

## ***Critical and Emerging issues in Food Safety and Quality-Montenegro***

**Critical issues** are those that are the most pressing ones, and as such need to be addressed and considered as priorities. They can be known issues that are actually present/already occurring or even recurring. They can also be completely new or emerging. With the word “issues” is meant either hazards/challenges or opportunities or even trends that might have an impact on food safety and quality.

**Emerging issues** are those that are new, unexpected, or can cause change in the status quo. Many factors inside and outside the food production system(s) could directly and/or indirectly lead to emerging issues in food safety and quality.

*Examples of “drivers of change” that could lead to emerging issues*

- **Globalization of trade:** Food safety must be considered within a global context that is dynamic and evolving as part of the globalization process: increased international trade, more integrated markets, more rapid adoption of new technologies, increased market concentration, and information transfer, can all have important implications (both positive and negative) in food safety.
- **New distribution channels**  
Increase in online retailers will eventually get to the food retail market; are there any food safety risks that might arise from such a change of the retail market, where the local store might be replaced with automated warehouses and logistics in distributing it to the end consumer?
- **Economic factors:** budgetary pressures on national governments to improve efficiencies and reduce spending on national food safety systems; the ability/ willingness of food enterprises to implement adequate food safety measures; trends in food adulteration and food fraud; fluctuation of food prices. All these, and many other economic factors can impact on food safety at different levels.
- **Climate change:** Climate change, perhaps the most compelling environmental issue of our time, can affect patterns of occurrence of food safety hazards. Indeed international commitment to address environmental issues has a significant impact on agricultural development strategies and on food safety
- **New technologies:** The increasing role of new and emerging technologies in food production, post-harvest treatment, processing, packaging and sanitary treatment is also significant in the context of food safety and more globalised food trade.
- **Scientific progress:** Technical and scientific innovation has multiple impacts on food safety and its management. More sensitive detection methods are providing new tools for investigating and indeed discovering new food safety hazards. Recent advances in food safety related sciences give us a better understanding of food-borne disease, and the role played by some food contaminants in the etiology of some pathologies and disorders.
- **Urbanization:** With the global population growing there is a sustained trend of migration from rural to urban areas. Cities (and surrounding areas) are increasingly becoming places where food is produced (i.e. urban and peri-urban agriculture). This plays an important role in how people procure food, what people eat, the nature of food traded and the interactions among food systems, people and the environment.
- **Regulatory landscape**  
The regulatory landscape is changing with an increased importance on bilateral or multilateral treaties, emergence of private standards etc that can affect the food supply chain.
- **Public attention to food safety:** Increasing public awareness of food safety hazards, concern over hazards to health attributable to food hazards and reduced confidence in the ability of current food supply systems to manage food safety risks are additional factors to be considered in the food safety evolving context. At the same time food insecurity – an extreme manifestation of a large and growing wealth disparity within countries and among countries – remains a pressing global concern with important implications for decision-making on food safety at all levels.

**Please note** that the above are just some examples of drivers and the list is not complete. In responding to question #1 please consider these and any other broad drivers that you think could lead to emerging issues in food safety and quality.

**# 1 -Identification of critical and emerging issues**

Please identify what you believe to be the 3-5 most **critical issues** related to Food Safety and Quality, from **present to the next 2 - 5 years**.

- 1)Globalization of trade
- 2)Economic factors
- 3)Climate change
- 4)New technologies
- 5)Scientific progress

Please identify what you believe to be the 3-5 most important **emerging issues** related to Food Safety and Quality **in the next 2 to 5 years**.

- 1)Globalization of trade
- 2)New distribution channels
- 3)Economic factors
- 4)Public attention to food safety
- 5)Urbanization

**# 2 - For each issue you have identified above please provide a short explanation<sup>1</sup> (1 or 2 paragraphs)**

<p>1) Globalization of trade In the intensive process of Montenegro accession to European Union, implementation of international agreement, standards, protocols, guidelines, and assigning the certification bodies are indicative of the serious efforts under way in Montenegro to ensure food quality and safety. Efforts to bring national standards up to international levels will significantly enhance the competitiveness of agricultural products in the world market. Globalization has complicated management of both infectious and noninfectious foodborne hazards. Increased global trade coupled with weak national food safety institutions and the difficulty of observing or detecting safety attributes of food create basis for consumer fraud. The institutional capacity of industry and governments need to be further developed.</p>	<p>1) Globalization of trade After accession of Montenegro to European Union, food and feed distributed over far greater distances than before, create conditions for widespread outbreaks of food-borne illness. It is also very difficult to track exactly where the produce became contaminated in the food supply chain. Food safety reform is an emerging global need for a risk-based, scientifically supported, integrated farm-to-fork policy.</p>
<p>2) Economic factors Economic and social consequences such as higher medical care costs, reduced productivity, and</p>	<p>2) New distribution channels Institutionsof Montenegro manage risks in an economy of local production and distribution and</p>

<sup>1</sup>In providing a **short explanation** of 1 -2 paragraphs please briefly explain: 1) why you selected that issue (i.e. on what basis - information/data, knowledge or assumption - you made that choice) and 2) the expected and/or actual impacts of the issue (whether the impact would be sector-specific, affect only some sub-populations or countries/regions, whether it would be related to public health or trade etc)

<p>reduction of tourist visits and exports, the latter affecting particularly the rural economy are the consequences of weak food safety control system. Contamination and hazards in food and agricultural products may occur in every stage of the food supply chain, from the field to the table, i.e., production, harvesting, processing, storage and distribution.</p>	<p>provide socially acceptable protection in nationally integrated economy. Systematic way to identify foodborne hazards, assess their criticality, and control weak points where they are most likely to enter a food production system. Opening of borders after the accession may weaken the system of food safety previously concentrated at a national level.</p>
<p>3)Climate change Climate is rapidly changing at a global level, but its effects are also present in Montenegro. Change of precipitations, temperature, duration of seasons and unpredictable extreme weather conditions are beginning to affect producers in Montenegro. Climate change has a negative impact on food security, particularly in developing countries. Climate change may influence the spread or transmission of foodborne pathogens, occurrence of food safety hazards at various stages of the food chain, from primary production through to consumption. Climate change may also affect socio-economic aspects related to food systems such as agriculture, animal production, global trade, demographics and human behaviour which all influence food safety.</p>	<p>3) Economic factors The global agricultural products and food trade provide opportunities for agricultural exporting and importing countries, which is indispensable for the economic development of Montenegro and for improving the living standards of rural populations. By supplying enough foods in the markets, they also offer many benefits to consumers, as it results in a wider variety of high-quality foods that are accessible, affordable and safe, meeting consumer demand. Rapid urbanization is accompanied by a shift from home to commercial food production and processing, leading to a heightened need for training in new food management practices.</p>
<p>4)New technologies Montenegro as a small country with limited human and technological capacities is challenged with fast growing trends in scientific development in food testing and food safety. Intensive training and introduction of new technologies is limited to a small number of staff. Montenegro often relies on neighbouring countries, requiring additional funds for transport, proper handling of samples for laboratory testing.</p>	<p>4)Public attention to food safety Increased public interest on food consumed will put additional pressure and require deeper and more comprehensive approach to food safety education and public awareness. Montenegro as a small country may benefit from local food outlets such as farmers' markets, improved access to healthful food and increase consumption of fruits and vegetables. Food safety incidents often become known to the general public after a damaging breakout.</p>
<p>5)Scientific progress Majority of companies in Montenegro is classified as small or medium in the field of food production. Keeping up with emerging trends in food production, processing and control is limited, leading to lack of competitiveness of small producers of Montenegro.</p>	<p>5)Urbanization Urbanisation may lead to decreased competitiveness of small, local producers, increased poverty rate due to low absorption capacities of cities. Expansion means that more food has to be transported in urban areas leading to increased pressure to rural areas.</p>