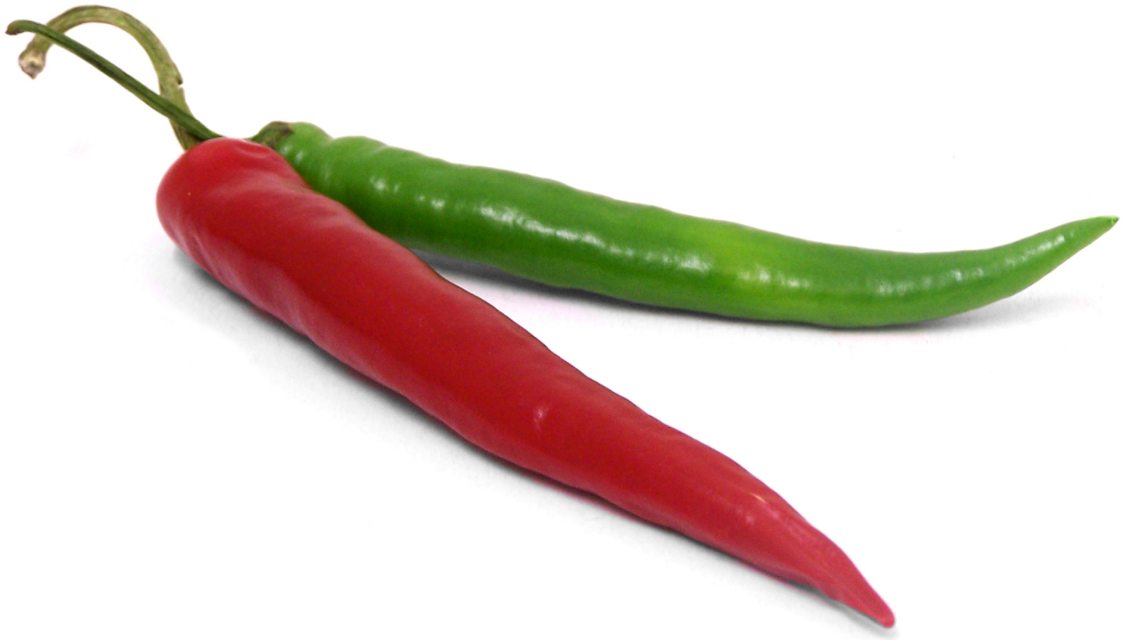
Mexico and USA reinforce the cooperation on food safety



The cooperative work of the National Health Service, Food Safety and Quality (SENASICA) and the Food and Drug Administration US (FDA) have been proposed to achieve a deep and thorough understanding of each food safety systems.

In the framework of a bilateral meeting between the chief director of SENASICA, Enrique Sanchez Cruz, and the FDA commissioner, Stephen Ostroff, held in the premises of the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA) Both officials spoke for further strengthening of cooperation in food safety.

These actions will result in benefits for consumers in Mexico and the United States as well as producers, who can sell fresh foods more easily and in a better competitiveness, they said.

Highlighted the achievements resulting from the signing of the "Declaration of intent for cooperation in the Alliance for the safety of fresh and minimally processed agricultural products" in July 2014, through which working groups that have been built were integrated into Safety System of Agricultural Products.

These working groups address issues such as the exchange of information, education and outreach, training of auditors and inspectors, laboratory collaboration and response to outbreaks of diseases or pests, through which Mexico and the United States may have greater understanding of standards, guidelines and best practices for safety regulations in each of their systems.

Officials stressed the importance of continuing this work and to strengthening the bonds to build a strong relationship between health institutions in Mexico and the United States.

They noted that these issues are of particular relevance to the entry into force of the Law of Modernization of Food Safety (FSMA, for its acronym in English) of the United States, implying commitments for growers, packers, shippers and marketers frescos.

Enrique Sanchez Cruz explained that, on instructions from the holder of SAGARPA, José Calzada, SENASICA is working with Mexican exporters of fresh produce to meet the safety standards required by the new regulations.
Stephen Ostroff said Modernization Act of Food Safety was designed to strengthen the production of safe food, so its main change is that now the focus is geared toward preventing a problem of food safety.

That is why, he added, that the FDA is working with the SENASICA to publicize various aspects of Mexican exporters Act, in order to continue to meet the required regulations.

It is important, he said, that people can understand and meet the requirements to facilitate the activities of verification, certification and inspection.

The general director of Agrifood Safety, Aquaculture and Fisheries SENASICA, Hugo Fragoso Sánchez announced in February will hold a training forum in Morelia, Michoacan, aimed at technicians, producers, transporters and marketers of fresh produce.

He said the SENASICA has put special emphasis on training in three of the regulations established by the United States: Fresh, Program Verification foreign suppliers, and Accreditation of third parties, considering that are most affecting the exportation the neighboring country of Mexico.

At the meeting they were also the director of Agrifood Safety, Operation Organic and Pesticide SENASICA, Silvia Elena Rojas Villegas; the Associate Commissioner for International Programs of the FDA, Mary Lou Valdez; FDA's regional director for Latin America, Edmundo Garcia; the Deputy Regional Director for Latin America, Sandra Cross, and the International Regulatory Affairs analyst,

Ana Lilia Sandoval, among others.

Source: SENASICA. SAGARPA