



## **BTSF – RISK ASSESSMENT IN THE FOOD CHAIN**

### **COURSE 3 – Plant and pest protection risk assessment**

#### **Fact-sheet**

The harmonisation of risk assessment methodologies has been identified as a priority area of the Strategy for Cooperation and Networking between the EU Member States and EFSA, since harmonisation would help in the development of high-quality scientific opinions that are recognised as truly authoritative. 2008 EFSA Working Group Report on "Fostering harmonised risk assessment approaches in Member States" pointed out how countries organised risk assessment differently at the time. Many of the procedures in the countries appeared to be in line, or at least not in conflict, with procedural aspects within EFSA, however highlighting discrepancies in procedural aspects of risk assessment, mostly regarding declarations of interest, public register of risk assessment requests, procedures concerning the selection of experts, the interaction with stakeholders and between risk assessors and risk managers during the risk assessment process.

The present training programme will address issues listed above through the adoption of a practical approach, aimed to increase knowledge of Competent Authorities and scientists from public institutions and national authorities involved in food chain risk assessment in order to increase the level of expertise and harmonisation.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

The main goal of the training programme is to disseminate best practices for the implementation of principles and methods of food chain risk assessment, improving knowledge of this complex area of work and ensuring consistent and high implementation standards across the European Union.

Specific objectives are:

- Promoting reduction of discrepancies in procedural aspects of risk assessment;
- Contributing to the harmonisation of risk assessment approaches;
- Contributing to increasing transparency and building trust amongst Member States' authorities in each other's risk assessments;
- Disseminating best practices for risk management and communication;
- Promoting exchange of experience in order to increase the level of expertise and harmonisation of approaches.

#### **TOPICS**

The following topics will be covered during the training sessions, both from a theoretical and practical standpoint.

1. Introduction to pest and plant protection risk assessment;
2. Risk assessment in practice: initiation phase and pest categorization, risk assessment on the border crossings;
3. The different steps in plant and pest risk assessment
  - Problem formulation:
  - Assessment of introduction and spread of organisms harmful to plants and/or plant products
  - Assessment of potential consequences associated with the introduction and spread of harmful organisms
  - Plant pest categorisation

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- Identification of appropriate risk management options
- Assessment of the effect of risk management options on the level of risks;
- Principal requirements for documentation of pest risk assessment process and submission of dossiers;
- Plant protection agents/pesticides versus plant health/diseases, incl key examples (e.g. Xylella fastidiosa, Citrus black spot);
- Plant protection agents

4. Risk Management;

5. Risk analysis and reporting

6. Short introduction to Risk Communication and surveillance.

Besides, group works, exercises and case studies will be included.

A test of knowledge will be carried out by all participants at the beginning and at the end of each workshop.

**FACTS AND FIGURES**

During the second phase, 2 five-day training sessions will be organised and implemented, and approximately 20 people will attend each training session.

**TRAINING LOCATIONS AND CALENDAR**

Training sessions will be implemented according to the following calendar.

Year	Training sessions	Locations	Proposed dates
2024	TS 1	Riga, Latvia	29 April - 03 May 2024
	TS 2	Valencia, Spain	18-22 November 2024

**PARTICIPANT SELECTION CRITERIA**

The training will be addressed to official from Competent Authorities and scientists from public institutions and national authorities involved in food chain risk assessment (with a focus on plant protection and pest risk assessment). They must have worked in functional areas of food chain risk assessment with a minimum of 3 years of professional experience or have had experience of setting up and implementation of food chain risk assessment in a Competent Authority (covering areas of food/ feed safety, animal health or animal welfare).

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND TUTORS' TEAM**

The project will be implemented by the company OPERA srl in consortium with NSF Euro Consultants SA. The project's staff includes Mr. Claudio Bompard (CEO of OPERA) as Project Manager, Ms. Astra Garkaje as training coordinator, Ms. Kristina Hristova Ms. Elena Chakarova as Event Managers, and a pool of 4 highly qualified tutors from 4 MS: Mr. Gabor Lövei, Mr. Dario Ivić, Mr. Eligio Malusa and Ms. Olga Lavrentjeva.

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