SPS COMPLIANCE, FOOD SAFETY AND FOOD QUALITY

SPC-LRD
BIOSECURITY SPS
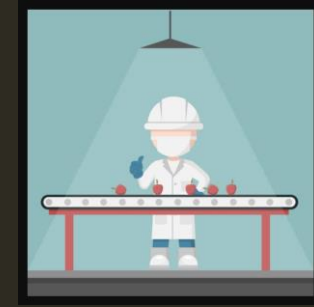
Joint IMPACT-SAFE workshop on Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) and International Trade Promotion – Port Vila, Vanuatu. 09 June 2023.

EUROPEAN UNION

SAFE PACIFIC
Safe Agricultural trade Facilitation through Economic integration in the Pacific

UNITED NATIONS
UNCTAD

PPPO
PACIFIC PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATION (PPPO)

Pacific Community
Communauté du Pacifique

SPS

Food Safety

Food Quality

REQUIREMENTS

Barriers to trade, or
Enablers of trade?

-International treaty of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to protect human, animal and plant health.

-SPS measures ensure that traded products do not spread pests and diseases and also that food products do not contain harmful substances or pathogens that could pose a risk to human health. **Prevention!**

-Compliance with these measures is essential to ensure products meet international (IPPC, WOAH and CODEX) standards and can be traded globally.

-SPS measures applied in trade must be scientifically justified and not trade restrictive.

SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY (SPS) AGREEMENT

FOOD SAFETY

-Ensuring that food is free from harmful contaminants that could cause illness or disease (food must be safe for consumption by humans).

-Involves implementing good agricultural practices (GAPs) in the field and good manufacturing practices (GMPs), such as proper sanitation, hygiene, and storage methods.

-Also includes regular testing and monitoring to ensure food products meet the required safety standards.

-Example: Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) for pesticides; GAP relating to chemical sprays (strictly observing withholding period).

-Measure of the characteristics of food products that are desirable or acceptable to consumers.

-High-quality food products are those that are free from defects, have a consistent taste and texture, and are visually appealing.

FOOD QUALITY

-Typically, represents the sum of all properties and attributes of a food item that are acceptable to the customer. These food quality attributes include:

➢ Appearance (including size, shape, colour, gloss and consistency); free from defects
➢ Texture
➢ Flavour
➢ Nutritional content
➢ Ethical and sustainable production

-It is not easy to define as the 'acceptability' and value of a product can vary from customer to customer; in different regions and cultures among other factors.

-Thus, unless it makes reference to particular criteria or standards, the general term quality can be "subjective".

-Handling, preparing and storing food in a way to best reduce the risk of individuals becoming sick from foodborne illnesses.

-The principles of food safety aim to prevent food from becoming contaminated and causing food poisoning. This is achieved through a variety of different avenues, some of which are:

➢ Properly cleaning and sanitising all surfaces, equipment and utensils

➢ Maintaining a high level of personal hygiene, especially hand-washing

➢ Storing, chilling and heating food correctly with regards to temperature, environment and equipment

➢ Implementing effective pest control

➢ Comprehending food allergies, food poisoning and food intolerance

FOOD SAFETY

Hazard Category	Number of Notifications
Pathogenic micro-organisms	685
Mycotoxins	551
Pesticide residues	253
Heavy metals	218
Composition	179
Food additives and flavourings	168
Foreign bodies	134
Allergens	113
Adulteration / fraud	112
Poor or insufficient controls	97
GMO / novel food	93
Migration	78
Non-pathogenic micro-organisms	62
Industrial contaminants	62
Residues of veterinary medicinal products	47
Biocontaminants	46
Organoleptic aspects	40
Labelling absent/incomplete/incorrect	28
Packaging defective / incorrect	25
Parasitic infestation	23
Biotoxins (other)	19
Not determined / other	10
TSEs	8
Radiation	5
Feed additives	3
Chemical contamination (other)	2

Source: *European Commission (2016) Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) 2016 Annual Report*

FOOD SAFETY

SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY (SPS) MEASURES

IMPORT PERMIT!

-SPS measures can be classified into the following sub-categories:

➤ **Prohibitions/restrictions** of imports for SPS reasons

➤ **Tolerance limits** for residues and restricted use of substances

➤ **Labelling**, marking and packaging requirements

➤ **Inspection and hygiene** requirements

➤ **Treatment** for elimination of plant and animal pests and disease-causing organisms in the final product (e.g., post-harvest treatment)

➤ Other requirements on production or post-production processes

➤ Conformity assessment related to SPS

➤ SPS measures not elsewhere specified

THE THREE SISTERS
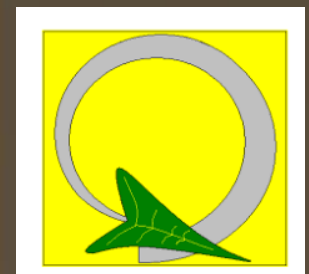
WHEN SPS (BIOSECURITY) REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT COMPLIED WITH = INCURSIONS!

-Giant African Snails (GAS): first found in the State of Florida (USA) in 1966. It cost the USD 1 million and took 10 years to eradicate the snails. In 2011, GAS was found again in Miami. It took another 10 years and cost USD 23 M to eradicate the snails (USDA).

-Today, USDA and the State of Florida are battling the invasive snail again, this time in Pasco County, FL.

© Scot Nelson

WHEN SPS (BIOSECURITY) REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT COMPLIED WITH = INCURSIONS!

-Red Imported Fire Ants (RIFA): between 2001 – 2017, Australia spent AUD 367 M to eradicate the ant species. In 2017, a further cost-shared Ten-Year Plan was approved – AUD 411.4 M for the Queensland Government to host and deliver an expanded National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program (NRIFAEP) from F/Y 2018 to 2027.

-It aims to eradicate RIFA from SEQ and Australia; and thus avert, by 2030, predicted annual impact and control costs of $2 billion, and up to 140,000 medical consultations and 3,000 anaphylactic reactions each year due to RIFA stings (NRIFAEP Strategic Review Report, 2021).

© DAFF

© MJA

-Oriental fruit fly (*Bactrocera dorsalis*): eradication program cost the Cook Islands NZD 246,000 in 2013 (Cook Islands Fruit Fly ERP – MOA, 2018).

-Equivalent to VT 18M (not accounting for inflation).

WHEN SPS (BIOSECURITY) REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT COMPLIED WITH
= INCURSIONS!

CERTIFICATION - ORGANICS

-Produce can be called organic if it is certified to have been grown on soil that had no prohibited substances applied for three years prior to harvest. Prohibited substances include most synthetic fertilizers and pesticides (USDA).

-Certification is intended to assure consumers that a product marketed as organic was in fact produced according to organic production standards, which can vary by country or region (Luttikholt, 2007).

-More in Jim's presentation.

CERTIFICATION - HACCP

-Hazard analysis and critical control points, or HACCP, is a systematic preventive approach to food safety from biological, chemical, and physical hazards in production processes that can cause the finished product to be unsafe and includes measures to reduce these risks to a safe level (FDA).

-HACCP certification is granted by an external third party certification authority that has auditors with the necessary knowledge and skills to undertake an assessment of the HACCP system or HACCP plan (HACCP Australia).

-Further information at: https://haccp.com.au/

CERTIFICATION - FAIRTRADE

-Fairtrade certification means products were produced in accordance with Fairtrade International's rigorous environmental, economic and social standards. This is independently verified through regular audits by an accredited third-party auditor such as FLOCERT (Fairtrade America).

-Fairtrade's work is guided by a global strategy focused on ensuring that all farmers earn a living income, and agricultural workers earn a living wage. Fairtrade works with farmers and workers of more than 300 commodities. The main products promoted are coffee, cocoa, banana, flowers, tea and sugar (Fairtrade Int'l).

-Further information at: https://www.fairtrade.net/

CERTIFICATION - RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

-An international non-profit organization working at the intersection of business, agriculture, and forests to make responsible business the new normal.

-Certification (compliance to requirements) helps farmers produce better crops, adapt to climate change, increase their productivity, and reduce costs (Rainforest Alliance).

-Further information at: https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/

CERTIFICATION - MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

-An international non-profit on a mission to end overfishing and restore fish stocks for future generations (set standards for sustainable fishing).

-Fisheries that wish to demonstrate they are well-managed and sustainable compared to the MSC's standards are assessed by a team of Conformity Assessment Bodies (Marine Stewardship Council).

-Further information at: https://www.msc.org/en-au

COMPLIANCE CHALLENGES

1. Pest and disease control:

Vanuatu is vulnerable to the introduction of pests and diseases that could impact its agricultural sector and biodiversity.

Vanuatu implements biosecurity measures to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species, but the limited resources and infrastructure make it difficult to effectively manage these risks.

COMPLIANCE CHALLENGES
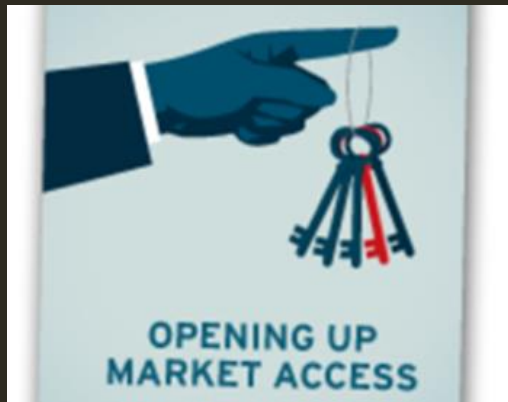
2. Limited market access:

Vanuatu's agricultural exports are primarily focused on copra, cocoa, and beef, but the country has limited access to international markets.

The lack of market access is due to a combination of factors, including lack of infrastructure, limited capacity to comply with international standards, and the small size of the country's agricultural sector.

COMPLIANCE CHALLENGES

3. Adherence to international standards:

Vanuatu's ability to comply with international standards for food safety, plant health, and animal health is limited by largely small-holder sector, resource and infrastructure constraints.

Compliance is essential for the country to access international markets and increase the value of its agricultural exports.

COMPLIANCE CHALLENGES

4. Climate change:

Vanuatu is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters, rising sea levels, and changes in weather patterns.

These impacts could have significant implications for the country's agricultural sector, including the introduction of new pests and diseases, and changes in crop yields and production.

COMPLIANCE CHALLENGES

5. Limited capacity:

Much like other Pacific nations, Vanuatu's capacity to manage biosecurity risks and comply with international standards is limited.

The country has made progress in improving its biosecurity and trade-related infrastructure, but further investment is needed to address the challenges facing the sector.

COMPLIANCE CHALLENGES

Addressing these challenges will require a coordinated effort from government, industry, and international partners to improve infrastructure, build capacity, and implement effective biosecurity measures to make SPS procedures efficient, reduce impact of TBTs, boost the country's agriculture sector and support economic development.

VANUATU/PIC EXAMPLES

1. Kava:

In 2001/2002, the European Union banned the import of kava from Vanuatu and other Pacific Island countries due to concerns about its potential hepatotoxic effects.

Vanuatu and other PICs have made efforts to improve the quality of kava (quality manuals, kava standards) and comply with EU regulations. In 2010, the EU lifted the ban, but strict regulations remain in place to ensure its safety.

VANUATU/PIC EXAMPLES

2. Eggplants:

In 2013 and again in 2017, Fiji faced a temporary ban on its eggplant exports to New Zealand due to concerns about the presence of eggs, live larvae and adult insects.

Fijian authorities had to work with NZ auditors to ensure root causes were identified, corrected and compliance with NZ IHS for eggplants. The bans were lifted after successful .

VANUATU/PIC EXAMPLES

© PHAMA Plus

3. Taro:

In 2017, American Samoa banned the import of taro from Samoa due to concerns over a virus disease affecting taro plants.

The issue was resolved after negotiations between the two countries and agreement that Samoa's authorities implemented measures to prevent pests from contaminating the taro. The ban was lifted in 2018.

© K. UTOVA

KEYS TO TRADE

Agree on SPS matters

Working with the Biosecurity agency on compliance

Ensuring food safety

Knowing import req.

Ensuring food quality

CONCLUDING REMARKS

-SPS compliance, food safety and food quality are critical concepts in the agricultural (plants and plant products) industry.

-SPS compliance ensures products meet international standards that prevent spread of pests and diseases, hence allowing global trade.

-Ensuring food safety protects human health whereas high-quality products are desirable to consumers and contribute to customer satisfaction and loyalty.

-Failure to comply with requirements can result in pest interception and/or product rejection, which can have significant economic consequences ($).

-Assistance is available through SAFE Pacific Project Biosecurity SPS, Animal Health and Value Chains components for government agencies and private sector; also support for trade instruments (EU-Pacific States EPA).

THANK YOU

✉ Email:

visonit@spc.int

riteng@spc.int