

FAEA

FOOD & AGRICULTURE EXPORT ALLIANCE

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FAEA MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER

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DIRECTOR'S DESK

We are thrilled to bring you the latest updates from the Food and Agriculture Export Alliance as we dive into an exciting new year. 2023 was a year filled with growth, achievement and impactful initiatives, all made possible by the unwavering support of our dedicated members. In this edition, we'll take a moment to reflect on the outstanding activities and milestones of the past year, introduce our new leadership team for 2024, and delve into the developments that have marked the first month of the year. As we embark on this journey together, we are energized by the prospects of the year ahead and remain committed to promoting excellence in food and agriculture exports. Thank you for being an integral part of our alliance, and we look forward to sharing an enriching and prosperous year with you.

CHANGING LEADERSHIP

As we stand on the threshold of an exciting new phase for the Food and Agriculture Export Alliance, it is with deep appreciation that we extend our gratitude to Kent Sisson, our outgoing Executive Director. Kent's steadfast dedication, visionary leadership and unwavering commitment have propelled FAEA to new heights. He not only expanded FAEA's programming but also championed great strides, elevating the reputation of FAEA and nurturing invaluable working relationships across the globe. Kent, we thank you for your outstanding service and the indelible mark you've left on our organization!

Now, as we look forward to the future, we are pleased to introduce the American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) as our program implementer, and to welcome Gina Tumbarello as FAEA's new Executive Director. Gina has almost 20 years of experience in international agricultural policy and trade and concurrently serves as AFIA's Senior Director of Global Strategies, Policy and Trade. In her role, she spearheads AFIA's global initiatives, formulating and executing the international priorities of the U.S. animal food industry.

Mallory Gaines, AFIA's Director of Market Access and Multilateral Affairs, will serve as FAEA's Director of Codex and Global Affairs. In her role at AFIA Mallory is responsible for developing, implementing and communicating our trade policy goals and activities, furthering the growth of trade-related policies that align with the expansion of U.S. exports. With over thirteen years of experience in international policy and regulatory affairs, Mallory's expertise is pivotal in advancing global regulatory harmonization, agricultural market access opportunities and science-based food and feed safety standards.

We are delighted to announce that FAEA will continue to benefit from the support of Rosida Nababan in her role as Program Coordinator. With this transition, FAEA is also excited to have AFIA as a new cooperator member, further enhancing our representation as we move forward.

As we embark on this exciting journey, we look forward to an impactful future that our dedicated team will lead us towards. We are grateful for the legacy left by Kent Sisson and excited about the opportunities that lie ahead.



Gina Tumbarello
Executive Director



Mallory Gaines
Director of Codex & Global Affairs



Rosida Nababan
Program Coordinator

PROGRAM UPDATES

CAMBODIA

FAEA prioritizes working with countries like Cambodia that are establishing new and/or are modernizing their existing food and animal feed safety laws and regulations to take advantage of global export and import trade opportunities. With an increasing number of actors in the supply chain, and regulatory and enforcement responsibilities shared by multiple government agencies both at the national and provincial levels, the Government of Cambodia wishes to enhance the participation of experts from all sectors in its rule-making process to better inform new regulations. FAEA is supporting this effort by collaborating with Cambodia's regulatory officials in implementing their recently promulgated Law on Food Safety to facilitate the development of a food and feed safety system that ensures Cambodian producers and consumers that the food they produce and eat is safe for domestic consumption and international trade.

In Dec. 2023, FAEA hosted a Cambodian food and feed safety delegation to the United States. This visit served as a platform to impart insights into how the United States manages and enforces its food and feed safety laws, regulations and protocols. Special emphasis was directed towards demonstrating the coordination among diverse federal agencies within the U.S. regulatory framework, fostering harmonious collaboration not only among these agencies but also with their counterparts in State Government bodies and private sector stakeholders.

The Cambodian delegation visited with several U.S. government agencies, such as the U.S. Department of



Agriculture (USDA), the United States Trade Representative (USTR), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) where they offered valuable insights into the intricacies of the U.S. food and feed safety regulatory system. FAEA members shared their experiences and best practices with the Cambodian officials. During the delegation's visit to the United States, they toured Perdue Farms' feed milling and soy crushing facility and visited the U.S. Cold Storage facility where they toured a modern cold storage facility.

NEXT STEPS...

As a result of the delegation's trip to the United States, and at the request of the Ministry of Commerce of Cambodia, FAEA and USDA are working with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to implement a workshop to gather technical experts from relevant ministries, competent authorities, academia and industry to develop an action plan for information sharing, capacity building and a consultative rule-making process.

NIGERIA

In a concerted effort to strengthen Nigeria's food safety control system and ensure the safety of its food value chain, FAEA, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Africa Food Safety Initiative (AFSI), hosted a two-day workshop in Abuja, Nigeria in Nov. 2023. This event brought together over 100 key stakeholders, including government officials, industry experts and civil society representatives with the aim of enhancing coordination and implementing capacity-building activities in the food safety sector.

The workshop yielded outcomes that will contribute to the enhancement of food safety in Nigeria. First, a strategic stakeholder map was generated, identifying experts from various government ministries, departments and agencies. This map will serve as a valuable resource for future coordination efforts. Second, the deliberations during the workshop provided crucial insights for the formation of Technical Working Groups (TWGs) and the development of an action plan. Participants actively engaged in identifying the relevant institutions and individuals needed to constitute these TWGs.

Furthermore, the workshop emphasized the pressing need for improved communication among MDAs, the private sector and development partners. Participants recognized that better collaboration, coordination and cooperation are essential in the complex food and feed safety ecosystem. This acknowledgment underscores the importance of fostering stronger ties between stakeholders to achieve common goals.

Lastly, a significant milestone was achieved when a Communique was read and affirmed by key Government of Nigeria (GON) agencies. This document formally encapsulated the workshop's key outcomes and recommendations, signifying a commitment to implementing the proposed actions and driving positive change in the country's food safety landscape. These outcomes mark a pivotal step towards a safer and more secure food system in Nigeria, reflecting the dedication and collaboration of all involved parties.



NEXT STEPS...

FAEA will work with the same partners in 2024 to support 1) the formation of the TWGs and their gathering of information on the priority areas identified for modernization; 2) the drafting of a comprehensive action plan for the TWGs; and 3) the improvement of communication between ministries, competent authorities, academia and industry.

KENYA

The need to re-align Kenya's food safety system to effectively tackle food safety concerns has now, more than ever, become evident, thanks to loopholes that have resulted in significant loss of life, increased economic burden to address food safety related illnesses, lost human productivity measured in Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYS) and major trade impediments.

Recently, heightened awareness of food safety risks has permeated much of sub-Saharan Africa. Globalization has profoundly impacted the food trade sector, with numerous countries in the region serving as both global food suppliers and substantial importers of food for direct consumption and raw material for further processing. Consequently, there is a pressing demand for robust traceability systems ensuring the safety of food from its origin to the final consumer.

Moreover, the haphazard alterations in existing legislation and a lack of coordination have led to redundant efforts by multiple regulatory bodies. This duplication of efforts has resulted in squandered resources, confusion among Food Business Operators (FBOs) and consumers, escalated food costs, and suboptimal outcomes in establishing clear, transparent, and harmonized food and animal feed regulations.

FAEA, as an implementing partner, and USDA have invested over \$500,000 in supporting the Kenyan Government's efforts to draft a new food and feed safety policy and bill. The passage of this bill is anticipated to establish a transparent legal framework for developing a regulatory system benefiting both FBOs and consumers, ensuring the safety and quality of food and feed products nationwide.

Through the partnership between the Kenya Government, USDA, and FAEA, an inter-ministerial and multi-agency Food Safety Task Force (FSTF) was established. This task force collaborated to develop a draft food safety policy and bill, garnering consensus from relevant authorities including the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives (MALFC), Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Trade. The draft bill underwent parliamentary scrutiny and was forwarded to the Senate for concurrence, acknowledging food safety as a devolved function.

In continued partnership with the Kenya government, USDA/FAEA worked to identify capacity gaps in food and feed safety. This initiative aimed to support the implementation of proposed legislation and enhance the efficacy of food safety roles within relevant agencies. Following this, USDA/FAEA conducted a comprehensive review to assess capacity needs, considering their relevance to improving Kenya's food safety landscape, addressing cross-cutting concerns from multiple agencies and aligning with FAEA's funding program criteria.

NEXT STEPS...

FAEA will collaborate with various institutions operating in Kenya to enhance food safety capacity within the private sector. This includes partnering with TradeMark Africa, industry players and academic institutions capable of hosting capacity training initiatives. A joint effort between TMA and FAEA will involve developing a roadmap to prioritize capacity training needs within the private sector. These activities, supported by FAEA and potentially other partners, will be implemented over the course of the next year.

CODEx

Mallory Gaines has been reaching out to FAEA members to discuss their Codex goals for 2024 and is developing a Codex strategy to reflect FAEA member needs, including Codex committees of interest. The goal is to ensure Codex work that affects all FAEA members is being appropriately monitored and action is taken when necessary.

If you or someone from your staff have not yet scheduled time to chat with Mallory please reach out to her, mgaines@afia.org.

FUNDING

FAEA received 2024 Global Based Initiative (GBI) funding allocation from the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). The allocation, totaling \$233,476, serves as the primary resource for FAEA's ongoing efforts to promote and enhance food and feed safety globally. Despite falling short of the initial request of \$300,000, this allocation reinforces FAEA's commitment to advancing its mission amidst challenging global dynamics. In addition to the GBI funding, FAEA is set to leverage approximately \$244,000 in rollover funds from its Emerging Markets Program (EMP) designated for work in Kenya.

Excitingly, FAEA's financial outlook for the upcoming year showcases promising signs of stability and growth. While the organization is still in the process of finalizing its 2023 accounts, early indications suggest a favorable trajectory. Additionally, the proposed operating budget for 2024 reflects a commitment to fiscal prudence, indicating a shift away from past years of operating with deficits. For members that have not paid their 2024 dues yet, please reach out to Sam Clemence at sclemence@grains.org.



ED MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT

In January, my first month as Executive Director for FAEA, I focused on familiarizing myself with the organization's operations and connecting with key partners in FAEA's program countries. This included an extensive review of organizational documents, program materials and budgets to gain a comprehensive understanding of FAEA's activities and priorities.

I engaged in a productive meeting with Kent Sisson to discuss program strategies and administrative matters, leveraging his valuable insights and expertise. Additionally, I had my first call with the U.S. Grains Council, which administers FAEA's program funds, to establish effective communication channels and ensure smooth collaboration. Additionally, I conducted several calls with program collaborators in program countries, i.e. Kenya, Bangladesh, Nigeria, China, and Cambodia) laying the groundwork for collaborative initiatives and fostering relationships essential for our success.

I contracted a food and feed safety consultant for our Cambodia program and worked with her to craft a comprehensive concept paper outlining our activities for 2024. FAEA staff had a call with the Trade & Regulatory Capacity Building Division of FAS and FAS staff posted in Nigeria to introduce ourselves and discuss their program in Nigeria. This was followed by broader discussions with FAS's collaborators, University of Missouri, on the Nigeria programs for 2024. Additionally, I engaged in discussions with consultants in Kenya, focusing on refining our concept paper for activities slated for 2024, aligning them with our strategic objectives and stakeholder needs. Additionally, I reviewed a proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TradeMark Africa, a vital step towards strengthening our partnerships and expanding our reach in both Kenya and the region.

Mallory spearheaded outreach efforts to members regarding CODEX interests and initiated the development of a CODEX strategy for FAEA for the year 2024, ensuring our commitment to regulatory compliance and market access.

To enhance FAEA's online presence and communication efforts, I started working on updating the organization's website, ensuring that it accurately reflects our mission, programs, and achievements. These efforts will likely continue over the next few months.

Overall, January was a month of intensive learning, collaboration, and strategic planning, setting a solid foundation for FAEA's endeavors in the year ahead under AFIA's leadership.

-Gina Tumbarello