



Executive Summary

SELAMAT

Safety enhancement of **E**dible products,
Legislation, **A**nalysis and **M**anagement, with **A**SEM
countries, by mutual **T**raining & research

Specific Support Action

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Project coordinator: Dr. H.J.P. Marvin

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Executive Summary of the SELAMAT project; achievements over 4 years period

Background

The large number of food safety incidents such as melamine, BSE, dioxin, nitrofurans, and outbreaks of microbial food borne diseases has brought to light the vulnerability of the modern food production systems.

Some of the food safety and quality problems in recent years have endangered consumer's health resulting in a decrease in consumer confidence in the food supply, with a negative economical impact of food production and sale. The increasing complexity of food chain production systems, increased globalisation of trade, market introduction of (genetically modified) new foods and application of new food processing technologies may lead to new and unforeseen risks, which may have a negative impact on human health, environment and economy. Moreover, known risks may re-occur and increase in frequency, due to altered human activities or changes in conditions and methods of food production.

It is therefore evident that food safety risks are not limited to certain countries and/ or geographical areas. Hence, to deal with these problems, adequate international cooperation is essential, in particular among important trade regions such as EU and Asia.

Subjects of mutual interest in relation to research, development, training and trade in this area have been identified at the ASEM workshop in June 2002 in Malaysia and were divided into three domains:

- Certification and Normalisation (i.e. open exchange of methods, where appropriate harmonisation & standardisation, new detection methods, risk assessment)
- Sustainable Production Systems for Food Safety (unintended effects, public perception transparency)
- Trade issues (i.e. market stability, traceability along the whole food chain [GM and organic])

It was against this background that the EU 6th Framework Programme SELAMAT was initiated. SELAMAT, meaning *SAFETY* in the Malay language or *SAFE* in Indonesian language, aims at creating **a permanent network** for international cooperation on food safety issues between Europe and ASEM. The project started in July 2004 and received funding from the European Commission for 4 years.

The overall aim of SELAMAT is:

- To create a permanent network for international cooperation on food safety issues between Europe and ASEM.

This Network aims to:

- Promote European and Asian collaboration on food safety issues
- Contribute opening up the European Research Area
- Mobilise the European and Asian Research Communities to support Communities and Asian foreign and development policies
- Develop a common research agenda and initiate joint initiatives

Work performed

Training courses/ capacity building

The SELAMAT project commenced in August 2004 with a kick off meeting in Wageningen, the Netherlands. On this meeting, that was attended by the core group (RIKILT (NL) , CSL (UK) , IBET (P), IPP (China) and Ministry of Health of Malaysia), a strategy to build a EU-ASEM food safety network was established. Following this initial meeting, the SELAMAT network has grown from 4 partners to 21 representing 14 countries (*Netherlands, United Kingdom, Portugal, China, Malaysia, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Republic of Korea and India*). The members (indicated in SELAMAT as

“gatekeepers”) are experts in food safety working at ministries, academia or food authorities and have excellent knowledge about food safety in their country/ region .

To achieve the goals, SELAMAT has carried out the following activities:

1. organised with its members one workshop and training course on food safety per year,
2. evaluated the food safety research agenda in an international perspective
3. developed a web based information / help desk for food standards/ MRLs
4. shared information of national food monitoring and surveillance data



Figure 1. SELAMAT training course in Vietnam, May 2008

SELAMAT has organised the following training courses which are also available on the SELAMAT website (www.selamat.net) :

- 1) Quantitative risk assessment; 17-18 November 2005, Bangkok, Thailand
- 2) Pesticide residue analysis; 5-7 July 2006, Bangkok, Thailand
- 3) Fusarium toxins-Fumoninsins, Don, T-2 toxin and Zeralenone; 11-13 December 2006, Beijing, China
- 4) Traceability; 12-13 May 2008, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

A very successful format was developed which consisted of a one day Seminar for a large audience (120-180 persons) with introductory lectures preceding a hands-on training course for approximately 15-30 students. The trainees invited to the course were nominated by the gatekeeper of their country. In total, approximately 320 persons have attended the seminars and approximately 130 students participated in the hands-on training course. Feed back received from the students via evaluation forms shows the appreciation for this format and the organization and the high quality of the courses given.



Workshops

In addition to the training courses SELAMAT also organized workshops with SELAMAT members and invited experts, discussing key issues on food safety and regulatory framework in EU and ASEM.

Striking finding was the fact that food safety issues being faced are common to countries in the ASEM region and have many identical elements to issues faced in the EU. Issues raised were related to infrastructure (among others reconstruction of food safety management system, modernising lab services, development of reference laboratory, training for inspectors), communication (among others food safety campaign, national centre for food safety alert and response) partnerships, import/export (among others complying with importing country requirements, changing food regulations, traceability). Also consumer perception, communication and education of the general public and other stakeholders were identified as an important condition to improve the food safety standard in any country. A

common research agenda has been proposed and published in Food Science and Technology (volume 21, issue 2, June 2007, page 27-29).

In the course of the 4 year, SELAMAT organised the following workshops, which have been attended by 300-500 persons in total:

1. EU-ASIA cooperation on Food Safety: a strategy forward, 11-12 April Lisbon, Portugal
2. Foresight on Food Safety collaboration between EU and ASEM countries; 24-26 April 2006, Seoul, Republic of Korea
3. Consumer Expectation through food safety (slot S15 in the 10th ASEAN Food Conference 2007); 23-25 August 2007, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
4. Managing Aflatoxin from Farm-to-Table; 25-27 June 2008, Bogor & Jakarta, Indonesia

MRL / legislation database

The SELAMAT network members concluded that information on legislation on food safety standards and MRLs (and upcoming changes) in EU and ASEM countries is difficult to find and proposed to develop a web based transfer point compiling the available information and thereby helping the search for relevant information. In the framework of SELAMAT a joint project was started to develop such transfer point. The first version of the web base transfer point / help desk for food standards/ MRLs has been created and is available via the SELAMAT site. Initially, the focus was on collecting information on pesticide legislation and information of more than 100 websites from 40 countries is now disclosed via this transfer point. Work continues to collect information on residues and to improve the database and its functionalities.

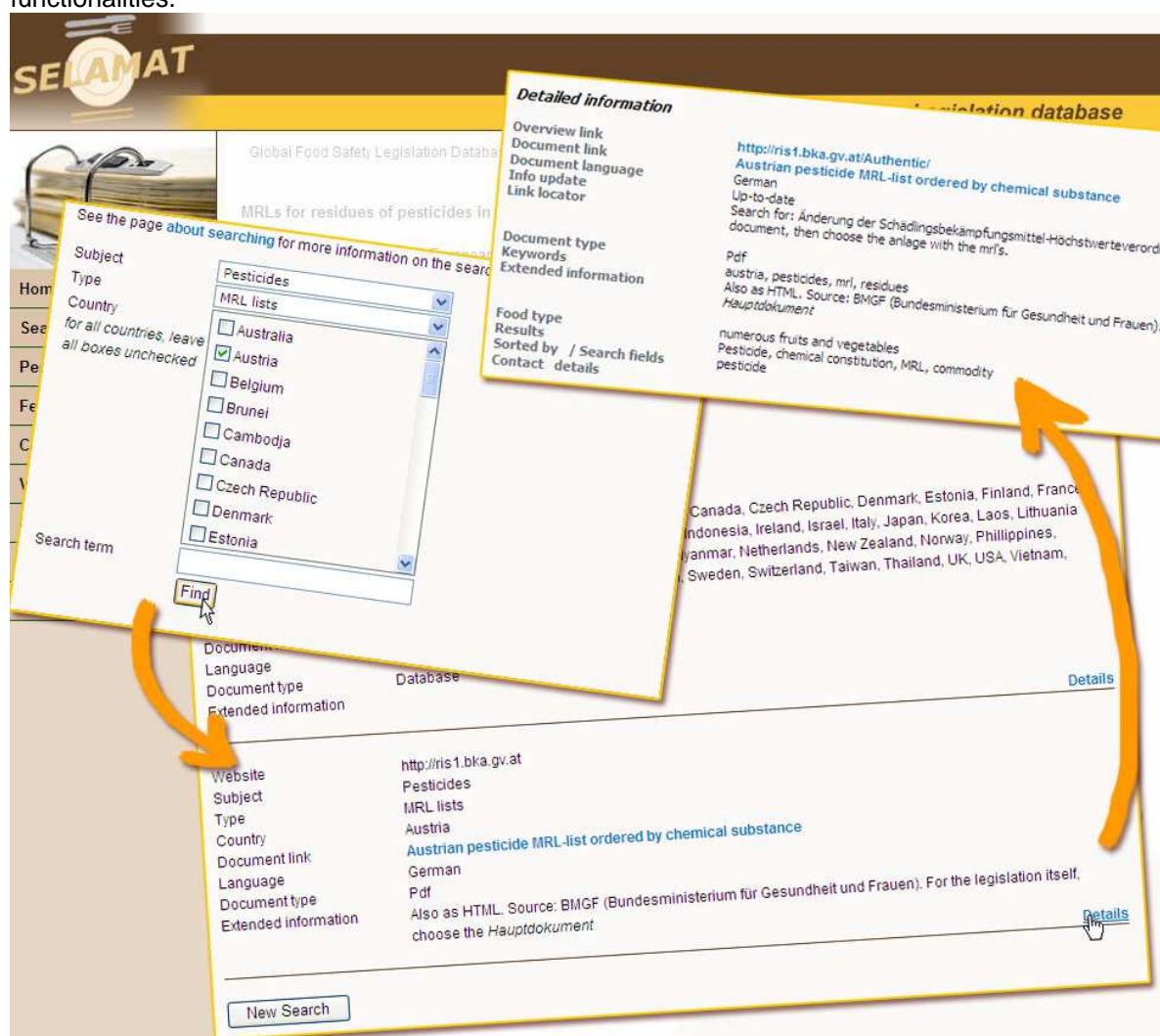


Figure 2. The MRL and legislation database

SELAMAT contract partners

Organization

RIKILT – Institute of Food Safety
Central Science Laboratory (CSL)
Institute of Experimental and Technological Biology (IBET)
Institute of Plant Protection (IPP)

Country

Netherlands
United Kingdom
Portugal
China

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All information of SELAMAT can be found on its website: www.selamat.net



Figure 3: SELAMAT logo



Figure 4: SELAMAT Public Web site: www.selamat.net