

INTERNATIONAL FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITIES NETWORK (INFOSAN)

INFOSAN  
ACTIVITY  
REPORT 2013



World Health  
Organization



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

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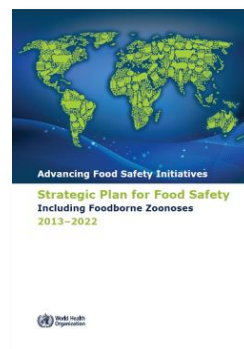
# FOREWORD

*For both FAO and WHO, 2013 has been a year balanced by reflection on past successes and forward thinking to the years ahead as we face new challenges and navigate between different priorities at the international level.*

*The new WHO Strategic Plan for Food Safety 2013-2022 supports the WHO's 12<sup>th</sup> General Programme of Work 2014-2019. It provides a coherent framework for tackling priority issues in the area of food safety and foodborne zoonoses for the coming years. Facilitating the rapid exchange of information among INFOSAN members and providing technical support to improve response to international foodborne outbreaks and food safety emergencies are important strategic actions identified in this plan. Other priority actions will support INFOSAN through efforts to improve core capacities required for the establishment of cross-sectoral linkages among human and animal surveillance systems to minimize duplication in monitoring, reporting and delivery systems and to facilitate integrated risk assessments.*

*The new FAO Strategic Objectives, published in 2013, will drive the activities of the organization to battle against hunger, malnutrition and rural poverty. As food safety emergencies can impact each of these factors, increasing the resilience of livelihoods to disasters, including emergencies in the food chain, is named as one of five strategic objectives. This emphasizes the emergency component of INFOSAN as an important tool for dissemination of information to network members that should continue to engage with the FAO EMPRES Food Safety program to provide early warning of food safety threats.*

*In 2014, INFOSAN will celebrate its 10-year anniversary. While this is an admirable milestone, it should also serve as a check-point to take stock of what has been working well and what can still be improved as we adjust and adapt to an ever changing global environment. Actions and priorities for INFOSAN will remain aligned and supportive of broader global strategies for FAO and WHO to improve food safety and mitigate the burden of foodborne disease around the world.*



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# ACRONYMS

## Acronyms

<b>AFRO</b>	WHO Regional Office for Africa
<b>AMRO</b>	WHO Regional Office for the Americas
<b>APEC</b>	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>AUC</b>	African Union Commission
<b>AU-IBAR</b>	African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources
<b>AUFMCM</b>	African Union Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism
<b>ECDC</b>	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
<b>EMPRES</b>	Emergency Prevention System Food Safety
<b>EMRO</b>	WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean
<b>EURO</b>	WHO Regional Office for Europe
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>FOS</b>	Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses, World Health Organization
<b>FSCF</b>	Food Safety Cooperation Forum
<b>FSIN</b>	Food Safety Incident Network
<b>Hong Kong SAR</b>	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
<b>HQ</b>	Headquarters
<b>IACRNE</b>	Interagency Committee for Response to Nuclear Emergencies
<b>IHR (2005)</b>	International Health Regulations (2005)
<b>INFOSAN</b>	International Food Safety Authorities Network
<b>OIE</b>	World Organisation for Animal Health
<b>RASFF</b>	Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed
<b>REC</b>	Regional Economic Community
<b>SEARO</b>	WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia
<b>SPS</b>	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
<b>TBT</b>	Technical Barriers to Trade
<b>USA</b>	United States of America (the)
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WPC</b>	Whey Protein Concentrate
<b>WPRO</b>	WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific
<b>WTO</b>	World Trade Organization

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Executive Summary

### INFOSAN 2013

To date, 181 Member States<sup>1</sup> (plus 10 Associate Member States, areas or territories) have joined INFOSAN since the Network was launched in 2004. The INFOSAN Secretariat will continue to encourage Member States to join INFOSAN until an Emergency Contact Point and Focal Points have been designated in each of the 194 Member States belonging to WHO and FAO. While the process to designate INFOSAN members (i.e. an Emergency Contact Point and Focal Points) at the national level is an important first step, active participation of these designated members through registration on the INFOSAN Community Website is vital. Overall, 50% of all Member States have an active INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point registered, which represents a 10-point increase since 2012 (up from 40%). The regions with the highest proportion of active members are from South-East Asia, Europe and the Western Pacific. In Asia, the high proportion of active members can be attributed to efforts made as part of the "INFOSAN in Asia" initiative. Making links to the European Commission's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) has resulted in a high proportion of active INFOSAN members in Europe. INFOSAN members who have not yet registered on the website will continue to be encouraged to do so.

During 2013, the INFOSAN Community Website continued to serve as the secure, online forum for exchanging important information related to food safety emergencies. It is the tool used by the INFOSAN Secretariat to disseminate INFOSAN Alerts during food safety emergencies of potential international concern. Members are also encouraged to use the site for sharing routine surveillance data and lessons learned from outbreaks of foodborne illness, which can be done through facilitated discussions. Eliciting this kind of active engagement from members will require additional guidance and support from the INFOSAN Secretariat.

Data from the online registration form has been used to compile summary data regarding which governmental sectors are represented by INFOSAN members (both Emergency Contact Points and Focal Points) and in what proportions. At the end of 2013, 37% of INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points and 34% of INFOSAN Focal Points are based in an authority responsible exclusively for food safety (but not public health in general), followed by public health (35% of INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points and 23% of INFOSAN Focal Points). Other members report being based in an authority with overarching responsibilities for food safety, public health, animal health, agriculture, etc.

During 2013, efforts continued to develop collaborative partnerships with other international networks, initiatives and agencies. For example, plans were made with colleagues from the African Union to

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