



The Fish Inspector

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GENERAL

IAFI: World Congress 2009

Preparations are underway for a grand *World Seafood Congress 2009* scheduled to be held in Agadir, Morocco, from 5 – 10th October 2009.

The main topics of the Congress will be: Challenges for industry and governments, Integrity in seafood supply, Trade regulations, Standards and certification, Innovations in seafood safety and quality, The Great Debate – Ecolabelling.

The participants will benefit much from the opportunity to network with key decision makers from 50-70 countries from all over the world. The event will showcase the Moroccan seafood industry and tourism; hear first hand about the issues affecting your trade with EU, North America, Asia, and other important seafood markets; discover opportunities for improving your business.

The *IAFI World Seafood Congress* website will be updated by mid May with all the new information including the Flight/Hotel package arrangements with *Royal Atlas Hotels/ Royal Air Maroc* and the planned Congress program. So please register early at www.worldseafoodcongress.org

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IAFI: Visit of IAFI Directors to Agadir

Following the European Seafood Exposition in Brussels, IAFI Directors Christopher Leftwich and Roy Palmer, visited Morocco to have discussions with all the major organisations involved in the *IAFI World Seafood Congress (WSC)*, and to see the facilities first hand. They found the venue for the Congress, the *Royal Atlas Hotel* in Agadir, to be a world class hotel with all the facilities that you would expect of a 5-star hotel. The hotel has been in operation for approximately 2 years and enjoys a superb beach setting with a 5 km promenade.

IAFI Directors felt that *“There is a friendly spirit and excellent support from the local seafood people, particularly from the Moroccan Government. The mix of Moroccan tradition and European style, highlights that this is the ‘corridor’ to Africa. There are also strong connections with the Arabic seafood world”*.



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In a presentation to the Moroccan organisations in Agadir, Roy and Christopher thanked them all for their support and highlighted that IAFI welcomed the opportunity to hold the WSC in Africa for the first time, and paid credit to their long term supporters from this important developing continent as well as the backing from Morocco, especially through the *Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fisheries* and the *Department of Maritime Fisheries* and their staff.

Source: Note of Press, IAFI, 11 May 2009

International Conference on Molluscan Seafood Safety

The *Seventh International Conference on Molluscan Seafood Safety* will be held in Nantes, France from 14-19 June 2009. Conference topics will include epidemiology, risk assessment, toxin monitoring, analytical methods in microbiology and biochemistry, consumer health protection, management of farming/harvesting areas, post-harvest treatment, and the macro-economic analysis of repercussions of shellfish-farming crises.

The conference will also address the identification of chemical contaminants and target species representing significant risks to consumers. It will also look into areas for improvement in the development of high performance detection tools to prevent and/or monitor contamination, and will thereby contribute to support existing marine environmental monitoring networks. General information on the conference is available in the conference web site, www.icmss09.com

Post-graduate Certificate in Quality Management Courses - Canada

The Marine Institute of Memorial University offers several courses in Quality Management/ Quality Assurance/ Food Law/ Food Management System during September 2009. All courses are web-based. Detailed information may be found on the Marine Institute homepage at <http://www.mi.mun.ca/QM/> or e-mail Elaine.Kennedy@mi.mun.ca

AFRICAN NEWS

FAO Regional Workshop on SPS and market access issues in Dakar, Senegal

FAO is implementing the project STDF 134, Capacity building to enhance fish trade performance in selected African countries since June 2008. The countries involved are Benin, Gambia, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone. The current status, strengths and weaknesses of the Competent Authority for fish inspection in these countries was assessed by National Consultants and the Regional Consultant. Following these assessments, a Regional Workshop was held in Dakar, Senegal during March 16-21, 2009. The objective was to train trainers from these five countries on SPS issues, risk assessment and management, HACCP implementation and harmonization of fish inspection services with International Market requirements. Dr. Henri Loreal, Dr. Paolo Manzoni, Dr. Amadou Tall, Dr. Iddya Karunasagar (FIU) Dr. Alhaji Jallow (FAO RAF) and Dr. P.N. Keita served as resource persons. 35 participants from Competent Authority and fish processing industry, representatives from INFOPECHE, took part in the Workshop that included field visits, lectures and practical interactive sessions. Plan for organizing National Workshops in each of the five countries was finalized during the Regional Workshop.

Ghana: Report of EU Inspection mission

The Final report of the EU (*Food and Veterinary Office of DG SANCO*) official mission to Ghana in October 2008, regarding health conditions for the EC imports of fish and fishery products is now available on the Internet. The report identifies several shortcomings; there was no significant improvement in official controls since the previous EU mission in 2005. Several approved establishments were found to be non-compliant in terms of hygiene conditions, but had not been refused export certification. The report also notes that non-equivalent test methods were used for histamine testing, while laboratories were not accredited. The mission concluded that standards could

not always be considered equivalent, and the Commission required the submission of an action plan to address the deficiencies identified.

Source: *FishFiles Lite, MEGAPESCA* April 2009 quoting the “*Final report of a mission carried out in Ghana from 13-18 Oct*, DG (SANCO)/ 2008-7659 – MR – FINAL.

http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/ir_search_en.cfm?stype=insp_nbr&showResults=Y&REP_INSPECTION_REF=7659/2008

Namibia: Training course for small-scale farmers

INFOSA concluded a national course on freshwater aquaculture for 40 participants ranging from co-operative members, technicians and extension agents from different aquaculture regions of Namibia. The course was conducted in collaboration with the *Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources of Namibia* and was held at the *Kamutjonga Inland Fisheries Institute* in Kavango Region, Northern Namibia. The training course included lessons on quality assurance and processing standards by Dr. (Ms.) Luisa Arthur, Quality assurance Officer, INFOPECSA. It also included some practical activities such as processing of fish, hygiene and sanitation practices at small scale fish farm facilities were also showcased.

Source: INFOFISH *International* 1/2009: 72.

NEWS FROM ARAB COUNTRIES

Algeria: Results of EU Inspection Mission

The report of the official EU inspection mission to Algeria during January 2009 is now available in the webpage of DG SANCO. The mission found that the structures of the shore based establishments were satisfactory, but the system of official controls showed significant non-compliances. These included lack of a legal requirement for HACCP, lack of histamine controls, no inspection or control of supplying vessels, non-conformities in processing facilities and ice plants, and laboratories not accredited to ISO 17025. The FVO made recommendations that these be addressed in an action plan to be submitted by the Competent Authority.

Source: *FishFiles Lite, MEGAPESCA* April 2009 quoting “*Final report of a mission carried out in Algeria from 20-28 Jan 2009*, DG (SANCO)/ 2009-8033 – MR – FINAL (in French)”

ASIAN NEWS

FAO-NACA Regional Workshop on Market chains and biosecurity issues associated with low valued aquacultured fish in Asia:

Low value freshwater fish (carps, catfish), which provide livelihood opportunities and contribute to nutritional security of poorer section of society, has received very little attention for improving biosecurity of the production systems. People in some of the developing countries in Asia like Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia are heavily dependant on low value cultured fish. For example, aquaculture production in Myanmar showed an annual percentage growth rate of 45.1 during 2002-2004. Freshwater aquaculture in Lower Mekong Basin including regions of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand increased more than fourfold during 1990-2000. However, one of the major public health problems associated with these freshwater fish is trematode infections. To address the biosecurity issues associated with these fish, a Regional Workshop was held in Siem Ream, Cambodia during February 23-26, 2009. Twenty five participants from 9 countries in the region participated. Prevalence of fishborne trematodes in different countries in Asia, methods for detection of trematodes, lessons learnt from experience of different countries in managing the problem, strategies to strengthen biosecurity and address shortcomings in the present control measures were discussed during the workshop.

Malaysia: Malaysia to resume seafood exports to the EU

In June last year Malaysia voluntarily halted its seafood exports to the E.U. to avoid an outright ban. However, according to the European Commission ambassador to Malaysia Vincent Picket, the March visit to Malaysia by an E.U. inspection team has led to EU granting clearance for the resumption of Malaysian exports. He also has said that the E.U. worked closely with Malaysian authorities to implement measures to address food safety management and hygiene issues, in order to allow trade to resume. With the E.U.'s decision, which was effective from May 14, six out of 46 Malaysian processing companies that were suspended last year have resumed exports, Malaysian Health Minister Liow Tiong Lai has said. The EU hopes to clear the other 40 companies by early next year. The E.U. is the largest importer of Malaysian seafood. Malaysia's frozen seafood exports to the E.U. are reported to be worth about MYR600 million (\$169 million) annually.

Source: INFOFISH. Email: infish@po.jaring.my

Cambodia: FAO Fish Sauce Workshop

FAO jointly with Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia, (MAFF) and INFOFISH will conduct a Fish Sauce Stakeholder Workshop in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 20&21 July 2009. The workshop will examine the industry status in the major fish sauce producing nations in the region with special focus on quality and safety issues, including improved handling practises. The workshop would also include discussions on additives, related laboratory analytical techniques and inspection and quality/ safety control procedures to be adopted. The workshop is also expected to promote networking and regional cooperation among fish sauce industry stakeholders in the region.

Source: Dr Karunasagar Iddya, Fish Utilisation and Marketing Service, FAO. Email: Iddya.Karunasagar@fao.org

EUROPEAN NEWS

FAO-CIHEAM Training Course on Seafood Safety Management based on Risk analysis

This training course was conducted at CIHEAM, the International Agronomic Institute, Zaragoza, Spain during January 19-23, 2009 for 30 participants from 14 countries in the Mediterranean region, west Africa and far east. The Course had a range of topics starting from introduction to risk analysis, international regulations, Codex Alimentarius, risk analysis tools, case studies in both microbiological and chemical area, risk management at national level, industry level and risk communication. In addition to lectures, the participants in three Working Groups went through risk analysis process for *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* in oysters using data from their own countries. All the selected participants were asked to come with some data from their counties on shellfish handling practices and on the relation between *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* and shellfish consumption. Though data available from the countries were limited, the participants could analyse the shellfish handling practices in different countries and the application of FAO/WHO risk assessment model to data from different countries. With limited data, they could do qualitative risk assessment and also use the semi-quantitative risk assessment tool, Risk Ranger.

European Union: Inspection programme for 2009

The *Food and Veterinary Office of DG SANCO* has published its programme of inspections for 2009. Inspection missions in relation to fishery products will be conducted in Algeria, Benin, Cape Verde, China, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Gabon, Guinea, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Libya, Mauritius, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Albania, Japan, Morocco, and Peru. In relation to live bivalve molluscs, missions will be undertaken to Canada, Greenland, United States, Uruguay, and Vietnam.

European Union: EFSA and marine biotoxins

At the request of the European Commission, the *European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain* gave a scientific opinion on the safety aspects of saxitoxin group of marine biotoxins in bivalve shellfish, which causes paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) in humans. The panel proposes different toxicity equivalency factors for different toxins. Although assessment of acute toxicity should be based on portion size rather than a long-term average consumption, the study found that it was not possible to obtain a reliable and representative estimation of dietary exposure to STX-group of toxins. It also considered that both the mouse bioassay (MBA) and the Association of Official Analytical Chemists (AOAC) HPLC method (so-called Lawrence method) of testing should continue to be used for official testing, but also noted that the LC-MS-MS method also had potential, once validated.

Source: *FishFiles Lite*, MEGAPESCA April 2009

Denmark: Workshop on prediction of food safety

A workshop on prediction of seafood safety and quality will be held on 15 September 2009 at DTU Aqua in Lyngby, Denmark. The workshop programme and related information is available on the SSSP homepage (<http://sssp.dtuqua.dk/>). This workshop is organized in relation to the 3rd *Trans-Atlantic Fisheries Technology Conference (TAFT 2009)* that takes place in Copenhagen from 16-18 September (see www.taft2009.org).

Key aspects of the workshop include: (1) Prediction of product characteristics and storage conditions that prevent growth of *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat seafood and the relevance of this in relation to EU regulations and new codex guidelines (EC 1441/2007; ALINORM 09/32/13), (2) Prediction of histamine formation in seafood, and (3) Shelf-life of seafood under variable storage temperatures. A new version of the Seafood Spoilage and Safety Predictor (SSSP) software will be used for this workshop.

Source: Dr. Paw Dalgaard, National Institute of Aquatic Resources (DTU Aqua), Technical University of Denmark, Lyngby, Denmark, e-mail: pad@aqu.dtu.dk, phone office: +45-45252566.

Italy: Human illness due to *Opisthorchis felineus*

Opisthorchis felineus is a trematode that is transmitted to humans through the consumption of raw freshwater fish of the family Cyprinidae (carps). Worldwide, the number of cases of human infection has been estimated to be 1.2 million. A high prevalence has been reported in Byelorussia, Russia, and the Ukraine.

In Italy, for over 100 years the infection with *O. felineus* was not detected or reported in animals and humans and no one investigated this pathogen. With regard to human infection, recent cases were reported in 2003, 2005 and 2007 when 3 outbreaks of opisthorchiasis occurred after consumption of fish from Lake Trasimeno and Lake Bolsena. The recent outbreaks were associated to consumption of marinated tench (*Tinca tinca*) fillets. Raw fish has become more popular in Italy in recent years, and the reported outbreaks reflect this change in eating habits. After the most recent outbreak, the local health service informed restaurant owners, fishermen, and the population in the areas of Lakes Bolsena and Trasimeno about the risks related to eating raw fish.

Source: "Human illness caused by *Opisthorchis felineus* flukes, Italy" by Armignacco et al, *Emerging Infectious Diseases* (www.cdc.gov/eid), 14 (12), Dec 2008: 1902-1905.

Russia: Results of EU inspection mission

The Report of the official EU (*Food and Veterinary Office of DG SANCO*) inspection mission to Russia in June 2008, with regard to meeting the conditions for supply of fishery products to the EU market is now available in the Internet. The mission found that although the Competent Authority (the *Federal Service of Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance*) had strengthened the official controls,

there were still longstanding deficiencies in place with regard to follow up of deficiencies and enforcement plans, insufficient monitoring of contaminants, testing for histamine in non-accredited laboratories, and certification of fishery products by officers who have no means to verify the data being certified. The mission concluded that the Competent Authority was not in a position to guarantee conditions at least equivalent to those defined in the EC regulations and was required to submit a plan of corrective actions.

Source: *FishFiles Lite*, MEGAPESCA April 2009 quoting the “*Final report of a mission carried out in Russia from 16-27 Jun*”, DG (SANCO)/ 2008-7673 – MR – FINAL.

LATIN AMERICAN NEWS

INFOPECSA: Workshops on domestic markets

FAO's project TCP/RLA/311 (*Improvement of the domestic markets for fish and fishery products in Latin America and the Caribbean*) is currently being executed in several countries in the region. The main objective is to promote the domestic and regional consumption of fish and seafood. The scheduled activities of the project included workshops for those directly involved in the trading of fish (fish sellers and distributors), and others involved in the chain. So far, workshops were held in Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Dominican Republic. More details on the project may be obtained from Dr. Nelson, Avdalov, Project Director, INFOPECSA, Montevideo, Uruguay, E-mail: nelson.avdalov@infopesca.org

NORTH AMERICAN NEWS

USA: Short course on shrimp pathology

The *University of Arizona Department of Veterinary Science and Microbiology*, in cooperation with the *USDA Marine Shrimp Farming Programme*, offers a short course on shrimp pathology from 1-2 June 2009. The course, entitled “*Disease Diagnosis and Control in Marine Shrimp Culture*” will be conducted by Dr. Donald Lightner and his colleagues from the *Aquaculture Pathology Laboratory* at the *University of Arizona*. The intensive course consists of comprehensive lectures and practical laboratory training that is focused on current methods used to diagnose, prevent and treat the principal diseases of cultured penaeid shrimp. For more information, contact Rita Redman or Dr Donald Lightner Tel: 1 520 6218414, Fax: 1 520 6214899, E-mail: ritar@email.arizona.edu or dvl@email.arizona.edu

Source: INFOFISH *International* 1/2009: 23.

SOUTH PACIFIC NEWS

New Zealand: *Pangasius* import risk analysis

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry prepared an *Import Risk Analysis on frozen, skinless and boneless fillet meat of Pangasius spp. fish from Vietnam for human consumption*. The document, published in March 2008, has 70 pages, and is science-based and quite comprehensive, being a model to be followed in similar cases. It can be obtained from Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Pastoral House, 25 The Terrace, PO Box 2526, Wellington, New Zealand, Tel: +64 4 4744100, Fax: +64 4 4744133, Internet: <http://www.maf.govt.nz>

PUBLICATIONS

EU: WHAT'S NEW on the website of DG for Health and Consumers

Subscribe with sanco-news@ec.europa.eu to regularly receive *WHAT'S NEW on the website of DG for Health and Consumers* to be acquainted with the latest food safety news, Food and Veterinary Inspection Reports, Rapid Food Alerts Systems and much more.

FAO/WHO: Guidelines for Microbiological Hazards in Foods

Exposure assessment of microbiological hazards in food – Guidelines is a new publication of JEMRA: *The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meetings on Microbiological Risk Assessment*. These guidelines on exposure assessment are part of a series of guidelines on microbiological risk assessment that were developed by joint expert meetings between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The guidelines aim to provide a practical framework and approach for undertaking exposure assessment of microbiological hazards in foods, in the context of a risk assessment or as a stand-alone process. The document has 102 pages and was published as Number 7 in the WHO-FAO *Microbiological Risk Assessment Series*, 2008: http://www.fao.org/ag/agn/agns/jemra/MRA%207_FAO.pdf.

Shellfish safety and quality

This new book, edited by Dr. S Shumway, is a collection of review papers that discusses issues of current interest and outlines steps that can be taken by the shellfish industry to improve shellfish safety and eating quality. Opening chapters provide an overview of the key issues associated with microbial and biotoxin contamination. Parts two and three address in more detail methods to improve molluscan shellfish and crustacean quality, and safety. Chapters focus on detection of algal toxins, monitoring and mitigation of the effects of harmful algal blooms, metals and organic contaminants, biofouling, disease control and selective breeding. Part IV reviews legislation, regulation, public confidence in shellfish and risk management. Chapters on post-harvest issues, such as depuration, storage and packaging complete the volume. The book has 500 pages and is published by Woodhead Publishing Limited, Cambridge, UK web: www.woodheadpublishing.com

The next issue of THE FISH INSPECTOR will be distributed in August 2009. Please forward any information you may wish to have disseminated through this newsletter to: Mr C A Lima dos Santos, Rua Cel. Eurico Gomes de Sousa 510 Cob 01, Jardim Oceanico – Barra da Tijuca, 22620-320 Rio de Janeiro, RJ – BRASIL, Tel: +55 21 2491-0704; E-mail: dossantoscarlos@globo.com

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