

Workshop Issue 1: Identifying and Assessing Educational and Informational Needs

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Discussion:

- The workshop participants concluded that, although there are differences among the two key audiences (government officials and private producers), their exposure to the same training would help capacity-building of the system.
- An objective should be to create bodies of trained professionals so that those who would leave government service would be replaced by similarly trained professionals who had been working in the private sector. Training government and private officials at the same time preempts the need to train new government officials should the bureaucracy change after an election.
- Emphasis was also placed on the importance of education for the consumer.
- It is assumed that laboratory personnel would have less need for training by FSIA.
- The workshop participants anticipate significant added-value in organizing training to involve mixed audiences (government and private sector, as well as laboratories and the general public) by encouraging a broader exchange of views among all interested parties.

Recommendations:

- **FSIA should draw on existing resources.**
 - There exist considerable educational and training resources among the international organizations (such as INPPAZ), ministries, private services and academic institutions in the region.
 - The goal should be to develop a structured approach to capacity-building training following the university-system of establishing prerequisites.
- **Training must cover several threshold areas.**
 - First, training should provide an introductory presentation of basic microbiology and good manufacturing and agricultural practices (GMPs).
 - Next, advanced training on HACCP should be provided.
 - Beyond the technical, substantive training, training should focus on the techniques of training trainers so that the training effort can be locally sustained and renewed.
- **Attention should be given to innovative techniques for adult education.**
 - Such attention is needed to make training efforts interesting and engaging for adult, non-professional personnel.

- **FSIA training should cover produce.**
 - In addition to training in systems of meat and poultry, attention should also be given to developing skills in the management of control systems, surveillance and tracing of produce.

- **Food Bio-security control should be factored into food safety training.**
 - Food security was defined by the workshop as the deliberate contamination of a food product from production through processing to distribution and consumption; food safety is the unintentional contamination of a food product as a consequence of production.

- **Each country should conduct its own survey.**
 - Each country should do so in working with FSIA to develop a training plan.
 - Surveys should seek to identify sources in agricultural organizations for potential project funding.

- **Attention should be given to regional needs.**
 - This is necessary both as a need to implement sanitary & phytosanitary (SPS) requirements in international free trade agreements (such as CAFTA), but also to develop a regional bloc to compete with and to develop compatible approaches on SPS issues with other regional trading blocs (such as the European Union).

- **The FSIA ought to start with small, manageable projects.**
 - With such projects, the FSIA can more easily bring to them to a successful conclusion which will, in turn, demonstrate the value of FSIA and therefore attract greater support and interest from other potential partners.

- **The FSIA should take a specific and incremental approach to developing training projects.**
 - In particular, the FSIA should identify a particular food-borne illness and then work backwards to develop the training needed for consumers, government inspectors and producers to reduce that problem.

- **Projects should aim at reducing the “double-standard” of products for exports.**
 - This “double-standard” was identified by the workshop as instances in which a country sets differing standards for exported products than for similar products destined for the internal, domestic market.

- **Projects should be sensitive to the ability of producers (especially small producers) to respond to new regulatory requirements.**
 - This may be achieved by providing a longer time line (such as a five-year capacity-building/implementation timeline) for implementation by smaller producers of requirements.

- Working with producers in partnership with Ministries of Agriculture to ensure a marketable commodity could provide a process for cost-recovery that would make training sustainable while working toward the same public health protection objectives that are promoted by Ministries of Health.