



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

The Future of Food Safety - Transforming knowledge into action for people, economies and the environment

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12-13 February 2019
Geneva, Switzerland, 23-24 April 2019**

The Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) presents his compliments to Member States and has the honour to invite their participation in two complementary international food safety events organized by the FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO) in close collaboration with the African Union Commission and the World Trade Organization under the theme **“The Future of Food Safety - Transforming knowledge into action for people, economies and the environment”**.

Despite a growing recognition of the fundamental role food safety plays in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the main objectives of the UN Decade on Action on Nutrition, efforts to strengthen capacities for food safety remain fragmented and the gains, particularly in many developing countries, have been well below expectations. Adding to this challenge are the impacts of climate variations and extremes, new technologies, as well as evolving food production and supply systems. The safety of food sources depends on our collective ability to anticipate and be prepared for the future challenges. The priority issues identified by this Conference and its call for concerted, multi-sectoral actions will reinforce global collaboration and help ensure that no one is left behind.

The opening event, **“The First FAO/WHO/AU International Conference on Food Safety”**, to be held on 12-13 February 2019 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, organized in collaboration with the African Union Commission will engage around 600 participants and will include a Ministerial segment. . The objective is to raise awareness, discuss and identify key actions and strategies to address current and future challenges to food safety emerging globally and to strengthen commitment at the highest political level to scale up food safety in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with significant contribution to several UN Sustainable Development Goals (2, 3, 8, 12, 13 and 17) and to UN Decade on Action on Nutrition.

The concluding event, **“The FAO/WHO/WTO International Forum on Food Safety and Trade”**, to be held on 23-24 April 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland, in collaboration with the World Trade Organization, will address trade-related aspects and challenges of food safety.

The meetings will engage participants representing various sectors in governments with relevance for food safety, including food and agriculture, health and trade at the level of ministers and senior policy makers. Representatives from the United Nations and other international and regional agencies, development partners as well as representatives of non-State actors representing food producers, consumers, research and academia are encouraged to participate.

Invitations for nomination of representatives from the health sector have been sent by WHO to Ministries of Health.

Member States are requested to designate at least two senior policy makers with responsibility for food safety along the food chain to ensure adequate participation in each of the events. Participants may include Heads of National Food Safety Authorities, senior officials from Ministries of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries with responsibilities relevant to food safety.

Member countries are kindly requested to facilitate the nomination of delegates by providing names, positions and contact information (E-mail and telephone number) of the nominated delegates to the two events:

a) The First FAO/WHO/AU International Conference on Food Safety, 12-13 February 2019; and/or

b) The FAO/WHO/WTO International Forum on Food Safety and Trade, 23-24 April 2019.

The nomination letters shall be sent by email to food-quality@fao.org at your earliest convenience, but not later than **30 November 2018**. Further information can be obtained from (<http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/future-food-safety>).

The Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations takes this opportunity to renew to Member States the assurance of his highest consideration.

ROME, 7 November 2018