



Pan American Commission on Food Safety (COPAIA 6)

Santiago, Chile, July 24, 2012

COPAIA 6/INF2 (Eng.)
July 24, 2012
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

6th MEETING OF THE PAN AMERICAN COMMISSION ON FOOD SAFETY (COPAIA 6)

1. The 6th Meeting of the Pan American Commission on Food Safety, held in Santiago, Chile on July 24, 2012, was convened by the Director of PAHO / WHO, and hosted by the government of Chile;
2. COPAIA 6 was composed of senior officials from the Ministries of Health and Agriculture, representatives of consumer organizations and producers of 15 countries from 5 regions: the Southern Cone, Andean, Central America, English-speaking Caribbean and North America. A list of the 15 members is found in the Appendix;
3. The Technical Secretariat report on the implementation of the recommendations of COPAIA 5, the "Sustainable Tourism and Food Safety" experience in Central America, and the proposed PAHO Regional Technical Cooperation Plan in Food Safety were presented at the Meeting;
4. A panel of experts made three presentations on the theme "Quality Nutrition". These include the Chilean program "Choose to live healthy," "The global burden of chronic diseases and their relation to agriculture" and "Healthy food production." The First Lady of Chile, Ms. Cecilia Morel, gave the first lecture, which received particular interest. This was followed by a panel on Food Safety Challenges and Opportunities;
5. The discussions that followed the presentations identified considerations, agreements and recommendations, aimed at the countries and the Secretariat, listed below;
6. The Members of the 6th. Meeting of the Pan American Commission on Food Safety, acknowledging that food security and safety are necessary for quality of life of the population and contribute to achieving the millennium development goals, and considering that:
 - Access to safe food and a nutritionally adequate diet is the right of each individual;
 - Food safety is an essential public health function to protect consumers from food safety risks associated with biological, chemical and physical hazards;
 - There are strong links between food security, food safety and health;
 - Food safety plays a crucial role in the eradication of hunger and malnutrition, especially in low income countries with food shortages;
 - The provision of safe food, and nutritional quality, presents major challenges in the food production continuum;
 - Changes in global patterns of food production, international trade, technology, public expectations of health protection, among other factors, have created an increasingly demanding environment for the food safety systems;

- Food-borne diseases remain a serious threat to the health of millions of people around the world, especially in developing countries with poor nutritional status;
- Capabilities to respond to naturally occurring accidental release or deliberate use of biological and chemical agents or radionuclear material that affect health are required as defined in the International Health Regulation and INFOSAN;
- The need to develop and maintain sustainable preventive measures to reduce the burden of foodborne diseases through a systems approach that encompasses the entire food production chain;
- The need to promote dialogue and collaboration between the medical, veterinary and food science disciplines, within and among Member States;
- The importance of countries to be actively involved in the process of developing *Codex Alimentarius* standards and to apply them, where appropriate;
- Multi-sectoral coordination and leadership are required to promote public policies that guarantee the welfare and health of the population.

Unanimously agree:

- a) To approve the Technical Secretariat report for the period 2008-2012;
- b) To thank Member States for their efforts to reduce the impacts of foodborne disease on health, and their social and economic impacts and to encourage them to maintain their political will and strengthen investment in food safety, and
- c) to express appreciation for technical cooperation provided by PAHO-WHO and resources allocated in the area of food safety, and to urge their continued coordination with the public and private international aid agencies, multilateral and national philanthropic organizations, and recommend:

Encourage countries to:

1. Strengthen prevention systems, epidemiological surveillance, early warning and response, education, communication and dissemination of information to prevent foodborne diseases;
2. Strengthen national regulations on food safety, to harmonize food standards for domestic consumption and export, and to improve their capacity to enforce the law.
3. Extend the scope of the food safety to vulnerable populations in the region to support policies related to the right to safe and healthy food, and education to build equity;
4. Encourage the production and accessibility of nutritious, healthy and safe food;
5. Position food safety as it relates to economic development and trade, measuring the economic benefit for the prevention of diseases transmitted through food;
6. Promote the development of state policies that involve all stakeholders to ensure continuity of food safety programs;
7. Ensure the empowerment of consumers and producers to participate in the development of national policies on food safety;
8. Formulate policies that take the relationship between food safety and non-communicable diseases into consideration

And request the Secretariat to:

9. Continue the stakeholder consultation with on the of the PAHO proposal for Regional Technical Cooperation in Food Safety and prevention of foodborne diseases in the Americas (2013-2017);
10. Review the COPAIA statutes, through external and internal (PAHO-WHO) consultation , to adapt it to the changes in the Region by strengthening the linkages with sub regional integration initiatives to align efforts and avoid overlapping; making better use of opportunities for synergy with other sectors to promote intersectoral action; increasing the frequency of the preparatory work in the sub region; taking advantage of the availability of information and communication technologies (ICTs); streamlining the composition and the mechanisms for convening COPAIA; exploring possibilities for collaboration with the private sector and revising the scope of its terms of reference, among others;
11. Facilitate the harmonization of regulatory frameworks at the sub regional and / or Regional levels;
12. Strengthen networks and partnerships extending them to involve other sectors related to food safety, including the Ministries of Social Security, Education, and Environment;
13. Promote integrated information systems to improve data supporting science-based regulations;
14. Develop a methodological tool to assess the impact of food safety programs;
15. Promote the development of plans and integrated policies in Agri-Health;
16. Promote the exchange of successful experiences in food safety in large public events at the country and sub-regional levels, such as the experience of sustainable tourism and health in Central America;
17. Promote the implementation of good food safety practices in the food chain, using the code of practice of the *Codex Alimentarius*;
18. Promote integrated systems of surveillance for antimicrobial resistance.

Annex: List of Members

- Dr. Mark Raizenne, *Director General-Public Health Agency of Canada, Canada*
- Dr. Cindy Roberts, *Food Safety Research Associate Center for Science in the Public Interest, USA*
- Dr. Ángel Eladio Caballero Torres, *Asesor del Ministro de Salud y Deportes-Ministerio de Salud y Deportes, Aruba*
- Mrs. Dolsie Allen, *Executive Director- Consumer Affairs Commission, Jamaica*
- Ing. Abraham Ducreux, *Jefe Departamento de Protección de Alimentos, Ministerio de Salud, Panamá*
- Dr. José Alpuche, *Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Belize*
- Sra. Mónica Elizondo, *Directora de Asuntos Científicos y Reguladores-Cámara Costarricense de la Industria Alimentaria, Costa Rica*
- Lic. Ana Ella Gómez Flores, *Directora de Vigilancia de Mercado-Defensoría del Consumidor, El Salvador*
- Sr. Raúl Hidalgo, *Consejero de la Embajada del Perú en Chile*
- Dr. Rommel Betancourt, *Director de Inocuidad de Alimentos-Agencia Ecuatoriana de Aseguramiento de la Calidad del Agro, Ecuador*
- Sr. Andrés Fernando Moncada Zapata, *Presidente Ejecutivo-Federación Nacional de Avicultores/ Fondo Nacional Avícola, Colombia*
- Dr. Martín Carrasco, *Oficial de Salud-Acción Internacional por la Salud / Comité de Defensa de Derechos del Consumidor, Bolivia*
- Dr. Matías De Nicola, *Director del Instituto Nacional de Alimentos- Ministerio de Salud, Argentina*
- Sra. Nuri Gras Rebolledo, *Secretaria Ejecutiva-Agencia Chilena para la Inocuidad Alimentaria, Chile*
- Dr. Décio Coutinho, *Coordenador Executivo da Comissão de Sanidade da Confederação da Agricultura e Pecuária, Brasil*