



European  
Commission



# Better Training for Safer Food

Annual Report 2013

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# Acronyms

Explanation of acronyms that appear in this document

ABP	Animal by-products
BIP	Border inspection post
BTSF	Better Training for Safer Food
CCP	Critical control point
DG SANCO	European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Consumers
EAHC	Executive Agency for Health and Consumers
EC	European Commission
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
FCM	Food contact materials
FNAO	Food and feed of non-animal origin
FVO	Food and Veterinary Office
FWD	Food- and water-borne disease
GMO	Genetically modified organism
GMP	Good management practice
HACCP	Hazard analysis and critical control point
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
ISSB	International Standard Setting Bodies
LBM	Live bivalve molluscs
MRL	Maximum residue levels
MS	Member States
NAS	National audit systems
NCP	National contact points
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NRMP	National residue monitoring plan
OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health
PPP	Plant protection products
RASFF	Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed
SPS	Sanitary and phytosanitary
STM	Sustained training mission
TRACES	Trade Control and Expert System
TC	Non-EU country
TSE	Transmissible spongiform encephalopathy
VMP	Veterinary medicinal products
WPM	Wood packaging material



# Foreword

The Better Training for Safer Food programme (BTSF) has now reached the end of its eighth year of activity, a year which has seen a number of changes to the way in which BTSF is run.

The BTSF Sector of the European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) continues to strengthen coordination and cooperation within DG SANCO, including the integration of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) capacity building within the sector. This broadens the scope of BTSF to encompass such aspects as cooperation and exchange on SPS regulatory issues. BTSF can now be even more active in promoting EU SPS requirements worldwide and provide more input into the SPS capacity building work both of the Commission and of other international fora.

Another important part of these changes has been the outsourcing to the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC) of tasks related to training that covers external trade relations, market access for non-EU countries and trade-related assistance. This enables EAHC to use funding sources other than those provided for by BTSF and has led to the launch of two new non-EU country training programmes, i.e. BTSF-WORLD and BTSF-ISSB (International Standard Setting Bodies). This is an important element in the development of a more flexible and demand-driven approach to training.

This outsourcing demonstrates the excellent working relationship which has been built up between DG SANCO and EAHC since we first entrusted the Agency with training-related tasks in 2008. It also reflects the good work done by EAHC in that time on such aspects as management of public procurement processes and monitoring of training implementation.

DG SANCO has continued to work to identify new areas where training needs exist. Seven training programmes on new subjects have been launched in 2013 and a further seven are set for launch from 2014. This will bring the number of subjects on which BTSF has provided training to over 40. Also, at the conclusion of the 2013 training, the number of control officials from across the globe who have attended BTSF training events is now in excess of 41 000.

With the development of the BTSF e-learning modules, which has continued over the past year, the number of people benefiting directly from the knowledge and expertise conveyed by BTSF is set to increase considerably in the coming years. The impact of the training should be further enhanced by the dissemination carried out by our participants within their services and by the training, communication and dissemination materials which EAHC is producing to support this process.

I am confident that DG SANCO and EAHC, which has now become the Consumers, Health and Food Executive Agency (CHAFEA), will continue to work closely together to drive up training standards and to identify ways of increasing the reach, impact and cost-effectiveness of BTSF. This will fulfil our core mission of ensuring safer food and feed and healthier animals and plants both in Europe and worldwide.

I would like to thank everyone who has played a part in making BTSF a success in 2013 and I am certain that what we have achieved thus far will provide a strong foundation on which to build from 2014 onwards.

**Paola Testori Coggi**

European Commission Director-General  
for Health and Consumers



# Introduction

The year 2013 has seen further success for BTSF as a whole and, specifically, EAHC's management of the activities, something which, in my capacity as Head of the EAHC Consumers and Food Safety Unit, gives me considerable satisfaction.

In general terms, BTSF has continued to expand as regards subjects covered and numbers of people trained. However, the achievements of 2013 cannot be measured by quantity alone. A key feature of our work has been the putting into practice of a more diverse and flexible approach to training provision.

Given the number of subjects which BTSF now covers, flexibility is essential if we are to adapt our training to take account of all new developments at EU and international level in our training areas.

An important innovation in 2013 is the introduction of sustained training missions (STMs) for EU Member States within the new SPS standards programme. Missions are launched when deficiencies are identified by the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) in order to support national authorities in improving compliance with EU standards. STMs have always been an important part of BTSF third country training and their incorporation into EU-based training will ensure that BTSF is even better tailored to Member States' specific needs.

A second new feature, and one with which we at EAHC are particularly pleased, is the broadening of the scope of the Agency's work to include measures related to external trade, market access for non-EU countries and trade-related assistance. Linked to this, EAHC can now access a wider range of funding sources, including those controlled by Commission services working in related areas such as the Directorates-General for Trade and Development and Cooperation.

This has already borne fruit in the shape of two new programmes: one providing training to enable third countries to participate effectively in International Standard Setting Bodies, the other transferring SPS know-how to developing country bodies.

Moreover, these new responsibilities demonstrate EAHC's strong working relationship with DG SANCO and our capacity to perform the tasks entrusted to us effectively. We will continue to work towards ever higher standards in the years to come.

All of these elements will better enable BTSF to provide top-quality EU-level training for national control officials responsible for ensuring food and feed safety, animal health and welfare and plant health and drive up standards of official controls in the EU and worldwide. On this score, the Interim Report on the evaluation of the impact of BTSF has brought encouraging news, showing that more than 96% of BTSF participants see the knowledge gained from the training as greatly beneficial to their daily work.

Aside from this, EAHC has continued to execute and monitor each BTSF training programme and has successfully launched 16 procurement processes to identify contractors to manage programmes. Without this work behind the scenes, BTSF could not function and so everyone involved with the programme has been essential to ensuring its success in 2013.

I am therefore very pleased to introduce this report, which provides information on all of the work done over the past 12 months and hope that it makes for interesting reading for you all.

**Salvatore Magazzù**

Head of the Consumers  
and Food Safety Unit, EAHC



# Training 2013 — EU-based programmes

EU-based programmes are mainly for Member State (MS) and Candidate country participants, with places on some programmes for participants from European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) countries and other selected non-EU countries. They are composed of workshops comprising activities such as presentations, discussions, case

studies and site visits during which participants observe the work of establishments and perform practical exercises. Specific programmes also include STM.

An international selection of participants and tutors at all workshops increases the value of knowledge exchanged during the training.

Programme	Courses	Participants	Hosting countries
Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point	19	418	Germany, France, Hungary, Malta, Portugal, United Kingdom
Food hygiene/controls	17	461	Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain
Health of aquaculture animals	3	119	Italy, Spain, United Kingdom
Health of bees/zoo animals	3	141	Belgium, Czech Republic
Food contact materials	3	130	Lithuania, Portugal
Food additives	5	250	Italy, Portugal, Spain
Veterinary medicinal products	6	261	Czech Republic, France, Latvia, Malta
Contingency planning	4	111	Germany, Slovenia, United Kingdom
Emerging animal diseases	3	139	Belgium, France, Portugal
Risk assessment	7	198	Germany, Italy, Lithuania
Plant health controls	9	262	Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Poland
Plant protection products	5	164	Hungary, Spain
Animal welfare	5	273	Italy, Slovenia, Spain, United Kingdom
Animal by-products	7	200	Belgium/Netherlands, Czech Republic, Germany, Slovenia
Feed law	6	190	Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Spain, Netherlands
Border inspection posts	5	188	Germany, Poland, Spain
Food/feed of non-animal origin	5	245	Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, Spain
The Trade Control and Expert System	5	151	Estonia, Italy, Spain

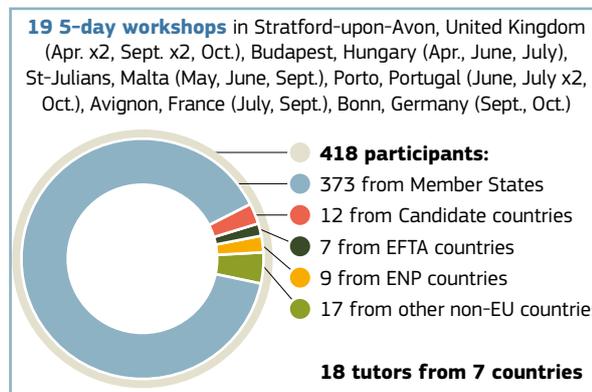
Programme	Courses	Participants	Hosting countries
Microbiological criteria in food	5	173	Estonia, Italy, Spain
Internal auditing	4	113	France, Spain
Quality schemes	4	108	Bulgaria, Italy, Poland, Portugal
Food information	8	318	Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain
Food-borne outbreak investigation	6	271	Estonia, Italy, Portugal
Control of food/feed contaminants	7	232	Czech Republic, Germany, Italy
Movement of cats and dogs	1	31	Spain
Support for enforcement in sanitary and phytosanitary fields	2	33	Czech Republic
<b>Total</b>		<b>5 180</b>	

## Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point principles

All EU food and feed businesses must implement procedures based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles. HACCP is recognised as the most effective tool for improving food and feed safety. It aims to identify hazards, prevent contamination and support verification of compliance with safety requirements.

The system consists of seven principles to be followed in sequence: hazard analysis, identification of critical control points (CCPs), establishment of critical limits, monitoring of CCPs, establishment of corrective actions, documentation and verification of effectiveness.

MS must verify that businesses meet safety requirements and so have to develop adequate controls. EU-level HACCP training is aimed at equipping them to do this.



HACCP courses are aimed at developing the ability to conduct audits to verify implementation of HACCP-based systems by food and feed businesses. The training begins by giving background information on HACCP and an overview of the seven principles. It then looks at the practical application of HACCP and the benefits such systems bring.

The role of prerequisite programmes in managing food safety is examined, as is the relationship between business quality assurance programmes and HACCP systems. Further subjects include the principles of effective HACCP auditing and implementation of procedures to verify compliance.

Practical activities form a key part of the training. Participants carry out auditing exercises in small working groups. Practical exercises followed by de-briefing sessions take place during visits to food and feed establishments implementing HACCP procedures.

## Food hygiene and controls

The EU has a range of measures aimed at ensuring high standards of hygiene during food production and proper control of food. Some of these apply to food businesses. Others are intended for authorities in charge of control of the food chain.

General hygiene requirements apply to all stages of food production, processing and distribution and necessitate implementation and maintenance of control procedures based on HACCP principles.

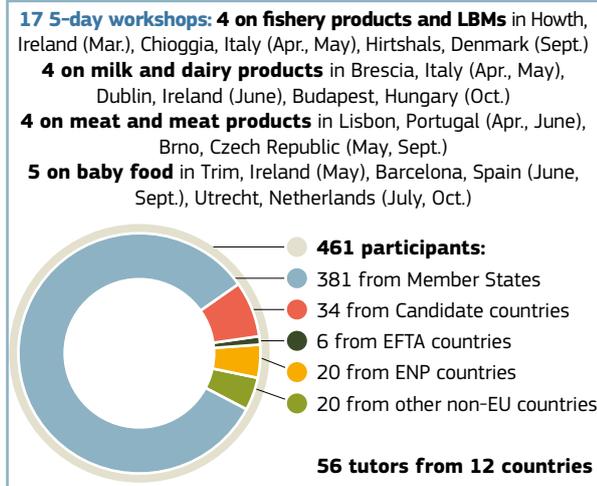
Hygiene and control rules for food of animal origin introduce various concepts. These include requirements that animals be clean at slaughter, provision of food chain information, risk-based inspection and simplified requirements for slaughter and de-boning

establishments and establishments producing meat-derived products. Detection methods for marine biotoxins in shellfish, microbiological criteria for certain food types and raw milk production requirements have been revised in recent years.

Specific legislation applies to production and marketing of infant formulae, follow-on formulae and other food for infants and young children. This covers the nature and composition of products, raw materials, prohibited substances, hygiene requirements and labelling.

Training in this area aims to spread knowledge and good practice and encourage exchange of experience. This should increase expertise on food hygiene and controls at all stages of production, processing and distribution of meat, milk, fish and baby food products.





Workshops on meat and meat products cover requirements for registration and approval of establishments, particularly low-capacity establishments. General hygiene requirements, including HACCP-based procedures are also considered, as are traceability, animal welfare and steps following slaughter for production of minced meat and meat preparations.

Other subjects include controls on primary production, inspections in slaughterhouses and establishments, peculiarities of fresh meat, farmed game and wild game, emergency slaughter, risk-based inspection and flexibility provisions. The training also covers microbiological criteria, sampling, trichinella examination requirements and other specialised procedures.

Topics in milk and dairy product workshops include registration and approval of establishments, hygiene and HACCP-based procedures, traceability and problems related to manufacture of dairy products. Controls on primary production and processing establishments and criteria for raw milk and traditional products are covered, as are controls concerning microbiological criteria and sampling methods.

Workshops on fishery products and live bivalve molluscs (LBMs) begin by looking at requirements for registration and approval of establishments and vessels, and hygiene and HACCP requirements. Official controls on primary production are covered, along with inspections in establishments, peculiarities of fishery products and LBMs, controls on microbiological criteria and sampling methods. Further subjects include marine biotoxin and freshness controls and classification and management of LBM production areas.

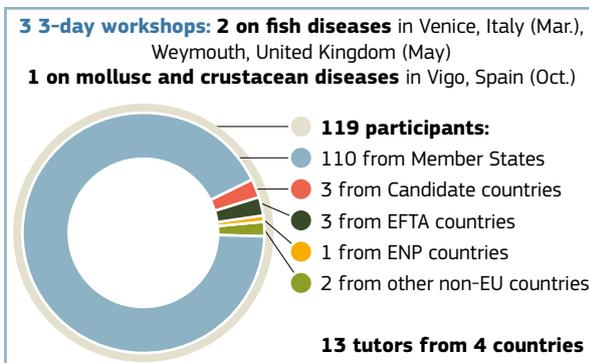
Training on baby food covers registration and approval of establishments and general hygiene requirements. It also looks at topics related to infant and follow-on formulae, baby food and processed cereal-based food for infants. Further subjects are inspections in production establishments, specific aspects of baby food, risk-based inspection, controls on microbiological criteria, sampling and pesticide control programmes required for baby food production.

All four types of workshop include site visits followed by debriefing sessions. These take place within establishments involved in the production or processing of meat and meat products, milk and dairy products, fishery products or baby food, or in LBM production areas, fishing, freezer or factory vessels, or fish markets, as appropriate.

## Health of aquaculture animals

Feedback from MS and stakeholders shows a need for EU-level training on fish, mollusc and crustacean diseases. Suitably experienced MS control staff who are familiar with the relevant EU legislation and in a position to train others following their attendance are the main target group.

The aim of the training is to convey a common and unambiguous understanding of the state of play regarding specific diseases and related EU legislation. This should lead to effective and harmonised implementation of the legislation across the EU and increase the efficacy of veterinary services in guarding against diseases affecting aquaculture animals.





Workshops cover application of EU provisions for control of mollusc and crustacean diseases or fish diseases, as appropriate. Topics include EU legislation relevant to aquaculture animals, particularly marketing and import rules, pathogen and disease description, surveillance and inspection and sampling procedures.

Outbreak measures are examined using scenarios and case studies. Internal and EU-level notifications and information and experience exchange are also covered.

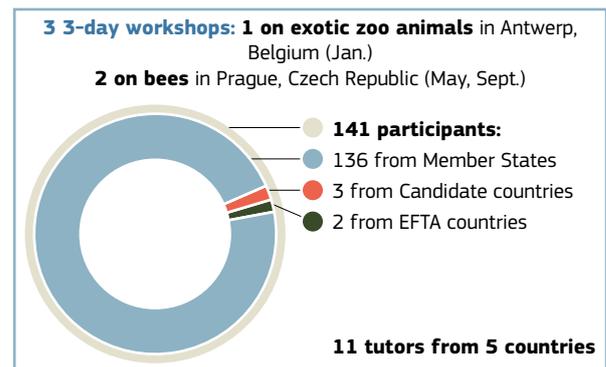
Field trips take place to mollusc, crustacean or fish farms. During the visits, participants observe practical elements of inspection and sampling. Trips to fish farms also include visits to hatchery, nursery and grow-out facilities.

## Health of bees and exotic zoo animals

MS and stakeholders have identified a need for EU-level training on diseases affecting bees and exotic zoo animals. MS control staff who are familiar with relevant EU legislation and in a position to train others are the main target.

Training in this field has two main areas of focus. The first is requirements for controls on honey and bumble bees aimed at ensuring early detection of pests. The second is good practice for checks on exotic animals destined for EU zoos and for controls related to EU zoo approval requirements.

The activity should provide a common understanding of the state of play regarding specific animal diseases and related EU legislation. This should improve implementation across the EU and increase the efficacy of veterinary services in protecting the EU against diseases affecting bees and zoo animals. It should also ensure wider implementation of good zoo approval practices.



Topics in courses on bee diseases include application of EU provisions for bee disease and pest control, particularly the small hive beetle and tritaxia mites. The courses cover EU legislation relevant to honey and bumble bees, pathogen and disease description, monitoring, assurance of adequate resources and inspection and sampling of various types of hives.

Outbreak measures are presented via case studies. Further subjects include traceability and follow-up checks, internal and EU-level notifications, information and experience exchange and planning and conducting of import controls. Field trips allow participants to examine beehives and practical elements of inspection and sampling.

Courses on diseases affecting exotic zoo animals and zoo approval procedures look at application of EU provisions for control of such diseases and other relevant legislation. They also present procedures for approval of establishments housing exotic animals and measures following import of animals and for movement of animals between approved, and from non-approved to approved EU establishments.

Further subjects include zoo quarantine procedures, internal and EU-level notifications and information and experience exchange. Visits to zoos enable participants to view practical elements of inspection and management procedures.

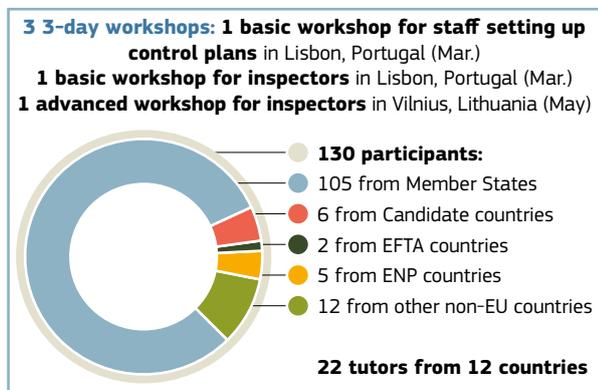
## Food contact materials

Food contact materials (FCMs) are materials intended to come into contact with food or water for human consumption. EU FCM legislation aims to protect public health and remove barriers to trade.

FCMs should not transfer their constituents into food in unacceptable quantities and should be manufactured in accordance with good management practice (GMP). Producers must thus have documented quality assurance and control systems in place.

The EU has drawn up lists of authorised substances and limits for their transfer into food. Manufacturers must issue declarations of compliance with these limits, backed by supporting documentation.

Excessive levels of migration into food of certain FCM constituents demonstrate a need to improve the skills of inspectors, while FVO reports show room for improvement in official FCM controls. Inspectors require training on provisions for GMP documentation and declarations of compliance and on changes arising from consolidation of EU plastics legislation.



Topics addressed in all types of workshop include EU FCM provisions, particularly those adopted in recent years, new testing rules for plastic materials and articles, enforcement of GMP requirements and setting-up of national FCM control plans. Other subjects include preparation by competent authorities of check lists for inspectors and information on different materials used in FCM.

Practical training is an important part of all FCM workshops. Depending on the type of workshop, it covers inspection of declarations of compliance and supporting documentation or inspection of FCM premises, including sampling.

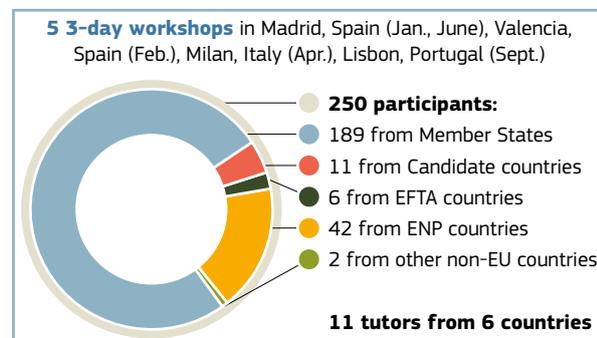
## Food additives

EU food additive rules aim to ensure effective functioning of the Internal Market and high levels of consumer protection. The EU is compiling a single list of all authorised additives and conditions for their use based on a new categorisation system.

The new system should make authorisations more understandable for control authorities. Training has been launched to inform control authorities about the new approach and facilitate enforcement of the new provisions.

The EU has also launched a re-evaluation programme for approved additives. MS must monitor consumption and use of additives using a common methodology and report their findings to the EC. Training should familiarise MS officials with this methodology.

New EU procedures have been introduced for presenting applications for authorisation of additives and checking their validity. The training will inform national authorities about these new rules so as to enable them to give guidance to food businesses applying for authorisation of additives or changes to conditions of use or specifications. It is mainly intended for competent authority staff responsible for food additive risk management, including setting-up of control plans, and inspectors of food additive producers and processors.



The workshops cover EU food additive provisions, in particular the new EU lists of additives authorised for use in food and of additives and carriers authorised for use in additives, flavourings, enzymes and nutrients. They give an update on food additive specifications and look at the additive re-evaluation programme and the common additive authorisation procedure and its implementing measures.

The training conveys an understanding of the EU lists, including interpretation of categories and use of guidance material. It covers the authorisation procedure, data requirements for risk assessment and management, as well as principles of risk assessment, including the tiered approach for estimation of exposure and approaches to risk management, including use of European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) opinions.

Further subjects include monitoring of MS consumption and use of additives, setting-up of national control plans including prioritisation of controls, information for inspectors and requirements for official control laboratories. Information from Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) notifications and conclusions from FVO missions are also outlined.

Participants are given an understanding of quantum satis and carry over principles using practical cases. Practical examples are also given of CCPs in food additive production, use and import, labelling requirements and checking of additive specifications provided by suppliers.

## Veterinary medicinal products

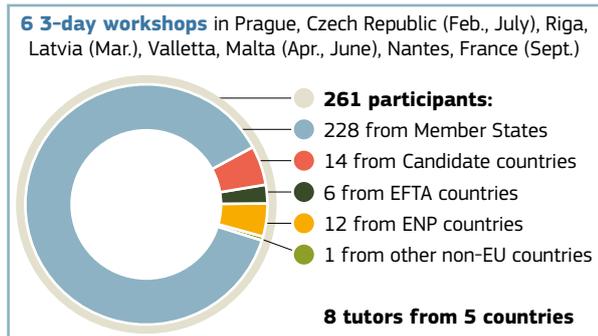
The EU requires MS to implement national residue monitoring plans (NRMPs) for specific groups of residues in food. MS assign responsibility to a central body for drawing up NRMPs, coordinating monitoring of central and regional departments, collecting data and sending results to the EC.

The plans involve taking targeted samples in order to detect illegal use of growth-promoting substances or to check compliance with maximum residue levels (MRLs) of authorised veterinary medicinal products (VMPs). In the event of infringements, actions include further investigation, taking of follow-up samples, holding or slaughter of animals, impounding of



carcasses, intensified controls and declaring products unfit for human consumption.

With a view to making NRMPs more effective, training has been launched to increase the expertise of national control staff in setting up systems for monitoring VMP residues in food of animal origin and carrying out such monitoring.



The workshops give an overview of the EU legislative framework for establishment of regulatory limits in food of animal origin and authorisation, distribution and use of VMP, as well as the structure of national control systems. They cover EU provisions for monitoring VMP residues in food of animal origin and production and use of medicated feed, as well as prohibitions of distribution and use of certain hormonal substances and of antibiotic use for growth promotion.

Further topics are maximum levels of coccidiostat or histomonostat carry over in non-target feed, cascade VMP use, VMP use in *equidae* and MRLs for biocides and pesticides. Analysis and interpretation of results, accreditation of residue monitoring laboratories and validation of analytical methods are also dealt with.

Work on requirements for residue monitoring and controls covers the structure of national systems, sampling levels and frequency, self-monitoring by and co-responsibility of businesses and types of check, including random, targeted and suspect sampling. It also looks at follow-up actions, measures to take in cases of infringement, procedural aspects such as approval of plans and reporting and import issues such as approval of TC monitoring plans.

Practical training on NRMPs covers aspects ranging from design of plans to sampling and interpretation of results. An overview is also given of infringements detected under national systems and actions taken.

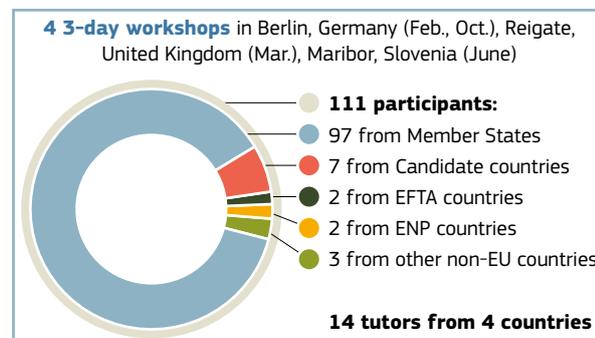


## Contingency planning and animal disease control

Outbreaks of diseases such as foot-and-mouth, classical swine fever and avian influenza have been controlled or eradicated by culling large numbers of animals. This is expensive and raises ethical questions.

In order to minimise socio-economic and public health consequences, animal disease outbreaks require immediate response. Improved preparedness is vital for this.

Training for MS veterinary staff on disease prevention, outbreak control and contingency planning should provide a common understanding of disease control tools. It should also better enable veterinary services to guard against animal disease.



Topics addressed include EU legislation relevant to animal disease epidemics, emergency preparedness, contingency planning, procedures for investigating suspect cases, measures to be taken in the event of outbreaks, preventive measures and biosecurity. Further subjects covered are management of animal movement, notifications and exchange of information at local, national and EU levels and coordination between public health and animal health services.

Practical demonstration of disease control techniques is an important part of the workshops. Half-day field trips are thus organised to relevant establishments where practical elements are presented to participants who then have the chance to undertake hands-on training themselves.

## Emerging animal diseases

Factors such as increased movement of animals, people and goods, high density of animal populations, climate change and changes in animal handling and breeding have led to the emergence and re-emergence of certain animal diseases. Veterinary services appear insufficiently prepared to address some of these diseases.

In tackling emerging diseases, adaptation of infectious agents and vectors to hosts, the role of wildlife and animal immunity response must be considered. As many emerging animal diseases are potentially transmissible to humans, interaction between humans, animals and the environment is of great importance.

Training on surveillance strategies for staff of national veterinary services aims to address risks from emerging diseases and practices for detecting, preventing and controlling them. It should provide a common understanding of suitable control tools and related actions, increase veterinary services' ability to guard against such diseases and improve coordination between MS and with the EU's trading partners on these issues.

The sessions focus on issues of surveillance, diagnosis, control and zoonotic and wildlife aspects. Topics addressed include EU legislation relevant to emerging animal diseases, relevant pathogen and disease description, design of surveillance, notification and exchange of information at local, national and EU levels and coordination between public health and animal health services.

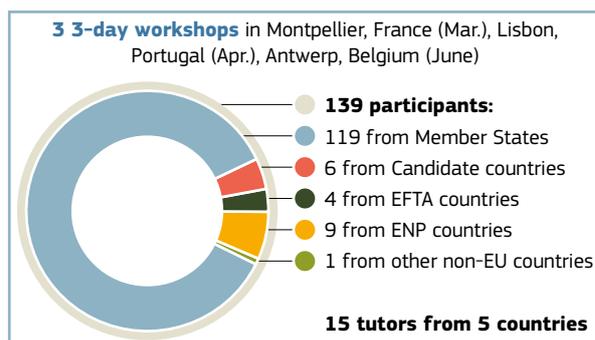
Further subjects include bio-terrorism and epidemiological intelligence, the EU One Health concept and a range of diseases, including West Nile Fever, Peste des Petits Ruminants, African Swine Fever, Rift Valley Fever, Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever, the Nipah virus and Hendra disease.

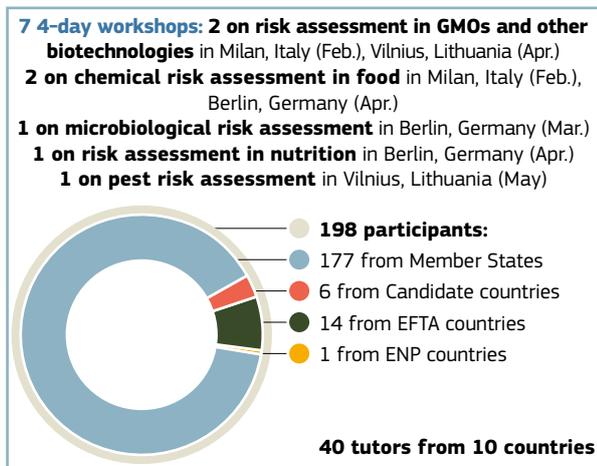
Measures to be taken in the event of outbreaks are explained using various scenarios and study cases. Practical training is also provided during half-day field trips to relevant holdings.

## Risk assessment

A 2009 EFSA report on food safety risk assessment training identified a need for training on risk assessment principles and methods for national authority scientists. The report recommended linking such training with BTSF.

Training on risk assessment aims to convey theoretical risk assessment knowledge in specific areas and practical awareness through use of case studies based on real-life scenarios. This should increase participants' knowledge of and skills in risk assessment principles and methods, thereby contributing to harmonising risk assessment approaches and building mutual confidence among MS authorities in this area. It should also better equip participants to undertake and understand risk assessments and to serve on national and international scientific committees.





All workshops give an introduction to food safety risk assessment. This covers the three pillars of risk analysis, EU and international regulatory frameworks, basic steps, main developments in the science of risk assessment and key concepts and terminology.

Microbiological risk assessment workshops introduce the subject, including different steps, national- and international-level assessment, approaches in different areas of food and feed safety, problem formulation, exposure routes and related legal frameworks. They then focus on hazard identification and characterisation, exposure assessment, risk characterisation, risk management aspects related to microbiological risk assessment and availability and use of data.

The introduction to chemical risk assessment covers similar areas to those for microbiology and also includes differences between types of chemicals in food and feed and behaviour of chemical contaminants. Work on hazard identification and characterisation looks at basic toxicology concepts and different endpoints in toxicity studies, while that on exposure assessment focuses on collection of consumption and chemical occurrence data and exposure estimations. Sessions on risk characterisation look at the hazard index, margins of exposure and analysis of uncertainties. MRL-setting is also covered.

The introduction to pest risk assessment is followed by work on data requirements and steps in pest risk assessment, including problem formulation and assessment of the introduction and spread of harmful organisms and their potential consequences. Identification of appropriate risk management options is covered, including options for consignments and for prevention or reduction of infestation. Further subjects are assess-

ment of the effect of risk management options on risk levels and documentation requirements.

Nutrition risk assessment workshops explore specificities of the subject such as assessment and management based on nutrient or food type, including essential and non-essential nutrients, macro- and micro-nutrients and novel foods. They look at the risk assessment model for nutrition, including concepts, terminology and methods and hazard identification and characterisation, as well as dietary intake assessment, risk characterisation and modelling tools for different management options.

The introduction to risk assessment in genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and other biotechnology looks at applications of biotechnology, specificities of risk assessment of food and feed derived from biotechnology, statistical principles, comparative analysis methods and the relevant legal framework. The training then covers hazard identification and characterisation principles and methods applied to whole food or feed, exposure assessment of food and feed derived from genetically modified (GM) plants, risk characterisation and mitigation. Post-market monitoring and the rationale and methodology of environmental risk assessment of GMOs are also dealt with.



## Plant health controls

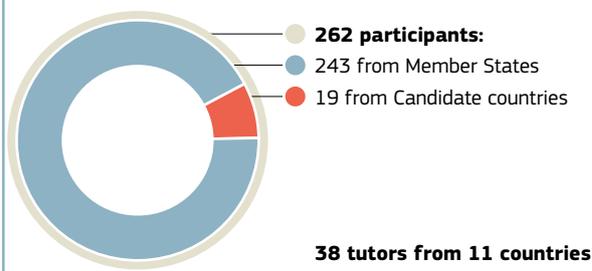
FVO missions have revealed shortcomings in implementation of potato control directives in several MS. They also revealed substantial differences between MS in terms of inspectors' approach, knowledge and ability with regard to controls under the EU plant passport regime. Further discrepancies have been noted as regards handling of pest outbreaks and approaches to controls on imported plants and plant products.

A number of emergency decisions lay down requirements to be met before plant passports are issued. These require MS to organise surveys, often in forests, in order to assess whether their territories are free of relevant harmful organisms.

In recent years, a large number of consignments have been intercepted with wood packaging material (WPM) containing harmful organisms. MS plant health services are now responsible for authorising WPM treatment facilities.

Against this background, training takes place on potato control directives, plant passport regime inspections, import controls, inspections required by EU emergency decisions and WPM controls.

**9 workshops: 2 3-day sessions on the EU plant quarantine regime for potatoes** in Warsaw, Poland (Mar.), Riga, Latvia (Oct.)  
**1 4-day session on the EU internal plant quarantine regime** in Riga, Latvia (June)  
**2 3-day sessions on the EU plant quarantine regime for imports** in Rome, Italy (Feb.), Warsaw, Poland (Sept.)  
**2 4-day sessions on the EU plant quarantine regime for WPM** in Budapest, Hungary (Apr., Dec.)  
**2 4-day sessions on internal controls required by EU emergency decisions for forested areas** in Como, Italy (May, Nov.)  
**A 4-day session on internal controls required by EU emergency decisions for non-forested areas** will also be organised under this contract



Training on the EU plant quarantine regime for potatoes looks at application of EU provisions for control of potato pests, particularly ring rot and brown rot and potato cyst nematodes. This includes pathogen and

disease description, monitoring, planning, assurance of resources, inspection, sampling, quarantine measures following outbreaks, traceability, follow-up checks, internal and EU-level notifications, information exchange, import controls and infringement procedures. Field trips take place to storage places and watercourses to present practical elements of inspection and sampling.

Topics addressed in training on the internal plant quarantine regime include application of EU provisions on producer registration and plant passports, quarantine requirements for products to be accompanied by plant passports and inspections. Preparation and issuing of passports, controls under export certification systems, Internal Market checks, quarantine measures following interception, non-regulated pest management, handling of outbreaks and consequences for passporting are also covered. Further subjects include infringements and sanctions, domestic and EU-level notifications and information exchange. Participants visit plant health offices and registered production premises to see inspection and sampling procedures.

Workshops on the plant quarantine regime for imports cover EU import control provisions, including organisational aspects, policy making, planning, internal coordination, cooperation with customs and other authorities and practical inspections. They also cover inspections at places other than points of entry into the EU, control of imports for scientific purposes, quarantine measures following interception, non-regulated pest management and use of MS data for targeting inspections. The training includes visits to points of entry, border inspection posts (BIPs) and inspection post facilities at points of destination.

Workshops on the WPM quarantine regime cover EU and Internal Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) provisions on control of WPM originating in third countries and moved internally. They provide information on types of WPM, such as processed, debarked and bark-free wood, and on organisms which can be carried by WPM, targeting of high-risk consignments and risks related to WPM from specific countries. Participants consider inspections of WPM in various transport types and for imports and internal trade, as well as laboratory sampling, handling of non-compliant material, domestic, EU-level and country of origin notifications, infringement procedures and sanctions. Production of WPM in heat treatment facilities and using other methods and procedures for repaired or recycled WPM are also dealt with. Trips take place to storage places to present inspection and sampling, and to WPM manufacturers.

Training on internal controls required by EU emergency decisions for non-forested areas looks at establishment and development of survey methodologies, including scientific and statistical principles, choice of observation points, policy making and planning for specific organisms. It also looks at practical aspects of surveys, laboratory sampling, registration of survey results, record keeping, reporting, management of specific organisms and production and movement requirements for EU-produced and imported propagating material. Other subjects include internal coordination, working instructions, training, experience exchange and information campaigns. Participants visit sites where surveys are carried out, including nurseries, parks, groves and greenhouses.

Courses on controls under emergency decisions for forests cover similar topics to those on non-forested areas. They also look at characteristics of forests in Europe, plant health status assessment and management of harmful organisms in forests and surveys targeting specific groups of organisms. Field visits take place to forests. For courses on emergency decisions for both non-forested and forested areas visits cover different types of inspection, use of pheromone traps, sampling for laboratory purposes, packing and sending of samples and eradication.

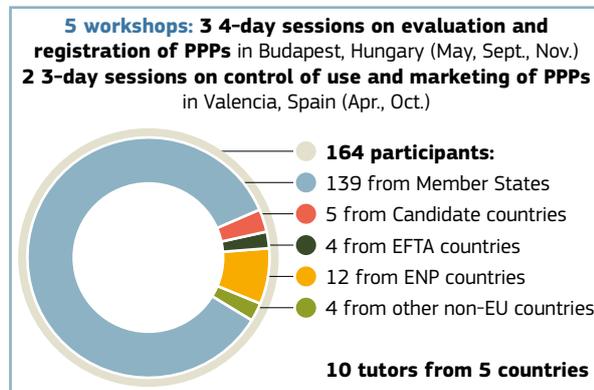
## Plant protection products

Active substances authorised for use in plant protection products (PPPs) in the EU are listed in Annex I of Directive 91/414. MS must ensure that all such substances authorised for use on their territory meet the conditions for inclusion on this list.

MS are re-evaluating national authorisations which require cooperation and work-sharing to ensure rapid re-evaluation and completion of a harmonised PPP authorisation system based on the division of the EU into geographical authorisation zones. Workshops are needed to ensure correct application of the rules and closer cooperation.

MS must check that PPPs are used and marketed in compliance with EU requirements and in particular with authorisation conditions and information on labelling. Effective use and marketing controls protect workers, consumers and the environment.

Illegal trade in and use of unauthorised PPPs continues in some MS. Training should help to combat this, while developing an integrated approach to controls covering environmental and health issues.



Evaluation and registration workshops are aimed at ensuring that MS approach post-Annex I compliance checking and PPP re-registration consistently. They outline administrative procedures and scientific principles to be followed.



Participants work through practical examples to reduce backlog and improve work sharing. They discuss the risk envelope approach to ensure its consistent and efficient application and try to further develop zonal system procedures.

The strategy is to identify substances to be assessed, provide criteria for assessments, training, advice and technical support and set deadlines for undertaking training and assessing results. This should lead to compilation of documentation for use by MS in meeting their obligations. It should provide guidance on administrative procedures, data protection, equivalent specifications, re-registration, reporting, the risk envelope, mutual recognition, classification, labelling, the zonal process, use of guidance documents, quality management and auditing.

Workshops on control of PPP use and marketing allow MS to share experience so as to improve harmonisation and identify measures to strengthen control systems. From previous workshops, transposition and control of classification and labelling requirements and analysis of links between use and marketing rules and worker safety and environmental monitoring requirements have been identified as requiring more work.

Subjects covered include the EU legal framework for control of PPP use and marketing and related environmental and health provisions. Workshops also look at national control systems and activities, coordination with authorities in related areas and infringements and follow-up under national penalty systems.

The workshops are aimed at increasing the skills base in participating countries so as to equip them to ensure proper PPP use and marketing. They should lead to the identification of certain MS as study cases, examination of criteria for planning and monitoring controls and support for their improvement, comparison of MS systems and identification of weaknesses and solutions. They should also contribute to follow-up workshops on issues requiring more investigation.

The output should be a report for use by MS authorities providing guidance on planning of controls and risk analyses, procedures and documentation, analytical support for laboratories, assessment of non-compliance and follow-up, quality management and audits.

## Animal welfare

The EU recognises animals as sentient beings and has been developing animal welfare legislation for over 30 years while being at the forefront of initiatives to promote it internationally. In formulating policy in areas such as agriculture, fisheries, transport, the Internal Market and research, the EU pays full regard to animal welfare.

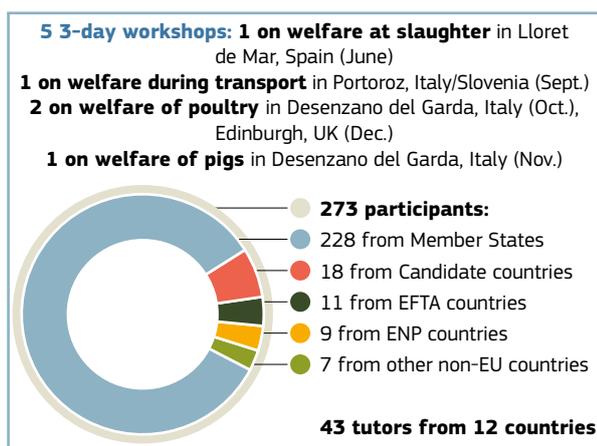
EU legislation on protection of farm animals aims to ensure that their physiological needs are respected. EU law on welfare during transport covers such operations as handling of animals at assembly centres or slaughterhouses.



Legislation on animal protection at slaughter aims to minimise suffering through use of approved stunning methods. To be allowed to export to the EU, third country establishments must guarantee equivalent treatment. New EU rules provide for operators to develop standard operating procedures and to appoint officers to see that welfare standards are met.

FVO reports highlight deficiencies in application of stunning methods and transport legislation while disease outbreaks have exposed limitations of certain culling techniques. Also, compliance with legislation for protection of farm animals should be improved.

The 2012–15 EU strategy for protection and welfare of animals prioritises enforcement of welfare requirements and stresses the importance of training. This should contribute to developing good practice and ensuring compliance with EU and international standards.



Topics in poultry welfare courses include relevant EU legislation, the scientific basis for proper housing, management, handling and transport of poultry, assessment of farming systems, standard operating procedures and welfare outcomes. Courses explain how to inspect farms, set up and monitor data collection systems and collect information for developing internet-based training for veterinarians. Practical training covers inspection of poultry farms based on biosecurity rules.

Courses on pig welfare look at relevant legislation, the scientific basis for proper housing, management and handling of pigs, existing farming systems, welfare outcomes, efficient farm inspections and information gathering for developing e-learning for veterinarians. Means other than legislation of developing and certifying animal welfare, such as

independent certification schemes, are also introduced. Practical training focuses on assessment of housing conditions and management practices and includes demonstrations of how to make best use of welfare outcomes.

Training on welfare at killing takes account of the particularities of the main farmed species. It looks at relevant legislation and the international framework, assessment of standard operating and monitoring procedures, the role of animal welfare officers, the scientific basis for proper handling, stunning and killing of animals and assessment of lairage facilities. Further subjects include main stunning and killing techniques used in Europe and monitoring of welfare outcomes in slaughterhouses. Information gathering for development of e-learning for veterinarians is covered, as is experience gained from disease epidemics, including third country perspectives.

Workshops on welfare during transport deal with relevant EU legislation and the international framework, the scientific basis for proper transport of animals, transport conditions and records to check, practical aspects of animal handling and design of vehicle facilities. Experience from use of navigation systems for monitoring and enforcing welfare requirements during transport and from general animal transport, including in third countries, is shared. Alternative approaches to legislation for assessing welfare, such as private audit schemes, are also discussed.

Presentations in all types of workshop take account of biosecurity, public health, and food safety and quality. Practical training takes place in laying hen, broiler or pig farms, slaughterhouses, transport companies, vehicles or control posts as appropriate. It uses case studies and problem-solving techniques to develop participants' ability to identify critical points and find solutions.

## Animal by-products

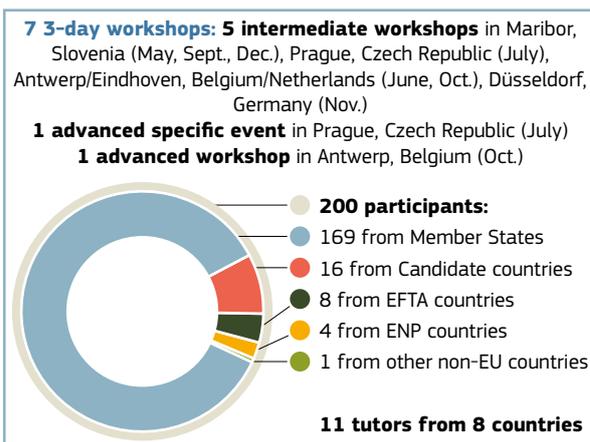
Animal by-products (ABPs) are materials of animal origin not intended for human consumption. More than 20 million tonnes of ABP are generated in the EU annually.

These materials are used as they are, transformed into products for use in feed, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, laboratory reagents and other technical products, or disposed of as waste by incineration or co-incineration. More and more ABPs are imported from or exported to third countries for similar purposes.

Using certain ABP in feed can spread disease or contaminants and ABP may pose environmental problems if not properly handled. The EU aims to prevent ABP from presenting animal or public health risks and only material fit for human consumption may be used in feed.

The EU has established principles for risk-based categorisation of ABP. Measures for production, collection, transport, storage, use and disposal apply based on categorisation. EU rules also govern use and disposal of material excluded from the food chain, identification and traceability and import, export and transit of ABPs and derived products.

ABP training for competent authority staff should spread knowledge and best practice in order to increase feed safety expertise at all stages of the chain and in inspection of establishments handling ABP.



Topics addressed include requirements for registration, approval and inspection of ABP establishments, rules for validation of processing methods and application of alternative methods. Links between public health and other relevant legislation are outlined in relation to ABP, as are implications of legislation on transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs) for ABP, rules under the cascade system and for marketing of ABPs and derived products.

The training covers a range of technical topics related to use, marketing, import and export of certain ABPs and derived products. Products covered include research, trade and display samples, blood and blood products, intermediate products, medical devices, processed animal protein, meat and bone meal, used cooking oils, fertilisers, waste food intended for use in feed and feed for specific uses.

Further subjects are controls on traceability and commercial documents and use of the Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) for ABP imports. Site visits followed by debriefing sessions take place at establishments involved in processing and marketing of ABP.

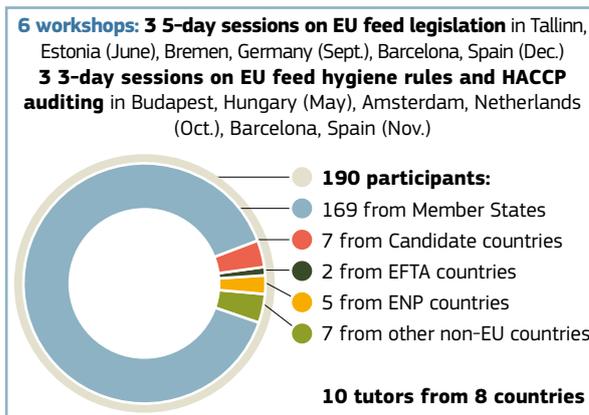
## Feed law

Feed production is a key agricultural activity and around 230 million tonnes are fed to farmed animals in the EU annually. Feed rules from the 1970s emphasised livestock productivity. This has shifted over time towards protection of human and animal health and the environment.

The EU has measures aimed at ensuring feed safety and hygiene at all stages of production. Undesirable substances legislation ensures that feed is marketed only if it is of sound quality and presents no danger to human or animal health, the environment or livestock production. Under ABP legislation, only material from animals fit for human consumption may be used in feed.

Additives are used to improve the quality of feed of animal origin. An additive may not be marketed unless authorised following scientific evaluation demonstrating that it has no harmful effects.

EU-level training for official feed control staff should increase levels of feed safety expertise at all stages of production, processing and distribution and ensure more efficient inspection of establishments.



All workshops cover requirements for registration, approval and inspection of feed establishments, hygiene and HACCP procedures and use of national or EU good practice guides. They also deal with rules for use of raw or processed materials in feed or compound feed, sampling methods and other specialised inspection procedures.

For both types of workshop, participants visit establishments involved in production, manufacturing and marketing of feed materials and compound feed. The visits are followed by debriefing sessions.

EU feed legislation subjects include authorisation, supervision and labelling of feed additives and requirements for materials whose circulation or use in feed is prohibited, and marketing and labelling of dietetic feed and products such as bioproteins. The training also covers authorisation of new GM feed, traceability and labelling of feed produced from GMOs, risks from biological and chemical contaminants and import controls.

Training on EU feed hygiene rules and HACCP auditing looks at traceability, production requirements at farm level, flexibility provisions, microbiological criteria, and controls on primary production and manufacturing establishments. HACCP procedures are dealt with in depth, including principles, benefits, links to business quality assurance programmes and evaluation and suitability of HACCP plans.

Audit preparation is covered, including research, desk reviews, risk-based targeting and check list development, as are performance of audits, collection of evidence, drawing of findings and conclusions, making recommendations, reporting and follow-up. The relationship between the different steps is also considered.

## Veterinary and food safety checks at border inspection posts

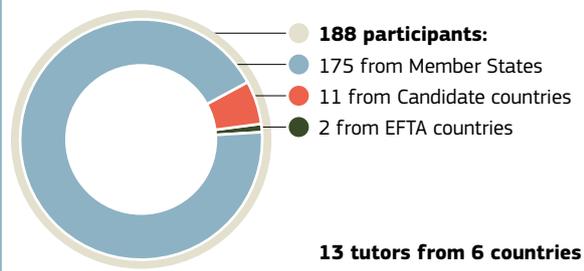
Border controls are vital for ensuring that EU imports meet required standards and protecting public and animal health. Border control staff must thus implement effective and harmonised veterinary and food safety checks.



EU law lays down health and supervisory requirements on imports of food, live animals and animal products so as to guarantee that imports meet standards equivalent to those required for production in, and trade between MS.

Training for border control officials in good practices for veterinary and food safety checks is aimed at improving knowledge of the field and ensuring consistently high implementation standards across the EU.

**5 3-day workshops: 2 in seaport BIPs** in Algeciras, Spain (Apr., Oct.)  
**2 in airport BIPs** in Munich, Germany (June, Nov.)  
**1 in road and rail BIPs** in Terespol/Luluryki, Poland (Sept.)



All courses cover relevant EU legislation, especially where interpretation can be difficult, and procedures such as channelling and sampling for controls on imports and transit products. They also look at

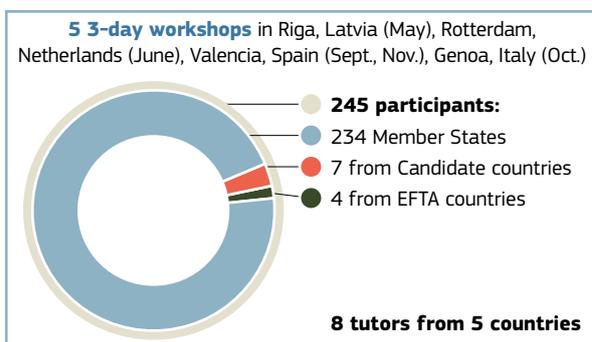
cooperation and information exchange with customs and other authorities, intelligence gathering and risk assessment. In addition, all workshops include discussion of common problems and their solutions, particularly as regards poor certification, as well as practical training in airport, seaport, road or rail BIPs, as appropriate.

Airport and road and rail workshops cover additional controls on live animals, while destruction of kitchen waste and other waste animal products from vessels and aircraft and checks on consignments sent by post or courier feature in seaport and airport workshops. Road and rail workshops consider checks on products of animal origin and non-commercial pets, control of re-imported consignments and exit checks on transit consignments. Airport BIP training also looks at rules on personal imports and entry of pets.

## Food and feed of non-animal origin

EU food and feed imports must comply with all conditions laid down or recognised by the Union. National control staff checking compliance should therefore be suitably qualified.

Training is thus provided for staff involved in official controls on imports of certain types of food and feed of non-animal origin (FNAO). This is aimed at improving knowledge and implementation of EU provisions and developing good control practices.



Courses take place in EU designated points of entry that have been operational for at least five years with annual throughputs of at least 2 000 consignments and in which controls cover a wide range of aspects related to FNAO imports and a variety of such products.

Topics include relevant EU legislation, procedures for import controls of certain FNAO products, standard operating procedures, information exchange and cooperation with customs. Best practices are discussed, as is performance of documentary, identity and physical checks, including sampling. Participants also carry out simulation exercises.

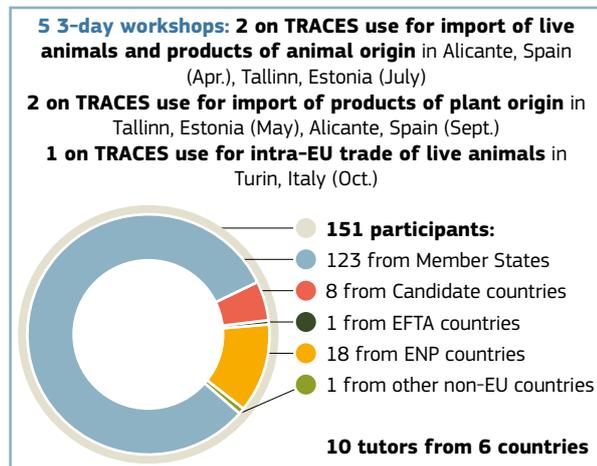
## TRACES in EU Member States

As the world's biggest food importer, the EU has comprehensive legislation to ensure that all food sold in, produced in, or imported to the Union meets well-defined standards. As part of its import control system, the EU has set up TRACES, an integrated computer system to track live animals and rejected food.

MS use TRACES to comply with traceability requirements for traded and imported live animals, semen and embryos and products of animal origin. In 2011, the scope of TRACES was widened to cover plants and products of plant origin.

TRACES is based on a network encompassing local and national authorities of MS and other participating countries and businesses. It provides access to EU legislation, a tracking system for food, feed, animals and plants, lists of third country establishments authorised to export to the EU and a registration system for rejected consignments. It uses all EU and some non-EU languages.

Training on TRACES is aimed at disseminating good practice for its use, improving knowledge of the system and ensuring a consistently high standard of use.



All courses give a detailed explanation of TRACES, in particular of recent developments on procedures at points of entry, import and trade certification and inclusion of products of plant origin and plant health aspects. They also emphasise aspects of food and animal health and welfare legislation related to trade and import control rules concerning food and feed safety and animal and plant health.

Site visits allow participants to carry out practical exercises on TRACES use and related certification activities. For workshops on TRACES use for import of live animals and products of animal origin, products of plant origin and live plants, participants visit points of entry. For workshops on intra-EU trade of live animals, they visit veterinary units.

## Microbiological criteria in foodstuffs

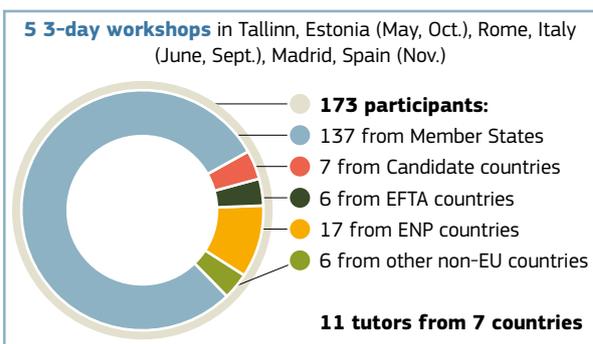
Microbiological contamination presents a considerable food safety risk. Microbiological criteria give guidance on the acceptability of food and manufacturing, handling and distribution processes and are an integral part of hygiene control.

The EU has revised its microbiological criteria for food and has defined criteria for several food categories and microbes. Two types of criteria have also been defined: food safety criteria, which apply to products at the end of the manufacturing process and during their shelf-life, and process hygiene criteria, which define the acceptability of manufacturing processes and apply during production.



Businesses must ensure that supply, handling and processing of raw materials and food meet process hygiene criteria and that food safety criteria can be met under foreseeable conditions of distribution, storage and use.

EC sources show room for improved implementation of these criteria by businesses and a need to improve controls on implementation. EU-level training should help to provide this.



Topics include the risk management role of microbiological criteria in EU legislation in terms of their purpose and resulting benefits and their role in harmonising food

monitoring. Studies to investigate compliance throughout the shelf-life of products are considered, with reference to the EC Guidance Document on *Listeria monocytogenes* shelf-life studies for ready-to-eat foods.

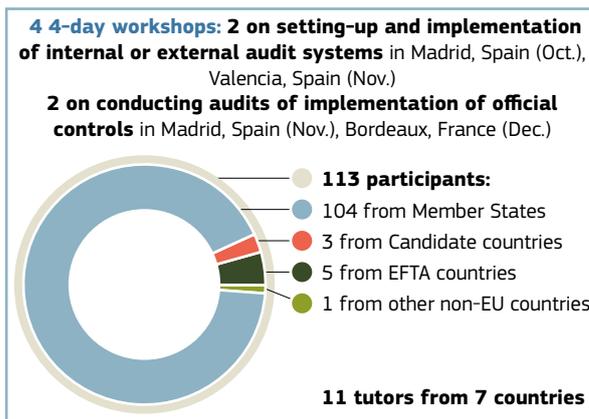
Implementation of microbiological criteria by food businesses on various products is explored, as is verification of implementation by competent authorities, including sampling methods.

## Audit systems and internal auditing

Under EU law, food, feed, animal health and animal welfare controls performed by national authorities must be audited independently. For this, national audit systems (NAS) must be developed.

These audits must be distinguished from day-to-day control supervision and the EU has drawn up guidelines for their conduct. Results must be reported annually to the EC and the reports will be used for developing annual FVO inspection programmes.

MS officials need to be familiar with auditing of controls and to understand the difference between compliance and performance audits. NAS are under development and training to spread good auditing practice will support a consistent auditing approach and help to ensure that findings are of comparable value.



Workshops on setting up and implementing audit systems introduce principles, types and aims of auditing and look at options for safeguarding independence of audit systems and auditors.



Preparation of audit programmes is covered, along with principles of risk-based programming. This includes defining scope, aims and criteria, setting up teams, auditor selection and training, monitoring and reporting on programmes, follow-up and preventive and corrective actions. Other subjects include transparency and independent scrutiny, documentation procedures and coordination between audit and other control systems.

Training on conducting audits gives background on internal auditing and looks at how to plan audits and define scope and aims. It sets out pre-audit tasks, including research, desk review, risk-based targeting and check list development and looks at assigning roles within teams, performing audits, collecting evidence, drawing findings and conclusions, making recommendations, reporting and follow-up.

## EU quality schemes

A key goal of agricultural quality policy is to inform buyers and consumers about product characteristics and farming methods. Without accurate information, they cannot be expected to pay a fair price.

Protected Designations of Origin, Protected Geographical Indications and Traditional Specialities Guaranteed are EU schemes aimed at encouraging production of agricultural products and food that meet strict specifications, protecting valuable names from misuse and providing guarantees concerning characteristics.

Organic food production has environmental and animal welfare benefits. The EU organic farming scheme is designed to guarantee that products labelled as organic are produced in line with requirements.

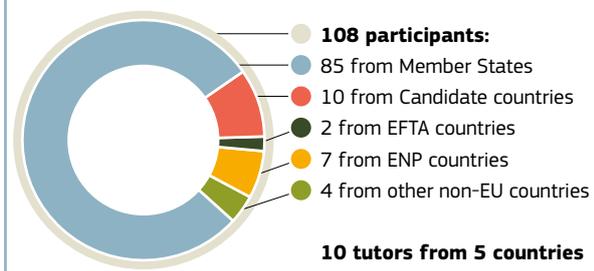
Consumers must be able to trust EU quality scheme labelling, which is only credible if backed by effective controls. Quality schemes legislation requires MS to establish systems to verify that organic and protected designation requirements are met by products labelled under the schemes.

A clear understanding of the requirements is crucial to the operation of such systems. Training on the subject aims to disseminate good control practices, improve knowledge of the area and ensure consistent and rigorous implementation of the rules.



**4 3-day workshops: 2 on the organic farming scheme** in Warsaw, Poland (Oct.), Sofia, Bulgaria (Dec.)

**2 on protected designation schemes** in Lisbon, Portugal (Nov.), Milan, Italy (Dec.)



Topics include controls on primary production, processing, distribution, transport and retail under EU organic and protected designation legislation, requirements of EU controls legislation and its application to quality schemes. Workshops also look at competent authorities' responsibilities, including oversight of control bodies to whom tasks have been delegated, and the responsibilities of such bodies, particularly those certifying products.

The training conveys an understanding of requirements for bodies operating product certification systems and for marketing accreditation, as well as their application to quality scheme legislation. It also looks at MS responsibilities as regards reporting to the EC. Discussion sessions allow participants to consider common control problems and their solutions.



# New EU-based programmes

## Food composition and information

EU food labelling rules forbid misleading labelling and set down details which have to appear on labels and which must be easy to understand, legible and indelible. Further provisions concern nutrition and health claims which must be substantiated by scientific evidence.

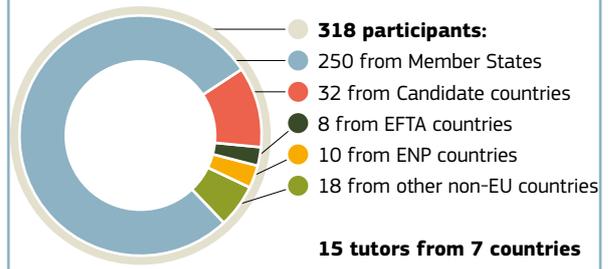
Food supplements are concentrated sources of substances with a nutritional or physiological effect and rely heavily on nutrition and health claims. Harmonised labelling rules have been established for supplements.

Vitamins and minerals are added to foods for such purposes as restoration of content where this has been lost. EU food fortification rules guard against the risk of excessive consumption of vitamins and minerals.

Dietetic foods satisfy specific nutritional needs and include baby food and gluten-free food. EU dietetic food rules aim to protect vulnerable groups.

As an essential goal of EU labelling policy is to give consumers accurate information, controls must be thorough. Training on labelling rules has thus been launched for staff in charge of such controls.

**8 4-day workshops** in Trim, Ireland (May, Oct.), Venice, Italy (June, Nov.), Madrid, Spain (June), Valencia, Spain (July, Dec.), Athens, Greece (Sept.)



Topics include general food labelling rules, mandatory labelling particulars, authorisation of nutrition and health claims and criteria for their use, as well as rules for the wording of such claims in relation to consumer understanding. The concept of nutrient profiles is covered, along with its consequences for nutrition and health claims.

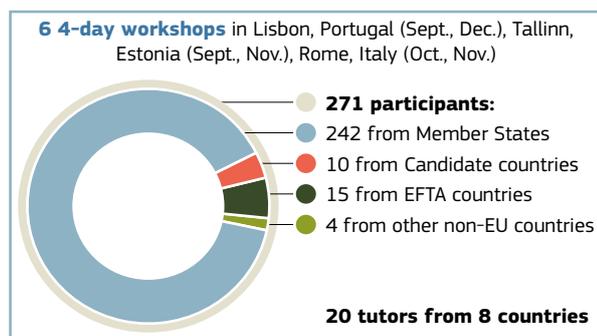
Other subjects include legislative requirements for food fortification and supplements and best practices for documentary, identity and physical checks. Discussion of common problems facing control systems and their solution takes place in groups.

## Food-borne outbreak investigation

Food-borne outbreak management, investigation and reporting require a multidisciplinary approach at local, national, EU and international levels and between veterinary and food safety authorities. The EU has legislation to ensure that food-borne outbreaks are properly monitored and investigated. During investigation, sources, vehicles and contributing factors need to be identified so as to prevent further cases.

Recent outbreaks have shown a need to improve management, investigation and reporting. Outbreaks may also result from bio-terrorism and there is a need to increase capacity to respond to this.

Training has been launched in order to disseminate best practices in this field. This should improve participants' knowledge of outbreak management, investigation and reporting guidelines and their understanding of relevant tasks, leading to consistently high management and investigation standards at local, national and European level. It should strengthen collaboration between veterinary, food safety and public health authorities and harmonise MS approaches through exchange of views and experience.



Topics include outbreak preparedness and investigation, covering inter-sectoral preparedness exercises, outbreak management plans, traceability and prevention of bio-terrorism. The training also looks at outbreak management issues such as standard operating procedures, use of the Early Warning Response System, RASFF and national-level alert and reporting mechanisms, as well as coordination.

Elements of food- and water-borne disease (FWD) investigation are covered, including epidemiology, case definition, microbiology and food safety aspects, as is application of analytical epidemiological methods and other investigation tools. The latter section deals with tracing back and forth, cohort and case control studies, software applications and molecular typing.

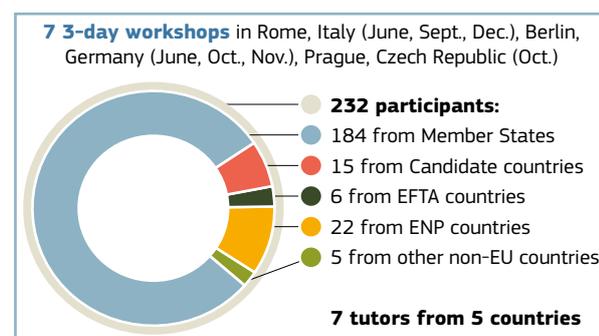
Further subjects include EU-level reporting of FWD outbreaks, including outbreak classification based on epidemiological and microbiological evidence, and crisis communication, including during the uncertainty phase.

## Control of contaminants in food and feed

Contaminants are substances which are unintentionally present in feed and food. They can be divided into three categories: agricultural, environmental and industrial. Undesirable substances are substances present in feed products which could endanger animal or human health or the environment.

The EU has established maximum levels for a range of contaminants and undesirable substances. Contaminant legislation aims to ensure that food with contaminants in unacceptable amounts is not marketed and that contaminant levels are kept as low as possible. EU law on undesirable substances stipulates that products for use in feed must present no danger to human or animal health, the environment or livestock production.

National authority staff must perform controls on contaminants to ensure compliance with EU law. Training should increase understanding of the EU legal framework, improve national contaminant control systems and allow participants to share experience.



The workshops give an overview of the EU legal framework for establishing regulatory levels and other risk management measures, as well as provisions on control of contaminants in feed and food. They also provide information on risk assessment principles, use of EFSA opinions in risk management, risk management approaches and EU-level risk management measures.

Extensive information is given on provisions for sampling procedures for control of different contaminants, analysis and interpretation of results, and accreditation of and requirements for official control laboratories. Details are also provided of EU-level guidance documents.

Work on setting up national contaminant control plans covers various aspects. These include prioritisation of controls, sampling levels and frequency, self-monitoring by and co-responsibility of businesses, types of check, including random, targeted and suspect sampling, follow-up actions and measures in cases of infringement.

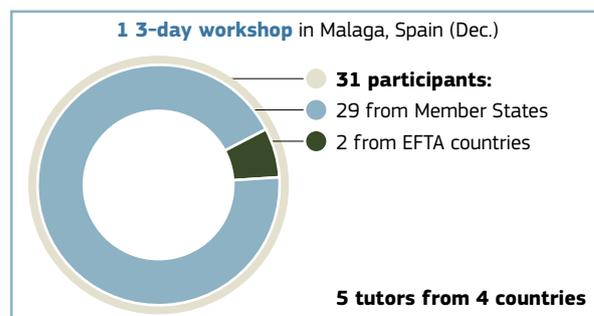
The RASFF and roles and responsibilities of EU and national food and feed contaminant reference laboratories are covered. Examples are given of how food and feed businesses apply HACCP principles in order to prevent contamination.

## Movement of cats and dogs

Dogs can move within or into the EU under commercial or non-commercial rules. As non-commercial rules are relatively light, much dog movement takes place under that regime even when done commercially. Data suggest that such movement often disregards health and welfare standards and is done using fraudulent documents.

The EU lays down conditions for commercial imports of live animals, including health and supervisory requirements designed to ensure that imported animals meet standards equivalent to those required for trade between MS. Non-commercial dog movement is subject to a special regime whereby veterinary checks do not apply but other issues must be dealt with in cooperation with customs.

Feedback from MS and stakeholders shows a need for training of veterinary staff on controls of commercial and non-commercial movement of dogs and cats. It should improve understanding and implementation of relevant rules, support tools and related veterinary interventions. It should also increase the ability of veterinary services to protect the EU against rabies.



The course gives an overview of EU legislation on commercial and non-commercial movement of dogs and cats within the EU and from third countries into the EU, as well as compliance checks at points of entry, veterinary BIP checks and coordination with customs. Theoretical and practical differentiation between commercial and non-commercial movement is outlined, along with different obligations involved and measures to take in the event of non-compliance.

Further subjects include description, occurrence, testing and treatment of relevant diseases, the role of EU-approved rabies serology laboratories and animal welfare requirements. Checks on the origin and destination of illegal movements and cooperation with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in cross-border dog adoption and movement and the fight against illegal movement are also covered.

Best practices are detailed for designing, legislating on and running national identification and registration schemes and databases and for awareness raising and communication between veterinary services, other authorities, citizens, mass media and NGOs.

Field trips take place to international airports, seaports or land points of entry with significant numbers of pet dogs entering from third countries. At some workshops, participants visit veterinary units supervising shelters or pet shops and fighting illegal movement.

## Support for enforcement in sanitary and phytosanitary fields

The EC is responsible for ensuring that EU SPS legislation is properly implemented and enforced and FVO inspections are aimed at verifying the effectiveness of national SPS control systems.

Each year an inspection programme is drawn up, identifying priority areas and countries. Following the inspections, the FVO makes recommendations to deal with shortcomings. National authorities present plans to the FVO describing how they intend to do this. Together with other EC services, the FVO evaluates the plans and monitors their implementation.

The aim of this action is to support MS in complying with EU feed and food safety standards and animal health and welfare and plant health rules.

Training and technical assistance is provided via workshops and STMs to help MS to meet EU requirements and rectify issues identified by the FVO. Detailed STM aims are established on the basis of FVO reports and discussion with authorities in beneficiary countries.



**1 3-day workshop** in Prague, Czech Republic (Oct.)  
**1 STM on animal welfare legislation** in Italy



Workshops provide an overview and explanation of SPS standards in the relevant areas, particularly as regards recent EU legislative developments. The training and information are tailored to the needs of the beneficiary countries.

STM experts assess implementation and control of relevant measures in beneficiary MS through meetings with authorities and site visits. They also support MS authorities in developing plans to improve compliance in the relevant fields, information tools and campaigns, documented control procedures and effective verification mechanisms. Intervals between STMs in each MS enable competent authorities to implement what has been taught and create sustainable results.

The experts mentor competent authorities through a learning process and preparation of manuals to be implemented at national or regional level. Mission activities can be open to private operators at the request of the competent authorities.



# Training 2013 — Non-EU country programmes

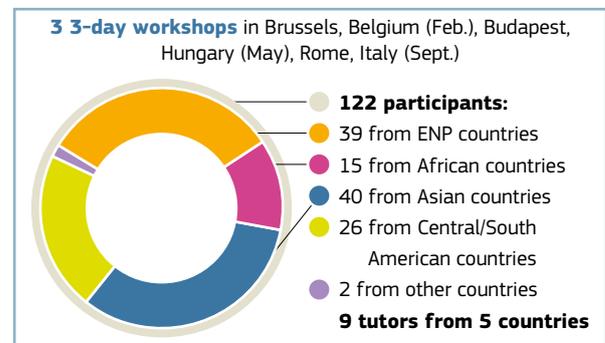
Training within non-EU country programmes is for participants from the region in which it is held. The programmes are partly composed of workshops similar to those held in Europe, while some also include STMs aimed at assisting beneficiary countries in areas where deficiencies have been identified, including through training and collaboration with competent authorities.

## Feed rules and import requirements

The need to comply with EU feed standards may hold back development of non-EU country feed exports to the EU as many developing countries lack the resources to ensure proper control of feed production. In many developing countries, control of various feed safety aspects is done by private organisations or importers.

Training on EU feed standards should give developing country competent authority staff a better

understanding of these standards. This should improve controls on products for export, thereby helping to ensure that they meet EU requirements, avoiding unnecessary burdens and facilitating trade in safe feed.



The workshops are tailored to participating countries' needs and provide an overview and explanation of EU feed standards, with particular focus on recent legislative developments. Topics include requirements for raw or processed materials for use as feed or

Programme	Events	Participants	Hosting countries
Feed rules	3	122	Belgium, Hungary, Italy
Sampling and analysis	4	83	Greece, France, Spain
RASFF	2	64	Lao PDR, Costa Rica
GMO analysis	1	65	Italy
BTSF World	1	34	STM in Uganda on the TRACES system
<b>Total</b>		<b>368</b>	
<b>HPAI/animal disease control    Number of visits to the E-learning portal: 263</b>			

for manufacturing compound feed, requirements for feed materials whose circulation or use in feed is prohibited, requirements for marketing and labelling of dietetic feed and ABP aspects.

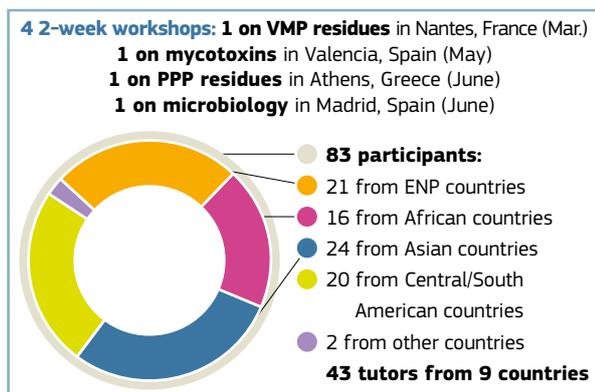
Authorisation and use of GM feed and traceability and labelling of GMOs and derived products are covered, as are use, labelling, authorisation and supervision of feed additives, feed hygiene requirements and risks from contaminants. Further subjects include controls to manage biological and chemical risks, sampling and other specialised inspection procedures and EU import controls.

## Sampling and analysis methods

The openness of the EU market has led to increased trade volumes. Unfortunately, many developing countries do not meet EU food testing requirements.

This has led to an increase in SPS-related trade concerns, a problem reflected in RASFF notifications and observations during FVO missions. Many of these concerns are related to deficiencies in controls on mycotoxins, microbiological issues and residues.

Although many developing country officials have received training on these issues, a need remains. Technical assistance, particularly hands-on training in analytical techniques at EU-accredited laboratories, should help to reduce difficulties faced by developing countries in this field.



The introduction to training on mycotoxin sampling and analysis covers relevant EU legislation, risk assessment, establishment of regulatory limits, official bodies dealing with food and feed contaminants,

laboratory networks and new import rules for products of non-animal origin. Further subjects include sampling, sample transport, preparation, extraction and clean-up, homogenisation procedures, laboratory automation, screening methods and confirmatory techniques. Work on these subjects addresses such products as peanuts, Brazil nuts, pistachios, spices, dried figs, rice, maize, peanut meal and copra for aflatoxins and cereals, dried fruit, coffee, cocoa, spices and liquorice for ochratoxin A. Work on quality in analytical laboratories looks at accreditation, EU performance criteria, validation of analytical methods and quality management.

Microbiology courses present EU legislation on microbiological criteria for food and recent updates and include a theoretical part on hygiene requirements, selected microbiological pathogens in the food chain and other relevant micro-organisms. The analytical part of the workshops focuses on micro-organisms and reference methods specifically indicated in EU microbiological criteria legislation. Alternative reference methods are also addressed.

VMP residue training provides an introduction covering relevant EU legislation on testing for residues in live animals and products of animal origin and related issues, risk assessment and establishment of regulatory limits in live animals and products of animal and non-animal origin. It also looks at official residue and contaminant bodies, laboratory networks and residue monitoring plans for animals and animal products. Further subjects include sample preparation, extraction and purification, laboratory automation, screening methods, confirmatory techniques and laboratory quality, including EU performance criteria, validation of analytical methods and quality management.

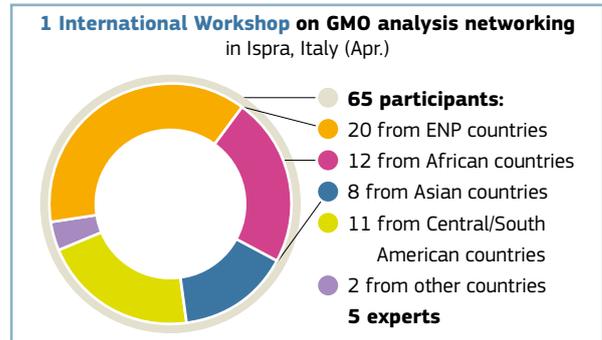
Pesticide residue courses give an introduction on EU legislation on pesticide residue analysis for products of animal and plant origin and related matters, risk assessment and establishment of regulatory limits for food of plant and animal origin. Official pesticide residue monitoring bodies and laboratory networks, pesticide residue control programmes and new EU import rules for products of non-animal origin are also covered. The training looks at single and multiple residue methods, development and validation of methods for food of plant and animal origin, advanced methods linked to new laboratory equipment, quality control procedures and laboratory quality management.

## Analysis of genetically modified organisms

Numbers of GMO events used to generate transgenic plants which are commercialised in various parts of the world are increasing. Many of these events are not authorised for food or feed use in Europe. Also, a specific event may be authorised in an exporting country but not in an importing country.

A more uniform approach to GMO analysis, including good understanding of EU requirements, will help international trade. Training should increase expertise of non-EU operators, helping them to adapt procedures for checking compliance with EU requirements.

This project aims to promote regional networking on GMO analysis and enhance harmonisation by supporting creation of regional networks of excellence outside of the EU, based on the EU experience. It also looks to strengthen regional-level collaboration between existing laboratories and networks and provides training to enforcement laboratories to help them to acquire relevant expertise. The project involves evaluation of needs and priorities, identification of relevant institutions and experts and organisation of regional meetings, training and follow-up meetings.



The International Workshop on GMO analysis began by looking at technical needs and future challenges and providing an update on technical issues. Regional sessions were then held, followed by sessions within which delegates could give their perspectives on the state of GMO analysis within their region, including the level of development of regional networks, and on the outcomes of the regional discussions. Finally, delegates met in plenary to plot the way ahead.

Meetings at regional level set out the benefits of GMO analytical networks and outline EU GMO legislation. They also explain how to plan experiments, principal laboratory techniques and requirements for laboratories and validation of analysis methods.



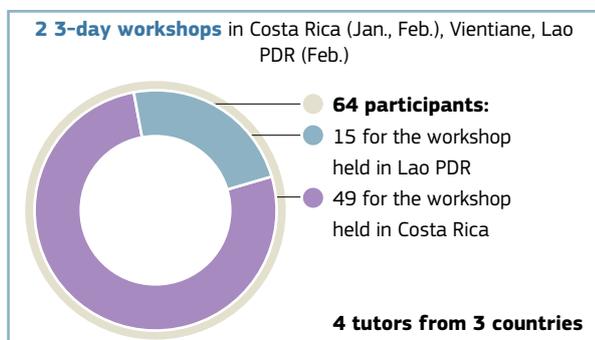
Participants have the chance to discuss the latest technical aspects relevant to GMO analysis, regional networking mechanisms and opportunities for cooperation among the networks and with the EU. They also share experiences, set out a framework for future collaboration and define priorities for future GMO analysis activities.

## RASFF/TRACES in Third Countries

With regard to food safety, as the biggest importer of food worldwide, the EU has in place comprehensive legislation aimed at ensuring that all food for sale in the EU, produced domestically or imported, is safe and complies with well defined standards or at least the equivalent thereof.

However, this compliance may represent a major constraint for countries exporting to the EU, in particular, those countries which have no adequate national services, resources, structures and equipment to ensure proper control and surveillance of the food production chain and provide sufficient evidence and guarantees of the safety of products exported to the EU.

The need to overcome those difficulties requires that officials involved in food controls, both in the EU and in its trading partner, in particular developing countries, are properly informed and trained to verify compliance with EU requirements. This implies the implementation of training courses with the aim of developing best practices on the EU RASFF and the possible introduction of a similar system in other regions of the world.



This project aims at providing third countries with information on the EU RASFF, introducing a simi-

lar system and promoting the setting-up of regional networks of countries exchanging rapid alerts about food and feed through related information technology systems (TRACES).

Within this frame, the workshops focused on participating countries' needs, providing an overview and explanation of RASFF/TRACES having regard, in particular, to the recent developments on food law and hygiene, food import controls rules and other relevant legislation, with the aim of raising the awareness of and the interest in rapid alert management in the countries concerned.

The better understanding of the legislation and the better way to comply with the obligation of rapidly notifying a food safety issue within the RASFF network was a key element in the success of the project.

Furthermore, the project orientates towards supporting existing networks and related tools (RASFF/TRACES) in South East Asia, including the required level of food and feed controls, organisational structure, legal basis and communication needs. A number of sustained training and technical assistance missions took place in order to support competent authorities in the aforementioned fields. This region was the place of four technical assistance missions to support member countries in the structuring of their national networks. Following a top-down strategy, the members of ARASFF (ASEAN Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed) are pushing for the establishment of national laboratory networks and for the adoption of traceability in the food chain. Their recommendations are frequently submitted to the relevant ASEAN expert groups and to the Ministries of ASEAN MS.

Two final missions were carried out in 2013. The first mission aimed at helping Lao-RASFF in solving technical IT issues and at reinforcing the database administration capacities through hands-on training on the ARASFF application. The second mission in Costa Rica aimed at providing technical assistance. This was organised in the form of a 3-day workshop during which the training material used was mainly based on Alert systems, RASFF, SCRI, management of food alerts, preparation and procedures in the EU MS, collection of information at regional and local levels and case studies, in particular with regards to histamine levels in cans of tomato and tuna, milk protein traces in chocolate-coated rice cakes, etc.



## New third country programmes

### International Standard Setting Bodies

The main International Standard Setting Bodies (ISSBs) for food safety and quality, animal health and plant health are the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the IPPC respectively. Many third countries are characterised by low levels of participation in the work of these bodies.

Assistance provided through training should increase the capacity of third country Codex Contact Points and OIE and IPPC delegates to contribute to drafting science-based SPS standards. It should also better prepare them to participate effectively in ISSB meetings and work and formulate national and regional positions on issues discussed within ISSB committees.

The first day of each workshop looks at the history, objectives, principles and procedures of the ISSB under discussion. The second day focuses on issues to be discussed in the respective ISSB committees in the period leading up to the next annual general assemblies and on working group discussion aimed at formulating national and regional positions. The final day is dedicated to mockup sessions and case study-based practical exercises also supporting preparation of national and regional positions.

Specific topics include the global dimensions of food safety and animal and plant health, international agreements governing food trade and consumer pro-

tection and the organisation of each ISSB in terms of statutes, mandate, structure and funds. National obligations and challenges which come with ISSB membership are covered, as are the principles of the EU's work within ISSBs.

The training conveys an understanding of ISSB documentation, principles and procedures for developing international standards and application of risk analysis in ISSB work. Participants also share experience on harmonisation and equivalence of standards. The first activities will start in 2014.

### BTSF World

Global trade in agricultural and fishery products is regulated by SPS standards which aim to protect human, animal and plant health. BTSF World has been launched to strengthen SPS frameworks in developing countries.

Production based on good agricultural practice and international standards will ease access to international food markets for developing country products, increasing availability of safe and nutritious food worldwide. This should reduce poverty among smallholders and agricultural workers in the developing world.

BTSF World uses workshops and STMs to transfer SPS know-how and information on SPS legal frameworks to public and private institutions in non-EU countries with a major trade interest in the relevant issues. This will enable them to address SPS concerns and set up networks of bodies involved in production of and trade in safe food.

Needs are identified on a regional basis, based on FVO reports and other international sources. Coordination with international organisations and EU delegations ensures that needs and solutions are identified, duplications avoided and synergies with existing aid programmes and other EU external action maximised. Coordination between training contractors also ensures synergy, including with other relevant BTSF training. The programme's flexibility allows it to complement larger projects in the same field.

BTSF World prioritises the needs of the poorest smallholder farmers and fishermen. Activities are mainly for competent authority staff, smallholders and other stakeholders, with places for industry representatives and business operators, where appropriate.

**1 STM (2 2-day sessions) on TRACES in Entebbe, Uganda (Nov.)**

**34 participants from Uganda**

**2 tutors/mission experts from 2 countries**

Activities are focused on either food safety and plant health or animal health and welfare and take place in Africa and ENP countries, South and Central America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific.

Regional workshops cover topics of interest to a number of countries in the target region, taking account of existing EU and international assistance programmes and previous work. Laboratory training in beneficiary countries supported by EU laboratories trains staff in state-of-the-art diagnostic techniques and is reinforced by STMs.

Workshops outline and explain EU SPS standards, particularly recent EU and international developments. Topics include fishery and aquaculture products, phytosanitary standards, FCM, residue and contaminant control and monitoring, traceability and food labelling, animal health and welfare, IT systems, risk assessment, World Trade Organisation SPS agreement principles and ISSB work. They also build SPS standard setting capacity and support the setting-up of regional bodies and risk assessment centres and drafting of reference guides.

For STMs, experts visit countries where the FVO or other sources have identified serious SPS shortcomings. They support authorities and private stakeholders in developing action plans and training pathways to improve compliance so as to prevent market closure, trade disruption and resulting impacts on producers.

STMs consist largely of hands-on training, including in laboratories, for competent authorities and the private sector. They can include a mentoring process and preparatory drafting of manuals and documented procedures to be implemented within regional control systems. Missions are consecutive and intervals between STMs in a given country allow the authorities to implement what has been taught and create sustainable results.

## STM in Uganda

A first STM was organised in the form of two 2-day sessions reviewing and demonstrating the use of TRACES. Time was given to the participants to create import certificates. Reinforced checks, data statistics and management of reference data were part of the subjects covered during these sessions. The audience was made up of fisheries inspectors and quality managers and exporter officers from private companies.





## E-learning

E-learning is a key part of the diversified BTSF training approach and an effective means of catering for the high demand for BTSF training. Work has continued in 2013 with a view to launching a first batch of two BTSF e-learning modules, available in English, French and German, on:

- Animal welfare at slaughter and killing for disease control;
- FCM.

Work on the remaining three e-learning modules from the first batch went on with a view to releasing them as soon as possible. They will cover:

- Prevention, control and eradication of TSE;
- HACCP;
- RASFF.

In addition, contractors have continued development of a further five modules in five languages, on:

- Welfare of poultry at slaughter and killing for disease control;
- Animal nutrition;
- Health of aquaculture animals;
- The EU plant quarantine regime for imports;
- Food hygiene and controls on fishery products and LBMs.

E-learning is vital to disseminating BTSF to the widest possible audience and giving more potential participants the chance to access the knowledge and expertise conveyed by the initiative.

Each module is designed for use by around 5 000 participants annually, of which some 80% should be from the EU. National participant quotas are based on those for standard BTSF training.

Each NCP selects participants from their own national authority. Selected participants are given access to the 'BTSF e-learning campus' platform which is able to manage over 25 simultaneous e-learning courses.

Participants have a month to follow each module, with 500 students expected to take part in each session. Ten sessions per module should be organised each year to reach 25 000 participants over five years.

The first batches of modules will be evaluated based on the feedback received. On this basis, it is hoped to create modules for the full spectrum of BTSF subjects from 2014.



# Training 2014

Below are the programmes planned for 2014, followed by information on new and returning programmes to be launched during the year.

<b>EU</b>
Animal by-products
Feed law
Controls on contaminants in feed and food
Border inspection posts
Food and feed of non-animal origin
TRACES
Movement of dogs and cats
Microbiological criteria in foodstuffs
Food-borne outbreak investigation
Animal welfare
Food composition and information
Audit systems and internal auditing
EU quality schemes
EU law enforcement in SPS fields
HACCP
Health of bees and zoo animals
Animal identification, registration and traceability <b>NEW</b>
Food additives, flavourings and enzymes
Residues of veterinary medicinal products
Food safety risk assessment
Contingency planning and animal disease control
Prevention, control and eradication of TSEs
New and emerging plant health risks <b>NEW</b>
Strengthening MS responses to Union audits <b>NEW</b>
Sustainable use of plant protection products <b>NEW</b>
Food hygiene at primary production <b>NEW</b>
Food hygiene and flexibility <b>NEW</b>
New investigation techniques for official controls along the food chain <b>NEW</b>
RASFF <b>NEW</b>
Supervision of semen, ova and embryos <b>NEW</b>
<b>Third country</b>
International Standard Setting Bodies
BTSF World



## New and returning programmes for 2014

### **Animal identification, registration and traceability**

EU legislation on identification and registration of animals has been amended over the last decade. Rules on intra-EU trade of live animals are linked to identification and registration and while they are not new, some of their provisions have been implemented gradually.

External evaluation of EU animal health policy suggests a need for simplified intra-EU trade of live animals. The EU Animal Health Strategy considers animal traceability, modern technology and interoperability of systems as priorities for ensuring smooth Internal Market operation, enabling the EU to respond to threats and protecting animals and food from risks. The EC has taken steps to this end such as compulsory electronic equine and ovine identification, interoperability of bovine databases and further development of TRACES and electronic certification.

The EC proposal for a new EU animal health regulation supports most of these principles. The EC is also working on a proposal to introduce voluntary bovine electronic identification. These measures should lead to changes in notification and registration of animal movement and traceability, reduce administrative burden, simplify procedures and make traceability more accurate and faster.

The recent horse meat scandal has underlined the need to trace products along the food chain and to have an appropriate framework for this. Training within BTSF should keep national control staff up to date with all developments in these fields.

### **New and emerging plant health risks**

Healthy plants, seeds and propagating material are vital for sustainable and competitive agriculture, horticulture and forestry. Plant health is essential for preserving the EU's forests, landscape, biodiversity and ecosystems.

Pests from other continents pose a threat to plant health as they do not often have natural enemies in Europe and European plants usually lack resistance. They may infect previously unaffected species, spread across countries, reduce yields and increase production and control costs, thus undermining competitiveness of agriculture and forestry.

New and emerging risks are a concern in light of recent outbreaks and changing trade patterns. The draft Regulation to form the basis of the new EU plant health regime includes provisions for contingency plans and simulation exercises linked to new and emerging risks, as well as mandatory surveillance of quarantine and priority organisms and multi-annual survey programmes.

Training for national officials involved in planning and coordinating control activities and field inspectors focuses on surveillance of new and emerging plant health risks and action to prevent their entry into or spread within the EU. The aim is to improve knowledge of the area, provide a common and unambiguous understanding of the situation, develop skills and ensure a consistent approach to identifying and responding to new and emerging risks.

## Strengthening Member State responses to Union audits

Commission experts carry out audits in MS in order to check that official controls take place in accordance with multi-annual control plans and EU law. They may perform controls in third countries to check compliance or equivalence of third country systems with EU law.

At the end of a series of audits on specific SPS topics, the FVO prepares a report on operation of controls in the relevant sector in the MS under audit. These reports identify good practices, weaknesses and recurring problems, but they could contribute more to improving national controls if they were seen more as guides towards improvement rather than benchmarks on current performance.

Courses in this programme are linked to reports and cover food of animal and non-animal origin, animal health and welfare, plant health, residues, import controls, animal nutrition, ABP and TSE, organic farming and quality schemes. They should allow MS to discuss and take ownership of findings and conclusions of audits, improve controls, gain an understanding of good practices and how they might be extended to other MS and examine problems with a view to identifying causes and solutions.

The courses should enhance discussion at Standing Committee level where time constraints only allow for very general discussion. They take place at the FVO premises and comprise plenary and workshop sessions. Plenary sessions address good practices and problems identified. MS experts present good practices and explain their reason for the choice of practice and its practical implementation. They may

also present problems and possible solutions. Workshops entail discussion with a view to identifying how to incorporate good practices more widely into controls and address problems. Concluding sessions seek agreement on actions to be taken.

## Food hygiene at primary production

The EU has a range of measures for ensuring high standards of hygiene during food production and proper control of food. Some apply to all food businesses and types and cover the entire food chain, while others apply to control authorities. They are indicative of a shifting approach to food hygiene, towards focusing on results rather than the means of achieving them.

A 2009 EC report highlighted difficulties among MS in interpreting certain hygiene aims and a lack of clear guidance for primary producers. Record-keeping was also perceived as a difficulty.

The EC, together with MS, has issued several guidance documents which elaborate and give practical examples of some more complex requirements. Specific guides have been developed by different food sectors at national and EU level, to give practical guidance to primary producers and describe in detail how operators can comply with requirements.

The situation is reviewed regularly, in particular through FVO missions. Guides to good practice have proved crucial in helping primary producers to fulfil their obligations, although difficulties persist.

The Commission considers EU-level training important for MS control staff working at this stage of the food chain. It is addressed to officials involved in planning and control activities and field inspectors performing hygiene controls on primary production. The training should raise awareness and promote a common understanding of rules to be applied by primary producers, disseminate good practice for primary production controls and favour exchange of experience in order to identify practical solutions to problems.

## Food hygiene and flexibility

In order to protect food diversity and serve consumers and small-scale producers, ample possibilities exist for adapting EU food hygiene requirements to the needs of businesses. These flexibility provisions aim to make saleS of food produced locally by traditional methods easier.

They provide for granting derogations or exemptions from or adapting certain requirements of, or excluding some activities from the scope of the Hygiene Package. To apply these provisions, MS must usually adopt national measures. The EC and other MS should be notified of such measures at the draft stage in order to have the possibility to comment.

A 2009 EC report pointed out that MS and private stakeholders were satisfied with flexibility provisions in the Hygiene Package, considering it well designed to respond to local issues. However, notifications of national measures and feedback from businesses indicate that MS are not making full use of the possibilities offered by the legislation. The situation is reviewed regularly, in particular through FVO missions, and while progress has been made, fact finding missions have confirmed difficulties in applying flexibility provisions.

The EC, in collaboration with MS, has issued two guidance documents to increase understanding of the flexibility provisions and improve their use by businesses and MS authorities. Training for officials involved in planning and control activities and field inspectors performing food hygiene controls should contribute further to this. It should also disseminate good practice regarding flexibility provisions, support experience exchange in order to increase expertise and harmonise approaches to flexibility at all stages of the food chain.

## New investigation techniques for official controls along the food chain

Food fraud concerns intentional violation of food production, processing, distribution or marketing law and can affect safety, quality, composition or presentation. Examples include use of industrial oil in food-grade oil, misleading labelling, use of forbidden substances, production and marketing of unauthorised food or violation of quality schemes.

Increased consumption due to the rising global population, diversification of consumption and rising prices of raw materials are seen as encouraging trade in illegal food. Also, fraudulent practices may be lucrative and difficult to detect, with free movement of goods and volumes of trade taking place via the internet presenting a particular challenge to control authorities.

It is not clear what proportion of infringements is deliberate and what can be put down to negligence. Intentionally illegal practices may be opportunistic or linked to company business strategy or organised crime.

Food fraud affects the entire chain, harming legitimate producers and posing an economic threat. Consumers buying counterfeit food and drink put their health at risk, as such products are not subject to quality or hygiene standards, while use of unauthorised substances in food may pose an environmental risk.

The EC is fighting food fraud by strengthening official controls and improving cooperation between competent authorities. Giving competent authority staff the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of relevant controls is vital as traditional techniques are not always sufficient to control e-commerce and reveal cases of fraud. Consequently, numbers of non-compliant products are growing, internet food traders are often not registered and many traders do not provide correct contact details.

EU-level training for officials involved in planning and organising official controls and inspectors performing such controls has thus been launched. It should improve knowledge of effective techniques for identifying food fraud, ensure better control of e-commerce in food, disseminate best practice and promote exchange of experience.



## Official supervision of semen, ova and embryos

Use of semen, ova and embryos of domestic animals is part of an efficient and productive breeding policy. The EU has comprehensive measures, amended significantly over the last decade, governing trade in and imports of semen, ova and embryos of bovine, ovine, caprine, equine and porcine species. The main aim is to protect the EU from the spread of animal disease via germinal products.

The EU lays down production, collection, processing, storage and transport rules for semen, ova and embryos. Semen centres and embryo teams performing such operations must be inspected, approved and supervised by veterinary authorities. This requires strong knowledge of the technological context and aims of the rules, which is all the more important as such centres often handle animals of high genetic value whose products may be exported worldwide.

Without strict production control, the risk of spread of communicable diseases is high, particularly as products can be stored for many years. FVO missions show variations in control effectiveness and as the sector is very specific with few skilled operators, national authorities may lack resources for training. In response, BTSF has launched courses for veterinarians supervising semen collection and storage and embryo collection and production and officials from central veterinary authorities working in this area.

The training should increase understanding of the organisation and functioning of semen collection and storage and embryo collection and production for different species. It should present the role and scope of official inspections, convey a common understanding of approval and supervision requirements and propose a practical approach to assessing this.

The workshops should also develop skills and disseminate good practices so as to ensure consistently high inspection standards and improved animal health. They should also increase veterinary services' capacity to guard against animal disease spread through germinal products.

## Towards a sustainable use of plant protection products

Since 1991 and as a consequence of the EU legislation concerning plant protection products, of approximately 1 000 active substances on the market before 1993, around 26%, have passed the harmonised EU safety assessment.

Besides Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market, introducing new, stricter criteria for the approval of active substances, the EU seeks to reduce the overall impact of plant protection products on health and the environment and promotes the application of general principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and the use of low-risk products. Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of plant protection products aims at reducing the risks linked to the use of plant protection products, improving the quality and efficacy of plant protection product application equipment, ensuring better training and education of users and developing integrated pest management schemes. The aim of Directive 2009/128/EC is also to achieve the sustainable use of plant protection products by promoting among others the use of IPM and of alternative approaches or techniques.

Additionally, considering also that Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 on placing of plant protection products on the market provides for an obligation upon all professional users to apply the general principles of IPM from January 2014 onwards, it is important to ensure that training carried out in accordance with the requirements set in Directive 2009/128/EC has a minimum level of harmonisation regarding training contents, in order to facilitate mutual recognition of training certificates by MS.

Training activities have been carried out since 2007 on the evaluation and registration of plant protection products and since 2009 on control. New training now focuses on the training requirements under Directive 2009/128/EC, where MS shall ensure that all professional users and distributors have access to

appropriate training by bodies designated by the competent authorities. It aims in particular at ‘training the trainers’ of professional users and distributors. The main goal of the workshop is to increase the knowledge of trainers of professional users, distributors and retailers of plant protection products according to the requirements under Directive 2009/128/EC.

### The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)

By 2013, RASFF had already been operating for 34 years. These more-than-three decades have brought about tremendous change, with the EEC becoming the EU and the number of member countries active in the RASFF network increasing from 9 to 32. The legal basis of the RASFF is Article 50 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002. It establishes RASFF as a network involving the MS (EU + EFTA/EEA), the Commission and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). It specifies that the MS, the Commission and EFSA must each designate a contact point, which becomes a member of the network and gives the responsibility for managing the network to the Commission.

In order to modernise the technology of RASFF, the online IT application ‘iRASFF’ was developed. This application entered into application in 2011. iRASFF is quite a revolutionary change for the RASFF system. Up to this time, the system was primarily email based. Member countries send documents and a RASFF notification form, based on a template, by email to the European Commission contact point (ECCP). The ECCP verifies the information and encodes a selection of that data in its RASFF database, compiles all the files, adds a cover page and uploads the resulting document to a repository where it is available to all members of the system. The same procedure is followed for original and follow-up notifications. This way of working is changed drastically with the arrival of iRASFF. Member countries enter the notification directly online in iRASFF. There are different levels of validation in iRASFF: a notification, once completed, is submitted to the national contact point.

NCPs can add to the notification and validate it but can also reject it or suspend it, due to requiring additional information. The NCP can also either submit the notification to the ECCP or not. Only notifications that are submitted to the ECCP and subsequently validated by it are valid RASFF notifications available to all members of the network. At this point, all members of the system can provide follow-up to the notification. The RASFF portal features a searchable online RASFF database. Here you can see the most recently transmitted RASFF notifications as well as search for information on any notification issued in the past. More information about RASFF and the way it functions can be found on the RASFF website (<http://ec.europa.eu/rasff>).

The objective of the training is to disseminate best practices for RASFF use, thereby improving knowledge of this system and ensuring consistent and high implementation standards across the EU.





## Communicating and disseminating BTSF

Communication of the benefits of BTSF and the work done within the initiative is one of EAHC's main responsibilities and the Agency has continued to develop this area of activity in 2013.

Drafting and production of booklets covering different BTSF subjects has also taken place. Progress has been made on new booklets on checks at border inspection posts, feed law and animal welfare. The booklets give information on the issues covered by each training course and serve as a useful starting point for potential participants.

Further communication activities have been regular updating of the EAHC and DG SANCO BTSF web pages, publication of the 2012 Annual Report and drafting of the 2013 edition, and the regular BTSF newsletter. The latter contains regular interviews with members of both the EAHC and DG SANCO BTSF teams, as well as with Commission colleagues working in related areas. It also gives details of such aspects as elaboration of new training approaches, upcoming courses, the launch of calls for tender and development of new operating procedures.

A first Info Day on activities planned for non-EU countries took place in Luxembourg in June 2013, supported by a dedicated web page. It gave information on BTSF training courses and capacity building activities and brought together potential contractors, BTSF national contact points (NCPs) and other organisations with an interest in the training. The day was well-attended and gave rise to constructive discussion and positive feedback from participants.

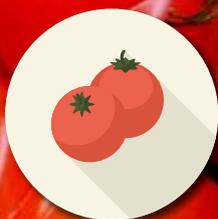
A second Info Day on activities planned in MS was held in Brussels in September 2013, this one covering

the 16 calls for tender launched by EAHC in summer 2013, as well as one re-launched call. The event was attended by representatives of various organisations interested in implementing training activities arising from the calls. A detailed explanation was given of the subjects of the calls. Participants then had the entire day to ask questions, including on the subjects of the calls, the technical specifications, contractual obligations and administrative execution of contracts. European Commission and EAHC officials were on hand throughout the day to answer questions and provide further clarification.

DG SANCO and EAHC have continued to work to improve participant selection and to encourage participants to disseminate the expertise acquired within their services. Work has also continued on improving implementation of the 'train the trainer' principle, including through development of e-learning.

Learning tools used at workshops are fine tuned in order to make them clearer, and further dissemination possibilities are being explored. These include verification of dissemination, such as through FVO reports, setting-up of expert training networks and formal dissemination commitments from participants and national authorities.

Finally, on the subject of communication, readers of the 2012 Annual Report may have noticed the prominence of orange on the cover and page borders, replacing the green of past editions. The use of orange reflects BTSF's evolution over the years. Green was appropriate for depicting the ad-hoc nature of BTSF during its early years, while orange represents its ripening into a broad-based, structured and permanent training instrument.



## BTSF general evaluation

The evaluation had three core objectives:

- evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme from 2006–10 and in particular assess its impact at personal and organisational levels in relation to the stated EU policy objectives;
- examine delivery challenges such as production of high quality training, clear prioritisation based on needs and more robust and reliable mechanisms for knowledge dissemination by trainees and an estimation of future demand;
- examine how quality can be improved in training delivery.

The main components of the exercise were questionnaires and case study analyses of participants in BTSF training, National Contact Points (NCPs), National Competent Authorities (NCAs), course tutors, Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) and stakeholders.

The analysis supports the idea that BTSF continues to effectively improve participants' knowledge and understanding of EU law and to build the capacity of control staff. More specifically, it has improved their understanding of the differences and solutions of those issues that reduce risks and increase harmonisation in both EU and candidate countries as well as non-EU countries.

Specific attention was given to examining the application of the 'train the trainer' principle, which relies on those trained to disseminate their knowledge to their colleagues, and the results demonstrate that it

is effective and has led to some changes in work practices of both MS and non-EU country official control staff and their teams with the greatest impact and improvement observed in front-line staff at EU border controls. The evaluation could not prove that this principle is massively or very systematically implemented in MS but there are substantial processes going on in national administrations and bodies in favour of disseminating the knowledge gained via BTSF.

Training has enabled valuable networks to be set up allowing knowledge and experience to continue to be shared well after the training event. In non-EU countries, training has also helped to improve food safety controls thus ensuring that food for export to the EU meets our food standards.

The main recommendations for achieving even greater impact with the programme include:

- the establishment of a more structured approach to dissemination at MS level, with the possible introduction of MS dissemination plans and fine-tuning of the selection process;
- expanding the reach of the programme through a mixed model of learning, including e-learning, sustained training missions addressing country-specific weaknesses and an online platform of support for front-line control staff;
- ensuring that training is also targeted at staff who occupy senior management or specific training positions, thereby reinforcing dissemination and ensuring that national and EU training are harmonised.



## BTSF operational guidelines

An important aspect of BTSF work during 2013 was EAHC's finalisation, in February, of an update to the Operational Guidelines for BTSF training contractors. A meeting between EAHC and training contractors was held in Luxembourg in February to discuss the update.

The Guidelines give advice to help contractors implement training correctly. They explain the legal framework governing BTSF and training contracts and outline the different BTSF stakeholders and their roles.

They provide information on such aspects as venue and accommodation selection, travel costs, organisation of social events, tasks during workshops and language provision. Deviations from contracts are covered, including replacement of experts and modification of dates, locations and participant quotas.

Participation advice deals with allocation of places by country and workshop, registration and storage and

provision to EAHC of participation data. The reporting section covers drafting and submission of all interim and final reports, as well as division of contracts into two phases and its implications for reporting.

Payment guidance sets out general payment terms, a time frame for submission of deliverables and task execution, payment steps, including pre-financing and interim and balance payments, and requirements under contingency budgets. Guidance on provision by contractors of financial guarantees against pre-financing includes rules under the previous Financial Regulation, for contracts signed before 1 January 2013, and under the new Regulation, for contracts signed from 2013 onwards.

Further information includes rules for offers of accommodation and catering and procedures for contractor communication with the EU institutions, with EAHC the sole contact point.



# How to get involved

## Participants

Officials of MS, candidate and EFTA countries interested in participating in BTSF activities are invited to refer to their NCP. The list of NCPs can be found in this report and at [http://ec.europa.eu/food/training\\_strategy/participants/ms\\_contact\\_points\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/training_strategy/participants/ms_contact_points_en.htm).

Interested parties from third countries should contact the contractor for the activity in which they wish to take part. Information about the courses and their respective contractors can be found in this report and at [http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/food/training\\_courses.html](http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/food/training_courses.html).

## Contractors

Training is mainly organised through the launch of calls for tender and for expression of interest. All parties interested in responding to invitations to tender connected to BTSF activities are invited to consult <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/food/tenders.html>.

Guidelines for tenderers and contractors are available at <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/food/guidelines.html>.



## Conclusions

Key elements in BTSF's development in 2013 have been moves towards elaboration of a more flexible training approach able to respond to needs, take account of all relevant EU and international developments and cater for a high demand for BTSF training.

Finalisation of the first batch of e-learning modules and development of the second group is an essential part of this. Introduction of STMs for EU MS and the widening of EAHC's mandate to cover market access and trade-related issues also have a crucial role to play.

The strengthening of the DG SANCO BTSF Sector with colleagues from the Multilateral International Relations Unit is contributing to increasing synergies between BTSF and the Commission's wider SPS capacity building efforts. It is also enabling BTSF to play a greater role in promoting EU and international SPS standards across the globe.

Besides this, the SANCO BTSF Sector has successfully identified new training needs over the course of the year based on extensive consultation with colleagues from a range of EC departments and services and sources such as RASFF notifications and FVO reports. This has led to seven new subjects being introduced in 2013 and a further seven set to come in from 2014.

For its part, EAHC has continued to execute and monitor existing programmes and launch procurement processes for new ones. Both the Commission and EAHC are committed to further strengthening their already excellent working relationship in the years to come.

Over the past couple of years, BTSF has reached the point where it is able to train more people on a lower budget. This is indicative of an effective and fine-tuned structure which works to a very high standard, and moves to increase the value for money provided by BTSF will continue.

None of these achievements would have been possible without contributions from numerous Commission and EAHC colleagues, as well as a considerable number of contributors from outside of the EU institutions. The EAHC BTSF team and the DG SANCO Training Sector would like to express their gratitude for the work done by everyone who has played a part in ensuring another successful year's training.

Special thanks go to all EAHC, DG SANCO and FVO colleagues, as well as members of the BTSF Inter-Service Steering Group. Finally, the essential assistance provided by NCPs and staff of EC Delegations in countries where training has been held must also be gratefully acknowledged.

# BTSF National Contact Points

Country	Name & Address	Email address	Telephone/Fax No
AUSTRIA	<p><b>Mr Hannes Pohla</b>            Agentur für Gesundheit und Ernährungssicherheit            Geschäftsfeld Lebensmittelsicherheit, Abt.            KOS            Innsbrucker Bundesstraße 47, 5020 Salzburg            Austria            Deputy:  <b>Mrs Andrea Igler</b>  <b>Mr Johann Hummel</b>            (same contact details)</p>	BTSF@ages.at	Tel.: +43(0)5055544211 Fax: +43(0)5055544109
BELGIUM	<p><b>Mr Bruno Debois</b>            Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain            Directorate General Control Policy            CA Botanique – Food Safety Center            Boulevard du Jardin Botanique 55            1000 Brussels            Belgium</p>	bruno.debois@afsca.be	Tel. : +32 2 211 86 33 Fax.: +32 2 211 86 30
BULGARIA	<p><b>Ms Marina Abadzhieva</b>            Chief expert            European Coordination, International Cooperation            and Training and Qualification Directorate            Training and Qualification Department            Bulgarian Food Safety Agency            «Hristo Botev» Blvd. 17            1040 Sofia            Bulgaria</p>	<p>m.abadjieva@nsrz.government.bg            m.abadjieva@bfsa.bg            ipms@nsrz.government.bg</p>	Tel: +359 2 9173 750 Fax: +359 2 9173 758
CROATIA	<p><b>Mr Krešimir Kralj</b>            Head of EU Affairs Department            Ministry of Agriculture            Veterinary and Food Safety Directorate            Sector for Administrative, Veterinary and            Financial Affairs            Planinska 2a            10 000 Zagreb            Croatia</p>	<p>kresimir.kralj@mps.hr            kralj975@gmail.com</p>	Tel: + 385 1 6443 867 Fax: + 385 1 6443 895
CYPRUS	<p><b>Ms Katia Stephanidou</b>            Veterinary Officer            Ministry of Agriculture Natural Resources and            Environment            Veterinary Services            1417 Nicosia            Cyprus</p>	kstephanidou@vs.moa.gov.cy	Tel: + 357 25819512 Tel: + 357 99478375 Fax : + 357 25306540 Fax: + 357 25306544
CZECH REPUBLIC	<p><b>Ms Ivana Lepeskova</b>            Food Safety Department            Ministry of Agriculture            Tesnov 17, 11715 Prague 1            Czech Republic</p>	ivana.lepeskova@mze.cz	Tel: + 420 221 813 040 Fax: + 420 221 812 965
DENMARK	<p><b>Ms Vibeke Øst Grunnell</b>            Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries            Danish Veterinary and Food Administration            Stationsparken 31-33            2600 Glostrup            Denmark</p>	kompetencegruppen@fvst.dk	Tel: +45-72276762 Fax: +45-72276501

Country	Name & Address	Email address	Telephone/Fax No
ESTONIA	<b>Ms Katrin Reili</b> Deputy Director General Veterinary and Food Board, Väike-Paala 3 11415 Tallinn Estonia	<a href="mailto:katrin.reili@vet.agri.ee">katrin.reili@vet.agri.ee</a>	Tel: +372 601 65 90 Fax: +372 6016593 Mobile: +37251 16 874
	<b>Mrs Karin Veski</b> Estonian Agricultural Board Teaduse 2, Saku, Harju County 75501 Estonia	<a href="mailto:Karin.veski@pma.agri.ee">Karin.veski@pma.agri.ee</a>	Tel: +37257503668 Fax: +3726712604
FINLAND	<b>Mrs Henrika Aapro</b> Finnish Food Safety Authority Evira Mustialankatu 3 FI-00790 Helsinki Finland	<a href="mailto:btsf@evira.fi">btsf@evira.fi</a>	Tel. +358 (0)40 835 8507 Fax. +358 (0)29 530 4356
	<b>Mr Juha Rautalin</b> Finnish Food Safety Authority Evira Mustialankatu, 3 FI-00790 Helsinki Finland		Tel. +358(0)50 382 9041 Fax. +358(0)20 772 4356
FRANCE	<b>Ms Monise Theobald</b> Direction générale de l'alimentation Service de la gouvernance et de l'international dans les domaines sanitaire et alimentaire Sous-direction du pilotage des ressources et des actions transversales Bureau du management par la qualité et de la coordination des contrôles 251, rue de Vaugirard 75732 Paris Cedex 15 France	<a href="mailto:monise.theobald@agriculture.gouv.fr">monise.theobald@agriculture.gouv.fr</a>	Tel: +33 (0) 1 49 55 55 81 Fax: +33 (0) 1 49 55 48 40
	<b>Mrs Dyna Koncki</b> Direction générale de la concurrence, de la consommation et de la répression des fraudes Bureau 2 B - Valorisation des compétences Télédoc 212, 59 boulevard Vincent Auriol 75703 PARIS cedex 13 France	<a href="mailto:bureau-2b@dgccrf.finances.gouv.fr">bureau-2b@dgccrf.finances.gouv.fr</a>	Tel.: +33 (0) 1 44 97 28 15 Fax: +33 (0) 1 44 97 30 33
GERMANY	<b>Mr Alexander Falkner</b> Bundesamt für Verbraucherschutz und Lebensmittelsicherheit Bundesallee 50, Gebäude 247 38116 Braunschweig Germany	<a href="mailto:BTSF@bvl.bund.de">BTSF@bvl.bund.de</a>	Tel: +49 (0)531 21497 160 Tel: +49 (0)531 21497 164 Fax: +49 (0)531 21497 169
GREECE	<b>Mrs Mary Gianniu</b> Ministry of Rural Development and Food Directorate General of Veterinary Services Animal Health Directorate 2 Acharnon St. EL - Athens P.C. 101 76	<a href="mailto:ka6u026@minagric.gr">ka6u026@minagric.gr</a>	Tel: +30 210 8836030 Fax: +30 210 8252673
HUNGARY	<b>Ms. Anita Papp</b> Department for Food Chain Control Ministry of Agriculture Kossuth L. tér 11 1055 Budapest	<a href="mailto:anita.papp@fm.gov.hu">anita.papp@fm.gov.hu</a> <a href="mailto:effo@fm.gov.hu">effo@fm.gov.hu</a>	Tel: + 36 1 795 3879 Fax: + 36 1 795 0094
IRELAND	<b>Mr Peter Mullaney,</b> Area 6 East, Agricultural House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2 and	<a href="mailto:peter.mullaney@agriculture.gov.ie">peter.mullaney@agriculture.gov.ie</a>	Tel: +353 1 6072737
	<b>Ms Cliona O'Reilly</b> Food Safety Authority of Ireland Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1.	<a href="mailto:training@fsai.ie">training@fsai.ie</a>	Tel: direct line +353-1-8171371 Fax: +353-1-8171271

Country	Name & Address	Email address	Telephone/Fax No
ITALY	<b>Ms Dr. Francesca Calvetti</b> Ministry of Health Via G. Ribotta 5, 00144 Roma Italy	<a href="mailto:dsvet@postacert.sanita.it">dsvet@postacert.sanita.it</a> <a href="mailto:btsf-contactpoint-di@sanita.it">btsf-contactpoint-di@sanita.it</a>	Tel. + 39 0659946960 Fax. +39 0659946217
LATVIA	<b>Ms Inga Bedrite</b> Head of Training Peldu street 30, Rig, LV-1050 <b>Ms Baiba Braslina</b> Personnel Division State Plant Protection Service Lielvardes street 36/38 Riga, LV-1006 Latvia	<a href="mailto:inga.bedrite@pvd.gov.lv">inga.bedrite@pvd.gov.lv</a> <a href="mailto:baiba.braslina@vaad.gov.lv">baiba.braslina@vaad.gov.lv</a>	Tel.: +371 670 27 573 Fax: +371 673 22 727 Tel.: +371 67027219 Fax: +371 67550934
LITHUANIA	<b>Ms Giedre Ciuberkyte</b> Head of International Affairs Department State Food and Veterinary Service Siesiku 19 07170 Vilnius-10 Lithuania	<a href="mailto:gciuberkyte@vet.lt">gciuberkyte@vet.lt</a>	Tel. +370 5 249 16 48 Fax. +370 5 240 43 62
LUXEMBOURG	<b>Ms Elisa Barillozzi /Mr Camille Strottner</b> OSQCA – Organisme pour la sécurité et la qualité de la chaîne alimentaire Ancien Hôtel de la Monnaie 6, rue du Palais de Justice L – 1841 Luxembourg Luxembourg	<a href="mailto:formations@osqca.etat.lu">formations@osqca.etat.lu</a>	Tel. : +352 478 35 45 Fax: +352 24 87 31 58
MALTA	<b>Mr Clive Tonna</b> Food Safety Commission c/o Environmental Health Directorate Continental Business Centre Old Railway Track, Santa Venera SVR9018 Malta	<a href="mailto:clive.j.tonna@gov.mt">clive.j.tonna@gov.mt</a>	Tel.: +356 21 332 225 Tel.: +356 21 334 093 Fax.: +356 21 344 767
NETHERLANDS	<b>Mr. Dick Schumer, DVM</b> Ministry of Economic Affairs Netherlands Food and Consumer Products Safety Authority (NVWA) Department of Human Resource Management Senior Adviser Education & Training National Contact Point EU-Program 'Better Training for Safer Food' PO Box 43006 NL - 3540 AA Utrecht	<a href="mailto:VWANCPsaferfood@vwa.nl">VWANCPsaferfood@vwa.nl</a>	Tel: +31 (0) 882232404
POLAND	<b>Ms Joanna Chil</b> General Veterinary Inspectorate, Wspólna street 30, 00-930 Warszawa, and <b>Ms Anna Jamka</b> Chief Sanitary Inspectorate Wydział ds. Planowania, Sprawozdawczości i SBŻ Departament Bezpieczeństwa Żywności i Żywienia Główny Inspektorat Sanitarny ul. Targowa 65 – 03-729, Warszawa Poland	<a href="mailto:joanna.chil@wetgiw.gov.pl">joanna.chil@wetgiw.gov.pl</a> <a href="mailto:a.gozdalik@gjs.gov.pl">a.gozdalik@gjs.gov.pl</a>	Tel.: +48 22 502 31 75 Fax.: +48 22 623 14 08 Tel: +48 22 536 13 24 Fax: +48 22 635 61 94
PORTUGAL	<b>Ms Ana Cristina Ucha Lopes</b> Estação Agronómica Nacional Edifício DGAV Quinta do Marquês Av. Da República 2789-505 Oeiras	<a href="mailto:auchalopes@dgav.pt">auchalopes@dgav.pt</a>	Tel.: +351 21 446 40 88 Tel.: +351 21 446 40 00 (ext. 8265)

Country	Name & Address	Email address	Telephone/Fax No
ROMANIA	<b>Mr Codrin Constantin Bortisca</b> National Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority Piata Presei Libere, No 1, D1, 1 District 013701 Bucharest	<a href="mailto:bortisca.codrin@ansvsa.ro">bortisca.codrin@ansvsa.ro</a>	Tel: +40 374 150 200 Fax: +40 213 124 967
SLOVAKIA	<b>Ing. Ľubica Hózová</b> Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR Department of Food Safety and Nutrition Dobrovicova 12 812 66 Bratislava	<a href="mailto:lubica.hozova@land.gov.sk">lubica.hozova@land.gov.sk</a>	Tel: +421 -2-59 266 564 Fax: +421-2-59 266 704
	<b>Ing. Katarína Janeková</b> Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development SR Department of Food Safety and Nutrition Dobrovicova 12 812 66 Bratislava	<a href="mailto:katarina.janekova@land.gov.sk">katarina.janekova@land.gov.sk</a>	Tel: +421-2-59 266 564
SLOVENIA	<b>Mr Božo Zakrajšek</b> The Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Food Safety, Veterinary Sector and Plant Protection Dunajska cesta 22 1000 Ljubljana Slovenia	<a href="mailto:bozo.zakrajsek@gov.si">bozo.zakrajsek@gov.si</a>	Tel: +386 4 201 00 10 Fax: +386 4 201 00 11
SPAIN	<b>Dña. Milagros Nieto Martínez</b> - (Health area) Subdirectora General de Coordinación de Alertas y Programación del Control Oficial. Agencia Española de Consumo, Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutrición. C/Alcalá 56, 4ª planta, 28071 Madrid	<a href="mailto:mnietom@msssi.es">mnietom@msssi.es</a>	Tel: +34 91 338 04 96 Fax: +34 91 338 02 38
	<b>D. José Manuel Belver Garcia</b> (Agriculture area) Jefe de Servicio de la Subdirección General de Sanidad e Higiene Animal y Trazabilidad. Dirección General de Sanidad de la Producción Agraria. Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente. C/Almagro 33, 1ª planta, 28010 Madrid	<a href="mailto:formacionue@magrama.es">formacionue@magrama.es</a>	Tel: +34 91 347 66 17 Fax: +34 91 347 82 99
SWEDEN	<b>Mrs Karin Wennås Gunnarsson</b> Administrator The National Food Agency, Box 622, 751 26 Uppsala	<a href="mailto:btsfcontactsweden@slv.se">btsfcontactsweden@slv.se</a>	Tel: +46 18 17 56 28
UNITED KINGDOM	<b>Mr Bill Drennan</b> Local Delivery Division 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor, Aviation House 125 Kingsway London WC2B 6NH	<a href="mailto:Bill.drennan@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk">Bill.drennan@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk</a>	Tel: +44 (0)20 7276 8141 Tel: +44 (0)20 7276 8693 Fax: +44 (0)20 7276 8289
	<b>Mr Daniel Lovelle-Diaz</b> Local Delivery Division 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor, Aviation House 125 Kingsway London WC2B 6NH	<a href="mailto:Daniel.Lovelle-Diaz@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk">Daniel.Lovelle-Diaz@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:eutraining@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk">eutraining@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk</a>	

## Candidate Countries

Country	Name & Address	Email address	Telephone/Fax No
ICELAND	<b>Ms. Anna Dóra Guðmundsdóttir</b> Icelandic Food and Veterinary Authority Austurvegur, 64 IS - 800 Selfoss,	<a href="mailto:btsf@mast.is">btsf@mast.is</a>	Tel: +354 530 4800 Fax: +354 530 4801
FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA	<b>Ms Svetlana Tomeska Mickova, DVM</b> Head of Department EU and International Cooperation Department Food and Veterinary Agency III Makedonska brigade 20 Macedonia tabak building 1000 Skopje, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	<a href="mailto:stmickova@fva.gov.mk">stmickova@fva.gov.mk</a>	Tel: +389 2 2457 895 ext. 120 Fax: +389 2 2457 871 ext. 147 Mob: +389 70 409 4 30
MONTENEGRO	<b>Ms Ljiljana Milovanović</b> Veterinary Agency 20 000 Podgorica Montenegro	<a href="mailto:ljiljana.milovanovic@vu.gov.me">ljiljana.milovanovic@vu.gov.me</a>	
SERBIA	<b>Mrs Milanka Davidovic</b> Assisstant Minister Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection Nemanjina Street 22-26 Belgrade	<a href="mailto:m.davidovic@minpolj.gov.rs">m.davidovic@minpolj.gov.rs</a>	Tel: +381 11 3611 - 880 Fax: +381 11 3611 - 880
TURKEY	<b>Ms.Neslihan Alper</b> Head of Food Control & Laboratories Department, DG for Food and Control, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock <b>Mr Ozkan Köylübay</b> Head of EU Harmonisation Department, DG for EU and Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock	<a href="mailto:neslihan.alper@tarim.gov.tr">neslihan.alper@tarim.gov.tr</a> <a href="mailto:baris.yilmaz@tarim.gov.tr">baris.yilmaz@tarim.gov.tr</a> (substitute)  <a href="mailto:ozkan.koylubay@tarim.gov.tr">ozkan.koylubay@tarim.gov.tr</a> <a href="mailto:nursel.kilic@tarim.gov.tr">nursel.kilic@tarim.gov.tr</a> (substitute)	

## Potential Candidate Countries

Country	Name & Address	Email address	Telephone/Fax No
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	<b>Mr. Sejad Mackic, Director</b>	<a href="mailto:mackic@fsa.gov.ba">mackic@fsa.gov.ba</a>	Tel: +387 36 336 956
	<b>Mr. Dzemil Hajric, Assistant Director</b> Food Safety Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina Sector of Crisis Department of Management and Emergencies Dr Ante Starcevic, 88000 Mostar	<a href="mailto:hajric@fsa.gov.ba">hajric@fsa.gov.ba</a>	Fax: +387 62 330 612
	<b>Mr. Aleksandar Nemet</b> Associate for veterinary epidemiology Veterinary Office Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations Radiceva 8, 71000 Sarajevo	<a href="mailto:aleksandar.nemet@vet.gov.ba">aleksandar.nemet@vet.gov.ba</a>	Tel: +38733565746 Fax: +387 33565725

## EFTA/EEA countries

Country	Name & Address	Email address	Telephone/Fax No
LIECHTENSTEIN	<b>Dr. Daniel Huber</b> Abteilungsleiter Lebensmittelkontrolle Amt für Lebensmittelkontrolle und Veterinärwesen (ALKVW) Postplatz 2 Postfach 37 LI - 9494 Schaan	daniel.huber@llv.li	Tel: +423 236 73 15 Fax: +423 236 73 10
NORWAY	<b>Mrs Astrid Nordbotten</b> The Norwegian Food Safety Authority P.O. Box 383 NO - 2381 Brumunddal	Training.SaferFood@mattilsynet.no	Tel: +47 22 40 00 00 Fax: +47 23 21 6801 Direct line: +47 23 21 6698
SWITZERLAND	<b>Mrs Nadine Metzger,</b> Head of Education & Training Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office Schwarzenburgstrasse, 155 CH - 3003 Bern	btsf@blv.admin.ch	Tel: +41 58 462 45 63

## Other non-EU countries

Country	Name & Address	Email address	Telephone/Fax No
FAROE ISLANDS	<b>Mr Bardur Enni</b> Managing Director Food and Veterinary Agency Falkavegur 6, 2nd Floor FO 100 Tórshavn, Faroe Islands	hfs@hfs.fo	Tel: +298 556400 Fax: +298 556401
MOROCCO	<b>Ms Zeineb EL Bouchikhi</b> Chargée de la Coopération Internationale/ Head of International Cooperation unit Office National de Sécurité Sanitaire des Produits Alimentaires/ National Office for Food Safety Avenue Hadj Ahmed Cherkaoui - Agdal Rabat Maroc	zeineb.elbouchikhi@ONSSA.GOV.MA	Tel: +212 537 67 65 59
MOLDOVA	<b>Mr Grigore PORCESCU</b> Deputy Director of the National Food Safety Agency MD-2004, 180, Stefan cel Mare av, Chisinau Republic of Moldova	Grigore.porcescu@ansa.gov.md	Tel: +37322294731 Fax: +37322294730
GEORGIA	<b>Mr George Jeiranashvili</b> Deputy head of International relation division of NFA National Food Agency 6 Marshal Gelovani ave. Tbilisi, Georgia	gjeiranashvili@nfa.go.ge	Tel: +995 577743939

# BTSF contractors

The following bodies have organised BTSF activities in 2013.

Contractor	Programmes	Contacts
AENOR Consortium	Audit	mzabala@aenor.es; coopera@aenor.es; pm20129606@aenor.es
AESA Consortium	Emerging animal diseases Plant health controls Controls on movements — BIPs, Food and feed of non-animal origin, TRACES, Movement of cats and dogs	Lorenzo Grazioli: lgrazioli@aesagroup.eu Lorenzo Grazioli: lgrazioli@aesagroup.eu Lorenzo Grazioli: lgrazioli@aesagroup.eu Fabiana Quadu: quadu@jvl-c.com 2012.96.02_WP1@agriconsultingeuropa.be 2012.96.02_WP2@agriconsultingeuropa.be 2012.96.02_WP3@agriconsultingeuropa.be 2012.96.02_WP4@agriconsultingeuropa.be
AETS Consortium	RASFF/TRACES in third countries Food additives VMP Food hygiene and controls Sampling and analysis Health of aquaculture animals Food composition/information	sebastien.rahoux@aets-consultants.com fabrice.claverie@aets-consultants.com marie-frederique.charenton@fvi-atf.org pietro.delia@aets-consultants.com sebastien.rahoux@aets-consultants.com fabrice.claverie@aets-consultants.com pietro.delia@aets-consultants.com sebastien.rahoux@aets-consultants.com pm20129605@aets-consultants.com
AINIA Consortium	PPP	José Maria Ferrer: jmferrer@ainia.es
Campden BRI	HACCP	Robert Gaze: r.gaze@campden.co.uk
Development solutions Consortium	Quality schemes	philip@development-solutions.eu 20129607@development-solutions.eu
Euro Consultants / JVL Consulting Consortium	Health of bees and zoo animals Contingency planning Feed rules and import requirements	Fabiana Quadu: quadu@jvl-c.com Fabiana Quadu: quadu@jvl-c.com Emilie Loward: e.loward@euroconsultants.be feedtc@btsftrainings.euroconsultants.be
Euro Consultants / JVL Consulting / Voyages Copine / France Vétérinaire International Consortium	Animal by-products Feed law Contaminants in food and feed	Emilie Loward: e.loward@euroconsultants.be 2012.96.01.wp1@euroconsultants.be 2012.96.01.wp2@euroconsultants.be 2012.96.01.wp3@euroconsultants.be
European Training Platform for Safer Food/GIZ	Food contact materials Risk assessment Microbiological criteria in foodstuffs Food-borne outbreak investigation	info@trainsaferfood.eu or tsf@gizbrussels.de Ninotti, Sergio GIZ BE: sergio.ninotti@giz.de 2012_96_03_WP1_Microbio@giz.de 2012_96_03_WP2_Outbreaks@giz.de
Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise 'G. Caporale' Consortium	Animal welfare E-learning	sancotraining@izs.it btsf4aw@izs.it
OPERA Consortium	SPS	Claudio Bompard — OPERA: claudio.bompard@gmail.com btsftraining@btsftraining.com

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