Promoting Harmonization of Food Standards in ASEAN

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ASEAN Secretariat

Food safety is an essential public health and trade issue. It is a major concern for consumers, industry and government. As such, the need to address it throughout the food supply chain is compelling. The importance of food safety has increased significantly in recent years following a series of global events associated with incidences of contamination and outbreaks like contamination of Escherichia coli O157:H7, dioxin, MCPD, the mad cow disease and the foot and mouth disease.

Advancement in the field of food science and technology has also stimulated the growth of the food industry. However, it has also contributed to increasing the likelihood of health hazards. Changes in consumers' taste and preferences that result in the influx of a wide variety of foods greatly impose on the government's limited resources to ensure food safety. All these have immense impositions on the national governments to ensure food safety both for public health as well as consumer health protection.

ASEAN is moving towards a vision where sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations is ensured, as well as placing the well-being, livelihood and welfare of the peoples as its focus. This vision is to be reached through a roadmap consisting of three pillars with their respective Blueprints. Foremost of these are the ASEAN Socio-Cultural and ASEAN Economic Community Blueprints, where food security and safety are a matter of permanent and high priority policy.

Food security and safety are being addressed at the regional level through various frameworks and mechanisms that include the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA), ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework, and the ASEAN Food Safety Improvement Plan (AFSIP II) under the Strategic Framework on Health Development 2010-2015. These frameworks are intended as a guide to achieve the strategic objectives of the food security and safety elements of the AEC and ASCC Blueprints as well as in the development of detailed implementation plans by all the relevant subsidiary bodies/technical working groups.

Cooperation on Food Safety is being coordinated by various sectoral bodies. Among these include the ASEAN Ministers for Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF), ASEAN Health Ministers (AHM) and ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM).

Considering the various challenges and gaps, food safety, is very much relevant in ASEAN's thrust to attain security and safety in food for ASEAN. Key areas of cooperation and success factors include harmonized production standards and practices, effective regulatory frameworks and implementation mechanisms, and multi-stakeholder engagement at national and regional levels.
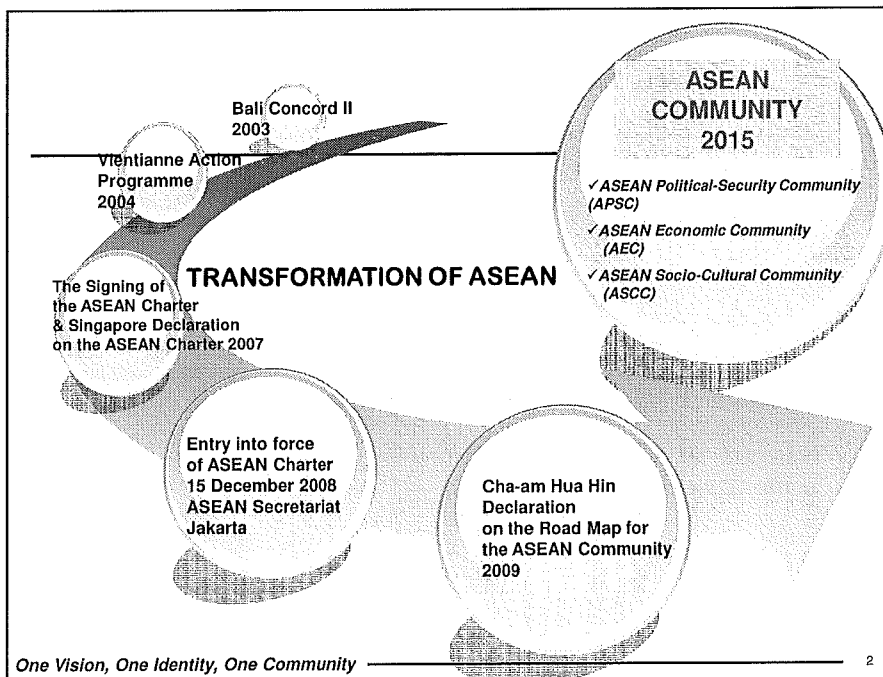
ASEAN Cooperation on Food Safety: Harmonisation of Standards

ASEAN Secretariat

International Conference for Sharing Information
on Food Standards in Asia
21 February 2012, Jakarta, Indonesia

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Bali Concord II
2003

Vientianne Action
Programme
2004

TRANSFORMATION OF ASEAN

The Signing of
the ASEAN Charter
& Singapore Declaration
on the ASEAN Charter 2007

Entry into force
of ASEAN Charter
15 December 2008
ASEAN Secretariat
Jakarta

Cha-am Hua Hin
Declaration
on the Road Map for
the ASEAN Community
2009

ASEAN COMMUNITY 2015

✓ ASEAN Political-Security Community
(APSC)

✓ ASEAN Economic Community
(AEC)

✓ ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community
(ASCC)

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ASEAN COMMUNITY IN 2015

ASEAN CHARTER

Asean today

Rules Based and People Oriented

ASEAN POLITICAL SECURITY COMMUNITY BLUE PRINT

ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT

ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT

Food Security and Safety

◈ Long standing agenda
◈ Dynamic and cross-sectoral/multi-stakeholder issue of which the context evolves through time
   * Food-Fuel-Financial crises
   * 2007/08 Soaring food prices
   * Impacts of climate change, including extreme climate events i.e. floods and droughts, natural disasters, large-scale disease outbreaks, food-borne events
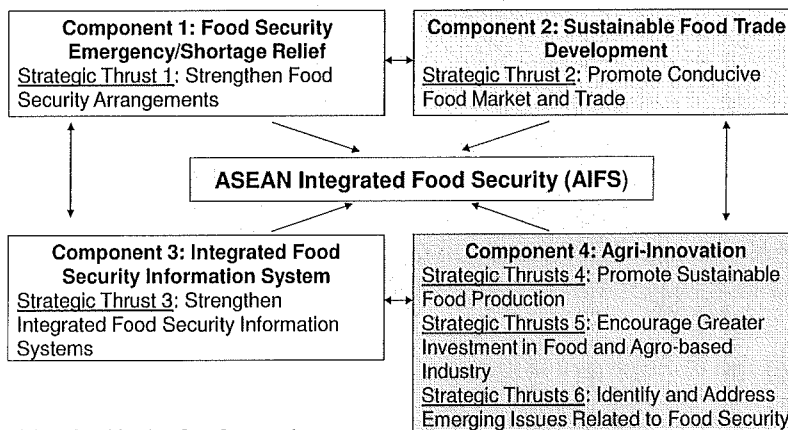
Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.
(World Food Summit, 1996 and adopted by AIFS Framework, 2009)

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AIFS Framework

Goal: To ensure long-term food security and to improve the livelihoods of farmers in the ASEAN region.

Component 1: Food Security Emergency/Shortage Relief	**Component 2: Sustainable Food Trade Development**
Strategic Thrust 1: Strengthen Food Security Arrangements	Strategic Thrust 2: Promote Conducive Food Market and Trade

ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS)

Component 3: Integrated Food Security Information System	**Component 4: Agri-Innovation**
Strategic Thrust 3: Strengthen Integrated Food Security Information Systems	Strategic Thrusts 4: Promote Sustainable Food Production Strategic Thrusts 5: Encourage Greater Investment in Food and Agro-based Industry Strategic Thrusts 6: Identify and Address Emerging Issues Related to Food Security

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ASEAN Food Safety Improvement Plan (AFSIP)

◈ Declaration of Healthy ASEAN 2020, 5th AHMM, Yogyakarta, 2010

◈ Comprehensive program of action to address impact of globalisation and trade liberalisation in health sector

◈ AFSIP II – 2011-2014: To ensure adequate access to food at all times and ensure food safety

◈ Key regional strategies

  ✳ Harmonisation of policies and standards on food safety regulation

  ✳ Advocacy and promotion of harmonised standards and policy guides

  ✳ Increase competency and specialisation of ASEAN food labs
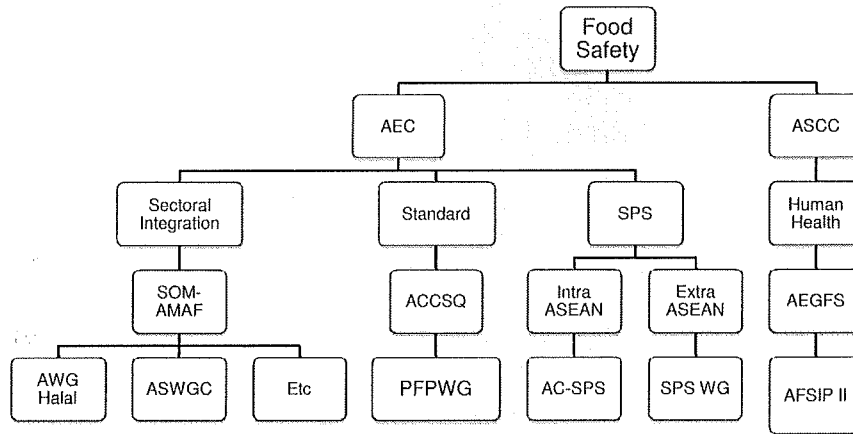
  ✳ Capacity building on risk assessment

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ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA)

❏ Succeeds the Agreement on Common Effective Preferential Tariff Scheme for the ASEAN Free Trade Area (CEPT-AFTA), which mainly covered tariff liberalization

❏ ATIGA brings into one single agreement all aspects of trade in goods and provides the legal framework to realize free flow of goods within the AEC

❏ ATIGA covers more than tariff liberalization as it includes substantive chapters on: enhanced ROO, disciplines on the application of NTMs and the elimination of NTBs, trade facilitation work program, customs procedures, STRACAP and SPS

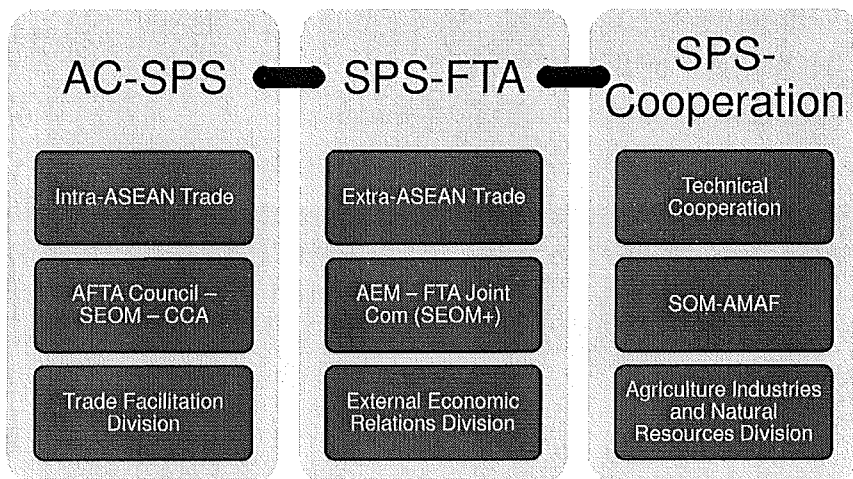❏ Signed in February 2009, entry into force in May 2010

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ASEAN FOOD SAFETY

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                           │  Food    │
                           │  Safety  │
                           └──────────┘
              ┌──────────────────┴──────────────────┐
         ┌─────────┐                            ┌─────────┐
         │   AEC   │                            │  ASCC   │
         └─────────┘                            └─────────┘
    ┌─────────┬─────────────┬──────────┐             │
┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌─────────┐
│ Sectoral │ │ Standard │ │  SPS   │ │ Human  │
│Integration│ └──────────┘ └────────┘ │ Health │
└──────────┘                          └────────┘
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Sectoral Integration	Standard	SPS		Human Health
SOM-AMAF	ACCSQ	Intra ASEAN	Extra ASEAN	AEGFS
AWG Halal / ASWGC / Etc	PFPWG	AC-SPS	SPS WG	AFSIP II

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SPS Mechanisms

AC-SPS ➡ SPS-FTA ➡ SPS-Cooperation

AC-SPS	SPS-FTA	SPS-Cooperation
Intra-ASEAN Trade	Extra-ASEAN Trade	Technical Cooperation
AFTA Council – SEOM – CCA	AEM – FTA Joint Com (SEOM+)	SOM-AMAF
Trade Facilitation Division	External Economic Relations Division	Agriculture Industries and Natural Resources Division

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Key Integration Initiatives

◈ Harmonisation of regulatory requirements: national food control systems, food hygiene, food labelling

◈ Identification of FS standards to be harmonised with international standards/benchmarks

◈ Enhancing technical infrastructure for conformity assessment

◈ Enhancing regional cooperation for post-market surveillance

Issues and Challenges

◈ Initiatives focus largely on various aspects of regulatory control for FS

◈ Various sectoral bodies involved

◈ Diverging food safety requirements and practices

◈ Increasing pressure of intra- and extra ASEAN consumers

Way Forward

◈ Strengthening coordination between/among sectoral bodies

◈ Conduct study on ASEAN food safety regulatory framework

  ✳ Framework to ensure uniform application of regional FS requirements at national level leading to trade of safe food

  ✳ Steps for harmonisation of identified NTMs which include registration procedures, pre- and post-marketing surveillance, etc.

◈ Enhancement of partnership arrangements with relevant stakeholders

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Thank you

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(World Food Summit, 1996 and adopted by AIFS Framework, 2009)

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