



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

# INFOSAN ACTIVITY REPORT

# 2018 | 2019



INTERNATIONAL  
FOOD SAFETY  
AUTHORITIES  
NETWORK





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INFOSAN activity report 2018-2019

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# Foreword

Safe food is critical, not only for better health, improved livelihoods and food security, but also for economic development, trade and the international reputation of every country. Unfortunately, unsafe food poses a significant burden to public health with an estimated 1 in 10 people falling ill each year and resulting in 420,000 deaths annually.

The 2018/2019 biennium has been marked by several high-profile occasions that have emphasized the significance of food safety for public health.

At the First FAO/WHO/AU *International Food Safety Conference* in February 2019 (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), food safety priorities were discussed to ensure that strategies and approaches can be aligned across sectors and borders, reinforcing efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals and supporting the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition. The need for increased and better coordinated collaboration and support to improve food safety globally was reinforced.

A few months later, in April 2019, the *WTO International Forum on Food Safety and Trade* (Geneva, Switzerland) addressed the trade-related aspects and challenges of food safety. The recommendations from both the Addis Conference and the Geneva Forum, are intended to better align and coordinate efforts to strengthen food safety systems across sectors and borders.

Then on 7 June 2019, the first ever World Food Safety Day was celebrated to draw attention and inspire action to help prevent, detect and manage foodborne risks, contributing to food security, human health, economic prosperity, agriculture, market access, tourism and sustainable development.

INFOSAN members, supported by the Secretariat, will play an integral role in achieving the ambitious goals highlighted by these global events. Ensuring food safety is therefore a shared responsibility that must be addressed through close collaboration across sectors at national level and with the establishment of functional links between food safety authorities everywhere.

This is especially important in our increasingly globalized world, where a local outbreak of foodborne illness can rapidly evolve into an international food safety crisis.

Since its creation in 2004, INFOSAN has facilitated the rapid exchange of information across borders and between members, during hundreds of food safety incidents.

During the past 15 years, we have witnessed foodborne outbreaks getting larger, affecting more countries, and we have seen food distribution patterns getting longer and increasingly complex. During the same period, communication, traceability and information sharing technologies as well as epidemiological tools have also evolved – reshaping the way foodborne disease outbreaks and sporadic cases of foodborne illness are detected, linked and managed across borders. These trends have highlighted the important role of INFOSAN and the necessity of working together to halt the international spread of contaminated food.

INFOSAN will continue to play an important role in supporting such efforts. FAO and WHO count on the commitment and support from dedicated INFOSAN members around the world to do so.



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## Abbreviations

AMRO	WHO Regional Office for the Americas
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
CFIA	Canadian Food Inspection Agency
CPLP	Community of Portuguese Language Countries
ECCP	European Commission Contact Point
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
EREN	Emerging Risks Exchange Network
EU	European Union
EURO	WHO Regional Office for Europe
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IAFP	International Association for Food Protection
ICW	INFOSAN Community Website
IHR (2005)	International Health Regulations (2005)
INFOSAN	International Food Safety Authorities Network
RASFF ECCP	RASFF European Commission Contact Point
RASFF	Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed
SAR	Special Administrative Region

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