



Pan American Health Organization  
Office of Caribbean Program Coordination  
Barbados

## **Challenges for Improving Food Safety Programs in the Poultry Industry in the Caribbean**

**Caribbean Poultry Association  
Poultry Processing & Marketing Competitiveness Workshop,  
March 14, 2003, Barbados**

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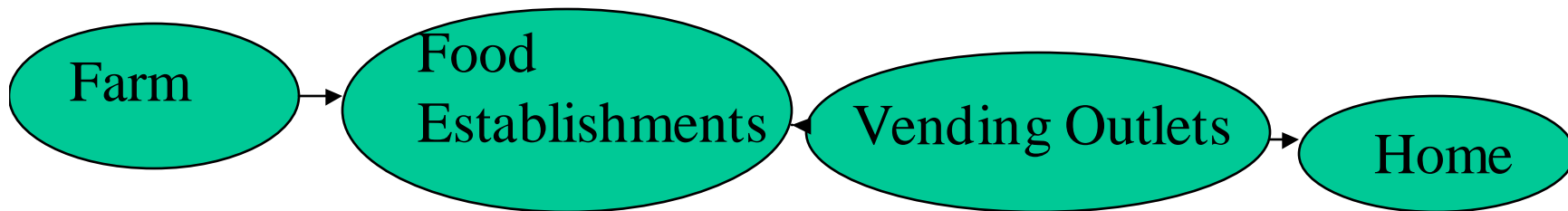


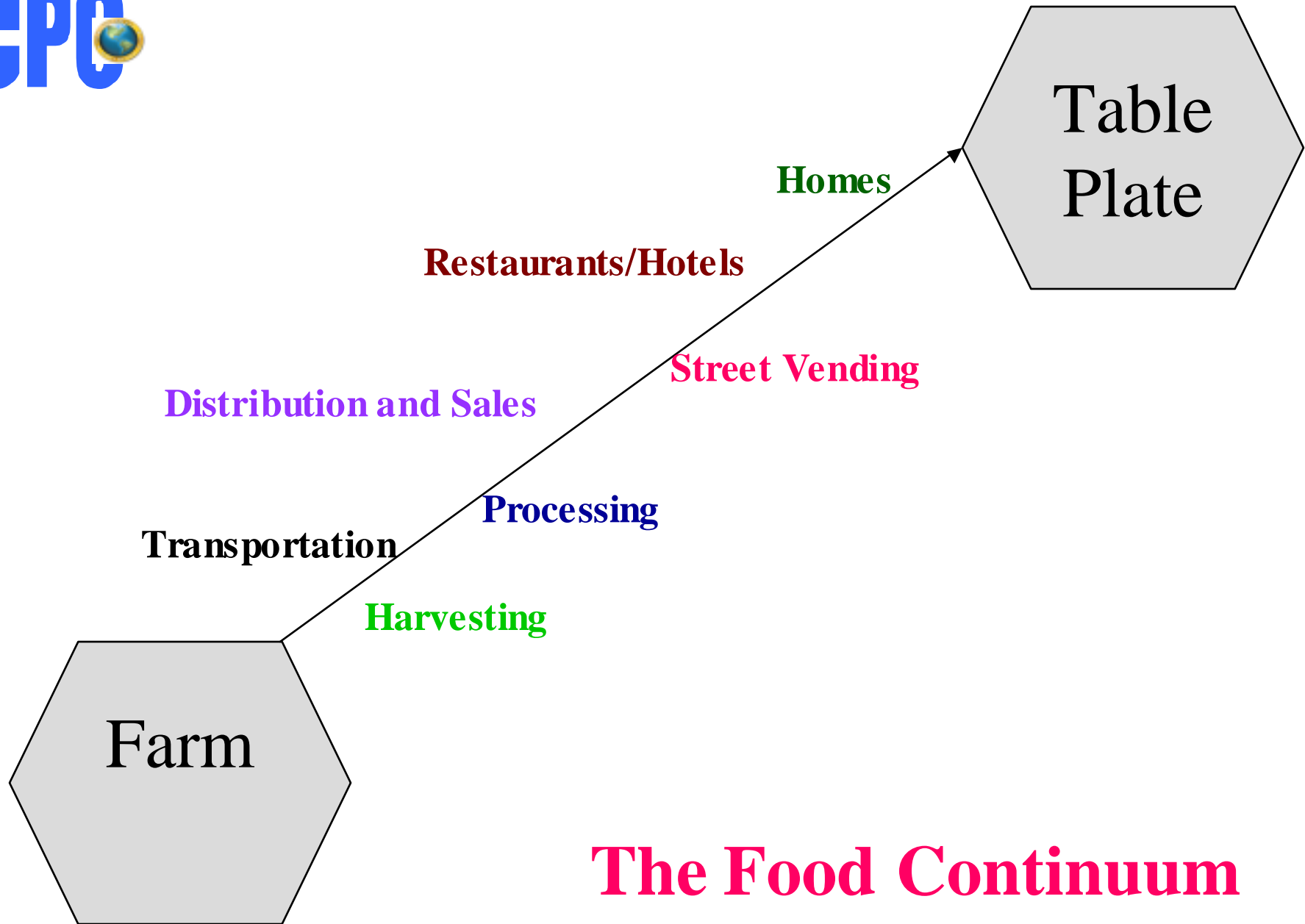
# Introduction

- **Food Control in CARICOM states has been perceived as increasingly based on systems, facilities and institutional arrangements that exist in developed countries.**
- **However, global issues related to trade, health and tourism have been demanding a transformation process in which Caribbean countries must decide on the type of facilities and infrastructure that are required for food control in the Caribbean Sub-region.**
- **Given the demands of the WTO/SPS Agreement to which CARICOM Governments are signatories, several factors must be considered.**



# Identify Where Hazards Can Occur





# The Food Continuum

# IMMEDIATE CHALLENGES



# A Look at SPS Measures Again

- Relevant laws - Acts and Regulations
- Requirements and procedures:
  - product criteria
  - processes and production methods
  - testing
  - inspection
  - certification and approval procedures



# SPS Measures

- **Ensuring that there are SPS measures in place for protecting animal health, plant health, and human health within CARICOM states from risks arising from the entry, establishment or spread of pests, diseases, disease-carrying organisms or disease-causing organisms.**
- Ensuring that the necessary measures are taken to avoid risks arising from additives, contaminants, toxins or disease-causing organisms in foods of animal origin or animal feed stuff.
- **Ensuring that SPS measures associated with human health risks arising from diseases carried by animals or plants are in place.**



# Areas for Action in SPS Measures

- Application of Codex Alimentarius and OIE requirements to facilitate food quality and safety as well as animal health standards.
- Development or refinement of the national programs to ensure that a comprehensive food safety system is in place.
- Promotion of an efficient and effective food safety system that incorporates preventive, risk-based approaches, comprising surveillance, risk assessment and implementation of risk management strategies.



# QUESTIONS

- Can CARICOM countries provide assurance to countries that wish to import from Member states, that food imports are safe?
- Can domestic food production standards be expanded to export markets?
- Can greater consumer awareness and participation in all matters of interest in animal, plant and human health lead to an improved program?
- What is required to improve agricultural health and food safety systems in order to ensure a safer food from the farm to the table?
- In what areas would science-based evidence be needed?



## Other Challenges

- **Legislative Framework almost Non-existent at the National Level**
  - some draft Acts/Regulations around (CARICOM draft, T&T draft (1975, etc))
- **Diversity of enterprises involving poultry and poultry products**
  - Pluck Shops, Fast Food Outlets, BBQ operators, Hotels and Restaurants, Supermarkets
- **Policies not clearly articulated**
  - written policies are almost non-existent



## Other Challenges

- Human Resource to regulate the food safety program
  - veterinarians almost non-existent in poultry establishments
    - exceptions: VPHU in Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica Broiler Association affiliations, other private companies
  - Environmental Health Officers passively involved in poultry inspection
    - exceptions: EHOs in poultry plants in Barbados



# How then can CARICOM States achieve SPS Measures?

Follow a basic HACCP Approach



# WHY HACCP?

- A good HACCP System requires that fundamental principles of hazard reduction are followed.
- Safety must be built into the product as it is manufactured or transformed.
- Industry takes a greater role in ensuring the safety of the product.



# Redefining the Role of Industry

## ↗ Sanitary Measures (on farm or transshipment)

### ↗ Acceptable Agricultural Management and Practices

## ↗ Ensuring prerequisites are in place

- Building Construction
- Ventilation, lighting, location
- Water Supply
- Pest and Insect Control

# Redefining the Role of Industry

## ↗ **Control of process steps:**

- **temperature controls**
- **sanitation**
- **product sampling and testing**
- **packaging**

## ↗ **Worker's Health and Hygiene**

## ↗ **Veterinary Drug and Antibiotic Control**

## ↗ **Transportation in clean vehicles**



# ROLE OF STATE REGULATORS?



## ***DO REGULATORY ASSESSMENT***

**To obtain evidence that HACCP principles are effectively applied**

**To verify that the HACCP plan and pre-requisites are implemented properly**

**To ensure that the HACCP system is in control**

**To verify that the establishment can consistently manufacture and/or distribute safe food**

## † To do regulatory assessment of the Industry

- † evaluate the minimum sanitation and food safety practices within the establishment
- † inspect products and physical facilities where such products (by-products) are manufactured or processed to ensure that they are in compliance with the national legislation

## † To protect the public's health

- † provide assurance that all products, whether for domestic production and consumption or for export, meet acceptable standards for grade, handling, identification, processing, quality and safety

# Regulators

**† To inform establishments of their performance (noting deficiencies and compliance)**

- † Determine the degree of compliance with building construction, equipment and operating regulatory requirements**
- † Determine the applicability of transport vehicles or vessels**

**† To convey new food safety information to establishments**

- † Regulatory updates**
- † Policy directives**

**† Determine the acceptability of products imported into or exported**



## CONSTRAINTS TO HACCP

- **Inadequate knowledge of HACCP principles**
- **Limited human and financial resources**
- **Lack of governmental support**
- **Inappropriate Food Inspection Procedures**
- **Inadequate infrastructure and facilities**
- **Lack of legal requirements/enforcement**

## Inadequate Knowledge

↗ **Government can facilitate the training program for industry personnel as well as government officers.**

↗ **Advocacy can be used for support from external agencies.**

↗ **Infrastructure can be provided by government to facilitate HACCP implementation**

## Limited human resources

↗ Management must ensure that workers know and practice good hygienic practices (GHP) and implement the HACCP methodology.

↗ Awareness programs must be promoted.

↗ At the beginning of HACCP implementation, additional staff time and resources must be committed.

## Limited human resources

↗ Behavioral and organizational changes may be imperatives, and the new food safety roles, responsibilities and functions must be explicitly identified and adopted.

↗ Association bodies and government can assist in developing a register of qualified advisors and experts.



# SOLUTION?



# USE AUDIT APPROACH



"A systematic and independent examination to determine whether quality activities and related results comply with planned arrangements and whether these arrangements are implemented effectively and are suitable to achieve objectives"



## Why is an Audit Needed?

- As an essential instrument for reviewing the HACCP System for its conformity to written procedures.
- To confirm that written procedures for pre-requisite programs and for HACCP plans are current (up-to-date).
- To measure the effectiveness of the HACCP System in meeting the objectives that are set out in the written HACCP Plan.



## Opportunities for Regional Collaboration

- ◆ *Promotion of use of Food Safety Manuals (for poultry) in all countries.*
- ◆ *Design and implementation of a Certification Program for the English-speaking Caribbean countries, and development of educational materials related to the Poultry Industry*
- ◆ *Support for modernization of legislation*
- ◆ *Promotion of training and execution of risk analysis for selected diseases of poultry*



## Modernization of legislation for Food Safety and Animal and Plant Health

- ◆ **Coordination of a USAID-funded project for Barbados and the OECS** (originally a CARICOM focus)
  - ◆ Strengthen alliance with FAO and IICA for updating legislation related to human health (PAHO), animal health (IICA) and plant health (FAO).
  
- ◆ Enhance the national capacity for food inspection with emphasis on:
  - ◆ adopting modern inspection principles
  - ◆ improving enforcement skills
  - ◆ strengthening food-borne disease surveillance capacity
  - ◆ introduction of the HACCP methodology

