

REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM ON Managing Food Safety Along the Food Supply Chain

Dates: October 19–23, 2020

Location: Mekong Institute Residential Training Center, Khon Kaen, Thailand with Structured Learning Visits to agro-processing firms in northeast Thailand

RATIONALE

Food safety has gradually become a major socioeconomic and political concern in many developing countries. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations suggests that food security “exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.” Some experts argue that enabling access to safe food should be major component in global and local initiatives addressing food security.

Exponential population growth, increasing rates of poverty and hunger, climate change and environmental degradation pose threats to food security. Technological advances in food and non-food production—while providing benefits—can also pose threats to human health and safety. The basic question now is whether the food on our table is safe and of good quality.

Because of growing concerns on food safety, many international organizations and national governments have been devising mechanisms to ensure the safety of food products that are available in the market. However, low public awareness on food safety renders producers—often small-scale enterprises—as well as consumers complacent in adopting safe food practices. Othman, in his 2014 paper titled *Food Safety in Southeast Asia: Challenges Facing the Region*, highlighted that “food safety can no longer be the luxury of the rich since all people should have the right to an adequate supply of safe and nutritious food.” With this comes a growing recognition of the importance of raising public awareness on proper food handling across the farm-to-table spectrum.

In line with this, Mekong Institute will organize the **Regional Training Program on Managing Food Safety Along the Food Supply Chain** from October 19–23, 2020 in Khon Kaen, Thailand. This safe food course targets to bring together postgraduate degree students from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam (CLMV) currently studying in Thailand to attend a five-day program to be delivered by regional food safety experts. Full training scholarships, which will cover the training fees as well as travel and accommodation expenses, will be provided to more than 20 master’s and doctoral degree CLMV students.

For more information about the program, please contact **Mr. Dwight Jason Ronan**, Program Coordinator (dwight@mekonginstitute.org or +66-4320-2441 ext. 3104).

OBJECTIVES

The regional training program is designed to raise the awareness of CLMV food safety professionals on emerging safe food issues and concerns by providing a platform for mutual exchange of knowledge, experience, and skills.

Specifically, the course aims to:

- Enhance participants' understanding of food safety and compare country experiences in managing food safety in the region;
- Discuss the various international commitments and standards on food safety;
- Explain the various food safety risk management tools and best practices;
- Highlight the importance of food hygiene and sanitation; and
- Introduce innovative risk communication and consumer engagement strategies that can be employed to further promote food safety awareness in the region.

COURSE CONTENTS

Topics to be covered include:

- Basic food safety concepts;
- Prominent food safety issues in CLMV;
- Best practices in food safety governance;
- Food safety management tools;
- Food safety risk management case studies;
- Managing food incidents and traceability;
- Legal frameworks governing food hygiene and sanitation; and
- Concepts and tools in food safety risk communication.

The program will include lectures, group discussions, paper or poster presentations, and field visits.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Master's and doctoral degree students from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam studying food safety or related field of studies (e.g., food science and technology, food engineering, public health and nutrition, agriculture, rural development and economics, etc.) are welcome to apply. All sessions will be delivered in English.

Due to restrictions on international travel during this period, only **those currently studying and residing in Thailand** will be invited to participate in this program. Selected participants must be able to travel to Khon Kaen before and after the course and commit to attend all activities during the training duration.

Selected applicants will be provided with full training scholarship, which will cover training fees, roundtrip economy ticket, accommodation, and daily allowances. Please download the application form and send your full information to dwright@mekonginstitute.org

Deadline of application is **September 15, 2020**.