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## The Food and Veterinary Office (FVO)



Presentation to AFSSA/EFSA Seminar in Paris

**HEALTH RISKS ASSESSMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF FOOD, ANIMALS  
AND PLANTS IMPORTS INTO THE EUROPEAN UNION**

# EU Food Safety – Brief History

- 1979: Commission controls/inspections organised in AGRI (veterinary and plant health matters) and ENTR (general food hygiene)
- 1996: BSE crisis
- 1997: Commission response: a new Food Safety Policy
- April 1997: FVO established (September 1997 in Ireland)
- 2000: White Paper on Food Safety
- April 2002: FVO in Grange

- Location : Grange, Co. Meath, Ireland
- Staff (Includes FVO + Dir A)
  - 177 staff (+ 30 support staff)
  - 106 AD, 61 Asst, 6 Contractors, 4 Stagiaires
- 24 Nationalities
- Backgrounds of AD staff:
  - Veterinarians (majority)
  - Agronomists
  - Scientists
  - Other qualifications (Law, Economics, etc)

# FVO Structure

**Directorate F - Food and Veterinary Office**  
Colm Gaynor - Director

**Unit F1**  
**Country Profiles, Coordination of Follow-up**  
Head of Unit – Hugh Quigley

**Unit F2**  
**Food of Animal Origin – Mammals**  
Head of Unit – Sabine Juelicher

**Unit F3**  
**Food of Animal Origin - Birds & Fish**  
Head of Unit – Carlos Alvarez Antolinez

**Unit F4**  
**Food of Plant Origin, Plant Health,  
processing and distribution**  
Head of Unit – Nandor Pete

**Unit F5**  
**Animal Nutrition, Import Controls, Residues**  
Head of Unit – Ken Elliott

**Unit F6**  
**Animal Health and Welfare**  
Head of Unit – Andrew Wilson

**Unit F7**  
**Quality, Planning and Development**  
Head of Unit – Frank Andriessen

## FVO Mission

- to monitor compliance with the requirements of EU food safety, veterinary and plant health legislation in Member States and third countries exporting to the EU
- to promote effective control systems in food safety, animal health, animal welfare and plant health
- to contribute to the development of EU policy in the food safety, veterinary and plant health sectors
- to inform stakeholders of the outcome of evaluations

## Key Tasks

- Assess the performance of national authorities and compliance with EU requirements – desk analysis and field work
- Carry out on-the-spot audits and inspections
- Report on findings, MS, EP/Council, and other stakeholders via internet publication ([http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.htm))
- Make recommendations to national authorities
- Follow-up implementation of action plans

# Areas of Activity

- Food of Animal origin
  - Meat / poultry meat / fish
  - Fishery products
  - Milk & milk products
- Animal feedstuffs
- Animal Health
- Animal Welfare
- Veterinary medicines

- Import controls
- Plant Health
- General Food Hygiene
- Pesticides
- Contaminants
- Novel Foods/GMO
- Food additives, etc

## Audits and Inspections

Total Audits/Inspections (1998 to 2007): 2,250

Annual average:

+/- 250

Member States  
Candidate Countries (enlargement)  
Third Countries

58%  
21%  
21%

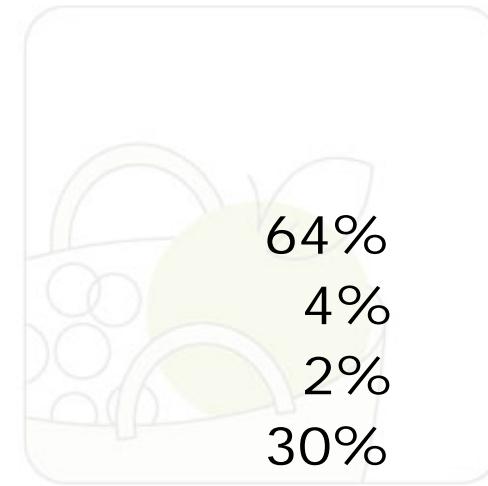
\* Mission team size and duration vary

# Audits and Inspections

Total Audits/Inspections 2008: 256 planned



Member States  
Candidate Countries  
EFTA  
Third Countries



## ON-THE-SPOT CHECKS IN THIRD COUNTRIES

### General context:

- Legal framework
- Initial request from the third country
- Desk evaluation of the request based on the detailed questionnaire concerning
  - the structure and the powers of the competent authorities
  - the legal framework in place
  - the current situation in relation to animal health, public health
- On the spot visit by FVO to be decided case by case.
- If all this is found satisfactory
  - Third country listing
  - Establishments in third country listing
  - Certificate as requested in EU legislation

## ON-THE-SPOT CHECKS IN THIRD COUNTRIES

### ■ SANCO annual inspection programme

#### Specific context:

- Inspection at prelisting stage
- Routine inspection
- Emergencies
- Follow-up

## ON-THE-SPOT CHECKS IN THIRD COUNTRIES

### INSPECTION PRIORITISATION

- Emergencies
- Routine inspections:
  - **quantities of live animals / animal products sent to the EU**
  - **type of live animals / animal products sent to the EU**
  - **results of previous missions / inspections**
  - **information / complains collected by the EU Member States**
- Inspections at prelisting stage

## ON-THE-SPOT CHECKS IN THIRD COUNTRIES

### KEY ELEMENTS CHECKED DURING INSPECTIONS

**Control systems put in place by the competent authorities:**

- **Holding registration**
- **Animal identification**
- **Animal movement controls**
- **Traceability**
- **Vaccination**
- **Border controls**
- **Maturation**
- **Certification:**
  - ✓ Consignments to be exported to the EU
  - ✓ Consignments to be introduced in the EU (transit – ship supplies)

## ON-THE-SPOT CHECKS IN THIRD COUNTRIES

### FOLLOW-UP TO CONTROLS IN THIRD COUNTRIES

- Measures taken on-the-spot:
  - **Withdrawal of establishments' approval**
  - **Stop to the certification (auto-ban)**
  - **Other corrective actions**
- Measures taken based on the reporting
  - **Back to office Note (Safeguard cell)**
  - **Urgent report**
  - **Sensitive report**
  - **Routine report**

] =>Action plan
- Safeguard measures

## BORDER INSPECTION POST

### ■ Import and transit controls

- Supervision and implementing measures
- Veterinary checks (procedures, staff, training...) in Border Inspection Posts
- Facilities and equipment of Border Inspection Posts
- Personal imports – Illegal imports

### ■ Evaluation of BIP plans

### FVO Web-site

- Mission programme
- Audit/Inspection reports
- Special reports (e.g. pesticides)
- FVO annual report
- Country profiles

[http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.htm)