

# BETTER TRAINING for SAFER FOOD

Newsletter

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## Great strides in development of BTSF e-learning modules



Work has continued on the development of the BTSF e-learning platform in 2014, with modules on animal welfare at slaughter and killing for disease control and food contact materials now being used by Member State participants. These modules are eventually to be made available in English, French and German and will each cater annually for some 5 000 participants during the 2014-16 period, of which around 80% will be from the EU.

National participant allocations are based on those for standard BTSF activities, with national contact points (NCP) selecting participants who are given a user name and password allowing them access to the 'BTSF e-learning campus' platform. The platform has a reserved area for NCPs and competent authorities and a section with the latest BTSF e-learning news. Participants have access to their own calendar and profile, which they can update with relevant information, an e-learning messaging system, their home page which lists the courses in which they have been enrolled and their e-learning activity reports.

Within the modules themselves, an introduction is provided comprising a welcome text and latest

news on the course. There is also an e-folder with the main course documents, including the course brochure, information on the e-learning project, details of people involved in its development and a guide to using the platform.

Participants take a preliminary test to assess their knowledge before starting the multimedia module. They then access the module which includes texts, interactive activities, quizzes and serious games and provides a glossary, a bibliography and useful links. Once they have completed the module, they take a post-module test to evaluate their progress, with a 75% score required to pass.

After this, participants provide feedback on the course using the satisfaction questionnaire. When this has been filled out, and assuming they have passed the post-module test, they download their attendance certificate which contains all information relevant to their participation.

The launch of the test phase for the modules on prevention, control and eradication of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point principles (HACCP) and the EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) is also planned for 2014. These modules will, in time, also be available in English, French and German for 5 000 participants each.

This should be followed by the launch of a further five modules in English, French, German, Spanish and Portuguese. These are to cover welfare of poultry at slaughter and killing for disease control, animal nutrition, health of aquaculture animals, the EU plant quarantine regime for imports and food hygiene and controls on fishery products and live bivalve molluscs.

# BTSF

# BTSF World gets off to a good start



In our previous edition, we gave a further update on preparation of training activities within the new third country programme, BTSF World. Since then, a considerable amount of activity has taken place and concrete training began in January 2014.

BTSF World is funded by the Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP) of the European Commission (EC) Development Cooperation Instrument. It is aimed at strengthening sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) frameworks in developing countries and improving food safety and animal and plant health. It transfers SPS know-how to beneficiary countries so as to enable them to address concerns identified in Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) reports or from other (international) sources.

This should increase the availability of safe food and help developing countries to access global food markets. Knock-on effects should be felt in terms of employment and development and lead to reductions in poverty among smallholders and agricultural workers, in line with the general FSTP aim of supporting the poorest and most vulnerable groups.

Activities include workshops and sustained training missions (STM). Workshops explain EU SPS standards and can also assist in setting up regional bodies and action plans, provide laboratory training. For STM, experts visit countries where SPS shortcomings have been identified to help authorities and stakeholders to improve matters and complement workshops. The activities are for food safety, animal and plant health and SPS control authorities, as well as for the private sector at large.

BTSF World is sub-divided into six programmes. Three of these are on food safety and plant health, of which one is for African and European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) countries, one is for South and Central America and the Caribbean and one is for Asia and the Pacific. The other three are on animal health and welfare and cover the same three regions.

## *Six distinct programmes*

The animal health and welfare programme in Asia and the Pacific was the first to get started with a workshop on animal disease control in Vietnam in January. This was followed by a workshop on animal welfare in Thailand in March. One more workshop is planned for 2014, with a further two to take place in 2015 and one in 2016, covering various animal health-related topics. The programme also includes 120 working days of STM.



The food safety and plant health programme for African and ENP countries also began in January with a workshop on plant health and plant protection products in Kenya. This was followed in April with an event on the RASFF and TRACES (Trade Control and Expert System) in Senegal. The latter fitted in our relations with the African Union and African RECs to set up pan-African food safety systems. A further workshop is to take place in Morocco in December 2014, with another three planned for 2015, along with 230 days of STM throughout the programme.

The programme on food safety and plant health in South and Central America and the Caribbean began in February with a workshop on fishery products and live bivalve molluscs in Jamaica. Further workshops on the same subject are scheduled to take place in two other countries in the region in 2015. Workshops are also planned on pesticides in the Dominican Republic in November 2014, on risk analysis in Brazil in October 2014, on food hygiene and control and plant health further on. In all, 270 days of STM are foreseen.



In the same region, the animal health and welfare programme kicked off with a workshop on best practices for trade in animals and animal products in Paraguay in March. The event was attended by 58 participants from seven South American countries and particular attention was paid to prevention of foot-and-mouth disease. A further five workshops and 85 days of STM are planned.

The food safety and plant health programme for Asia and the Pacific likewise began in March with a workshop on plant protection products in Thailand. This is to be followed by the EU-China workshop on food risk analysis in Beijing in May. A further five workshops are to take place, the next one being scheduled in Vietnam in June 2014 covering plant health and another one in January 2015 on fishery products in Indonesia. STM are also included, totalling 270 working days.

For the animal health and welfare programme for African and ENP countries, three workshops and 220 days of STM are planned. The workshops will only cover ENP countries, as the EC-financed African Veterinary Governance programme already provides training in this field for sub-Saharan Africa.

Programme on food safety and plant health in South and Central America and the Caribbean <http://www.trainsaferfood.eu/Home.aspx>

Programmes on animal health and welfare in Asia and the Pacific, and food safety and plant health in Africa and ENP countries and in Asia and the Pacific <http://www.foodinfo-europe.com/about>

Programmes on animal health and welfare in Africa and ENP countries and in South and Central America and the Caribbean <http://www.btsftraining.com/>

# EU sanitary and phytosanitary law enforcement training well under way



The programme on EU law enforcement in SPS fields is now well into its stride. It started with a workshop in Prague in October 2013 which introduced topics and methods to be covered during sustained training missions (STMs) and presented the STM programme for the first year.

The programme is mainly for competent authority staff, but industry representatives and other stakeholders can participate where appropriate. It helps Member States to address SPS issues identified during FVO missions so as to meet EU requirements and conveys a common understanding of the role of enforcement in official control systems.

Workshops emphasise the importance of rigorous application of risk-based controls, documented inspection procedures, clear enforcement policy and consistent application of sanctions which escalate in severity where non-compliance persists. Participants also learn how to deploy investigative resources strategically.

STM provide technical assistance tailored to the needs of individual Member States. They support local and regional authorities in developing plans in response to FVO recommendations and in strengthening information tools, documented control procedures and verification mechanisms. They can be requested by Member States or

offered by the Commission to address specific issues.

## *Workshops and missions*



The Prague workshop gave an overview of Member State enforcement of EU law and of FVO country profiles of the 28 Member States. It comprised sessions on risk-based control plans, new EU requirements, recent control developments, risk assessment and consistency in border controls, flexibility afforded by national measures, emergency response, transparency and coordination.

Comparison exercises looked at procedures in different Member States, while simulation exercises covered interpretation and application of technical rules and cases of widespread and serious non-compliance. A panel discussion took place on common procedures and national-level case studies were presented. Participants also performed an action plan evaluation exercise.

This was followed by the first STM, which took place in Italy in December 2013. It focused on animal welfare and included meetings with the central competent authority and a field visit. It also prepared the way for the drafting of guidelines for use by official veterinarians and producers. A follow-up mission is planned to provide training of a more specific nature.

In the programme as a whole, STM are to take place in 8-9 different EU Member States during 2013-15. A second workshop is scheduled to be held in Rome later on during which participants will receive updates on the completed STM and be able to address issues of general concern related to enforcement.

More information: <http://www.btsftraining.com/2014/04/btsf-eu-sps-law-enforcement-2/>

# BTSF database training and operational guideline meeting held in Luxembourg



Two important events took place at the Chafea headquarters in Luxembourg on 19 March. The first was a training session during the morning on the BTSF database which stores all training contract data. This was followed in the afternoon by an information meeting on the operational guidelines for BTSF contract implementation. The events were attended by representatives of 10 organisations implementing BTSF programmes.

The database training began with a general overview of BTSF issues relevant to the database. This was followed by an explanation of the tool, including its aims and advantages, the responsibilities of Chafea and training contractors, and access and navigation issues.

An in-depth tutorial followed on use of the database. This covered getting started and aspects linked to organisation of courses, such as fixing numbers of participants per country, implementation of training sessions, participant and tutor registration and compilation of related lists. Participants performed two simulation exercises, using the database to organise mock training sessions.

The operational guidelines meeting gave an outline of the points laid down in the guidelines and an update on their development. Procedures for invoicing and reporting for the 2012 and 2013 contracts were set out, along with changes made for the 2013 contracts. Reporting on the 2013 contracts was explained in depth and covered types of report, report identification and submission, uploading of reports to the CIRCABC document management platform and e-mail communication.

Participants were shown the new standard format for BTSF Power Point presentations and an explanation was given of how to use it. The online BTSF participant evaluation tool was also presented, together with the general and data exchange principles underpinning its use. Finally, a Q&A session enabled participants to get further insight into the issues discussed.

Dedicated webpage with further information on the two events at which participants can give their feedback  
[http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/food/BTSF-data-base-training-19032014\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/food/BTSF-data-base-training-19032014_en.html)



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and participate to win a BTSF USB key.