



FOOD SAFETY NEWS



Issued by the Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses (FOS)
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<http://www.who.int/foodsafety/en>

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Food Safety at the Executive Board – WHO Headquarters – January 2010

The WHO Executive Board (EB) discussed food safety and forwarded a suggested new resolution on "Advancing food safety initiatives" to the 63rd World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2010. The resolution contains clear directions to strengthen WHO's food safety work in relation to: a) building INFOSAN, adding food safety data-generation and data-sharing to its portfolio, b) monitoring and reporting on the burden of foodborne and zoonotic diseases, c) advancing the provision and sharing of international scientific advice, and d) focusing on the public health aspects of zoonotic diseases originating at the human-animal interface. The WHO Department for Food safety and Zoonoses (FOS) will use these directions (when approved by the WHA), to strengthen a coherent, integrated work-plan covering science, burden estimation, food safety management and communication and general coordination of zoonoses prevention. This will be done in collaboration with other Departments within WHO, as well as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). Information about the EB resolution is available at: http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB126/B126_R7-en.pdf. Read more about the 2010-2011 directions of FOS activities at: www.who.int/foodsafety/about/en.

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Development of the WHO Strategy for the management of zoonotic public health risks at the human–animal interface

The WHO continues to work towards a greater focus on the public health aspects of zoonotic diseases originating at the human-animal interface. FOS now works with multiple WHO departments, including all six WHO Regions, covering different aspects of zoonoses. The work is aimed at developing a comprehensive approach and a more coherent strategic view on zoonoses prevention, with a human health focus. As part of this process WHO is also obtaining input from external partners, representing cross-sectoral experience, and of course including FAO and OIE. It is important to realize that the greatest risk for the transmission of zoonotic diseases occurs at the human-animal interface, which describes a continuum of direct or indirect human exposure to animals, their products and/or their environments. More than 60% of the newly identified infectious agents that have affected people over the past few decades have been caused by pathogens originating from animals or animal products. 70% percent of these zoonotic infections originate from wildlife. Read more at: www.who.int/foodsafety/zoonoses/en/

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Call for Experts and Data for Bisphenol A

Bisphenol A (BPA) is a widely used chemical in polycarbonate plastic and epoxy resins, also used in food contact materials, leading to potential consumer exposure through food. A large number of publications on the toxicity and endocrine activity of BPA has been published. In light of contradicting results of experimental studies and resulting uncertainties about the possibility of adverse human health effects from low levels of exposure to BPA, FAO and WHO will jointly organize an ad hoc expert meeting, supported by Health Canada and the US National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), to assess the safety of BPA. Calls for experts and for data have been published and are accessible from our BPA website at: www.who.int/foodsafety/chem/chemicals/bisphenol/en. **Deadline: 26 February 2010.**

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Codex Trust Fund

Applications for support from the Codex Trust Fund in 2010 were received from 76 eligible countries. Resources available to the Codex Trust Fund will allow over 300 participants to be supported in 2010 to attend Codex meetings, task forces and working groups. Additional support will be made available for Codex training courses, and to enhance the technical and scientific input that eligible countries are contributing to the Codex process. For more information please contact Catherine Mulholland (Tel: +41 22 791 3080 - E-mail: codextrustfund@who.int).

Codex Trust Fund website: www.who.int/foodsafety/codex/trustfund/en.

New publications available on the web:

Portuguese version of the **Guide on Safe Food for Travellers** available at:

www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/consumer/travellers/en

Creole Haiti version of the **Five Keys to Safer Food** available at: www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/consumer/5keys/en

Food Safety is critical to nutrition security. J. Schlundt, 2010, available at: www.scidev.net/en/opinions/food-safety-is-critical-to-nutrition-security.html