



Egypt: Strengthening compliance with food safety standards in horticulture value chains

Technical Consultation with Regulatory Bodies

Background and Rationale

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with financial support from the European Union, are providing technical assistance to the Egyptian agribusiness sector to improve compliance with food safety standards in target horticulture value chains. In particular, drawing on their previous experience in other countries, the EBRD and the FAO are promoting improvements in food safety standards and practices that are required to increase the access of export oriented value chains in Egypt to high value markets.

The technical assistance project is supported by the European Union under the EBRD Trade and Competitiveness Programme, which aims at enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (“SMEs”) in the industry, commerce and agribusiness sectors in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. In the agribusiness sector in Egypt, the programme supports SMEs to invest in new technologies, improve standards and value-added, and increase their access to high value markets.

Export of high value agricultural and food products is an important avenue for Egypt to improve its trade balance and expand value added to boost access to higher value markets which have more stringent standards. Egyptian exports have been hindered by food safety and quality issues, which have caused export rejections. Egyptian farmers' ability to meet food safety and quality requirements is a critical issue in promoting market access, and is currently one of the main reasons for product rejection on export markets. Pesticides and chemicals used by growers are of great concern to horticultural production in Egypt. Furthermore, the absence of a traceability system represents a challenge for national authorities to quickly identify and respond to compliance issues. The National Food Safety Authority (NFSA) and the Central Plant Quarantine Administration (CAPQ), in coordination with key stakeholders such as the Agricultural Export Council (AEC), Horticultural Export Improvement Association (HEIA), and private food business operators can play a crucial role in improving the food safety status in the country.

Objective

In the context of their efforts to support the private sector to improve compliance with food safety standards in export-oriented value chains in Egypt, the EBRD/FAO are organizing this technical consultation to engage with main regulatory bodies (NFSA and CAPQ) dealing with food safety issues in Egypt in a discussion about the market potential for Egypt exports, food safety issues affecting the sector, and support available for value chain actors to improve compliance with food safety standards. Specifically the consultation will highlight:

- Present a needs assessment on Egyptian horticulture exports and findings on the main food safety related challenges that horticulture value chains face in Egypt
- Present draft guidance on integrated pest and disease management considering maximum residue limits (MRLS) and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures to ensure quality and safety of sourced products
- Address regulatory challenges in ensuring higher levels of compliance

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Target Participants

Senior management and staff from the NFSA and CAPQ, the EBRD; Agricultural Pesticides Committee (APC), QCAP, the Central Laboratory for Pesticides, and Croplife Science Egypt.

Program

Duration: 1.5 hour

Moderated by Dmitry Prikhodko, Senior Economist, Investment Centre, FAO

15/03/2021		Speakers
10:45 -11:00	Prepare speakers and Zoom set-up	
11:00 - 11:30	Opening remarks: - FAO, EBRD, NFSA - Objectives of the webinar	Dr Nasredin Hag Elamin, FAO Representative in Egypt Mohamed Mansour, Principal Banker, Agribusiness, EBRD Dr Hussein Mansour, Chairman of NFSA
11:30 – 11:50	Presentation Food Safety in Export Oriented Value Chains in Egypt: Main Factors Affecting Compliance	Jozimo Santos Rocha, Investment Centre, FAO
11:50 – 12:20	Presentation on draft guidelines for integrated pest and disease management	Melvin Medina Navarro, FAO
12:20 – 12:30	Closing remarks / Questions & Answers	