

Taiwan-Peru-New Zealand Hosts 2016 APEC Conference on Minimizing Retailer and Consumer Food Losses and Wastes

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The Taiwan-Peru-New Zealand joint hosting of the 2016 APEC Conference on Minimizing Retailer and Consumer Food Losses and Wastes on September 22 has raised a high attention among APEC member countries. The successful close of this conference will propose several related issues as future government references. This conference makes a great contribution to the food security in the Asia-Pacific region.

Council of Agriculture (COA) said that Taiwan has already successfully applied the APEC multi-year project of “APEC Strengthening Private-public Partnership to Reduce Food Losses in Supply Chain” in 2013. The conference topic on Minimizing Retailer and Consumer Food Losses and Wastes was jointly hosted by Taiwan, Peru, and New Zealand, which was one of the fourth year activities in this project. There were over 13 professional lecturers from the public and private sectors of New Zealand, Canada, Holland, Japan, the US, the Philippines, Peru, and Taiwan. More than 50 people participated in this conference, represented by 16 APEC member countries, World Bank, and APEC Secretary Office. This conference shared the outcomes of “2016 APEC Professional Consultation Meeting of Retailers and Consumers’ Food Losses and Wastes Problem” held in Taipei on July 18 and 19 which was hosted by Taiwan. In addition, participants discussed the current status and evaluation methods of retailer and consumer food losses and wastes in the Asia Pacific region, looking for the best practices out of the private and public sectors to resolve the problem food losses and wastes.

According to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) research, as high as 1.3 billion metric tons of food, or one-third of annual global food production, get lost and wasted every year. Particularly, the food losses and wastes occur at the end of supply chain, in retails and consumers, which might account for 46% or 0.6 billion metric tons of food losses and wastes. The Council of Agriculture (COA) pointed out a lot of negative impacts out of food losses and wastes, especially 26% in APEC regions, or 0.67 billion metric tons, while 40% (0.267 billion metric tons) is attributed to the end of the supply chain, which comprise of retailers or consumers. Such huge amount of food losses and wastes can fully supply a whole year of food to people living below-poverty-line which is estimated to be around 800 million people living in the APEC areas. Therefore, it is utmost important to initiate food security policy by reducing food losses and wastes from end users’ hands.

COA emphasized the importance of this conference in achieving the goal of exchange professional and practical information in dealing with APEC region retailers and consumers’ food waste problem in coordination with Peru and New Zealand. According to Taiwan-led multi-year project, the research shows that if 10% of food losses occur in APEC member countries, the total social welfare can be increased by US\$14.3 billion. The effort on 10% reduction of food losses can then make a great achievement in reducing food prices and promote regional food security. The conference provided private-public partnership

experiences to each participating country and raised the attention level of APEC in resolving the problem of food losses and wastes in order to promote food security in the region. The dialogues between professional experts and national policymakers in this meeting will further strengthen the private-public partnership in reducing food losses and wastes to enhance food security, evaluation efficiency, and social welfare in the Asia-Pacific region. It is expected to align professional efforts of private-public partnership to accomplish the goal of diminishing poverty by “APEC Food Security Roadmap Towards 2020” and “UN Millennium Development Project”.

COA pointed that the Peru series of food security conference has raised a big attention in global societies. APEC highly appreciated what Taiwan has contributed as a main host of this conference. The series outcomes will be proposed to be included in the official document of the 2016 Minister’s Meeting of Food Security in order to provide references to all APEC member economies to make contributions to food security in the Asia-Pacific region.

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