WTO	World Trade Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

INFOSAN 2013

To date, 181 Member States¹ (plus 10 Associate Member States, areas or territories) have joined INFOSAN since the Network was launched in 2004. The INFOSAN Secretariat will continue to encourage Member States to join INFOSAN until an Emergency Contact Point and Focal Points have been designated in each of the 194 Member States belonging to WHO and FAO. While the process to designate INFOSAN members (i.e. an Emergency Contact Point and Focal Points) at the national level is an important first step, active participation of these designated members through registration on the INFOSAN Community Website is vital. Overall, 50% of all Member States have an active INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point registered, which represents a 10-point increase since 2012 (up from 40%). The regions with the highest proportion of active members are from South-East Asia, Europe and the Western Pacific. In Asia, the high proportion of active members can be attributed to efforts made as part of the “INFOSAN in Asia” initiative. Making links to the European Commission’s Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) has resulted in a high proportion of active INFOSAN members in Europe. INFOSAN members who have not yet registered on the website will continue to be encouraged to do so.

During 2013, the INFOSAN Community Website continued to serve as the secure, online forum for exchanging important information related to food safety emergencies. It is the tool used by the INFOSAN Secretariat to disseminate INFOSAN Alerts during food safety emergencies of potential international concern. Members are also encouraged to use the site for sharing routine surveillance data and lessons learned from outbreaks of foodborne illness, which can be done through facilitated discussions. Eliciting this kind of active engagement from members will require additional guidance and support from the INFOSAN Secretariat.

Data from the online registration form has been used to compile summary data regarding which governmental sectors are represented by INFOSAN members (both Emergency Contact Points and Focal Points) and in what proportions. At the end of 2013, 37% of INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points and 34% of INFOSAN Focal Points are based in an authority responsible exclusively for food safety (but not public health in general), followed by public health (35% of INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points and 23% of INFOSAN Focal Points). Other members report being based in an authority with overarching responsibilities for food safety, public health, animal health, agriculture, etc.

During 2013, efforts continued to develop collaborative partnerships with other international networks, initiatives and agencies. For example, plans were made with colleagues from the African Union to support the development of an African Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed by utilizing the existing functionality of the INFOSAN Community Website. Similarly, during the APEC Food Safety Incident Network (FSIN) workshop organized at the Food Safety Cooperation Forum in Surabaya, Indonesia, it was agreed to integrate the FSIN portal into the INFOSAN Community Website. Strengthening collaboration at the national level (between INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points and National Focal Points of the International Health Regulations) was also encouraged through targeted messages to network members.

Other non-emergency work conducted in 2013 included holding the second regional INFOSAN meeting in Asia, which focused on determining recommendations for implementing the regional strategy to

¹ For the purpose of this report, the term Member State is used to refer to those countries that are members to either WHO or FAO; not all WHO Member States are FAO members. WHO Member States are listed here: <http://www.who.int/countries/en/>. FAO members are listed here: <http://www.fao.org/legal/home/fao-members/en/>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

enhance participation in INFOSAN among countries in Asia (developed at the first meeting in 2012). The recommendations highlighted several important areas to focus efforts on, including strengthening in-country linkages between National IHR Focal Points and INFOSAN members to facilitate coordinated response efforts during food safety emergencies. It was also recommended that WHO and FAO continue to work with countries to convene regional forums on food safety to review progress, share country practices and address common issues related to INFOSAN development and national food control systems strengthening.

With respect to emergency activities, the INFOSAN Secretariat has facilitated international communication with INFOSAN members during 44 events in 2013 (compared to 46 in 2011 and 42 in 2012). Biological hazards were responsible for the largest number of INFOSAN events and most commonly involved *Salmonella* spp. This remains consistent with hazards involved during both 2011 and 2012. In 2013, events most commonly involved milk and dairy products, as well as vegetables and vegetable products. The average time that the INFOSAN Secretariat remained actively engaged with an event was 19 days (compared to 18 days during 2011 and 2012). Most of INFOSAN events in 2013 involved Member States in Europe and the Americas, followed in order by the Western Pacific, Eastern-Mediterranean, and South-East Asian regions. No countries from the African region were involved in INFOSAN events in 2013. Member States from Europe, the Americas and the Western Pacific were also involved in most of the events during 2011 and 2012.

INFOSAN should be a member-driven network and therefore requires active participation in order to disseminate useful and timely output. Over the current biennium (2014-2015), the INFOSAN Secretariat will implement a workplan that is focused on: 1) promoting cross-sectoral collaboration and information sharing to optimize the food safety emergency response; and 2) strengthening countries' capacities to manage food safety risks (including establishing systems to monitor, assess and manage food safety events). Some key activities planned for 2014-2015 include:

- development of WHO's Hazard Detection and Risk Assessment System (HDRAS) to better identify foodborne health threats;
- publication of guidance documents to assist Member States in managing food safety events (e.g. guidance for national authorities regarding provision of food safety advice during various emergency situations (i.e. natural disasters));
- publication of INFOSAN Information Notes, to be prioritized based on results from the survey of INFOSAN members conducted in May 2013;
- formalizing links to regional networks (including EU RASFF and APEC FSIN);
- introduction of new features on the INFOSAN Community Website to facilitate communication including the translation of the user interface into French and Spanish;
- addressing membership issues, especially in under-represented areas such as Africa;
- expansion of regional initiatives to enhance participation in INFOSAN by holding a first regional meeting of members from the Americas; and
- implementation of training exercises to follow-up on recommendations from "INFOSAN in Asia".

Additionally, the INFOSAN Secretariat will strive to enhance the role of the INFOSAN Advisory Group through a revitalization process and also develop a new strategic framework for the Network based on review and evaluation of the past 10 years of INFOSAN in action. By collaborating through INFOSAN, countries around the globe will continue to benefit from their combined efforts to improve food safety, facilitate trade, protect public health and save lives.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) has been connecting national authorities from around the globe since 2004, with the goal of preventing the international spread of contaminated food and foodborne disease and strengthening food safety systems globally. This is done by:

- 1) promoting the rapid exchange of information during food safety events;
- 2) sharing information on important food safety issues of global interest;
- 3) promoting partnership and collaboration between countries; and
- 4) helping countries strengthen their capacity to manage food safety risks.

Since its inception, the INFOSAN Secretariat has facilitated international communication with members during hundreds of food safety events, including 44 in 2013.

This INFOSAN Activity Report provides an overview of the major events, activities and information products relating to INFOSAN during 2013. The report highlights some of our achievements from the past year, as well as challenges to overcome and areas for improvement. INFOSAN should be a member-driven network and a united and sustained effort on behalf of all INFOSAN members must be made in order for INFOSAN to reach its full potential.



"INFOSAN has been connecting food safety authorities around the globe for essential food safety communication by providing opportunities for alerts and preparedness. The INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point in Nepal considers INFOSAN as the authorized communication network for food safety information sharing for international food trade."

*- Ms Jiwan Prava Lama, Director General
Department of Food Technology and Quality Control
INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point, Nepal*

NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

Network Membership

OVERVIEW

Since 2004, 181 Member States have joined INFOSAN. Sustained efforts at the Secretariat are ongoing to ensure that eventually all 194 Member States belonging to the WHO and FAO will join with designated INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points and Focal Points.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION BY SECTOR

While the INFOSAN Secretariat maintains a list of all INFOSAN members, active engagement requires members to register on the INFOSAN Community Website (launched in 2012). Table 1 below shows the percentage of INFOSAN members by region² who have registered on the INFOSAN Community Website as of the end of 2013 compared to 2012. INFOSAN members registered on the website are considered “active”. Overall, 50% of all Member States have an INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point registered, which represents a 10-point increase from 2012 (up from 40%). Targeted efforts will continue through the current biennium (2014-2015) to ensure that all INFOSAN members register as active members on the INFOSAN Community Website.

TABLE 1. INFOSAN MEMBERS REGISTERED ON THE INFOSAN COMMUNITY WEBSITE BY REGION, 2013

REGION	Member States /areas/territories with INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point registered on INFOSAN Community Website, N (%)	Increase since 2012, N	Member States/areas/territories with one or more INFOSAN Focal Points registered on INFOSAN Community Website, N (%)	Increase since 2012, N
Africa (AFRO)	12/46 (26%)	4	12/46 (26%)	3
The Americas (AMRO)	15/48† (31%)	2	16/48† (33%)	5
The Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO)	8/23‡ (35%)	1	10/23‡ (43%)	4
Europe (EURO)	42/53 (79%)	6	24/53 (45%)	3
South-East Asia (SEARO)	9/11 (82%)	3	6/11 (55%)	2
The Western Pacific (WPRO)	22/37§ (59%)	4	20/37§ (54%)	4
Global	108/218 (50%)	20	88/218 (40%)	21

† Including 35 Member States and 13 areas/territories

‡ Including 22 Member States and the Occupied Palestinian Territory

§ Including 27 Member States and 10 areas/territories

^{||} Including 194 Member States and 24 areas/territories

²For the purpose of this report, regional divisions of Member States/areas/territories are based on coverage provided by the six WHO regional offices. For more information: <http://www.who.int/about/regions/en/index.html>

NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

Data regarding national authorities collected via the online registration form for the INFOSAN Community Website was analysed for 128 INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points (from 108 Member States/areas/territories) and 142 INFOSAN Focal Points (from 88 Member States/areas/territories).

Among INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points, 47 (37%) report being based in an authority responsible for food safety (but not public health in general); 45 (35%) in an authority responsible for public health; and 36 (28%) report being based in an authority combining public health, food safety, animal health, agriculture, and trade and commerce (Figure 1). To date, 13 Member States have designated more than one INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point for specific operational reasons.

Among INFOSAN Focal Points, 48 (34%) report being based in an authority responsible for food safety; 32 (23%) in an authority responsible for public health; 10 (7%) in an authority responsible for agriculture; 4 (3%) in an authority responsible for animal health; and 7 (5%) are based in “other” authorities. Furthermore, 41 (29%) report being based in an authority related to a combination of food safety, public health, animal health, agriculture or trade and commerce (Figure 2). There are 60 Member States that have designated 1 INFOSAN Focal Point, 19 Member States have designated 2 INFOSAN Focal Points, and 9 Member States designated 3 or more to a maximum of 8.

FIGURE 1. EMERGENCY CONTACT POINTS BY GOVERNMENT SECTOR

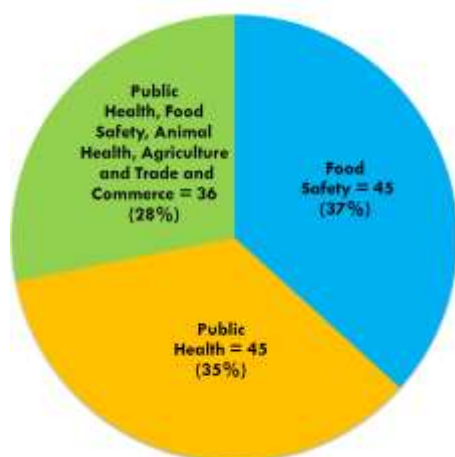
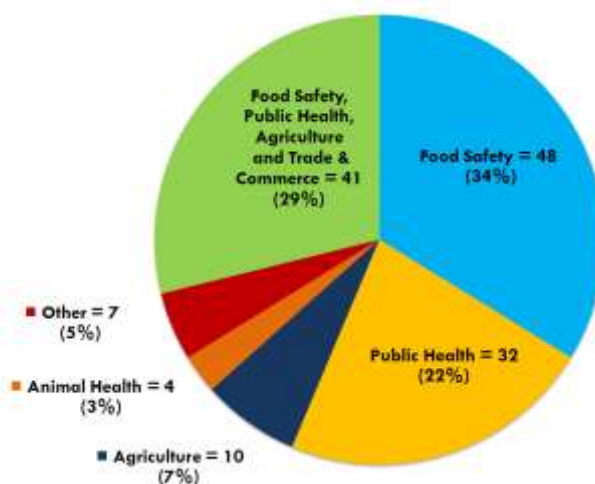


FIGURE 2. FOCAL POINTS BY GOVERNMENT SECTOR



No significant change in the proportions of government sectors representing INFOSAN members was observed, as compared to 2012. However, collaborative efforts with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) continued in 2013, which resulted in 21 additional OIE National Focal Points for Food Safety (from national veterinary authorities) who joined INFOSAN as Focal Points in 2013, bringing the total to 40.

Members States are invited and encouraged to designate additional INFOSAN Focal Points from government sectors not currently represented in order to further strengthen cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation at national levels. Greater participation in INFOSAN at the national level can serve as one component of developing national food safety emergency response plans, which should clarify the roles and responsibilities of all relevant sectors during a food safety emergency³.

³The FAO/WHO framework for developing national food safety emergency response plans is available online: http://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/emergency_response/en/

INFOSAN ACTIVITIES

INFOSAN Activities

NETWORK BUILDING ACTIVITIES

1) Strengthening the link between INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points/Focal Points and National IHR Focal Points



The International Health Regulations 2005 (IHR) specify “core capacity requirements for surveillance and response” and also for “public health actions at Points of Entry”⁴. Some of these capacities relate to food safety. The World Health Assembly Resolution 63.3 adopted in 2010 urges the development and implementation of the core capacities as applicable, including those required for participation in INFOSAN and specifically for managing food safety events.

The IHR (2005) specify that the national core capacities must be established as soon as possible but no later than five years from their entry into force. For the majority⁵ of State Parties⁶ this was on 15 June 2012; however, most countries have requested a two-year extension.

Questionnaires have been provided to National IHR Focal Points to assist State Parties in assessing their fulfilment of the national core capacity requirements. Given the specific questions related to food safety, INFOSAN members were reminded by the Secretariat of the importance of food safety officials taking part in national discussions held to complete the 2013 version of this questionnaire and they were provided the contact details of National IHR Focal Points upon request.

2) Strengthening INFOSAN in Africa



Ensuring improved food safety conditions in most African countries presents significant structural challenges, including overcoming poorly developed infrastructure and services (such as access to clean water), inadequate knowledge and skills among food workers, and a significant lack of data. These insufficiencies are compounded by outdated, weak and dysfunctional regulatory systems that are often a legacy of a previous era.

An important function within the African Union Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism (AUFISMCM) is the implementation of an African Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed. Recommendations for a way forward were agreed upon at the second continental workshop held in November 2013 and organized by the African Union Commission (AUC) through the Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR). Among the 54 African countries represented by the African Union (AU), only five were not members of INFOSAN at the time of the workshop. Rather than establishing an independent system, AU Member State experts considered it appropriate to therefore accept a WHO recommendation to establish an "INFOSAN in Africa" group on the INFOSAN Community Website and agreed to base the future development of the Africa-wide rapid alert system on this platform (with the AU performing the role of group coordinator). As an initial step, the AU alert function should therefore

⁴ <http://www.who.int/ihr/9789241596664/en/index.htm>

⁵ The time frames for the States Parties which made reservations to the IHR (USA and India) are slightly later, as is the case for Montenegro which became a Member State (and State Party after the IHR entered into force).

⁶ Member States which are bound by the IHR (2005) are referred to as State Parties.

INFOSAN ACTIVITIES

promote the voluntary participation of Member States in the "INFOSAN in Africa" group and support the participants in meeting their obligations as INFOSAN members (as set out in the INFOSAN Members' Guide). The AU will subsequently promote the network expansion and critically work with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States to strengthen communication between the different authorities with food safety mandates in cases of food safety emergencies. The scope of the alert system will be initially defined by conditions governing INFOSAN. In the future the AU could supplement functional elements of the system via the INFOSAN Community Website according to needs.

3) Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Food Safety Cooperation Forum (FSCF) Food Safety Incident Network (FSIN)



The APEC FSCF is a forum of food safety regulators that seeks to build robust food safety systems in the Asia-Pacific region that are consistent with the Agreements on the application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The Food Safety Incident Network (FSIN) workshop was organised and implemented by Australia (FSANZ) and involved approximately 90 delegates

from 16 member economies, as well as participants from a range of government, industry, academic and other organisations including the INFOSAN Secretariat. The purpose of this workshop was to develop the FSIN for the APEC region. It was agreed that Australia would host the Secretariat for the first year of the FSIN, with Chile to take on this role in the second year. The key recommendations from the workshop included building on existing communication networks and processes; continuing to support food safety incident management capacity building activities; and developing a work plan to progress FSIN identified priorities. The FSIN Report was agreed upon by the delegates and signed by the Chair and is available online⁷.

The goals of FSIN are to:

- improve information-sharing and communication, including on risk assessment, risk management and risk communication amongst members, in order to provide accurate and timely information on emerging food safety issues, or in the event of a food safety incident;
- develop and implement approaches to improve food safety incident preparedness, response and recovery mechanisms; and
- strengthen participation of members in INFOSAN and other international networks to increase the ability to respond to food safety emergencies of international significance.

The FSIN will amplify the functioning of INFOSAN in the Asia-Pacific region to prepare for and respond to food safety incidents by encouraging communication and information sharing between regulatory agencies and other stakeholders. Next steps will include launching the FSIN Portal using the INFOSAN Community Website (planned for 2014) and supporting the FSIN Secretariat in Australia and Chile with implementation of the FSIN workplan.

⁷ <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/science/international/apec/Documents/FSIN%20Report.pdf>

INFOSAN ACTIVITIES

4) Strengthening INFOSAN in Asia

The Meeting on Strengthening INFOSAN and National Food Control Systems in Asia was held in Manila, Philippines in December 2013. The objectives of the meeting were:

- to provide a global update on INFOSAN strategic directions and activities and review regional progress on and challenges to strengthen INFOSAN in Asia;
- to review country progress in strengthening national food control systems in line with relevant regional food safety strategies; and
- to identify priority activities for strengthening INFOSAN and developing national food safety capacity in Asia.



The meeting resulted in the following recommendations related to strengthening INFOSAN in Asia:

1. Countries are encouraged to strengthen in-country linkages and communication between National IHR Focal Points, INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points and INFOSAN Focal Points by establishing committees or working groups and/or establishing formal or informal agreements/arrangements detailing methods of cooperation.
2. Strengthen capacity-building within the INFOSAN network by identifying opportunities for cross-cutting collaboration with programmes that support Member States in meeting their IHR core capacity requirements.
3. Recognizing the importance of countries taking appropriate action on INFOSAN Alerts, countries are encouraged to share information about what actions they are taking in particular cases, either directly or through the INFOSAN Secretariat.
4. Countries in the Asian region should consider continuing collective efforts to contribute to early detection of and rapid response to food safety incidents of potential international concern, as well as supporting further INFOSAN activities in the region and globally.
5. INFOSAN members should continue to use the Community Website and use training material developed by the Secretariat.
6. WHO should facilitate operational communication on food safety related instances between national IHR Focal Points and INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points and Focal Points.
7. WHO and FAO must continue to work with countries to convene regional forums on food safety to review progress, share country practices and address common issues related to INFOSAN development and national food control system strengthening. It is proposed to hold the next regional meeting in early 2015.

The meeting conclusions and recommendations have been published online⁸

⁸ <ftp://ftp.wpro.who.int/scratch/INFOSAN%202013/Conclusions%20and%20Recommendations.pdf>

INFOSAN ACTIVITIES

EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES

INFOSAN has been operational during numerous food safety events throughout 2013. Action taken by the INFOSAN Secretariat in a food safety event can be described as follows:

- Verification – Following the receipt of information about a food safety event of potential international concern, the INFOSAN Secretariat requests additional details from an INFOSAN Emergency Contact.
- Consultation – The INFOSAN Secretariat provides technical advice or information to an INFOSAN member regarding a food safety event or issue.
- Coordination – The INFOSAN Secretariat actively obtains and disseminates information from INFOSAN members regarding a food safety event of international concern; this may or may not result in an INFOSAN Alert/Notice being posted on the INFOSAN Community Website.

INFOSAN EMERGENCY INVOLVEMENT IN 2013

In 2013, a total of 44 food safety events were handled by INFOSAN (see Appendix), including 13 verifications, 5 consultations and 26 coordination events. There were 28 events involving a biological hazard, 15 involving a chemical hazard and 1 event involving an unknown hazard. For INFOSAN events involving a biological hazard, *Salmonella* spp. was most commonly responsible in 2013 (7 events). These were followed by *Listeria monocytogenes* (5), *Hepatitis A Virus* (4), and *Escherichia coli* (3). Events involving aflatoxin and atropine occurred most often out of all events relating to chemical hazards, with two events each in 2013. The average time that the INFOSAN Secretariat remained actively engaged with an event was 19 days, with a minimum of 1 day and a maximum of 106 days (median = 8 days).

For a Member State to be considered “involved” in an INFOSAN event, it means either: 1) potentially contaminated food was imported to or exported from that Member State; or 2) cases of foodborne illness linked to internationally distributed, contaminated food were reported in that Member State. The majority of INFOSAN events in 2013 involved Member States in Europe and the Americas, followed by the Western Pacific, the Eastern-Mediterranean and South-East Asian regions. Member States in Africa were not involved in any events. The fact that no events involved African Member States in 2013 can be partially explained by the fact that 74% of INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points are inactive in this region (i.e. not registered on the INFOSAN Community Website) and are not engaged in reporting food safety events to the Secretariat at this time. Surveillance of foodborne diseases and monitoring and inspection of foods are capacities that need to be strengthened in this region in the future if we should expect increased participation in INFOSAN (especially with respect to timely reporting of food safety events directly by INFOSAN members to the Secretariat).

In 2013, most event notifications were reported to the INFOSAN Secretariat by WHO staff from the regional office in Europe. This was followed by WHO staff at headquarters, including those departments responsible for Public Health and the Environment and for Alert & Response Operations within the Health Security Cluster. Tables 2 – 7 provide an overview of INFOSAN events by region, food category, hazard and source of notification in 2013.

INFOSAN ACTIVITIES

Table 2. INFOSAN INVOLVEMENT BY REGION, 2011-2013

REGION	2013 NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 44 *	2012 NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 42 **	2011 NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 46 ***
Africa	0	2	2
The Americas	17	19	22
The Eastern Mediterranean	6	3	6
Europe	30	27	21
South-East Asia	5	6	3
The Western Pacific	16	19	17

* 18 events involved more than one region in 2013.

** 19 events involved more than one region in 2012.

*** 18 events involved more than one region in 2011.



"Thailand has a multiagency food control system which takes advantage of INFOSAN to share information and take action for food safety risk management in a timely manner. The mechanism of the INFOSAN Community Website reduces the gap between each participating country and creates one united community for food safety."

*- Dr Jongkolnee Vithayarungruangsri, Director
Bureau of Food Safety Extension and Support
INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point, Thailand*

INFOSAN ACTIVITIES

Table 3. INFOSAN INVOLVEMENT BY FOOD CATEGORY, 2011-2013

FOOD CATEGORY	2013	2012	2011
	NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 44 *	NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 42	NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 46
Milk and dairy products	7	6	3
Vegetables and vegetable products	6	3	4
Fish and other seafood	5	4	3
Meat and meat products	5	5	5
Nuts and oilseeds	5	2	5
Fruit and fruit products	3	5	7
Food for special dietary uses	3	3	3
Unknown	3	2	2
Herbs, spices and condiments	2	3	3
Cereals and cereal-based products	2	2	0
Alcoholic beverages	1	1	2
Non-alcoholic beverages	1	0	0
Snacks, desserts and other foods	1	1	0
Sugar and confectionary	1	2	1
Animal feed	0	1	1
Composite food	0	0	4
Fats and oils of animal origin	0	0	1
Foods for infants and small children	0	2	1
Legumes and pulses	0	0	1

* 1 event involved more than one food category in 2013.

Table 4. INFOSAN INVOLVEMENT BY HAZARD CATEGORY, 2011-2013

HAZARD	2013	2012	2011
	NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 44	NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 42	NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 46
Biological	28	30	31
Chemical	15	11	14
Physical	0	0	0
Unknown	1	1	1



“The INFOSAN system provides a valuable platform for direct communication between food safety regulators around the globe. Notably, the INFOSAN structure enables flexible communication arrangements that can be tailored to needs and the risk of the food safety concern, while the moderation and help provided by the INFOSAN Secretariat support the system’s efficiency and reliability.”

*- Dr Craig Thornley
Ministry of Primary Industries
INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point, New Zealand*

INFOSAN ACTIVITIES

Table 5. INFOSAN INVOLVEMENT BY EVENTS INVOLVING BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS, 2011-2013

BIOLOGICAL HAZARD	2013 NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 28	2012 NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 30	2011 NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 31
<i>Salmonella enterica</i>	7	13	10
<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	5	2	2
Hepatitis A virus	4	0	1
<i>Clostridium botulinum</i>	3	4	7
<i>Escherichia coli</i>	3	4	6
<i>Clostridium sporogenes</i>	1	0	0
<i>Datura stramonium</i>	1	0	0
Influenza A virus (H7N9)	1	0	0
Norovirus	1	1	0
Schmallenberg virus	1	0	0
<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	1	1	0
African Swine Fever virus	0	0	1
<i>Bacillus cereus</i>	0	1	0
<i>Brucella</i> spp.	0	1	2
<i>Cronobacter sakazakii</i>	0	1	1
<i>Cryptosporidium</i> spp.	0	1	0
<i>Vibrio parahaemolyticus</i>	0	0	1
>1 hazard	0	1	0



"In Chile, we have recently developed our National Food Information and Alert Network, within which INFOSAN performs a key role by reporting many relevant food safety events around the world. Being a Focal Point of INFOSAN allows us to manage the last international trends regarding food safety and to be properly prepared for any event."

*- Ms Nuri Gras, Former Executive Secretary
Chilean Food Quality and Safety Agency (ACHIPIA)
INFOSAN Focal Point, Chile*

INFOSAN ACTIVITIES

Table 6. INFOSAN INVOLVEMENT BY EVENTS INVOLVING CHEMICAL HAZARDS, 2011-2013

CHEMICAL HAZARD	2013	2012	2011
	NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 15*	NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 11	NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 14
Aflatoxin	2	2	0
Unknown	2	0	0
Atropine	2*	0	0
Chloramphenicol	1	0	0
Cocaine	1	0	0
Dicyandiamide	1	0	0
Nitrates	1	0	1**
Formalin	1	0	0
Methanol	1	1	1
Organophosphate	1	0	0
Phenylbutazone	1	0	0
Rat poison	1	0	0
Scopolamine	1*	0	0
1,3-dimethylamylamine	0	1	0
Carbamate	0	0	1
DEHP/DINP/DBP	0	0	1
Dioxin	0	0	1
Heavy Metals	0	1	3**
Hydrocyanic Acid	0	0	1
Isopropyl Alcohol	0	0	1
Melamine	0	0	1
Nitrites	0	0	1
Paralytic Shellfish Toxin	0	1	0
Phthalates/polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons	0	1	0
Radionuclides	0	0	1
Salt (not for human consumption)	0	1	0
Sodium Nitrite	0	1	0
Sulfites	0	0	1
Sulphuric Chemical	0	1	0
Undeclared allergens	0	1	1

* 1 event involved both atropine and scopolamine in 2013.

** 1 event involved both heavy metals and nitrates in 2011.

INFOSAN ACTIVITIES

Table 7. SOURCE OF NOTIFICATION OF INFOSAN EVENTS, 2011-2013

SOURCE OF NOTIFICATION	2013	2012	2011
	NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 44	NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 42	NUMBER OF EVENTS, N = 46
WHO Regional Office for Europe (EURO)	15 (34%)	13 (31%)	17 (37%)
WHO HQ Event-Based Surveillance*	11 (25%)	11 (26%)	9 (20%)
INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point or Focal Point	8 (18%)	8 (19%)	5 (11%)
WHO Regional Office for the Americas (PAHO)	4 (9%)	3 (7%)	7 (15%)
European Commission (RASFF)	4 (9%)	2 (5%)	1 (2%)
ECDC	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	0
WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific (WPRO)	0	3 (7%)	7 (15%)

*Includes surveillance activities conducted in different departments of the Health Security and Environment Cluster.

INFOSAN EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Dairy products and ingredients originating from New Zealand contaminated with *Clostridium* bacteria

The INFOSAN Secretariat was informed by the INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point of New Zealand that several batches of milk whey protein concentrate (WPC) (an ingredient used in the manufacture of food products such as powdered infant formula, juice, dairy beverages, yoghurt and sports beverages) were suspected to be contaminated with *Clostridium*. The affected batches were distributed to many countries worldwide. When products such as WPC are thought to be contaminated, of particular concern is their potential use as an ingredient in other products that are then secondarily distributed. This makes it increasingly difficult to track and trace products through the food chain. A precautionary recall was initiated to withdraw affected batches and products from the market while further subtyping of the *Clostridium* bacteria was pending. Timely communication and information sharing that utilized the built-in functions of the INFOSAN Community Website allowed all INFOSAN members to interact with one another and receive important information directly from the New Zealand Emergency Contact Point. It was eventually determined that the subtype of *Clostridium* bacteria was *sporogenes* (and not *botulinum* which was initially feared). *C. sporogenes* is often used as a surrogate for *C. botulinum* when testing the efficacy of commercial sterilization and elevated levels may be associated with food spoilage. During this event, INFOSAN provided members with timely and accurate information direct from national government authorities. This eliminated the need to rely on media sources that are prone to exaggeration or inexactitudes during a food safety emergency.

INFOSAN ACTIVITIES

Outbreaks of salmonellosis in the USA and New Zealand linked to tahini sesame paste from Turkey

Outbreaks of salmonellosis were reported in both the USA and New Zealand and these were separately traced back to a common tahini paste manufacturer in Turkey. The details of each investigation were shared with the INFOSAN Secretariat by the respective INFOSAN members of each country. The INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point in Turkey was subsequently contacted and provided additional distribution information for the implicated product. National authorities in 13 additional countries across 4 regions were provided with the details required to recall products and prevent further outbreaks through an INFOSAN Alert informing network members of potentially contaminated product. Without INFOSAN, the international scope of this event would not have been realized and information required by national authorities to take risk management actions to protect public health would not have been disseminated.

International outbreak of acute non-viral hepatitis associated with OxyElite dietary supplement products from the USA

The INFOSAN Secretariat was notified of an outbreak of acute (non-viral) hepatitis among otherwise healthy adults in the USA and associated with the consumption of OxyELITE Pro™ products (dietary supplements marketed for energy boosting, body building and weight loss). Initially, it was reported that none of the implicated products had been exported. However, upon further investigation it was determined that products



were widely available for sale over the internet. An INFOSAN Alert was subsequently posted, allowing countries to conduct a risk assessment and, if necessary, issue consumer warnings about the risk of consuming the implicated product. In response to the INFOSAN Alert, further cases of acute non-viral hepatitis linked to consumption of this product were identified in Europe, Asia and the Western Pacific. The INFOSAN Secretariat worked closely with INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points of affected countries to share detailed information to aid the investigative efforts. This event highlights the increasingly complex task of tracking and tracing products through the global distribution chain, especially as it becomes more and more common to purchase products online. Sharing information about this event through INFOSAN prompted investigations in other countries which lead to the identification of additional cases and the implementation of measures to prevent further illnesses.



"The importance of INFOSAN is in its role as provider of useful and reliable food safety information and guidance. Additionally, it offers an appropriate communication platform to specialists worldwide, which is broadly used, not only as a risk communication tool, but also as a network that enables an open exchange of views and opinions on food safety risk assessment and risk prevention/management."

*- Dr Marek Saph, Senior Officer
Central Veterinary Administration of the State Veterinary Administration
INFOSAN Focal Point, Czech Republic*

INFOSAN ACTIVITIES

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

INFOSAN Secretariat Participation in Emergency Simulation Exercises

1) ConvEx, 2013



The ConvEx exercise is conducted once every three to five years under the framework of the Interagency Committee for Response to Nuclear Emergencies (IACRNE). The purpose of this exercise is to strengthen preparedness and evaluate response systems to a major radiation emergency and, in particular, the exchange of information and provision of international assistance. Thus, the ConvEx exercise provides an opportunity to identify shortcomings in national and international emergency response systems that might hamper the response aimed at minimizing the consequences of a radiation emergency. This year, the exercise focussed on a simulated event in Morocco with potential implications for North Africa, Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. The INFOSAN Secretariat

participated in this exercise in order to provide technical input and facilitate information sharing regarding potential food safety issues.

2) LÜKEX, 2013



The main objective of the German-based LÜKEX exercise series is to improve common response capacities for extraordinary crisis situations and to promote the development of a coordinated decision-making culture in crisis management organisations. LÜKEX 2013 focused on food safety, consumer protection and healthcare in an extraordinary biological threat situation. The INFOSAN Secretariat participated in this exercise along with several organizations in Germany, including the INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point.

INFOSAN Research Project Coordination with the Graduate Institute, Geneva, Switzerland



The INFOSAN Secretariat teamed up with applied researchers from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, Switzerland, to develop a project titled, "Intersectoral Action to protect Public Health and ensure Food Safety using INFOSAN". The project objectives include understanding barriers to countries' participation in INFOSAN, gathering a list of best practices for managing food safety events at the international level and examining if and how national-level sectors collaborate to support food safety, including in what ways INFOSAN is involved in this collaboration. During Phase 1

of this project the researchers conducted an applied review of evidence by conducting a literature review. Subsequently, the researchers designed, created and refined two electronic surveys for the purposes of evaluating the research objectives. The ultimate outcomes of Phase 1 included a written report (containing an applied review of evidence, research and survey-design methodology, and a preliminary evaluation of the surveys), as well as the actual surveys. During Phase 2, the surveys will be finalized and translated into French and Spanish before administration to members, which will serve as part of a broader evaluation of INFOSAN in 2015.

The Rising Profile of INFOSAN

INFOSAN IN THE SCHOLARLY LITERATURE

The INFOSAN Secretariat carried out a review of scholarly literature published in 2013. The purpose of this review was twofold: 1) to determine and describe where/how INFOSAN has been discussed and referenced in the scholarly literature; and 2) to quantify the proportion of different INFOSAN information products being referenced. The term "INFOSAN" was used as a key word in several online databases, such as Scopus, Science Direct, PubMed and Google Scholar. There were 35 literature products found. These include scientific articles, e-books, outbreak assessments and theses (WHO and FAO documents were excluded). The full texts of the articles were either publicly available or accessible via a university library subscription. All of the materials were reviewed. One article and four theses written in a language other than English were included in this review using an online translator to understand how INFOSAN was discussed and referenced. The outcome of the literature review is as follows:

- 25 peer-reviewed articles, 3 e-books, 1 outbreak assessment, and 6 theses were published in 2013, for a total of 35 references.
- 4/35 (11%) of the references actually described the function of INFOSAN (some very briefly) and 7/35 (20%) mentioned INFOSAN in some way. The remaining 24/35 (69%) of the references only used an INFOSAN information product as a reference to provide support for their paper.
- 19/35 (54%) of the references used 1 of 9 different INFOSAN Information Notes (Table 8); 6/35 (17%) referenced a page from the INFOSAN website; 2/35 (6%) referenced a WHO Meeting Report of the *Expert meeting to review toxicological aspects of melamine and cyanuric acid*; 1/35 (3%) referenced an INFOSAN Emergency Alert Update of *Melamine contaminated products*; 1/35 (3%) referenced an INFOSAN Emergency Alert Update of 2004-2010; and 6/35 (17%) did not provide a reference for their INFOSAN discussion.
- An individual affiliated with WHO was listed as an author for 1/35 (3%) of the references.

In 2013, there were nearly as many references to INFOSAN identified as there were for 2011 and 2012 combined when using the same methods (N= 36 for 2011/2012).

This literature review suggests that information produced and shared through INFOSAN continues to provide the international community with valuable information on food safety information and best practices.

These results also indicate that INFOSAN Information Notes provide an important source of information and support for many scholarly papers. The table below (Table 8) summarizes the INFOSAN Information Notes that were used in the scholarly literature in 2013 and the frequency at which they were referenced.

THE RISING PROFILE OF INFOSAN

Table 8. FREQUENCY OF REFERENCES TO INFOSAN INFORMATION NOTES, 2013

INFORMATION NOTES TITLE	NUMBER OF TIMES CITED
Acrylamide in food is a potential health hazard	4/19 (21%)
Basic steps to improve safety of street-vended food	3/19 (16%)
Highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza outbreaks in poultry and in humans: Food safety implications	2/19 (11%)
<i>Enterobacter sakazakii</i> in powdered infant formula	1/19 (5.2%)
Food allergies	1/19 (5.2%)
Highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza outbreaks in poultry and in humans	5/19 (26%)
Prevention of Foodborne Disease: The Five Keys to Safer Food	1/19 (5.2%)
Unusual sources of <i>Salmonella</i>	1/19 (5.2%)
WHO Global Salm-Surv: A surveillance network for foodborne diseases	1/19 (5.2%)

MAKING HEADLINES AROUND THE GLOBE

Several food safety events captured headlines around the globe this year, with news media citing INFOSAN as a source of information that prompted national authorities to take action or recognizing the Network for its information dissemination activities (Figure 3). This emphasizes the importance of ensuring timely and accurate information sharing through INFOSAN since messages are often picked up by the media for communication with the public.

Figure 3. SELECTION OF NEWS HEADLINES REFERENCING INFOSAN, 2013



THE RISING PROFILE OF INFOSAN

INFOSAN AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND UNIVERSITY TRAINING COURSES

The INFOSAN Secretariat discussed the activities of the Network at a number of international conferences and university training courses during 2013. A selection of these are listed below:

- 1) Prince Mahidol Award Conference, A World united against infectious diseases: Cross Sectoral Solutions, Bangkok, Thailand, January 2013
 - Poster presentation entitled “The International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN): Fostering an integrated and cross-sectoral approach to food safety emergency preparedness and response”
- 2) Engaging Intergovernmental Organizations for Food Safety, Animal Health and Public Health (University of Minnesota), World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, March 2013
 - Oral presentation on the topic of “Cross-sectoral solutions for global food safety and the International Food Safety Authorities Network”
- 3) University of Basel, Switzerland, Advanced Studies- Master in Food Safety, September 2013
 - Oral presentation on the topic of “Role of WHO in the coordination of risk assessment and risk management measures in international food safety events – INFOSAN”
- 4) European Food Law Association Conference, Brussels, Belgium, October 2013
 - Oral presentation and panel discussion on the topic of “Management of global food safety incidents under INFOSAN and the International Health Regulations (2005)”
- 5) International Food Safety Conference, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, November 2013
 - Oral presentation and panel discussion on the topic of “Emerging issues and international approaches in managing food contaminants”



“Having followed the evolution of INFOSAN since inception, I am glad today to measure the great work done and the important role taken by the network. Indeed, INFOSAN itself is an essential tool in the field of food safety for countries, providing both reference materials and food safety alerts. INFOSAN has become a veritable platform for information exchange and professional cooperation. As an Emergency Contact Point, my requests for technical assistance and advice through INFOSAN have always been met”

*- Dr Thouraya Annabi Attia, Directrice du contrôle sanitaire des produits
Agence Nationale de Contrôle Sanitaire et Environnemental des Produits
INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point, Tunisia*

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Conclusion and Future Directions

In 2013, INFOSAN facilitated the rapid exchange of information during many food safety emergencies with international implications. Membership grew and expanded this year with additional Focal Points joining from a diverse range of national agencies. Through this expansion, we have continued to encourage multi-sectoral collaboration to address food safety issues.

Fostering stronger links to regional initiatives and networks has also been an important theme during 2013 and it is one that will continue in the years to come. Leveraging existing tools and momentum to further amplify the work of INFOSAN is important in the face of challenges related to human and financial resources and has proven mutually beneficial for achieving common goals. In addition, the regional efforts in Asia to enhance participation in INFOSAN have resulted in the highest proportion of active members relative to other regions. However, implementing the recommendations from the second regional meeting will require commitment and sustained participation from regional and national stakeholders, and lessons learned from this regional initiative will be utilized for the regional initiative in the Americas.

While progress has been made to strengthen the Network, several challenges have persisted over the past few years and these need to be addressed. INFOSAN is meant to be a member-driven network. Although programs within WHO HQ and Regional Offices play an important role in identifying and reporting food safety events to the INFOSAN Secretariat, it is more important than ever for INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points to take an active role in reporting food safety events to the INFOSAN Secretariat directly. This is essential for timely information exchange among relevant national authorities in the Network. Furthermore, this kind of active participation is needed from members in order to ensure that INFOSAN can function as an effective early warning communication tool.

Many regions continue to lag behind in terms of having active, registered and responsive INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points who fully understand their roles and responsibilities within INFOSAN. For example, although 181 Member States have agreed to join INFOSAN, only 50% have active Emergency Contact Points. In some regions, countries that agreed to join INFOSAN do not have an active Emergency Contact Point. This is the case for 74% of Member States in Africa. These gaps highlight the need to further strengthen basic surveillance capacities for foodborne diseases and food safety event detection since the lack of these basic capacities are often perceived as barriers to participation in INFOSAN. Addressing these gaps will require linking to other capacity building programs at WHO and FAO in order to transform the status of some Member States from passive recipients to active generators of information to share through INFOSAN. This will also increase the proportion of INFOSAN events being notified directly by members (which was only 18% in 2013).

The workplan for the INFOSAN Secretariat for 2014 and 2015 includes: 1) the promotion of cross-sectoral collaboration and information sharing to optimize the response to foodborne health risks, including outbreaks; and 2) the development of countries' capacities to manage food safety risks in emergency and non-emergency situations (which includes the establishment and refinement of systems to monitor, assess and manage food safety incidents and emergencies).

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This will be achieved by focusing on three activity areas:

1. Emergency INFOSAN Activities

- Enhanced detection, assessment and management of food safety events of international concern
 - Development of WHO's Hazard Detection and Risk Assessment System (HDRAS) to better identify foodborne health threats
- Improved communication during both routine and emergency activities with members
 - Encourage, through training exercises, the unprompted reporting of food safety events by INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points when international implications are identified

2. Non-Emergency INFOSAN Activities

- Publication of guidance documents to assist Member States in managing food safety events
 - Guidance for national authorities regarding provision of food safety advice during various emergency situations (i.e. natural disasters)
- Publication of INFOSAN Information Notes
 - Prioritize topics based on results from the survey of INFOSAN members conducted in May 2013
- Strengthen and/or formalize links to other regional networks (including EU RASFF and APEC FSIN)
 - Invite an official from European Commission's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed for a long-term mission to the INFOSAN Secretariat; integrate APEC FSIN Portal into the INFOSAN Community Website.

3. Community Strengthening Activities

- Introduction of new features on the INFOSAN Community Website
 - Translation of user interface into French and Spanish; implementation of webinar series to improve interactivity of members online
- Strengthen and update membership (designation and re-designation of members)
 - Focus on under-represented areas, including AFRO, through targeted efforts involving WHO and FAO Country Office Staff
- Expand regional initiatives to enhance participation in INFOSAN
 - First regional meeting of INFOSAN members from the Americas to be held in September 2014; exercises to follow-up on recommendations of the "INFOSAN in Asia" initiative (linking INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points to National IHR Focal Points)

In addition, the INFOSAN Secretariat will strive to enhance the role of the INFOSAN Advisory Group and develop a new strategic framework upon review and evaluation of the past 10 years of INFOSAN in action.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The INFOSAN Secretariat wishes to express gratitude and appreciation to our partners and donors for their generous financial and in-kind contributions in 2013 which enable INFOSAN to continue operating. Many thanks to the United States of America, Japan, the Netherlands, and the Republic of Korea.

APPENDIX

INFOSAN EVENTS 2013

EVENT	DATE	INVOLVEMENT TYPE	REGION(S) INVOLVED	COUNTRY(IES) INVOLVED	HAZARD TYPE	SPECIFIC HAZARD	FOOD TYPE	SPECIFIC FOOD
1. Outbreak of listeriosis in Australia linked to soft cheese products produced domestically and distributed internationally	18-Jan-13	Coordination	AMRO EMRO SEARO WPRO	Australia, Brazil, China (Hong Kong SAR), Fiji, Japan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, United Arab Emirates	Biological	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	Milk and dairy products	Various soft cheese
2. Dried milk powder produced in Poland potentially contaminated with rat poison and distributed internationally	23-Jan-13	Coordination	AMRO EURO	Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, United States of America	Chemical	Rat poison	Milk and dairy products	Milk powder
3. Herbal product from Bulgaria contaminated with atropine causing anticholinergic syndrome in the Netherlands and distributed internationally	24-Jan-13	Coordination	AMRO EMRO EURO WPRO	Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia	Chemical	Atropine	Herb, spices and condiment	<i>Althaea officinalis</i> (herb)
4. Outbreak of salmonellosis in the USA linked to domestically produced sprouts exported to the United Kingdom	24-Jan-13	Verification	AMRO EURO	United Kingdom, United States of America	Biological	<i>Salmonella. enterica</i> serovar Cubana	Vegetables and vegetable products	Alfalfa sprouts/ sprout seeds
5. Trace amounts of dicyandiamide (fertilizer) found in domestically produced milk products in New Zealand	28-Jan-13	Verification	WPRO	New Zealand	Chemical	Dicyandiamide	Milk and dairy products	Milk products
6. Gorgonzola cheese produced in Italy contaminated with <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> and exported to Australia	01-Feb-13	Verification	EURO WPRO	Italy, Australia	Biological	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	Milk and dairy products	Gorgonzola cheese

EVENT	DATE	INVOLVEMENT TYPE	REGION(S) INVOLVED	COUNTRY(IES) INVOLVED	HAZARD TYPE	SPECIFIC HAZARD	FOOD TYPE	SPECIFIC FOOD
7. Outbreak of botulism in Armenia linked to local homemade canned Susha	04-Feb-13	Consultation	EURO	Armenia	Biological	<i>Clostridium botulinum</i>	Herb, spices and condiment	Homemade canned "Susha" (Cervil)
8. Outbreak of Schmallenberg disease in cattle in Kazakhstan	13-Feb-13	Coordination	EURO	Kazakhstan	Biological	Schmallenberg virus	Meat and meat products	Cattle
9. Presence of phenylbutazone in horsemeat-contaminated foods across Europe	13-Feb-13	Coordination	EURO	Europe	Chemical	Phenylbutazone	Meat and meat products	Horsemeat
10. Outbreak of EHEC in Sweden linked to ground beef and kebab meat from the Netherlands produced with raw ingredients originating from four EU countries	18-Feb-13	Consultation	EURO	Hungary, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, United Kingdom	Biological	<i>Escherichia coli</i>	Meat and meat products	Ground beef, kebab meat
11. Milk products produced in Bosnia and Herzegovina contaminated with high levels of aflatoxin and distributed internationally	20-Feb-13	Coordination	EURO	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia	Chemical	Aflatoxin	Milk and dairy products	Milk products
12. High levels of aflatoxin in raw milk produced in Germany from cows that were fed maize contaminated with aflatoxin from Serbia	26-Feb-13	Verification	EURO	Germany, Romania, Serbia	Chemical	Aflatoxin	Vegetables and vegetable products	Maize (corn)
13. Buffalo cheese produced in Australia contaminated with <i>E. coli</i> and exported to Singapore	08-Mar-13	Verification	WPRO	Australia, Singapore	Biological	<i>Escherichia coli</i>	Milk and dairy products	Buffalo cheese
14. Thousands of deceased pigs in China disposed of in the Shanghai river	12-Mar-13	Verification	WPRO	China	Unknown	Unknown	Meat and meat products	Pigs
15. Outbreak of Hepatitis A infections in Nordic countries linked to frozen mixed berries imported from North Africa	14-Mar-13	Coordination	EURO	Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden	Biological	Hepatitis A virus	Fruit and fruit products	Frozen mixed berries

EVENT	DATE	INVOLVEMENT TYPE	REGION(S) INVOLVED	COUNTRY(IES) INVOLVED	HAZARD TYPE	SPECIFIC HAZARD	FOOD TYPE	SPECIFIC FOOD
16. Outbreak of EHEC in the USA linked to frozen snacks produced domestically and distributed internationally	29-Mar-13	Coordination	AMRO	Bermuda, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America	Biological	<i>Escherichia coli</i>	Snacks, deserts and other foods	Various frozen snacks
17. Avian influenza A (H7N9) virus monitoring of poultry populations in China	03-Apr-13	Consultation	WPRO	China	Biological	Influenza A virus (H7N9)	Meat and meat products	Poultry
18. Outbreak of Hepatitis A infections among international travelers returning from Egypt	18-Apr-13	Coordination	EMRO EURO WPRO	Australia, Egypt, Germany, Japan, Norway, Sweden	Biological	Hepatitis A virus	Unknown	Unknown
19. Cases of tongue paresthesia and diarrhea in Aruba linked to consumption of gummy candies from Colombia distributed internationally	20-Apr-13	Coordination	AMRO	Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Aruba, Guatemala, Puerto Rico	Chemical	Unknown	Sugar and confectionary	Gummy candies
20. Outbreak of salmonellosis in the USA linked to cucumbers imported from Mexico	26-Apr-13	Verification	AMRO	Mexico, United States of America	Biological	<i>Salmonella enterica</i> serovar Saintpaul	Vegetables and vegetable products	Cucumbers
21. Herring fillets produced in Latvia contaminated with <i>Listeria Monocytogenes</i> and exported to the USA	02-May-13	Coordination	AMRO EURO	Latvia, United States of America	Biological	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	Fish and other seafood	Herring fillets
22. Outbreak of Hepatitis A infections among European travelers returning from Italy	09-May-13	Coordination	EURO	Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Poland	Biological	Hepatitis A virus	Vegetables and vegetable products	Frozen berries (suspected)
23. Buckwheat contaminated with atropine and scopolamine from Slovenia exported to Austria	20-May-13	Coordination	EURO	Austria, Slovenia	Chemical	Scopolamine and Atropine	Cereals and cereal-based products	Instant buckwheat powder

EVENT	DATE	INVOLVEMENT TYPE	REGION(S) INVOLVED	COUNTRY(IES) INVOLVED	HAZARD TYPE	SPECIFIC HAZARD	FOOD TYPE	SPECIFIC FOOD
24. Outbreak of salmonellosis in the USA and New Zealand linked to tahini paste from Turkey distributed internationally	23-May-13	Coordination	AMRO EURO EMRO WPRO	Albania, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Iraq, Libya, New Zealand, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Yemen, United States of America	Biological	<i>Salmonella enterica</i> serovar Mbandaka and Montevideo	Nuts and oilseeds	Tahini sesame paste
25. Soy products produced in Israel contaminated with <i>Salmonella</i> serovar Mbandaka and exported to the USA	23-May-13	Coordination	AMRO EURO	Israel, United States of America	Biological	<i>Salmonella enterica</i> serovar Mbandaka	Nuts and oilseeds	Soy products
26. Cases of intoxication reported in Finland linked to consumption of vegetable mix originating in Spain contaminated with <i>Datura</i> seeds and distributed internationally	27-May-13	Consultation	AMRO EURO	Barbados, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Malta, Russia	Biological	<i>Datura stramonium</i>	Vegetables and vegetable products	Frozen mixed vegetables
27. Outbreak of Hepatitis A infections in the USA linked to consumption of frozen berry mixes with common pomegranate seeds from Turkey distributed internationally	01-Jun-13	Coordination	AMRO EURO	Germany, Turkey, United States of America	Biological	Hepatitis A virus	Fruit and fruit products	Frozen berries
28. Increase in cases of salmonellosis caused by a highly drug-resistant strain of <i>Salmonella</i> serovar Kentucky in Europe	03-Jun-13	Consultation	EURO	Europe	Biological	<i>Salmonella enterica</i> serovar Kentucky	Unknown	Unknown
29. Outbreak of staphylococcal infections in Sweden linked to chilled tuna imported from Suriname	04-Jun-13	Coordination	AMRO EURO	Suriname, Sweden	Biological	<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	Fish and other seafood	Tuna

EVENT	DATE	INVOLVEMENT TYPE	REGION(S) INVOLVED	COUNTRY(IES) INVOLVED	HAZARD TYPE	SPECIFIC HAZARD	FOOD TYPE	SPECIFIC FOOD
30. Mango pickles and juices produced in Bangladesh potentially contaminated with formalin and distributed internationally	12-Jun-13	Coordination	SEARO	Bangladesh, Nepal	Chemical	Formalin	Fruit and fruit products	Mangoes
31. Pistachios contaminated with <i>Salmonella enterica</i> from Iran exported to Australia	17-Jun-13	Verification	EMRO WPRO	Australia, Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Biological	<i>Salmonella enterica</i>	Nuts and oilseeds	HodHod Halva Shekari with Pistachio
32. Lunch meal served to school children in India contaminated with organophosphates	17-Jul-13	Verification	SEARO	India	Chemical	Organophosphate	Composite (Cereals and cereal-based products, Vegetables and vegetable products)	Cooked rice and vegetables (Potato & Soybean Bari)
33. Pesto from Italy contaminated with <i>Clostridium botulinum</i> distributed to several countries in Europe	22-Jul-13	Coordination	EURO	Albania, Denmark, France Italy, Monaco	Biological	<i>Clostridium botulinum</i>	Nuts and oilseeds	Pesto
34. Whey protein concentrate from New Zealand contaminated with <i>Clostridium sporogenes</i> and distributed internationally	02-Aug-13	Coordination	EMRO SEARO WPRO	Australia, Cambodia, China, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam	Biological	<i>Clostridium sporogenes</i>	Products for special nutritional use	Whey protein concentrate in milk powder, infant formula and sport drinks
35. Case of infant botulism in Norway linked to the consumption of almond puree purchased in France	19-Aug-13	Verification	EURO	France, Norway	Biological	<i>Clostridium botulinum</i>	Nuts and oilseeds	Almond puree
36. Excessive nitrate in lactoferrin dairy products from New Zealand distributed to China	21-Aug-13	Coordination	WPRO	China, New Zealand	Chemical	Excessive nitrate	Milk and dairy products	Lactoferrin

EVENT	DATE	INVOLVEMENT TYPE	REGION(S) INVOLVED	COUNTRY(IES) INVOLVED	HAZARD TYPE	SPECIFIC HAZARD	FOOD TYPE	SPECIFIC FOOD
37. Smoked trout from Turkey contaminated with <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> distributed to the Netherlands and Germany	22-Aug-13	Verification	EURO	Germany, Netherlands, Turkey	Biological	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	Fish and other seafood	Smoked trout
38. Outbreak of salmonellosis in Viet Nam linked to food prepared in a factory canteen	05-Oct-13	Verification	WPRO	Viet Nam	Biological	<i>Salmonella</i>	Unknown	Unknown
39. Outbreak of acute non-viral hepatitis in several countries from dietary supplements (OxyElite) produced domestically	09-Oct-13	Coordination	AMRO EURO WPRO	Australia, China (Hong Kong SAR), Ireland, New Zealand, United States of America	Chemical	Unknown	Products for special nutritional use	Dietary supplement (OxyElite)
40. Outbreak of methanol poisoning in Latvia linked to domestically produced, deliberately mislabeled alcohol	17-Oct-13	Coordination	EURO	Latvia	Chemical	Methanol	Alcoholic beverages	Alcohol
41. Nutritional shakes contaminated with chloramphenicol from Canada distributed to the USA	04-Nov-13	Coordination	AMRO	Canada, United States of America	Chemical	Chloramphenicol	Products for special nutritional use	Nutritional shakes
42. Caribbean soft drink from Trinidad and Tobago contaminated with cocaine reported in the United Kingdom	16-Dec-13	Coordination	AMRO, EURO	Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom	Chemical	Cocaine	Non-alcoholic Beverages	Soft drink
43. Outbreak of norovirus in China (Hong Kong SAR) epidemiologically linked to raw oysters imported from France	17-Dec-13	Coordination	EURO, WPRO	France, China (Hong Kong SAR), Ireland, Portugal	Biological	Norovirus	Fish and other seafood	Raw oysters
44. Herring fillets contaminated with <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> from Russia distributed to the USA	30-Dec-13	Verification	AMRO, EURO	Russia, United States of America	Biological	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	Fish and other seafood	Herring fillets

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INTERNATIONAL FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITIES NETWORK (INFOSAN)



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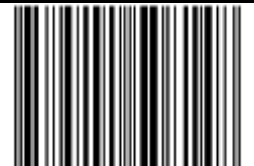


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