



APO *news*

ISO22000 for food safety and reliability

Although the global level of food safety has increased in recent years, food-borne diseases such as bovine spongiform encephalitis ("mad cow" disease) and avian influenza are continuing concerns of governments, consumers, and the media. Before the issuance of the ISO22000 series of standards, food industry enterprises had to follow various local standards, such as hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP), British Retail Consortium guidelines, International Food Standard, etc. The need for harmonization was one of the reasons for the development of ISO22000.

The APO seminar on ISO22000 for Improving Food Safety was held in Tokyo, 18–25 January. The Japan Association for International Collaboration of Agriculture and Forestry (JAICAF) with financial assistance from the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery (MAFF) implemented the project. Twenty-two participants from eight member countries attended, along with five resource persons from Canada, France, Japan, and Malaysia, to: 1) review recent developments in safety management in food chains; 2) examine issues related to modern food safety systems, especially ISO22000, in SMEs; and 3) recommend actions to address problematic areas in maintaining food safety.



Participants donning safety suits before viewing Coco's culinary system

The resource persons covered: 1) Modern food safety management systems; 2) Food safety standards and HACCP in Japan; 3) ISO22000: 2005 and the present situation of the Japanese food industry; 4) ISO22000 for development of reliable and safe food supply chains; 5) Requirements and process of implementation of ISO22000; and 6) Auditing and certification for ISO22000. The country papers reviewed the current situation of food safety management in each country, focusing on systems in SMEs.

To observe modern food safety management concepts/systems in the Japanese food industry, seminar participants visited: Coco's Japan, a chain restaurant operator in Ibaraki prefecture; the Goka Factory of Q.P., a food-processing company, also in Ibaraki; the Fukaya Factory of Daitoh Shokken, a producer of seasonings and food additives in Saitama prefecture; and Kamaichi, another Saitama-based food processor. As pointed out by Head of the Quality Systems Branch Khoo Gek Hoon and Deputy Head (Factory Control), Food Legislation and Factory Control Branch, Diana Koh, both participants from Singapore's Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority, "Although there is little involvement from its government in implementing ISO22000, there is a strong sense of self-regulation in the Japanese food industry." They also noted that the extensive array of hygienic safety gear donned by each participant before entry into food preparation sites reflected the commitment of the

(Continued on page 6)

Volume 37 Number 3
March 2007

"It is important that students bring a certain ragamuffin, barefoot irreverence to their studies. They are not here to worship what is known, but to question it."

Jacob Chanowski

I N S I D E

- 2... p-Watch—USA
- 3... p-TIPS
- 4... New APO publication
- 4... Common Sense Talk
- 5... Explaining ISO22000
- 6... 2006 quiz contest winners
- 6... Indonesia hosts 2007 WSM
- 7... p-Experts
- 7... APO-NPO Update
- 7... Program calendar
- 8... International tourism promotion for regional development

Published monthly by
Asian Productivity Organization
Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F
1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo 102-0093, Japan
Tel: (81-3) 5226-3920
Fax: (81-3) 5226-3950
e-Mail: apo@apo-tokyo.org
Web site: www.apo-tokyo.org



Printed on Recycled Paper

companies visited to their food safety assurance systems. Some of the other lessons learned from the visits to Japanese food industry actors which participants considered useful in enabling ISO22000 compliance by SMEs in other member countries were:

- 1) The commitment of top management is the primary factor in the adoption and implementation of ISO22000 in SMEs.
- 2) Empowerment of staff facilitates ISO22000 practices, and recognizing the value of feedback from workers allows continuous improvement (kaizen) in food safety management in an enterprise.
- 3) Their awareness of the importance of a safe and reliable food supply mobilizes consumers to put greater pressure on the food industry to improve safety management standards.

- 4) Automated set-ups reduce errors, assist in data collection and analysis, and enhance record keeping.

Appropriate policy incentives, along with financial and infrastructural support, for agricultural/food industry SMEs could go a long way toward strengthening their food safety management standards.

Many participants expressed interest in undertaking ISO22000-related follow-up activities in their home countries. For example, participants from Thailand and Vietnam in collaboration with their NPOs planned to hold ISO22000 awareness seminars/meetings at the end of February/beginning of March with technical and financial support from JAICAF and MAFF. 