

## **Commission publishes Better Training for Safer Food annual report**

The annual report on the Better Training for Safer Food initiative (BTSF) has been published and provides an overview of the 2008 training activities. The report also looks at the programmes starting in 2009 as well as the Better Training for Safer Food in Africa programme (BTSF Africa) which runs during 2009-10. It gives information on the intermediate evaluation on BTSF which was carried out in 2008 and the transfer of competences related to BTSF to the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC).

In 2008, BTSF completed its third year and activity levels increased considerably in relation to 2007. The 15 2008 programmes trained 4 000 people from almost 150 countries. Around 120 workshops, seminars and training missions took place for a budget of €9.5 million.

Nearly all 2007 EU-based programmes continued in 2008. These covered Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point principles for preventing contamination of food and feed, animal by products, border controls, animal welfare, plant protection products and control of food-borne disease. New EU programmes for 2008 were on food hygiene and controls, plant health controls and BSE and related diseases.

Third country programmes focused on EU food standards, the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed, avian influenza and food testing. An additional programme was set up to review the 2006 and 2007 avian influenza training.

### **Looking ahead**

BTSF should expand further during 2009-10 to train 5 000 people over 150 activities some of which will be on new subjects such as feed law and GMO analysis. The budget for the training is to be around €12 million.

The start of training under BTSF Africa is another important step and EU Health Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou chaired the opening conference in Addis Ababa in April 2009. This programme is jointly coordinated by the European and African Union Commissions. It is aimed at strengthening national, regional and pan-African capacity on health and plant health.

BTSF Africa includes activities aimed at evaluating the performance of veterinary services, improving animal health and food safety legal frameworks, strengthening laboratory and small and medium enterprise capacity and training trainers. Training will also be provided on international health standards for delegates to the World Organisation for Animal Health and Chief Veterinary Officers. Intensive training will be held for officials from the African Union Commission, regional economic communities and other specialist bodies.

### **Long term plans**

The report contains details of the outsourcing of training-related administrative and financial tasks to EAHC. This is part of the development of an organisational structure capable of responding to high levels of training demand in the long term.

The findings of the intermediate evaluation launched during 2008 are given in the report. The evaluation was aimed at assessing the impact of training on participants' work, learning more about the strengths and weaknesses of the training and obtaining recommendations. It was mainly carried out through distribution of questionnaires to participants who had attended training in 2006 and 2007 as well as tutors and National Contact Points.

Participants viewed the training very positively in a range of areas such as content, delivery, and organisation. They also felt that the training had significantly improved their understanding of the subject covered. Finally, respondents gave constructive recommendations for the future.

The BTSF annual report 2008 is available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/food/training\\_strategy/annual\\_report2008/BTSFAnnualreport2008.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/food/training_strategy/annual_report2008/BTSFAnnualreport2008.pdf)