

**AN INTRODUCTION TO CHINA'S REGIONALIZATION MANAGEMENT
SYSTEM ON FOOD SAFETY**

Statement by China at the Committee Meeting of 30 June-1 July 2011

The following communication, received on 24 June 2011, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of China.

China is pleased to avail itself of this opportunity to introduce its regionalization management system on food safety to other Members, sharing the unremitting efforts and successful experience in its innovative management of food safety.

I. CONCEPT OF REGIONALIZATION MANAGEMENT OF FOOD SAFETY

1. The term "regionalization" used in this paper refers to China's regionalization management of food safety, not the same term as used in the OIE or IPPC contexts. China's theory of regionalization management of food safety emanates from its exploration and practice of the management mode of export food safety. Since 2000, the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China (AQSIQ), which is in charge of import and export food safety, has applied the principles of HACCP and risk analysis in the control over food processing and dynamic management of food processing plants, introducing a management mode called "company + farm + standardization". In 2007, the theory of "regionalization management of food safety" was proposed and a government-led regionalization management system was established. The system requires local governments to play a leading role in the implementation of the system in an organized, planned and step-by-step manner, taking into account their respective economic and social conditions. Through enhancing regional organization of agricultural production and carrying out safety controls over the entire local food chain, the system aims to improve the overall local food safety level and ensure export food safety. Once the regionalization management system is in place, food safety risks of each jurisdiction will be controlled within acceptable levels, and a uniform food safety level in different areas will be ultimately achieved.

II. SCIENTIFIC CONNOTATIONS OF REGIONALIZATION MANAGEMENT OF FOOD SAFETY

2. First, local governments shall fulfill their obligation on food safety and meet their commitments to safeguarding consumers' health. Second, by following the principles in GAP, GHP, GMP, HACCP and risk analysis, local governments should provide guidance to farmers and processing enterprises on scientific production and processing of food, enhance their environmental awareness and prevent the use of pesticides, veterinary drugs, fertilizers, hormones and additive from becoming the source of contamination in the food chain. Third, administrative resources shall be integrated to establish and improve a pragmatic and efficient mechanism of food safety control.

Fourth, food processing enterprises should play a key role in raw material base construction, food production and processing, self-testing and self-control. Finally, publicity and training on food safety and its laws and regulations should be strengthened to raise public awareness.

III. MAJOR WORKING MECHANISMS

3. Mechanism of food safety administration: Departments of regionalization management are set up in local governments, responsible for overall supervision, coordination and services under the regionalization management system on food safety.

4. Mechanism of environmental control and agricultural chemical inputs control: Effective administration and protection is carried out in agricultural conditions from soil to water. A market access system is introduced on agricultural chemical inputs to implement a closed management from their production, through distribution to utilization.

5. Mechanism of food safety standardization: Food safety management standards or systems such as GAP, GHP, GMP, HACCP and ISO 9000 are locally promoted.

6. Mechanism of monitoring network on food safety risks: Testing resources are planned and distributed by local governments to monitor food, soil, water and chemical inputs in the regions.

7. Mechanism of complete traceability on food safety: Both documented and electronic traceability platforms are set up for real-time monitoring of critical points in farms, chemical inputs, standardization management, food processing, food inspection and testing, in order to achieve complete traceability covering agricultural production, food processing and distribution.

8. Mechanism of food safety emergency response: Local governments respond immediately to food safety accidents, eliminating or minimizing their effects and protecting consumers' health and ecological security.

9. Mechanism of publicity and training on food safety: Publicity, education and training on food safety are provided by local governments.

10. Mechanism of scientific and technical services: Local governments respond to questions raised by farmers and enterprises in a variety of approaches, such as phone calls, the internet, clinic diagnosis and on-site guidance to realize scientific farming, breeding, raising and food processing.

11. Mechanism of Integrity: Violations are notified and relevant enterprises are blacklisted to enhance integrity awareness.

IV. PRIMARY CONTROL MEASURES

12. Under the framework of the regionalization management system on food safety, the Chinese Government has primarily applied four control measures.

13. First, in May 2011, *Regionalization Management System on Primary Agricultural Products Requirements* (GB/T26407-2011) was issued as a national standard and will enter into force on 1 September 2011. The standard serves as a basis for local governments to establish a regionalization management system on primary agricultural products and for third party certification bodies to conduct certification. Additionally, it will further enhance the food safety level in China.

14. Second, rational planning and layout as well as registration have been introduced into local production bases and farms; origins of raw materials are controlled; processing plants and storehouses are subject to sanitary registration; production process and surroundings are subject to scrutiny.

15. Third, real-time supervision is conducted either by resident inspection and quarantine officials, supervising officials or by electronic monitoring systems to enhance safety and hygiene control on food processing.

16. Finally, dynamic data of food safety risks are obtained through the implementation of official food safety risk monitoring plans and tests conducted by both government and plant laboratories. If products are found with high risks or potential high risks, an alert system will be activated or control measures taken.

V. MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

17. Thanks to the efforts made by AQSIQ and other government agencies, regionalization management system on food safety has been implemented in 261 counties from 27 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities since 2007, when the regionalization management system commenced for export food in China. Experience has been spread from those with remarkable success. The regionalization management system has brought local governments, industry groups, enterprises, farmers, consumers and the media into full play and eliminated potential risks in the food chain by whole-process monitoring. As a result, export food safety is ensured and the overall food safety level in China is enhanced. Statistics for 2010 show that export food from counties or regions implementing a regionalization management system all met the requirements of importing markets. Facts have shown that the regionalization management system is an effective means to address food safety problems when unbalanced management exists in different regions.
