



BETTER TRAINING FOR SAFER FOOD

ANNUAL
REPORT 2019

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Better Training for Safer Food

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Acronyms

ABP Animal by-products

AHL Animal Health Law

AMR Antimicrobial Resistance

ASF African Swine Fever

BIP Border Inspection Post

BTSF Better Training for Safer Food (initiative)

Chafea Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency

Codex Codex Alimentarius Commission

DG SANTE European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety

DG SANTE F Health and Food Audits and Analysis

ECDC European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

EFSA European Food Safety Authority

EFTA European Free Trade Association

ENP European Neighbourhood Policy

EMA European Medicines Agency

EPPO European Plant Protection Organisation

HACCP Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points Principles

IPM Integrated Pest Management

IPPC International Plant Protection Convention

ISO International Organisation for Standardisation

ISPMs International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures

ISSB International Standard-Setting Bodies

JRC Joint Research Centre

LMS Learning Management System

NCP National Contact Point

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation

NRMP National Residue Monitoring Plan

OIE World Organisation for Animal Health

PAE Pesticide Application Equipment

PPP Plant Protection Products

RASFF Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed

SPS Sanitary and Phytosanitary

STM Sustained Training Mission

SUD Sustainable Use Directive

SWOT Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats

TRACES Trade Control and Expert System

TSE Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies

VMP Veterinary Medicinal Products

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Introduction

Continual expansion: new territory and new users

Is animal feed imported to the EU healthy and free of dangerous pesticides and additives? Is livestock being transported in healthy conditions? Are hygiene standards being observed at food packaging and handling centres? These are the kind of issues addressed by the European Commission's Better Training for Safer Food Initiative (BTSF). BTSF provides a strategy for training in the areas of food law, feed law, animal health and animal welfare rules and plant health rules. The initiative was launched in 2005, on the legal basis of Article 51 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules and Article 2 of Directive 2000/29/EC on protective measures against the introduction into the Union of organisms harmful to plants or plant products and against their spread within the Union. Since then, it has continued to grow and thrive, with continuous expansion in terms of subject matters that were covered and the number of participants who took part in its activities.

This growth can be credited in part to the addition of new training programmes in line with legal developments at EU level. These new programmes included courses on a new plant health regime, a new official control regulation and a revised control system on meat inspection. BTSF also added courses in alignment with priorities given to the Juncker Presidency of the European Commission, such as the improvement of preparedness to crises in the food, animal and plant areas.

The initiative offered seven training courses during the first year after it was launched. Today more than 40 training programmes are offered and attract over 6,000 participants annually. These courses cover the entire sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) fields, with topics including food safety, animal disease preparedness, animal welfare rules, to the sustainable use of pesticides and plant health controls, to name a few.

And of course, the BTSF Academy will make it possible to reach even more participants and ensure the initiative's continued growth. By the second half of 2019, all the groundwork had been laid and the developmental phase for the BTSF Academy was completed. BTSF stakeholders were then shown all of the online academy's functionalities, in view of starting a testing phase before its actual launch in 2020.

Training is designed primarily for the staff of competent authorities of Eu countries involved in official control activities, but authorities in non-EU countries, particularly in developing countries, also need to be up to date on EU import requirements. Whether inside or outside of the EU, courses are designed to make sure that people understand and comply with all the relevant aspects of Union law and that controls are carried out objectively, adequately and uniformly. This protects businesses as well as consumers by helping to maintain fair trade and a more level playing field.

Courses are taught by experts in their field at locations that are selected for being easily accessible and suitable for the purpose, with all the necessary infrastructure. Courses vary in length and content and involve both theoretical and practical elements, but they all share the same goal of 'training the trainer', meaning that participants should be able to share the knowledge they have gained with others. In this way, the outreach of the BTSF initiative expands exponentially.

The “Better Training for Safer Food” is a EU training strategy that:

- Promotes a harmonised and efficient approach to the operation of Union and national control systems;
- Maintains a high level of consumer protection and of animal health, animal welfare and plant health;
- Creates an equal level playing field for all food businesses;
- Enhances the trade of safe food;
- Ensures fair trade with non-EU countries and, in particular, developing countries.

BTSF's scope covers every link in the food chain

The bread on our table starts in the field. There are many steps between the soil being prepared for planting and the bread being sliced and buttered, and safety measures must be followed to make sure that the end-product is safe for consumption. What fertilisers were used? What sanitary conditions are enforced during harvesting, processing, production, packaging, transport, storage, sales?

Many players are involved in the food chain and share the responsibility of keeping consumers safe, from the farmer and the cargo handlers to the warehouse dealers and the retail sellers, and even to your own food preparation at home. To meet that responsibility, they need to know what's safe and what's not. Just like most of us were raised to wash our hands before cooking and eating, to cook chicken and pork thoroughly and wash our fresh produce before using, everyone in the food chain needs to know the rules and why they need to be followed. But today's rules aren't as easy as the ones we learn at home from our parents and grandparents globalisation makes the food supply chain increasingly complex and makes it even harder to guarantee food safety.

Protecting the consumer means protecting businesses

BTSF initiative protect everyone along the production chain from the end-consumer to producers and tradesmen whose livelihoods are at stake. That includes both big and small players, huge cooperations and small family businesses that want to uphold traditional ways of producing local products like cheese, sausage, fish products, olives, jams, baked goods, beer and wine.

Since every step from farm to fork can impact health, it's important that there is a harmonisation and uniformity of controls across the EU, and BTSF plays a big part in this. Efficient and uniform controls not only maintain high levels of consumer protection, animal health and welfare and plant health, they also provide a level playing field for food businesses. It wouldn't be fair if some rules applied in one area and not in another, which could allow some companies to save money at the expense of safety. The even enforcement of legislation is essential if the EU's internal market is to function properly.



Much of the food consumed within the EU comes from outside its borders, particularly from developing countries. BTSF targeted training makes it easier to detect fraud and non-compliance at its borders, as well as on the EU market, which helps to provide even greater protection to human, animal and plant health. This doesn't just benefit the EU, it also protect outside interests. If goods are rejected at EU borders due to non-compliance of regulations, it is harmful to the non-EU farmers and businesses who depend on EU trade for their livelihoods. Food consignments are still being rejected at EU borders, which makes it clear that the EU's trading partners still need to be better informed about EU rules. With up-to-date information, they can conduct their own checklists and ensure that the food, plants or feedstuffs they want to sell to the EU passes inspection and ends up reaching paying customers.

BTSF training seeks to make a concrete contribution to increasing health, safety and worldwide consumer confidence. Companies can thrive and consumers can buy and use products confident that they are safe and meet stringent regulations.

Consumers aren't the only ones to gain more trust. BTSF training programmes plays an important role in building trust in the EU's regulatory model with the competent authorities of other international trade partners. It also helps open up new food market opportunities and makes EU operators more competitive, which is great for business and consumers alike.

Virtually growing by leaps and bounds! BTSF Academy

The BTSF Academy has firmly brought BTSF into the digital era. It is a cloud-based Learning Management System (on an open source Moodle-platform) that offers a unique on-line system for all trainings organised under the BTSF programme. It not only hosts all available training resources (training materials and online courses) and will continue to add to these resources in the years to come, but it also creates a unique channel of information between all main BTSF stakeholders: contractors, beneficiaries and the Commission and facilitates training and participant management. Some information available through BTSF Academy is also of interest to the general public.

The BTSF Academy offers a more sustained knowledge sharing system through an alumni network that helps participants to keep in touch with each other. It also helps provide more user-friendly statistical tools about BTSF programmes and indicators.

The BTSF Academy is both an administration management tool and a learning resources sharing point. From a training point of view, it offers access to a full range of information, from general information on BTSF including newsletters, annual reports and leaflets to more targeted and technical information that is addressed to the core audience of BTSF. This audience is primarily comprised of the staff of competent authorities in both EU and non-EU countries in charge of verifying the enforcement of EU rules in the food and feed, animal health and welfare and plant health areas.

The current e-learning BTSF campus trains around 8000 participants a year and includes 10 modules distributed over the full sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) field, available in five EU languages (50 modules in total).

BTSF Academy is a collaborative effort. Training providers upload and maintain information related to the training agendas and course contents, the training locations and the practical organisation of trainings for the whole duration of their service contracts. All of this information is centralised through the BTSF Academy, which helps BTSF National Contact Points (NCP) to circulate it further and to invite and select participants. An all-in calendar is also available to facilitate the training courses follow-up and management throughout their implementation. In addition, an internal communication and alert system keeps BTSF stakeholders (training providers, NCPs, participants and Commission departments) abreast of any changes in the execution of the training programmes (new locations, new dates, new contents, etc.). The Commission also benefits from this infrastructure too and can better supervise BTSF implementation.

After existing e-learning modules were transferred to a new e-learning campus in 2018 to enable BTSF beneficiaries to continue to use these learning tools without disruption a series of new functionalities were launched this year to offer a better governance and easier management of all BTSF training activities. Additional functionalities of this sort will be progressively released from 2020 onwards.

Besides management improvements, it is also important to strengthen and broaden the current e-training offer to respond to the high demand for training supply expressed by BTSF beneficiaries. Despite efforts to make face-to-face

activities accessible for everyone, the number of people who can really manage to participate in these courses is likely to remain limited for a variety of reasons. The Academy's learning management system is a true breakthrough that supports the development of several multilingual and more modern on-line training tools such as webinars, video-teaching and serious gaming training, among others.

A documentable Return on Investment

Performance indicators for all activities help assess BTSF's impact on the performance of control staff. These indicators look at how training courses have increased the staff's knowledge, how staff apply their new knowledge at the workplace and how effectively they share this knowledge with their colleagues.

An ex-post study of the BTSF initiative was conducted to ensure that BTSF continues to meet its objectives and that public money used for its funding is well spent. The purpose of the study was to inform the Commission on the impact of the BTSF programme to date, based on the development of a robust model to measure the cost effectiveness of the training model and its impact (including key performance indicators), and to analyse several possible alternative ways to providing training, like using a single or a mixed model format (SWOT analysis).

The study demonstrated that the BTSF programme has delivered courses with an excellent level of organisation, high quality tutors and very good technical content. It also showed that the programme has improved the knowledge and skills of participants and positively affected the on-the-job behaviour of participants upon the return to their organisation of work. BTSF was considered superior to other training on the same thematic area. Most importantly, the study findings indicated that BTSF training was having the greatest impact where the National Competent Authorities expect it most. Combined, these impacts demonstrated that BTSF has fulfilled its objectives.

Finally, the study showed that a high level of dissemination of BTSF training was taking place, which is very positive as it means that people beyond those present in the training have benefitted from BTSF (it is estimated that one participant goes on to share the knowledge they acquired during the training with between 20-30 people).

Would you like to participate in BTSF?

Would you like to take a course, give a course, or help to organise one? Competent authority staff interested in participating in trainings should contact their BTSF national contact points (NCP), which have been designated for EU Countries, Candidate, Potential Candidate and EFTA Countries and some other non-EU countries. These NCP centralise information on BTSF, make it available to the relevant authorities in their countries, and handle the coordination of things like participant selection. Interested authorities from non-EU countries may also refer to the EU delegations in their country if no NCP has been designated or directly contact the contractor of the activity they would like to take part in.

Contractors interested in helping to organise training sessions may want attend an Info Day to get more information about BTSF and meet face to face with representatives from the Commission, Directorate General Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) and Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (Chafea) who manage the initiative. If it is impossible to attend an Info Day in person, you can also find information on e-tendering and the BTSF online, on the BTSF webpages, which can be found via the websites of both Chafea and DG SANTE.

Organising and participating in training sessions has become easier with the introduction of tools like templates that contractors can make use of for invitation letters and participant application forms, and BTSF is always looking at innovative ways to keep things running smoothly and to ensure that the course material is up-to-date and relevant to current needs.

TRAINING HELD IN EU COUNTRIES

BTSF complements the national-level training on performing control duties that is offered by national authorities, by providing courses that focus on issues of special interest to the EU and that bring EU-added value to more local efforts.

BTSF training helps keep EU countries authorities who are involved in official control activities up to date with all relevant aspects of European law and ensures that they share a common understanding of the regulatory system. Having uniform controls protects both consumers and the internal market.

Contractors help share knowledge at national level in a variety of ways, including- by sharing audio and video recordings of training sessions, leaflets covering the course's main take-aways, course summaries, training packages with links to the training sessions, USB keys with the training contents and syllabi of the training sessions including relevant questions and answers). In both face-to-face trainings and online course, the idea is to train the trainer – to give people accurate and timely information that they can then easily share with others. In this way, BTSF's reach is exponential. The information given out in the courses reaches many more people than just the class participants. In the following pages you find the courses organised in the EU Countries in 2019.



ANIMAL DISEASE PREPAREDNESS

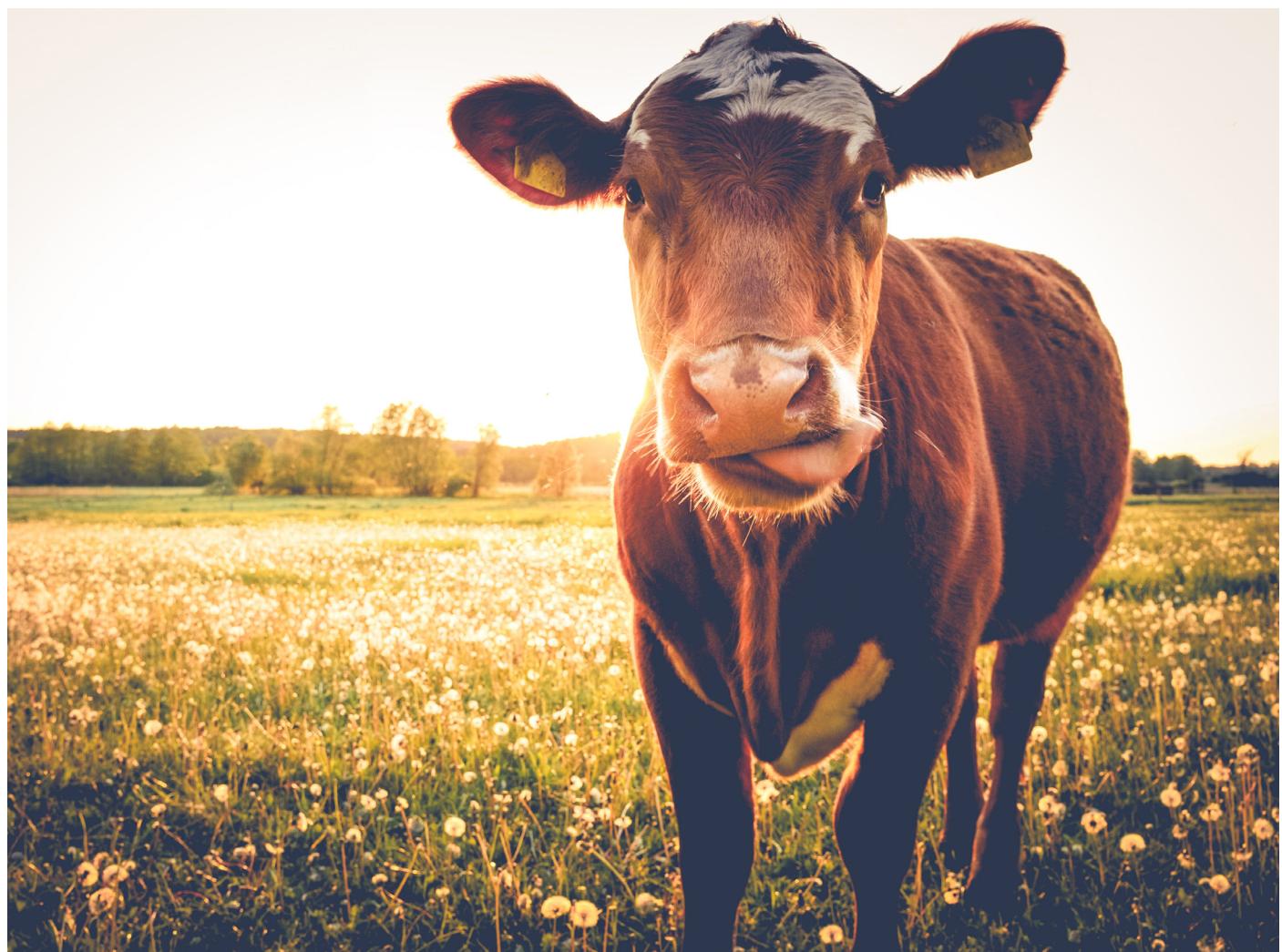
THE ISSUE: As indicated by the EU Animal Health Strategy and Action Plan , there is a need for policy to shift toward effective risk management/disease prevention and to promote initiatives to improve preparedness against major threats to animal health. The European Union and the European region as a whole have experienced serious animal disease emergencies over the last decade, such as foot-and-mouth disease, African swine fever and avian influenza. Responding quickly and effectively to these kinds of emergencies takes advance preparation. This includes having early warning systems in place, holding contingency planning exercises and knowing what procedures to follow to implement appropriate and, where possible pre-determined, emergency response actions.

COURSE CONTENT: The course provides a common understanding of the range of tools available for addressing emerging animal diseases (including zoonosis), and the related early reaction veterinary interventions. These training courses address the specific requirements for prevention, surveillance and early warning, for contingency planning, vaccine banks and simulation exercises, for awareness raising, partnership and networking, for best practices for preparedness and application of the contingency plan. The trainings pave the way for a new generation of contingency planning under the “Animal Health Law, or Animal Health Law (AHL),” that makes the best use of modern IT tools. This is modernising things and making them less bureaucratic and more smoothly operational.

NINE 4-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 269

HOST COUNTRIES: 4 (BULGARIA, ITALY, LATVIA, THE NETHERLANDS)



ANIMAL NUTRITION

THE ISSUE: Animal feed is one of the most important activity sectors in agriculture. Approximately 230 million tons of feedstuff (excluding roughage) are fed each year to farm animals in the EU. Back in the 1970s, the rules on animal feed emphasised the productivity of livestock farming, but the emphasis has shifted towards the protection of human and animal health, animal welfare and the environment. The European Union has developed a wide range of safety measures for all stages of the animal feed process, including at primary production.

Regulation (EC) No 183/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down requirements for feed hygiene introduced additional requirements that play a key role for ensuring feed safety along the food chain. The Commission considers it important to continue the training courses that it has offered for five years now in this field, in particular for staff of the competent authorities of EU Countries involved in official controls in the field of animal nutrition.

The aim of the training is to increase knowledge and share best practices in order to build expertise in feed safety issues at all stages of production, processing and distribution of feed, including by conducting some on-site inspections at animal feed production facilities.

Regulation (EC) No 183/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down requirements for feed hygiene introduces additional requirements which play a key role for ensuring feed safety along the food chain. In this context, and after 4 years of training experience in this field, the Commission considers it important to continue training courses at EU level, in particular for staff of the competent authorities of EU Countries involved in official controls in the field of animal nutrition

The aim of the training is to spread knowledge and best practices in order to increase expertise in feed safety issues concerning all stages of production, processing and distribution of feed, including some on-site inspections of establishments that produce this type of product.

COURSE CONTENT: Feed control staff are offered both general training on the EU legislation on feed and specific training for feed control staff on EU feed hygiene rules and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points Principles (HACCP) auditing. Various topics are covered, including legislative requirements concerning feed hygiene, raw or processed materials intended for use as animal feed or for manufacturing compound feeding stuffs; the authorisation, supervision and labelling of feed additives; and materials whose circulation or use for animal nutrition purposes is prohibited. Legislative requirements for the marketing and labelling of feeding stuffs intended for particular nutritional purposes, for medicated feed and for undesirable substances are also covered. Participants become familiar with the authorisation of new genetically modified food and feed, traceability and labelling of genetically modified organisms and traceability of food and feed products produced from genetically modified organisms and the identification of risks associated with biological and chemical contaminants along the feed chain that may influence food and feed safety, animal health and animal welfare. Other topics include, but are not limited to, primary production and inspections in manufacturing establishments, planning and supervision of official controls, sampling methods, guidance on prioritising hazards in feed, the assessment of auto-control systems of the feed business operators, and all aspects of auditing from planning to follow-up.

THREE TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 86

HOST COUNTRIES: 2 (CZECH REPUBLIC, ITALY)

ANIMAL WELFARE

THE ISSUE: The EU legislation on the protection of animals on the farm aims to make sure that animals are treated humanely, with respect to their needs and well-being, and that they are spared any undue discomfort, anxiety and pain. This applies to caring for farm animals throughout their life span. EU legislation on slaughtering practices aims to minimise the pain and suffering of animals through the use of proper approved methods to stun and kill animals, based on scientific knowledge and practical experience. The Commission considers it important to continue training courses at EU level in the areas of animal welfare issues in view of developing best practices and compliance with the EU and international standards.

COURSE CONTENT: Training is provided on animal welfare in poultry productions (laying hens and chickens kept for meat production – Course 1), animal welfare in pig production (Course 2), and animal welfare at the time of killing (Course 3) and animal welfare during transport (Course 4). The courses on animal welfare at the time of killing and on animal welfare during transport are offered for both basic and advanced levels. Course 1 includes information on EU legal requirements concerning the proper housing, management, handling and transport of poultry, on the assessment of farming systems, including cages and alternative systems for hens and monitoring at slaughterhouses for broilers, animal welfare outcomes (practical experience on farms/at slaughterhouses) and on how to conduct efficient inspections at farm level, and to set up and monitor data collection system for broilers. Course 2 provides information on relevant AW EU legislation on pig production, the scientific approach on proper pig housing and management and measures to carry out efficient inspections at farm level.

Course 3 includes basic level training on animal welfare at slaughter and in case of killing in cases of overpopulation, and advanced training on animal welfare at the slaughter of cattle, pigs, sheep, goats and poultry. It also looks at relevant EU legislation and international framework. Course 4 includes one basic level training session and two advanced training sessions on animal welfare during transport. Topics discussed range from the scientific basis for proper transport of the animals (animal behaviour, the concept of stress and its implication in the quality of the meat, animal physiology in particular drinking and feeding needs) to the conditions and records to be checked (fitness for transport, vehicle standards, space allowances, travelling time limits, temperatures, etc.) before, during and after a journey, in particular in case of long distance transport. Practical aspects of animal handling and the suitability and design of transport vehicles (temperature, ramps, Satellite navigation systems, etc.) are also covered in Course 4, as is the emergency care of animals during transport.

SEVEN 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 208

HOST COUNTRIES: 5 (DENMARK, GERMANY, ITALY, SPAIN, THE NETHERLANDS)



ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR)

THE ISSUE: The overuse of antimicrobials in human and veterinary medicine has led to the accelerated spread of resistant microorganisms to the point where drug-resistant infections now result in an estimated 33,000 patient deaths per year and 1.5Bn€ in healthcare costs and productivity losses in the EU. The Commission therefore strongly advocates and supports the prevention and control of AMR across the human, veterinary and food sectors, along the “One health” concept, as well as the research and development of new antimicrobial agents. In the EU, monitoring and surveillance of AMR and antimicrobial consumption are currently coordinated by the three EU agencies operating in the areas of human health, food safety and pharmaceuticals: the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Medicines Agency (EMA). These three agencies collect data from EU Countries and other reporting countries through diverse networks.

COURSE CONTENT: The training aims to further harmonise Member State approaches and practices in order to make it easier and more efficient for competent authorities to verify compliance with the legal requirements in the field of distribution and the use of antimicrobials and AMR monitoring, reporting and control. Bringing together participants from both public health authorities and veterinary/food safety authorities from different EU Countries makes procedures and practices across the EU more compatible and allow exchange between them.

The training includes both theoretical and practical sessions and is intended for officials from Competent Authorities who are involved in planning and coordinating relevant control activities (preferably at central level) and it consists of a balance of theoretical and practical sessions.

FOUR 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 141

HOST COUNTRIES: 3 (BULGARIA, CROATIA, SPAIN)

AUDIT SYSTEMS AND INTERNAL AUDITING

THE ISSUE: Independent auditing is an essential part of quality management in inspection systems. Auditors must audit controls covering the full scope of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. This training shares best practices for auditing procedures, provides more information about this complex area of work and ensures that consistent standards are widely implemented across the European Union. One main goal is to develop a consistent approach across the EU Countries and to make it possible to compare audit findings in different reports.

COURSE CONTENT: The trainings focus on the setting-up and implementation of an audit system and basics for performing a detailed audit. Course 1 provides an overview of organising internal audit standards, setting-up audit teams and auditor selection, developing an audit programme/schedule, defining the scope, objectives and audit criteria of the audits to achieve the overall programme goals, performing the audit, monitoring and reporting on the audit programme.

The Course 2 focuses on developing advanced skills to conduct a detailed audit to verify the effective and suitable implementation of official controls by the relevant control authorities. The topics to be covered include at least a review of the audit process and of the organisation of an audit system, the definition of the audit scope and final objective, and the pre-audit activities to be performed (research, desk review, risk based targeting, checklist development, audit team roles and responsibilities, etc.). Also to be covered are the techniques and tools to be used during the audit, with particular emphasis on root cause analysis methods and on how to draw conclusions on the effectiveness of implementation and suitability in achieving objectives, and on making recommendations when reporting.

FIVE 4-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 150

HOST COUNTRIES: 3 (CZECH REPUBLIC, LATVIA, PORTUGAL)

BORDER INSPECTION POSTS (BIPs)

THE ISSUE: It is essential to the animal and public health security of the EU single market that thorough and harmonized import controls are conducted. Once imported into the EU, animals and animal products are in free circulation within the Union, so they must meet strict safety requirements. All official staff engaged in import controls (including candidate countries for EU accession, the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries and European Economic Area (EEA) countries) should therefore receive adequate training in order to better implement effective and harmonised import controls.

COURSE CONTENT: Best practices for import control procedures are shared and information regarding this complex area of work is given out and gone over thoroughly to ensure that import controls are consistent and widely implementation across the European Union.

Designed primarily for EU Countries staff operating or involved in BIP (seaport, airport and road/rail) control systems, the training focuses on a range of topics presented in three courses: import controls on live animals (Course 1), import controls on food of animal origin and composite (Course 2), import controls on animal by-products and genetics (Course 3).

Different aspects of import /transit controls are also covered, including those on products and live animals and a wide range of products both those intended for human consumption and those not for human consumption. Selected areas of EU legislation are also examined, especially those areas that can be difficult to interpret.

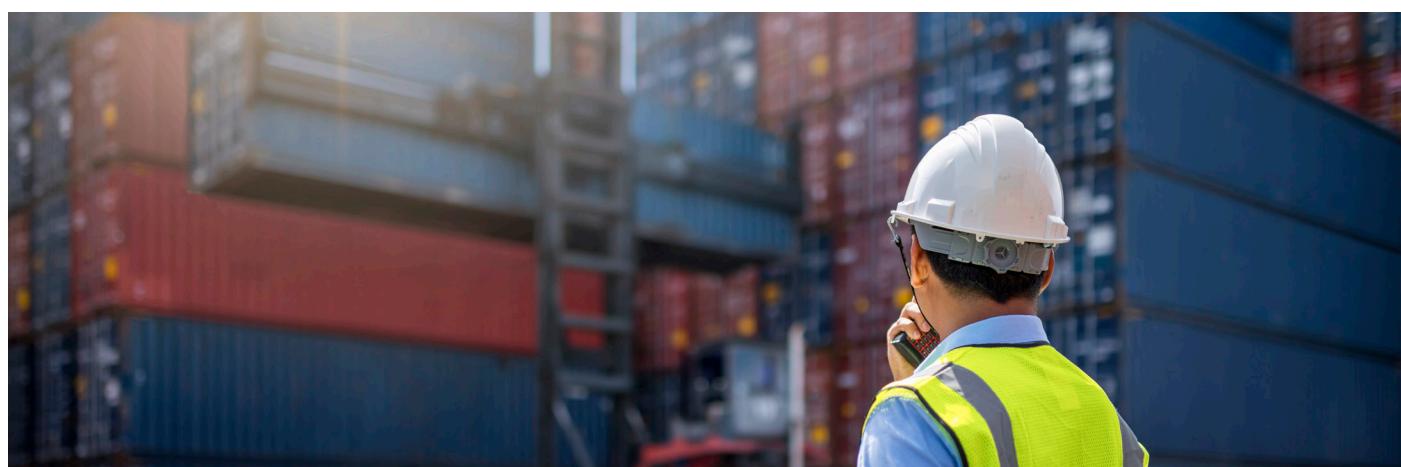
For live animals (field A), these include rules on welfare and other environmental fields (CITES, invasive alien species), specific issues relating to the import of live horses, the non-commercial entry of pets and import rules for non-harmonised animals. In the area of food (field B), topics include rules on composite products, personal consignments (luggage, postal/courier parcels), monitoring plans; and in Animal by-products (ABP) (field C), training is given on rules on samples, personal consignments (luggage, postal/courier parcels), destruction of kitchen waste and other animal product waste from vessels and other means of transport.

Also covered are the practical aspects of implementation (best practices for controls on imports/transits of products (documentary checks, re-entry of Union consignments, channeling, sampling of consignments, laboratory tests, reinforced checks, non-conforming consignments, etc.); cooperation with customs services, intelligence gathering, risk assessment procedures and information exchange with other competent authorities (e.g. road feeder traffic); and the use of IT systems (TRACES);In addition to the workshops and training sessions, there are discussion groups on common problems concerning veterinary checks and their challenges, particularly with regard to infringement detections, decisions to be taken and their enforcement.

FOUR 4-DAY TRAINING COURSES WERE ORGANISED.

PARTICIPANTS: 154

HOST COUNTRIES: 4 (BELGIUM, CROATIA, FRANCE, SPAIN)



CONTROLS ON CONTAMINANTS IN FEED AND FOOD

THE ISSUE: Contaminants are substances not intentionally added to food and feed which are nonetheless present in food and feed as a result of the production, manufacture, processing, preparation, treatment, packaging, transport or holding of feed and food, or as a result of environmental contamination. Contaminants present a potential danger to animal or human health or to the environment and could adversely affect livestock production.

COURSE CONTENT: This training course for competent authorities aims to increase understanding of the EU legislative framework in order to improve the capacity of competent authorities to set up a control system for contaminants in feed and food and to allow participants to share experiences in order to improve implementation of such control. Training consists of both theoretical and practical sessions and it is broken down into two submodules. Course 1 (eight 3-day courses) provides a basic understanding of EU regulations and guidelines applicable to the control of contaminants. Course 2 (4 three-day courses) is more advanced and focuses on official controls plans and systems for the control of contaminants. It increases the participants' capacity to set up systems for the control of contaminants in food and to therefore ensure appropriate and harmonised implementation of monitoring and official controls plans in this field.

THREE 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 90

HOST COUNTRIES: 2 (GERMANY, SPAIN)

ENDOCRINE DISRUPTORS

THE ISSUE: A smooth implementation of the new criteria to identify endocrine disruptors is a high priority for the European Commission (DG SANTE), and the topic has gained high political attention in the EU Countries, in the European Parliament and amongst stakeholders. New criteria to identify endocrine disruptors under the Regulation (EU) N° 528/2012 on biocidal products and under the Regulation (EC) N° 1107/2009 on plant protection products have been applicable since 7 June and 10 November 2018, respectively, and foresee that, if criteria to identify a substance as an endocrine disruptor are met according to this Guidance, the substance is

withdrawn from the market, unless specific derogations apply.

A guidance document developed by ECHA and EFSA has been available since 7 June 2018 (Guidance for the identification of endocrine disruptors in the context of Regulations (EU) N° 528/2012 and (EC) N° 1107/2009, thereafter the Guidance), but implementation has proven challenging for competent authorities, particularly as no transitional period was foreseen for the assessments of applications.

The topic of endocrine disruptors, as well as the criteria and the guidance document mentioned above, are scientifically very complex. From a regulatory perspective, the EU is a pioneer in this field, and new territory presents new challenges.

COURSE CONTENT: Offered for the first time in 2019, this training focuses on the implementation of the new criteria to identify endocrine disruptors under the Regulation (EU) N° 528/2012 on biocidal products and under the Regulation (EC) N° 1107/2009 on plant protection products, in particular by applying the Guidance. The training aims to support experts on the interpretation of complex situations for identifying a substance as falling under the criteria to identify endocrine disruptors or not, and in the interpretation of scenarios in which the use of the Guidance may not be straightforward for the Member State experts.

Specifically looking at 'Applying the EFSA/ECHA Guidance to identify Endocrine disruptors' this training contributes to a harmonised implementation of the criteria and the Guidance amongst the 28 EU Countries and across the biocidal products and plant protection products sectors.

TWO 2-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 115

HOST COUNTRIES: 1 (BELGIUM)

EU SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY LAW ENFORCEMENT

THE ISSUE: Food and feed safety, animal health and welfare and plant health rules are almost fully based on EU law. Such a strong EU-oriented integrated approach requires a high level of competence and expertise of the controlling competent authorities and imposes high standards on control officials. Audits and inspections by DG SANTE are held to check the effectiveness of national systems for control of compliance with EU food safety, animal health and welfare and plant health standards. Training and technical assistance can help EU Countries to rectify issues identified during Commission audits.

COURSE CONTENT: The training covers the organisation and implementation of two types of activities: Training Workshops and Sustained Training Missions (STMs). The course is intended to give participants a better understanding of EU law and its implementation and enforcement in EU Countries and in neighbouring non-EU countries in all SPS fields (Food and feed law, including quality aspects; animal health rules; animal welfare rules and plant protection and plant health rules). Workshops provide a detailed overview of EU legislation in the relevant areas, with regard, in particular, to recent legislative developments, but also at disseminating best practices for control procedures to make these procedures more compatible across and outside the EU, and based, when possible, on EU overview reports. During STMs, experts assess the situation in EU Countries and support the authorities in developing action plans to improve compliance.

SIX 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 181

HOST COUNTRIES: 5 (BELGIUM, BULGARIA, CROATIA, ITALY, LUXEMBOURG)

SEVEN SUSTAINED TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 358

HOST COUNTRIES: 6 (BULGARIA, CROATIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, HUNGARY, ROMANIA, SERBIA)

FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

THE ISSUE: Food contact materials are materials and articles intended to come into contact with food and beverages, including bottled drinking water. The harmonisation at EU level of the legislation on Food Contact Materials (FCM) achieves two essential goals: it protects the health of the consumers and removes technical barriers to trade. The EU Rules on FCM can be of general scope and apply to all FCM, or they made apply only to specific materials, EU law may be complemented with EU Countries national legislation if specific EU rules do not exist.

COURSE CONTENT: The training objective is to provide key authorities involved in official controls with a consistent and high level of understanding on how to ensure effective implementation of the control of FCM and to give them the opportunity to exchange best practices for ensuring better enforcement of EU rules. Providing training on such control techniques helps develop a consistent approach across the EU Countries and to make it easier to compare audit findings in different reports.

These training sessions are especially designed for field inspectors who are involved in control activities in food establishments and food contact materials premises, but officials from Competent Authorities who are involved in planning and control activities may also take part. Participants must have adequate professional experience, be familiar with the relevant EU legislation and have successfully participated in the BTSF e-learning module on food contact materials.

FIVE 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 143

HOST COUNTRIES: 5 (ESTONIA, GERMANY, GREECE, ITALY, SPAIN)



FOOD FRAUDS /E-COMMERCE OF FOOD

THE ISSUE: “Fraud along the agri-food chain” or “agri-food fraud” covers – in broad terms – fraudulent activities characterised by their intentional nature, aimed at an economic gain, in violation of legal rules (applicable to the production, processing, distribution and marketing of agri-food chain products) and at the expense of the immediate customer or the final consumer. Such violations could affect the safety and quality of food, its composition or presentation, the use of prohibited substances or ingredients, deceptive labelling, etc. Food fraud could imply infringements of intellectual property rights. The ability to recognise and investigate fraudulent activity presents a challenge for competent authorities, not only due to the various forms it can take but also owing to the need to distinguish deliberate acts from accidental or unintentional ones, which could equally affect the safety or quality of the foodstuff concerned.

Attempts by some business operators to obtain unfair advantages over competitors by deceiving them (and/or consumers) and the extension of organised groups’ crime portfolio to cover food and drink have led to a series of prominent food fraud cases. The digital dimension (e-commerce of food) further creates opportunities for deceptive and dishonest practices allowing action from “abroad”. The resulting food fraud incidents led consumers to lose confidence in the food systems, with an immediate impact on the functioning of the markets.

To improve the effectiveness of official controls in relation to food fraud and e-commerce of food, staff in the competent authorities must be equipped with appropriate knowledge and skills, adjusted to the needs of such controls. Traditional investigation and control techniques are not always sufficient to properly control e-commerce of food and food related products, nor to reveal cases of fraud in the food chain (be it through Internet-based or traditional businesses), as many competent authorities do not have the necessary equipment and appropriate approach.

COURSE CONTENT: Courses aim to improve knowledge on new effective and efficient control/investigation techniques to identify more easily fraud along the food chain (Course 1) and ensure better official controls on e-commerce in the food sector (Course 2). Topics in Course 1 provide a general planning of food fraud work, simulation of a physical control, control of accounts and traceability documents, collection of information from other authorities and sources. The topics in Course 2 include but are not limited to legal requirements concerning food businesses operating on the Internet, registration requirements of EU e-traders and their possible identification via trusted seals, the technical basis of the Internet and techniques to reveal the identities of the server, computers and traders.

THREE 5-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 89

HOST COUNTRIES: 3 (SPAIN, ITALY, LATVIA)



FOOD HYGIENE AND FLEXIBILITY PROVISIONS

THE ISSUE: EU food hygiene legislation is strict enough to protect consumers' health, but flexible enough to protect food diversity, let consumers enjoy the products they love, support small-scale producers and make the sale of food produced locally by traditional methods easier. In the context of local products, it's easier for EU Countries than for the EU to find the appropriate solutions based on their local situation and on the appropriate level of hygiene in these businesses, without compromising the objective of food safety. Although national competent authorities and food business operators were satisfied with the flexibility provided in the legislation, the Commission received feedback from certain food businesses indicating that some EU Countries might not have made full use of all flexibility possibilities offered in the legislation. As a first attempt to help the EU Countries to be more aware of flexibility provisions, the Commission in collaboration with EU Countries issued two specific guidance documents on this topic. As well as providing a basis for a better understanding of some of the provisions for flexibility provided in the Hygiene Regulations, these documents are intended to help food business operators and competent authorities of EU Countries to make the best use of these provisions. Information and training are important strategic tools for helping EU Countries to achieve these goals.

COURSE CONTENT: The purpose of this training is to further raise awareness and to further help the competent authorities of the EU Countries and field inspectors to better understand the flexibility provisions so that they can make better use of them. It is also designed to encourage the dissemination of best practices for official controls regarding flexibility provisions in all food sectors and the exchange of experience in order to increase the level of expertise and harmonisation in the approach to flexibility at all stages of production, processing and distribution of the food chain. The training is addressed both to officials from Competent Authorities involved in planning and control activities (preferably at headquarters' level), and field inspectors involved in control activities on food hygiene.

SEVEN 5-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 202

HOST COUNTRIES: 5 (CROATIA, FINLAND, GERMANY, ITALY, LATVIA)

FOOD HYGIENE AT PRIMARY PRODUCTION

THE ISSUE: The European Union has developed a wide range of measures to ensure a high standard of hygiene during food production and proper control of foodstuffs. These rules include activities carried out at primary production level. Commission guidance documents elaborate on complex hygiene requirements applicable to primary production and give practical examples. National- and EU-level sectorial guides have been developed to describe how primary producers can meet legal requirements. The training raises awareness and promotes a common understanding of the rules that food operators operating at primary production level need to comply with. It also disseminates best practices for official controls regarding primary production activities in all food sectors and provides a space for sharing experiences in order to identify practical solutions to problems in implementing best practices at the primary production level.

COURSE CONTENT: Courses cover EU provisions related to general hygiene rules and controls applying to businesses rearing domestic land or aquatic animals, producing derived primary products, or producing or harvesting plant products. They also deal with registration requirements for primary production businesses, hygiene requirements, control of hazards and precautionary measures for storage, handling and use of fertilisers, pesticides and biocides, and for the storage, handling and disposal of waste.

TWO 4-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 54

HOST COUNTRIES: 1 (SPAIN)



FOOD IMPROVEMENT AGENTS

THE ISSUE: Competent authorities need to be sufficiently skilled in the field of food improvement agents to be able to verify whether the legal requirements are being met and to be able to detect non-compliances. They must also be able to set up systems for the control of food improvement agents with a view to better set priorities, to identify food businesses to be controlled and to determine the scope and type of controls to be implemented. With this training, they can ensure the appropriate and harmonised implementation of monitoring and official controls plans in this field.

COURSE CONTENT: BTSF training in this field is divided into two focus subjects, one on harmonised implementation and enforcement of the EU legislation on food improvement agents (Course A) and one on the planning of monitoring and official controls of food improvement agents (Course B).

Course A focuses on the understanding of EU regulations and guidelines applicable to food improvement agents and inspection practices in this field and is addressed to competent authorities' staff responsible for the delivery of official controls in relation to food additives, flavourings and enzymes. The topics covered fall into three broad categories: 1- Common aspects applicable to food additives, flavourings and enzymes; 2- EU provisions on food additives 3. EU provisions on food flavourings.

Course B focuses on planning activities for the monitoring and control of food improvement agents. The training is intended primarily for the official staff of EU Countries competent authorities working at food control authorities in a central/regional administration level responsible for the development, coordination and implementation of official monitoring and controls plans. Participants receive detailed information on the risk management (including control) measures taken at EU level as regards food improvement agents, especially on the most recent developments and the different guidance and information documents elaborated (like Q&As) at EU level related to control of food improvement agents, and many other topics are also addressed, like the monitoring of food additive consumption and use.

NINE 4-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 232

HOST COUNTRIES: 7 (BELGIUM, GERMANY, GREECE, IRELAND, LATVIA, NETHERLANDS, POLAND)

FOOD INFORMATION AND COMPOSITION

THE ISSUE: Food law, both at national and EU level, establishes the consumer right to safe food and to accurate and honest information. In addition to protecting the consumer from misleading claims, labelling also influences fair trade because differences between the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the EU Countries on the labelling of foodstuffs may impede the free circulation of both general food products and special food categories (such as food supplements, fortified foods, food for special medical purposes and/or infant formulae) and can lead to unequal conditions of competition. In addition, foods promoted with health claims may be perceived by consumers as having a nutritional, physiological or other health advantage over similar or other products that either do not claim or do not contain the nutrients or other substances claimed by their competitors. For example, if one company's fresh or frozen fruit was marketed as gluten-free, and consumers bought it based on this claim, whereas all fresh or frozen fruit is actually gluten-free. (Processed fruit products may contain gluten) This may encourage consumers to make choices that directly influence their total intake of individual nutrients or other substances. For these reasons, only permitted nutrition and health claims can be used in the EU after a thorough scientifically assessment.

COURSE CONTENT: The objective of the training is to disseminate best practices for control procedures, increase knowledge of this area of work and ensure consistent and rigorous implementation of rules across the Union. The training is mostly intended for Member State staff involved (preferably at central level) in supervision, planning and coordinating of control activities on food labelling requirements in general and for the types of food products mentioned above in particular, as well as for field inspectors who are working with the authorities in charge of carrying out such controls. Workshops ensure that participants have a good understanding of regulations, including new regulations like the one concerning the minimum font size on food labels and the criteria for the use of claims (specific conditions of use and general principles and conditions of the Regulation).

THREE 4-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 94

HOST COUNTRIES: 3 (GREECE, HUNGARY, PORTUGAL)



HACCP PRINCIPLES

THE ISSUE: The HACCP system is internationally recognised as the most effective instrument to help food business operators attain a higher standard of food safety. The HACCP system focuses on identifying and preventing hazards from contaminating food. It is based on hazard analysis and aims to make the control of product processes more efficient and effective in order to verify how well a food business is complying with relevant food safety requirements. This system places responsibility for ensuring food safety on business operators, helping them to compete more effectively in the world market and reducing barriers to international trade. Control techniques, such as auditing and evaluation of the application of the good hygiene practices and the HACCP based procedures by food businesses and their assessment, are included in Annex II of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 among the relevant subject areas for the training of staff performing official controls. As regards products of animal origin, more specific rules concerning audits are also laid down in Regulation (EC) No 854/2004. Similar rules are and will be introduced in tertiary legislation of Regulation (EU) No 2017/625.

COURSE CONTENT: The training objective is to develop the ability to conduct audits to verify food business operators' proper implementation of HACCP-based systems, taking into account their specificities and particularities and using a flexible approach. Providing training on such control techniques assists in developing a consistent approach across the EU Countries and in providing assurances that the audit findings in different reports are comparable. The courses provide an overview of general hygiene requirements, the background of the HACCP systems, the evaluation of the HACCP plan, preparation of audit activities, performance of the audit, collection of audit evidence, reporting on the audit and follow-up.

THIRTEEN 5-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 313

HOST COUNTRIES: 5 (CZECH REPUBLIC, FRANCE, HUNGARY, LITHUANIA, PORTUGAL)

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM)

THE ISSUE: The EU has the world's strongest regulations for the authorisation and control of pesticides. Yet much of the European population would like to even stricter regulations, to further reduce the use of pesticides or even ban them outright, in an effort to move towards sustainable food production. In response, the EU adopted a comprehensive series of legislation with a two-fold objective of strengthening the approval/authorisation system for plant protection products and engaging in a more sustainable use of such products.

Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council also called the Sustainable Use Directive (SUD), plays an important role in this strategy. It indeed established a framework for EU action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides by reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment and by promoting the use of Integrated Pest Management schemes and alternative approaches or techniques such as non-chemical alternatives to pesticides.

COURSE CONTENT: The training was designed to improve the understanding of the IPM concept and IPM schemes in order to develop criteria for the assessment of IPM implementation at farm level. The courses focus on legal requirements, the IPM general principles, the crop-specific IPM schemes and IPM assessment at farm level, including a field visit in a specialised location involved in the development of new IPM techniques and the transfer of knowledge on IPM.

As crop production and, in particular, pest monitoring and pest control measures are closely linked to geographical locations and climatic conditions, separate training sessions are organised for EU Countries from the Northern and the Central zone (combined sessions) and for EU Countries from the Southern zone. Training is specifically designed to cover specific crops or groups of crops, including field crops; vegetable crops (field production); greenhouse production (vegetables and berries) and fruit tree production, including vineyards (table and wine grapes) and field production of berries. A one-day practical session is held at a demonstration farm specialised in the crops of reference for the workshop and focuses on the assessment of IPM implementation. Participants perform a mock inspection to verify if IPM principles have been implemented at the farm, using check-lists they have developed as part of this training.

As well as this practical training, a theoretical component looks at the legal requirements of Regulation 1107/2009 on placing of plant protection products on the market and of Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides, in particular. This theoretical training also covers other relevant EU-legislation regarding plant protection products and their use and the general principles of IPM.

EIGHT 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 226

HOST COUNTRIES: 7 (CZECH REPUBLIC, FRANCE, GERMANY, ITALY, LATVIA, SPAIN, THE NETHERLANDS)



MICROBIOLOGICAL CRITERIA AND MONITORING AND CONTROL OF ZOONOSES AND ZOONOTIC AGENTS

THE ISSUE: Microbiological criteria are used to assess the safety and quality of foods. Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 defines microbiological criteria for several food categories (e.g. ready-to-eat foods, infant foods, minced meat and meat products and fishery products) and microbes (e.g. *Salmonella*, *Listeria* and *Enterobacter Sakazakii*).

Zoonoses are managed by a set of general and specific measures, and in particular for *Salmonella*, by a number of specific rules for monitoring and control on primary production and placing on the market, including microbiological criteria. Directive 2003/99/EC on the monitoring of zoonoses and zoonotic agents and Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 on the control of *Salmonella* and other specified food-borne zoonotic agents entered into application in 2003 and 2004 respectively.

COURSE CONTENT: The activity focuses on the implementation of microbiological criteria (Course 1) and the control of zoonoses, with a particular focus on the control of *Salmonella* in poultry and pigs and *Campylobacter* along the poultry meat production chain (Course 2). The objective of Course 1 is to harmonise the approaches and practices of the EU Countries in order to increase the efficacy of the competent authority to verify compliance with the legal requirements in the field of microbiological criteria, while the objective of Course 2 is to further harmonise the approaches of the EU Countries on the control of zoonoses and of zoonotic agents. It should primarily increase the efficacy of staff of competent authorities in the EU Countries who are involved in the implementation and reporting on the control zoonoses and zoonotic agents, in particular *Salmonella*. It is also pertinent to those zoonoses and zoonotic agents that are monitored and controlled in the primary production in the framework of control and eradication programmes. These programmes are carried out in relevant animal populations in order to reach the requested targets for reduction and the epidemiological indicators set by the EU Countries.

NINE 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 231

HOST COUNTRIES: 5 (FRANCE, IRELAND, ITALY, LATVIA, SWEDEN)

MOVEMENTS OF DOGS AND CATS

THE ISSUE: EU Countries and stakeholders have reported that training concerning controls of intra-Union trade in, imports of and non-commercial movements of dogs and cats is very important. Dogs and cats in the EU can be transported for non-commercial purposes or for intra-Union trade or import purposes. Experience has shown that unscrupulous persons pretend they are involved in non-commercial rather than commercial operations, in order to escape from having to adhere to strict rules. This is something that happens often and not only is the welfare and health of the animals being transported being disregarded, but not following the rules and producing fraudulent documents puts the EU at risk of being exposed to rabies and other health risks. The aim of the activity, therefore, is to provide a common understanding of the EU legislation in relation to cross-border movements of dogs and cats, and for participants to share their knowledge and experience in order to help stop illegal activities.

COURSE CONTENT: The course provides a full overview of all relevant animal health requirements, including identification and differentiation between intra-Union trade in, imports of and non-commercial movements of dogs and cats. Participants should come from official veterinary and custom services involved in animal health prevention and control actions in all EU EU Countries and from official veterinary services involved in animal health prevention and control actions in Candidate Countries, the European Neighbouring Policy Countries and the EFTA countries.

FOUR 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 116

HOST COUNTRIES: 3 (FRANCE, GREECE, SPAIN)



OFFICIAL CONTROL REGULATION

THE ISSUE: In order to afford European Union citizens a high level of food and feed safety and of public, animal and plant health, and guarantee the functioning of the internal market, Union legislation provides for a set of harmonised rules to prevent, eliminate or reduce the level of health risk to humans, animals and plants, which may arise along the agri-food chain. EU official control rules are a key element of the governance of the agri-food chain in Europe, recognised world-wide as an example of best practice. The "Official Control Regulation" (OCR) modernises EU control legislation by providing for more risk-based approach, by sharpening enforcement tools and by integrating more consistently the system of official controls in the animal health, plant health and plant reproductive material sectors. This course was designed to strengthen both the controls and the cooperation among different bodies in the EU Members States, Norway, Iceland and Switzerland that are involved in control and audits in the broad fields of plant health, animal health and welfare and food safety.

COURSE CONTENT: Six seminars are held to exchange knowledge on the progress and developments in the areas of official controls, with emphasis on the elements of the legislation valid in the particular field as well as changes in the current legislation. The seminars also provide the opportunity to obtain feedback related to its practical implementation. The main beneficiaries are Member State officials responsible for this subject area. The seminars organised in 2019 focused on the general changes provided by the OCR and then, more specifically on plant health and food safety new aspects introduced by this new legal framework.

THREE SEMINARS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 110

HOST COUNTRIES: IRELAND

ORGANIC PRODUCTION SCHEME

THE ISSUE: The EU legislative and policy framework on organic production and the labelling of organic products is designed to protect consumers and to ensure that products they purchase that are labelled 'organic' have been produced in line with the regulatory requirements. Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and the labelling of organic products requires EU Countries to establish control systems, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls in food and feed, and to verify compliance with the regulatory requirements. The courses on organic production schemes cover the continually expanding body of knowledge on the control requirements and bring together participants from different EU Countries to exchange experiences and share best practices for control activities and procedures.

COURSE CONTENT: The courses cover the requirements for the set-up and functioning of the control system on organic production and the labelling of organic products, with regard to the general control rules for all food and feed sectors according to the official controls regulation (No 882/2004) and the additional, specific sector control rules in the organic legislation (No 834/2007, 889/2008 and 1235/2008). They also address the competent authorities' supervision of control bodies and provide the requirements for the accreditation of the control bodies and for their supervision by the competent authorities.

EIGHT 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 233

HOST COUNTRIES: 5 (CROATIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, GERMANY, ITALY, LITHUANIA, SPAIN)

OUTBREAK PREPAREDNESS AND MANAGEMENT IN FOOD

THE ISSUE: The Commission considers that there is a need to improve outbreak preparedness and management and to strengthen investigation and reporting of national and multinational food-borne outbreaks. Food-borne outbreak management, investigation and reporting require a multidisciplinary approach at local, national and, if multinational, European and international level, as well as between public and veterinary/food safety authorities. Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 (the General Food Law) ensures a high level of protection of human health and consumers' interest with regards to food. This Regulation lays down the general principles of food law including the risk analysis concept, the precautionary principle and the protection of consumers' interest. It includes general requirements to ensure that food is safe and that its source is traceable and it gives food business operators primary responsibility for meeting these requirements. It also provides the basis for the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) and for the management of emergencies and crises. The latter part was expanded upon by a general plan on food/feed crisis management (Decision 2004/478/EC).

COURSE CONTENT: The objective of the training is to disseminate best practices for the multidisciplinary management, investigation and reporting of food-borne outbreaks, building knowledge of this complex area of work and ensuring consistent and high implementation standards across the European Union. Bringing together participants from both public health authorities and veterinary/food safety authorities from different EU Countries helps make procedures and practices across the EU more compatible.

FIVE 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 142

HOST COUNTRIES: 3 (ITALY, LATVIA, SPAIN)



PLANT HEALTH SURVEYS

THE ISSUE: The course provides useful tools for services that need to plan large scale surveillance for organisms that could potentially create a plant health crisis, for example, *Xylella fastidiosa*, or Huanglongbing, for which intensive multi-annual surveys may be required in order to determine the status of the disease.

The course provides a clear and harmonised understanding of the key elements of the relevant International Standards (in particular International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures No. 6 and 8) and best practices for planning surveys, in particular defining their objectives and statistical basis, their implementation and their reporting. The course covers the application, documentation and reporting requirements for the Commission Work Programme.

COURSE CONTENT: The course covers the relevant EU legislation, including the Financial Regulations and Commission Work Programme, the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) and European Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO) standards, establishing the survey plan and planning of resources, training and guidelines for staff performing surveys.

SIX 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 144

HOST COUNTRIES: 4 (GERMANY, ITALY, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA)



PPP APPLICATION EQUIPMENT

THE ISSUE: The EU is working to reduce the overall impact of plant protection products on human health and the environment. Legislation has been adopted to reduce the risks linked to the use of plant protection products, improve the quality and efficacy of plant protection product application equipment, ensure better training and education of users and develop integrated pest management schemes. EU Countries must ensure that all pesticide application equipment (PAE) is inspected at regular intervals, and it must successfully pass the inspection or be banned. In addition, professional users have to conduct regular calibrations and technical checks of the PAE in accordance with the training they have received. For the purposes of mutual recognition of PAE inspections, EU Countries must also designate bodies to implement inspections and establish certification that is recognised across the EU. These measures help ensure that pesticides are being applied correctly and in a sustainable manner.

COURSE CONTENT: Training raises the participants' awareness about this complex field and provides for practical, harmonised and up-to-date information regarding PAE and their inspection, including the application of relevant international standards. It should make inspection practices more harmonized and support the mutual recognition of certification. Topics include legislation, inspection and certifications bodies, application of International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) and national standards and methodologies for complying with these standards.

ONE 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 18

HOST COUNTRIES: 1 (FRANCE)

PPP EVALUATION AND AUTHORISATION

THE ISSUE: There is a continuous need for training on food safety risk assessment for experts dealing with food safety, because guidelines for risk assessments evolve in accordance with new regulations. The objectives of the training is to promote harmonisation within the EU countries of the procedures of evaluation and authorisation of plant protection products with a specific focus on higher tier risk assessment, protection goals and risk mitigation measures with particular emphasis on mutual recognition within the authorisation zones. This training is for experienced EU countries staff who already have in-depth knowledge about the latest developments concerning guidance for risk assessment and who are involved in evaluations and decision making for the authorisation of plant protection products.

COURSE CONTENT: The training covers relevant areas of the evaluation and authorisation procedures for plant protection products, including the assessment of efficacy of plant protection products in the light of the newly endorsed EPPO Guidelines and recent developments that impact toxicological risk assessment. It also focuses on eco-toxicological risk assessment for the terrestrial and aquatic environment and on environmental fate and behaviour in soil, air and water in the light of most recent development reflected in the agreed Guidance Documents at EU/OECD level.

This course should allow an analysis and exchange on risk assessment methodologies

FIVE TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 149

HOST COUNTRIES: 5 (BELGIUM, DENMARK, GREECE, ITALY, PORTUGAL)



PROTECTED DESIGNATIONS SCHEMES (PDO, PGI, TSG, GI)

THE ISSUE: Quality is an issue for every farmer and buyer, whether dealing with commodities produced to basic standards or with high-end quality products Europe is known for. Using geographical indications, in particular, helps add value to agricultural products. The EU protects European food heritage by highlighting its diversity and emphasising the qualities associated with the origin of its products. The European quality schemes for designations of origin, geographical indications and traditional specialities cover more than 3400 protected product names and include cheese, meat and meat products, fruits and vegetables oils, wines, spirit drinks and more. Consumers can easily recognise these products thanks to their logos, and product names are protected from imitation and fraud.

An essential feature of the quality schemes is to ensure that consumers can trust the guarantees provided by labelling, which is only credible if backed by effective verification and controls. Unless buyers and consumers have accurate, useful and guaranteed information about these characteristics and attributes, they cannot be expected to buy speciality or regional products or to pay a fair price for them.

It is crucial that competent authorities, control bodies, national accreditation bodies and customs authorities have a clear understanding of the EU requirements laid down in the horizontal and sector-specific legislation if the control system is to be effective.

COURSE CONTENT: Competent authorities working in this field need to have a thorough understanding of protected designation schemes. Workshops explain EU food control and marketing accreditation requirements and their application, as well as general requirements for bodies conducting product certification.

Training furthers understanding and knowledge on the control of geographical indications in the wine sector and in the field of spirit drinks, and on the control of PDO/PGI/TSG in the field of agricultural products and foodstuffs. It also provides cross-sectorial training on market controls, which should cover all three sectors: agri-food, wine and spirit drinks.

The objective is to improve knowledge of this complex area of work and further harmonise the approaches and practices of the EU Countries in order to help the competent authorities/control bodies to more efficiently verify compliance with the legal requirements in the field of protected designations.

The course therefore provides an overview of the EU legal framework applicable to quality schemes with a special focus on the legal provisions adopted in the last few years, covering relevant EU provisions on the control of undertakings under the quality schemes,

The cross-sectorial workshops on market controls cover all three sectors: agri-food, wine and spirit drinks and highlight the specificities of each sector. They also focus on the market controls themselves and related issues, and include the protection of third countries geographical indications, which is granted in the EU through international agreements.

TEN 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 297

HOST COUNTRIES: 6 (CZECH REPUBLIC, ESTONIA, FRANCE, ITALY, POLAND, PORTUGAL)



SUPPORT TO UNION AUDITS

THE ISSUE: Commission experts have to carry out general and specific audits in EU Countries in order to verify that official controls take place in EU Countries in accordance with multi-annual control plans and EU law. Similarly, Commission experts may also carry out official controls in third countries to verify the compliance or equivalence of third country legislation and systems with EU law.

To perform these tasks, the Commission may appoint experts from EU Countries to assist its own experts in their audits and inspection, and these experts must have up-to-date training.

In organising this training, the Commission draws upon the experience of the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) in using national experts in an organised and systematic way for its work in the field of air safety inspections.

COURSE CONTENT: The training activities are exclusively addressed to Eu countries staff in charge of official controls to verify compliance with EU feed and food law, animal health and welfare and plant health legislation. Six training sessions, also called workshops, are held at the DG SANTE premises in Grange, Ireland and are mainly for experts from EU Countries who will assist Commission experts in their audits and inspection.

TWO 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 80

HOST COUNTRIES: 1 (IRELAND)

TRACES USE

THE ISSUE: There is a continuing need to disseminate best practices for TRACES use, to improve knowledge of this system and to ensure consistent and high implementation standards across the EU.

TRACES is a computer network that controls the movement, import and export of live animals, plants and food and feed in the EU. This system is used as part of the EU's internal import control system and is intended to track live animals and rejected foods. Decision 2003/623/CE provides the legal basis for the development of this integrated computerised veterinary system, and Decision 2004/292/EC requires EU Countries to use TRACES to comply with the objectives of traceability for all traded and imported live animals, semen and embryos

and products of animal origin. The scope of TRACES was extended in 2011 and in 2015, to provide for two new modules aimed at tracing products of non-animal origin and live plants and to cover organic products. The TRACES network includes competent authorities at Member State and participating non-EU countries level and economic operators. It provides for a series of functionalities including of course the tracking of any type of consignments of food and feed and live animals and plants, an access to the EU legislation, relevant trade documents and lists of approved establishments and a statistical tool.

COURSE CONTENT: The training courses cover the use of TRACES for importing live animals and products of animal origin; products of non-animal origin; live plants and organic products and for the intra-EU trade of live animals and animal by-products. The course should provide a detailed overview and explanation of TRACES and cover recent developments in procedures used at points of entry and import and trade certification, giving special emphasis to related aspects of food law, animal health and welfare legislation for trade, food and feed and animal and plant health import control rules and other relevant legislation. It should also update system users in the EU Countries of the latest TRACES developments implementation, in particular as regards the inclusion of products of plant origin and plant health aspects, and it should allow for on-the-spot visits to points of entry (Courses 1, 2, 3 and 4) and Local Veterinary Units (Course 5) for practical exercises on TRACES use and related certification activities carried out at these levels.

FOUR 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 114

HOST COUNTRIES: 2 (GREECE, LATVIA)

Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies / Animal by-products

THE ISSUE: Every year more than 20 million tonnes of materials of animal origin not intended for human consumption are generated within the EU. Although the bulk of these materials are derived from healthy animals, evidence and experience of former food crises have shown that the use of certain animal by-products (ABP) in animal feed can spread diseases (e.g. Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy - BSE) or chemical contaminants and also pose a threat to animal and human health via the environment (BSE) if they are not properly disposed of. Depending on the risks posed by these ABP, they are either transformed into a variety of products used in animal feed, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, medical devices and laboratory reagents and other technical products (fertilisers, soil improver, oleo-chemical products, etc.) or disposed of as waste by incineration or co-incineration with or without prior processing. In addition, an increasing amount of materials of animal origin not intended for human consumption are being imported from or exported to non-EU countries for disposal.

A comprehensive set of legislation has been introduced at EU level to protect the safety of the food and feed chain in this regard, which was developed around two main pillars: the so-called “Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE) Regulation” (Regulation (EC) No 999/2001) and “ABP Regulation” (Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009). Relevant training on these regulations and their implementation have been held for a number of years, and an e-learning on TSE issues is now being offered. But, despite the fact that this information is being sufficiently disseminated, discussions with EU Countries’ experts in TSE and ABP working groups as well as SANTE Directorate F’s audits and desk studies show that, for some areas of the TSE and ABP legislation, implementation of TSE and ABP legislation in some EU Countries is either inconsistent or insufficient. Therefore, DG SANTE considers it important that further training is provided at EU level.

COURSE CONTENT: Training courses cover relevant aspects applicable to controls to be carried out to verify compliance with regard to the TSE and ABP legislation. The training level is advanced and aims to promote a common understanding and deep knowledge of certain EU ABP and TSE rules among officials in charge of implementing these legislations. It also aims to further harmonise the approaches and practices of the EU Countries and offer a forum for exchanging best practices in order to help competent authorities verify compliance with the relevant legal requirements more efficiently.

FIVE 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 188

HOST COUNTRIES: 4 (CROATIA, FRANCE, PORTUGAL, SLOVENIA)

UNION OVERVIEW REPORTS

THE ISSUE: According to the EU legislation, Commission experts have to carry out general and specific audits in EU Countries to verify that official controls take place in MS in accordance with multi-annual control plans and in compliance with EU law. At the end of a series of audits on specific topics in sanitary and phytosanitary fields, overview reports are prepared on the overall operation of controls in the relevant sector across the MS. These reports, *inter alia*, identify good practices, areas of weakness and recurring problems.

The full potential of these reviews, however, is not being used, because they are seen as a benchmark on current performance rather than as guidance towards future improved performance. An opportunity to use them to help develop and improve controls at national level is being missed.

Providing a forum to discuss these findings may help good practices to be disseminated and extended to other MS facing similar difficulties. And discussing recurring problems may help identify practical solutions to address such problems. Both of these types of discussions could help improve official controls.

COURSE CONTENT: Seminars are held, focusing on anti-microbial resistance, food contact materials and biocides. These seminars are mainly for Member State officials and are organized with the intent of helping to align the control and audit procedures within the European Commission to improve Food Safety and Quality, Animal Health and Welfare and Plant Health.

THREE TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 102

HOST COUNTRY: 1 (IRELAND)



TRAININGS HELD OUTSIDE THE EU

The EU is a major player in the global agri-food market. Food, feed, animals, plants and derived products imported into the EU must comply with EU requirements. This may sometimes place constraints on exports by non-EU countries, particularly in many developing countries that may not have the necessary resources and structures to ensure controls and surveillance of their food production systems. In certain areas, this is in the hands of private organisations and importers, especially in the area of fruits and vegetables. Better understanding of EU requirements helps authorities in non-EU countries to improve controls and get their products to the EU market.

The BTSF initiative organises specific training programmes targeting only non-EU countries. They can cover any sanitary and/or phytosanitary subject anywhere in the world. BTSF has thus become an important trademark as a provider of very specific trade-related capacity building. The training is mainly provided through workshops or/and ad-hoc assistance missions.

Workshops have similar formats to those held in the EU. They are organised at regional level on selected topics that are of wider interest to a number of countries in a region and provide a detailed overview and explanation of EU SPS standards in the relevant areas, looking, in particular, at the recent developments of EU legislation and by extension of international SPS standards. They can also take the form of targeted training missions where a specific safety concern is being addressed, and hopefully, resolved. This may be take place in various formats, including farmer training, laboratory training and producing guidance documents.

A specific programme aims to train laboratory staff on state-of-the-art techniques for diagnostic testing. Laboratory trainings are organised directly in EU-accredited laboratories and ensure hands-on experience for non-EU laboratory staff.

In 2019, three new specific training programmes for non-EU countries complemented the former offer. These new programmes cover anti-microbial resistance, risk analysis and information management systems for official controls used at EU level.

ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR) IN NON –EU COUNTRIES

THE ISSUE: The objective of the training is to develop cooperation activities on AMR at international level to further raise awareness about the AMR threat and ways to best address it, to promote international recommendations and to contribute to the adoption and implementation of measures to tackle AMR nationally and regionally. It also aims to promote EU policies on AMR internationally, particularly the ‘One-Health’ approach for addressing AMR in both humans and animals, and to discuss and share EU rules, practices and experience with countries currently developing their national AMR action plans in a mutually and reciprocally beneficial way. The training should help ensure the convergence of AMR policies between the EU and the beneficiary countries.

COURSE CONTENT: The training is mainly addressed to officials from Competent Authorities in the beneficiary countries involved in developing, planning and coordinating control activities (preferably at central level) to tackle AMR.

This course focuses on:

- Occurrence factors of AMR in zoonotic and other bacteria with public health importance and general concepts related to AMR;
- EC Action Plan against the rising threats from AMR with focus on its ‘One-health’ approach;
- Overview of the EU legal framework applicable to AMR and use of antimicrobials;
- Relevant international initiatives and standards in the field of AMR (e.g. Codex Alimentarius, WHO and OIE);
- Practical application of EU provisions on monitoring of AMR in zoonotic and other bacteria with public health;
- Practical application of EU provisions on the monitoring of use of antimicrobials;
- Commission guidance document on prudent use of antimicrobials in veterinary medicine and EU guidelines for the prudent use of antimicrobials in human health;
- Examples of good practices for strategies and actions aimed at promoting and strengthening the prudent use of antimicrobials, including examples of successful private standards and/or policies related to AMR developed by companies.

SIX TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 170

HOST COUNTRIES 6 (ARGENTINA, ETHIOPIA, JORDAN, MONTENEGRO, SOUTH AFRICA, UKRAINE)



BTSF World

THE ISSUE: Several global and EU policies have recently been adopted and affect the implementation of SPS standards. The UN “Sustainable Development Goals” aim to have a lasting impact on reducing poverty, ensuring food security, sustainable agriculture and preserving oceans and marine sources, amongst others. The measures adopted at the COP21 Conference will affect the way farming and agricultural practices will change over the coming years. The Commission objective is to reconcile European and global interests and to create jobs, growth and investment. As part of its Development Policy, the EU pursues the objective to reduce and eradicate poverty through sustainable development and the integration of developing countries into the world economy.



Trade at local, regional or international level, and with it access to markets, remains therefore a major catalyst for the development of countries' individual businesses and for farmers including smallholder farmers. Good agricultural practices, integrated pest management and a healthier animal workforce contribute to this development. Trade creates employment and provides for improved incomes. The objective of “Better Training for Safer Food” actions in non-EU countries is to promote safe food for consumers and to enhance market access opportunities at a national, regional and international level – first and foremost in the

EU – by targeting all stages of the food production chain, both public sector as well as the private sector.

The BTSF programme mainly targets those countries where the benefits are the greatest and the trade volumes the highest, such as China, Brazil, India, and the ASEAN countries, but also the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) countries, both South and East. The latter countries are particularly important to help safeguard the EU's high level of protection in the area of plant and animal health.

The main objectives of the current BTSF programme in non-EU countries are:

- To increase the availability of safe and nutritious food on national and international markets (i.e. safe food produced thanks to the application of EU sanitary and phytosanitary practices). This creates jobs and promotes growth by boosting the potential of creating market access to the EU;
 - to facilitate trade with our trading partners,
 - to contribute to protecting the EU from the entry of harmful organisms, in particular in the area of plant and animal health, and from the spread of antimicrobial resistance;
 - to build confidence in the EU regulatory model with competent authorities from non-EU trade partners and to pave the way for new market opportunities.
 -
- The specific objective is to improve and reinforce the SPS framework in selected countries to allow better production, processing and trade of safe food, healthy animals and plants.

In the EU, food and feed safety, animal and plant health rules are almost fully harmonised and based on legislation developed at EU level. Any piece of EU legislation relating to feed and food safety, animal and plant health takes international standards and recommendations into consideration.

The EU agro-food sector is an active producer, exporter and importer of foods, and a major player on the global market. Animals, plants, products of animal and plant origin and all food and feed imported into the EU have to comply with the relevant requirements and conditions established by the EU, or at least the equivalents thereof. Promoting the EU regulatory model, which is based on international standards, helps developing countries that are EU trading partners to comply with the relevant rules/standards, which gives them easier access to the EU and global food markets.

Compliance with international and/or EU food safety and quality standards can put a great strain on the development of exports by non-EU countries to the EU, because many of those countries, mainly developing countries, do not have adequate national services, resources, structures and equipment to ensure the control and surveillance of the food production chain. The control and surveillance of food safety are sometimes in the hands of private organisations and importers, especially for certain food sectors like fruit, vegetables and other non-animal foods. Armed with the right information and adequate training, non-EU countries can meet EU import requirements and boost the trade of safe food.

A better understanding of the EU policy allows the competent authorities in non-EU countries to better understand the requirements of EU legislation and ensures improved official controls of products intended for export, thus avoiding unnecessary burden and facilitating trade. Moreover, it is recognised that successfully importing into the EU is a major catalyst for international trade to any other country.

In order to help trade partners to become fully aware and more familiar with EU import rules and international standards and to enhance international trade, the Commission considers it important to develop and set up training activities in non-EU countries. The involvement of relevant staff of the competent authorities of non-EU countries in such training activities is also important in order to enable them to disseminate the knowledge acquired during these trainings in their own countries.

Existing “trade and development agreements” also serves as guidance to select the countries and themes to be targeted. Such agreements often include the obligation to deliver capacity building on SPS matters.

The audit reports of the Commission Directorate F of DG SANTE also serve as benchmarks and assessment tools to evaluate the need and progress made along the training period. Hence the inspection programme helps guide the identification and selection of countries/themes especially for the sustained training missions.

COURSE CONTENT: The trainings cover the organisation and implementation of training activities on food safety, plant health, animal health and welfare covering all non-EU countries in need of such support.

Topics to be addressed include food and feed products sanitary standards; phytosanitary standards, animal welfare, plant protection products, animal disease preparedness and other specific official controls rules. The geographical scope of the trainings covers non-EU countries globally.

The programme looks at trade negotiations, to standing SPS concerns of restricted market-access and to emerging SPS issues that may affect trade with the EU.

The EU faces more and more new threats, both in the area of animal and plant health, and therefore needs to anticipate these threats and work to prevent them from entering the EU. Climate change, global trade, demographic developments and other factors increase the exposure of livestock and plants in the EU to external hazards. It is therefore critical to build capacity with our global trading partners and work together to try to anticipate such threats. In this context, the ongoing programme places emphasis on training on “animal disease preparedness”. In 2019, three such workshops have been held, a general one in Malaysia and two very specific technical workshops : one on the “peste des petits ruminants”(plague of small ruminants) in Jordan, and another on African Swine Fever in China. Further workshops were organised to focus on other SPS areas, such as animal welfare, animal nutrition, residues of veterinary medicinal products and official controls in the context of fighting against food frauds and controlling the e-commerce of food.

Apart from the workshops, continuous efforts are made to organise tailor-made sustained training missions outside the EU. These respond to urgent threats and to findings of DG SANTE audits that may affect trade, or are held to support the implementation of free trade agreements or at the request of EU Delegations and national authorities. In the Philippines, for example, training was provided to support the competent authorities of the Philippines to ensure that the Philippines apply international standards for trade purposes, both for imports and exports. The training helps Philippine competent authorities to ensure that no unjustified trade barriers are in place. The STM also aimed to ensure that plant commodities exported to the European Union are exempt of harmful organisms that are banned in the EU.

This training mission to Manila from 21 to 25 October 2019 helped participants at all BPI levels to become more

familiar with the EU plant health regulations and the EU's rather complex annexes on special requirements, as spelled out per commodity, origin and destination. Hands-on exercises improved the staff's concrete competencies on ensuring and documenting compliancy with all of the requirements. This should strengthen the Philippine phytosanitary certification for exports to the EU.

SEVEN 4-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 287

HOST COUNTRY: 5 (CHINA, COLOMBIA, MALAYSIA, JORDAN, SOUTH AFRICA, TURKEY)

TWENTY-FOUR SUSTAINED TRAINING MISSIONS WERE ORGANISED

HOST COUNTRIES:

ARGENTINA	PEST RISK ANALYSIS (1)
ARGENTINA	CITRUS BLACK SPOT (1)
BANGLADESH	ANIMAL HEALTH – AQUACULTURE (2)
CHILE	PEST RISK ANALYSIS (1)
ECUADOR	PEST RISK ANALYSIS (1)
LAO PDR	PLANT PRODUCTS (PH, PPP, MICROBIOLOGY) (4)
INDIA	RISK ASSESSMENT (3)
INDIA	NRMP (2)
INDIA	FMD CONTROL STRATEGY (1)
MALAYSIA	OUTBREAK AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT (1)
SENEGAL	FISHERY AND AQUACULTURE PRODUCTS (1)
SRI LANKA	PLANT HEALTH (2)
THE PHILIPPINES	HACCP IMPLEMENTATION (1)
THE PHILIPPINES	PLANT HEALTH (1)
VIETNAM	FTA IMPLEMENTATION (2)

PARTICPANTS: 450



FOOD TESTING

THE ISSUE: Due to the openness of the EU market to imports from non-EU countries, the volume of the trade dynamically increases over the years. However, many non-EU countries fail to fulfil the EU requirements, in particular those regarding the testing of food and feed. These circumstances have led to an increase in the number of SPS-related trade concerns between the EU and exporting non-EU countries, particularly developing countries. The problem is also reflected by the notifications in the EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) and the observations made during audits made by the Directorate F (Health and food audits and analysis) of the European Commission's Directorate General for Health and Food Safety. Many of these issues were related to:

- Lack of or deficiencies in mycotoxin controls within the exporting developing countries and the increased occurrence of mycotoxins in food and feed samples taken during inspection in the EU;
- Lack of or deficiencies in residue controls within the exporting developing countries and frequent positive cases in samples taken during inspection in the EU.

Technical assistance, particularly hands-on training of analytical techniques at EU accredited laboratories, aims to tackle these difficulties. These workshops, although they were held in the EU in EU-accredited laboratories, are exclusively for participants from ENP, African, Asian, and Central and South American countries.

COURSE CONTENT: Training on mycotoxins focuses particularly on aflatoxins in peanuts, Brazil nuts, pistachios, spices, dried figs, rice, maize, peanut meal and copra, and ochratoxin A in cereals, dried fruit, coffee, cocoa, spices and liquorice. A general introduction covers EU legislation, risk assessment, the establishment of regulatory limits, official bodies and laboratory networks dealing with contaminants and rules for imports of products of non-animal origin. Subsequent sessions deal with sampling, sample preparation, extraction and clean-up, screening methods, confirmatory techniques and quality in analytical laboratories.

The focus is on the practical implementation of this knowledge, and participants, who are all laboratory technicians from non-EU countries (and in particular from developing countries) spend two full weeks immersed in diagnostic techniques.

Training is comprised of two courses. Course 1 is focused on Mycotoxins with particular attention to aflatoxins and ochratoxin A; and Course 2 is on Residues and is divided into two sub-modules, one on the residues of veterinary medicinal products and the other on residues of plant protection products

FOUR 10-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

TWO ON RESIDUES OF VMP ONE ON RESIDUES OF PPP ONE ON MYCOTOXINS

PARTICIPANTS: 63

HOST COUNTRIES: 3 (GREECE, IRELAND, ITALY, PORTUGAL)

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS FOR OFFICIAL CONTROLS - TRACES

THE ISSUE: It is important for the performance of effective official controls and other official activities that the competent authorities in the EU Countries, the Commission and, where relevant, the competent authorities in non-EU countries and operators be able to exchange data and information related to official controls and/or results therefrom rapidly and efficiently. Several information systems have been established by Union legislation and are managed by the Commission to allow such data and information to be handled through EU-wide computerised and internet-based tools.

The system dedicated to recording and tracing official control results is TRACES, which was established by Commission Decisions 2003/24/EC and 2004/292/EC in accordance with Council Directive 90/425/EEC. The TRACES system is a computerised-based network which controls the movement, import and export of live animals, plants and food and feed in the EU.

COURSE CONTENT: The objective of the training is to continue cooperation activities on information management systems at international level to further raise awareness and contribute to a better understanding and more efficient use of existing EU SPS information management systems by the competent authorities and other stakeholders in non-EU countries. It also aims to facilitate their integration as active users in these systems and in the specific case of the TRACES system, to support them in adapting it, in accordance with the principles used at EU level by this system, for the exchange of information both inside the country and between countries located in the same geographical region. Through the course, the EU's main trade partners are updated on new developments made to the system to ensure a smooth transition to the new technology and prevent users from refraining from further use of the system due to any technical challenges. The training is provided to staff of competent authorities of non-EU countries through workshops on the use of the TRACES system and through STMs to further help main trading partners to overcome difficulties derived from the development of TRACES New Technology.

EIGHT TRAINING SESSION WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 252

HOST COUNTRY: 8 (ARGENTINA, COSTA RICA, INDIA, LEBANON, MALAWI, SENEGAL, THAILAND, UKRAINE)

SUSTAINED TRAINING MISSIONS 11 STMS WERE ORGANISED IN 2019 IN 9 HOSTING COUNTRIES: DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, ECUADOR, INDONESIA, MOROCCO, PERU, PHILIPPINES, SENEGAL, THAILAND, VIETNAM.

NOVEL FOOD

THE ISSUE: The objective of the training is to develop cooperation activities on novel food with non-EU trade partners with a view to further raise awareness and contribute to a better understanding and more efficient use of existing EU rules applicable to the authorisation and placing on the EU market of novel foods by the competent authorities and other stakeholders in non-EU countries. The training is mainly addressed to officials from competent authorities in the beneficiary countries verifying compliance with rules applicable to placing of novel food on the EU market.

COURSE CONTENT: Nine three-day training courses cover relevant aspects applicable to novel food authorisation and placing on the EU market. The training provides an overview of the EU legal framework applicable to novel foods and an understanding of the definitions of 'novel food' and 'traditional food' in particular, (with practical examples) as well as of the scope of Regulation (EC) No 2015/2283.

Other topics covered include but are not limited to EU implementing rules on authorisation procedures for a novel food and for traditional food from a non-EU country; the practical application of EU implementing rules on authorisation and notifications procedures, including consultation process and e-submission; and the principles of risk assessment and use of EFSA Opinions and guidance documents.

The scope of the authorisation, including specifications, conditions of use, additional specific labelling requirements and post-market monitoring requirements is discussed, as is the labelling of novel foods, the union list of novel foods and intellectual property rights.

NO SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED YET

RISK ANALYSIS

THE ISSUE: The principles of risk analysis as a basis for all policy measures entails three interconnected components: risk assessment, risk management and risk communication, which provide a systematic methodology for the determination of effective, proportionate and targeted measures or other actions to protect health. The EU has been at the forefront of the development of the risk analysis principles and their subsequent international acceptance. It has developed a robust system and can play a major role by promoting its standards and measures for addressing risk analysis

with its trade partners. The training therefore aims at strengthening the EU as 'stronger global actor', and at building on existing relationships and facilitating policy dialogue with the countries involved.

COURSE CONTENT: The key objective of this course is to disseminate the principles and methods of food safety risk analysis, improving knowledge of this complex area of work and specifically improving Third Countries' knowledge of the European control systems and legislation.

This course focuses on:

- The concept of risk assessment (as applied in national and in EFSA and other international food safety organizations);
- The role of international regulatory agencies and international risk assessment guidelines;
- The three components of risk analysis – risk assessment, risk management and risk communication;
- Risk assessment approach steps according to the WHO: problem formulation, hazard identification, hazard characterisation, exposure assessment and risk characterisation;
- How to perform a structured risk assessment;
- The process of hazard and risk identification;
- Risk analysis on regulated products and plant health;
- Chemical contaminants and chemical risk analysis (hazard identification, hazard characterization, exposure assessment and risk characterization in chemical risk assessment, risk management and risk communication);
- Risk analysis on Zoonosis and Animal Health with a focus on Microbiological Risk Analysis;
- New Official Controls Regulation (OCR) and Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)

FIVE 3-DAY TRAINING SESSIONS WERE ORGANISED

PARTICIPANTS: 138

HOST COUNTRIES: 5 (ETHIOPIA, MOROCCO, SENEGAL, THAILAND, UKRAINE)

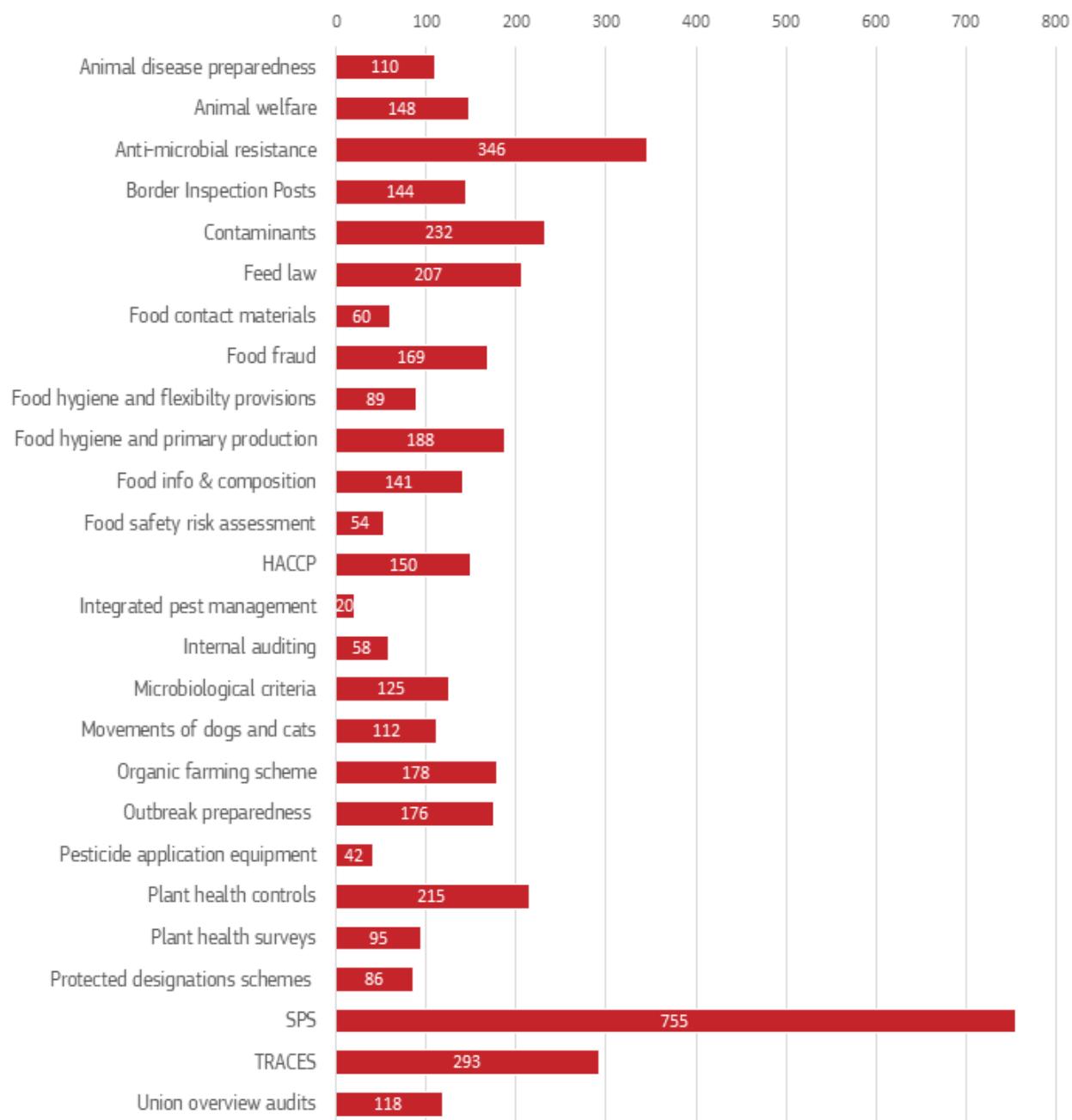
FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Looking ahead, several new courses will be added to the BTSF curriculum. Four calls will be launched to find the appropriate trainers and locations to meet the needs for this instruction. So far, plans call for training courses in the fields of microorganisms in biocides/PPP; on food hygiene and controls of meat, including derived products; and on the organisation and implementation of inter-sectoral simulation exercises on crisis management coordination and response in the food and feed, animal and plant sectors. One new course on the new plant health regime is also foreseen for EU countries.

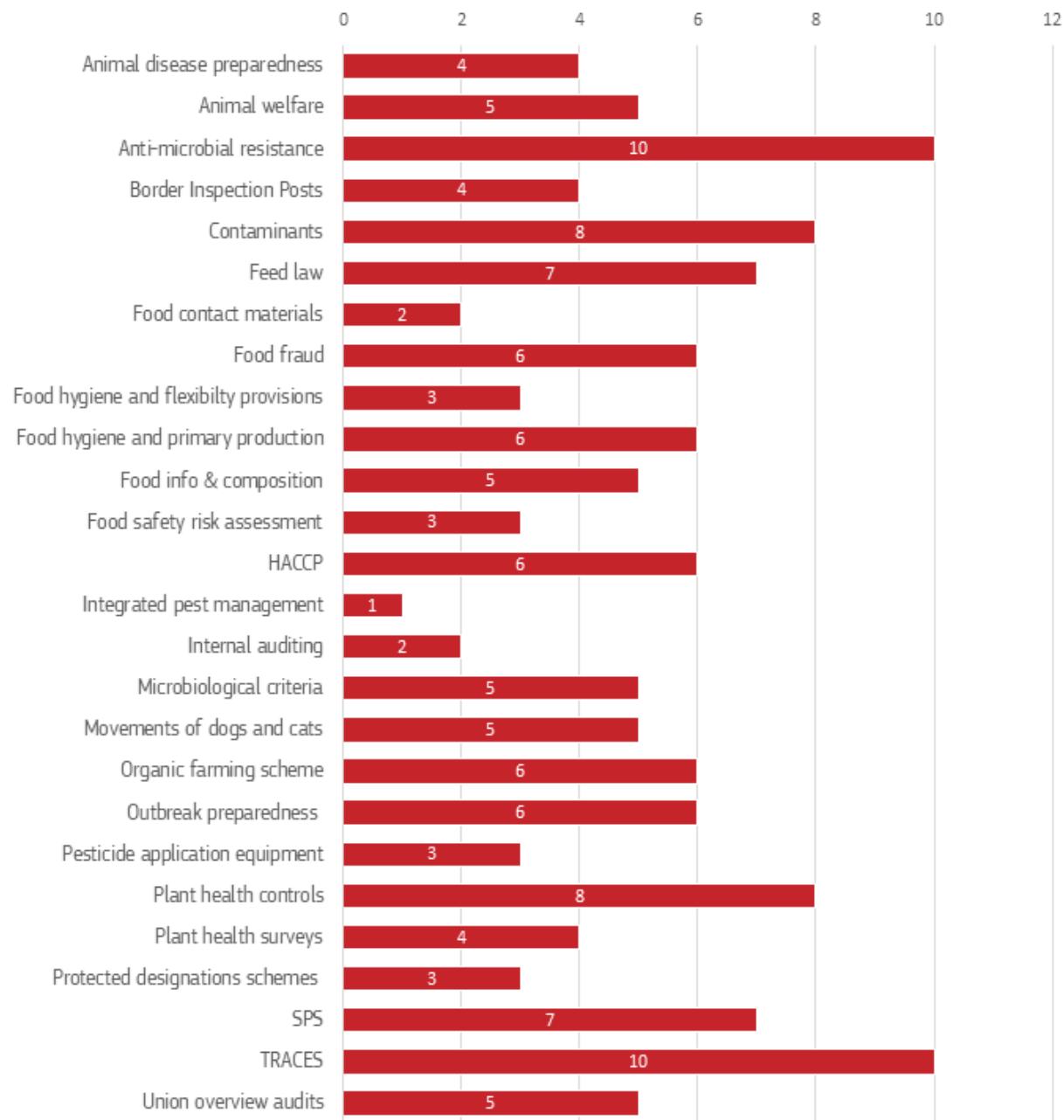
In addition, the BTSF Academy will continue to grow as e-learning becomes increasingly important. Online courses make it possible for people who would otherwise not have the possibility to take courses to participate in BTSF activities, and makes it easier and more environmentally friendly for others as well. Online courses, however, will never replace hands-on, face-to-face courses. Not only is it often essential to be present on the spot and see first-hand what is happening, but strong and lasting bonds are often created when people get to meet in person, and the seeds of mutual understanding, trust and respect are often planted.



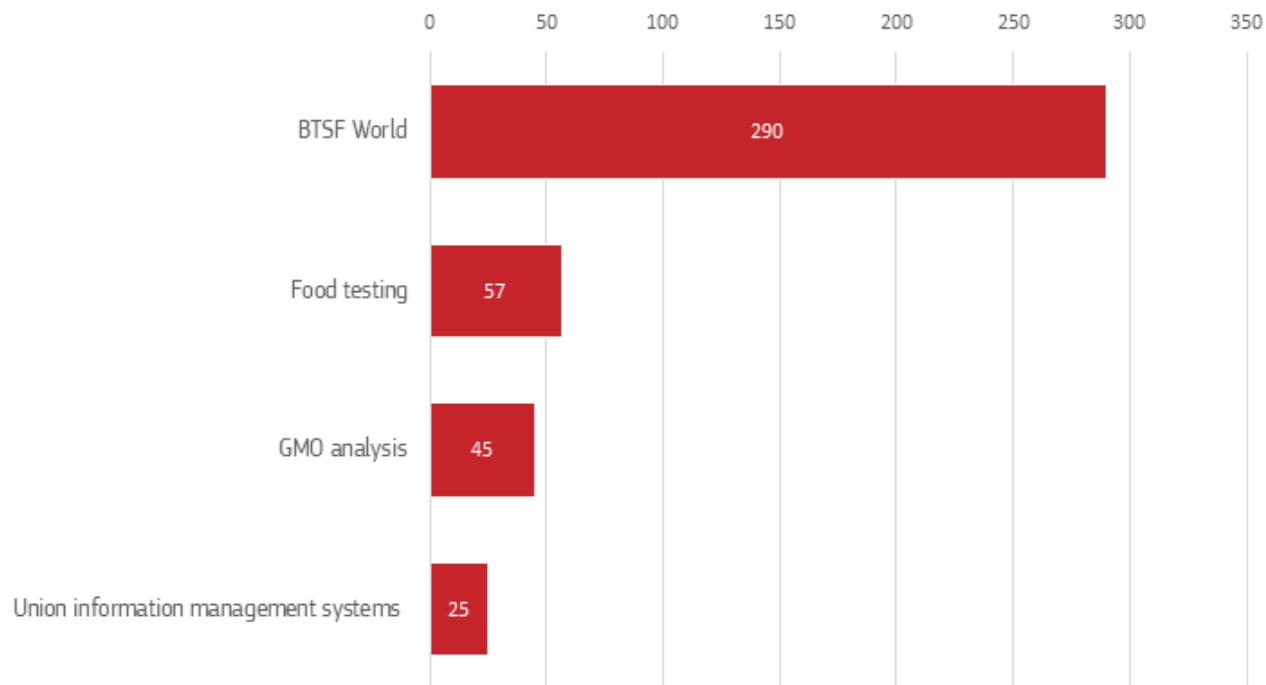
PARTICIPANTS PER TRAINING PROGRAMME IN 2019 (EU COUNTRIES)



NUMBER OF TRAINING SESSIONS IN 2019 IN EU COUNTRIES



PARTICIPANTS PER TRAINING PROGRAMME IN NON EU COUNTRIES IN 2019



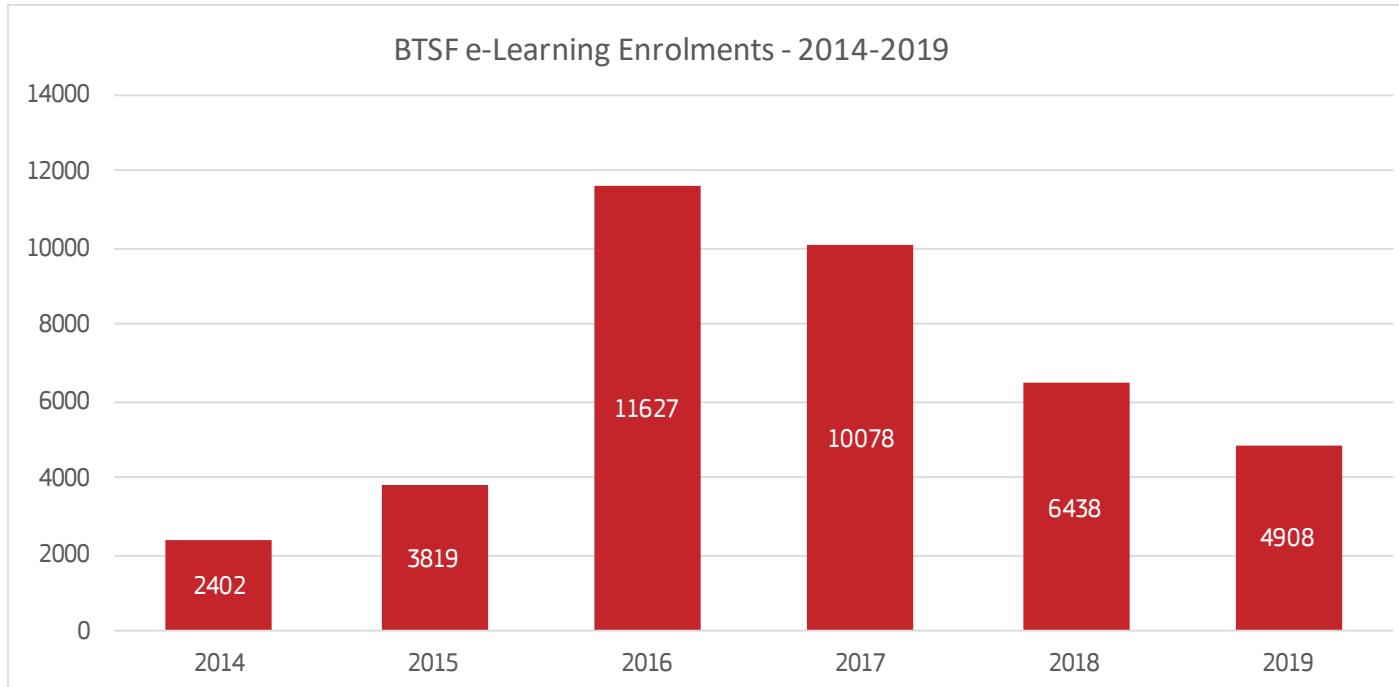
PROGRESS REPORT ON E-LEARNING MODULES ENROLMENTS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PERIOD 2014-2019

From 2014 to 2019, some 39 272 participants took part in BTSF e-learning activities. In 2019 there were 4 908 participants from 53 different countries, 27 EU-EU Countries and 26 non-EU Countries.

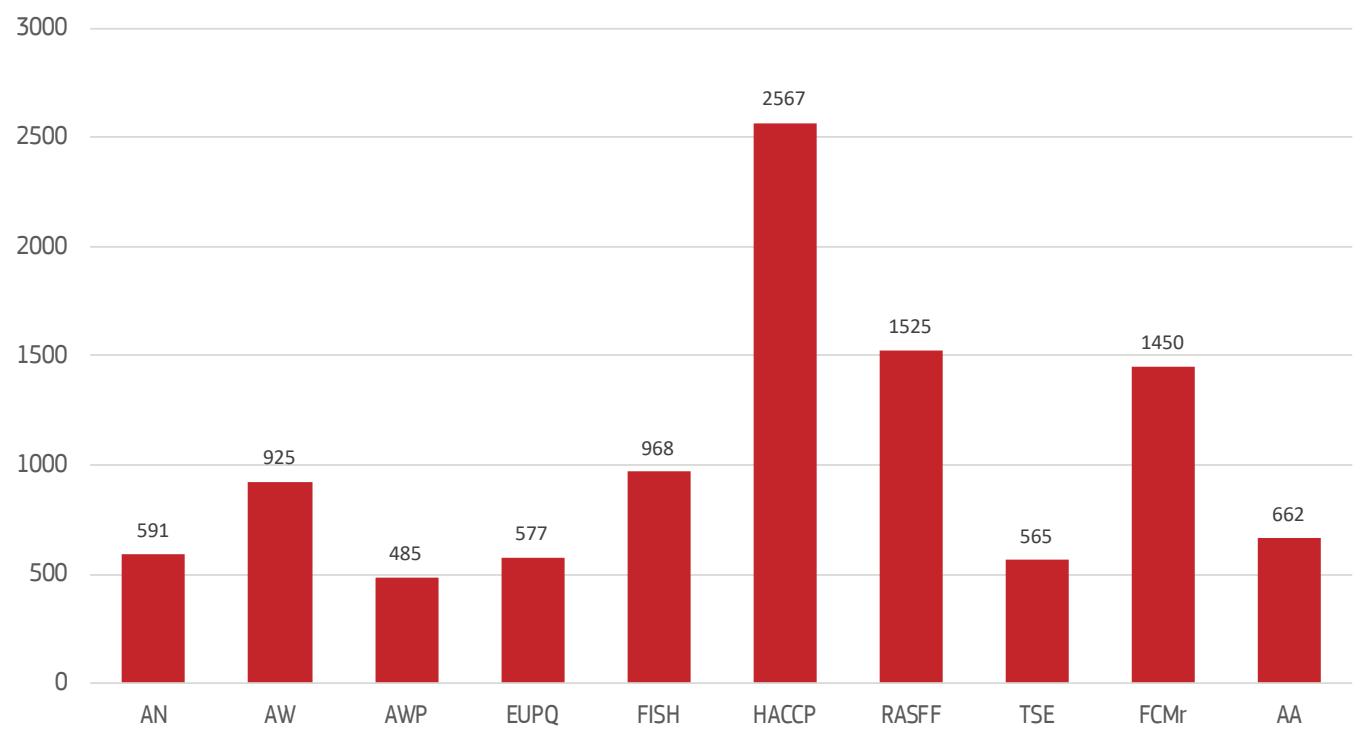
The most popular e-learning course was the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), which attracted 2 567 enrolments, followed by Food Contact Materials (FCM), Rapid Alert System for Feed and Food (RASFF), Food hygiene and control on fishery products and Live Bivalve Molluscs (FISH) and Animal Welfare at slaughter and killing for disease control (AW).

In 2019, Spain had the highest participation among the EU Countries, with 1 503 enrolments, participating mostly in EU plant quarantine regime for imports (EUPQ), Prevention, Control and Eradication of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE) and Animal Health Prevention and Controls for Aquaculture Animals (AA) e-learning courses. Portugal was the second most active country, with 805 enrolments, mostly in HACCP, FCM and RASFF. Germany's most popular e-learning courses are HACCP, RASFF and AW, which were also the most popular in the United Kingdom. In France, participants seem most interested in the HACCP, FISH and FCM courses.

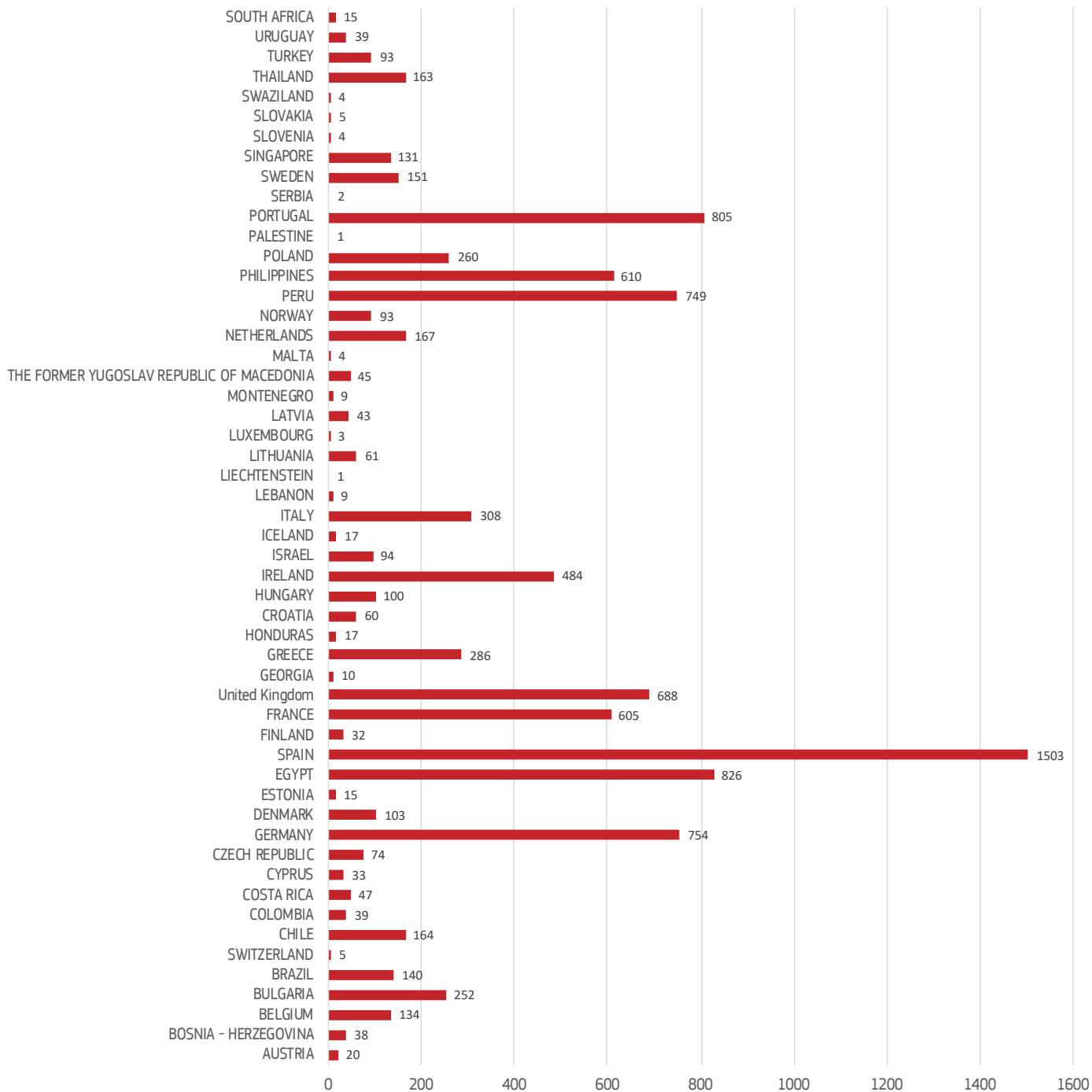
For non-EU countries, the countries with the highest participation were Peru, the Philippines, Egypt and Chile. HACCP was the most popular course among the participants, just as it was in EU Countries, followed by RASFF, FISH and AA.



E-LEARNING BY COURSE IN 2019



E-LEARNING BY COUNTRY IN 2019



BTSF contractors in 2019

- AENOR
- Agriconsulting S.A.
- AINIA
- APPLICATION EUROPÉENNE DE TECHNOLOGIES ET DE SERVICES (AETS)
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ)
- NSF Euro Consultants
- Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell' Abruzzo e del Molise 'G Caporale' (IZSAM)
- JVL Consulting S.A.
- Opera SRL
- Mostra



National contact points

Official “Better Training for Safer Food” contact points have been designated for EU countries, as well as candidate, acceding, and associated countries. Staff of competent authorities interested in finding out more about participating in “Better Training for Safer Food” activities are invited to refer to the appropriate contact point from the list at https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/btsf_national-contact-points.pdf.

Participants

Interested parties from other countries should contact the relevant contractor. Information about the contractors for each course can be found in this report and at http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/food/trainings/available-trainings_en.htm.

Contractors

CHAFEA encourages a wide number of contractors to participate in the BTSF initiative. Information about the funding opportunities and calls of interest can be found at <https://etendering.ted.europa.eu/general/page.html?name=home> and at http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/food/funding/calls-for-tenders/index_en.htm. Guidelines for tenderers are provided at http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/food/guidelines/index_en.htm.



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