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Global Food Regulatory Science Society

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Food Safety and Food Quality



# SECOND MEETING OF THE AFRICAN FOOD REGULATORY AUTHORITIES FORUM

 **2025 DECEMBER | 10 - 11**

 **EGYPT INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION  
CENTER (IEC) - CAIRO - EGYPT**



**HYBRID EVENT**

On the Margins of



## REPORT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE AFRICAN FOOD REGULATORY AUTHORITIES FORUM (AFRAF)



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## **Executive Summary**

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The Second Meeting of the African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF) was convened on 10–11 December 2025 in Cairo, Egypt, on the margins of Food Africa Expo 2025. Organized by the National Food Safety Authority (NFSA) of Egypt in collaboration with the Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GFoRSS), the meeting brought together heads and senior officials of African food regulatory authorities, representatives of Regional Economic Communities, Codex structures, and international partners. The meeting aimed to review progress since the adoption of the Cairo Declaration (2023), advance technical dialogue on priority food safety issues, and clarify the future role, governance, and operational modalities of AFRAF.

Discussions reaffirmed AFRAF’s positioning as a voluntary, regulator-driven cooperation platform established by and for African food regulators. While independent from the African Food Safety Agency (AFSA), AFRAF was recognized as a complementary mechanism focused on practical regulatory collaboration, experience-sharing, and capacity strengthening, aligned with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the Food Safety Strategy for Africa (FSSA 2022–2036).

The meeting featured in-depth scientific and technical exchanges on food monitoring as a foundation for evidence-based regulation, risk-based regulatory oversight, regulatory modernization, and food innovation. Presentations highlighted the importance of strengthened analytical capacity, harmonized methodologies, Codex-aligned approaches, and regulatory transparency to support consumer protection, market access, and safe trade. Particular emphasis was placed on addressing emerging food safety risks, preventing food fraud, and enabling innovation through predictable and science-based regulatory pathways.

Country updates from participating authorities illustrated diverse regulatory contexts and reform pathways, while underscoring common challenges related to capacity, harmonization, and coordination. These exchanges reinforced the value of AFRAF as a platform for peer learning, sharing of best practices, and avoidance of duplication of efforts across the continent.

A closed session of heads and senior officials marked a key milestone in defining AFRAF’s future direction. Participants reached consensus on strengthening governance arrangements, including the establishment of a Steering Committee, maintaining Egypt’s chairmanship for the upcoming period, and reinforcing structured linkages with Codex coordination in Africa. AFRAF members agreed to focus collective efforts on three priority areas: capacity building and coordination (including the proposed AFRAF Academy), risk-based food regulatory oversight, and regulatory transformation to support food innovation. The establishment of thematic working groups and the development of a structured activity calendar were identified as immediate next steps.

Overall, the meeting confirmed strong ownership of AFRAF by its members and a shared commitment to maintaining momentum through timely follow-up, structured planning, and continued engagement with regional and international partners. The outcomes of the Second Meeting provide a solid foundation for the

development of an AFRAF Roadmap for 2026–2027, supporting Africa’s collective efforts to strengthen resilient, science-based, and harmonized food regulatory systems in support of public health, fair trade, and sustainable food systems development.

## Objective

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This report presents a summary of the deliberations and discussions held during the Second Meeting of the African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF), convened on 10–11 December 2025 in Cairo, Egypt, on the margins of [Food Africa Expo 2025](#). It captures the strategic and technical exchanges, key outcomes, and agreed actions emerging from the meeting.

In particular, the report synthesizes scientific and technical discussions on food monitoring, risk-based regulatory approaches, regulatory modernization, and food innovation.

It reflects the updates provided by participating authorities on their national food regulatory activities and documents deliberations on the proposed future role, governance, and operational modalities of AFRAF as a voluntary, regulator-driven platform.

It further identifies areas of consensus and priority actions, which may serve as the basis for the development of a proposed Roadmap of AFRAF activities and interventions for the period 2026–2027, to support follow-up and implementation in alignment with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the Food Safety Strategy for Africa (FSSA 2022–2036).

## Background: Inception of the African Food Regulatory

### Authorities Forum (AFRAF)

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The [African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum \(AFRAF\)](#) was established following the High-Level Meeting of African Food Competent Authorities, held in Cairo from 11–13 October 2023, which concluded with the adoption of the Cairo Declaration. The Declaration called for the establishment of a sustainable and collaborative mechanism to strengthen food regulatory governance across Africa.

Following the confirmation of the statutes of the African Food Safety Agency (AFSA), which did not designate AFRAF as the General Assembly of the Agency as initially anticipated in 2023, AFRAF members agreed to position the Forum **as a voluntary, regulator-driven platform** bringing together heads of African food regulatory authorities. In this role, AFRAF serves to promote information exchange, peer learning, and regulatory coordination, support harmonization efforts in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and contribute to the implementation of the Food Safety Strategy for Africa (FSSA 2022–2036).

In the period leading up to the Second Meeting of AFRAF, this positioning was further clarified, confirming **AFRAF as an independent cooperation forum established by and for African food regulators**. While not intended to serve as a formal governance body of AFSA, AFRAF is designed to operate as a complementary mechanism focused on practical regulatory collaboration, experience-sharing, and capacity strengthening, preserving its flexibility and inclusiveness while enabling constructive alignment with emerging continental food safety institutions.

## **Introduction and Opening Remarks**

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The Second meeting of the African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF) was organized, in a hybrid mode, by the National Food Safety Authority (NFSA) of Egypt and the Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GForSS) and brought together more than 55 participants including heads and senior officials of 10 African food safety authorities, representatives of Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Codex Contact Points, and partner organizations.

Dr. Tareq El-Houby, Chairman of the National Food Safety Authority (NFSA) of Egypt, and acting current Chair of AFRAF, opened the meeting, welcoming all participants both in-person and virtual and congratulated Dr. Khalid Soufi on his appointment as President of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). He highlighted Egypt's role as the originator and host of AFRAF since its first meeting in 2023, stressing that the forum was designed to strengthen food regulatory governance, unify Africa's voice on food safety, and enhance cooperation among African food regulators. He emphasized that collaboration is critical for building regulatory capacity, supporting safe intra-African trade, boosting food exports, and promoting economic integration under the AfCFTA.

Dr. El-Houby reaffirmed Egypt's strategic commitment to AFRAF, aligned with national leadership priorities and Egypt Vision 2030, which places Africa at the centre of cooperation, innovation, and sustainable food system development. He concluded by thanking all participating African authorities and partner organizations for their engagement, noting that their active involvement is key to building strong, science-based regulatory systems for the continent, and warmly welcomed all attendees to Cairo.

Dr. Khaled Soufi, Chairman of the Egyptian Organization for Standardization and Quality (EOS) and current President of ISO, delivered introductory remarks, thanking participants and acknowledging the invitation extended by Dr. Tareq El-Houby. He welcomed the opportunity to engage once again with African food regulators and emphasized the Forum's role in protecting public health and strengthening the competitiveness of African countries in regional and international markets.

Dr. Soufi highlighted food safety as a key driver of economic growth and trade facilitation, noting ISO's collaboration with African national and regional authorities in capacity building, standards development, and

legislative alignment, including the application of standards such as ISO 22000 and ISO 17025. He also underscored the complementary role of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in setting international food standards and supporting regulatory harmonization and trade.

He further referred to growing cooperation between ISO, ARSO, and African food safety authorities, expressing confidence that these efforts would enhance regulatory coherence and alignment between ISO and Codex standards. He concluded by reaffirming ISO's commitment to supporting African countries and wishing participants a productive and successful meeting.

Dr. Mamodou Bah, Director General of the Food Safety and Quality Authority (FSQA) of The Gambia and Chair of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA), delivered opening remarks, thanking participants and welcoming colleagues from African food regulatory authorities. He emphasized the importance of close cooperation to strengthen food control systems across the continent and the need to build on past achievements through inclusive engagement with relevant regional and global institutions, including Codex.

Dr. Bah highlighted CCAFRICA's commitment to supporting all member countries through advocacy, resource mobilization, and capacity-building initiatives, with particular attention to countries most in need. He underscored the importance of effective communication and performance assessment as essential elements of robust food safety systems.

Addressing food safety in Africa, he noted the significant burden of foodborne diseases and the need for strengthened preventive measures, infrastructure, and adoption of advanced technologies. He stressed that the Forum's objective was to move beyond identifying challenges to developing practical solutions and seizing opportunities.

He concluded by emphasizing the role of the Africa Food Safety Forum in strengthening regulatory capacity, supporting resilient food systems, and enabling African countries to benefit from increased trade and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) through strong leadership and coordinated action.

Ms. Precelia Cherue Guanue, Director General of the Food Authority of Liberia, delivered a statement expressing the Authority's appreciation for participating in the second meeting. She underscored the Forum's role as an important platform for dialogue and cooperation on food safety and food security issues in Africa. She also emphasized the value of strengthened partnerships and constructive engagement among African regulators, thanked the organizers, and reaffirmed Liberia's commitment to advancing food safety and food security through collaboration.

Prof. Samuel Godefroy, Laval University, President of the Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GForSS) and the International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFoST), delivered welcome remarks, thanking the National Food Safety Authority of Egypt and partners for their contributions to the second AFRAF meeting held on the margins of Food Africa.

He emphasized that AFRAF is grounded in food science and technology and aims to strengthen regulatory systems, build capacity, and foster collaboration among African authorities. Recalling the Forum's establishment in October 2023 and the Cairo Declaration, he highlighted the importance of sustaining AFRAF within the framework of the Food Safety Strategy for Africa and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). He concluded by reaffirming GFORSS's continued support for AFRAF and thanking participants for their commitment to food safety in Africa.

Following these interventions, participants attending both in person and online were introduced. The session then proceeded with a review of progress since the adoption of the 2023 Cairo Declaration, after which AFRAF members reviewed and formally adopted the agenda for the second meeting, including the scientific sessions.

## **Strategic Discussion – Updates from Members and Proposed Discussion Points on the Future of AFRAF (Closed Session)**

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A facilitated discussion, moderated by Dr. Mamodou Bah and guided by a [discussion paper on the future of AFRAF](#), focused on strengthening food regulatory cooperation, supporting regulatory integration, and confirming AFRAF's positioning as a voluntary, independent, and regulator-driven platform. The discussion examined the evolution of AFRAF as a non-reporting network serving as a free and open forum for experience-sharing, collaboration, and alignment of food regulatory systems across Africa, operating without formal institutional attachment to the African Food Safety Agency (AFSA).

### **❖ Country interventions demonstrated strong and convergent support for AFRAF's role and value:**

- The representative of **Mauritius** emphasized that AFRAF was established to unite African countries and unlock the continent's trade and production potential. It highlighted that divergent standards and registration requirements, including aflatoxin limits, continue to constrain intra-African trade, and underscored AFRAF's role in promoting Codex-based harmonization to reduce such barriers.
- The representative of **The Gambia** stressed that effective harmonization requires a structured and coordinated approach, noting that AFRAF is well positioned to serve as an anchor platform bringing together countries, institutions, and partners to support regulatory strengthening and leadership.
- The representative of **Libya** described AFRAF as a valuable and innovative initiative, acknowledging the leadership of Egypt's National Food Safety Authority in its establishment. AFRAF was viewed as a science-based, technical, and knowledge-sharing platform that complements existing bodies such as ARSO and CCAFRICA, while enabling open exchange among regulators.
- The representative(s) of **Liberia** highlighted AFRAF's importance as an open and proactive knowledge-sharing forum, particularly for countries with developing regulatory systems. The intervention

emphasized peer learning, sharing of best practices, and avoiding duplication of efforts to strengthen national frameworks and support trade.

- The representative of **Algeria** emphasized that AFRAF represents a distinct and priority platform that complements existing regional and international mechanisms. The need for clear terms of reference, a defined mandate, and focused priorities was highlighted, particularly in relation to trade facilitation, capacity building, rapid response, and support to Codex work.
- The representative of **Ghana** identified key collaboration priorities for AFRAF, including cooperation on emerging issues, capacity building, harmonization of standards, and trade facilitation, while emphasizing the importance of coordination with Regional Economic Communities (RECs), CCAFRICA, and ARSO.
- The representative of **Cabo Verde** noted that Africa's diversity in agricultural systems and production contexts further underscores the importance of AFRAF as a platform for cooperation, harmonization, and shared regulatory approaches.

#### ❖ Overall Conclusions

Participants expressed strong and consistent support for AFRAF as a unique, flexible, science-based, and regulator-driven platform. AFRAF was recognized with the potential to play a critical role in strengthening food regulatory systems across Africa through Codex-based harmonization of standards and legislation, facilitation of intra-African and international trade in support of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), capacity building and peer learning, and the provision of an open and inclusive forum for collaboration.

**There was broad agreement that AFRAF should continue to evolve with a clear mandate, defined priorities, and practical implementation tools, while maintaining its informal yet strategic character.**

## Day 1: Discussing Food Safety Emerging Issues

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### ❖ Addressing Food Monitoring as a Foundation of Food Control Systems – Support to Market Access Opportunities

#### ▪ Food Monitoring as a Foundation for Evidence-Based Regulation, MRL Harmonization, and Market Access in Africa

Prof. Chris Elliott, founder of the Institute of Global Food Security, at Queens University, Belfast, United Kingdom, addressed emerging food safety and authenticity issues of growing importance to the African continent, highlighting how global pressures such as climate change, geopolitical instability, conflict, and supply chain disruptions are reshaping food systems and increasing food safety risks. He emphasized that these challenges contribute to food insecurity and expose weaknesses in existing control systems, requiring stronger, more resilient regulatory approaches.

The keynote presentation stressed that food monitoring is a fundamental pillar of effective food control systems, enabling evidence-based regulation and supporting market access. Prof. Elliott demonstrated how enhanced analytical capacity particularly in pesticide residue surveillance supports MRL development and regulatory harmonization, while also improving the ability to detect emerging chemical hazards such as PFAS, heavy metals, and mycotoxins, thereby protecting consumers and facilitating international trade.

#### ▪ Analytical Solutions for Pesticide Residue Analysis: Quantification of 1,000 Pesticide Residues in accordance with EU requirements

Dr. Laurent Pascaud, representing Agilent Technologies, delivered a technical presentation on advanced analytical solutions for pesticide residue analysis, focusing on the quantification of up to 1,000 pesticide residues in compliance with EU SANTE/11312/2021 requirements. He highlighted the analytical challenges posed by the growing diversity of pesticides, complex food matrices, and increasingly stringent detection limits.

The presentation showcased a comprehensive and robust workflow combining QuEChERS sample preparation with GC-MS/MS and LC-MS/MS triple quadrupole technologies. The validated methodology demonstrated high sensitivity, wide compound coverage, strong linearity, and reliable quantification at EU MRL levels. Dr. Pascaud emphasized the importance of such high-throughput, quality-assured analytical solutions in supporting regulatory compliance, effective monitoring programs, and international trade of agricultural products.

#### ▪ Setting Import Pesticide MRLs as a means to prevent trade disruption of agricultural products

Dr. Mustafa Sultan, Scientific Director, GForSS Near East Office, delivered a presentation on setting import pesticide Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) as a science-based mechanism to prevent unnecessary trade disruption of agricultural products. He highlighted that differences in national MRLs, or the absence of MRLs where pesticides are not registered domestically, are common causes of trade barriers and do not always indicate a public health risk.

The presentation emphasized reliance on Codex Alimentarius principles and JMPR scientific assessments, including ADI and ARfD, dietary exposure evaluations, and Good Agricultural Practices. Dr. Sultan outlined a risk management approach allowing competent authorities, under negligible health risk and food security considerations, to consider temporary authorization of consignments and the structured adoption of import MRLs. He concluded by stressing the importance of regional cooperation and data-sharing to support consumer protection while facilitating safe agricultural trade.

- **Analytical Solutions for Food Authenticity Testing**

Dr. Laurent Pascaud, representing Agilent Technologies, delivered a presentation on analytical solutions for food authenticity testing, highlighting the growing importance of combating food fraud and adulteration, particularly in the African context. He emphasized that food authenticity is essential for protecting public health, maintaining consumer confidence, preserving cultural heritage, and safeguarding the economic value of agricultural and food products.

The presentation showcased a range of targeted and untargeted analytical approaches, including spectroscopy, chromatography, mass spectrometry, elemental fingerprinting, and DNA-based techniques, to verify product origin, composition, and integrity. Dr. Pascaud underlined that selecting appropriate analytical tools requires balancing regulatory needs, risk levels, and available resources, and concluded that robust authenticity testing systems are critical for strengthening food safety controls, supporting exports, and enhancing trust in African food products on international markets.

## ❖ Day 1 – Closing

A group discussion examined current and future food monitoring initiatives in Africa as key regulatory science tools for dietary exposure assessment. Participants highlighted challenges related to data gaps, laboratory capacity, resource constraints, and the need for harmonized methodologies, alongside enabling factors such as regional collaboration, capacity building, and data-sharing mechanisms. The discussion underscored AFRAF's role in promoting the mainstreaming of food monitoring initiatives to support regulatory convergence across African countries. Participants also addressed ongoing efforts to prevent food fraud and ensure food authenticity, emphasizing the need for coordinated regulatory action to protect consumers and facilitate safe trade. The session concluded with a synthesis of key messages, after which Day 1 was officially closed.

## Day 2: Food Innovation and Food Regulatory Modernization

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Day 2 of the Second Meeting of the African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF) continued the discussions initiated on the previous day through a dedicated scientific session under **Food Innovation and Food Regulatory Modernization**.

The session was introduced by Prof. Samuel Godefroy (Laval University, Canada), President of the Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GFoRSS) and the International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFoST).

### ❖ Proposed National Food Innovation Regulatory Transformation Strategy

The first presentation was made by the National Food Safety Authority of Egypt, on behalf of Dr. Tareq El-Houby, Chairman of the National Food Safety Authority of Egypt and representation a first discussion of a Proposed National Food Innovation Regulatory Transformation Strategy.

It emphasized the strategic role of regulatory modernization in positioning Egypt as a regional hub for food innovation, research, manufacturing, and market access. It underscored the importance of predictable, transparent, and proportionate regulatory pathways for novel foods, functional ingredients, and emerging production systems, aligned with Codex principles. By enabling safe and timely market entry, supporting evidence-based claims, and fostering collaboration among regulators, academia, and industry, the proposed strategy illustrates how innovation-friendly regulation can drive investment, enhance public health protection, and transform traditional agricultural resources into high-value, competitive, and sustainable food sectors.

Overall, the presentation highlighted a vision for Egypt to become an active contributor to food innovation, given the country's rich portfolio of agricultural products that can be transformed into healthy food products through value addition hence supporting small, micro, and medium-sized enterprises working in agricultural and food production.

Dr. El-Houby further emphasized that while achieving such a level of innovation represents a significant challenge, it must be accompanied by an equally robust regulatory framework. He stressed the importance of transparency in food labeling, including nutrition information and nutrition claims, and the necessity of grounding all claims in sound scientific evidence.

In this context, he outlined the future challenges and the dual regulatory and service-oriented role of the Authority in ensuring food safety, noting that this role serves as a key driver for investment.

### ❖ Regulating Food Innovation as an Important Contributor to Resilient Food Systems: Current Approaches and Future Developments

Prof. Samuel Godefroy delivered a presentation addressing the regulatory management of food innovation, with a particular focus on novel foods, ingredients, and production processes. The presentation examined global

drivers of food innovation, including the diversification of food sources, sustainability imperatives, evolving consumer expectations, and advances in food technologies.

**Overall**, this session highlighted key regulatory challenges associated with assessing the safety of foods with limited histories of consumption, the need for fit-for-purpose and science-based risk assessment approaches, and the importance of predictable and transparent regulatory pathways to support innovation and investment. It emphasized the critical role of global alignment and reliance on Codex principles and guidance to ensure consumer protection, fair trade practices, and the integration of emerging scientific evidence.

Particular attention was given to the relevance of food innovation regulation for Africa, noting the significant potential of indigenous crops, traditional ingredients with functional properties, and novel processing technologies to drive value addition and export growth. The presentation underscored the opportunity for AFRAF to support regulatory convergence through harmonized principles, shared safety assessment methodologies, capacity building, and collaborative approaches. Such efforts were identified as essential to strengthening resilient food systems, accelerating innovation, and enhancing Africa's active participation in shaping international standards for novel foods and emerging production systems.

## Day 2: Food Regulatory Updates

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Day 2 of the Second Meeting of the African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF) was also dedicating to introducing Food Regulatory Updates from representatives of member countries present at the meeting physically.

The following offers succinct summary of these updates.

### ❖ Food Regulatory Updates of Member Countries

#### ▪ Algeria

Dr. Nourredine Haridi, Director of Quality and Consumer protection, Ministry of Internal Trade and National Market Regulation, Algeria presented an overview of the food safety system in Algeria, highlighting recent developments. He explained that the system is structured around five core pillars: a science-based legislative framework; clearly defined institutional roles and responsibilities; conformity assessment laboratories; inspection and fraud control mechanisms; and communication and information exchange with food business operators and consumers.

He outlined the legal framework governing food safety, including legislation on animal and plant health overseen by the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as consumer protection and fraud control legislation under the responsibility of the Ministry of Trade and Regulation of the National Market, which is currently under revision to align with international standards. Dr. Haridi emphasized that consumer rights, including food

safety and product conformity, are constitutionally guaranteed in Algeria, with enforcement measures applied in cases of non-compliance.

He concluded by noting that regulatory frameworks must evolve to keep pace with innovation and emerging technologies, and highlighted Algeria's national strategy to strengthen capacity in food safety and public health as a key implementation priority.

#### ▪ **The Gambia**

Dr. Mamodou Bah, Director General of the Food Safety Authority of The Gambia, presented The Gambia's experience in establishing and operationalizing a single food safety authority. He explained that the country previously operated a highly fragmented system, with food safety responsibilities spread across multiple ministries. In line with international best practices, a unified Food Safety and Quality Authority was legally established in 2011 and became operational in 2013. While the consolidation process encountered institutional resistance, strong government support enabled successful implementation.

He noted that the Authority operates under a comprehensive legal framework covering inspection, Codex, and SPS matters and reports directly to the Office of the Vice President. Its governance structure includes a Board of Directors, a Scientific Committee, and formal mechanisms for risk communication and stakeholder consultation. The Authority also hosts the SPS Committee and the National Codex Committee, addressing SPS issues and Codex-related matters, respectively.

Dr. Bah further outlined the Authority's institutional structure, including a Directorate of Scientific Affairs responsible for testing and risk assessment, which provides scientific input to regulatory development in coordination with Regulatory Affairs to ensure legal soundness, trade compatibility, and WTO notification. He also highlighted the application of CCAFRICA guidance and the implementation of food control functions through a dedicated Food Control Directorate with specialized units.

#### ▪ **Mauritania**

Dr. Braika further noted that the Agency operates under the Ministry of Trade and Tourism and is advancing the integration of technology and digitalization, including the use of artificial intelligence to support early detection. The Agency has also undertaken awareness-raising activities targeting stakeholders and consumers. Given Mauritania's high reliance on food imports, he emphasized the importance of strengthening border controls and implementing effective food safety oversight from points of entry through storage and markets.

Dr. Braika further noted that the Agency has rehabilitated its laboratory, initiated field operations, and, as a newly established authority, is seeking cooperation and capacity-building support from regional and international partners.

- **Cape Verde**

Dr. entrusted to an independent regulatory authority responsible for food supervision along the entire food chain, including market surveillance, inspections, and official controls. In the context of increasing market globalization, the Authority oversees food imports and domestic markets to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and serves as the national focal point for the European Union's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) and other international food safety networks.

- ❖ **Closed Session Discussion – Summary of Recommendations**

A closed session of heads and senior officials of African food regulatory authorities was convened on 11 December 2025 during the Second Meeting of the African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF), providing a candid platform to discuss the future role, governance, and operational priorities of the Forum. Participants reached consensus on positioning AFRAF as a voluntary, regulator-driven cooperation platform established by and for African food regulators, operating independently while remaining complementary to emerging continental food safety institutions.

Key agreements included strengthening AFRAF's governance through the establishment of a Steering Committee, maintaining Egypt's chairmanship of AFRAF for the upcoming period, reinforcing structured linkages with Codex coordination in Africa, and focusing AFRAF's work on capacity building, risk-based regulatory oversight, and regulatory transformation to support food innovation. Participants emphasized the need for timely follow-up actions, the development of a structured activity calendar, and communication of outcomes to the African Union Commission for information and coordination. A detailed account of the closed session discussions, agreements, and recommendations is provided in [Annex 2](#).

- ❖ **Developing Partnerships Among African Food Regulators and With Other Regions**

- **Intervention from the China National Center of Food Safety Risk Assessment (CFSA)**

Dr. Fan Yongxiang, Deputy Director General of the China National Center of Food Safety Risk Assessment (CFSA), presented [an overview of China's food safety risk assessment system](#), highlighting CFSA's central role in supporting national food safety governance. He outlined key components of China's integrated risk surveillance framework, including chemical and microbiological monitoring, the Total Diet Study (TDS) programme, and quantitative risk assessments for priority hazards such as mycotoxins, pesticide residues, foodborne pathogens, food allergens, and radioactive substances. The presentation emphasized evidence-based standard setting, pre-market safety assessment of novel foods and food additives, and strengthened risk communication.

Dr. Fan also highlighted CFSA's increasing engagement at the international level, including contributions to Codex work, addressing emerging risks, and promoting global cooperation, and expressed interest in

strengthening cooperation and providing support to African food regulators to enhance food safety and public health protection.

- **FoodSafeR Network** (funded by the European Union)

Prof. Martin Wagner, Professor of Molecular Food Microbiology, at the Veterinary University of Vienna, Austria, and Co-Director of Food SafeR, presented the [FoodSafeR network](#), an international collaborative initiative, funded by the European Union, bringing together academic experts and partners to address emerging food and feed safety challenges through science-based approaches. The presentation highlighted how evolving global dynamics are reshaping food safety risks, including emerging hazards such as biotoxin contamination, increased microbial virulence illustrated by the E. coli outbreak in Germany, new transmission pathways linked to global mobility, and distinct microbiological profiles associated with novel foods and meat substitutes compared to traditional animal-derived products.

He also presented recent FoodSafeR activities, including a global consultation involving 21 partners to assess regional perceptions of food safety risks and hazards. The outcomes of this work, published in *Frontiers in Sustainability*, identified region-specific concerns and represented an initial effort to systematically characterize and quantify emerging food safety hazards worldwide. FoodSafeR was further presented as a collaborative hub designed to connect regulators, scientists, and technical partners, facilitate knowledge exchange and joint foresight activities, and support coordinated responses to emerging food safety risks across regions.

Dr. Cristina Fernandez presented the FoodSafer Digital Hub, the world's first online community dedicated to food safety professionals, developed under Work Package 4 of the project. The Digital Hub serves as a trusted source of information, offering guidelines, expert insights, and curated content on emerging food safety hazards, including early warning signals not yet systematically tracked. The platform enables professionals to access resources and engage with the community through a dedicated website and multimedia content. The full launch of the Digital Hub, with complete and updated content, is scheduled for February 2026.

- **Turning Evaluation into Strength: Egypt's Journey with the FAO/WHO Food Control System**

The [Presentation](#) by Dr. Marwa Badr, Senior Legal Expert, NFSA, Egypt, outlined Egypt's efforts to strengthen its national food control system using the FAO/WHO Food Control System (FCS) Assessment Tool, aligned with Codex Alimentarius principles and international best practices.

The presentation discussed the outcomes of an International Validation Mission conducted in mid-2024, which resulted in an assessment report identifying 26 priority recommendations to guide improvements in Egypt's food safety system. It highlighted progress in translating these recommendations into action, including the development of a National Food Safety Policy, digitalization of food establishment registration,

and the introduction of risk-based inspection and control measures. Overall, the presentation demonstrated tangible advances in strengthening food safety governance, regulatory effectiveness, and system performance.

### ❖ Day 2 – Closing Remarks

**In closing**, Dr. Tareq El-Houby expressed appreciation for participants' engagement, recalling AFRAF's launch in 2023 and the progress achieved despite initial challenges, and reaffirmed Egypt's strong commitment to supporting the Forum's development and strengthening food regulatory cooperation across Africa.

Prof. Samuel Godefroy thanked the National Food Safety Authority of Egypt, partners, and African food regulators for their dedication, highlighting key outcomes of the closed session, including the establishment of three thematic working groups on risk-based decision-making, food innovation regulation, and capacity building through the proposed AFRAF Academy, as well as further refinement of governance arrangements in alignment with continental mechanisms such as CCAFRICA.

## Conclusion

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The Second Meeting of the African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF) reaffirmed the Forum's growing relevance as a voluntary, regulator-driven platform for strengthening food regulatory cooperation across Africa. Building on the foundations laid by the Cairo Declaration of 2023, the meeting demonstrated clear progress in consolidating AFRAF's role as an inclusive and flexible mechanism that complements emerging continental food safety institutions while remaining firmly anchored in the practical needs of African food regulators.

Through strategic dialogue, technical exchanges, and country-led updates, participants highlighted shared challenges and opportunities related to food monitoring, risk-based regulatory approaches, regulatory modernization, and food innovation. The discussions underscored the importance of science-based decision-making, Codex-aligned harmonization, and strengthened regulatory capacity as essential enablers of consumer protection, safe trade, and effective implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the Food Safety Strategy for Africa (FSSA 2022–2036).

The closed session marked a key milestone in clarifying AFRAF's future direction, with consensus reached on reinforcing governance arrangements, establishing a Steering Committee, and focusing collective efforts on priority areas including capacity building, risk-based oversight, and regulatory transformation to support innovation. The agreement to establish thematic working groups, including the proposed AFRAF Academy, reflects a shared commitment to translating dialogue into concrete and coordinated action.

Overall, the meeting confirmed strong ownership of AFRAF by its members and a clear determination to maintain momentum through timely follow-up, structured planning, and continued engagement with regional

and international partners. As AFRAF moves into its next phase, the outcomes of this meeting provide a solid basis for developing a forward-looking Roadmap for 2026–2027, reinforcing Africa’s collective capacity to advance resilient, science-based, and harmonized food regulatory systems in support of public health, fair trade, and sustainable food systems development.



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<https://afraforum.org/2025secondafrafmeeting/>

## Annex 1: List of Participants (in Person)

	Name	Entity	Country
1	Percellia Cherue Guanue	Food Authority of Liberia	Liberia
2	Georgette Nathalie Gray	Food Authority of Liberia	Liberia
3	Theophilus Ndorbor	Food Authority of Liberia	Liberia
4	Stephen Yongar Mambu	Liberia Standards Authority (Lisa)	Liberia
5	Hadi Abdelati Elalem	Libyan National Center for Standardization and Metrology	Libya
6	Mohamed Braika	Mauritanian Agency for Food Safety (AMSSA)	Mauritania
7	Nourreddine Haridi	Ministry of Internal Trade and National Market Regulation	Algeria
8	Mamodou Bah	Food Safety and Quality Authority (FSQA)	The Gambia
9	Andrew Lartey	Food And Drug Authority	Ghana
10	Patricia Alfama	Independent Health Regulatory Authority (ERIS)	Cabo Verde
11	Yousouf Gaungoo	Food Standards Agency, Ministry of Health and Wellness	Mauritius
12	Awanwee Petchkongkaew	International Joint Research Center on Food Security (IJC-FOODSEC)	Thailand
13	Chris Elliott	Institute of Global Food Security, at Queens University	Ireland
14	Laurent Pascaud	Agilent Technologies	France
15	Christophe Marchal	Agilent Technologies	France
16	Tareq El-Houby	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
17	Khaled Soufi	The Egyptian Organization for Standardization and Quality Control (EOS)	Egypt
18	Hend Abdellah	The Central Laboratory of Residue Analysis of Pesticides and Heavy Metals in Food (QCAP)	Egypt
19	Dina Soliman	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
20	Mohamed Naem	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
21	Eman Helmy	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
22	Amr Mosad	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt

	Name	Entity	Country
23	Mohamed Abdelfadel	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
24	Rasha Galal	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
25	Haitha Hatem	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
26	Waled Mustafa	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
27	Basma Soliman	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
28	Ahmed Fawzi	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
29	Rawhya Mohamed	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
30	Ashraf Sami	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
31	Fawzya Ahmed	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
32	Ghada Khediwy	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
33	Mohamed okailah	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
34	Mohamed Elnawawy	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
35	Farah Hana	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
36	Noshy Wesa	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
37	Malak Elbasyouny	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
38	Esraa Moussa	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
39	Hader Samer	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
40	Mohamed saeed	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
41	Marwa Badr	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
42	Walid Mustafa	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
43	Ahmed Othman	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
44	Nashwa Albennawy	National Food Safety Authority (NFSA)	Egypt
45	Samuel Godefroy	GForSS/IUFoST	HQ Office Canada
46	Elie Boyazbeck	GForSS/IUFoST	HQ Office Canada
47	Ruba Goussous	GForSS/IUFoST	HQ Office Canada
48	Mustafa Sultan	GForSS/IUFoST	Near East Office Egypt
49	Nayra Elsherief	GForSS/IUFoST	Near East Office Egypt
50	Mohamed Ahmed Fawzi	GForSS/IUFoST	Near East Office Egypt
51	Mustafa Ahmed Fawzi	GForSS/IUFoST	Near East Office Egypt
52	Abelrahman Ahmed Fawzi	GForSS/IUFoST	Near East Office Egypt

## Annex 2: Summary of the 11 December 2025 Closed Session

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### 1. Context

A closed session of heads and senior officials of African food regulatory authorities was convened on 11 December 2025 during the Second Meeting of the African Food Regulatory Authorities Forum (AFRAF), held in Cairo on the margins of Food Africa 2025.

The session was organized to allow regulators to exchange views candidly on the future role, governance, and operational priorities of AFRAF, in light of evolving continental food safety governance arrangements and the forthcoming African Food Safety Agency (AFSA).

Regulators present at this session included representation from Algeria, Cape Verde, Egypt (acting as current Chair of AFRAF), the Gambia (also acting as the Chair of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa – Codex Coordinator for Africa), Liberia, Libya, Mauritania and Mauritius.

### 2. Key Agreements and Recommendations

Following structured discussion and country interventions, participating regulators reached consensus on the following points:

#### 2.1 Nature and Role of AFRAF

Participants reaffirmed that AFRAF will continue as a regulator-driven forum, established by African food regulators and for African food regulators.

AFRAF will function as a voluntary, collaborative platform designed to serve regulators' practical needs, facilitate peer exchange, and support the strengthening of national and regional food control systems across Africa.

#### 2.2 Governance and Organizational Structure

Participants agreed that AFRAF's governance structure should be reviewed and strengthened to support its continued evolution and effectiveness.

It was agreed in principle to establish a **Steering Committee, initially composed of the countries represented in person at the 2025 Cairo meeting**, to guide strategic direction, coordination, and continuity of AFRAF activities.

The Steering Committee will operate in a transparent, inclusive manner, with further modalities to be defined and endorsed by AFRAF members.

### 2.3 Chairmanship

Participants expressed consensus that **Egypt continue to chair AFRAF** for the upcoming period, recognizing its initiating role, sustained leadership and commitment to supporting the Forum's development.

### 2.4 Linkage with Codex Structures

It was agreed that AFRAF's governance arrangements should include **a clear and structured connection with the Codex Coordinator for Africa**, currently **held by The Gambia**, to ensure alignment, complementarity, and mutual reinforcement between AFRAF activities and CCAFRICA priorities.

### 2.5 Priority Focus Areas for AFRAF Activities

Participants agreed that AFRAF's work for the upcoming period concentrate on three strategic focus areas:

#### A. Capacity Building Coordination and Enhancement

Supporting peer learning, sharing of expertise, and coordinated approaches to strengthening regulatory capacities across African food authorities. This initiative could be dubbed **as the AFRAF Academy**.

#### B. Risk-Based Food Regulatory Oversight

Promoting coordination and experience-sharing on the use of risk-based approaches to inform regulatory decisions, including food monitoring programs, risk-based inspections, and evidence-driven prioritization of controls.

#### C. Regulatory Transformation to Support Food Innovation

Supporting dialogue, guidance, and cooperation on modernizing food regulatory frameworks to enable safe innovation, value addition, and competitiveness in African food and agri-food sectors.

### 2.6 Working Groups

Participants agreed on the establishment of thematic Working Groups under AFRAF, aligned with the three focus areas above, to drive tangible actions, technical exchanges, and deliverables.

## 3. Next Steps and Proposed Actions

Participants agreed that the immediate next step will be the development of a **clear and structured calendar of AFRAF activities for the upcoming period**.

This calendar will outline proposed **meetings, Working Group activities, priority deliverables, and coordination mechanisms**, and will be shared with AFRAF members for consultation and endorsement.

Participants emphasized the importance **of timely and decisive action** to sustain the current momentum and to **effectively serve the collective interests** of the African food regulatory community.

It was also recommended that a **Steering Committee** be established at the earliest opportunity, with an agreed-upon Terms of Reference, and be tasked to guide the operationalization of AFRAF in line with its newly agreed direction.

Finally, it was recommended that the agreed follow-up actions, together with the evolving approach through which AFRAF is being shaped to better serve African food regulators, be communicated to the African Union Commission for information and further coordination.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The closed session confirmed strong collective ownership of AFRAF as an independent, flexible, and regulator-led cooperation platform. Participants emphasized that AFRAF is uniquely positioned to support African food regulators in addressing shared challenges, strengthening science-based decision-making, and contributing to safe food, fair trade, and sustainable food system development across the continent.