

International Food Safety Capacity Building: JIFSAN's Experience

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The United States Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) was signed into law in 2011. FSMA aims to better protect public health by strengthening the food safety system. It focuses more on preventing food safety problems rather than relying primarily on reacting to problems after they occur. For the first time, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will require comprehensive, science-based preventive controls across the food supply. The law directs FDA to develop a comprehensive plan to expand the capacity of foreign governments and their industries. One component of the plan is to address training of foreign governments and food producers on U.S. food safety requirements. The Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN) at University of Maryland (UMD) was established by the university and FDA in 1996. The UMD and FDA partnership has provided a dynamic program that integrates research, education and outreach that enhance FDA's ability to address safety concerns and public health issues related to foods. JIFSAN has also developed and delivered education and training programs to support food safety capacity building in more than 50 countries. These programs include food safety best practices at production, risk analysis, preventive controls and hands-on laboratory techniques. Over 8,000 food safety professionals have participated in the programs. JIFSAN will continue to strengthen the established programs and work on new initiatives to be identified that are important to support FSMA in enhancing science-based preventive control standards to strengthen the food safety system and improve worldwide health.

Biography:

Dr. Jianghong Meng is Director, Joint Institute for Food Safety & Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN); Acting Director, Center for Food Safety and Security Systems; and Professor, Department of Nutrition and Food Science, University of Maryland, College Park. Prof. Meng received his Ph.D. from University of California, Davis. He is an internationally renowned expert in microbial food safety, and has authored over 180 publications. He has made a major impact on food safety globally through his strong leadership at JIFSAN (www.jifsan.umd.edu), an FDA's Center of Excellence. He has built strong partnerships in expanding JIFSAN's food safety training programs both locally and globally.