

The Health and Consumers Directorate-General of the European Commission manages the Better Training for Safer Food initiative. This report describes the activity of Better Training for Safer Food in 2008.

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and information on the Better Training for Safer Food initiative at:

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Better Training for Safer Food

Annual Report 2008

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1. INTRODUCTION



The European “Better Training for Safer Food” initiative has completed its third year. It serves to train Member State control staff and third country participants dealing with food, veterinary and plant health issues.

The past year has seen both consolidation and expansion: consolidation in terms of the number of training programmes on offer, which has seen a steady increase each year since 2006, expansion in terms of participation levels which have increased considerably in relation to the previous year.

This expansion is set to continue over the coming years and 2008 has seen further progress made towards the finalisation of an organisational structure which will in time be able to cater for an annual average of around 6,000 participants. Part of this process is to be a transferral of certain administrative responsibilities to the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers. Preparations for such a step have been ongoing during 2008.

We have also laid the ground for a new initiative, in the form of a targeted Africa programme. This programme will provide training for African countries in sanitary and phytosanitary measures and is to run until the end of 2010.

This report describes the full range of activities which have taken place during 2008, including the training programmes themselves and the work carried out in support of them. It also looks ahead to 2009 and beyond by giving an overview of planned future activities.

I would like to thank everyone involved in Better Training for Safer Food for their contribution to its success in 2008.

Robert Madelin

Director-General for Health and Consumers

2. OVERVIEW

Better Training for Safer Food is managed by the Training Sector of DG Health and Consumers Directorate E, with contributions from Unit D3 on the international dimension. It trains official safety control staff in Member States and third, particularly developing countries on food, veterinary and plant health issues. Article 51 of Regulation 882/2004 provides the legal basis for the initiative.

Training is organised in the EU and third countries. Some EU-based training is open to third country participants and most third country training is specifically for developing country participants.

The training should keep control staff up to date with EU rules and guarantee uniform, efficient controls. This will help ensure respect for Community regulations safeguarding animal and plant health and contribute to providing safer food and feed.

A harmonised approach to control systems encourages cross-border trade and creates a level playing field for business. Programmes developed for third countries help to increase trade between countries of the same region and with the EU and the rest of the world.

The legal basis only allows training to be funded from the Community budget for competent authority staff. Private-sector participants can attend certain activities at their own expense.

2.1 FUTURE TRAINING STRATEGY

Communication COM (2006) 519, adopted in September 2006, explores options for future organisation of training. The Communication concluded that recourse to an executive agency would allow the Commission to keep its policy role, with the Agency concentrating on administrative and financial tasks.

With a view to exploring an extension of the Public Health Executive Agency's (PHEA) mandate to include training-related tasks, the Commission requested a cost-benefit analysis. This analysis, completed in September 2007, supported outsourcing tasks that could be better managed by the Agency.

Following Commission Decision 2008/544, PHEA became the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC) and the relevant tasks have been outsourced. Competences should be transferred during 2009.

The first task to be outsourced is monitoring of contracts currently running or beginning in 2009. This covers operational and financial aspects as well as definition of benchmarks to measure the success of projects. EAHC should also process any contract amendments.

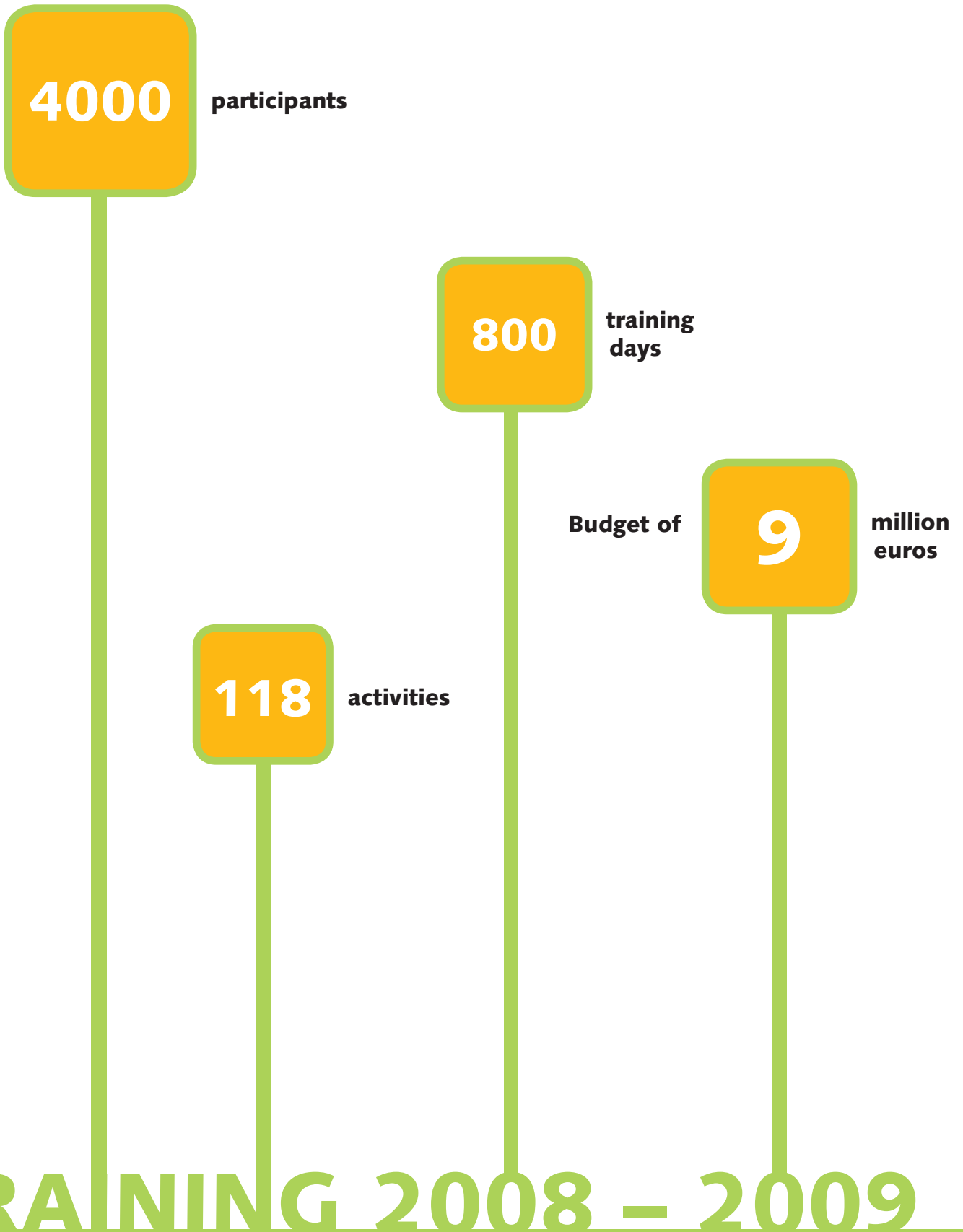
The Agency will assess technical and financial reports and other training-related deliverables, taking corrective action as necessary. It will make financial transactions, including interim and final payments, and monitor transaction times.

EAHC should also supply DG Health and Consumers with regular information on progress and results of training programmes.

The second main task is the preparation and launch of new calls for tender in 2009 and the subsequent award of contracts. This involves drafting of texts for the calls and related documents. EAHC will set up committees to evaluate responses to the calls, report on the evaluation process and notify tenderers of the outcome.

EAHC is responsible for disseminating information about Better Training for Safer Food. This will involve regular updating of the Agency website and ensuring availability of complete, up-to-date information on all aspects of the initiative.

Furthermore, a new programme is being launched jointly by the EC and the African Union Commission under the Regional Integration, Trade and Infrastructure partnership of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy's first Action Plan 2008-2010. Specifically targeted at Africa, the programme is aimed at strengthening capacities in the areas of rules, standards and quality control at pan-African, regional and national levels, with focus on harmonisation of frameworks within Africa. It is to be implemented with active collaboration from EC Delegations, the African Union Commission, African Regional Economic Communities, specialist bodies and African national contact points.



TRAINING 2008 – 2009

3. TRAINING 2008-09

The work towards the implementation of the 2008-09 training began in 2007 with discussion of training needs between the DG Health and Consumers Training Sector and colleagues within the DG.

Discussions were also held with other DGs, in particular through the Inter-service Steering Group¹. This met in March and November 2007 to reflect on general and technical aspects and to facilitate coordination with other Commission services.

Coordination with European national authorities took place during expert group meetings in February and July 2007. These were attended by National Contact Points (NCP) of Member States and associated countries, identified by the Commission to channel information on the initiative between the Commission, training contractors and national authorities. The Commission maintains coordination with NCPs all year round.

The Training Sector drew on notifications received by the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) and findings of Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) inspections, in order to finalise the 2008-09 offer. Outcomes of the 2007 training were also taken into account.

Full details of the activities running in 2008-09 are outlined in the table below.

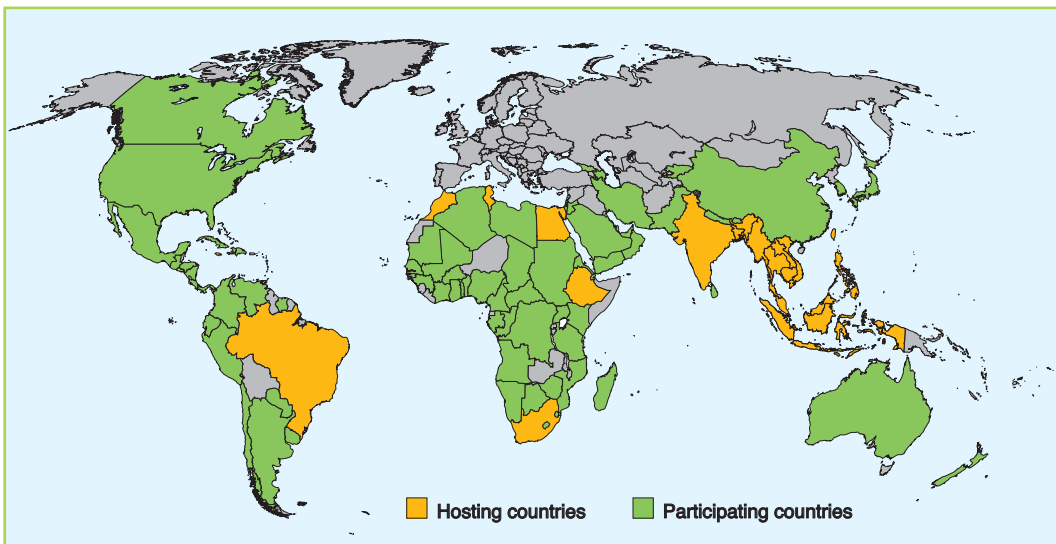
TRAINING ACTIVITIES 2008-09²

Training programmes	No. of events	Overall participants
EU-based programmes		
HACCP	19	362
Airport BIP (2008-09)	3	122
Seaport, road, rail BIP	4	143
ABP	3	200
Zoonoses	5	191
Food hygiene and controls	15	296
TSE	5	135
Plant health controls	9	200
Animal welfare (2008-09)	2	147
Plant protection products (2008-09)	2	59
Third country programmes		
EU food standards (2008-09)	16	1155
HPAI control (2008-09)	9	337
HPAI assessment	11	163
Food testing	7	170
RASFF/TRACES	8	259
Total (third country programmes)	52	2084
Total (all programmes)	118	3939

¹ In addition to DG Health and Consumers, this group was composed of representatives from the Secretariat General, the Legal Service and from DGs Agriculture and Rural Development, Budget, Development, Enlargement, Enterprise and Industry, External Relations, Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, Internal Market and Services, Research, Taxation and Customs Union and Trade, as well as the EuropAid Cooperation Office and the European Anti-Fraud Office.

² For programmes to be completed in 2009, estimations based on initial provisions have been given. These exclude activities to be implemented under the "Better Training for Safer Food in Africa" programme

COUNTRIES HOSTING AND PARTICIPATING IN TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN 2008



3.1 EU-BASED ACTIVITIES

3.1.1 HAZARD ANALYSIS AND CRITICAL CONTROL POINT

EU food and feed hygiene regulations require businesses to implement and maintain procedures based upon Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles. HACCP consists of seven principles to be followed in sequence. These are hazard analysis, identification of Critical Control Points (CCPs), establishment of critical limits, monitoring of CCPs, corrective actions, verification and documentation.

Member States have to develop control systems to monitor and verify that these requirements are met. EU-level training is aimed at ensuring that competent authority staff are qualified to carry out these controls.

Contractor	Campden and Chorleywood Food Research Association
Workshops	Course one: 7 workshops on HACCP development, implementation and maintenance in Stratford-upon-Avon (April), Budapest (May, July, September), Lyon and Porto (June), Bonn (October) Course two: 12 workshops on HACCP auditing in Stratford-upon-Avon (May, July, September, October), Porto (June, July x2, September, November), Lyon (October) Budapest and Bonn (November)
Participants/ countries of origin	362 participants from: all EU Member States, candidate countries, EFTA countries except Liechtenstein ENP countries: Egypt, Israel, Moldova, Morocco, Tunisia, Ukraine Third countries: Argentina, Chile, Congo, Ghana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Peru, South Africa, Thailand
Tutors	26 tutors from 5 EU countries
Satisfaction index	90%

Course one contained five sections. The first dealt with the background to HACCP. It looked at the system's development and status, EU requirements, international standards, benefits and limitations and potential barriers to introducing HACCP. This section also covered certification schemes and guidance sources.

The second section looked at Prerequisite Programmes (PRPs) for HACCP implementation, their role in food safety and examples of PRPs.

A section on HACCP planning examined the need for management commitment and personnel resources for HACCP implementation as well as consultancy roles and linear, modular and generic approaches to HACCP.

The training then turned to the preparatory stages and the seven principles. The principles of auditing HACCP systems were covered in the final section including the main stages of auditing and the role of checklists.

Practical activities included exercises on prerequisite programmes, terms of reference, flow diagrams, document review and checklist preparation as well as the benefits of and barriers to HACCP implementation. Case studies were used to develop HACCP plans, thereby facilitating practical use of all seven principles. This helped participants to understand the development stages of a HACCP plan in accordance with Codex Alimentarius.

Participants visited food or feed businesses and, in working groups, checked flow diagrams and identified hazards and control measures in the production process. The groups gave a verbal report of their findings. Food operations involved in herb packing, bakery, dried sausage, port wine bottling, canning, meat cutting and cereal handling were visited.

Course two contained the same main sections as course one but allocated more time to auditing and less to basic principles. An additional feature on PRPs covered methods of assessing their effectiveness. The course two auditing section also looked at questioning techniques, preparation for audits and differences between third party audits and those carried out by public health officials.

As with course one, practical activities included group exercises involving blank slides to be completed. Case studies aimed to develop skills in assessing documentation. A further exercise focused on flexibility of approach to the regulations and aimed to gather information on appropriate approaches for different types of food and feed operation.

During visits to food or feed businesses, participants performed exercises on flow diagrams and assessed implementation of CCPs. They presented verbal reports of their findings at the closing meeting. Operations visited were bakeries, caterers, cereal and flour mills, pasta manufacturers, milk processors, sandwich preparation plants, cold storage and packers.

3.1.2 VETERINARY AND FOOD SAFETY CHECKS AT BORDER INSPECTION POSTS



Border controls are fundamental to safeguarding public and animal health and control staff must implement effective, harmonised veterinary and food safety checks. EU legislation imposes health and supervisory requirements on imports of live animals and products of animal origin³ so as to ensure that they meet relevant standards.

Following positive results in 2007, it was decided to continue training on best practices for veterinary checks in airport border inspection posts (BIP). The programme on seaport BIPs expanded to include veterinary checks at both road and rail BIPs. Both programmes now included practices for food safety checks.

The training was aimed at increasing control staff's understanding of EU legislation and strategies for harmonising controls across the EU.

³ Import requirements are, in particular, included in Directives 97/78/EC and 91/496/EEC

SEAPORT, ROAD AND RAIL BIPS

Contractor	The European Training Platform for Safer Food
Workshops	Seaport BIPs: 2 workshops in Rotterdam (May, September) Road/rail BIPs: 2 workshops in Lithuania (April, June)
Participants/countries of origin	43 participants: All EU Member States, candidate and EFTA countries except Malta and Liechtenstein ENP countries: Georgia, Moldova, Tunisia, Ukraine, Third countries: Chile, USA
Tutors	23 tutors from 7 EU Member States
Satisfaction index	94%

Road and rail workshops introduced EU legislation, particularly import issues in the Hygiene Package. Control of products of animal and non-animal origin and FVO findings were discussed. Presentations on controls of products of animal origin highlighted the importance of harmonised procedures. Sessions on control of live animals focused on welfare issues. Training on control of animal by-products (ABP) mainly dealt with introduction of new certification⁴.

Discussion took place on notifications on health risks transmitted via the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed and the Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) for monitoring movement of animals and products of animal origin within the EU and from third countries. Transit control and control of customs warehouses and free zones were also covered.

Each workshop included study visits to road or rail BIPs as appropriate. Practical sessions during road BIP visits covered products of animal origin and luggage checks. Participants viewed such checks as well as those on products in transit. Sessions in the road BIP on live animals covered welfare requirements and clinical examinations. Sessions in the rail BIP focused on control of composite products and ABP.

Seaport BIP training outlined EU legislation on imports of products of animal origin and looked at official controls, particularly future developments and food and feed inspections.

Presentations on international agreements covered SPS issues, matters related to the World Trade Organisation, equivalence agreements between the EC and third countries and their effect on controls. Global food trade patterns were considered in relation to their influence on fraud in the sector.

Data management from veterinary checks was discussed in terms of its importance for shipment selection and project support. Presentations also looked at electronic databases and their possible creation at EU level as well as electronic certification projects. Other subjects featured were collaboration with customs and control procedures for transit consignments.

A talk was given on anti-infringement measures⁵. The need to implement these provisions in a coordinated manner through TRACES was emphasised. Another problem area discussed was different approaches to import certificate inspection.

⁴ Regulation (EC) 829/2007

⁵ See article 24 Directive 97/78

Participants visited the BIP's customs area to view demonstrations of container scans and documentary checks. They also went to the inspection area to observe identity and physical checks and storage of detained and rejected consignments. Additional issues covered during the visits were disposal of kitchen waste and landings of fish.

AIRPORT BIPS

The first workshop was mainly intended for veterinarians who had just started or were about to start work in a BIP and those who had not previously participated in similar training.

Contractor	Austrian Federal Ministry of Health, Family and Youth
Workshops	3 workshops in Vienna (September, November 2008, March 2009)
Participants/countries of origin	122 participants: All EU Member States, candidate and EFTA countries except Malta and Liechtenstein, Moldova
Tutors	16 tutors from 8 EU Member States, 1 EFTA
Satisfaction index	88%

Presentations looked at customs legislation and BIP procedures, illegal imports and fraudulent practices, transshipment and transit procedures in airports and international relations. Health and welfare rules for air transport of animals, the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed and FVO inspections were also covered.

Practical sessions involved checks on animals and products including thawing and pH testing. Another session looked at hygiene and covered equipment, hygiene plans, cleaning, disinfection and protective measures. A session on cargo involved handling and loading of animals and animal products and practical training in the hold of a plane. Other sessions dealt with composite products and luggage checks. Case study subjects were specific procedures and certification.

The second workshop was aimed at all border veterinarians and focused mainly on import of animal by-products (ABP).

Presentations looked at legal developments on ABP, ABP import rules and identification, labelling, examination and sampling requirements. Further presentations were on disposal of catering waste, transit of ABP, international relations, new customs regulations and their impact on border controls.

A working group session looked at guidelines for air transport of animals covered by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and their relationship to veterinary checks. This session also featured common procedures and problems. Another practical session dealt with casings. Further sessions looked at sampling and disease control. Excursions to waste disposal and pet food plants, a storage facility for raw materials and a taxidermist allowed participants to view procedures in these establishments.

The final workshop was principally intended for heads or deputy heads of BIPs or veterinarians involved in management and organisation of BIPs and import control. Presentations

during this workshop covered audits of BIPs, FVO inspections, multi-annual national control plans, fraud, residue control plans, management of BIPS, international relations, International Air Transport Association standards and cooperation with customs.

Practical exercises were performed on sampling, residue control plans, international negotiations, comprehension of EU legislation, animal welfare and preparation of audits.

3.1.3 EU REGULATIONS FOR ANIMAL BY-PRODUCTS

Animal by-products (ABP) are materials of animal origin not intended for human consumption. Over 16 million tonnes are produced in the EU annually to be used as they are, transformed into other products or disposed of. Using some ABP in feed can spread disease or contaminants and ABP may pose environmental problems if not properly disposed of.

The EU has adopted legislation for collection, transport, storage, handling, processing, use, disposal, commercialisation, import, export and transit of ABP. The legislation stipulates that only materials fit for human consumption may be used in feed. It also sets out rules for disposal of materials excluded from the food chain.

As FVO reports show that some EU countries face a challenge to comply with these requirements, the Commission continued to organise training on EU ABP standards in 2008.

Contractor	The European Training Platform for Safer Food
Workshops	3 workshops: Brussels in May, Rome in June, Riga in October
Participants/countries of origin	200 participants: All EU, candidate, potential candidate and EFTA countries except for Albania and Liechtenstein; ENP countries: Georgia, Lebanon, Moldova, Tunisia, Ukraine; Third countries Brazil, Peru, Argentina, Vietnam, India, Pakistan, New Zealand
Tutors	9 tutors from 6 EU Member States
Satisfaction index	88%

The workshops gave an update and overview of EU ABP requirements following legislation adopted in 2007 and 2008⁶. The overview covered import provisions and use of the Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) health certificate format. The sessions also looked at marking requirements including separation of different categories of ABP and colour-coding for intra-community transport.

Another session focused on good manufacturing practice in the rendering industry which processes ABP into other materials. This session focused on provisions for rendering plants, products into which ABP are transformed and cross-cutting legislation. Attention was also paid to import and export requirements.

Former foodstuffs and ways of dealing with them proposed in EU legislation were featured. Derogations from EU ABP provisions in this legislation were also covered⁷. Packaging of former foodstuffs, particularly its effect on their use in rendering, was discussed as were environmental provisions on burial or incineration. Finally, the session presented examples of good uses for these products.

⁶ Regulation (EC) 829/2007,

⁷ Regulation (EC) 197/2006



Use of ABP in medical devices, in-vitro diagnostics and laboratory reagents was presented with reference to the ABP Regulation's provisions as well those in principal legislation on human medicine. Attention was paid to intermediate products requiring further treatment before being placed on the market or put into service. Special focus was given to import and export of these products. Identification methods for such products were also demonstrated.

Risk evaluation in the ABP sector was considered and the scientific basis of EU legislation was demonstrated. Commission guidelines for new methods of disposal or use of ABP were also presented.

An overview was given of possible ABP use in renewable energy including as biogas and biodiesel. Requirements for and obstacles to such use were outlined.

A session was held on ABP practices in the milk industry and uses of milk and milk-based ABP for feeding purposes. Problems including antibiotic residues in milk were addressed as were identification, channelling, traceability, import and export requirements and provisions for production of milk-based pet food. Feed and animal health legislation was also touched upon.

Participants looked at specific issues of the ABP Regulation in working groups. They drew up questions on the Regulation in advance and distributed them to other participants. Written answers were prepared using legislation and other documents and presented.

Case studies were provided on implementation of ABP Regulation requirements in the pet food industry. This included procedures in place and changes made since the introduction of the Regulation. An overview was given of legislative provisions for feed, labelling, traceability and HACCP. The study also looked at raw materials, plants, industrial processes and import and export requirements.

3.1.4 MONITORING AND CONTROLS OF ZOOSES, APPLYING MICROBIOLOGICAL CRITERIA IN FOODSTUFFS AND INVESTIGATION OF FOOD-BORNE OUTBREAKS

The Commission has laid down criteria for certain micro-organisms in specific foodstuffs⁸. Competent authorities verify compliance with these criteria.

EC rules aim to ensure that zoonoses, zoonotic agents and related antimicrobial resistance are properly monitored and that food-borne disease outbreaks receive appropriate epidemiological investigation⁹. Investigation of food-borne outbreaks enables evaluation of the risk for human infection presented by different foodstuffs.

Training in this field should increase participants' understanding of relevant EU legislation. This should in turn improve their ability to verify compliance with microbiological criteria in foodstuffs and investigate food-borne outbreaks. It will also contribute to harmonising Member States' approaches in this area.

⁸ Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005

⁹ Directive 2003/99/EC

Contractor	The IZS Teramo consortium
Workshops	5 workshops: Helsingør, Denmark in June and Giulianova, Italy in June, October (twice), November
Participants/countries of origin	191 participants from all EU Member States except France, all candidate and EFTA countries except Liechtenstein, ENP countries: Algeria, Belarus, Israel, Moldova, Morocco, Tunisia, Ukraine, Third countries: Argentina, Botswana, Brazil, Chile, Namibia
Tutors	19 tutors from 3 EU Member States
Satisfaction index	80%

An overview of EU microbiological criteria legislation was given and food safety and process criteria as well as implementation of HACCP-based systems were explained.

Microbiological criteria were considered in terms of their use for risk management. Their development, from guidelines to well-defined criteria based on scientific evidence, was described. Elements which make up microbiological criteria were considered including numbers of sampling units, analysis methods, acceptable levels of micro-organisms and action to take when these are exceeded. The need to balance scientific evidence with political and practical considerations was considered. Parameters linked to microbiological criteria including appropriate levels of protection, food safety and performance objectives and performance and process criteria were also covered.

A case study was provided on evaluation of analysis results on a pathogenic micro-organism in a foodstuff with reference to a microbiological criterion in force.

A panel discussion took place on application of microbiological criteria in selected food items and controls on criteria application.

One lecture looked at systems for collecting and reporting data on microbiological criteria application and their use in risk management. Information gaps delaying implementation of risk-based official control systems and the main features of implementing and managing IT systems were defined. A demonstration was given of an IT system used for food safety risk management.

A further session and case study focused on monitoring and reporting of zoonoses with reference to data collection on EU-level food-borne outbreak investigations. This gave an insight into the Zoonosis Directive and agents covered by it as well as reporting of data concerning these agents to the Commission. Participants were introduced to the European Food Safety Authority zoonosis team and the zoonoses data collection task force. The online zoonoses database was described and findings of EU-reports were presented.

As regards reporting of food-borne outbreaks, information to be reported was outlined and examples of data collection systems were given. Data collection methods at EU-level and ways to improve reporting were discussed. Finally, an overview was given of uses of the data.

An additional lecture and case study covered local surveillance systems for food-borne outbreaks in terms of the roles of and cooperation between veterinary and public health institutions. This dealt with the establishment of such systems, cooperation procedures, the main

components of surveillance systems and protocols for action and data exchange. Examples of existing systems were also given.

Workshops were concluded with lectures and case studies on epidemiological methods for food-borne outbreak investigations. This session covered laboratory-based surveillance systems for detection, investigation and control of food-borne outbreaks, descriptive and analytical epidemiology, outbreak investigations and operational and epidemiological steps of such investigations. It was also aimed at enabling participants to interpret epidemic curves and food-specific outbreak rates and calculate risks, understand environmental investigations and communicate with stakeholders.

3.1.5 FOOD HYGIENE AND CONTROLS

The EU has developed measures aimed at ensuring high standards of hygiene during food production and effective control of compliance. General hygiene requirements apply to all stages of production, processing and distribution and require implementation of procedures based on HACCP principles.

Training on food hygiene and controls was thus launched in 2008 so as to give food inspectors a better understanding of the implementation of EU food law regarding hygiene and controls.

Contractor	AETS consortium
Workshops	<p>5 workshops on meat and meat products in Toulouse in May (twice), July (twice), September</p> <p>5 workshops on fishery products and LBM in Vigo in May, June, July, September, October</p> <p>5 workshops on milk and dairy products in Brescia in May, June, September (twice), October</p>
Participants/countries of origin	<p>296 participants from all EU/candidate/EFTA countries except Liechtenstein; Potential candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; All ENP countries except Azerbaijan and the Palestinian Authority; Third countries: Russia, the United Arab Emirates, French Polynesia, Falkland Islands</p>
Tutors	23 tutors from 6 EU Member States
Satisfaction index	90%

The initial session of meat and meat products workshops covered EU food law, including the legal framework, its objectives and application. Also covered in this section were public and animal health and welfare, specific points applicable to meat, areas covered by national legislation, risk analysis, risk-based control systems and guidance documents.

Sessions on primary production controls and animal transport discussed harmonisation of controls and animal health and welfare. They covered farm-level inspections, information gathering on the food chain, inspection results and use of check-lists to assess compliance.

Presentations, discussions and group exercises covered management of official controls, approval of establishments and collection and use of information on establishments before and after audits.

Training also looked at hygiene in meat processing establishments and approaches to hygiene audits. This included construction, layout and equipment of establishments, pre-requisite programmes, process control, good hygiene practice and HACCP.

Slaughterhouses, cutting plants and processing establishments were visited. Participants observed and discussed application of hygiene requirements as well as the construction, layout and equipment of the establishments. Visits to slaughterhouses also allowed for observation of ante- and post-mortem inspections and compliance with welfare rules.

During post-visit debriefings, additional information was provided on application of requirements. Factors such as BSE, tuberculosis and brucellosis were also discussed.



Workshops on fishery products began with presentations and discussion on official controls including controls on the domestic market, relevant regulations, competent authority structure, and collection and use of information on and authorisation of establishments. Additional topics were controls on establishments and products, documentation, crisis management and recall procedures.

Another presentation covered controls of fishery products in Border Inspection Posts including authorisation, rejected lots, data collection and documentation. Organisation of controls in third countries was also featured. Aquaculture presentations dealt with controls and hygiene requirements for fish farms.

Training on LBM dealt with main components of relevant legislation and control and management of production areas. Monitoring aspects were related to issues such as biotoxins, microbiological criteria, sampling, laboratory methods, criteria for closing and opening production areas and quality assurance.

Participants visited a purification centre to observe application of hygiene requirements and perform exercises. Other LBM-related themes featured during visits were hygiene requirements for production, harvesting, handling, transportation, dispatch and purification, inspection procedures, packaging, product control and traceability.

Visits also took place to landing sites, auction halls and processing plants to observe application of requirements, discuss auditing and perform practical exercises. Freezers and factory vessels were visited in order to enable participants to view the layout and equipment and discuss auditing of hygiene practices.

The visits were followed by debriefing sessions on structural and hygiene requirements, requirements for vessels during and after landing, health standards for frozen products, packaging, labelling, traceability, storage, transport and documentation.



Milk and dairy products workshops gave an overview of relevant EU food law and milk controls in Member States. Guidelines on raw milk control, including laboratory requirements, were also given.

Presentations on raw milk production looked at application of controls in primary production, good hygiene practice at farm level, guidelines for verifying adherence to hygiene requirements and hazard identification. They also described the use of check-lists for assessing compliance, determining risk and designing controls.

Training on milk processing covered relevant legislation, organisation of controls and collection and use of information on establishments before and after audits. Exercises were performed on good hygiene practice and HACCP verification.

Food safety and microbiological criteria sessions looked at safety indicators for cheese production and data management and sharing. Application of EU legislation relevant to cheese products, scientific approaches to cheese production, application of predictive models and shelf life studies were also discussed.

Farm visits gave practical examples of control of milk quality and looked at management of critical situations, official audits and registration. Visits to dairies entailed case study exercises on HACCP and good hygiene practice, auditing, packaging, labelling and traceability and control of heat treatment systems.

3.1.6 PREVENTION, CONTROL AND ERADICATION OF TRANSMISSIBLE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHIES

The EU has laid down rules for prevention, control and eradication of certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE) and has brought existing BSE measures into a single, regularly reviewed framework¹⁰. This includes measures targeting animal and public health risks and governs the entire production chain of live animals and products of animal origin.

Training on TSE was launched to improve participants' understanding of EU measures targeting animal and public health risks from TSE. This should contribute to harmonising Member State approaches to combating TSE and increase authorities' ability to verify compliance with requirements. It should also facilitate comparison of the situations in different Member States.

Contractor	The European Training Platform for Safer Food
Workshops	5 workshops in Oldenburg, Germany in May, June, July, August, September
Participants/countries of origin	135 participants from all EU Member States/candidate countries except Luxembourg, Finland and Malta; ENP countries: Tunisia, Morocco; Georgia; Potential candidate countries: Serbia; Third countries: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Namibia, Swaziland
Tutors	9 tutors from 6 EU Member States
Satisfaction index	84%

¹⁰ Regulation (EC) No 999/2001

The workshops began by considering food safety in the EU including principles of regulations, the role of veterinary services, control systems and inspections of such systems, risk management and communication, hygiene and problems highlighted by FVO inspections. A session on BSE looked at its history, causes of its occurrence in UK cattle, the role of bone meal in its transmission, its spread, the current status of individual countries, monitoring in third countries, laboratory analysis and causes, detection and control of scrapie.

Further topics included examination of suspect cases, diagnostics, characteristics of infection, disposal of scrapie-infected animals and experiences from scrapie control. Films were shown on BSE in cattle, scrapie in sheep and goats and chronic wasting disease in wildlife.



Work on EU Regulations for prevention, control and eradication of TSE was focused on the legal basis for TSE control, the monitoring system, differences between BSE and other TSE infections, scope of investigations for BSE detection and testing methods. The EU TSE reporting system was also featured.

TSE prevention was the subject of another session. This covered monitoring in cattle, sheep and goats, feed ban provisions, control and eradication in the event of TSE suspicion and confirmation and epidemiological investigations to identify birth and feeding cohorts. Additional aspects featured were awareness raising and commercialisation, import and export of live animals, semen, embryos and egg cells.

A session on determination of risk status looked at the legal basis for classification of countries according to BSE status, the status of different countries, risk assessment and the role of control measures in determining a country's classification. Other subjects were removal of animal by-products and BSE diagnostic training for veterinarians.

Practical demonstrations formed a large part of the training and took place over four work stations. The first was in a laboratory and covered diagnostics, sampling and examination, reporting of results, databases, measures to be taken, unsuitable specimens and disposal of animal by-products.

The second work station was a bovine slaughterhouse. BSE prevention measures at slaughter were explained including selection of cattle for examination, sampling and measures to take following notification of results. Removal, marking and disposal of animal-by products and specified risk material, quality management, measures to take in cases of undetermined animal identity and transport documentation were also covered.

The third station dealt with authorisation of feed establishments, monitoring requirements, feed sampling and control of affected agricultural establishments. It also looked at examination of animal feed and proteins, measures following discovery of prohibited proteins and import controls. In addition, microscopic examinations of feed were demonstrated.

The final work station demonstrated official controls and explained the structure of the German veterinary system, BSE detection in Germany, examination and measures to take if infection is suspected or detected. This session also looked at isolation and culling, compensation, monitoring, databases and findings of national and FVO inspections.

3.1.7 PLANT HEALTH CONTROLS

FVO missions have revealed a lack of implementation of potato control directives in some Member States¹¹. Inspections also show differences between Member States in the approach and knowledge of inspectors with regard to controls under the Plant Passport Regime. Differences have also been recorded in efficiency in handling outbreaks of new pests.

Plant health controls training was launched in 2008 in order to provide a common understanding of EC legislation and encourage a uniform approach to official controls. This should better enable plant health services to protect the EU from introduction of harmful organisms and prevent the spread of and eradicate those present.

Contractor	The European Training Platform for Safer Food
Workshops	<p>3 workshops on the EU plant quarantine regime for potatoes in September (twice), October</p> <p>3 workshops on the internal plant quarantine regime in June, July, September</p> <p>3 workshops on the plant quarantine regime for imports in June, August, October</p> <p>All courses in London.</p>
Participants/countries of origin	200 participants from all EU Member States, all candidate countries except Turkey and Switzerland
Tutors	10 tutors from 6 EU Member States
Satisfaction index	87%

Courses in all modules began with an overview of EU plant health legislation and the international framework including International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures and EPPO standards.

For internal controls workshops, this was followed by sessions on the Plant Passport Regime including legal requirements, implementation, producer registration systems and production, storage and documentation requirements. Presentations on quarantine requirements focussed on the main pests affecting different plants and plant passports for ornamental plants and vegetables.

A session on preparing and issuing and inspecting Plant Passports looked at information that should appear on a passport, inspection for different crops, sampling, packaging of samples and record keeping. Work on export certification covered inspection and sampling and issue of phytosanitary certificates.

EC Marketing Directives including responsibilities of suppliers and competent authorities and measures in cases of non-compliance also featured. Training was given on measures following findings of harmful organisms, the legal basis for action following detection, official surveys and public information on plant health concerns.

Delegates visited a plant passport nursery where they were trained on factors to consider when inspecting a range of plant materials. This was followed by demonstrations of equipment used by plant health inspectors.

¹¹ Council Directives 93/85/EC and 98/57/EC

Courses on import controls looked at policy making, import control planning, interpretation of legislation, organisational structures for implementing policy and control programmes. Internal coordination sessions covered collaboration between control bodies at point of entry, rapid notification, inspection facilities, entry of consignments and import fees.

Overviews of inspection requirements were backed up with case studies about citrus imports. A presentation on sampling looked at selection of samples, documentation, packaging, labelling and testing.

Sessions on imports for scientific purposes covered the licensing system, material imported for research, the role of laboratories and research establishments and containment and inspection facilities. An additional presentation dealt with requirements for additional declarations on phytosanitary certificates related to import consignments. Interceptions of infected consignments were also featured including examples of interceptions, traceability, notifications and non-regulated pests.

Participants toured the airport cargo handling centre and transit sheds during which requirements for facilities were discussed.

Training on the Potato Quarantine Regime began with an overview of directives for brown rot, ring rot and potato cyst nematodes. This also covered interpretation and enforcement of legislation as well as requirements for inspection, surveys, sampling and testing.

Training on survey planning included examples of surveys from Member States. Sessions on potato quarantine pests gave an overview of bacterial diseases such as brown rot and ring rot. Overviews of viral and nematode diseases were also given. A review of inspection and sampling procedures for potato pests and diseases included inspection of potato crops, stored tubers, soil, and water.

Measures to be taken during disease outbreaks including containment, establishment of the extent of an outbreak and eradication were detailed. Further sessions presented systems for tracing the origin of potato stocks and looked at follow-up checks on outbreaks, internal and EC-level notifications, legal and practical aspects of controls and infringements.

Field trips were undertaken to a potato farm and a watercourse. Farming activities and inspections were discussed as was brown rot.



3.1.8 ANIMAL WELFARE ISSUES

The European Commission is committed to paying proper regard to animal welfare and Community slaughtering and transport legislation aims to minimise suffering¹². Humane treatment of animals is also of interest to European consumers and high welfare standards can have positive effects on the quality of the food subsequently produced.

Following positive outcomes from training in animal welfare at slaughter and killing for disease control in previous years, this programme has been expanded to include welfare during transport.

Contractor	The IZS Teramo consortium
Workshops	1 workshop on welfare during transport in Teramo, Italy in January 2009 1 workshop on stunning and killing at slaughter and for disease control in Budapest in March 2009
Participants/countries of origin	147 participants from all EU/candidate/EFTA countries except Austria; ENP countries: Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia; Third countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Lesotho, Namibia, New Zealand, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay
Tutors	19 tutors from 6 EU Member States and 3 third countries
Satisfaction index	96%

Training on welfare during transport was mainly for veterinarians working on enforcement of animal transport legislation and controls on documentation and structural and physical aspects of transport. Training on stunning and killing was aimed at official veterinarians involved in welfare controls at slaughter or killing for disease control. Both workshops were also intended for officials developing practices for application of EU norms and international standards.

The course on transport was aimed at better enabling participants to contribute to strengthening national policies on welfare during transport. It was also intended to increase their ability to verify compliance with legislation and to help to set up appropriate control procedures.

This workshop began by looking at OIE standards, FAO actions and relevant EU legislation. This was followed by presentations conveying perspectives of the FVO, EFSA, competent authorities, business operators, NGOs and consumers and outlining third country approaches. Presentations were also given on the scientific basis for proper handling of cattle, pigs, poultry, horses and ovine animals during transport.

Other subjects covered included control points during journeys, loading and unloading, risk analysis, journey planning, navigation systems, e-learning and future perspectives for management of long distance transport. The training also included discussion, case studies and simulation exercises during field visits.

The stunning and killing workshop should improve participants' knowledge of relevant EU legislation and OIE standards and their scientific basis, as well as procedures for monitoring, controlling and supporting implementation of welfare requirements in slaughterhouses.

¹² Directive 93/119 EC, Regulation (EC) 1/2005

This workshop also included presentations, discussion, case studies, simulation exercises and field visits. As well as EU and international standards, it covered areas such as the scientific basis for proper stunning and killing of animals, assessment of lairage facilities and handling of animals, main stunning and killing techniques in Europe, welfare indicators and experience gained from disease epidemics.



3.1.9 PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS

Active ingredients used in plant protection products in the EU must not pose a threat to human health or the environment or exceed Maximum Residue Levels. Substances authorised for use in plant protection products are listed in Annex I of Directive 91/414. All substances authorised for use in Member States must comply with conditions for inclusion on this list. Member States joining the EU in 2004 and 2007 need to ensure that active substances used in products on their markets comply with these conditions.

Contractor	The European Training Platform for Safer Food
Workshops	1 workshop on evaluation and registration in February 2009 1 workshop on control on use and marketing in March 2009 Both workshops in Vilnius
Participants/countries of origin	59 participants from all EU Member States acceding in 2004 and 2007 except Latvia and all candidate countries
Tutors	Experts from 5 Member States having joined the EU before 2004
Satisfaction index	100%

The EU has also laid down rules for official controls of use and marketing of plant protection products¹³. Effective controls in this area will increase worker, consumer and environmental protection.

The training was aimed at national authority staff responsible for evaluating and registering plant protection products and for control of their use and marketing.

The evaluation and registration workshop built on the training provided in 2007. It examined improvements in new Member States since those workshops and identified actions taken by candidate countries to bring their practices into line with those of the EU.

The workshop also focused on work to be done following the EC active substance review process. The importance of harmonisation and collaboration in the planning and implementation of re-registration activities was emphasised.

The workshop on control of use and marketing was aimed at informing participants of current EU legislation. It was aimed at giving them a through understanding of the legislative framework under development, in particular, requirements arising from the EU Thematic Strategy. Information was provided on control systems in operation in Member States. The training

¹³ Article 17 of Directive 91/414/EEC

enabled participants to identify problem areas, examine the effectiveness of monitoring and enforcement mechanisms and identify best practices.

The workshops provided recommendations in the form of a framework for use by the authorities of participating Member States in fulfilling their legal obligations. This included a checklist of points to consider when conducting re-registration and compiling guidance documents.

3.2 ACTIVITIES IN THIRD COUNTRIES

3.2.1 EU FOOD STANDARDS

The EU is the world's biggest food importer and has legislation aimed at ensuring that imports reach its standards. However, in some developing countries there is a lack of surveillance structures and inability to provide safety guarantees. Training on EU standards should help to improve verification of compliance in developing countries, thereby facilitating trade.

Contractor	The AETS consortium
Workshops	<p>8 workshops in 2008: Food labelling and traceability, Thailand, March; Fishery and aquaculture, Philippines, April, Jamaica, June; Fruit and vegetables, Tunisia, May, India July; Pinewood nematodes, Portugal, October; Plant health and pesticide residues, Ethiopia, November; BSE, South Africa, November</p> <p>3 workshops in 2009: Codex Alimentarius Malaysia, February; Plant protection products, Thailand, March; Residue and contaminant monitoring, Brazil, May</p> <p>7 sustained training missions in 2008: Fisheries: Cambodia, April, Malaysia, July, August-September, November, Myanmar, November; Honey, Laos, June-July; Plant protection products, Dominican Republic, November</p> <p>Sustained training (2009): Laboratory training, Peru, Fisheries/honey, Myanmar, Food contact materials, Thailand, Marine biotoxins, Chile</p>
Participants/countries of origin	<p>1100 participants by end of programme from:</p> <p>Asia: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Macao, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam</p> <p>Americas: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Surinam, Trinidad and Tobago, USA</p> <p>Africa: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zimbabwe</p> <p>Europe: Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, UK</p>
Tutors	40 tutors from 10 EU Member States and 4 third countries
Satisfaction index	83%

This year, for the first time, two different types of activity have been implemented under the food standards programme. One comprised traditional workshops as provided in previous years, the other involved sustained training missions. This is an ad-hoc facility within which an expert is sent to a particular country to address a well-defined issue. Most of these missions

follow an unfavourable outcome from an FVO inspection mission in cases where such ad-hoc assistance may remedy all or part of the non-conformities. Some are fact-finding missions through which more targeted capacity building may be provided under BTSF or other technical assistance initiatives.



The food labelling and traceability workshop covered current and possible future food labelling legislation in the EU and Thailand, traceability and specific labelling, nutrition and health claims and labelling of fortification, supplements and nutritional aspects.

Fishery and aquaculture standards workshops looked at EU food legislation, FVO missions, official controls and requirements for vessels, landing sites, auction halls, markets, processing establishments and aquaculture products. Site visits were undertaken to aquaculture facilities, processing establishments, cold storage compartments, fishing vessels and landing sites. The visits were followed by debriefing sessions during which findings and observations were discussed.

Presentations in fruit and vegetable workshops covered the EU regulatory context, functions of the FVO, pesticide and contaminant regulations and controls in the production chain. Site visits took place to farms and processing establishments and were followed by debriefing sessions. The subjects covered were control of pesticide use, auditing of good hygiene practice, pre-requisite programmes and HACCP and control of private sector quality schemes.

The workshop on plant health and pesticide residues began with plenary presentations on FVO missions and EU legislation. Parallel sessions were held on legislation on plant protection products and residues and contaminants. Two days were dedicated to site visits. Exercises on the DG Health and Consumers Maximum Residue Level database also formed part of the practical training.

The BSE legislation workshop began with a presentation of different types of TSE followed by sessions on EU food legislation and the TSE road map, FVO missions and the process for official recognition of BSE risk status. Other subjects covered were official controls legislation, ante and post mortem inspection, information management systems, monitoring programmes, animal feed and rendering practices. Further presentations detailed control in primary production, the Hygiene Package, laboratory testing, sampling and communication of risks.

Site visits covered controls on primary production and hygiene in slaughterhouses and cutting plants. Discussion-based parallel sessions looked at risk assessment, surveillance, data sharing and crisis management.

Initial presentations in the Pinewood Nematode (PWN) conference stressed economic and environmental effects of PWN and gave an overview of outbreaks, eradication and control in Portugal. There followed sessions on the global impact and management of PWN, lessons from research into PWN eradication and containment and EU emergency measures.

A visit to a national forest was organised to demonstrate control strategies. Roundtable sessions were held on PWN management from scientific and regulatory perspectives.

The sustained training mission to Cambodia was aimed at assessing progress made by the Cambodian fishery authorities since a September 2005 FVO inspection and at identifying further needs. The seconded expert met with competent authority representatives and visited laboratories and establishments in the fishery sector.

Findings suggest that issues remain to be corrected. Control legislation on fish and fishery products is not equivalent to that of the EU and systematic inspection, certification, sampling, testing and residue monitoring programmes are not in place. However, laboratories can now perform many tests required by EC legislation.

Laos would like authorisation to export wild honey to the EU but doesn't control production of honey and has no residue monitoring plan. A mission was undertaken during which ministries and laboratories were visited in order to get an overview of their involvement in beekeeping issues and present EU monitoring and import requirements.

The purpose of the first mission to Malaysia was to assist the authorities in reviewing progress made following recommendations arising from an April 2008 FVO inspection. Help was given in reviewing control system protocols and standard operating procedures. Processing establishments, landing sites, fishing vessels and aquaculture farms were audited as preparation for a follow-up FVO visit.

Myanmar has never been authorised to export fishery products to the EU. However, fishery products are exported to the EU under transitional measures expiring at the end of 2009. Unless Myanmar is formally authorised to export before then, Member States currently authorising imports of its fishery products will repeal such authorisations.

To obtain authorisation, FVO inspectors must assess Myanmar's control programme for fishery products. The purpose of the mission to Myanmar was to help the authorities identify weaknesses in the control programme so that these issues can be corrected. Training was also provided to relevant officials.

The mission to the Dominican Republic was partly aimed at reviewing authorisation procedures for plant protection products, in particular supporting the implementation of scientific risk assessment as part of the authorisation process. Information was given on EU legislation on registration of Plant Protection Products and the setting of Maximum Residue Levels in the EU.

This action also provided technical support in establishing an analytical residue monitoring plan. Training was given on obtaining official documentation, technical information and Internet-based resources concerning outcomes of analysis.

3.2.2 ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT SITUATION OF HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA CONTROL

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreaks in poultry began to increase sharply in 2004, mainly in South-East Asia, and spread to other parts of the world in 2005. International organisations have concluded that a long-term coordinated effort is necessary to control the situation. After two years of Better Training for Safer Food activities on HPAI control, it was considered appropriate to review the work done thus far.

Contractor	ID-Lelystad consortium
Workshops	1 conference on training for HPAI control, Brussels, April 10 missions reviewing training activities to Bulgaria, Romania, Egypt, Morocco, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam
Participants/countries of origin	66 participants at conference from EU Member States and Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand, International Livestock Research Institute, the World Organisation for Animal Health, World Bank
Tutors	5 tutors at conference from UK, Bulgaria, Italy, Kenya, Netherlands
Satisfaction index	86%

The programme began with a high-level conference reviewing HPAI training within Better Training for Safer Food from 2006 and 2007 as well as similar undertakings by other bodies. Initial presentations covered global HPAI training programmes and their effectiveness and experience gained from HPAI training in the Balkans. Further presentations looked at HPAI training needs in affected non-EU countries, training options for HPAI control in Africa and European Commission HPAI training in ASEAN countries.

Discussion groups were then formed to examine organisational and technical issues of training and the Commission's contribution. Conclusions were presented in plenary.

The conference made recommendations for future training. An initial suggestion was to better adapt training to local needs by more involvement of competent authorities of beneficiary countries at the planning stage.

Participants felt that a needs analysis should be carried out prior to launching training so as to avoid overlaps with other activities. Another recommendation was to improve dissemination through development of the train-the-trainer approach.

Delegates thought that training should be organised on the basis of a common platform to be adapted as appropriate. Technical issues suggested for inclusion in future training were bio-security, laboratory diagnostics, monitoring and surveillance, awareness raising, legislative aspects and compensation policy.

This programme also comprised missions to countries having received training on HPAI control within Better Training for Safer Food in 2006 and 2007. During these missions, interviews were carried out with people who had been involved in the previous HPAI training.

Feedback from the missions emphasised the importance of initial needs analysis to define content and avoid overlaps. Contacts made during the missions stressed that practical training is vital and pointed out the need for experts to be able to adapt to local situations.

Whereas training had hitherto focused mainly on government officials, it was felt that a broader cross-section of stakeholders should be reached and that dissemination should be increased.

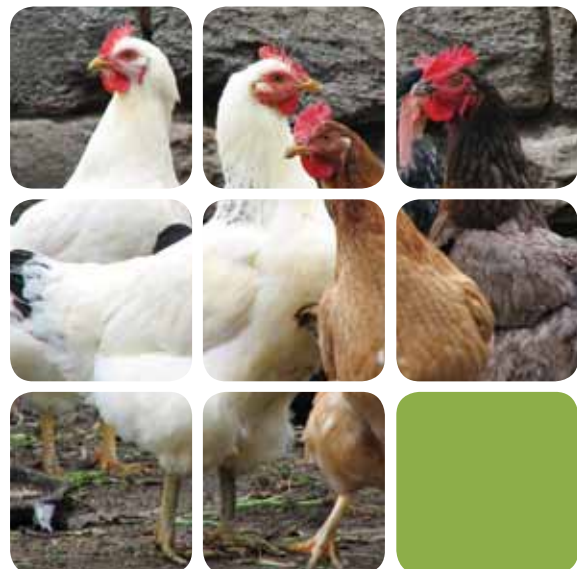
As concerns the format of training, the need for a train-the-trainer approach was stressed. It was felt that theoretical training might be best presented via e-learning techniques. The advantages of holding brainstorming sessions between government officials were emphasised. Training in foreign countries with foreign experts and study visits to the EU were considered as potentially useful features.

The missions reviewed laboratory workshops which had taken place in previous programmes. Interviewees were of the view that techniques featured in laboratory training should be continuously updated. Differences of opinion as regards the level of training indicate that training should be provided to cater for participants with different levels of knowledge.

Most participants expressed a preference for longer workshops with a strong practical dimension. As with sustained training it was felt that there was room for improvement as regards dissemination.

Most subjects recommended for inclusion in future training have already been covered but should be recapped. For laboratory-related issues these include laboratory management, epidemiology, use in AI serology of the ELISA technique which detects antibodies, Polymerase Chain Reaction testing and molecular virology.

Subjects to include related to HPAI control on the ground are surveillance, zoning and compartmentalisation, risk analysis, outbreak management and communication, bio security and culling. Beneficiary countries would also like to receive training on issues such as slaughtering, food chain hygiene, legislative aspects and practices to follow at markets where live birds are sold.



3.2.3 HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA CONTROL

The outcomes of the programme assessing the current HPAI situation contributed to the development of the HPAI training programme, launched in 2008 and running until mid-2009.

Contractor	Development Solutions
Activities	2 laboratory workshops , Padua, Italy in September 2008, January 2009 3 missions in 2008 to Philippines, September, Egypt October-November, Bangladesh, November 3 missions in 2009 to Bulgaria, January-February, India, February-March and China
Participants/countries of origin	337 participants approx. by end of programme from Bangladesh, Bulgaria, China, Egypt, India, Morocco, Philippines

Three five-day workshops took place during the mission to the Philippines. They were attended by 58 participants, mainly regional or provincial AI coordinators and provincial or city veterinary officers. A half-day session was also organised for a government-run voluntary emergency and disaster response organisation. This saw 38 participants receive training on disinfection of HPAI infected premises and use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

The main sessions began with an overview of HPAI in the Philippines and globally and looked at its socio-economic aspects. The training went on to examine the clinical signs of HPAI and give an introduction to HPAI epidemiology.

The subject of bio-security on farms was presented and use of different chemicals for disinfection, PPE and hygiene were covered. Participants were trained on surveillance, data management, zoning and regionalisation and legislative issues. Culling and preparation for emergencies also featured.

Other features of the workshops included a presentation of training of trainers techniques and outbreak simulation exercises. Participants also visited a farm in order to practice bio-security, risk assessment, use of PPE and disinfection.

During the mission to Egypt, 39 participants from the General Organisation of Veterinary Services attended two seven-day training sessions. The sessions gave an overview of Avian Influenza followed by a look at the current situation in Egypt and the socio-economic aspects of HPAI.

The training also dealt with farm bio-security and risk assessment, disinfection and chemical use, public health, protective equipment, waste disposal and compost. Another session looked at outbreak management and response, zoning, culling, cleaning and disinfection, recovery measures, emergency preparedness and contingency planning.

Participants were informed about key components of surveillance, including of markets and wild birds, and development of plans. An overview was given of vaccination planning and exit strategies.

Role play and simulation exercises enabled participants to apply their knowledge of culling and disposal techniques, outbreak response and site management. Field visits allowed them to

use protective equipment and complete exercises on zoning, epidemiological and bio-security investigation, culling, disposal, cleaning and disinfection.

The mission to Bangladesh included four three-day sessions attended by 100 participants. These were veterinarians from the Department of Livestock and private sector stakeholders.

The sessions began with background information covering epidemiology, clinical signs and the situation in Bangladesh. Bio-security was the next main theme and included risk assessment and bio-security plans. Disinfection was also featured, including basic disinfection and that to be undertaken following outbreaks. Another main topic was outbreak management. Training in this area looked at culling, disposal and composting.

The training also included visits to broiler farms where groups of participants performed simulation exercises on outbreak management and presented response plans.

The workshops in Italy on virological and serological HPAI diagnosis methods covered the role of laboratory diagnostics in HPAI control and laboratory capacity and equipment. An inventory was given of methods to be employed in the implementation of a disease control project.

Molecular diagnostics, HPAI identification through sequencing and the DIVA vaccination strategy to distinguish infected and vaccinated animals were also featured. Hands-on training included polymerase chain reaction testing, DIVA and sequencing.

3.2.4 TRAINING ON THE EU RAPID ALERT SYSTEM FOR FOOD AND FEED AND THE POSSIBLE INTRODUCTION OF A SIMILAR SYSTEM IN OTHER REGIONS OF THE WORLD

The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) is a network involving European Economic Area Member States, the Commission and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). It is primarily an information exchange tool for instances where health risks have been identified. It allows members to identify whether a problem affects them and take appropriate measures.

In many developing countries, control systems lack resources and a relevant number of cases notified through the RASFF concern third country products. Training on the RASFF for third countries aims to help them to improve controls and to explore the possibility of setting up similar systems in other parts of the world.

This programme also provides training on the Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES), a risk management tool for animal and public health used by EU countries. TRACES creates a database for electronic exchange between national authorities of trade certificates and import documents for animals and products of animal origin as well as Common Veterinary Entry Documents provided by Border Inspection Posts (BIP).

TRACES allows third country actors to produce health certificates for exports to the EU and to give electronic notification of consignments sent to the EU. Such actors can get information on the consignments once an EU BIP has made an entry decision.

The RASFF workshops in Morocco and Turkey concerned global regions which had not previously received training on the subject, namely Africa and EU candidate, ENP and other non-EU

European countries. These events were aimed at providing an overview of the RASFF and discussing implementation of such systems at national and regional level.

Contractor	AETS consortium
Activities	<p>3 RASFF workshops in Casablanca, Jakarta and Istanbul in April, June and November</p> <p>4 TRACES sessions in Bangkok, Rabat, Singapore, Zagreb in February, March, April, October</p> <p>1 sustained training mission in Vietnam, October</p>
Participants/countries of origin	<p>259 participants from:</p> <p>Africa: Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Madagascar, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, Tunisia</p> <p>South-east Asia: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam</p> <p>Europe/ENP: Albania, Bosnia, Croatia, FYROM, Georgia, Israel, Moldova, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine</p>
Tutors	10 tutors from EU and ASEAN Member States
Satisfaction index	84%

Subjects covered included general principles, the legal basis and organisation of the RASFF, its operative guidelines, collection of information at national level and follow-up of alerts. An introduction was given to the WHO INFOSAN network which is a global network of national food safety authorities promoting exchange of food safety information so as to prevent food-borne disease. A further presentation looked at the RASFF Window which allows for sharing of information on food alerts between the RASFF and national competent authorities.

Participants performed practical exercises using case studies. These dealt with creation of and reaction to notifications. Participants were also introduced to the relevant software and were shown how to enter details related to notifications and evaluate and submit notifications.

The workshop in Jakarta addressed ASEAN countries for the second year. Following the commitment to develop an ASEAN regional network, the aim was to provide support and technical assistance to the establishment of the ASEAN RASFF (ARASF).

The workshop enabled participating countries to work on practical aspects of the transition from a pilot project to an operational system. Priority issues were development of the system, user manuals and procedures for collecting and transmitting information, compiling terms of reference for the system and assessing assistance needs. Information was also provided about the latest developments of the EU RASFF.

By the end of the workshop, participants had elaborated common transmission of information and notification procedures for the ARASF at national level. They agreed on improvements to the system and a strategy was developed for gaining endorsement of the system by regional institutions.

The TRACES training sessions were aimed at informing competent authorities in beneficiary countries about the system. They consisted of a general introduction to the interface followed by a series of practical exercises on its functionalities.

The exercises covered customs codes, creation and completion of import certificates, follow-up to certificates, management of reference data and support to decision making.

The mission in Vietnam was aimed at providing additional training on the ARASF to the Vietnamese authorities. Local experts were trained to operate and maintain the ARASF database using study cases. They were shown how to respond to notifications and given a demonstration of the EU RASFF Window.

A review of Vietnamese alert management and other operational procedures was carried out and the development of a national network was discussed. The experts assessed the capacity of competent authorities to manage alerts and provided recommendations regarding the operation of a national network. Terms of reference were drawn up for the establishment of a national alert system and a framework for the development of such a system was constructed.

3.2.5 TRAINING FOR LABORATORY STAFF OF ASEAN COUNTRIES IN THE APPLICATION OF FOOD TESTING

Six ASEAN Reference Laboratories (ARLs) have been established under the EC-ASEAN Economic Cooperation Programme on Standards, Quality and Conformity assessment. ARLs disseminate approved analysis methods to National Reference Laboratories (NRL) in the ASEAN region. Training in this area is partly aimed at reinforcing cooperation between EU Community Reference Laboratories (CRL) and ARLs by enabling ASEAN laboratory staff to develop, apply and disseminate CRL-validated analysis methods.

Contractor	The European Training Platform for Safer Food
Activities	1 preparatory workshop , Bangkok, November 2008 6 workshops in ARLs from May 2009 on: GMOs, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia; Heavy metals, Nonthaburi, Thailand; Pesticides and mycotoxins, Singapore; Microbiology, Dong Nai, Vietnam; Veterinary drugs, Pathun Thani, Thailand
Participants/countries of origin	132 participants approx. from ASEAN member states

A preparatory workshop was held to establish the programme to be implemented which should be driven by the demand from ASEAN countries. The meeting began with an explanation of Europe's motivations for stimulating the development of laboratory facilities in ASEAN countries. The EU imports large quantities of food from the ASEAN region and so aims to support improvements to the ASEAN laboratory infrastructure for food safety controls.

Participants gave details of facilities in their respective countries. Subjects to include in the training were pinpointed. Each area of focus was then discussed in a working group.

For mycotoxins it was decided that training should focus on instrumental analysis of commonly occurring mycotoxins. Practical training should look at cereals and nuts in which mycotoxin contamination occurs relatively frequently.

For training on pesticides, it was agreed to focus on vegetables as well as rice and soya. A cross-section of pesticides relevant for vegetable products would be analysed.

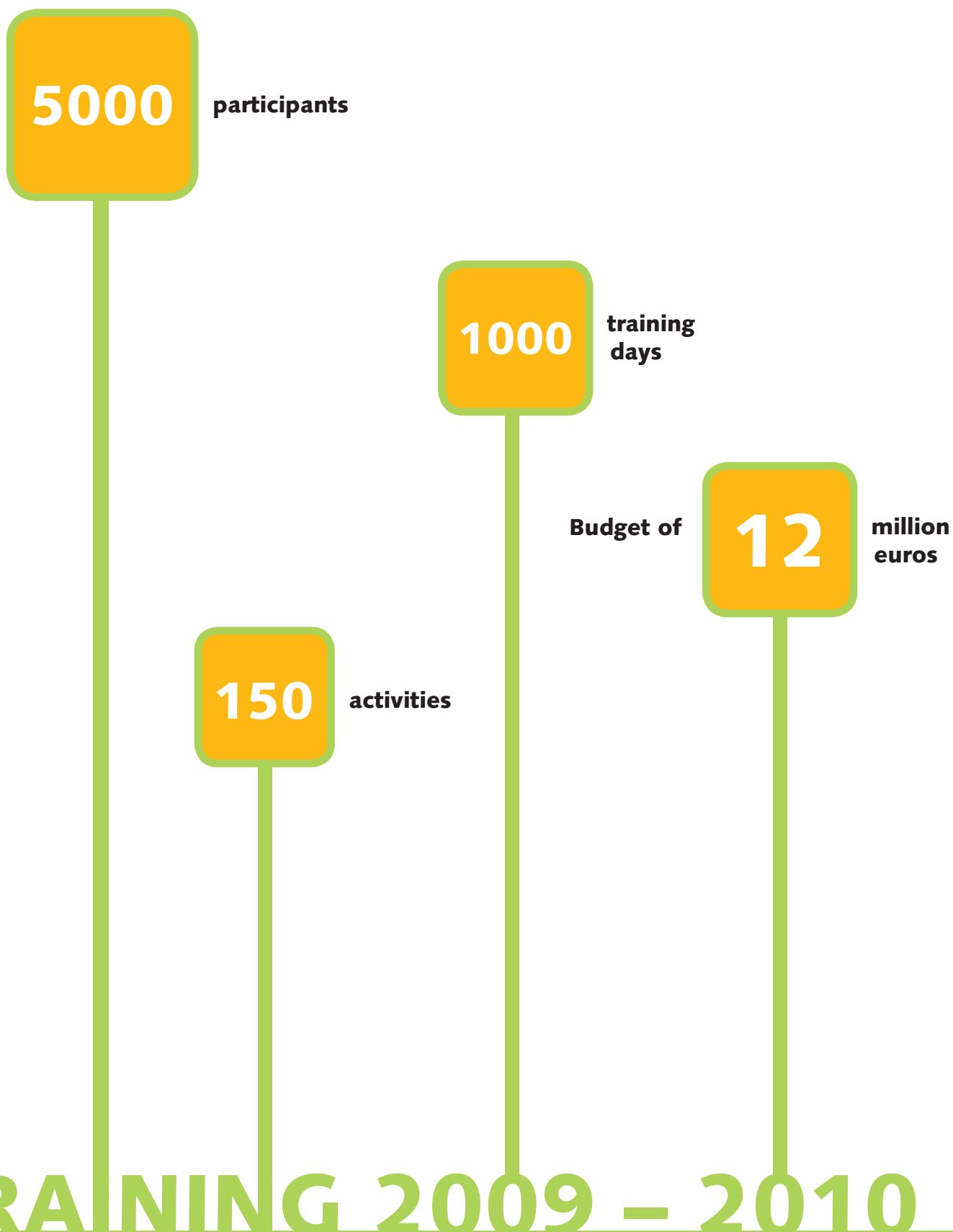
Veterinary drugs training will mainly cover growth stimulants. Practical testing will deal with animal tissue such as liver or muscle from fish, poultry and pigs.

The theoretical part of training on heavy metals will focus on drafting of sampling plans. The practical side is to involve testing of fish for arsenic and mercury.

Pathogens to be covered in microbiology training are to include *Campylobacter* and *Vibrio cholerae*. Laboratory-based training will use conventional and Polymerase Chain Reaction methods to test for these agents.

The workshop on genetically modified organisms (GMO) will look at EU legislation and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. This seeks to protect biodiversity from risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from biotechnology. The training will also look at quality assurance, method validation and measurement uncertainties. Practical training will be concentrated on GMO analysis in processed foods.





4. TRAINING 2009 – 10

OVERVIEW

New programmes are set to be launched in 2009 and the majority of the 2008 programmes are to continue. Preparation for the 2009 activities was undertaken throughout 2008. The Training Sector met with European National Contact Points (NCP) in January, June and December to receive feedback on the training and areas for improvement.

Outcomes and needs were discussed within the Inter-service Steering Group in December 2008. Consultation within the DG took place, with colleagues providing support in their area of competence. Additional discussions were carried out with the EC's External Relations services in relation to the specific programme on Africa. The Training Sector used Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) notifications and Food and Veterinary office (FVO) findings in order to ascertain needs.

Activities running in 2009-10 are outlined below.

TRAINING ACTIVITIES 2009-10

EU-based programmes
Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point principles (2009)
Food hygiene and controls (2009)
Plant health controls (2009)
Seaport/road/rail Border Inspection Posts (2009-10)
Zoonoses and microbiological criteria in foodstuffs (2009-10)
Plant protection products (2009-10)
Animal welfare (2009-10)
Feed law (2009-10) NEW
Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (to be confirmed)
Food contact materials (to be confirmed)
GMO analysis (to be confirmed)
Third country programmes
Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza control (continued from 2008)
EU food standards (continued from 2008)
Food testing (2009)
Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed/TRACES (2009-10)

HAZARD ANALYSIS AND CRITICAL CONTROL POINT

A total of 19 five-day Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) workshops are scheduled. Six of these are on implementation and maintenance of procedures based on HACCP principles. The other 13 focus on audits verifying implementation of HACCP systems. Around 20-25 people should attend each course from EU Member States and candidate countries as well as European Free Trade Association (EFTA), European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and selected third countries.

Content of both types of workshop will include background, principles and benefits of HACCP, applying and maintaining an HACCP plan and HACCP audits. Practical exercises should look at checklist preparation, development of HACCP plans and documentation and verification procedures. Further practical exercises will be carried out during site visits.

The auditing workshops will also cover the role of prerequisite programmes in food safety management, the relationship between business Quality Assurance programmes and HACCP systems and implementation of verification procedures. Practical auditing activities will be included in these workshops.

VETERINARY AND FOOD SAFETY CONTROLS IN BORDER INSPECTION POSTS

The border inspection post (BIP) course will comprise seven three-day courses. It is planned to hold five of these in a seaport BIP and two in road and rail BIPs, although one of the seaport BIP workshops may be replaced with an Airport BIP course. Around 40 participants, mainly from EU Member States and candidate countries, will attend each workshop.

Training will consist of theoretical aspects and practical exercises in the BIPs. The workshops will cover EU legislation, controls on products and live animals, information exchange, intelligence gathering, risk assessment and cooperation with customs.

Seaport BIP workshops will look at destruction of waste animal products from vessels. Training at road and rail BIPs will include checks on products of animal origin and pets, controls of re-imported consignments and exit checks on transit consignments.

MICROBIOLOGICAL CRITERIA AND CONTROL OF ZOOSES

Five four-day courses will be dedicated to the implementation of microbiological criteria and investigation of food-borne disease outbreaks. A further five four-day courses are to focus on control and eradication of salmonella in poultry and pigs.

Approximately 40 people should attend each course. They will mainly come from competent authorities of EU Member States and candidate countries as well as EFTA, ENP and some third countries. Traders of live poultry, hatching eggs and other relevant products may also attend.

Microbiological criteria training will look at the use of such criteria as tools for risk management and harmonisation of monitoring practices for foodstuffs. It will also deal with implementation of these criteria by businesses and its verification by competent authorities.

With regard to the investigation of food-borne outbreaks, subjects covered will include investigation tools such as cohort analysis, software applications and strain typing. The investigation of outbreaks will be examined as a means of assessing the risks derived from different foodstuffs. Further areas considered will be classification of outbreaks according to the epidemiological and sample evidence and outbreak reporting.

Training on salmonella will update participants on EU provisions for monitoring and control of salmonella in poultry and pigs. It will look at trend analysis based on data for the EU salmonella reporting system and the public health impact of salmonella. Further subjects covered will be application of EU provisions for salmonella control, salmonella risk factors, risk management and control of antimicrobial resistance of salmonella.

ANIMAL WELFARE CONCERNING STUNNING AND KILLING AT SLAUGHTER AND DURING DISEASE CONTROL AND ANIMAL WELFARE DURING TRANSPORT

Six three-day courses will be held of which three will focus on stunning and killing at slaughter and for disease control and three will look at welfare during transport and related operations. The courses cater for participants from competent authorities of EU Member States, candidate and selected third countries. Around 60 participants should attend each workshop.

Both types of workshop will comprise presentations and practical training in slaughterhouses, transport companies, vehicles or control posts. They will cover relevant EU legislation and international guidelines. Alternative approaches to legislation for assessing welfare conditions, such as private audit schemes, will be compared with the legislation.

Each stunning and killing workshop will be dedicated to a specific species; poultry, ruminants and pigs. Topics will include the scientific basis for proper handling, stunning and killing, assessment of lairage facilities and handling. Other subjects will be stunning and killing techniques applied in Europe, welfare indicators, development of internet-based learning for veterinarians and experience gained from disease epidemics.

Transport workshops will cover the scientific basis for proper transport of animals, transport conditions and records to be checked, handling of animals and emergency care during transport, the design of vehicles and requirements for control posts. They will also consider the application of navigation systems for monitoring adherence to requirements and experience gained from transporting animals.



EVALUATION, REGISTRATION AND CONTROL OF USE AND MARKETING OF PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS

Two four-day workshops on evaluation and registration of plant protection products and two three-day workshops on control of use and marketing of plant protection products will be implemented. Workshops on evaluation and registration cater for around 35 people each and those on control of use and marketing will each be attended by approximately 40 people. Participants should come from organisations responsible for evaluating pesticide approvals or control of use and marketing of plant protection products in EU Member States, candidate and ENP countries.

Active substances authorised for use in plant protection products are listed in Annex I of Directive 91/414. Member States now have to re-evaluate national-level authorisations. The goal of the evaluation and registration workshops is to ensure that Member States have a consistent approach to post-Annex I compliance checking. They cover administrative and scientific procedures to be followed in compliance checking. Participants will work through practical examples to develop re-evaluation work-sharing procedures between Member States.

This should lead to the establishment of a programme identifying active substances to be assessed and criteria on which to base the assessments. A template should be developed for use by Member State regulatory authorities to fulfil their obligations.

Workshops on control of use and marketing focus on pesticide-related topics identified during the 2008 workshop as requiring further harmonisation. Subjects covered will include current and future EU legislation on use and marketing of plant protection products and related environmental and health provisions. The structure of national control systems and coordination with authorities dealing with related areas will be examined and an overview will be given of national control activities. An overview of infringements and follow-up to them in national penalties systems will also be provided.

The training should lead to the designation of certain Member States as study cases and examination of criteria for planning controls and monitoring their performance. A report should be produced for use by Member State competent authorities in planning controls under Directive 91/414.

FOOD HYGIENE AND CONTROLS

Five five-day courses will be held on each of meat and meat products, milk and dairy products and fishery products and Live Bivalve Molluscs (LBM). Each course is to cater for around 25 people from EU Member States, candidate, EFTA, ENP and third countries.

Topics to be covered in all modules include legislative requirements concerning registration, approval, hygiene and HACCP and official controls on primary production, microbiological criteria and sampling methods. Site visits will also feature in every workshop.

Topics addressed specifically in the meat and meat products course include legislative requirements concerning ante- and post-mortem inspection and welfare issues. This module will also look at inspections in slaughterhouses and other establishments, peculiarities of fresh meat, farmed and wild game, emergency slaughter, risk based inspection and requirements for trichinella examination.

Subjects particular to the dairy products module include legislative requirements for raw milk production and manufacture of milk products, inspections in processing establishments, raw milk criteria and traditional products.

Topics specific to fishery products and LBM are relevant legislative requirements, inspections in establishments, peculiarities with regard to fishery products and LBM and risk based inspection. Other topics featuring in this module are controls for marine biotoxins, freshness and classification and management of LBM production areas.

PLANT HEALTH CONTROLS

Training on plant health controls is focussed on three fields. These are the EU plant quarantine regime for potatoes, the EU internal plant quarantine regime and the EU plant quarantine regime for imports. The modules on the quarantine regimes for potatoes and imports comprise three three-day courses. The internal plant quarantine regime module comprises three four-day courses.

Approximately 25 people should attend each workshop from EU Member States and candidate countries. Delegates from Switzerland may also participate. Workshops in all modules will cater for officials involved in policy making, planning and controls. Participants in the plant quarantine regime for potatoes module will also include field inspectors involved in control of potato quarantine pests, particularly ring rot and brown rot control. Workshops on the internal plant quarantine regime and the plant quarantine regime for imports are aimed at field inspectors involved in internal and import control.

Topics addressed in training on the plant quarantine regime for potatoes include application of EU provisions for control of potato quarantine pests and the Council Directive on control of potato cyst nematodes. Further areas of focus are pathogen and disease description, inspection and sampling of host plants and surface waters, quarantine measures, traceability, information exchange, implementation of potato import controls and procedures in cases of infringements. Workshops include field trips to storage places and watercourses.

Topics in the internal plant quarantine regime module include EU internal control provisions and international standards, the plant passport regime, registration requirements for producers and inspection of production and storage places. Other subjects covered will be quarantine requirements for products accompanied by a plant passport, inspections, issuing of passports, internal controls within export certification systems and internal market checks. Additional topics include quarantine measures following interceptions, non-regulated pests, surveys required by EU legislation, handling of outbreaks and information exchange. Field trips will be undertaken to plant health offices and premises of registered producers.

Training on the quarantine regime for imports looks at relevant EC legislation and international standards, policy making, import control planning, internal co-ordination, co-operation with customs and inspections at places of destination. Further topics are control of imports for scientific purposes, quarantine measures, non-regulated pest management and information exchange. The training includes field visits to points of entry and BIPs.



FEED LAW

Approximately 230 million tonnes of feed are fed to farmed animals in the EU each year. This makes feed production one of the most important sectors of agricultural activity. EU measures are aimed at ensuring feed safety at all stages of production.

Training for Member State competent authority staff involved in official controls on animal nutrition takes place for the first time in 2009. Ten five-day workshops will be organised on feed hygiene, marketing and control. Around 30 people should attend each workshop from EU Member States, candidate, EFTA, ENP and some third countries.

Subjects include requirements for registration, approval and inspection of feed establishments and requirements for hygiene and use of raw or processed materials as feed or for manufacturing compound feedstuffs. Training will also look at authorisation, supervision and labelling of feed additives, materials whose use in animal nutrition is prohibited, marketing and labelling of feed for specific purposes and use of bio-proteins.

Further areas covered are authorisation of GM feed, traceability and labelling of GMOs, biological and chemical risks, sampling, import controls of raw or processed materials for use in feed or compound feedstuffs and inspections in feed establishments.

RAPID ALERT SYSTEM FOR FOOD AND FEED AND THE POSSIBLE INTRODUCTION OF A SIMILAR SYSTEM IN OTHER REGIONS OF THE WORLD

Four three-day workshops on the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) will be held in different global regions. Participants at each workshop will come from the region where the event is taking place. Approximately 60 people will attend each workshop. They will be government officials and competent authority staff as well as industry representatives.

The workshops should provide a detailed overview and explanation of the EU RASFF. They will discuss the desirability of and requirements for setting up a rapid alert system inside a country. This should cover subjects such as required standards for food and feed controls, the organisational structure of competent authorities, the legal basis and communication needs.

The workshops will also examine the possibilities for setting up regional networks of countries exchanging rapid alerts on food and feed. This will take into account the scope for information exchange, the required legal basis, transparency and confidentiality requirements and the follow-up of notifications.

Sustained training and assistance missions will involve the secondment of experts to up to twelve countries across Latin America, Asia, Africa, the Mediterranean basin and EU candidate countries. They are aimed at supporting beneficiary country authorities in implementing rapid alert systems, TRACES and other EU-related IT systems.

5. BETTER TRAINING FOR SAFER FOOD IN AFRICA

The EC and the African Union Commission (AUC) are jointly coordinating the implementation, from 2009 to 2010, of **seven capacity building activities**. The activities target public and private sector actors in Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) systems at national, regional and continental levels.

The key **objective** is to support food security mainly by the transfer across Africa of technical expertise and policy advice in areas of animal health and food safety and quality. The knowledge, expertise and skills transferred will facilitate the production and distribution of agro-food products compatible with international SPS standards. This will in turn contribute to reducing the likelihood of food-borne disease and related health and socio-economic burden. At micro level, the activities will help to improve the use of agricultural inputs such as fertilisers, pesticides and veterinary drugs and good hygiene practices in the production and distribution chains. They will also strengthen animal/product management systems in areas of control and certification as well as competent authorities, producer associations and small and medium enterprises (SME). At macro level, the activities will support the gradual integration and competitiveness of the agro-food sector, strengthening the contribution of agriculture to rural development and food security, with positive knock-on effects on growth and employment in Africa.

Four activities are being implemented by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). They aim to:

1. Evaluate the performance of veterinary services (PVS) in 15 countries and carry out PVS Gap Analysis of needs and priorities, PVS follow-up evaluations and accompanying measures in 40 countries.

Experts will be designated at the request of the beneficiary country and missions will be prepared in coordination with relevant authorities. The missions should last around 10 to 15 days. At the end of the mission, the main findings will be presented to the authorities and a comprehensive country PVS report prepared by the experts. A peer-review will be conducted by an independent expert and the finalised report will be submitted for approval by the national authority. Once the report is accepted, a PVS Gap Analysis may be carried out or a national action plan and investment programme drawn up on which experts will work with central veterinary services.

2. Improve the national and/or regional legal framework in relation to animal health and food safety in 15 countries.

This will be done at the request of national authorities and will consist of consolidation and development of national and/or regional animal health, including legislation on veterinary medicine when relevant, as well as legislation on areas such as cross-border movement of animals and products, identification and certification. Experts will review legislation pertaining to veterinary services. They will identify the main gaps and propose appropriate legislation guidelines to consolidate the legal framework.

3. Strengthen laboratory capacities (technicians) via twinning (10 laboratories).

This consists of twinning between laboratories in Africa and OIE Reference Laboratories. Candidate laboratories will work in partnership with an OIE Reference Laboratory for one to two years in order to improve their expertise in a specific area. This will facilitate capacity building and exchange of procedures. Diagnostic material may be provided for training and assessments and workshops will be organised in order to disseminate the expertise.

4. Strengthen the capacity of National Delegates to the OIE, Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) and National Focal Points in all African countries in relation to international sanitary standards.

The training of CVOs will cover issues such as good governance, focusing on the roles of veterinary services throughout the food chain and on traceability of animals and products. The training on food safety for National Focal Points will address prevention and control of zoonoses. The training should concentrate on reducing food-borne risks to human health, with the main focus on food safety measures applicable at farm level and methods for conducting inspections at slaughter and during processing. In total, at least eight workshops are foreseen.

Two activities are implemented by “Agriconsulting Europe S.A” in consortium with AETS, AENOR, AINIA & FVI. They aim to:

5. Train trainers over twelve five-day regional workshops, ten of which will cover the five Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) regions (West, Central, South-East, Southern including South Africa, and East Africa) and two will cover North Africa.

Around 80 participants per workshop will be expected, consisting of two officials from the AUC, two from the regional economic communities (REC) and four from each country concerned of which two will be stakeholders and two will be public officials. The workshops will focus on harmonisation of frameworks within each region, with illustrative case studies, simulations and other practical exercises.

6. Strengthen the capacity of SMEs via targeted and sustained missions and ad hoc assistance.

About twelve experts will be deployed to assist competent authorities and operators in about 26 countries for a total of about 1,560 days. They will work with the beneficiaries to address deficiencies identified by the EC's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) or other credible reports. The training will be distributed among countries throughout Africa and the experts will spend approximately 60 days in each country.

Also, two one-day high level conferences are foreseen: an opening conference on 3 April 2009 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and a closing conference at the end of 2010 in Brussels. The aim of the opening conference is to explain the overall programme, to generate political momentum and to collect further views on how best to engage jointly to strengthen capacities and address needs in the SPS field. The closing conference will discuss the outcomes of the entire programme and future perspectives.

One additional activity is being implemented by the "Application Européenne de Technologies et de Services" (AETS). It concerns:

7. Specific intensive training sessions for officials of the AUC, RECs and associated specialist bodies.

This consists of three workshops, the first of which was held on 30 March–2 April 2009 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The other two are scheduled for 8-12 February 2010 in Dakar, Senegal and 11-15 October 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa.

All of these activities are part of the EU's 2007 Annual Action Programme for Food Security which implements the "Thematic Strategy Paper and Multi-annual Indicative Programme 2007-2010" for the Development Cooperation Instrument. They form an integral part of the deliverables under the Joint Africa-EU Strategy's Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure partnership. The activities are aimed at strengthening SPS capacity by means of training for inspectors and customs officials handling exports, in particular in the areas of inspection techniques, standards, quality assurance, accreditation, metrology and maximum residue levels. They have been endorsed jointly by the College of the African Union Commission and the EC at their October 2008 meeting in Brussels and by the AU-EU joint Ministerial Troika of November 2008 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as priorities for the first action plan 2008-2010.



6. INTERMEDIATE ASSESSMENT OF BETTER TRAINING FOR SAFER FOOD

Two intermediate assessments of Better Training for Safer Food activities were launched during 2008 in order to review the first two years of training within the initiative. One was specific to training on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza control and is discussed further in section 3.2.2. The other was a general assessment covering all other programmes and is the focus of this section.

The general assessment had three main aims: to assess the impact of the training in terms of improvements to participants' work; to learn more about the implementation of training and its strengths and weaknesses; and to obtain recommendations for future training.

A survey was carried out consisting of three questionnaires, one for participants from EU, candidate, and associated countries, one for participants from third countries and one for tutors and National Contact Points (NCP). Each questionnaire included sections on assessment of the training, its impact and recommendations for the future.

The survey was sent to 2,762 participants, 49 NCPs and 191 tutors. In all, 850 participants, 37 NCPs and 59 tutors completed it. A total of 100 phone interviews were conducted with participants in order to get additional details.

The response rate for 2007 participants was 34% as opposed to 25% for 2006 participants. A higher response rate was noted for EU participants than for those from third countries (34% versus 25%). In addition, the response rate reached at least 24% for all programmes with the exception of training on the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (17%).

It was found that non-responsiveness to the survey was generally not down to reluctance on the part of recipients to give negative feedback. Justifying their lack of response, participants mentioned a lack of time, changes in their job situation, difficulty remembering the workshop two years on and the fact that they provided their opinion in evaluation forms distributed at the end of workshops.

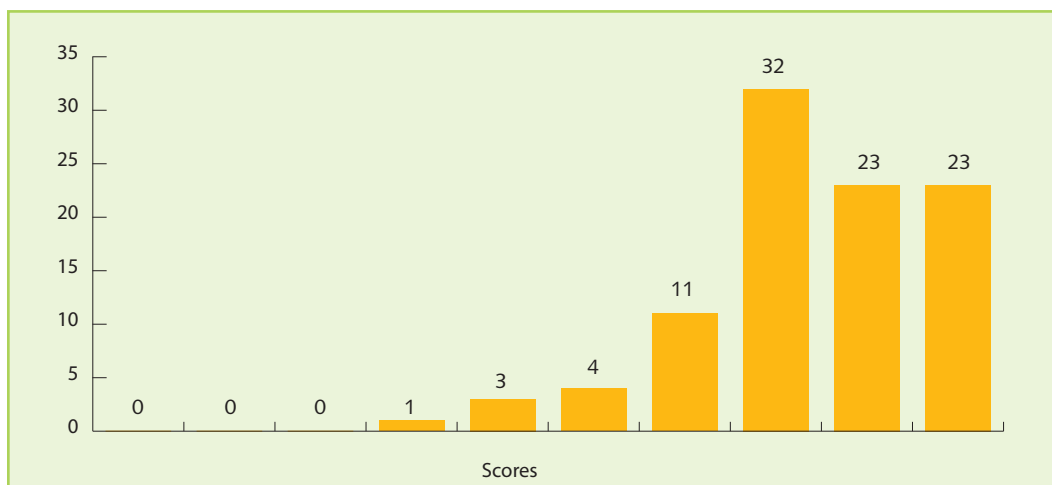
OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE TRAINING

The implementation and impact of the training were assessed very positively. No significant differences were identified between individual programmes. Assessments from third country participants were slightly less positive than those from European participants concerning the duration of workshops and opportunities for social interaction. Third country participants perceived a stronger impact in terms of the amount of knowledge acquired and its effect on their work.

Concerning changes in perception between 2006 and 2007, some improvements have been identified. These concern aspects such as increased practical work, development of approaches focusing on the main problems identified and more working group sessions. This shows that lessons were learnt from the 2006 training which led to improved performance in 2007.

The learning objectives were very clear and usually achieved to a large extent with 78% of participants giving scores of between 8 and 10 out of 10 on this. Some EU participants underlined the absence of indications regarding the level of knowledge required to participate.

CLARITY OF THE STATED OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING (% OF RESPONDENTS)

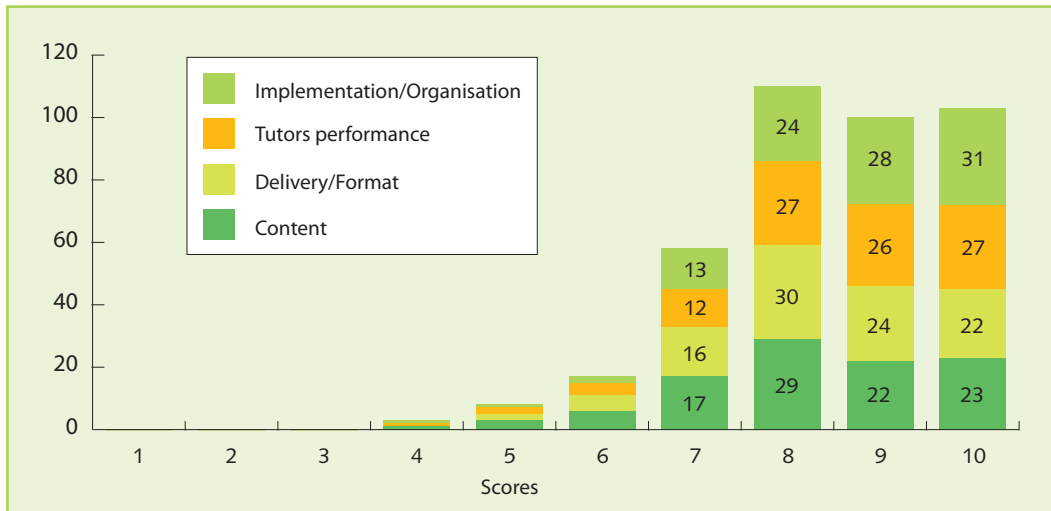


Perceptions regarding visibility of the training ranged from sufficient to weak. It was generally considered sufficient in cases where national authorities organised systematic communication on the events to their relevant services or when potential participants were already in contact with DG Health and Consumers such as within the framework of other projects.

In other cases, it was considered as moderate to weak due to the lack of regular mailings or newsletters providing information on upcoming events and the fact that information was only accessible via the Better Training for Safer Food website. Many third country participants are not familiar with the website and unsure of how to get information on future training.

The training usually conformed to the expectations and needs of participants. The quality of content, delivery, format, tutors' performance, implementation and organisation was rated highly.

**EXTENT TO WHICH TRAINING ACTIVITIES MET PARTICIPANTS' EXPECTATIONS
(% OF RESPONDENTS)**

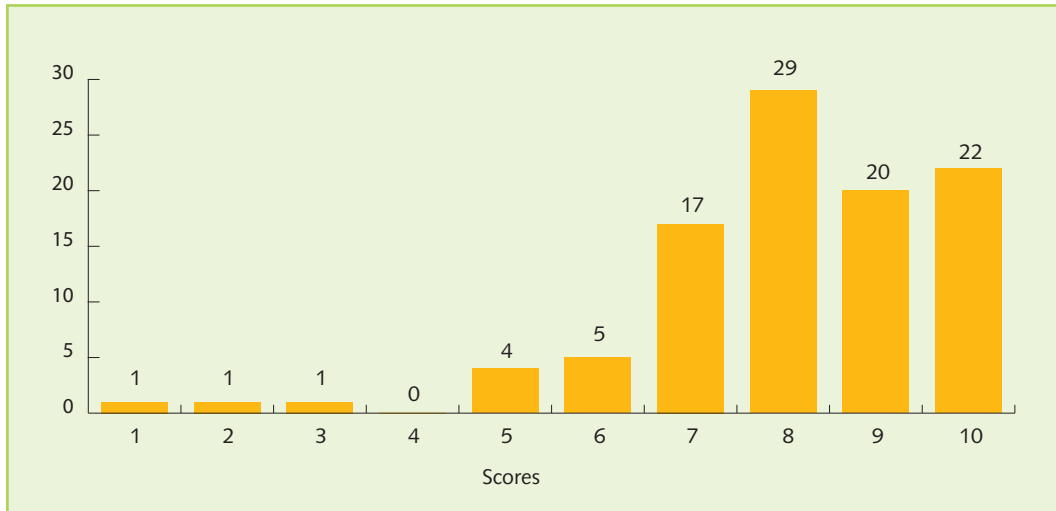


The content is considered to be highly relevant and enough opportunity is provided for discussion with other participants. However, the language barrier has been mentioned as a problem in this area.

Tutors' performances were usually strong in terms of technical and teaching ability, language skills and availability for in-depth explanations. The organisation and implementation were judged positively in terms of accommodation, catering, travel and the participant selection process which is seen as fast, user-friendly and free from administrative burden.

The activities are seen as highly relevant as the majority of respondents are not aware of other training on similar topics. This is less true in Europe, where 45% of participants referred to similar training organised in their own country. BTSF complements other training on similar issues well due to the fact that it offers a European dimension, provides an up-to-date, in-depth approach to the topic covered and gives insight into the practices and facilities of other countries through networking and site visits.

COMPLEMENTARITY OF BTSF (% OF RESPONDENTS)

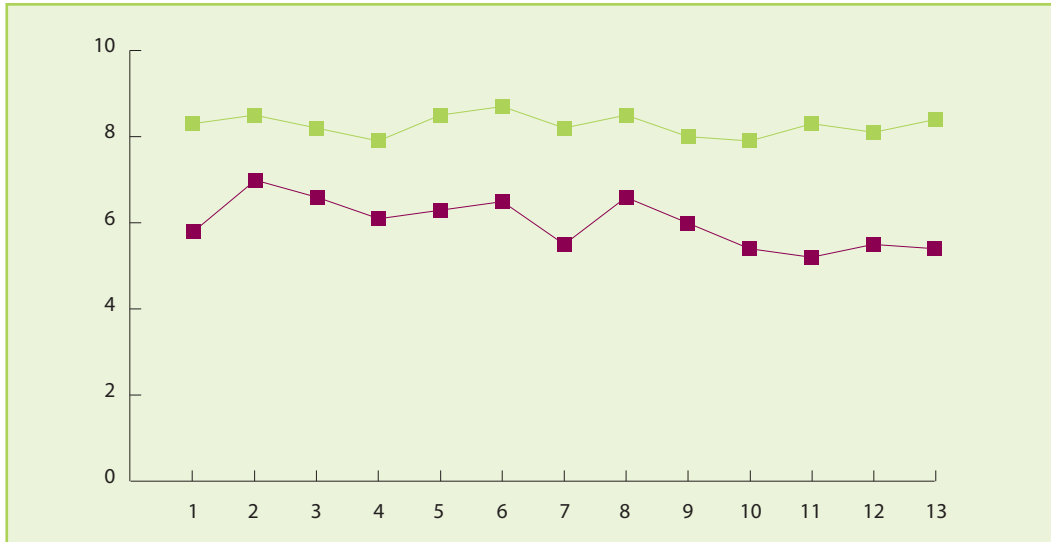


IMPACT OF THE TRAINING

BTSF activities significantly raise participants' knowledge from an upper-moderate level to a high to very high level. They provide up-to-date information on relevant EU legislation and foster harmonised controls in the EU and increased compliance with EU hygiene and safety requirements in third countries.

Participants underlined the improved comprehension of EC legislation and deeper knowledge of the topic in question which accrued from the training. They also pointed to the fact that the training enabled them to gain insight into the opinions, experiences and practices of other countries in the relevant field.

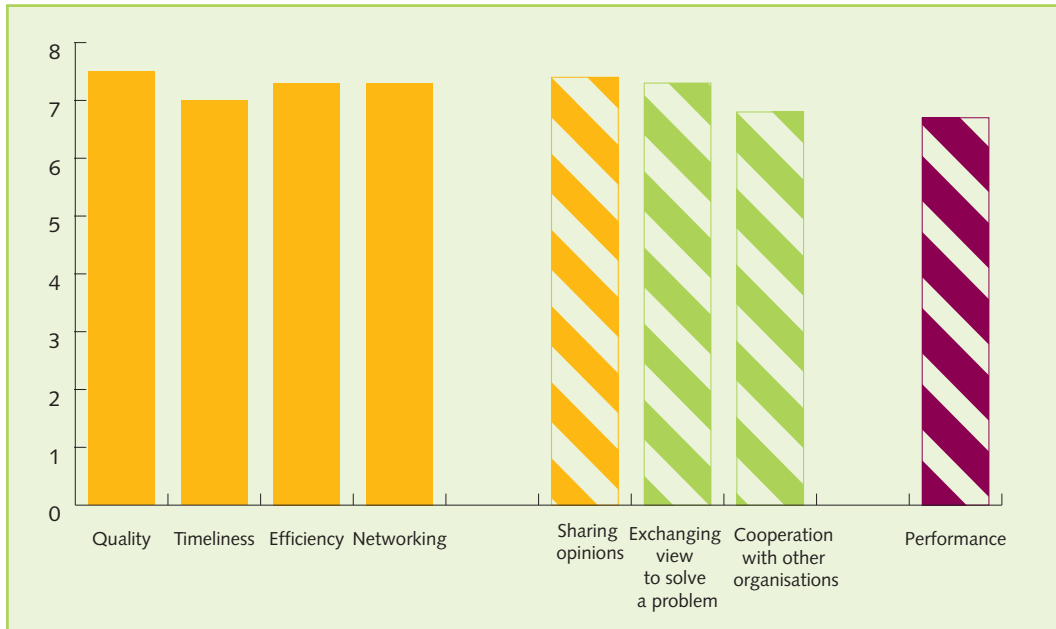
LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE BEFORE AND AFTER THE TRAINING (BY PROGRAMME)



1. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
2. Veterinary checks at Airport Border Inspection Posts
3. Veterinary checks at Seaport Border Inspection Posts
4. EU Regulations for Animal By-Products
5. Welfare Standards for Stunning and Killing Animals in Slaughterhouse and Disease Control Situations
6. EU Standards for Fishery and Aquaculture Products
7. EU Standards for Fruits and Vegetables
8. Training on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
9. Monitoring and Controls of Zoonoses and Applying Microbiological criteria in Foodstuffs
10. Control on Food Contact Materials
11. Evaluation and Registration of Plant Protection Products
12. Training in the Application of Food Testing
13. Training on the EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed and the possible introduction of a similar system on other regions of the world

The training improves the quality and efficiency of participants' work, their networking capacity and ability to exchange views to solve problems. Other main impacts were increases in participants' levels of self-confidence and technical and scientific ability. The networking capacities were used mostly for information purposes and for the sharing of opinions on issues such as control processes or sampling procedures.

EFFECTS OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES ON PARTICIPANTS – AVERAGE SCORES

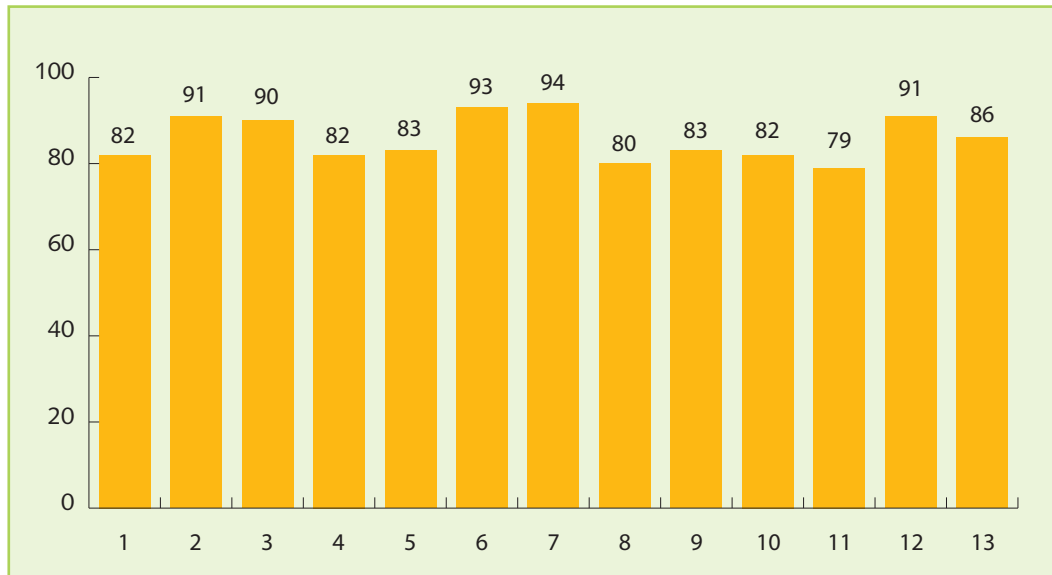


To a limited extent, BTSF led to the setting up of new projects and associations. It had cascade effects on participants' services, notably through the adoption of new procedures, guidelines or working methods. The few cases of weak impact are due to external factors such as lack of professional resources, lack of a direct connection between the topic taught and participants' work, changes in participants' job position, lack of time and lack of interest from the hierarchy.

The results of the training were disseminated by 85% of participants, mainly through informal discussion, distribution of learning material and to a lesser extent through dedicated meetings and presentations.

The multiplying effect of the dissemination activities is important and it is estimated that over 15 people are reached by each dissemination activity. The 1,593 dissemination activities undertaken by participants reached around 26,575 people in all.

DISSEMINATION ACHIEVED PER TRAINING PROGRAMME (% OF RESPONDENTS)

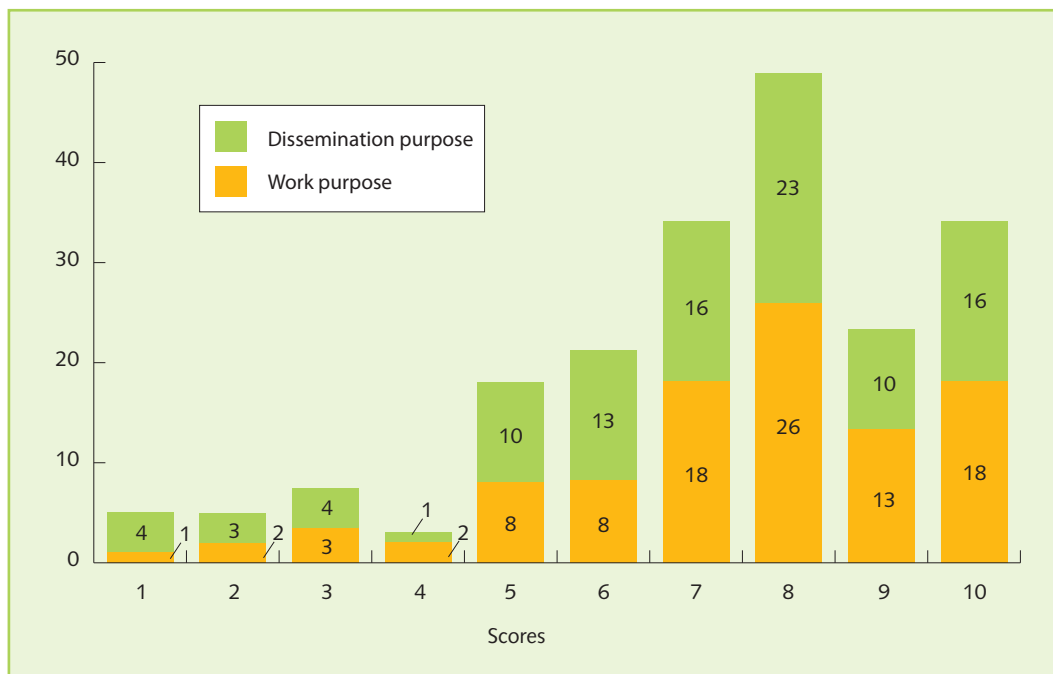


1. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
2. Veterinary checks at Airport Border Inspection Posts
3. Veterinary checks at Seaport Border Inspection Posts
4. EU Regulations for Animal By-Products
5. Welfare Standards for Stunning and Killing Animals in Slaughterhouse and Disease Control Situations
6. EU Standards for Fishery and Aquaculture Products
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11. Evaluation and Registration of Plant Protection Products
12. Training in the Application of Food Testing
13. Training on the EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed and the possible introduction of a similar system on other regions of the world

Transfer of knowledge took place as part of the “train the trainer” approach. 38% of participants, mostly from third countries, transferred knowledge by training other people. In the EU, BTSF events provided an opportunity to add topics to the agenda of training already scheduled. In third countries, subsequent training replicated the content of BTSF events more often.

The learning materials distributed at workshops are useful for work and dissemination. They are helpful reference sources, enabling participants to remember specific points covered by the courses or to solve problems. The most useful materials are in electronic format and consist of a mix of documentation including presentations, related publications, website links, legislative references, practical cases and tools such as check lists, inspection grids and guidelines.

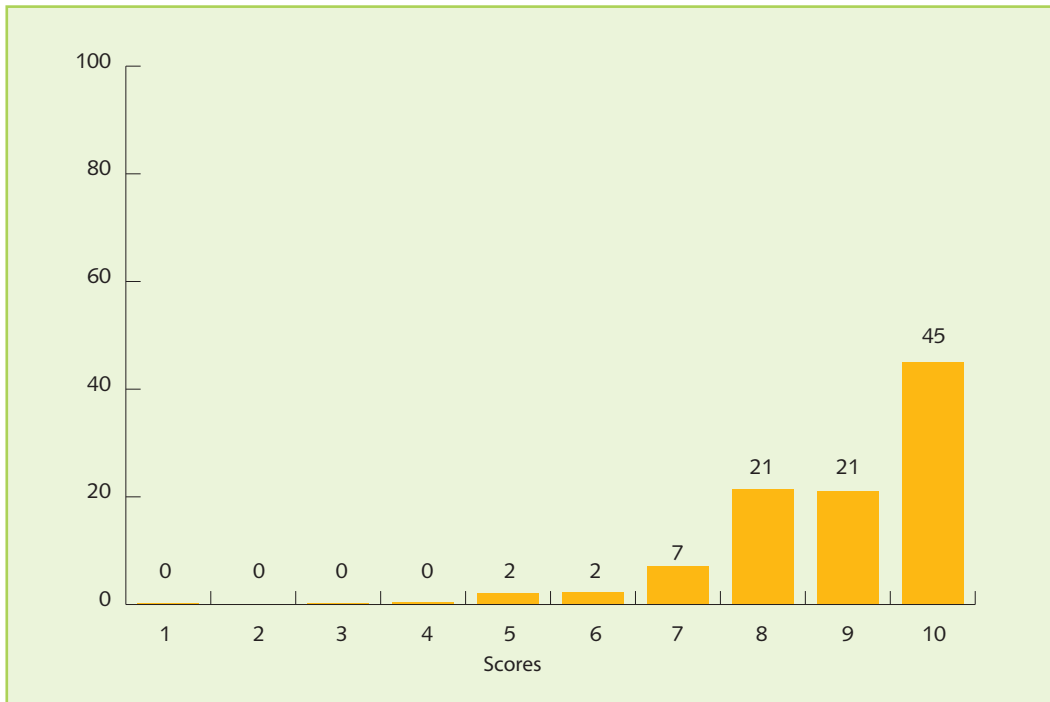
USEFULNESS OF THE LEARNING MATERIAL (% OF RESPONDENTS)



POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

Respondents think that BTSF training is very useful and must continue. They underlined that the most useful elements are practical sessions in their various forms and discussion with experts. These aspects help to ensure that BTSF complements similar training activities. There is no consensus on new areas that would add value to the training as participants felt that BTSF already covered the most relevant topics.

NEED FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE BTSEF TRAINING IN THE FUTURE (% OF RESPONDENTS)



Most participants had no suggestions, indicating a high satisfaction level. Issues for which most suggestions were made were duration of training and the content.

Regarding duration, participants asked to extend workshops to five days. This applies to all programmes, and comes more frequently from third country participants. Such an extension would allow for more networking and practical sessions and give participants more time to digest information.

As concerns content, third country participants suggested including more in-depth practical cases tailored to their regional specificities so as to better adapt the content to their needs. It was also felt that the content could better address the wide range of participants' professional needs. Closer cooperation with local or regional competent authorities could be useful for defining content.

The most highly recommended learning tools are site visits, case studies and discussion. Participants want more practical activity with theoretical presentations serving as a starting point for practical sessions. It was also thought that more tutors with extensive experience of enforcement of EU legislation in the field could be involved during practical sessions.

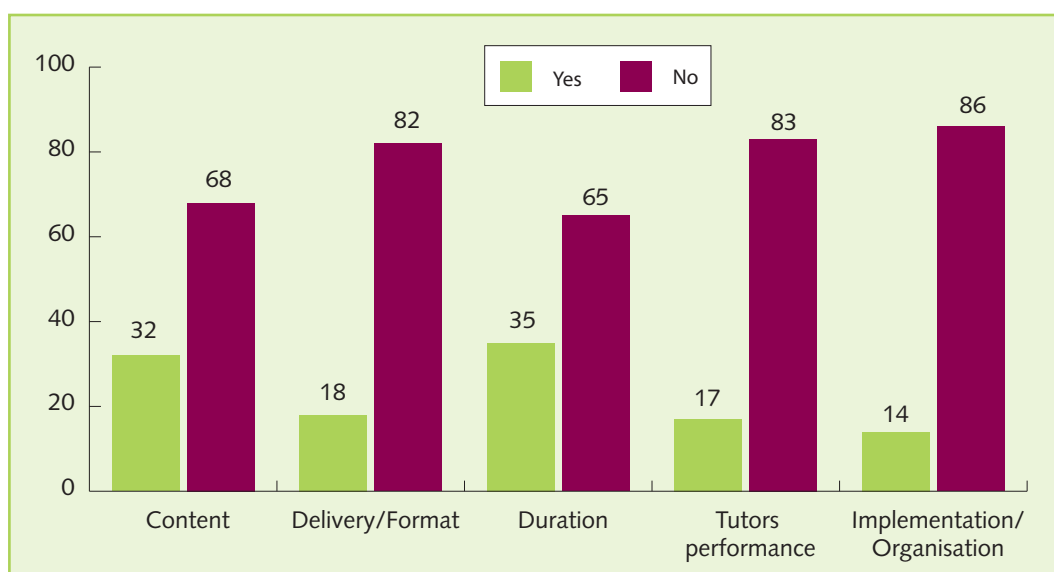
Amongst other recommendations, it was thought useful to indicate the knowledge level required to participate in order to allow interested parties to assess the suitability of courses. Separate workshops could be organised for different experience levels.

To take more account of the different backgrounds of participants, questionnaires on areas of interest could be sent out before events. Where appropriate, suggestions could be integrated into the training agenda. Prospective participants should also prove that they have sufficient knowledge of the languages to be used during training.

Respondents feel that learning material should be provided in electronic format and include presentations delivered by tutors, related publications, web links, legislative references, practical cases and guidance tools. This would serve as a good reference source for participants and facilitate dissemination.

Finally, a newsletter describing future activities and explaining how to register should be published in order to increase visibility. In terms of accessibility, it should be ensured that training venues are easily reachable by air and public transport.

PARTICIPANTS WITH OR WITHOUT SUGGESTIONS REGARDING CONTENT, DELIVERY/FORMAT, TUTORS' PERFORMANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION AND ORGANISATION (% OF RESPONDENTS)



7. CONCLUSIONS

The year 2008 has been one of consolidation within Better Training for Safer Food. Steady increases have taken place in the number and range of programmes on offer and in the number of participants trained.

The ground has also been laid for the future development of the initiative. This has come in the form of the preparation for transfer of competences to the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers, the work leading up to the launch of Better Training for Safer Food in Africa and the implementation of the intermediate assessment of the initiative.

Better Training for Safer Food in Africa is an important step in the initiative's expansion and implantation in new global regions. The restructuring and the intermediate assessment will provide a strong foundation for further development over the coming years.

These factors, together with the encouraging outcomes of the training programmes launched in 2008, give cause for optimism. The Training Sector intends to capitalise on this work in order to ensure continued success in 2009 and beyond.

The positive results which the initiative has achieved in 2008 would not have been possible without contributions from within and outside of the European Commission. The Training Sector would like to express its appreciation to all who have contributed to the success of Better Training for Safer Food. A special mention should go to Isabelle Rollier, coordinator for much of the third country activity, Moustapha Magumu, coordinator of Better Training for Safer Food in Africa and Ludwig Vandenberghe and Marc Vallons from the DG Health and Consumers financial cell.

Thanks go to all other colleagues within DG Health and Consumers and the Food and Veterinary Office as well as the members of the inter-service steering group from other Commission DGs and services. The Training Sector is also grateful to the National Contact Points from across Europe and in third countries whose coordination has been essential.

Finally, the training sector would like to thank the staff of EC Delegations in countries where training has been or is to be held for their assistance and support. Thanks go, in particular, to Patrick Deboyser, the Health and Consumer DG representative in the Delegation in Thailand, for the coordination and help he has provided in the organisation of training in the ASEAN region.

ANNEX 1. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following are information requests concerning Better Training for Safer Food often received by DG Health and Consumers Training Sector. This section aims to provide clear answers for interested parties.

HOW CAN I REGISTER TO TAKE PART?

National authority staff of EU, candidate and associated countries interested in participating in the activities should refer to their National Contact Point. Interested parties from third countries should refer to the contractor for the activity in which they wish to take part.

HOW DO I GET TOUCH WITH MY NATIONAL CONTACT POINT AND RELEVANT CONTRACTORS?

Contact details of National Contact Points are available in this report and at http://ec.europa.eu/food/training_strategy/participants/ms_contact_points_en.htm. Links to the websites of the contractors for 2009 can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/food/training_strategy/training/contractors2009_en.htm. These websites provide contact information and details of registration procedures.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING TO PARTICIPATE IN TRAINING?

For EU-based programmes, participation of competent authority staff from Member States and selected non-EU countries is funded from the Community budget. For third country activities funding is provided for national-level staff of developing countries. For most third country training, funding is limited to competent authority staff of countries in the global region for which the activity is intended.

WHAT ABOUT THE PRIVATE SECTOR?

Places are usually set aside for private sector participants on programmes of particular relevance to industrial sectors. The attendance of such participants is at their own expense, except in the case of "BTSF Africa" where most private sector participants' attendance costs are supported by the programme.

HOW ARE TRAINING ACTIVITIES CURRENTLY ORGANISED?

At present, the development of training activities is mainly based on the periodical launch of calls for tender aimed at concluding contracts for the implementation of training.

HOW CAN MY ORGANISATION PARTICIPATE IN CALLS FOR TENDER RELATED TO TRAINING?

To find out about these calls, interested parties should consult the Tenders Electronic Daily supplement to the Official Journal of the EU at <http://ted.europa.eu/> where prior information and contract notices are published. Relevant information is also published at the Better Training for Safer Food webpages at http://ec.europa.eu/food/training_strategy/tenderers/calls_tenders_en.htm.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO ACCESS TRAINING MATERIAL IF I DID NOT ATTEND?

The best way to do this is via colleagues who have taken part in training and have material at their disposal. During 2009 the Training Sector hopes to produce an e-learning tool with different sections focusing on subjects covered by the initiative. This should be made available to all interested parties. It is also hoped to place the tool at the dedicated webpages.

HOW COULD I CONTRIBUTE TO RAISING THE INITIATIVE'S PROFILE?

People who have attended training are encouraged to disseminate the knowledge acquired within their own organisations. Information tools produced to support the initiative can be obtained by contacting the Training Sector by e-mail at sanco-trainingforsaferfood@ec.europa.eu or by post at:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Health and Consumers
Unit E2 Training Sector
Rue Belliard 232
B-1049 Brussels

ANNEX 2. TRAINING SECTOR MEMBERS

The members of the DG Health and Consumers Training Sector are (from left to right): Lauro Panella (economic analysis), Daniela Chibbaro (stagiaire), Patrick De Cuyper (administrative support), Daniella Heyninck (administrative support), David Turner (communication) and Salvatore Magazzù (Head of Sector).



The specific programme "BTSF in Africa" is coordinated by Moustapha Magumu, DG SANCO/ Unit D3 – International questions (multilateral).

ANNEX 3. NATIONAL CONTACT POINTS

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ANNEX 4. PHOTO GALLERY FROM 2008 TRAINING ACTIVITIES



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