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STRENGTHENING THE OFFICIAL FOOD SAFETY CONTROL SYSTEM AND FACILITATING MARKET ACCESS OF FOOD PRODUCTS

April 2022

SDGs:



Country:

Belarus

Project Code:

TCP/BYE/3702

FAO Contribution:

USD 310 000

Duration:

1 April 2019 – 31 December 2021

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Implementing Partners

Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MoAF).

Beneficiaries

Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and their national and regional institutes; State Committee for Standardization; educational institutions on health, medicine, agriculture, and veterinary medicine; and state scientific institutions.

Country Programming Framework (CPF) Outputs

Strategic Objective 4: Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems.

Outcome 4.2: Agribusinesses and agrifood chains that are more inclusive and efficient are developed and implemented by the public and private sectors.

Output 4.2.1: Public sector organizations' capacities strengthened to design and implement national policies, strategies, regulatory frameworks and investments plans supportive of inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems development.

Country Programming Framework (2017-2020) - Government Priority 1: Agrifood production chain development and access to international markets.

Output 1.1: National food safety governance framework and capacities strengthened in compliance with international requirements.



BACKGROUND

The food industry plays a leading role in the structure of industrial production in Belarus, and has major importance for the Belarusian economy, which is actively oriented towards export and import substitution. Many of the large, high-capacity food production establishments have modern facilities and equipment, and apply international hygienic and quality management standards.

The country's current food safety control system is based on a multi-agency framework that involves the MoH, the MoAF, and the State Committee for Standardization. These inspection agencies work independently of each other, with overlapping mandates and responsibilities. One of the main objectives of the project was to assess the existing system, provide recommendations for its optimization, and strengthen collaboration among the relevant stakeholders.

In addition, accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and export market diversification are high priorities of the country; therefore, the project aimed to support the country in its efforts to increase the efficiency and competitiveness of agriculture, strengthen the national food control system, improve agrifood production, and facilitate the access of Belarusian food products to international markets.

IMPACT

The project contributed to improving the national food safety control system. It is expected that this will enable the production of safe and quality food for the domestic market, and increase competitiveness in international food trade.

ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS

The project successfully strengthened the national food safety governance framework, priority official food control functions were improved, and the capacities of highly-dedicated national experts were enhanced. The key project activities carried out and results achieved are outlined below.

Several advocacy events on the benefits of preparing a self-assessment of the current system for official food control were delivered, as well as training of focal points at different competent authorities. This included a workshop for the designated focal points in the MoH, the MoAF and Gosstandart (the State Committee for Standardization), where they gained in-depth knowledge of the FAO/World Health Organization (WHO) Food Control System Assessment Tool, enabling them to gather the available evidence for the agreed criteria.

National capacities on risk analysis and international food safety notification systems were successfully strengthened. This was achieved through the training of around 100 national experts on risk assessment, risk communication, and the application of international food safety notification systems. In addition, national experts' knowledge on international notification systems for unsafe food (NSUF) was increased through a training course, in order to enhance and build national NSUF. In addition, several theoretical and hands-on training courses were delivered, to increase the practical capacities on laboratory analysis of more than 430 national experts.

In order to strengthen the quality management capacities of laboratory personnel of competent authorities, an assessment of the current level of four selected laboratories' expert capacity, infrastructure, and methods used was carried out, based on consultations with the representatives of the laboratories; and a specially prepared training course was delivered to 431 participants, based on the assessment.

National food exporters' capacities were strengthened to access information on requirements of potential markets for meat and dairy exports and ability to comply, through the provision of training courses and supportive materials. Producers and exporters of meat and dairy products gained knowledge about the diversification of export markets, and were provided with marketing and technical information related to export to China, Viet Nam, the United Arab Emirates and the European Union, which were selected as key markets for Belarus. In addition, high-quality export guides on meat and dairy products were produced, in both Russian and English.

A specific training programme was organized for 92 experts on the principles of obtaining permission to export products of animal origin to the European Union; approval procedures for exporting countries and enterprises; and certification for exporting food products to the European Union.

An assessment of the status of the national Codex programmes was carried out, in collaboration with the Codex Contact Point (CCP) and a team of international consultants from Kazakhstan. A set of recommendations and a targeted training programme were developed and successfully implemented, to strengthen national capacities. In addition, support was provided to the relevant experts on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS)-related knowledge and skills during the training course provided on WTO requirements for the circulation of veterinary drugs and experience in state control of their residues in food products of animal origin.

IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

Most of the planned activities were implemented by the end of the project. Delays were experienced owing to administrative constraints, as well as issues with the recruitment of international consultants, and the procurement and formulation of Letters of Agreement (LoAs). A no-cost extension was requested and approved, in order to complete project activities.

FOLLOW-UP FOR GOVERNMENT ATTENTION

It was not possible to fully complete the self-assessment of the current system for official food control initiated during the project. However, the MoAF, the MoH and Gosstandart have confirmed their interest and commitment in continuing with this activity. It is recommended that it be implemented in the future, if financial and technical resources to support the national authorities are identified.

It is recommended that donor funding be sought to undertake follow-up activities that focus on developing skills and preparing targeted guiding materials for: i) the implementation of risk-based approaches; and ii) the adoption of international NSUF.

A follow-up project could include activities to further strengthen the quality management capacities of competent authorities, involving international expertise, given that there was a high demand concerning various aspects of quality management, which could not be completely covered during the project. It is also recommended that capacities on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) detection be further strengthened through the provision of a more in-depth training programme. In addition, a follow-up project could include activities to strengthen the quality management capacities of competent authorities with more practical, up-to-date, in-depth knowledge on quality management, including the development of standard operation procedures (SOP) and participation in proficiency testing.

SUSTAINABILITY

1. Capacity development

The capacities of highly-dedicated national experts from several reference laboratories, public institutes and academia were improved, ensuring the sustainability of results.

The development of both national and international partnerships was facilitated during the project. Representatives were involved from the MoH, the MoAF, Gosstandart, reference laboratories, the Belarusian State Centre for Accreditation (BSCA), food exporters, academia, CCEURO Regional Coordination in Kazakhstan and the Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment in Latvia (BIOR).

The project activities are considered catalytic, and the options for follow-up are included in the report. Strong ownership and leadership was demonstrated by the national project coordinator, and national experts were closely involved in the activities and led the project implementation. The required technical knowledge and commitment are in place to follow up the project activities. Collaboration among the three lead government entities responsible for food safety governance was further enabled and enhanced.

2. Gender equality

Gender balance was respected throughout the project. Decision-making capacities and access to knowledge resources of both women and men were increased.



3. Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability was not directly linked to the project objectives.

4. Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA) – in particular Right to Food and Decent Work

The project contributed to the realization of the right to adequate and safe food by strengthening food safety in Belarus. Human rights principles were also respected throughout the project implementation, specifically with regard to participation and non-discrimination.

5. Technological sustainability

State-of-the-art technical knowledge was introduced that can be directly implemented in key public institutions. With regard to contributing to the development of local knowledge, capacity and resources, this was the main focus of the project. The required technical knowledge and commitment are in place to follow up the project activities.

6. Economic sustainability

All knowledge products are available and free of charge.



DOCUMENTS AND OUTREACH PRODUCTS

Documents

- ❑ **FAO.** October 2021. *Осуществление экспорта молочных продуктов на ключевые рынки, Вспомогательное руководство для белорусских экспортеров.* 120 pp.
- ❑ **FAO.** October 2021. *Exporting Dairy Products to Key Markets - Companion Guide for Belarusian Exporters.* 57 pp.
- ❑ **FAO.** October 2021. *Осуществление экспорта мяса на ключевые рынки, Вспомогательное руководство для белорусских экспортеров.* 98 pp.
- ❑ **FAO.** October 2021. *Exporting Meat to Key Markets - Companion Guide for Belarusian Exporters.* 78 pp.
- ❑ **Tolysbaeva, Z. & Sharipov, Z.** November 2021. *Technical Advice and Comments Provided to the Situation Analysis of the Status of the Codex Alimentarius in the Republic of Belarus (EN/RU). Nur-Sultan.* 5 pp.
- ❑ **Tolysbaeva, Z. & Sharipov, Z.** November 2021. *Recommendations for Capacity Development on Codex Alimentarius. Nur-Sultan.* 6 pp.
- ❑ Translation of the *FAO/WHO Food Control Assessment Toolkit (Introduction and Dimension A-D): Инструмент Оценки Системы Контроля Пищевых Продуктов (Введение И Компонент А-D).* January 2021. 380 pp.
- ❑ Translation of the *FAO/WHO Handbook on Risk Communication Applied to Food Safety: Практическое Пособие «Информирование о Рисках в Области Безопасности Пищевых Продуктов».* January 2021. 99 pp.
- ❑ **Fedorenko, E.** January 2022. *Narrative Report on Implementation of Activities under the Agreement “Strengthening the Capacity for Laboratory Quality Assurance and Analytical Skills of Official Food Safety Laboratories”.* 48 pp.
- ❑ **Fedorenko, E.** January 2022. *Narrative Report on Implementation of Activities under the Agreement “Strengthening the Official System of Food Safety Control and Promoting Market Access to Food Products”.* 32 pp.

Outreach material

- ❑ **FAO.** August 2018. *FAO-REU Website: Belarus reviews food safety system to meet modern requirements,* 3 August 2018, Minsk, Belarus: <https://www.fao.org/europe/news/detail-news/en/c/1147661/>.
- ❑ **FSN.** August 2018. *FSN Food Safety News: FAO helps Belarus review industry, government food safety systems,* by News Desk on 10 August 2018: <https://www.foodsafetynews.com/2018/08/fao-helps-belarus-review-industry-government-food-safety-systems/>.

ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS - LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Expected Impact	Improved food safety control system to enable the production of safe and quality food for domestic market and increase the competitiveness in international food trade	
Outcome	Indicators	<p>The national food safety governance framework and priority official food control functions are strengthened, as well as the capacities of international trade requirements, including WTO issues and the utilization of Codex Alimentarius standards and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The official food control system is assessed, and actions to continually strengthen a coordinated, system for official food control agreed. – Operational capacity of laboratory analysis and testing strengthened in target laboratories. – The capacities of competent authorities are reviewed and strengthened in priority food safety topics including risk analysis, knowledge, developing food safety emergency recall systems, risk-based food inspection. – Food exporters have increased access to information on importing country SPS requirements, ability to identify new markets, and knowledge on compliance. – The National Codex Programs is strengthened to support the active participation of the Republic of Belarus in Codex Alimentarius activities. – Improved technical competence of national authorities on SPS and TBT issues to successfully participate in the WTO negotiations.
	Baseline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No comprehensive assessment is available. – Weaknesses in quality assurance, laboratory management and detection methods persist despite some capacities. – Competent authorities have a suitable theoretical knowledge on aspects of food safety but require practical and up to date information in line with modern food control systems. – Information is limited and available in an ad hoc manner. The majority of exported food products are exported to the Russian Federation and the EAEC. Food business operators have difficulties to open to other markets. – The participation of the Republic of Belarus in Codex activities is very limited. – The Republic of Belarus experiences some technical barriers in the on-going WTO negotiations.
	End Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The system is assessed using the FAO/WHO tool on assessing official food safety control systems and strategic documents and approach are available and agreed. – Practical know-how on international detection methods increased. Knowledge of quality assurance and laboratory management enhanced. – Practical trainings implemented for MoAF, MoH and Gosstandart and guiding materials available. Increased understanding of elements and requirements to transition to risk-based food inspection system. Recommendations on the relevance to create a national notification system for unsafe food and options to implement this mechanism provided. – Increased potential for food exporters to access new markets. – To assess the current system and provide recommendations for practical implementation, operationalization of Codex work. – The competent authorities have sufficient capacities to address the SPS/TBT requirements for the successful accession to the WTO.
Comments and follow-up action to be taken	<p>Several international consultants provided high-level, up-to-date training sessions for the beneficiaries. There was a high demand for such capacity development, especially with regard to export markets, laboratory methods, and European Union requirements.</p> <p>The training-of-trainers (ToT) approach will provide an opportunity to follow up and share the knowledge acquired during the project. The beneficiaries were also very satisfied with the international consultants, therefore, there is potential to build further collaboration and facilitate knowledge exchange.</p> <p>The beneficiaries of capacity-development activities were representatives from the following:</p> <p>i) Ministry of Agriculture and Food and its national and regional institutes (Department of Veterinary and Food Control; Belarus State Veterinary Centre; Veterinary Surveillance; Vitebsk Regional Veterinary Laboratory; regional and district veterinary stations); ii) Ministry of Health and its national and regional institutes (state institution: Republican Centre for Hygiene, Epidemiology and Public Health; and regional hygiene and epidemiology centres from Minsk, Brest, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno; healthcare institution: Mogilev Regional Centre for Hygiene, Epidemiology and Public Health; state institution: Minsk City Centre for Hygiene, Epidemiology; Republican Unitary Enterprise: Scientific and Practical Centre for Hygiene; and other district and zonal hygiene and epidemiology centres; iii) The State Committee for Standardization: RUE Belarusian State Institute of Metrology – National Metrology Institute of the Republic of Belarus; and the state enterprise: Belarusian State Centre for Accreditation; iv) educational institutions on health, medicine, agriculture, veterinary medicine; and v) Scientific-Practical Centre for Foodstuffs of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus; and state scientific institution: Institute of Genetics and Cytology of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.</p>	

Output 1	National food safety governance framework and strategic development of official food control capacities strengthened		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	The official food control system is assessed, and actions to continually strengthen a coordinated, system for official food control agreed.	The system is assessed using the FAO/WHO tool on assessing official food safety control systems and strategic documents and approach are available and agreed.	Partially
Baseline	No comprehensive assessment is available.		
Comments	<p>The main task of the FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment Tool is to analyse the work of the competent authorities in charge of food control, covering the entire food chain, from the production of raw materials to the consumer. The tool was translated into Russian to make its application easier for the beneficiaries. Several advocacy events on the benefits of preparing a self-assessment and the training of focal points at different competent authorities was carried out. This included a three-day workshop for the designated focal points in MoH, MoAF and Gosstandart, where they gained in-depth knowledge of the tool, thus enabling the focal points to gather the available evidence for the agreed criteria.</p> <p>National capacities on risk analysis and international food safety notification systems were successfully enhanced.</p>		
Activity 1.1	Conducting a self-assessment of the current system for official food control		
	Achieved	Partially	
	Comments	Several advocacy events on the benefits of preparing a self-assessment, and the training of focal points at MoH, MoAF and Gosstandart (18 professionals) were carried out. The self-assessment was initiated but was not fully completed. However, the national project coordinator confirmed that there was interest in continuing this activity during the next years, and commitment from MoAF, MoH and Gosstandart was also confirmed.	
Activity 1.2	Enhancing the capacities and skills on the food safety risk analysis framework, and up to date approaches to manage food safety along the food chain through a series of (3) training courses of 3-days duration		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	<p>The capacities of national experts were enhanced on key elements of the risk analysis framework. The training course on “Selected elements of health risk analysis in food safety – risk assessment and risk communication” was completed by 60 experts. The objective of the educational programme of the training course was to familiarize participants with international (e.g. Codex Alimentarius Standards) and national legal aspects in the field of risk analysis; the role of risk communication in the risk analysis paradigm and mechanisms for their implementation, including the development of a risk communication plan.</p> <p>The FAO manual on risk communication was also translated into Russian, which can be used for further capacity development.</p>	
Activity 1.3	Support review of existing international notification systems for unsafe food (NSUF), as the basis for strategic planning for a national NSUF		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	<p>Knowledge was increased through a training course on “International unsafe food notification systems”, to introduce the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), Sirano notification systems, and the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN).</p> <p>The 39 national experts who completed the training course learned about the role and application of these systems through case studies. This informs the relevant authorities on issues that need to be considered to enhance and build the national NSUF.</p>	

Output 2	Priority official food control functions, operationally strengthened		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Operational capacity of laboratory analysis and testing strengthened in target laboratories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Practical know-how on international detection methods increased. – Knowledge of quality assurance and laboratory management enhanced. 	Partially
Baseline	Weaknesses in quality assurance, laboratory management and detection methods persist despite some capacities.		
Comments	Several theoretical and hands-on training courses were delivered to increase the practical capacities on laboratory analysis of more than 430 national experts. The training topics included the European requirements and laboratory experience in the field of food safety control, regulation and control of GMOs and laboratory quality management (in line with national and international legislation).		
Activity 2.1	Strengthening the quality management capacities of the laboratory personnel of competent authorities		
	Achieved	Partially	
	Comments	<p>The assessment of the quality management capacities and training needs of four selected reference laboratories was carried out through a questionnaire, with particular attention to compliance with internationally recognized requirements (the GOST ISO/IEC 17025). The selected laboratories included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Republican Unitary Enterprise: Scientific and Practical Centre for Hygiene. – Republican Unitary Enterprise: Belarusian State Institute of Metrology. – Medical and diagnostic institution: Vitebsk Regional Veterinary Laboratory. – State institution: Republican Centre for Hygiene, Epidemiology and Public Health. <p>Capacity needs were identified in the following main areas: i) the study of the legislative framework of technical regulation at international and regional levels; ii) international principles of accreditation, conformity assessment, aimed at eliminating technical barriers in world trade; iii) activities of international, regional and national organizations on standardization; and iv) the cooperation of Belarus with the organization of other states in the field of conformity assessment. This training course was completed by 235 people.</p>	
Activity 2.2	Assessment of the laboratory infrastructure needed to support the implementation of new detection methods		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	<p>An assessment of the current level of the laboratories' expert capacity, infrastructure and methods used was carried out, based on consultations with the representatives of the four selected laboratories, and a training plan was prepared accordingly. The assessment found that the premises and environmental conditions met the requirements for testing and measurements within the declared scope of accreditation, and the laboratory personnel were constantly trained in accordance with the existing capabilities of the laboratories; however, there was a need to expand the experience and skills on the test methods recommended by international and regional standards (International Organization for Standardization [ISO], International Electrotechnical Commission [IEC], American Society for Testing and Materials [ASTM], European Standards [EN], etc.), in order to introduce and implement these promptly.</p>	
Activity 2.3	Support national laboratories to improve analytical capacity on selected microbiological and chemical hazards through study tour and training		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	<p>In total, three theoretical training sessions and 22 hands-on training sessions were delivered to increase practical capacities on laboratory analysis of national experts. The theoretical training topics included the European requirements and laboratory experience in the field of food safety control; the regulation and control of GMOs; and laboratory quality management (in line with national and international legislation). The hands-on training sessions focused on the detection of both chemical and microbiological contaminants, such as synthetic dyes, melamine, packaging residues (phthalates), mycotoxins and trace elements, as well as Listeria. In total, 431 participants received theoretical training and 52 hands-on practical training sessions. Some of the training activities, which involved international trainers and provided information about state-of-the-art detection methods and EU requirements, were particularly popular (with 2 to 7 times higher number of participants than planned).</p>	
Activity 2.4	Build capacities on risk-based inspection		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	<p>In addition to the training activities on the risk analysis framework, more specific training sessions were delivered on risk-based inspection, including real-life case studies and situation exercises.</p>	

Activity 2.5	Upgrade the capacity of local trainers to provide training and advice to personnel involved in food control through two 3 days trainings		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The capacities of trainers were enhanced on all elements of the risk analysis framework, particularly on risk-based meat inspection. “Modern approaches to ensuring meat safety and supervision based on risk assessment” training introduced modern meat quality control practices that take a risk-based approach, in which decisions, standards and actions are based on specific knowledge of risks (best practices, including meat inspection, slaughter conditions, and safety and quality management systems [good manufacturing and hygiene practices, analysis of risk and critical control points]). The training course was completed by 43 experts. The ToT will ensure the sustainability of the project activities.	
Output 3	National food exporters capacities strengthened to access information on requirements of potential markets for meat and dairy exports and ability to comply		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Food exporters have increased access to information on importing country SPS requirements, ability to identify new markets, and knowledge on compliance.	Increased potential for food exporters to access new markets.	Yes
Baseline	Information is limited and available in an ad hoc manner. The majority of exported food products are exported to the Russian Federation and the Eurasian Economic Commission (EAEC). Food business operators have difficulties to open to other markets.		
Comments	The training courses and supportive materials were very well received, and the number of beneficiaries was higher than planned, demonstrating the high interest in the topic. The prepared export guides (on meat and dairy products) were considered to be of very high quality, and were therefore also translated into English.		
Activity 3.1	A market survey is conducted on key import markets for meat and dairy products		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The market survey was conducted by the national and international consultants and provided the basis of the export guides. It identified that the meat and dairy sector had potential for extending exports to new markets, including the European Union, China, Viet Nam and the United Arab Emirates.	
Activity 3.2	Means to access up to date requirements for meat and dairy exports to new potential markets outlined		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The most relevant references and useful Web sites were collected and disseminated to the training participants.	
Activity 3.3	Preparation of two supportive guides for export conditions		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The export guides on meat and dairy products were considered to be of very high quality, and were therefore also translated into English. It was also proposed by independent reviewers to publish a series of similar guides.	
Activity 3.4	Training food exporters in export market requirements through two 2 day seminars		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The training sessions and supportive materials were very well received, and the number of beneficiaries was higher than planned, demonstrating the high interest in the topic. The training on “Trade and economic aspects of meat products exports to the European Union, China, Viet Nam and the United Arab Emirates” was attended by 69 persons, while a similar training on dairy products was attended by 75 experts. The producers and exporters of meat and dairy products gained knowledge about diversification of export markets, and they were provided with marketing and technical information related to export to China, Viet Nam, the United Arab Emirates and the European Union, which were selected as key markets for Belarus.	

Activity 3.5	Support operationalizing on the EU requirements for poultry exports through two 2 day training courses		
	Achieved	Yes	
Comments	<p>The specific conditions of the European market create difficulties for Belarusian companies when exporting their products to the European Union, primarily due to a lack of information about the requirements of the directives. The aim of the educational programme was to gain knowledge of the principles of obtaining permission to export products of animal origin to the European Union; approval procedures for exporting countries and enterprises; and certification for exporting food products to the European Union. The training on "Organization of official controls on products of animal origin in compliance with EU requirements for import into and transit through the European Union" was attended by 92 experts.</p> <p>The training sessions and supportive materials (checklist and guides) were very well-received, and the number of beneficiaries was higher than planned, demonstrating the high interest in the topic.</p>		
Output 4	Country participation in Codex Alimentarius is strengthened and support on SPS and TBT aspects of the WTO accession		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
Baseline	The participation of the Republic of Belarus in Codex activities is very limited.		
Comments	The assessment of the status of the national Codex programmes was carried out, in collaboration with the CCP and a team of international consultants from Kazakhstan. A set of recommendations and a targeted training programme were developed and successfully implemented to strengthen national capacities.		
Activity 4.1	Conduct a "Situation Analysis" of activities within the Codex Alimentarius		
	Achieved	Yes	
Comments	<p>The situation analysis was conducted by national experts through the use of the FAO/WHO Diagnostic tool for assessing the status of national Codex programmes. International experts helped to analyse the results, provided recommendations, and developed a training plan for capacity development.</p> <p>It emerged, among other aspects that the CCP currently operated on the basis of the leading organization in the country in the field of food hygiene and safety. However, the structure, staff, roles and responsibilities of the CCP have not been documented, and therefore information on current Codex-related activities is not communicated adequately within the country.</p>		
Activity 4.2	Strengthening national capacity to work with the Codex Alimentarius Commission through two 2 days workshop		
	Achieved	Yes	
Comments	<p>Three two-day online workshops were delivered to review the Codex structure ("Overview of the Institutional Framework of the Codex Alimentarius" and "Online tools used by the Codex Alimentarius Secretariat") and discuss specific issues to support the participation of Belarus experts in the activities of the Codex Alimentarius Commission ("Some aspects of work within the Codex Alimentarius Procedures"). The training was delivered by international experts from Kazakhstan, who were closely involved in the work of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO), as Kazakhstan is the regional Coordinator.</p>		

Activity 4.3	Support SPS experts in negotiations for WTO accession via 2.5 day training	
	Achieved	Partially
Activity 4.3	Comments	<p>For Belarus, one of the problematic issues in WTO accession is the use of veterinary drugs and the system of control over their residual quantities in animal products. Targeted support was provided to the relevant experts on SPS-related knowledge and skills during the training on “World Trade Organization (WTO) requirements for the circulation of veterinary drugs and experience in state control of their residues in food products of animal origin”.</p> <p>The attendees learned the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ukraine’s experience in the WTO accession in the field of sanitary measures; – approaches to the control of circulation of veterinary drugs and their residues in international trade; – correlation of international norms and rules and national legislation; – on the implementation of the principle of non-discrimination of the WTO – equivalence of SPS measures applied to the members of the Customs Union and beyond and the provisions of Article XXIV of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT); – on risk assessment in the framework of SPS measures; – current topics of recent meetings of the SPS Committee of the WTO; and – on assessment of the existing system for the control of residues of veterinary drugs in food products. <p>At the request of the Belarusian authorities, further technical assistance on this activity was not considered necessary.</p>
	Evaluation of the existing system of control of veterinary drug residues in food products to support WTO negotiations	
Activity 4.4	Achieved	Yes
	Comments	The existing system of control of veterinary drug residues in food products was evaluated through a tailored questionnaire and key informant interviews. Training sessions were provided to address specific needs.

Partnerships and Outreach

For more information, please contact: Reporting@fao.org

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