



ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

## PROJECT NOTIFICATION

21 August 2017

- 1. Project Code** 17-AG-29-GE-CON-B
- 2. Title** Forum on Strengthening Food Safety Standards
- 3. Timing** 5–8 March 2018 (four days)
- 4. Venue** Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 5. Implementing Organizations**

Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute (HARTI)  
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e-Mail: director@harti.gov.lk; registrar@harti.gov.lk

National Productivity Secretariat  
10th Floor, Sethsiripaya 2nd stage  
Baththaramulla, Sri Lanka  
Tel: 91-11-2186026/2186030  
Fax: 91-11-286025  
e-Mail: nposlanka@gmail.com
- 6. Co-sponsors**

Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP)  
Chameli House, 17, Topkhana Road, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh  
Phone: 880-2-9586508; 9558751/Ext. 205  
Fax: 880-2-9562035; 9571880  
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African-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO)  
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New Delhi 110021, India  
Tel: +91-11-24100475; +91-11-26877783  
Fax: +91-11-26115937  
e-Mail: cb.aardo@gmail.com
- 7. Number of Overseas Participants** Up to 36 qualified participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia Republic of China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam.

However, other member countries with special interest in this project may nominate candidates upon consultation with the APO Secretariat (see 13. Qualifications of Participants).

**8. Number of Local Participants** Up to 12 qualified participants

**9. Closing Date for Nominations** 12 December 2017

## **10. Objectives**

This is an initiative of the APO to bring together leaders in the food sector such as senior government officials, production managers, consultants, and food industry executives in charge of strengthening food safety management (FSM) systems in food-processing industry SMEs to deliberate on recent advances in FSM. It aims to:

- a. Share recent developments, advanced knowledge, and emerging trends in FSM systems in major global markets; and
- b. Formulate strategic recommendations for food-industry SMEs to enable them to meet the FSM standards of advanced markets.

## **11. Background**

Food safety and quality standards are global concerns as they are important for public health and impact international trade. Consumers are increasingly concerned about the quality and safety of food and are taking unprecedented interest in the way food is produced, processed, and marketed while demanding greater quality and safety assurances from agribusinesses and food companies. Globalization of trade makes food chains longer and more complex and increases the risk of food safety incidents.

Food standards, both public and private, are fundamentally about establishing control, conformance, and compliance in production, processing, and distribution. Private food standards are becoming basic requirements in the context of global trade in food and agricultural products. International private food standards such as GlobalGAP and International Featured Standards are aimed at ensuring safety. Third-party certification is required to enhance consumers' trust in standard compliance. Certification entails costs, and the proliferation of such standards is becoming an obstacle for exporters in the agricultural and food sectors in developing Asian countries. In response to concerns about the emergence of numerous different but similar standards, the Global Food Safety Initiative has been conducting benchmarking activities for private food standards to promote a harmonized approach to managing food safety and quality across the industry.

Food producers and exporters of agrifood products in APO member countries need to update the standards and requirements for certification. This platform will provide opportunities for participants from government, food industry associations, producers' associations, and private companies to review and study food standards and consider appropriate strategies to meet their requirements.

## 12. Scope and Methodology

The tentative themes for the sessions are:

Session 1: Overview of international food safety standards and regulations;  
Session 2: Application and enforcement of modern food safety standards;  
Session 3: Issues and challenges faced by farmers and SMEs in the agrifood industry in meeting the requirements for certification in food standards;  
Session 4: Capacity building of SMEs for better adoption of food safety standards;  
Session 5: Best practices to respond to the requirements of private food standards; and  
Session 6: Formulation of strategic recommendations for strengthening food standards.

The four-day forum will consist of plenary thematic sessions with expert presentations, panel discussions, country paper presentations, an open forum, and site visits.

The tentative program of the forum is given below:

Date/Time	Activity
Sun., 4 March 2018	Arrival of participants in Colombo
Mon., 5 March 2018	Opening session Sessions 1–2: Presentations and discussions
Tues., 6 March 2018	Session 3: Presentations and discussions Site visits to relevant facilities
Wed., 7 March 2018	Sessions 4–5: Presentations and discussions
Thurs., 8 March 2018	Panel discussions Formulation of strategic recommendations Program evaluation Summing-up session Closing session
Fri., 9 March 2018	Departure of participants

## 13. Qualifications of Candidates

The participants are expected to possess the following qualifications:

Present Position	Senior government officials, production managers, consultants, and food industry executives in charge of FSM systems in the food-processing industry.
Experience	At least three years of experience in the position described above.
Education	University degree or equivalent qualification from a recognized university/institution.

Language	All proceedings of the project are conducted in English, and participants are frequently required to make oral and written presentations. They must therefore be proficient in spoken and written English. Those who are not proficient in English will not be accepted.
Health	Physically and mentally fit to attend an intensive project requiring participants to complete a number of individual and group activities and strenuous fieldwork. It is therefore recommended that member countries do not nominate candidates likely to suffer from physical and mental stress.
Age	Candidates who meet the qualifications above are generally between 35 and 55 years of age.
APO Certificate	Participants are required to attend the entire program to receive the APO certificate of attendance.

#### **14. Financial Arrangements**

##### **To be borne by participants or participating countries**

- a. Participants' insurance premiums: All participants should be fully insured against accident and illness (including hospitalization and death) for a principal sum equivalent to USD10,000.00 for the entire duration of the project and travel and must submit to the APO Secretariat a copy of the comprehensive travel insurance certificate before participation. Such insurance should be valid in the host country. This insurance requirement is in addition to existing government insurance coverage in some member countries. If any participant is unable to insure himself/herself as stipulated above, he/she should secure this insurance in the host country at the commencement of the project and pay the premium himself/herself, if necessary, from the per diem allowance provided. Neither the APO nor the implementing organizations will be responsible for any eventuality arising from accident or illness.
- b. All expenses related to visa fees and airport taxes.
- c. Any expenses incurred by participants for stopovers on the way to and from the project venue as well as for extra stay at the project venue before and/or after the official project period because of early arrival or late departure, for example, due to either limited available flights or any other reason.
- d. Any cancellation charges for airfare and hotel accommodations arising from withdrawals after letters of acceptance have been issued by the APO.

##### **To be borne by the host country and co-sponsors (CIRDAP, HARTI-Sri Lanka, and AARDO)**

- a. Per diem allowances and hotel accommodation for up to 18 APO overseas participants for up to five days at the rate to be specified later.

- b. All local implementation costs (venue, conference facilities and kit, local travel arrangements, etc.) for all participants.
- c. Cost of local resource persons and for up to 12 local participants.
- d. All official local travel arrangements.

**To be borne by the APO**

- a. All assignment costs of overseas resource persons.
- b. Round-trip economy-class international airfare by the most direct route between the international airport nearest to the participants' place of work and Colombo, Sri Lanka. As far as practicable, all participants should purchase discount tickets. Please note that the arrangements for the purchase of air tickets should follow the "Guide on Purchases of Air Tickets for APO Participants," which will be sent to the selected participants. It is also available on the APO website and from APO Liaison Officers in member countries.
- c. Per diem allowances and hotel accommodation for up to 18 APO overseas participants for up to five days at the rate to be specified later.

**15. Actions by Member Countries**

- a. Each participating country is requested to nominate three or more candidates in the order of preference. Please ensure that candidates nominated meet the qualifications specified under section 13 above.
- b. No form of self-nomination will be accepted. All nominations must be endorsed and submitted by an APO Director, Alternative Director, Liaison Officer, or their designated officer.
- c. Please note that nomination of a candidate does not necessarily guarantee that he/she will be selected. Selection is at the discretion of the APO Secretariat. A basic criterion for selection is the homogeneity of the participants in terms of qualifications and work experience. Nonselection therefore does not mean that the candidates concerned are not competent enough. Sometimes candidates are not selected because they are overqualified for a project.
- d. Each nomination should be accompanied by the necessary documents. A nomination lacking any of these documents may not be considered: two copies of the candidate's biodata on the APO biodata form together with a passport-sized photograph. The biodata form can be downloaded from the APO website ([www.apo-tokyo.org](http://www.apo-tokyo.org)). We encourage submitting the biodata form to the APO Secretariat in electronic form as an attachment to a cover e-mail message from the APO Director, Alternate Director, or Liaison Officer. The nomination documents should be sent to the Agriculture Department, APO Secretariat (e-mail: [agr@apo-tokyo.org](mailto:agr@apo-tokyo.org), fax: 81-3-5840-5324).
- e. The APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form. Every candidate must complete and submit a copy of the APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form with his/her biodata at the time of nomination. Please note that self-declaration is sufficient for candidates without any of health conditions or illnesses listed on the reverse

side of the medical form. However, for all others, medical certification by a licensed physician on the reverse side of the medical form is required.

- f. Necessary documents are to be submitted electronically. In that case, there is no need to send a hard copy by postal mail. However, if the documents are submitted by fax, member countries are requested to mail the originals of the documents to the APO Secretariat as well. If a digital photograph of a nominee is not attached to the electronic biodata form, a hard-copy photograph should be sent to the APO Secretariat by postal mail. Please give the candidate's name and the project code on the reverse side of the photograph.
- g. Member countries are requested to adhere to the nomination deadline given on page 1. The APO Secretariat may not consider late nominations as they have in the past resulted in considerable difficulties to the implementing organization in its preparatory work for the project.
- h. For member countries where nominations are required to be approved by higher government authorities and require a longer time, the APO Liaison Officers/NPOs are urged to send the names of nominees on or before the deadline, indicating that government approval will follow.
- i. If a selected participant becomes unable to attend, he/she should inform the APO Liaison Officer/NPO in his/her country immediately and give the reason for withdrawal. The NPO concerned is requested to transmit that information to the APO Secretariat and the host country promptly.
- j. NPOs are requested to inform the selected participants that they are not to bring family members or to engage in any private business activities during the entire duration of the project.
- k. Each selected participant should be instructed to arrive at the venue one day before the start of the official project. Also, he/she is expected to return home upon completion of the official project because he/she is visiting the host country for the specific purpose of attending this APO forum.
- l. NPOs should inform participants that they must attend all four days of the project to qualify for the certificate of attendance.
- m. Any cancellation charges for airfare and hotel accommodations arising from withdrawals after letters of acceptance have been issued by the APO.

#### **16. Actions by the APO Secretariat**

- a. Under normal circumstances, candidates who are selected will be informed of their acceptance at least four weeks prior to the start of the project.
- b. If some candidates fail to qualify or be unable to participate after selection, or if some member countries fail to nominate any candidate, their slots may be filled by alternates from the same or another member country on a merit basis.

## **17. Project Preparation**

The participants are required to prepare a paper prior to departure for the project venue. In preparing the paper, they are expected to follow the “Guidelines for the Preparation of Country Papers” to be provided later.

## **18. Postproject Actions**

All participants are required to prepare action plans and share the plans with their NPOs. The APO will also request participants to submit progress reports six months after completion of the forum.

## **19. Evaluation of Participants**

If the conduct/attendance/performance of a participant is not satisfactory, it will be reported to the APO director concerned.

## **20. Guide for Participants**

Other conditions for participation are given in the *APO Guide for Participants*, which is available from APO Liaison Officers/NPOs in member countries and on the APO website ([www.apo-tokyo.org](http://www.apo-tokyo.org)).



Santhi Kanoktanaporn  
Secretary-General