



World Food Safety Day

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One day each year is now dedicated to food safety. Today, June 7th, 2019 and together, we celebrate the first-ever World Food Safety Day!

Food safety is a prerequisite to food availability and security. Unsafe food is not a commodity that can be traded, may lead to serious health repercussions, not only in individuals but across populations. Food that is not safe can undermine consumer confidence and trust.

Food Control Systems aim to ensure that consumers are protected from instances of unsafe food, to clarify responsibilities and provide guidance to all parties involved in food production, across the supply chain, such that food safety hazards are identified and prevented from introduction in the food supply. Food Control Regimes empower regulators to set and oversee food production requirements, make the relevant decisions to protect consumers and to ensure fair practices in the food trade. Ineffective Food Control Structures, associated with ill-equipped regulators, result in unpredictable environments and untrustworthy markets leading, unequivocally, to potential health and economic emergencies. Investing in food safety capacity building should encompass not only upgrades to the food production sector but also enhancement of regulatory oversight in a given jurisdiction.

Training and propagation of **food regulatory sciences** is one avenue to enable the improvement of competencies and capacities of food regulators around the world. This is one of the mandates of the [Food Risk Analysis and Regulatory Excellence Platform](#) (PARERA), recently created by the Department of Food Sciences jointly with the Institute of Nutrition and Functional Food (INAF) of the Université Laval. The Platform contributes to the development of [tailored training on risk analysis](#), with a specific focus on risk assessment, as well as on best practices of food regulatory policies.

The Platform also plans to create an open access data hub for contaminant and nutrient occurrence in food and to support the collection of food consumption information useful for exposure assessment purposes.

Recognizing the importance of food testing in generating the scientific information underpinning food regulatory decision-making, the Platform also hosts the [International Food Safety Training Laboratory](#) (IFSTL), a unique facility that develops and delivers competency enhancement programs in chemical residue analysis and other food chemical safety laboratory techniques.

Fostering standardization of food analytical methods is another objective pursued by the Platform, with the objective to disseminate best practices in food analytical performance and to harmonize, globally, the reliance upon reference methods for (a) given analyte(s), with guidance / direction from the AOAC International.

The above represents a snapshot of commitments that colleagues and partners involved in the development of the Platform are helping to achieve through their invaluable dedication, engagement and funding.

Celebrating World Food Safety Day once a year presents not only an opportunity to review our progress on such obligations, but also to identify new needs and challenges that must be addressed now and into the future. As with similar endeavors, collaboration and partnerships are, without question, key to attain the desired impact: to achieve food safety through improved regulatory oversight.