

FPTCFSP PROTOCOL ON INFORMATION-SHARING AND COLLABORATION ON FOOD SAFETY POLICY MATTERS

Introduction

1. Policies and programs to protect Canadians against food borne health risks, and to promote the safety of food, are a shared responsibility of Federal/Provincial and Territorial government authorities.
2. As such, the protection of Canadians from food borne health risks requires effective, ongoing information-sharing among F/P/T food safety partners, and collaboration and coordination in developing and implementing policies.
3. This Protocol of the F/P/T Committee on Food Safety Policy (FPTCFSP) aims to promote information-sharing, and collaboration and coordination to help the F/P/T food safety partners protect and promote the health of Canadians.

Commitments of All Partners

4. Each F/P/T food safety partner is committed to making reasonable efforts to inform other partners about food safety policy development within their jurisdiction, and about policy initiatives in their jurisdiction which may help all partners identify and manage risks, or might positively or adversely effect their ability to do so.
5. Each F/P/T partner agrees to provide reasonable opportunities for other partners to contribute to policy development within their jurisdiction, particularly on matters that may have impacts beyond their jurisdiction.
6. F/P/T partners agree that the FPTCFSP is the primary forum for promoting information-sharing and joint collaboration on food safety policy matters. As possible, partners will use the committee to share information, to contribute to national policy development, and to coordinate their collaborative efforts.

Health Canada Commitments

7. Health Canada, through the Food Directorate, is committed to collaborating with all F/P/T partners in managing food borne risks to Canadians. Specifically, it recognises that:
 - i. Provincial and Territorial food safety partners have a right to be informed about,

and to contribute to, policy deliberations at the Federal level related to food safety.

- ii. Provincial and Territorial food safety partners have a right, at their discretion, to contribute to policy deliberations at the Federal level as individual jurisdictions, and/or collectively via the FPTCFSP.
 - iii. The participation opportunities afforded to Provincial and Territorial food safety partners in policy deliberations at the Federal level will, at minimum, reflect the requirements specified in relevant Federal policies, including the Federal Regulatory Policy, the Health Canada Decision-Making Framework, and Health Canada policies on consultations.
8. The Food Directorate of Health Canada is responsible for providing P/T food safety partners with information about policy development taking place at the Federal level related to food safety, and for facilitating their participation in policy deliberations through appropriate mechanisms.
 9. In meeting this responsibility, the Food Directorate will ensure that information provided to P/T food safety partners, directly and via the FPTCFSP, is accurate, is provided as early as possible in any deliberative process, and is sufficient to support informed and meaningful participation in policy deliberations.
 10. The Food Directorate will liaise with P/T food safety partners, and with program managers within Health Canada and elsewhere in the Federal Government, to promote and facilitate participation opportunities for P/T food safety partners in deliberations on food policy at the Federal level.

Implementation

11. Health Canada and its F/P/T partners in food safety on the FPTCFSP are jointly responsible for the implementation of this Protocol, as per Appendix A which outlines the Implementation Procedures.

Approved by: Members of the FPTCFSP
Date: February 5, 2001

APPENDIX A: IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

1. The Health Canada Food Directorate will table a “Food Safety Policy Development Report” before each meeting of the FPTCFSP listing emerging or ongoing policy development within the federal government on food safety matters, and indicating the stage in the Decision-Making Framework of each policy development, and describing how F/P/T partners may contribute to deliberations in a timely and effective manner.
2. P/T food safety partners will, in a timely manner, via the FPTCFSP meetings, and via the Food Directorate and its web site referred to below, inform its food safety partners of relevant issues, and policy developments, in their jurisdiction which may impact on other partners, or which may help other partners identify and manage food borne health risks. This information will be included by the Food Directorate in the “Food Safety Policy Development Report” tabled at each meeting of the FPTCFSP.
3. The Food Directorate will establish a secure web site accessible to F/P/T partners which will:
 - i. Provide comprehensive and up-to-date information about new and ongoing policy developments and deliberations at the Federal level of possible interest to the partners, as well as information about opportunities for participation in these deliberations;
 - ii. Allow F/P/T partners to post, or to arrange to have posted, information about issues and policy initiatives in their jurisdiction which may be of interest to other partners;
 - iii. Offer F/P/T members email notification of all new information on the web site as it is posted; and
 - iv. Provide access to records of the FPTCFSP deliberations, such as meeting minutes, and key reports.
4. F/P/T partners will, at each meeting of the FPTCFSP, collectively confirm or identify policy development initiatives at the Federal level which are of priority interest to the committee as a whole, and identify committee members to contribute on behalf of the committee to the policy development process. The Food Directorate will subsequently liaise with these members to facilitate appropriate participation in these deliberations.

5. P/T food safety partners will, as individual jurisdictions, inform the Food Directorate of policy initiatives at the Federal level which are not identified by FPTCFSP as being priorities for the committee, but which are of priority interest to them, so that the Food Directorate can assist them in obtaining the information and support needed to participate in a timely and effective manner in these deliberations.