

Greening the supply chain for processed food products

The food-processing industry is expanding fast in the Asia-Pacific region, creating many opportunities, but is also generating a substantial environmental burden. To address this, world-class food companies are encouraging suppliers to be green. Greening the supply chain (GSC) has several benefits for the food business such as cost savings, enhanced image, smaller carbon footprints, and lower risks from food pathogens. The application of GSC concepts to different components of the supply chain could, however, be challenging for food-processing industry SMEs in developing countries that do not have such standards and continue to use practices that may be considered environmentally unfriendly. The main constraints are a lack of awareness, limited capacity, and insufficient financial resources.

To build the capacity of food-processing SMEs to apply GSC concepts and principles for greening their businesses, the APO and Korea Productivity Center (KPC) organized a workshop on Greening the Supply Chain for Processed Food Products in Seoul, 12–16 November 2012. Eighteen participants from 13 member economies and three resource persons from Australia, the ROK, and Singapore attended.

The resource person from Singapore, Dr. Kheng Soon Rodney Wee, Chief Executive/Principal Consultant, Asia Cold Chain Centre (Singapore), provided an overview of GSC for processed food products. He also talked about the impact of an unregulated agro/food-processing sector on the environment and mitigation of such impacts. Australian speaker Peter de Lacy, Operations Director, Train-

ing and Export, Grow SA Ltd., made a presentation on the Framework for GSC for Processed Food Products. Both Dr. Wee and De Lacy made presentations on approaches and tools for GSC of food-processing SMEs. Korean expert Dr. Kun-Mo Lee, Professor, Department of Environment Engineering, Ajou University, shared the Korean experience in promoting the application of the GSC concept and principles in the processed food industry.



Participants examining ornamentals during their visit to the Korea Agro-Fisheries & Food Trade Corporation Flower Marketing Center.

The participants reported the current status of GSC concepts application in the food-processing industry in their countries in presentations. In a group exercise, they identified issues and problems in promoting the application of GSC concepts and practices in the processed food industry and formulated roadmaps to address them. In addition, participants made informal commitments to take specific follow-up action plans after attending the workshop. To observe the application of GSC principles and practices, participants visited the Korea Agro-Fisheries & Food Trade Corporation Flower Marketing Center and a Korea Agricultural Cooperative Marketing supermarket. 🌱