National task force of risk assessment for food safety management in Vietnam

Hung Nguyen-Viet

Overview

Risk analysis is considered the gold-standard approach for food safety management. However, in Vietnam risk analysis capacity is lacking in practical application, especially in the informal markets, where the majority of domestically produced foods are bought and sold.

The task force was set up in 2013 with the aim of developing the capacity of decision-makers and national researchers in Vietnam to use risk-based approaches for food safety management. The task force brought together risk assessment experts from universities and research institutes as well as representatives from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Activities

Interdisciplinary team formation: A task force of risk assessment for food safety was formed, comprising researchers in Vietnam working on risk assessment and food safety from key universities, research institutes and representatives of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Analyses of food safety policy and research evidence use for food safety policy: Key informant interviews; 20 experts and policymakers in food safety were interviewed.

Consultation meetings and workshops: Stakeholder workshops to identify the scope of activities and priority issues in food safety formulated by policymakers that the task force works on and workshops to disseminate outputs.

Training and capacity building: Training in risk assessment for task force members and staff from the ministries.

Case studies: Case studies on the use of risk assessment were conducted to characterize the health risks associated with vegetables and fish grown and caught in wastewater, ready-to-eat vegetable and noodle soup and antibiotic residues in pork.

Task force members

Ministries

- Ministry of Health: Vietnam Food Administration
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development: Department of Animal Health

Universities/research institutes

- Hanoi School of Public Health
- National Institute of Nutrition
- National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology
- National Institution for Food Control
- Ho Chi Minh City Institute of Public Health
- Vietnam National University of Agriculture
- National Institution of Veterinary Research

International partners

- International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Kenya and Vietnam
- Rakuno Gakuen University, Japan
- Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute

Achievements

Achievements on strengthening the capacity of risk assessment

2. Developed a policy brief in Vietnamese and English on risk-based approaches to food safety.
3. In September 2014, a 10-day training course on advanced risk assessment was conducted for members of the taskforce. In December 2014, two other training courses on risk assessment were organized for veterinary staff from the Department of Animal Health, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.
4. Conducted four case studies on risk assessment related to vegetables and fish grown and caught in wastewater, ready-to-eat vegetable and noodle soup and antibiotic residues in pork.
5. Published a report on food safety issues in Vietnam.

Next steps

1. To make risk-based approaches to food safety easier to use and adapted to the local context.
2. Plans to become a technical working group nationally recognized by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in risk assessment.
3. Plans to publish two risk assessment guidelines on food safety related to biological and chemical hazards.

Contacts

National task force of risk assessment for food safety management
Center for Public Health and Ecosystem Research (CENPHER)
Hanoi School of Public Health; 138 Giang Vo, Ba Dinh, Hanoi, Vietnam
Telephone: +84 4 62733162
Email: nvh@hsph.edu.vn

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