



Addressing Food Losses in the APEC Region

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Taiwan is an island with limited resources. Through the years, the major focus is to promote production. Many policies were established to ensure self-sufficiency with selected export. In recent years, Taiwan has its share of food losses.

Based on the UN's research, roughly one-third of the edible parts of food produced for human consumption gets lost or wasted globally, which is about 1.3 billion ton per year. For fruit and vegetables, post harvest losses can be as high as 50% or more (relative to actual production). Therefore, it is of vital importance to cut the losses down as much as possible.

The end to end process, from agriculture production to food on the table, many areas should be examined, and improved on in order to reduce food losses. These loss/waste areas:

1. Early harvest before products are matured;
2. Improper or handling of transportation;
3. Improper warehouse condition;
4. Incorrect or improper agro-processing;
5. Poor (material, quantity) packaging;
6. Wasteful consumption

Based on Taiwan's preliminary investigation, a proposal was made to APEC (Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation), and was subsequently approved with funding provided to Chinese Taipei. This project (APEC Multi-Year Project - MSCE 02 2013A) is a five-year, three-phase endeavor. The three phases are:

- 1) Phase I (2013): Preparation, Research, and Identification of Key Issues
- 2) Phase II (2014-2016): Investigation of Food Losses
- 3) Phase III (2017): Consolidation.

Phase I is designed to be the foundation of the project and a seminar is one of the key activities in this phase which was called in August 2013, on 'Strengthening Public-Private Partnership to Reduce Food Losses in the Supply Chain', the objectives of the seminar were:

- To identify key issues on governing post-harvest food losses and costs in the supply chain in the Asia-Pacific region;
- To promote experience-sharing and capacity-building on reducing food losses on wheat, maize and cassava and facilitate technical development
- To formulate the methodology of food losses assessment in order to evaluate the strategy on food losses;
- To establish a toolkit and database for the private sectors to assess relative knowledge on preventing food losses.

The project aims to address post-harvest losses in all stages of the food supply chain in the APEC region by strengthening public-private partnership. It intends to establish a practical toolkit to reduce food losses, which is designed to provide practical solutions suitable for the Asia-Pacific environment, while enabling APEC developing economies to advance their agricultural productivity when adopting them. In addition to generating workable solutions, concrete policy recommendations and action plans for cutting food losses, the project attempts to develop a consolidated methodology of food losses assessment for APEC economies. This methodology will be beneficial for identifying the progress made by each economy in reducing food losses.

Meanwhile, in light of an important role played by the public sector in reducing food losses, this project also highlights the active involvement of the private sector by underscoring the public-private partnership, which will take their voices into account and make the outputs of this project more practical and sensible to those involved in the entire food supply chain.

(Sources: Concept Note of 「Strengthening Public-Private Partnership to Reduce Food Losses in the Supply Chain」, COA ; Eric Chiou “Taiwan takes a lead in saving food”)

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