

Study Visit to the Spanish Food Safety Agency - AESAN

Madrid, 22/23 March 2010

REPORT

Background information:

This study visit was organised as a part of EFSA Pre-Accession Programme 2009-2010 for the Candidate and the Potential Candidate Countries*. Representatives from different institutions involved in the food safety system from the two Candidate countries, namely the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey took part in the study visit.

The overall objective of the Programme is to promote the understanding of EFSA's work as risk assessor, share expertise and create information exchange mechanisms in order to ensure that the national authorities of the beneficiary countries can participate effectively in the activities of EFSA both prior to accession and following accession to the EU. The participation in this Programme may contribute to the beneficiaries in familiarising themselves with the EU policies and working methods particularly focusing on "from field to plate" integrated approach to food safety.

In particular, the study visit to AESAN gave the participants good knowledge on how the food safety authorities in the EU MS work and by that give them possibilities to improve their own work and also a good starting point for networking and sharing of information.

Draft agenda enclosed as Annex I

Relevance of the Study Visit to objectives of the Programme:

- The study visit aimed to provide the participants with an overall knowledge on the role of AESAN in the area of risk assessment and risk communication.
- Experts from AESAN and the Spanish Reference Laboratory presented the risk analysis approaches.
- In particular following topics of interest for the two beneficiary countries were addressed: General organisation of food safety system in Spain, Registration/record of food products, both animal and non animal, registration/cord on food products, specially for mineral waters abd food for particular nutritional use, GMO, Health claims, Food supplements, HACCP, RASFF, SCIRI and Risk Communication.
- This study visit provided a starting point for networking and creation of information exchange systems as the first step in preparation of the beneficiaries for their future participation in the EU networks.

Participants:

16 participants attended the study tour (8 participants from both the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey) representing competent authorities at national and regional level.

Detailed list of participants enclosed as an Annex II.

* **Candidate countries:** Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey

Potential Candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia&Herzegovina, Kosovo (under UNSCR1244), Montenegro, Serbia

Conclusions:

This Study visit brought participants responsible for food safety policies together for two days intensive exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise. It was an excellent opportunity for the experts from the 2 Candidate countries to meet experts and specialists from Spain, to learn about and discuss issues of common interest, establish contacts for future cooperation and take ideas back home.

The study tour provided a comprehensive overview on the regulatory and administrative aspects of AESAN and also comprehensive information on the scientific work of AESAN and the Spanish Reference Laboratory.

Study Visit provided a forum for networking, discussion, exchange of ideas and learning on themes of common interest. It also gave LPA a good opportunity to know more about the Spanish system and to participate in networking with the host and the experts from the 2 Candidate countries.

Results of the evaluation questionnaire:

All 16 representatives answered to the survey. Hotel and meeting venue were found being excellent by 40% and good by 50% of the participants. Presentation skills of the speakers were found to be very good of 40% of the participants and good of 60%. The content of the speeches and the responsiveness to questions were found being excellent or very good by 75% and 70% found presentations being on the right level. 84% of participants felt they had enough opportunity to express their opinion. 65% of the participants considered that this study tour was an excellent or very good opportunity for improving their knowledge on this topic and 56% found the overall value excellent or very high while 44% found it good.

Additional topics they would like to see addressed in possible future study visits include topics such as: risk assessment of additives, risk communication, traceability in border control for products from 3rd countries, risk assessment in GMO food, food for special nutritional use, risk assessment of drinking water regarding heavy metals, and preparation of multiannual control plan.

The majority of participants found this Study visit a good opportunity for networking and information exchange.

<u>PROGRAMME OF THE STUDY TOUR</u>			
22-03-10			
9:30 - 11:00	Welcome by the Executive Director and Presentation of AESAN.		
11:00 - 11:30	Coffee break		
11:30 - 14:00	Sub-directorate of Coordination of Food Alerts and Official Control Planning HACCP, RASFF, SCIRI.		
15:30 - 18:00	Sub-directorate of Food Risk Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration/records of food products, both animal and non-animal origin. • Registration/records of food products, especially for mineral waters and food for particular nutritional uses. • GMO (legislation, production and trade issues in particular). • Health claims (legislation, implementation and control). • Food supplements (legislation and implementation). 		
23-03-10			
10.00 - 14:00	Visit to the National Reference Laboratory <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microbiological analyses of fishery and dairy products • Toxins and mycotoxins • PAHs • Pesticides in vegetables • Pesticides in animal fats • Dioxins </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food contact materials • Microbiological controls • Allergens and contaminants • Additives • Phytosanitary treatments residues • GMO • Detection of irradiated food </td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microbiological analyses of fishery and dairy products • Toxins and mycotoxins • PAHs • Pesticides in vegetables • Pesticides in animal fats • Dioxins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food contact materials • Microbiological controls • Allergens and contaminants • Additives • Phytosanitary treatments residues • GMO • Detection of irradiated food
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16:00 - 18:00	Communications Office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk communication. 		

List of Participants

ANNEX II

LIST OF THE PARTICIPANTS FROM MACEDONIA			
No.	FAMILY NAME	NAME	INSTITUTION
1	AGUSHI	ARSIM	Food Directorate, Ministry of Health
2	JOSIFOVSKI	MARIJAN	Centre for Public Health
3	MAKAROVSKI	SPIRO	Food Directorate, Ministry of Health
4	POPOVSKA-DOMAZETOVA	MARINA	Food Directorate, Ministry of Health
5	POPOVSKA	SUZANA	Food Directorate, Ministry of Health
6	RUNTEVSKI	DEJAN	Veterinary Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy
7	TASEVSKA	ELIZABETA	Food Directorate, Ministry of Health
8	TALESKI	VASO	Centre for Preventive Medicine
LIST OF THE PARTICIPANTS FROM TURKEY			
9	KORKUT	HALIS	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, General Directorate of Protection and Control, Department of Food and Feed Control Control Services
10	ÖZBAĞ	NERGIZ	Ministry of Agriculture And Rural Affairs (MARA)
11	AYAZ	SELMAN	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs General Directorate of Protection and Control Department of Food and Feed Registration
12	TOKAY	HARUN	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs General Directorate of Protection and Control Department of Food and Feed Registration
13	ERALP	ÖZLEM	Ministry of Agriculture And Rural Affairs (MARA) General Directorate of Protection and Control, Department of Food and Feed Control Control Services
14	SAHIN	ILHAMI	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs General Directorate of Protection and Control Food Control Services Department
15	KELEŞ	MUHARREM	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs General Directorate of Protection and Control Food Control Services Department
16	YÜKSEL	NURI	General Directorate of the Protection and Control (GDPC) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Department of Coordination Services
REPRESENTATIVE OF EFSA			
17	SHEYE	FINN	EFSA, Pre-Accession Coordinator and Policy Officer, Legal and Policy Affairs Unit, EFSA