



Workshop on "Practical Arrangements for Implementing System Audits and Pre-listing Approach on Imports of Animals and Animal Products between the European Union (EU) and Thailand"

19 – 20 September 2013

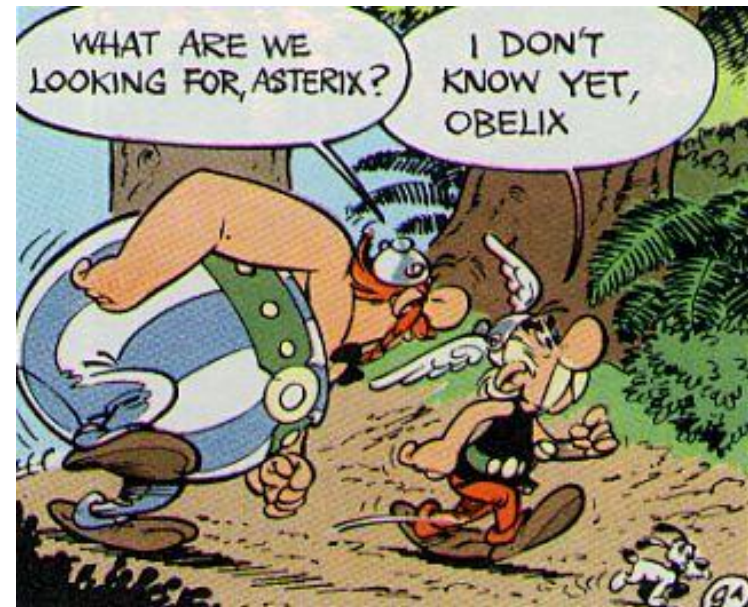
The Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) General Introduction

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Purpose of this presentation

To give you an insight into:

- Who the FVO is
- What the FVO does
- How the FVO does it, *and*
- What the FVO is not



What is the Food and Veterinary Office?



- The Food and Veterinary Office is a **Directorate** of the **European Commission Health and Consumers Directorate-General (DG SANCO)**
- It is responsible for verifying compliance with EU legislation/standards for food safety, animal health, animal welfare, and plant health
- It is active in Member States, Candidate Countries, and in Third Countries exporting, or wishing to export, foodstuffs/feedstuffs/live animals, plants and plant products to the EU

- The FVO is based in Ireland
- It has about 160 staff
- It carries out around 250 audits per year, of which more than one third are in TCs
- Reports are published and available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.htm



FVO – What the FVO does?

- Performs **audits** and other controls in MS/TC
- **Reports** on the findings (publicly)
- Makes **recommendations** to competent authorities (CA) to address identified shortcomings
- **Follows up** on the recommendations and corrective actions announced/undertaken by CA
- Contributes to **policy development** and **management** within the Commission in respect of food safety, animal and plant health, and animal welfare

FVO Structure

7 FVO Units:

- 5 Audit Units, organised on a sectoral basis:
 - F2: Food of animal origin: mammals
 - F3: Food of animal origin: birds/fish
 - F4: Food of non-animal origin and plant health
 - F5: Feed (TSEs), residues, import controls
 - F6: Animal health, animal welfare
- 2 Horizontal Units:
 - F1: Follow-up, country profiles
 - F7: Quality, planning, development and administration

FVO AUDITS – Union controls

- Verification of national official controls carried out by the competent authority
 - It is the third step in the control process:
 1. Operators apply EU rules
 2. National authorities carry out official controls to enforce rules
 3. Union controls (FVO) verify that national authorities have ensured delivery of EU rules/compliance with EU legislation.
- Done in the context of a SANCO **world-wide annual audit programme**
- In accordance with **documented procedures**

Purpose of FVO audits

- To assess the competent authority's delivery of systems which ensure that rules are met
- To assess the operation of these systems in practice and on-the-spot
- To assess the animal/plant health situation and related controls, as appropriate
- To verify that MS are compliant with EU law
- To determine whether TC can provide reliable guarantees that commodities intended for export to the EU, meet equivalent rules

What does the FVO look at during an audit?

Control Systems :

- Should assure the competent authorities that rules are applied, in a consistently and uniformly way
- Should ensure that controls are carried out, as required
- Should ensure timely **detection** of non-compliance, correction of shortcomings, and confirmation of effective remedial action
- Provide the basis for reliable certification

What does the FVO look at during an audit?

What do you need to have for a control system?

- **Legal framework:** are legal/administrative measures in place to ensure that producers apply the rules, and for the CA to enforce them?
- **Competent authority** organisation and procedures:
 - Clear responsibilities – “Chain of command”
 - Independence, co-operation, communication
 - Competent personnel, training
 - Adequate facilities (e.g. laboratories)
 - Enforcement powers
 - Control systems, information management and records
 - Certification practices
- **On site delivery** of control system: primary production, transport, production establishments, handling and storage sites, laboratories

What does the FVO look at during an audit?

FVO assessment of control systems:

- Aims to answer 4 questions:
 - **IS** there a system?
 - **CAN** it work (i.e. ensure EU rules achieved)
 - **DOES** it work, in practice?
 - If not, **WHY** not?
- The answers provide the basis for FVO report recommendations
- Assessment made against EU general and specific requirements

Reporting on the Results

- Types of report:
 - individual audit reports
 - general reports on series of audits (end/interim)
- Procedure:
 - Draft reports to CA, for comment
 - Final reports to CA, Commission Services, European Parliament/Council, stakeholders
 - In accordance with Reg. 882/2004, and
 - FVO standard operating procedures
 - Publication of reports on internet

Follow up

- CA “Action Plan” (AP) to address report recommendations
- Assessment AP (after completion / clarification)
- Close-out: overall assessment of adequacy of the AP and proposal for further action
- Systematic follow-up (correspondence, general reviews, future audits, etc.)
- Enforcement action, as appropriate
- Follow-up FVO audit

What FVO is not

- A police service:
 - The FVO has no police powers
- A fire-brigade:
 - The FVO doesn't (and can't) run after every incident
- A research institute/laboratory:
 - The FVO doesn't take samples, perform analyses etc.
- The Competent Authority:
 - The FVO doesn't do their job; where corrective action is needed
 - The FVO doesn't decide on or tell them how to implement the corrective action
 - The FVO doesn't indicate the result which must be achieved

FVO Audits contribute to:

- Ensuring safe food production within EU
- Ensuring the safety of products imported from third countries
- Ensuring animal health and welfare standards
- Ensuring plant health standards
- Capacity-building and technical assistance efforts in third countries
- Facilitating market access within the EU and elsewhere
- Assuring stakeholders that EU rules are properly implemented and enforced