

International Symposium on Food Safety and Quality: Application of Nuclear Related Techniques



Challenges and Benefits of International Guidelines, Standards and Regulations: The Uganda Case.

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Introduction

Uganda is a landlocked East African Country. The Agriculture sector remains the backbone of the economy. Crop and Animal production constitute an important subsector. Recently the export of fresh fruits and vegetables and fishery products are increasing in importance. Uganda's main food export is mainly to the European Union (EU) although other global and regional markets exist. Because of the high demand for consumer protection, compliance to international guidelines, standards and regulations is very important.



Current paradigm in food safety guidelines, standards and regulations

- Risk based safety control approach
- Establishing controls through the entire food production chain
- Traceability
- Food producers have responsibility for the safe production of food
- Marketing Quality Standard
- Environmental requirements
- Social responsibility



Important Regulatory Environment for Uganda Food Exports to the European Union

- General food law, Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, general principles and requirements
- Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 on food hygiene
- Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 on microbiological criteria
- Regulation (EC) No 466/2001 setting maximum level for certain contaminants in foodstuffs
- Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 on the maximum levels of pesticide residues in food and feed of plant and animal origin
- Regulation laying down the marketing standards



Regional and Domestic regulatory landscape

- The East African Standards Quality Assurance Metrology and Testing Protocol (SQMT)
- Food and Drug s law (1964)
- Public Health Act (2000)
- Crop protection Act (1964)
- Control of Agrochemical Act (1964)
- Draft Food safety law
- Fish Quality (Assurance) Rules (1998)
- Fish Beach Management Uganda rules,2003
- Public Health Act (2000)
- Draft Food Safety Policy
- Uganda National Bureau Act (1983)Cap278
- Animal Disease Act (1964)



Non regulatory food safety and quality, guidelines, standards

- Codex standards and related texts
- OIE guidelines
- Private standards
 - *ISO Food safety management Standards*
 - *Global GAP standards*
 - *BRC standards*
 - *Environmental standards (ISO 14001)*
 - *Social standards (Social accountability 8000)*



Markets requirements for Uganda's food exports

International Markets

- United Kingdom
- France
- Holland
- Germany
- Belgium
- Switzerland
- Scandinavia
- USA
- Hong Kong
- United Arab Emirate

Requirements

- Phytosanitary certificate
- MRL tolerance
- HACCP Program
- Traceability
- Microbial
- Contamination Test
- GAP/Environmental
- Plan for the Farm
- Social Welfare
- Packaging specificity
- SPS Requirement
- Supply conformity
- Product conformity



Markets requirements for Uganda, Food Products

Regional market

- Kenya
- Tanzania
- Rwanda
- Burundi

Requirements

- EAC standards
- Codex Standards
- Food Safety Management Systems:
- GMP,GHP,GAP,HACCP

Challenges of compliance and solutions

Challenges

- Fragmented existing laws and regulations
- Weak institutional linkages
- Low coverage inspection service
- Strengthening Laboratory capacity
- Low level of awareness
- Economic cost of compliance a barriers to small farmers
- Technical and administrative complexities

Solutions

- Review of existing legislations
- Strengthening institutional linkages
- Supporting laboratory accreditation program



Addressing the challenges of compliance

- Codex Standards, Guidelines and Codes of practices
 - The use of HACCP
 - EU regulations
 - Use of regional standards
- Fruits, vegetables and related products
 - Coffee, Tea, Cocoa and related product
 - Milk and milk products
 - Fish and fishery products
 - Cereals and pulses and related product
 - Meat, poultry and related product



The story of Uganda Fish Sector

In 1997 a temporary ban was imposed on Uganda fish exports to the European Union (EU) markets because the country fish processors and exporter failed to meet the new EU hygiene and processing quality standards for fish exports



Compliance to specific regulations

- Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 on the hygiene of food stuff
- Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 for the export of fish and fishery products to EU
- Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 Microbiological Criteria
- Regulation (EC) No 466/2001 levels for certain contaminants in food stuff
- Regulations (EC) No1148/2001 n the specific check on the conformity to the market standards



What was done in the fish sector?

- A new fishery policy was passed that resulted into the restructuring of the Uganda's entire regulatory and inspection system
- All fish exporters were expected to be HACCP compliant
- All fish exporters were expected to use the service of accredited laboratories
- The landing upgraded to handle fish for export



Benefit of compliance to international requirements by the fish sector

| Year | Quantity (Tonnes) | Value in Million US\$ |
|------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1990 | 1,664 | 1,386 |
| 1991 | 4,687 | 5,313 |
| 1992 | 12,800 | 12,000 |
| 1995 | 16,046 | 32,262 |
| 1996 | 14,075 | 46,251 |
| 1997 | 11,819 | 27.864 |
| 1998 | 14,075 | 39,879 |
| 1999 | 9.628 | 24.839 |
| 2000 | 15,800 | 34,360 |
| 2001 | 28,000 | 78,839 |
| 2002 | 26,800 | 80,000 |
| 2003 | 25,080 | 86,088 |



Conclusion

Although major country and product-specific differences may exist in complying with different market requirements, In general, compliance with International food safety regulations and standards have a stronger positive effect when it come to consumer protection.

Many Thanks For Your Attention