SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

UNFSS Regional Briefing Session

24 October 2013
VSS should be viewed as a tool that can be used to advance sustainable production and consumption methods including opportunities.
Sustainability standards are market-driven, better yet consumer-driven. It started in developed economies, rather than in developing countries for a very fundamental reason – they have the money to pay extra.

In most cases, VSS are not food safety based – some addresses other considerations like social aspects.

Highlighted the concern of many Codex members on the proliferation of private food standards as they may act as commercial requirements for market access.
ITC STANDARDS MAP

- ITC is a program and not part of the core UN organization, extra-budgetary funded by donor organizations.
- Technical assistance projects with key objective of trade facilitation, market access and market intelligence.
- ITC as a program has provided support in benchmarking of GAP standards.
national GAPs should address both the commercial context and the non-commercial sustainability aspects, including benefits for

- national food safety strategy;
- agricultural development and rural livelihoods;
- export promotion strategy.
• GAP Schemes are not:
  • All farms should comply with commercial GAP schemes;
  • All countries should define a national GAP
  • Make compliance with national GAP legally mandatory (should be voluntary)
  • All farmers large & small will apply the same GAP now (=everyone or no one strategy)
ThaiGAP and QGAP systems are complementary, depending on the preference of the farmer stakeholders.

Stressed the need for awareness training for smallholders – FOOD SAFETY being the minimum requirement.

QGAP & ThaiGAP standards & certification
- QGAP must be mandatory and enforced by law
- ThaiGAP – have 2 levels depending on the market where the product is intended to be sent.
ASEAN GAP is identified as one of the tools that can be used by the ASEAN Member States (AMSs) to gain market access and promote inter- and extra-ASEAN trade.

- Mentioned the new ASEAN GAP SPA Priority Activities and the vision/activities of the new AADCP Project re: gaining global recognition for the ASEAN GAP.
GLOBALG.A.P is a holistic approach for food safety

More than half of the criteria is related to Food Safety, but some of the elements (environment, workers welfare, traceability) is an indirect correlation with food safety.
The K-Farm GAP Project was basically launched to help smallholder group gain market access considering their limitations in resources.

Based on the experience, the signing of the contract of K-Farm with contract growers signified the very strong commitment in ensuring a ready market for the Carambola farmers.
The GOMA Asia Project results constitute a rich pool of resources that the ASEAN can use and that can be incorporated in their activities in support of the AEC. These results are already calibrated in the ASEAN framework and guidelines.
Developed the following during the 1st Workshop of the Special Task Force in the Philippines

- 2nd draft of the ASEAN Organic Agriculture
- 1st draft of the Strategic Plan of Action for Organic Agriculture
One of the key opportunity for the development of the ASEAN organic standard is its role in the ASEAN Economic Community Integration.

Most member countries are more-oriented towards the lucrative market in Europe and North America with less trading among members, because we have the same conditions and same products. Thus, competition for the same niche market within the region.
Providing funds for the institutionalizing mechanism for regional cooperation

Under Pillar 1 – there is much opportunity in submitting proposals since this support activities related to food safety harmonization. Under this pillar also, capacity building initiatives for formal and informal certification systems (e.g. PGS) are also funded.
SUGGESTIONS:

- To develop / establish a forum between UNFSS and the ASEAN Region to talk about the 3 pillars presented. This can be held back-to-back with the meetings of the Special TFASOA and/or EWG ASEAN GAP.
- To upload in the website the tools developed under the GOMA project, which the ASEAN Member States can use.