



FOOD AFRICA 2025

Second Meeting of the African
Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF)

10 -11 December 2025
Cairo, Egypt



Face-to-Face Meeting on the Margins of Food Africa 2025
PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

1. Background and Context

The **African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF)** was established during the High-Level Meeting of African Food Competent Authorities, held from 11–13 October 2023 in Cairo, Egypt, which culminated in the adoption of the Cairo Declaration.

This Declaration recognized the need for a sustainable and collaborative mechanism among African food regulatory agencies to address the increasingly complex and interconnected environment of food production, trade, and public health protection across the continent.

AFRAF was conceived as a network of African food competent authorities at the heads-of-authority level, aimed to:

- ❖ Serve as a forum for information exchange, experience sharing, and collaboration among food regulators in Africa.
- ❖ Shape a collective agenda for the harmonization of food regulatory frameworks across African Union Member States, in line with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
- ❖ Support the implementation of the Food Safety Strategy for Africa (FSSA 2022–2036).
- ❖ Act as the General Assembly of the forthcoming African Food Safety Agency (AFSA).

Since its creation, AFRAF has convened virtual engagements to define collaborative priorities, including the **development of risk analysis capacity, food monitoring and data generation frameworks, and joint regulatory science initiatives** in partnership with the Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GForSS) and other organizations.

Building on these milestones, and in anticipation of AFSA’s operationalization, AFRAF members will reconvene in Cairo in December 2025 for an in-person meeting on the margins of Food Africa 2025 — a major platform to foster collaboration between regulators, industry, and scientific partners.

2. Meeting Framework

Conveners:

- National Food Safety Authority (NFSA), Arab Republic of Egypt.
- The Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GForSS), a disciplinary group of the International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFoST)

In collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC) - TBC

Participants: Heads and senior officials of African national food safety authorities, representatives of Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Codex Contact Points, and partner organizations including FAO, WHO, and others.

Format: Combination of Meetings Including Participation in the Food Africa 2025 Conference (open sessions) and Closed AFRAF Regulators’ Meeting

3. Agenda Outline

DAY 1 – 10 DECEMBER 2025

Closed AFRAF Members Session (in person and online) 11:00-13:00

❖ Progress Review of AFRAF

- Welcome remarks – NFSA Chairman
- Statement – AUC Representative (TBC)
- Review of AFRAF progress since 2023 Cairo Declaration
- Adoption of meeting agenda

❖ AFSA Operationalization – AFRAF’s Enabling Role

- Presentation: AFSA status update and governance framework (AUC)
- Country interventions: establishing and consolidating food authorities

Discussion on coordination mechanisms and policy alignment

❖ Reshaping AFRAF: A Network of African Food Regulators – Supporting African Food Regulatory Cooperation

Objective: To discuss the evolution of the African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF) as a voluntary, non-reporting network of food regulators across Africa — serving as a free and open platform

to exchange experience, foster collaboration, and advance the alignment of food regulatory systems, without formal institutional attachment to the forthcoming African Food Safety Agency (AFSA).

Open Discussion on Perspectives from African Regulators:

- The value of maintaining AFRAF as a free, self-driven network.
- Opportunities to strengthen collaboration, capacity building, and data exchange.
- Practical modalities for sustaining engagement (rotating leadership, thematic working groups, peer learning mechanisms).

Open discussion among participants to gather views on future direction and governance of AFRAF.

Expected Outcomes:

- Consensus on AFRAF's continued role as an independent, voluntary network of African food regulators.
- Identification of priority areas for cooperation (e.g., food monitoring, risk analysis, regulatory innovation).
- Agreement on steps to sustain communication, resource sharing, and collaborative action within the network.

13:00-14:00 Lunch

Conference Session (open session and broadcast)

14:00-17:00

❖ **Theme 1 – Emerging Issues: Addressing Food Monitoring as a Foundation of Food Control Systems – Support to Market Access Opportunities**

Objective: To discuss food safety emerging issues impacting the African Continent and explore how food monitoring programs underpin evidence-based regulation – demonstration of food analytical solutions to address emerging risks with a focus on pesticide residue surveillance as a driver for MRL development and harmonization.

➤ **Keynote Lecture: Prof. Chris Elliott, Founder of the Institute of Global Food Security, Queens University, Belfast, Bualuang; ASEAN Chair of Food Security**

Other Presentations and Discussion on Focus Areas:

- Food monitoring as a regulatory science tool for exposure assessment.
- Using monitoring data to support national and regional MRL establishment.
- Managing challenges in defining import MRLs where pesticide registration faces delays.
- Pathways to convergence under AfCFTA and Codex frameworks.

Expected Output: Develop recommendations of efforts to mainstream food analytical approaches to address emerging food safety issues – and support the establishment of food monitoring collaboration mechanisms to enhance efforts of residues of pesticides/agricultural inputs surveillance and contribute to harmonization of MRL setting.

DAY 2 – 11 DECEMBER 2025

Conference Session (open session and broadcast) 11:00-12:30

❖ Theme 2 – Food Innovation and Food Regulatory Modernization: A Lever to Strengthen Resilience and Revitalize Traditional Agriculture

Objective: To explore how modernization of food regulatory frameworks can both enable innovation in food systems and promote the sustainable transformation of traditional agriculture into value-added, resilient production sectors.

Focus Areas:

- The role of regulatory innovation in supporting emerging food technologies (novel foods, fermentation, precision agriculture, functional ingredients).
- Ensuring safe and science-based pathways for innovation, including guidance for product evaluation and market authorization.
- Integrating traditional foods and crops into modernized regulatory frameworks to enhance local value chains and regional trade.
- Promoting innovation-friendly policies that respect food heritage while enhancing competitiveness.
- Supporting harmonization of food regulatory provisions related to novel foods, ingredients and claims between African jurisdictions.
- Panel Discussion: “Modernizing African Food Regulation – Balancing Innovation, Tradition, and Food System Resilience.”

Expected Output: A policy brief on innovation-enabled regulation as a driver of resilience, emphasizing opportunities to revitalize traditional agriculture through science-based modernization.

Conference Session (open session and broadcast) 12:30-13:30

❖ Theme 3 – Updates on Recent Developments in the Food Regulatory Landscape in Africa and Levers to Operationalize a Single Food Safety Authority in Africa: Perspectives and Lessons Learnt

- Institutional and legal design of food safety authorities.
- Transition from multi-agency to unified systems.
- Integration of laboratory networks and human resources.
- Leveraging partnerships and donor support for sustainability.

Updates by Regulators:

- *Presentation by Algeria (TBC)*
- *Presentation by Egypt (TBC)*
- *Presentation by Mauritania (TBC)*

13:30-14:30 Lunch

Developing Partnerships Among African Food Regulators and With Other Regions
(open session and broadcast)

14:30-16:00

Focus Areas:

- Review of Current Mechanisms of Food Regulatory Cooperation in Africa: Impacts and Effectiveness.
- Review of Existing Capacity Building Programs and Resource Mobilization Effort.
- Review on New Opportunities of Collaborative Interventions:
 - Food Risk Assessment Network.
 - Data-sharing and monitoring frameworks.
 - Risk-based inspection practices.
- Discussing Inter-Regional Cooperation with neighboring Regions, e.g. Arab Region/GCC countries
 - Contribution of Senior Food Regulators from the GCC: Oman and Kuwait

Closing Session – Restricted to AFRAF Members (in person and online by invitation)

16:00-17:00

❖ **Reviewing AFRAF Collaborative Priorities for 2026–2027**

- Identification of new focus areas emerging from the 2025 themes
- Adoption of the Cairo 2025 Communiqué

❖ **Closing**

- Summary of meeting conclusions and next steps
- Closing remarks

4. Overall Expected Deliverables

1. Cairo 2025 Communiqué reaffirming AFRAF's commitment to:
 - Supporting the operationalization of AFRAF as a key forum of food regulatory cooperation in Africa
 - Advancing risk- and evidence-based food regulatory systems.
 - Promoting innovation-friendly and resilience-oriented food regulation.
2. AFRAF Roadmap 2026–2027, defining strategic priorities and lead agencies.
3. Technical Notes on:
 - Food monitoring and MRL harmonization.
 - Innovation and modernization of regulatory frameworks.