



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

WORLD TRADE  
ORGANIZATION



# THE FUTURE OF FOOD SAFETY

Transforming knowledge into action  
for people, economies and  
the environment

Ongoing changes in climate, global food production and supply systems affect consumers, industry and the planet itself. These changes can have an impact on food safety systems and pose sustainability and development challenges. This is a pivotal moment demanding urgent reflection on actions needed to bolster food safety - the impetus for the two international meetings.

At the **Addis Ababa Conference**, priorities will be discussed so that food safety strategies and approaches can be aligned across sectors and borders, reinforcing efforts to reach the Sustainable

Development Goals and supporting the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition.

The **Geneva Forum** will address the trade-related aspects and challenges of food safety.

The two meetings will result in a high-level political statement advocating for increased and better coordinated collaboration and support to improve food safety globally.

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**ADDIS ABABA, 12-13 February 2019**

The First FAO/WHO/AU  
International Food Safety Conference

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**GENEVA, 23-24 April 2019**

The FAO/WHO/WTO International Forum on  
Food Safety and Trade

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With an estimated 600 million cases of foodborne illnesses annually, unsafe food is a threat to human health and economies, disproportionately affecting vulnerable and marginalized people, especially women and children, populations affected by conflict and migrants.



## OBJECTIVES:

Identify **key actions** and **strategies** to address current and future challenges to food safety globally.

**Strengthen commitment** at the highest political level to scale up food safety in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

# THE FUTURE OF FOOD SAFETY

## THE MEETINGS ARE MOTIVATED BY ISSUES CONCERNING:

### PEOPLE

- More than 600 million people fall ill and 420 000 die every year as a result of eating food contaminated with bacteria, viruses, parasites, toxins and chemicals.
- Investment in consumer food safety education has the potential to reduce foodborne disease and return savings of up to ten-fold for each dollar invested.
- As growing urbanization, changing purchasing power and new systems of marketing alter food access and consumption patterns, consumers need to be empowered to make nutritious and safe food choices.

### ECONOMIES

- Recent estimates indicate that the impact of unsafe food costs low- and middle-income economies around US\$ 95 billion in lost productivity each year.
- Food safety is a critical enabler for market access and productivity, which drives economic development and poverty alleviation, especially in rural areas.
- By 2050, two out of three people will live in megacities (10 million residents or more): adequate investment is needed to address challenges with food distribution, sanitation and hygiene, food waste and water scarcity.

### THE ENVIRONMENT

- Climate change is associated with altered geographic occurrence and prevalence of food safety hazards, leading to changed patterns of pathogens and mycotoxins, marine biotoxins and heavy metals (e.g. cadmium, mercury) contaminating food.
- Improving hygiene practices in the food and agricultural sectors helps to reduce the emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistance along the food chain and in the environment.

## FORMAT AND THEMES

Strategic actions will be defined through Ministerial panels involving Health, Trade and Agriculture officials and expert thematic sessions will cover:

- the burden of foodborne diseases and the benefits of investing in safe food;
- safe and sustainable food systems in an era of accelerated climate change;
- science, innovation and digital transformation at the service of food safety;
- empowering consumers to make healthy choices and support sustainable food systems.

## PARTICIPANTS

- Ministers from relevant sectors (Agriculture/Fishery, Health, Food Security, Tourism and Trade) and representatives of national governments from all regions of the world;
- Delegations from regulatory bodies, UN organizations, development agencies, regional economic bodies;
- Non-State actors: consumers and producers groups, civil society, academic and research institutions and private sector entities.

## CONTACTS

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