

Food Safety Overview in Thailand



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Presentation Topics

- I Current food situation in Thailand
- II Thailand's National Food Safety
Agenda and Policy
- III Food Safety Framework
- IV Food Safety-relevant Developments
- V Concluding Remarks



Current Food Situation in Thailand

- **Thailand is 14th world largest exporter of food and agricultural products.**
- **Annual food production amounts to 130 million tons/year for which 70% is locally consumed.**
- **Food contributes 15% of the country's total export revenue of ~ US\$67 billions/year**
- **The food industry provides employment to more than 20 million people and absorbs more than 80% of the country's raw food material production.**



Food safety as a tool to global competitiveness

Recognizing the contribution of foods in the country's economy and people's livelihood, especially during the economic recession in 1997, and faced by the growing competition in the global market, the government has identified two major strategies to boost food competitiveness:

- Improve food safety
- Promote Thailand as “kitchen of the world” - “producer of safe and quality foods”



National Agenda on Food Safety

- Declaration of “2004 as food safety year”
- Making Thailand “kitchen of the world”





National Food Safety Goals:

- **Equivalent food safety standards for local and foreign consumers**
- **A science-based safety standards and regulations**
- **An effective farm to table control system that is internationally recognized.**



National Food Safety Strategies

- Hasten improvement in the current food control system
 - Food law and regulations – aligned with Codex standards
 - Science-based Food control management measures (inter-agencies collaboration to enhance systematic collection and analysis of national data)
 - Inspection services (risk analysis application)
 - Lab services - national food monitoring and surveillance
- Enhance Information dissemination, Education and Risk Communication
- Promote Capacity Building of human resource through training

Thailand's Present Food Safety Framework



Food Safety Control Authorities

Major Food Safety Control Ministries

Ministry of Public Health - safety of Local Foods

- FDA
- Department of Health

- Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives - safety of food for exports

- Department of Livestock Development
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Fisheries



Food Safety Control Acts and Authorized Bodies

Ministry of Public Health

Food Acts B.E. 2522 (1979) - authorized FDA

Ministry of Agriculture

Department of Fisheries

Fisheries Act B.E 2490 (1947) - **authorized DOF**

Department of Livestock Development

Animal Epidemic Act B.E. 2499 (1956)

Feed Quality Control Act B.E.2525 (**1982**)

Animals and animal Carcasses Act B.E 2544(2001)

Department of Agriculture

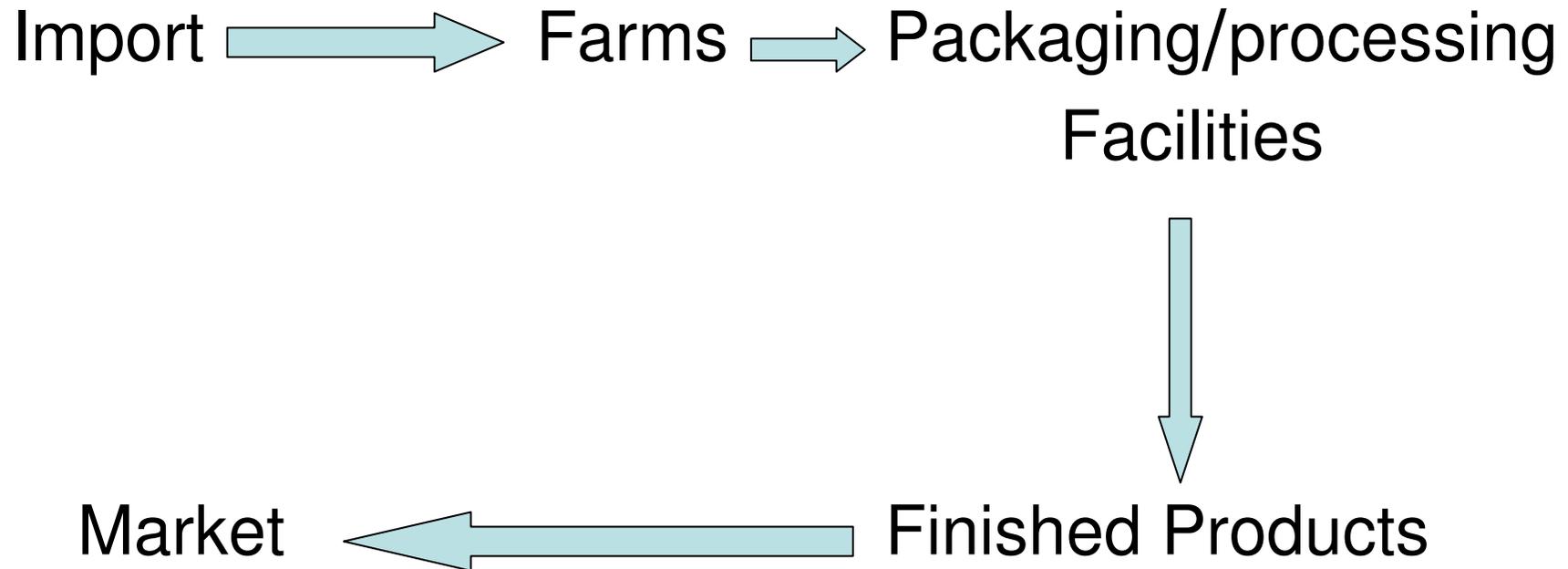
Plant Quarantine Act B.E. 2507(1964)

Hazardous Substances Act B.E. 2535 (1992)

Plant Varieties protection Act B.E. 2542(1999)



Thailand's Food Safety Inspection Points in a food chain





Authorized Food Safety Inspection Agencies of Food Imports

Inspection of food/feed imports

Product Category

Responsible Agency

Animal Feeds

****Dept. of Livestock Development***

Aquatic feeds

****Dept. of Fisheries***

Farm chemicals

****Dept. of Agriculture***

Food chemicals & Pharmaceuticals

*****Food and Drug Administration***

Plants and food plant products

Dept. of Agriculture

Animals and food animal products

Dept. of Livestock Development

Fisheries and fishery products

Dept, of Fisheries

**** Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC)***

***** Ministry of Public Health***



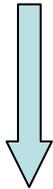
Authorized food safety inspection agencies along the food chain

Farm/Inputs

Department of Agriculture (DOA)

Department of Livestock Development (DLD)

Department of Fisheries(DOF)



Slaughter house – DLD

Fresh Fruit Packing House - DOA

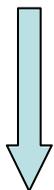
Peeling shed/central fishery markets - DOF



Processing Plants

DOA, DLD, DOF

Processed Product



Food & Drug Administration

Thai Industrial Standards Institute

Markets

FDA



Responsible food safety authority of food outlets

Food Distribution Outlets

- Local Markets - Department of Health, MOPH for hygiene check, FDA and Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (in Bangkok) for product safety
- Catering and Restaurant Establishments, stores and supermarkets - Food and Drug Administration, MOPH for product safety and Dept. of Health for hygiene and water safety check

Exports - DOA, DLD, DOF inspection now under ACFS



Food Safety Framework to Support Competitiveness

- To be competitive and be able to cope with the increasingly stringent requirement of international trade, the private sector in conjunction with the National Food Institute, a network organization of the Ministry of Industry mandated to foster development in the food industry, advocated the review of the existing regulatory and food control system to the government in 2001.
- Despite that the three competent food authorities were under one Ministries, their authorities were exercised independently creating difficulties to exporters of products with mixed ingredients. Recognizing the weaknesses of a multi-agency food control system, the government created the National Bureau of Agricultural Commodities and Food Standards (ACFS) in October 2002 to integrate food control functions of the Departments under the MOAC and implement consistent control across a farm to table continuum. By integration, it has created a one-stop service for the exporters and it has reduced duplication of efforts among agencies involved.



Food Safety Policy Development - establishment of an integrated Food Safety Agency

- **The functions of the newly established ACFS were to:**
 - **Set up food and agricultural commodity standards**
 - **Serve as national accreditation body for food and agricultural commodity standards**
 - **Serve as the focal point for international trade standards (including Codex, OIE and IPPC standards) and as trade dispute arbitration body**



Food Safety Policy Development (continued)

- **Likewise, in an effort to harmonize food safety standards of locally consumed foods with those for exports, the FDA has made GMP Mandatory in 2003 for all food establishments producing controlled and standardized products.**
- **Once establishments are GMP-certified, they are further encouraged to work towards HACCP certification. To date there are only 461 factories with HACCP certification.**
- **Based on the MOPH report, there are 17,803 food factories and food establishments registered. Of that, about 60% are now GMP-certified (or 100% compliance). Producers of the general foods constituting about 40% of the registered establishments are exempted from GMP mandatory compliance.**



Movements in Science-based measures

- **Capacity building in Risk assessment**
- **More researches to support risk analysis and food policy are being conducted (for example, risk assessment along the entire food chain)**
- **Greater focus on information sharing and database building to support risk analysis**



Trends in Food Safety Strategies

- **Emphasis on preventive measures throughout the entire food chain. Ex. - mandatory implementation of GAP in farms, GHP and GMP systems in food establishments. HACCP is also required for all exporting companies.**
- **National food safety capacity building programs emphasizes on hygiene practice in small and medium primary and secondary food producers, inspection and risk analysis skills for legislators, supporting laboratories, service providers and standard setting agencies and traceability system implementation for exporting food manufacturers**
- **More collaborations and networking among food safety-relevant agencies**
- **More food safety media coverage to create greater public food safety awareness and push for better food control enforcement**



Remaining Food Safety Problems

- **Incidence of food-borne/animal diseases (ex. Avian flu)**
- **Meeting stringent standards on veterinary drug residues and other unintended contaminants - (both levels and methodology requirements)**
- **Dispute over factory and Lab result recognition – a number of accredited Lab and factories complained of not getting due recognition despite their ISO standard certification**
- **Traceability requirement of some country tend to be more restrictive than necessary**



International Food Safety Cooperation

- **Cooperation with WHO Center for Reference and Research on study about Influenza and avian flu**
- **Cooperation with WHO on Global Salmonella Surveillance Network**
- **ASEAN Food Safety Network**
- **Cooperation with various food importing countries on Food Inspection**

Concluding Remarks

Despite the many changes that Thailand has and presently adopting to improve global competitiveness of its food sector, coping with the changing regulations that comes with prescribed testing methodology and instrumentation precision are sufficient reasons to discourage our private sector from competing. However, if there is really a scientifically proven valid reasons for such requirements, the question then is how should we work together to lessen their impacts and economic burdens especially to marginally thriving exporters?



Thank you very much
indeed for your attention!