

Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Policy

April 2012



Outline of presentation

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Background and scope**
- 3. Structure of policy document**
- 4. Purpose**
- 5. Approach to developing policy**
- 6. Policy intent**
- 7. Policy drivers and policy environment**

Outline of presentation

9. Policy principles

10. General policies

11. Food safety policies

12. Agriculture policies

1. Production

2. Protection

3. Common

14. Determining the future

Introduction

Background & Scope

In 2011, the Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority (ADFCA) embarked on an ambitious program of policy development in recognition of its expanded mandate of responsibility for the entire food chain from farm to fork including the safety of foods imported into the Emirate.

This policy document will tackle the general cross cutting (agriculture and food safety) policies. It will cover Agriculture production, protection and common policies. It will also cover specific food safety and suitability policies.

Work Progress to Date

- Policy and Regulatory group initiated policy work in 2011 following its regulatory assessment exercise.
- Employed consultants with diverse experience to assist in drafting the policy document.
- Numerous presentations, briefings, consultations, meetings and follow up sessions were conducted.
- Worked intensely with Policy and Regulatory team and representatives from ADFCA's sectors to develop best practice policies relevant to Abu Dhabi.
- As part of our policy and communication strategy, this session is an important part of the overall development process.

Work Progress to Date

- **Phase 1 deliverable:**
 - Regulatory gap analysis report
- **Phase 2 deliverables:**
 - General agriculture and food safety policies
 - Specific food safety policies
 - Policy Implementation Guiding document
 - Policy Communication Strategy
 - Regulatory Matrix
- **Phase 3 deliverables:**
 - Specific agriculture policies
 - Regulatory matrix

Structure of policy document (Phase 3)

The Policy document is now divided into Six Chapters:

1- **Introduction** (*i.e. Background, scope, purpose, Approach & Stakeholders*)

2- **Policy Context** (*i.e. Intent, Drivers, policy environment and policy strategy*)

3- **Overarching Agriculture and Food Safety Policy Principles** (*7 principles*)

4- **General Policies for Agriculture and Food Safety** (*11 General policies*)

5- **Agriculture Policy Framework and Policies** (*15 policies*)

(Agriculture Production (4 policies), Agriculture Protection (5 policies), and Common

Agriculture Policy areas (6 policies))

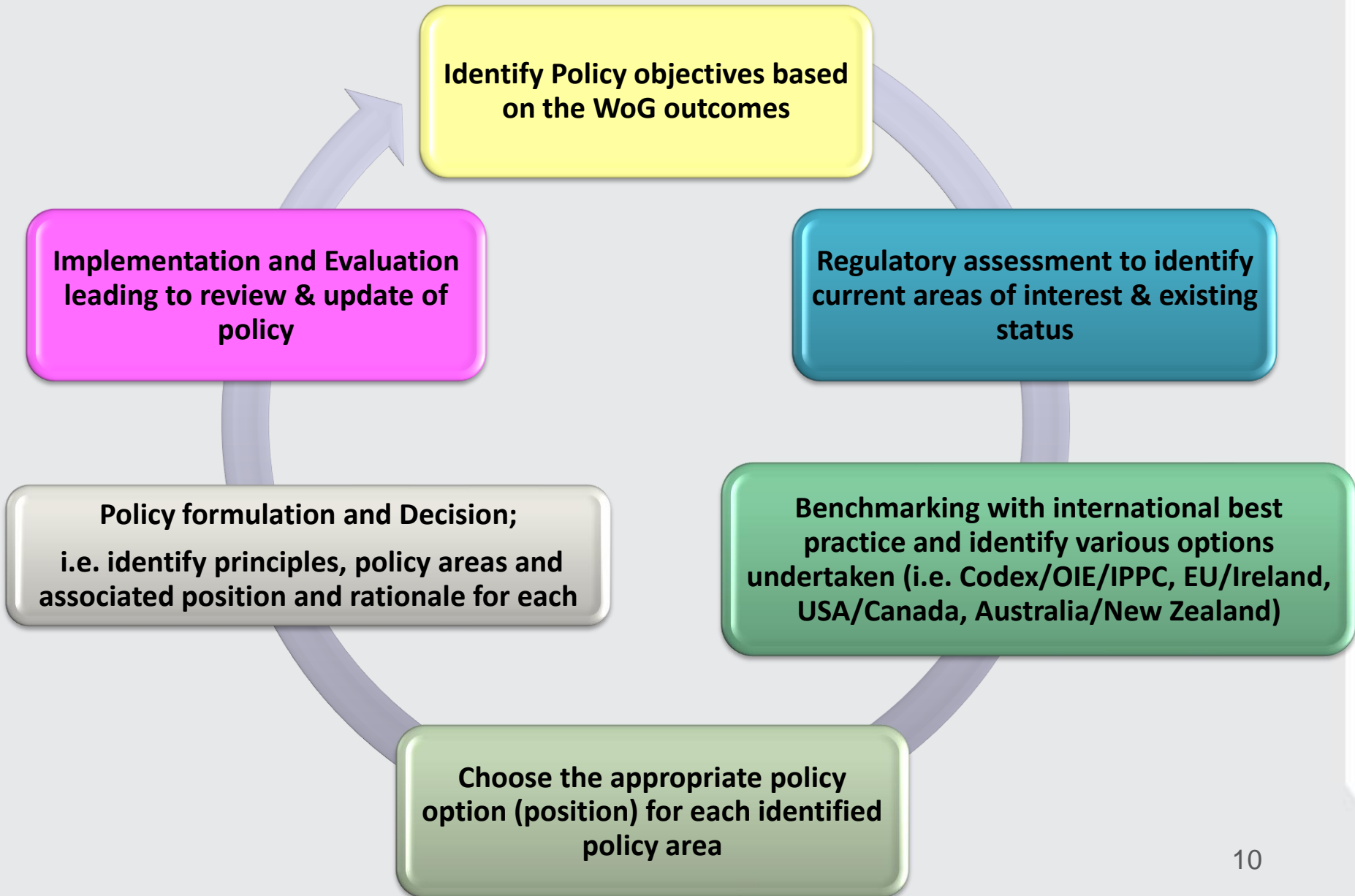
6- **Food Safety Policy Framework and Policies** (*11 Food safety policy areas*)

Purpose

The key purpose for developing policies related to agriculture and food safety includes:

- Providing effective, efficient and risk based regulatory regime that manages:
 - Imported and domestic food safety and suitability issues
 - Animal and plant food production and protection issues
 - Sustainability in production
- Providing risk management measures that:
 - Minimize and manage risks to public health
 - Protects and promotes animal, plant and public health
 - Provide certainty to food businesses on how requirements will affect their activities
 - Require food business operators (and food traders) to take responsibility for the food safety and suitability
 - Achieve safety and suitability of food for sale

Approach to Developing Policy- Policy Process



Policy Intent

- The policy intent clearly identifies the link with and importance of the Whole of Government outcomes that ADFCA is the champion entity for
 - Assuring food safety for consumers
 - Ecologically sustainable development of the agricultural sector, and
 - A secure food supply to the Emirate.
- These outcomes also generate a significant contribution to the social and economic wellbeing of the Emirate.
- Account is also taken of ADFCA's mission to protect the health of animals and plants and deliver safe food (in collaboration with other Emirate and Federal agencies where appropriate).
- The policies are intended to align with existing laws where possible and to form the basis for ADFCA's future overall direction to planning, development and regulation of Abu Dhabi's agriculture and food sectors.

Policy Drivers

The **General Policy drivers** include:

- Government policy interests and aspirations
- Contribution to social health and wellbeing
- Greater demand for health protection
- Changing consumer behaviours and choices
- Food security demand on availability, accessibility and affordability
- More complex food chains and emerging technologies
- Economic and environmental sustainability
- New and existing diseases and contaminants and other potential risks to health
- Population growth and changing demographics
- WTO-SPS, TBT and other international obligations
- Authority evolution as a government role model/leading agency on the regional level and well recognized on the international level
- Economic development/desired increase in contribution to overall GDP

Policy Drivers (cont.)

Drivers **specific to Food safety and suitability**:

- Consumer safety and informed choice
- Food business operators (including food traders) responsibilities
- Compliance with legislative and other requirements
- Increasing volume and diversity of traded foods

Drivers **specific to the Agriculture sector** :

- Greater diversification and commercialisation of agriculture
- Farmers' social level enhancement
- Significance to the social and cultural dimension in the Emirate
- Government commitment to assisting the sector make the maximum contribution to the supply of quality food, in an ecologically & economically sustainable way
- Need to address increased exposure to animal and plant health risks and downstream food safety concerns
- Natural resources sustainability/water use optimization, land use, soil management including the use of chemicals, and waste management

Policy Environment

- Abu Dhabi operates as the local government mandated to agriculture and food safety
- Interaction with the relevant Federal and local entities as well as coordination with other Emirates to harmonise the regulatory regime across the UAE
- Need for an integrated agriculture and food safety policy (including biosecurity and imports)
- Provides a basis for the establishment of national agriculture and food safety and suitability requirements, and guidance for application to specific sectors in the food chain

ADFCA Agriculture and Food Safety Policy Framework

Agriculture and Food Safety Policy Principles (7)

1. Science and Risk based Government Intervention
2. Responsible Food and Feed Business Operators
3. Seamless and Coherent Regulatory Program
4. Coherent and Effective Import System
5. Consistent and Equitable Application of Regulatory Requirements
6. Facilitated Trade
7. Coordinated Service Provision

Agriculture and Food Safety General Policies (11)

1. Integrated Farm to Fork "Food Chain" Approach
2. Integrated Risk Management Framework
3. Abu Dhabi regulatory model
4. Good operating practices and HCCAP principles
5. Capability and credibility
6. Transparency through consultation and communication
7. Consistency with WTO SPS and TBT Agreements
8. Harmonisation across the UAE
9. Performance Management
10. Traceability
11. Imports and Exports

Agriculture Policies (15)

| Agriculture Production | Agriculture Protection | Common Agriculture Policies | |
|----------------------------|--|------------------------------|---|
| 1. Agriculture Land Use | 5. On-Farm Prevention Measures | 10. Research and Development | 13. Animal Welfare |
| 2. Agriculture Water Use | 6. Pest and Disease Control | 11. Social Support | 14. Competencies & On-Farm Capabilities |
| 3. Production Choice | 7. Regulated Areas for Pest and Disease Management | 12. Agriculture Compounds | 15. Compliance, Offences, Penalties and Enforcement |
| 4. Economic Sustainability | 8. Emergency Preparedness and Response | | |
| | 9. Preservation of Valuable Agricultural Species | | |

Food Safety Policies (11)

| | | |
|---|---------------------------|--|
| 1. Accountabilities and Roles | 2. Licensing Registration | 3. Verification (inspection during transition) |
| 4. Labelling and Composition | 5. Halal | 6. Tools |
| 7. Competencies | 8. Incident Responses | 9. Powers of Officers |
| 10. Compliance, Offences, Penalties and Enforcement | | 11. Consumer Awareness and Food Sector Support |

Policy Principles

Policy Principles

1.

Science and risk based Government intervention

2.

Responsible food and feed business operators

3.

Seamless and coherent regulation

4.

Coherent and effective import system

5.

Consistent and equitable sector regulation

6.

Facilitated trade

7.

Coordinated service provision

Policy Principles

Policy Principle 1: Government involvement in the sectors and regulatory controls will be science-based and risk-based as far as possible.

Policy Principle 2: Food and feed business operators will take responsibility for producing safe and suitable food and feed.

Policy Principle 3: The regulatory program, for which ADFCA is responsible and within which decisions on the type of involvement are made, will be seamless and coherent across the food chain.

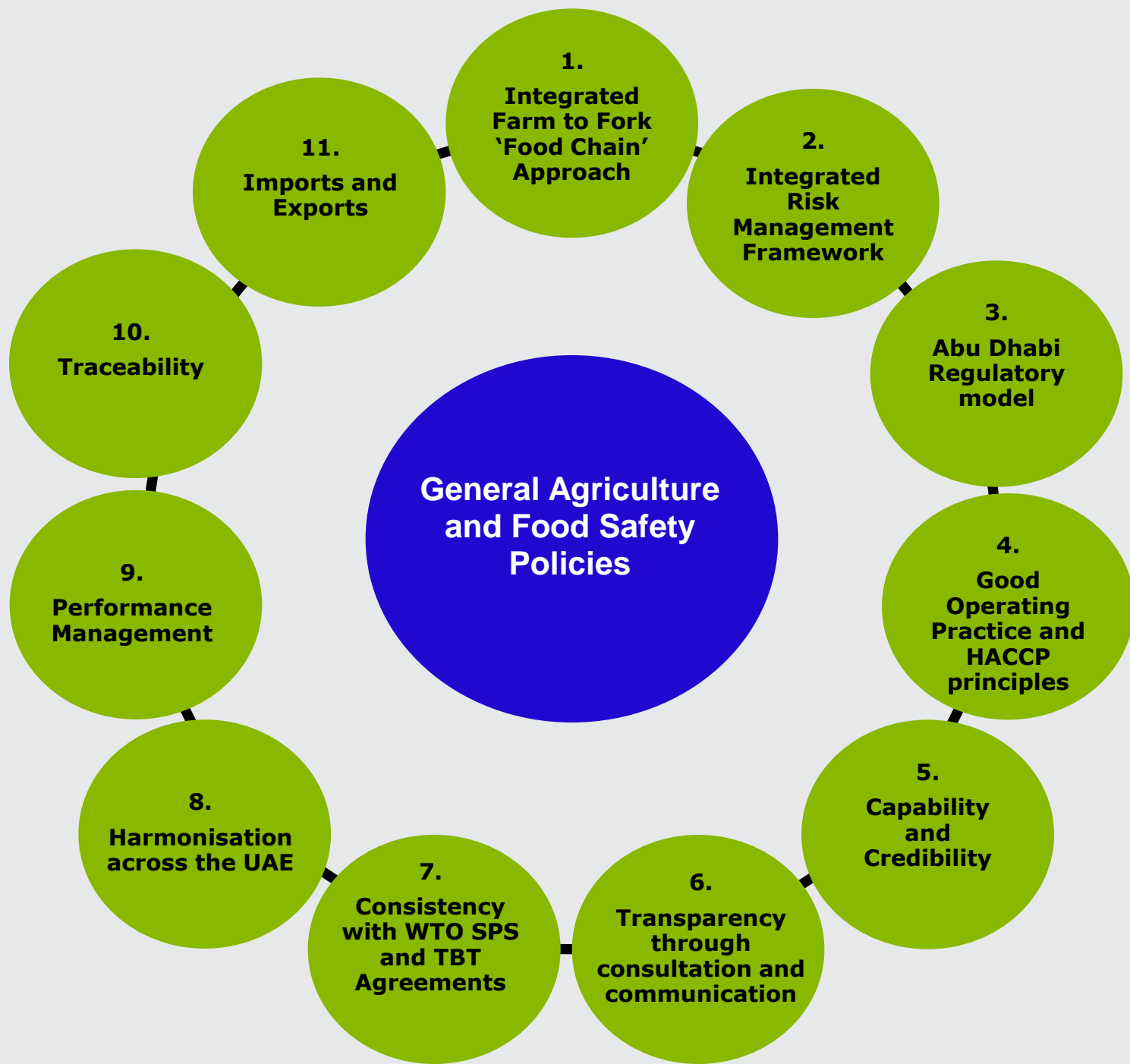
Policy Principle 4: A coherent, risk based, whole of chain import system with effective and sufficient assurances and measures to ensure an appropriate level of consumer protection.

Policy Principle 5: Regulatory requirements will be applied consistently and equitably across sectors.

Policy Principle 6: Trade and commerce in food as well as food producing animals and plants and their inputs shall be facilitated.

Policy Principle 7: ADFCA shall ensure service provision is coordinated and coherent to the greatest extent possible.

General Policies



General policy- Integrated food chain

Position

ADFCA adopts the integrated farm to fork ‘food chain’ approach as a means of ensuring coherence and integration of regulatory and non-regulatory risk management measures across the entire food chain.

Rationale

A food chain approach ensures that government intervention to address food safety and suitability issues and biosecurity pathways can be applied effectively at the most effective point to deliver the best outcome for the purpose of consumer protection .

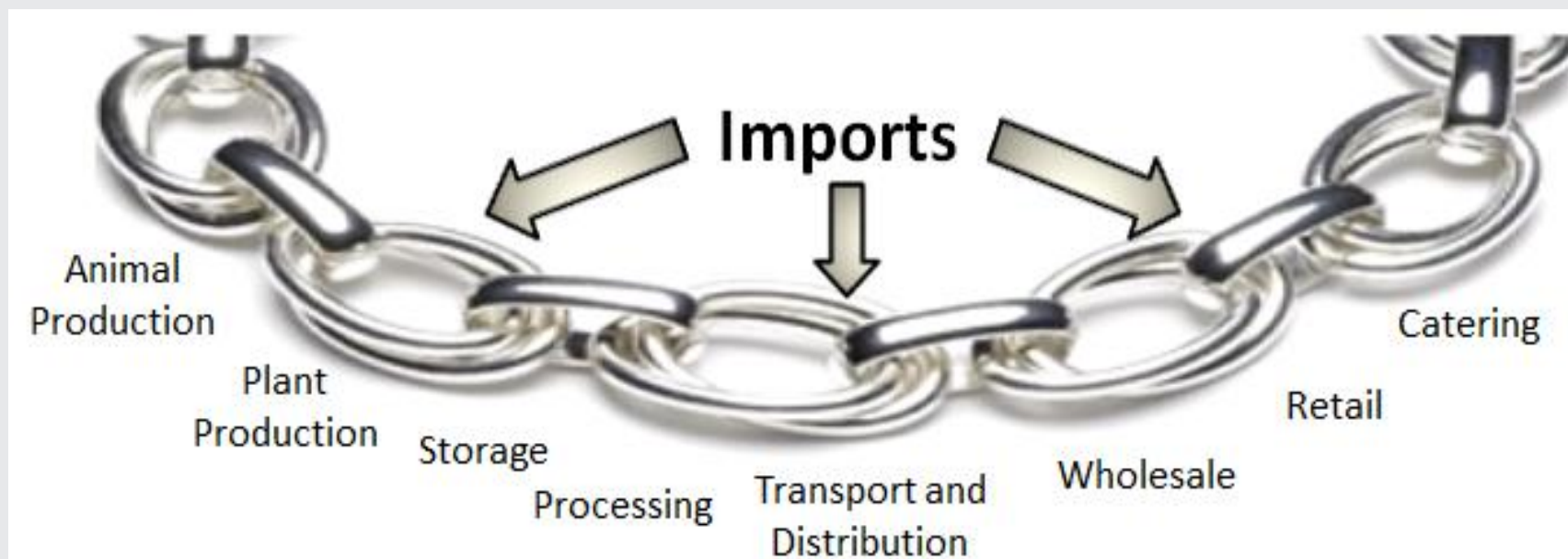
Description

ADFCA is in a unique position to parallel the best agriculture and food agencies in terms of its approach to ‘biosecurity’ in the widest sense as defined FAO.

Such ‘*a strategic and integrated approach*’ for dealing with risks presented along the food chain is achieved by developing a comprehensive and coherent set of policies applicable across the entire ‘biosecurity’ area – effectively across the ‘Farm to Fork’ continuum

Food chain “Farm to Fork” Continuum

The food chain covers all agricultural inputs and production of plants and animals, all processing, manufacture, transportation and distribution through to retail, catering in all its forms and sale. The food chain also covers all food imports and exports



General policy- Risk Management Framework

Position

ADFCA's Integrated Risk Management Framework, based on risk analysis, is an essential tool to provide a consistent approach for making decisions on any government intervention and action in response to animal, plant and human health related issues.

ADFCA recognises it must have a science strategy to prioritise its work within the relevant area, while ensuring functional separation of any risk assessment activities

Rationale

The Abu Dhabi Integrated Risk Management Framework is fundamental to effective compliance and provides the approach that ADFCA will take in establishing plant, animal and human health measures. This approach is a means of improving efficiency and optimal use of resources.

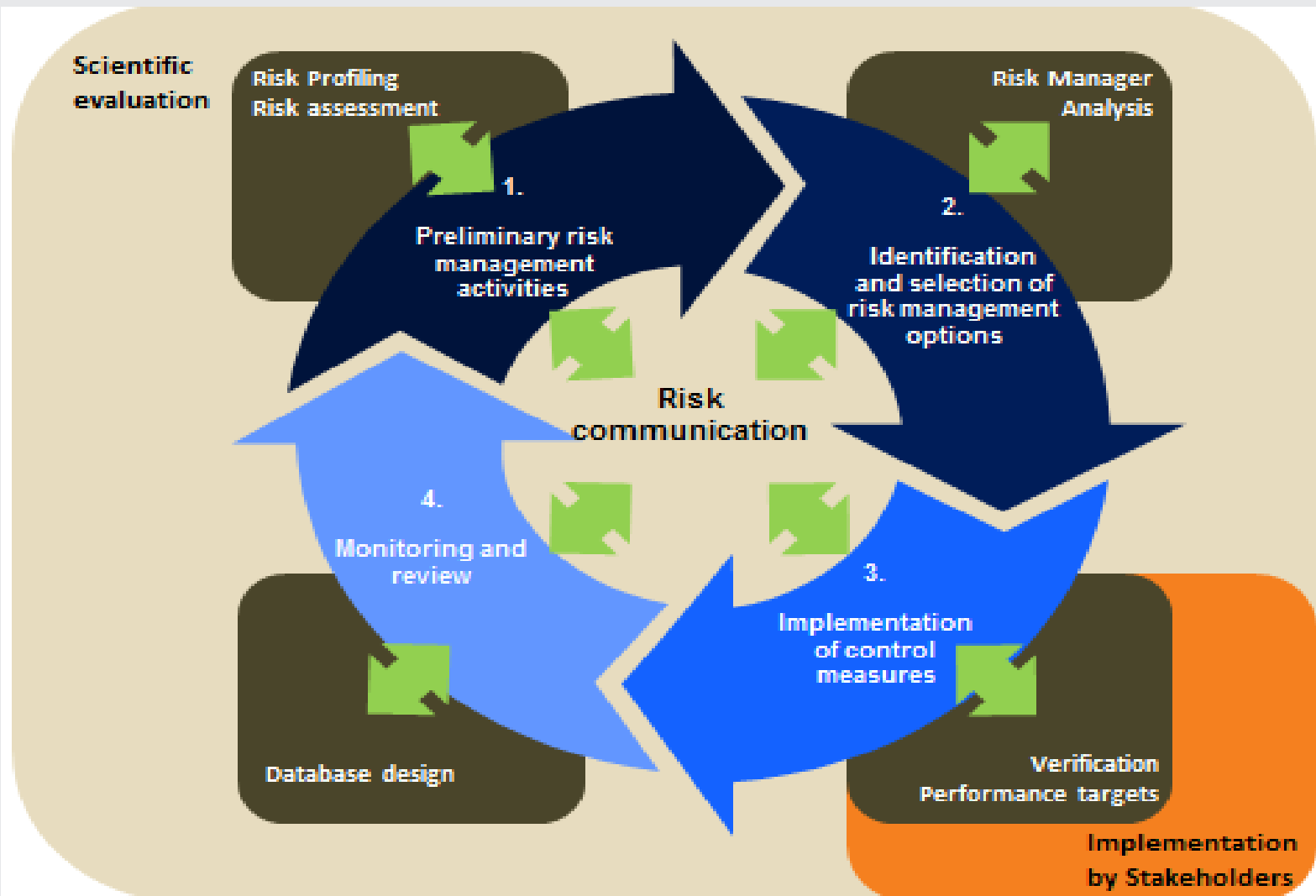
Description

Development and application of an integrated risk management framework to relevant aspects of policy, legislation and issue management across the food chain in Abu Dhabi is a core part of ADFCA's approach to managing risk

ADFCA takes the final risk management decisions, and is involved in all the steps of the risk management framework including assisting in provision of training and education

Risk Management Framework

The four key steps for applying the **AD Integrated Risk Management Framework** are:
Preliminary risk management activities, Identification & selection of risk management options, Implementation of control measures and Monitoring and review



General policy- Abu Dhabi Regulatory Model

Position

A Regulatory Model has been designed to describe the core roles of the key players:

- ADFCA (Regulator Inspection , verification, and enforcement)
- Industry, including primary production % food service (producing safe and suitable food)
- Consumers

It also sets out the relationship to international commitments and agreements and to the UAE Federal requirements.

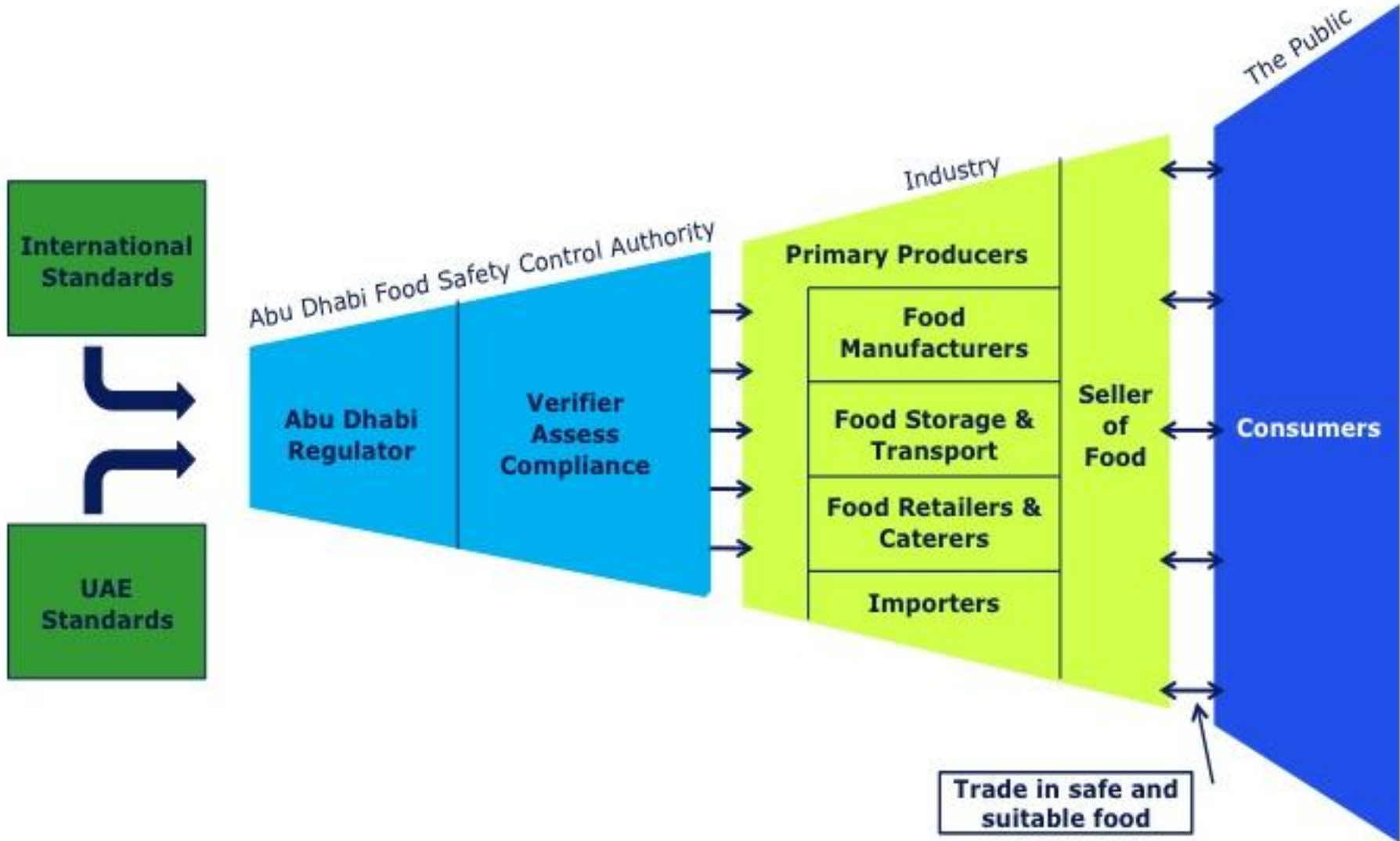
Rationale

A regulatory model provides clarity around the functions that each of the key players (regulator, inspector /verifier, business operator and consumer) in the agriculture and food sectors plays and the inter-relationship between those players and functions.

Description

ADFCA will provide a cost effective and efficient regulatory program where business operators across the food chain take primary responsibility for meeting regulatory requirements. ADFCA will implement a regulatory approach that is simple, practical, risk-based, integrated and harmonised across the food chain and across individual groups within it.

Abu Dhabi Regulatory Model



General policy- Good Operating Practice

Position

ADFCA recognizes the importance of 'Good Operating Practice' including HACCP principles, in order to encompass best practice along the food chain whether that is agricultural, veterinary, manufacturing or hygiene. Good Operating Practice is also intended to encompass application of HACCP principles where necessary

Rationale

What has been considered 'prerequisite building blocks', 'HACCP principles' and 'HACCP steps' have been packaged into a concept called 'Good Operating Practice' in order to present 'good practices' for business operators without the complexity.

Description

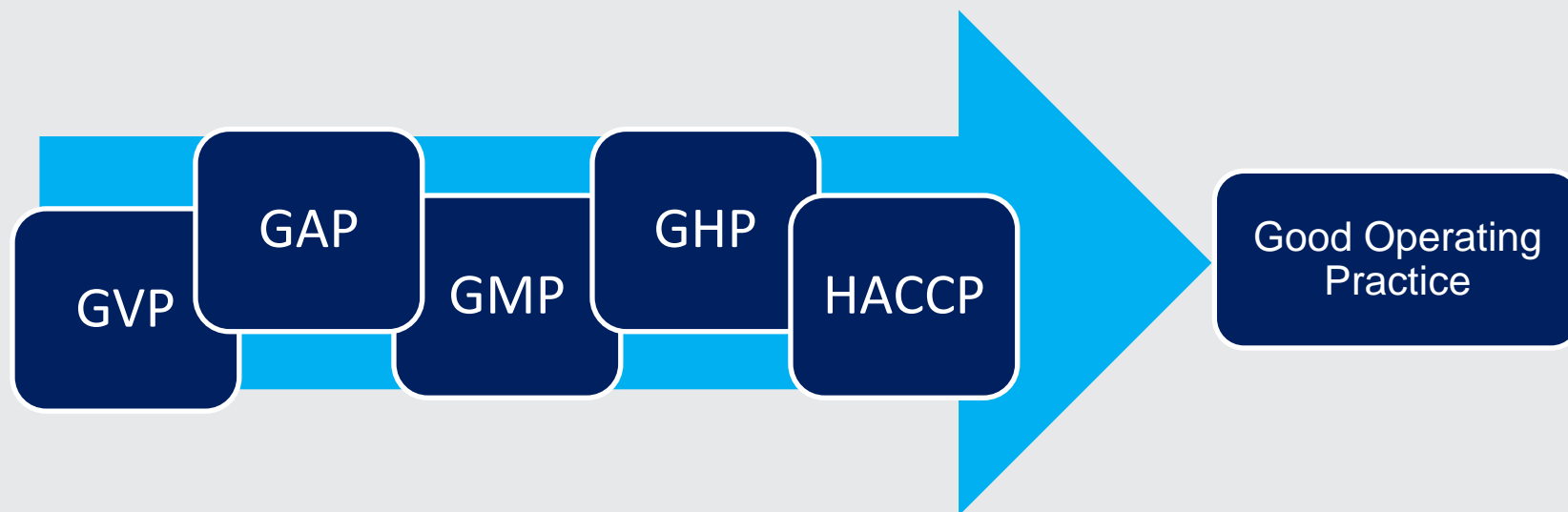
HACCP was developed in response to a need for a more science-based approach to control hazards in food primarily in large scale food processing and manufacturing sectors.

Small businesses are generally comfortable with an approach that has them being responsible for producing but often they want to be provided with more guidance from the regulator and a practical and simple way that 'meets' requirements.

Good Operating Practice builds in HACCP.

General policy- Good Operating Practice

The application of HACCP needs an underpinning of 'good practices' that take into account aspects of GAP (good agricultural practice), good veterinary practice, GMP (good manufacturing practice) and GHP (good hygienic practice). Good Operating Practice combines these, and HACCP, into a practical and operable risk-based food safety management system.



General policy- Capability and Credibility

Position

ADFCA strives to achieve Credibility that enhances the confidence in the totality of the Abu Dhabi regulatory program covering the food chain. ADFCA is aiming to engender credibility by demonstrating it is a world class regulatory agency and 'competent authority' that has professionalism and integrity as cornerstones of its organisational culture.

Rationale

Capability within or available to ADFCA is an essential part of a world class regulatory agency and critical to ADFCA's credibility as a reputable and well branded 'competent authority'.

Description

ADFCA recognises it must create, then operate within, a coherent agriculture and food policy framework that ensures responsiveness of the program to international regulatory (multi-lateral and bi-lateral) and trade developments.

Regulatory performance relies on maintaining and enhancing credible technical capability and risk management expertise.

General policy – Transparency through consultation and communication

Position

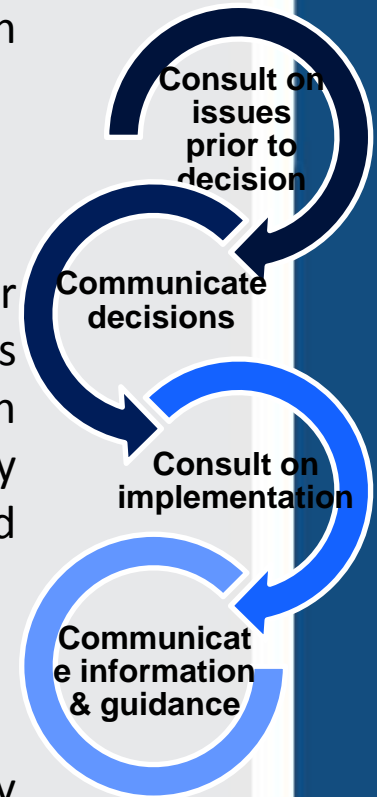
ADFCA recognizes Transparency as a key feature of the government's regulatory framework which will be achieved through deploying an efficient consultation and communication approach.

Rationale

Transparency is a key attribute of a national regulatory framework for government and has been identified as important to allow stakeholders across the food chain to contribute and provide a means for the regulator to explain the basis of decisions and encourage cooperation from parties affected by decisions. Transparency can be achieved through general consultation and communication.

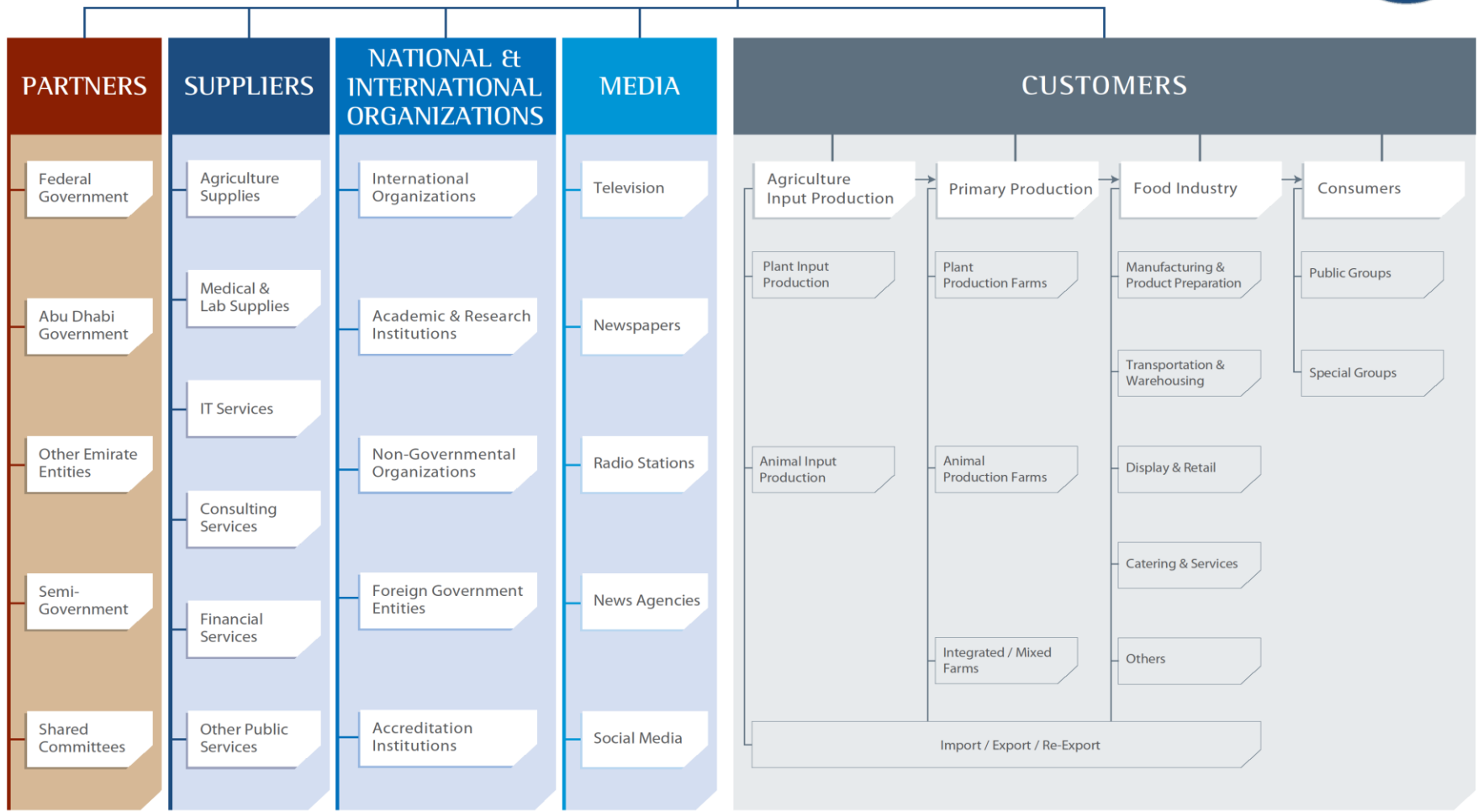
Description

Various consultation and communication tools that contributes to transparency are set out. Public participation involved a phased continuum which starts with basic Information exchange, into Consultation and Engagement dialogue, and further extends to Shared decision making, and Shared jurisdiction.

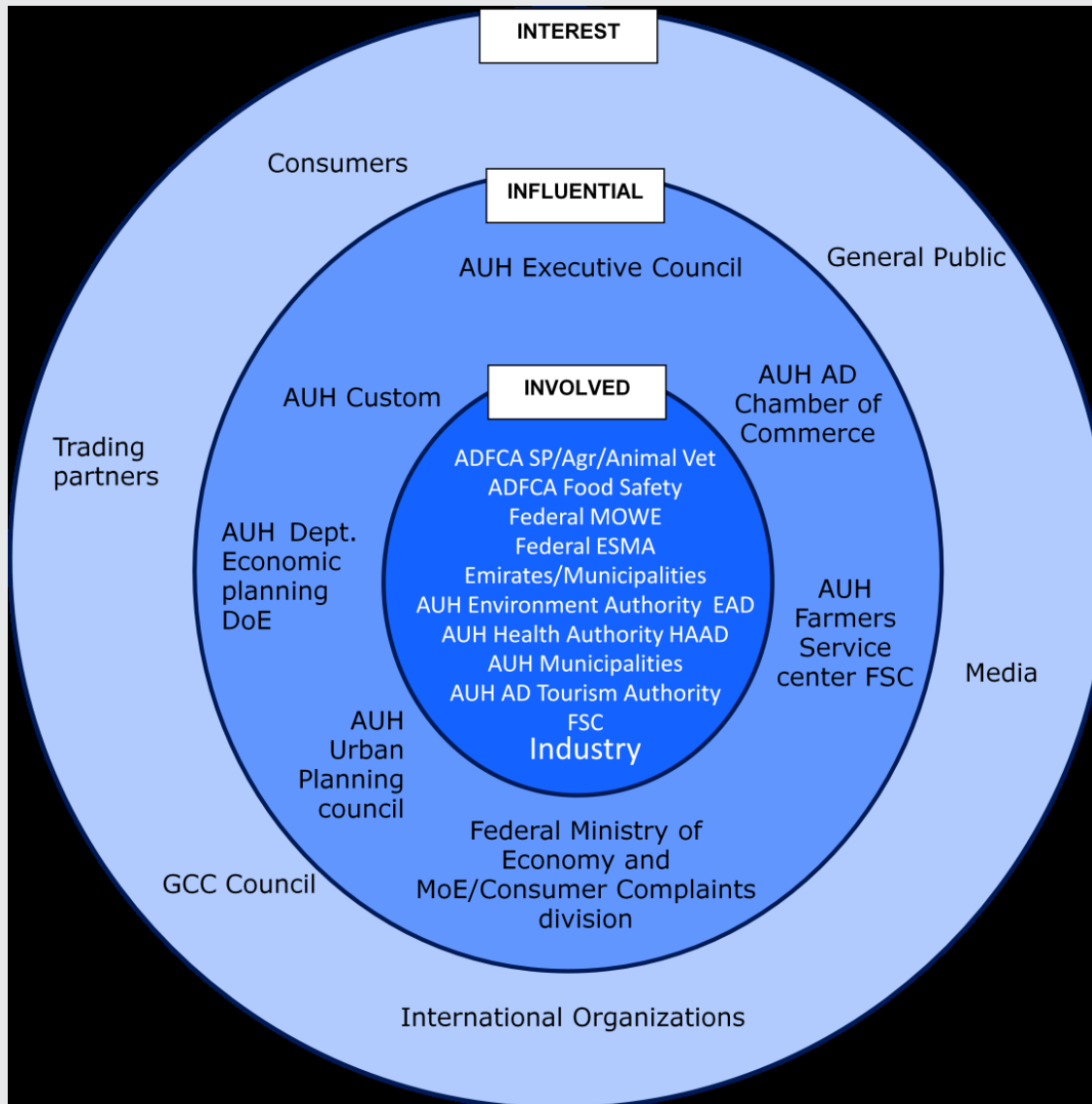


Stakeholders Groupings

ADFCA'S STAKEHOLDERS' GROUPS



Stakeholders Involvement



General policy- Consistency with WTO SPS and TBT Agreements



Position

ADFCA realizes that Abu Dhabi, as a member of the UAE, accepts its obligations under the WTO Agreements and the associated reference bodies: Codex, OIE and IPPC. ADFCA contributes to the Federal role in this area. At a national level, the regulatory program will be greatly enhanced by the relationships that the UAE, the Abu Dhabi Government and ADFCA build. Entering government-to-government arrangements are particularly important for an efficient and streamlined imports program

Rationale

The UAE is a signatory to the WTO and the SPS and TBT Agreements. The UAE is also a member of Codex, OIE and IPPC. These memberships carry with them obligations and benefits in terms of trade and fairness of treatment in the global trading environment.

Description

The obligations and commitments and response of Abu Dhabi in relation to WTO SPS and TBT are set out. This primarily in areas of setting of ALOPs , commitment to science & risk based approach, transparency in bilateral trade and regulator/stakeholder relation, regionalization of exotic diseases control efforts , and equivalence between importing and exporting counterparts.

General policy- Harmonisation across UAE

Position

At a national level, the overall country level regulatory program will be greatly enhanced by the relationships that the Abu Dhabi Government and ADFCA build across the UAE. Entering emirate-to-emirate arrangements (where applicable) are particularly important for an efficient and streamlined programs

Rationale

The UAE commits member emirate states to meeting WTO SPS/TBT obligations. The Emirate states of the UAE therefore need to ensure their agri-food approaches are harmonised in order to deliver on obligations.

Description

ADFCA will endeavour to influence positively the setting of strategies and regulatory model requirements at the federal level. There will undoubtedly be pressure to harmonise requirements to a greater level across the country and ADFCA strives to contribute substantially and constructively in this process.

Given the high level of imports by the UAE and open movement once within the UAE, consistent application of a well thought out and risk based approach to imports policy, particularly in relation to specific product/source country combinations, is important.³⁴

General policy- Performance Management

Position

ADFCA acknowledges that Performance across the food chain is a measure of its accomplishment against the desired objectives. As such, ADFCAs' performance measures include those identified at the organizational level as well as more specific measures set on the sector level.

Rationale

The goal in establishing a performance management system is to develop systems, criteria and evaluation tools to measure overall performance.

Description

The underlying principles of a performance management system include the following:

- Performance information may be quantitative (measurable) or qualitative (subject to rankings and judgment) and must be collected and used in a systematic manner
- Performance measures can be both outcome-based and output-based
- Performance measurement systems should be SMART
- Performance should be measured in the context of agreed time lines, including achievement of interim goals as the system matures..

General policy- Traceability

Position

ADFCA recognises that product traceability is an important part of delivering on transparency and information needs throughout the food chain and can be vital during incidents (such as where recalls are necessary or an exotic disease outbreak).

ADFCA endorses the Codex (i.e. one step forward and one step backward) and OIE principles of traceability. Furthermore, ADFCA shall continue the ongoing work on the establishment of animal identification and registration system that this is the foundation of a more complete and holistic traceability system.

Rationale

Product traceability and associated labelling can be key tools for answering demands for transparency, for dealing with incidents and for satisfying information needs about food at the time of purchase.

Description

The purpose of traceability and trace-back essentially falls within three areas: Risk assessment, Recall procedures and Market eligibility.

General policy- Trade in Food (Imports and Exports)

Position

ADFCA recognizes that the emirate, as a net importer of food, needs to have effective measures and appropriate assurances in place to protect the health of its plants, animal and people from risks associated with imports.

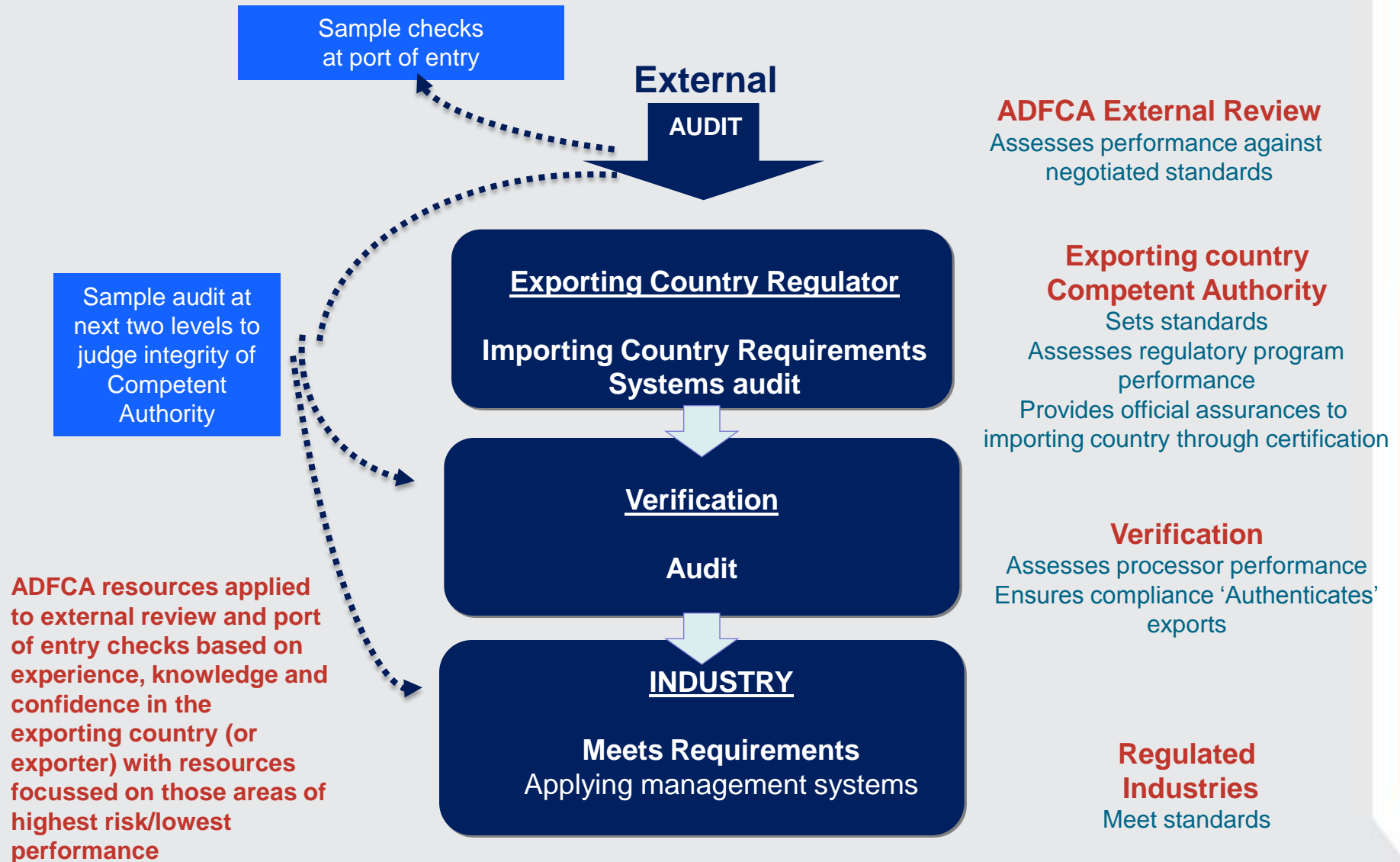
Rationale

Control of imports ensures that food entering the Abu Dhabi food supply is safe and suitable. Controls need to be risk-based and cost effective to optimizeresources to the process and minimize costs that might be passed on to consumers.

Description

There are various tools to assess import status which includes The operational and technical requirements in place, The performance of the program against the requirements & benefiting from other country experiences, while introducing appropriate assurances (i.e. health certificates and documentation)

Import and Export



Agriculture Policies

Agriculture Policies

Agriculture Production

1. Agricultural Land Use
2. Agricultural Water Use
3. Production Choices
4. Economic Sustainability

Agriculture Protection

5. On-Farm Prevention Measures
6. Pest and Disease Control
7. Regulated Areas for Pest and Disease Management
8. Emergency Preparedness and Response
9. Preservation of valuable agricultural species

Common Agricultural Policies

10. Research and Development
11. Social Support
12. Agricultural Compounds
13. Animal Welfare
14. Competencies and On Farm Capabilities
15. Compliance, Offences, Penalties and Enforcement

Agriculture Policies

Agriculture Production Policies

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Common Agricultural Policies

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14. Competencies and Farm Capabilities

15. Compliance, Offences, Penalties and Enforcement

Agriculture Production Policies

Introduction to Agriculture Production

Production relates to the activity of growing, rearing and producing raw material for entry to the food chain.

The potential environmental concerns are covered in the first two policies, Agricultural Land Use Policy and Agricultural Water Use Policy.

Success in the agriculture sector is very dependent on choices the farm owner/operator makes concerning what to produce for the food chain.

Factors influencing product choice are covered in the policy Production Choices.

The policy on Economic Sustainability identifies the necessary factors and inter- linkages for agriculture to be successful and sustainable.

P1: Agricultural Land Use

Position

- Sustainable agriculture requires land and soil to support the agriculture activity
- ADFCA will use a consistent decision-making framework to identify the optimal use of land for agriculture
- ADFCA will pursue inter-agency coordination on such matters.

Rationale

Agriculture uses and exploits Abu Dhabi land. A consistent decision-making framework for reaching future decisions on land use concerning agriculture will ensure optimal agricultural use.

P1: Agricultural Land Use (cont.)

Description

The Government desires “economic diversification, sustainability and distribution throughout the regions” (Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030). The Policy Covers:

1. Economic, Environmental and Social objectives

2. Data for analysis

3. Issues around scale of operation

4. Land use Impact Assessment addresses these factors in four steps aligned with the Risk Mgt Framework in the General Policies

5. Waste Management

6. Liaison with other departments and agencies

P1: Agricultural Land Use (cont.)

Steps for the Agricultural Land Use Impact Assessment



P2: Agricultural Water Use

Position

- Agriculture is one of the largest users of fresh water in Abu Dhabi. That use must be efficient and sustainable
- ADFCA supports the use of a consistent impact assessment framework for reaching decisions on the use of water by agriculture that maximise efficiency and support sustainability
- ADFCA will pursue inter-agency coordination on such matters.

Rationale

Agriculture to date has impacted on the source and quality of fresh water used. A policy to guide future decision-making will ensure agricultural use of water is sustainable and efficient.

P2: Agricultural Water Use (cont.)

Description

Fresh water is a valuable and costly commodity in Abu Dhabi.
The policy covers:

Water sources are changing as ground water stocks are depleted

Barriers to efficient agricultural water use

Water targets for use

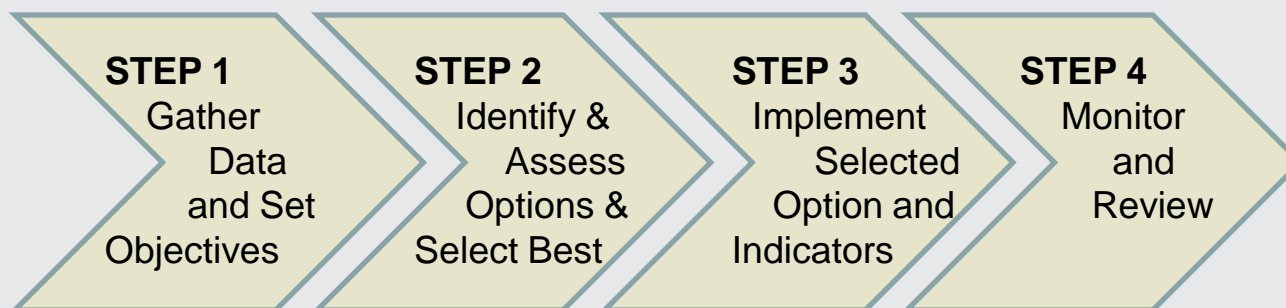
Water Use Impact Assessment addresses economic, social and environmental factors in reaching decisions on agriculture activities using water

Data for water impact assessments

Liaison with other departments and agencies

P2: Agricultural Water Use (cont.)

Steps for the Agricultural Water Use Impact Assessment



P3: Production Choices

Position

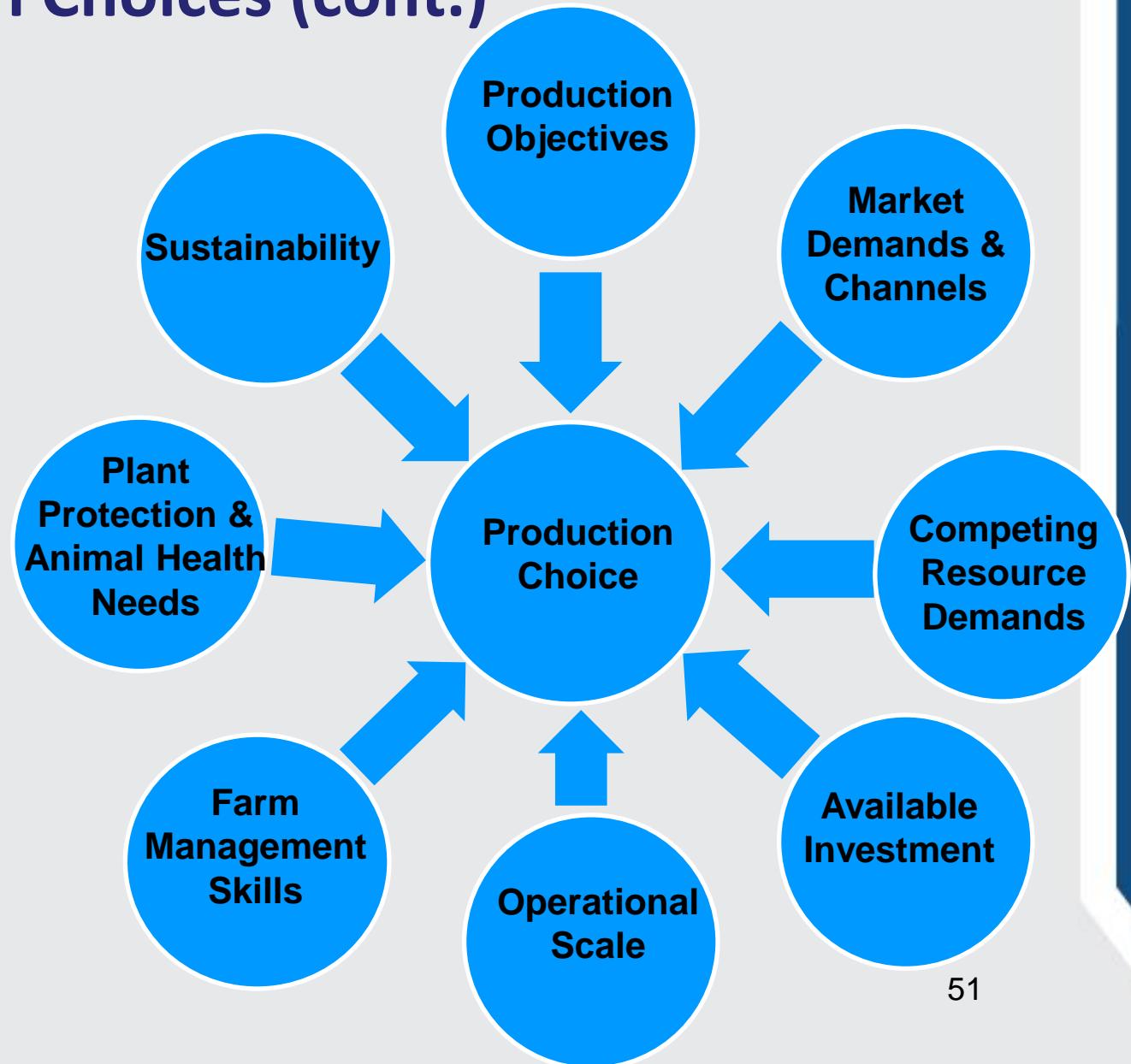
- ADFCA will ensure decisions on government intervention will be subject to rigorous analysis to deliver a neutral or positive impact on the natural and economic environment
- ADFCA has a key role in providing relevant agricultural data to ensure the best decisions on production choices are made by both government and businesses.

Rationale

Decisions by the agriculture sector – government and private – require many factors to be considered in order for agriculture to be sustainable economically and environmentally. This policy identifies the factors that need to be considered.

P3: Production Choices (cont.)

The factors of production choice are:



P3: Production Choices (cont.)

Description

Making the production choice

With each scenario or proposal, the factors in production choice decisions need to be addressed:

- Economic viability: the extent of income generated over expenditure applied – including the cost of capital.
- Barriers to decision making: reliable, baseline data in these areas would assist both government and private interests make investment decisions

P4: Economic Sustainability

Position

- Improved capability and supporting infrastructure are necessary for an economically sustainable agriculture sector
- Such a sector produces and successfully markets appropriate volumes of safe and high-quality food
- ADFCA will continue its investment in building capability and supporting infrastructure in the sector by providing or redirecting assistance.

Rationale

There are opportunities to increase productive capacity along the food chain through public and private investment. Realising those opportunities can only occur if they are investigated and are economically sustainable. This policy sets out Government's role in the process.

P4: Economic Sustainability (cont.)

Description

ADFCA, through the Farmers Services Centre and other assistance measures, is supporting farmers to expand productivity and market their produce. The principles for this are:

- The agriculture sector produces what the market needs
- A profit motive is maintained to incentivise better productivity
- Any Government support must reinforce the first two principles

Applying these principles will deliver a more commercial agriculture sector, as desired by Government.

Agriculture Protection Policies

Introduction to protection

Components of an effective plant protection and animal health system are:

- Science and risk based approach to identifying and responding to risks of greatest impact to the agriculture sector and response options
- Identification of risk pathways and effective pre- and post-border measures to prevent relevant pests and diseases entering
- Global and regional coordination to identify and manage emerging risks to human, animal and plant life and health
- Surveillance programs and diagnostic services
- Partnerships with agriculture producers
- Comprehensive protection approaches to minimise introduction
- Education and awareness programs
- Enforcement of agriculture protection requirements
- Capability to deliver protection

P5: On-farm Prevention Measures

Position

- On-farm prevention measures minimise the introduction of animals and plants carrying pests and diseases
- ADFCA will develop guidelines and assurance programs for preventative measures to protect farms from the arrival of new pests and diseases
- These will complement the responsibilities of Federal agencies concerning cross border movements

Rationale

Application of best practice animal and plant health preventative measures minimise the introduction of new pests and diseases. This policy identifies how best practices might be delivered to and by farm operators.

P5: On-farm Prevention Measures (cont.)

Description

Best practice prevention measures will involve:

- Sourcing animals and plants from pest and disease free sources, or
- For plants and animals being introduced to the farm to be treated/vaccinated against pests and diseases that present risks prior to entry to the farm
- Farm management practices that minimise pest and disease occurrence

Educating and training farm workers on applying preventative measures and early recognition of pest and disease problems is important

P6: Pest and disease control

Position

- ADFCA will identify the pests and diseases of greatest impact to the agriculture sector
- ADFCA will develop the best practice pest and disease control measures
- ADFCA will ensure farmers are informed of best practices for the control of specific pests and diseases

Rationale

The occurrence of pests and diseases are known to severely affect human, plant and animal life and health. Pest and disease controls need to be applied as necessary to maintain the health of animals and plants and mitigate risks to humans. Control measures need developing and be communicated to farmers.

P6: Pest and disease control (cont.)

Description

- Key methods/techniques for managing:
 - animal pests and diseases include treatment with agriculture compounds, modification of farm management practice, feed supplementation to prevent deficiency diseases and prevention measures that include vaccination and culling
 - plant pests and diseases include habitat manipulation, modification of cultural practices, use of resistant varieties, biological control perhaps utilising introduced biological control agents.
- Techniques for pest and disease control in plants or animals should be integrated and take account of economic and environmental impacts.
- Codes of practice are needed for facilitating uptake by farmers.

P7: Regulated Areas for Pest and Disease Management

Position

- ADFCA will, as necessary, establish or assist UAE's federal government or the GCC in the establishment of areas regulated to manage pests and diseases
- Such regulated areas may be zones/regions, compartments, pest free areas or areas of low pest prevalence.

Rationale

The impact of specific pests and diseases on farms can be significant in lost production as well as risks to human health. Establishment of regulated areas is an effective tool for management.

P7: Regulated Areas for Pest and Disease Management (cont.)

Description

- For the purposes of managing particular pests and diseases, ADFCA will develop procedures for the establishment of regulated areas, and the capability to establish such areas when necessary.
- Such regulated areas are referred to as zones/regions or compartments in regard to animal health status
- Pest free areas or areas of low pest prevalence are recognised terms in regard to plant health.
- Establishment of a pest free area or disease free zone/region requires:
 - Systems to establish freedom from pests and diseases
 - Phytosanitary or sanitary measures to maintain freedom, and
 - Checks to verify freedom has been maintained.

P8: Emergency preparedness and response

Position

- ADFCA will develop response protocols that are able to be applied in a range of scenarios (from small to large scale, and general to specific)
- ADFCA will develop a Crisis Management Plan in collaboration with Emirate and Federal agencies
- ADFCA will ensure it has the technical and human resource capability and capacity to respond to any rising emergency

Rationale

A range of potential agriculture emergencies exist, varying in their likely occurrence, likely threat to human health and impact on the integrity of the food chain. Systems must be in place to deal with the likelihood of agriculture related emergencies of any nature.

P8: Emergency preparedness and response (cont.)

Description

- Key components of emergency response are:
 - Effective surveillance for early detection of exotic pests and diseases including zoonoses
 - Preparedness for necessary emergency response including contingency plans
 - Rapid investigation and diagnostics
 - Early notification to the Federal and relevant International organisations
 - Application of quarantine measures to limit the pest or disease spread
 - Ability to apply eradication and control measures, including treatments or the destruction of animals or plants.

P8: Emergency preparedness and response (cont.)

Description

- ADFCA recognises Federal and regional collaborative roles should satisfy:
 - Harmonization of agricultural protection policies and strategies
 - Development of joint pest and disease documented control programs
 - Development of compatible systems for pest and disease reporting & information sharing,
 - Exchange of information on pest and disease occurrence and incidence along with aligned effort when preparing and drafting contingency plans.

P9: Preservation of valuable agricultural species

Position

- ADFCA will ensure that the Emirate makes best use of and capitalises on Abu Dhabi's valuable genetic resources for agricultural purposes.
- ADFCA recognises the prime role of the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD) in the conservation of Abu Dhabi Emirate's biological diversity, and will coordinate with Federal/local agencies as necessary to protect local species or varieties of value to agriculture.

Rationale

To maximise the efficiency of farm production, relevant local species or varieties (e.g. date palm, local camel, sheep and goat breeds) should be protected and utilised for the efficient production of food or feed in Abu Dhabi.

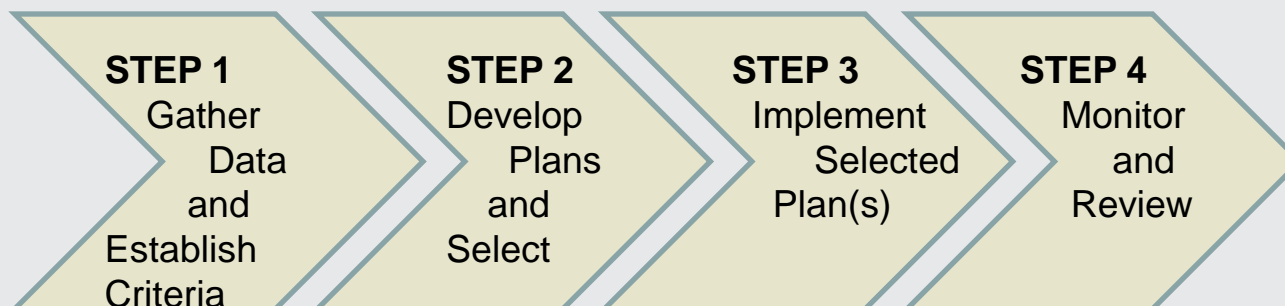
P9: Preservation of valuable agricultural species (cont.)

Description

In recognising the prime role of EAD in the conservation of the Emirate's biological diversity, ADFCA focuses on:

- Ensuring the best use of Abu Dhabi's valuable genetic resources in the Emirate's agriculture production, and
- Following the steps of the Integrated Risk Management Framework to identify, protect and preserve local species or varieties of value to agriculture

Steps for the Integrated Risk Management Framework



Common Agricultural Policies

P10: Research and Development

Position

- ADFCA invests in R&D in the agriculture sector:
 - Commissioning R&D in areas relevant to agriculture
 - Providing guidance to the wider Agricultural R&D sector.
- ADFCA will ensure that R&D is directly aligned to addressing:
 - key issues facing the sector or
 - key data needed for decision making in the sector.
- ADFCA will identify, record and prioritise issues and data needs over time.
- ADFCA will leverage existing R&D worldwide where appropriate and tailor this to the local environment as necessary to avoid duplicating effort.

P10: Research and Development (cont.)

Rationale

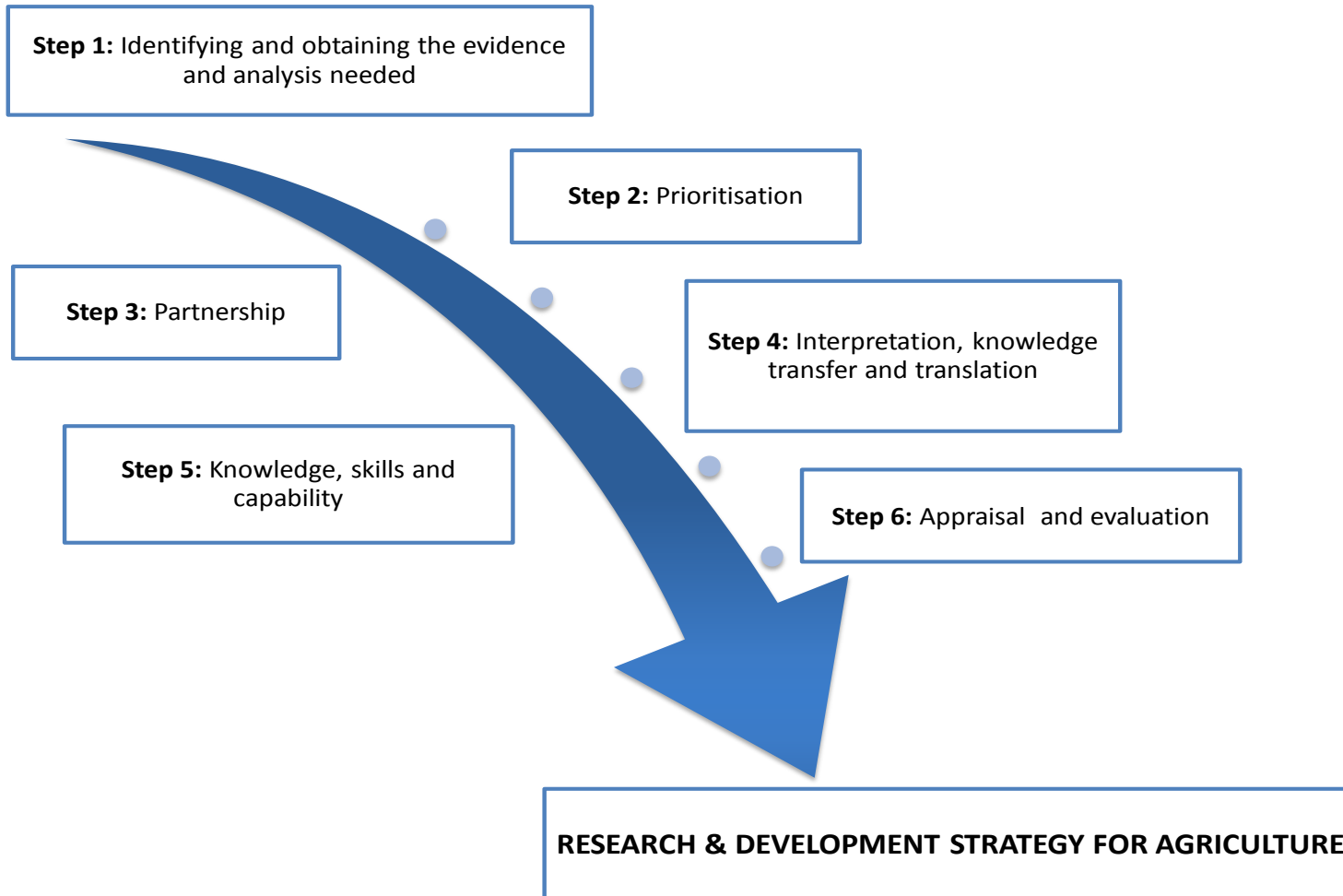
R&D, when aligned to solving the key issues facing the agriculture sector or meeting its data needs, can enable economic and environmental sustainable development.

Description

To deliver the best value for money, research commissioned by ADFCA needs to address issues and data needs identified by the Emirate, should not duplicate research undertaken or in train elsewhere in the region or the world, should be prioritised.

An agricultural R&D strategy for ADFCA could deliver on all the above principles and provide a pilot for a broader R&D strategy for the Department.

Steps in the Development of an R&D Strategy for Agriculture



P11: Social Support

Position

- ADFCA will continue to provide social support to encourage sustainable agricultural practices and production.
- ADFCA will allocate social support to encourage the six distinct outcomes.
 - Compliance with best practice
 - Farm owners continue to farm sustainably
 - Preservation of natural resources
 - Farmers supplying local demand
 - Maintaining and enhance cultural traditions
 - Contribute to food security
- ADFCA will continue to provide social support to producers so long as policies are adhered to.

P11: Social Support (cont.)

Rationale

Abu Dhabi is a harsh farm production environment. Encouragement is necessary to maintain the heritage of farm production whilst ensuring there is a sustainable contribution to the Emirate's food supply - assisting with the achievement of food security.

Description

Using social support to facilitate sustainability, build knowledge on the true cost of production and encourage compliance with best practice will be beneficial to the agriculture sector in the long term.



P12: Agriculture Compounds

Note, this policy is currently being revised

Position

- Businesses and farmers involved in the food chain have the primary responsibility for ensuring agriculture compounds do not present unacceptable risks to human, plant or animal health and to trade and the environment.
- ADFCA will collaborate with the Federal ministry on the control of agriculture compounds to address risks and expand agricultural capacity.
- ADFCA will ensure implementation of controls, dispensing and application of agriculture compounds

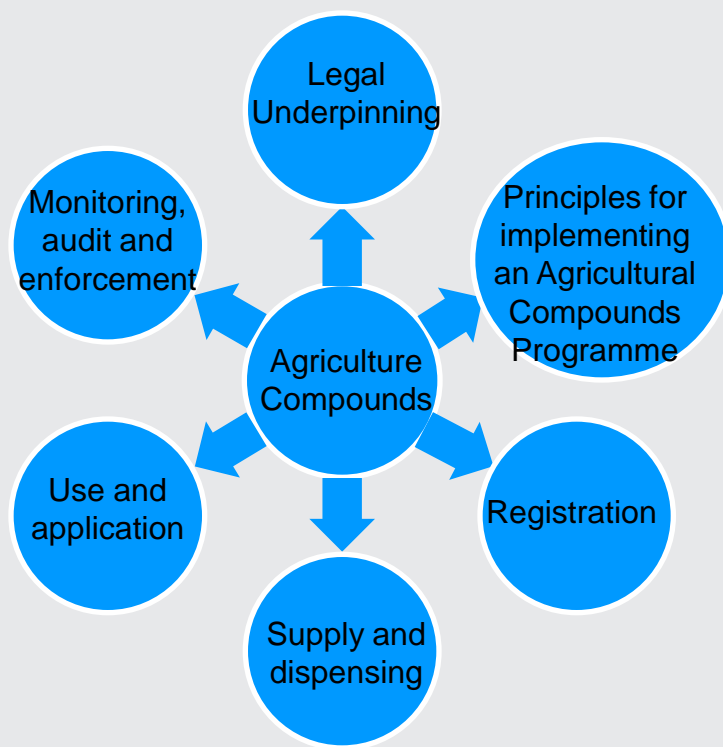
Rationale

Controls on the availability and application of agricultural compounds ensure that the target product, whether animal or plant, is efficacious, safe to use and safe for the animal as well as the consumer at the time of consumption, that trade is not jeopardised and the environment is protected.

P12: Agriculture Compounds (cont.)

Description

Modern agriculture food producing systems should be designed and managed to ensure that the exposure of food producing plants and animals to agricultural compounds does not pose inappropriate risks to human health, trade in food, animal welfare or the environment. This Policy covers:



P12: Agriculture Compounds (cont.)

Definition

An Agriculture Compound is defined as any substance, mixture of substances or biological compound used or intended for use in the direct management of plants and animals, or applied to the land, place or water on or in which plants and animals are managed. Agriculture compounds include pesticides (including bio-pesticides, chemical pesticides and insect growth regulators), veterinary and other animal drugs (including vaccines), biological control agents, fertilisers, feeds and pheromones

P13: Animal Welfare

Position

- The law covering Animal Welfare is set at the Federal level.
- ADFCA will ensure compliance with animal welfare requirements by those dealing with animals.
- The responsibility for animal welfare rests with those dealing with animals

Rationale

Those who keep animals have obligations to protect their welfare and government policy should be focused on supporting keepers of animals in providing for the welfare needs of their animals. Good animal welfare practices are also associated with increased productivity ADFCA will set the expectations, requirements and sanctions in order to ensure that these obligations are being met.

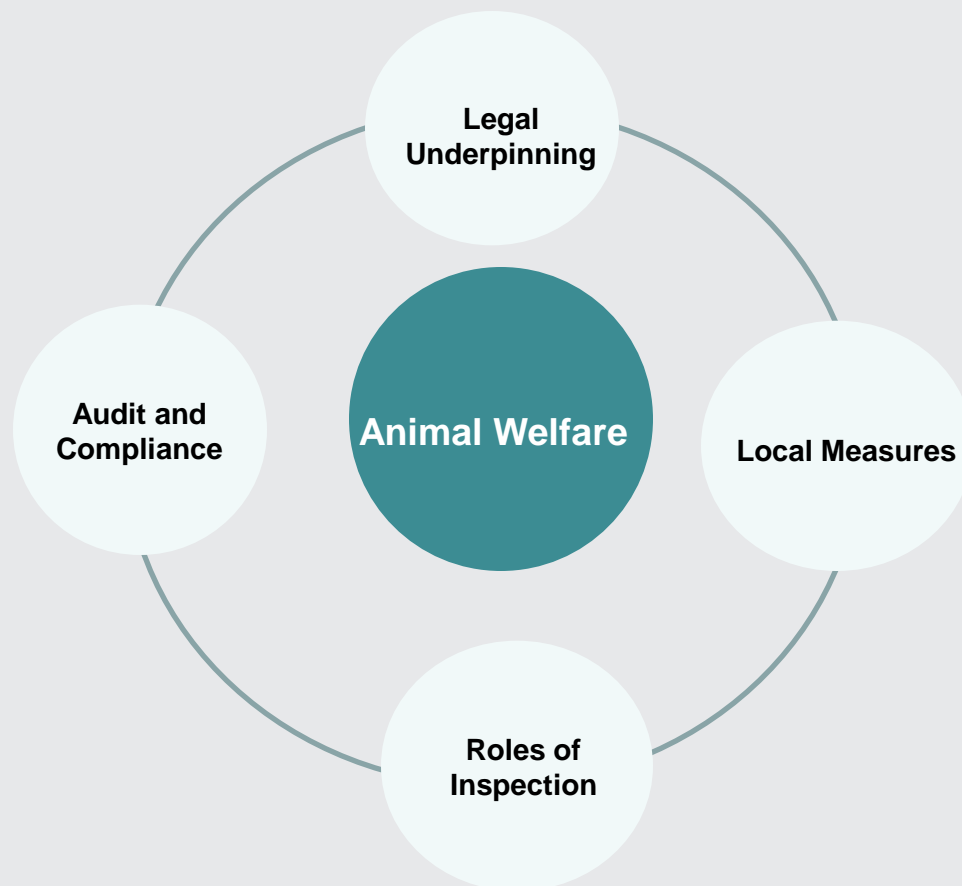
P13: Animal Welfare (cont.)

Description

- Animal welfare is the physical and psychological wellbeing of animals. Welfare is measured by indicators including behaviour, physiology, longevity, and reproduction.
- Animal welfare at one level can be seen as a complex public policy issue, with important scientific, ethical, economic, cultural and religious, trade and political dimensions. At another level animal welfare relates to how an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives.
- An animal is in a good state of welfare if it is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express innate behaviour, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear and distress.

P13: Animal Welfare (cont.)

This Policy Covers:



P14: Competencies and On Farm Capabilities

Position

- In order to have a safe food chain delivering products that meet consumers' needs, the capability of farmers, their farming operations and management practices are all critical success factors.
- ADFCA will support programmes that build capability:
 - Inside the farm gate
 - Across agriculture service suppliers, and
 - Within its organisation as appropriate

Rationale

Farmers are integral participants in the food chain and are the first to handle food in the chain. Their performance (or lack of it) affects the overall performance of the food chain therefore it is critical that they execute their role and responsibilities to the standards set by competent authority and expected by the consumer. Further, the harsh environment in which farmers operate and the scarcity of some inputs (e.g. water), means that they have to operate at peak performance if they are to be sustainable

P14: Competencies and On Farm Capabilities (cont.)

Description

Without this optimal level of operation, the food chain is not sustainable because consumers will lose confidence. An optimal level of farmer operation requires:

- Growing the right produce that best meets the capability of the farming systems
- Ability to adopt new technologies
- Awareness of the risks they are managing

P14: Competencies and On Farm Capabilities (cont.)

Description

The policy sets out expectations:

- On-farm
- For Service Providers
- For Regulators/inspectors/verifiers
- For Training

The policy also covers:

- Ability to adopt new technologies
- Awareness of the risks being managed

P15: Compliance, Offences, Penalties and Enforcement

Position

ADFCA will develop a programme specifically aimed at administering the application of a compliance regime across all agriculture production and protection activities.

| | Rationale | Description |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Compliance | Ensuring compliance delivers outcomes effectively and efficiently without the need to resort to legal enforcement and court proceedings. | Facilitating compliance can be effected through the application of a range of tools including training, education, advertising, extension services and general support for best agricultural practices. |
| Offences and penalties | Offences are needed so that those operating in the agriculture sector are clear on the nature of any transgressions they might generate. | Offences and penalties will vary according to the risk or harm to both animal and plant health, animal welfare and to public health and safety resulting from the action or inaction of the person or business involved. |
| Enforcement | Enforcement is necessary when any person in the agriculture sector does not comply with regulatory requirements associated with production, protection, animal welfare or agriculture compounds. | Managing non-compliance requires identification of the most appropriate response in the circumstance and to align the response with the seriousness of the non-compliance. |

Food Safety Policies

Food Safety Policies



P1: Accountabilities and roles

Position

ADFCA recognises the significance of accountability to the food regulator.

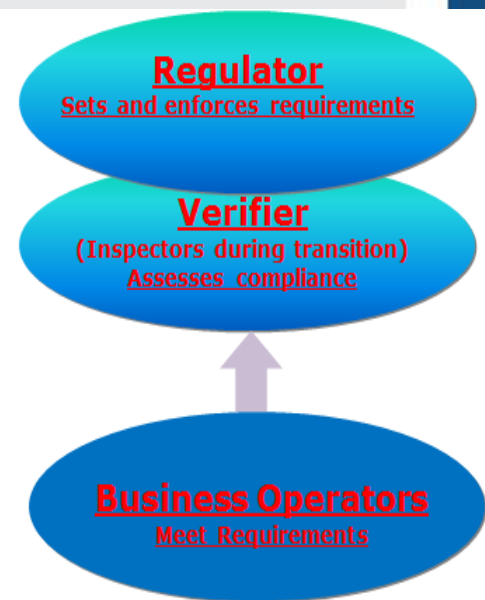
ADFCA recognizes the importance of the food business operator taking paramount responsibility over time for producing safe and suitable food.

Rationale

Accountability within the food safety system needs to be clear and transparent
In order that each of the key players understands their responsibilities
for delivering the strategic objective of ensuring safe and suitable
food in Abu Dhabi.

Description

Sets out the accountability and responsibility of the regulator,
the food business operator, importer and exporter and the
verifier.



P2: Licensing, Registration, Accreditation, Recognition, Approvals

Position

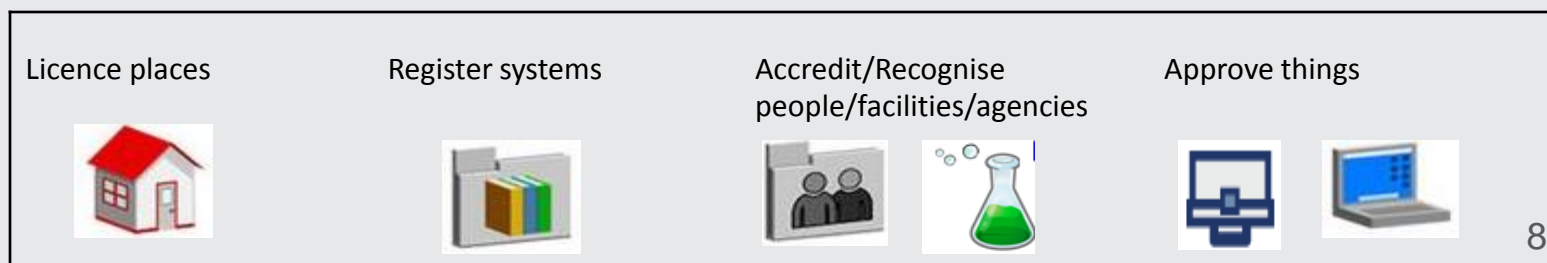
ADFCA recognizes its responsibility to the relevant aspects of, or all of, the licensing (of premises), registration (of food safety management systems), accreditation (of agencies and persons), recognition (of agencies and persons) and approvals (of things).

Rationale

Licensing, registration, accreditation, recognition and approvals provide the means of placing responsibilities and obligations on the various stakeholders and, for things or agencies, the means of ensuring pre-requisite or minimum requirements are met prior to use or operation

Description

For all licensing, registration, accreditation, recognition and approvals, a number of consistent elements are required.



P3: ASSESSING COMPLIANCE- VERIFICATION (Inspection during Transition)

Position :

ADFCA understands that the long term position of assessing compliance will be through applying the verification model. In this model, verification is applied to a food business's operations against an approved and registered food safety management system. The model places responsibility for producing safe and suitable food on the food business operator which is the foundation of the food regulatory program. In the short term (during transition) the current inspection model will continue where compliance is assessed against relevant prescriptive regulatory requirements. verification will only replace inspection once the ADFCA verifier has confidence that the business operator is effectively operating management systems.

Rationale:

In a modern food safety regulatory program, verification supports food business operators making decisions that go to food safety and gives effect to the change in responsibility from government to business.

P3: ASSESSING COMPLIANCE- VERIFICATION (Inspection during Transition)

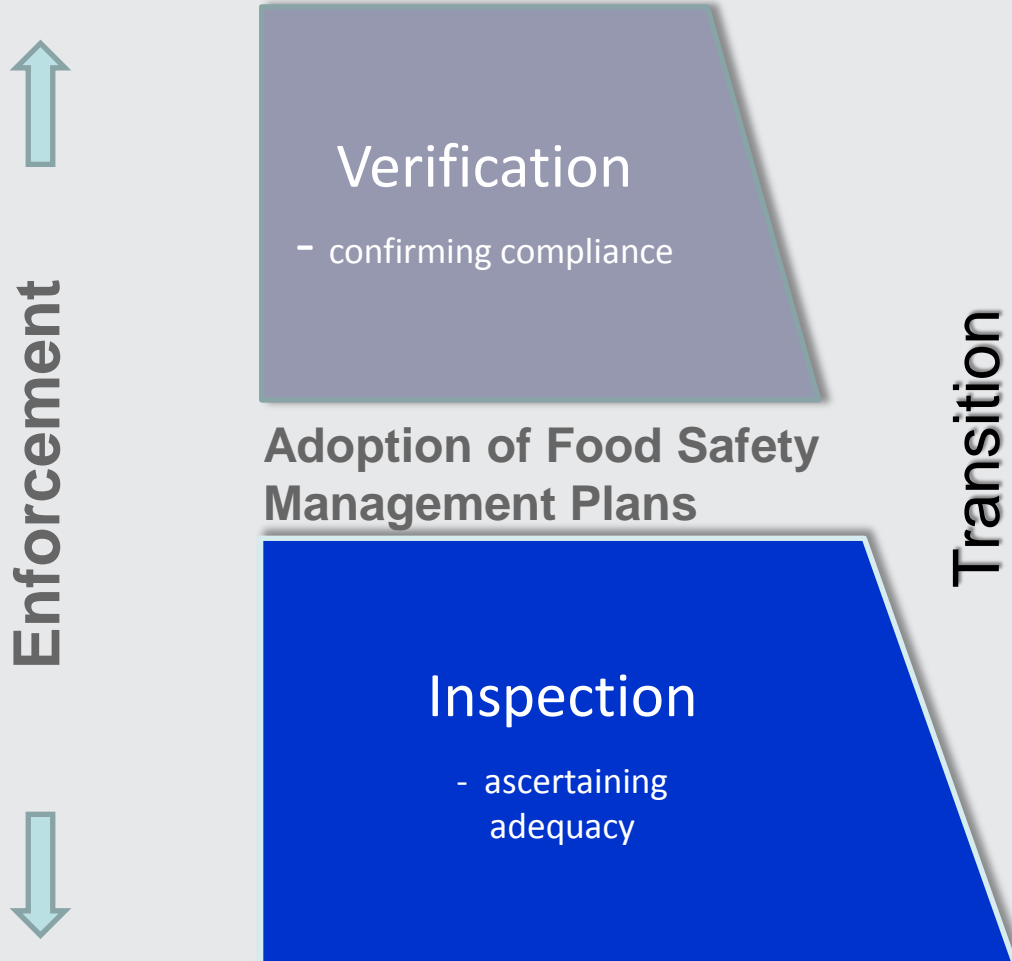
Description :

ADFCA's ultimate goal is to replace the current inspection model by a verification model under which food officers will assess compliance against FSMS requirements. In some businesses where this may not be required, exemption and subjection to appropriate risk mitigation measures will be the rule.

The current inspection model is being evolved into a risk-based approach taking into account the type of foods produced, scale of operations, handling methods, at-risk consumers and the food business operators' performance in meeting all requirements to allocate the inspection frequency and level of regulatory requirements involved. This enhancement is also intended to address competency/calibration issues amongst Food Officers.

Inspection of a business will only cease when a business registers their food safety management system and verification begins.

Verification in Transition



Activities

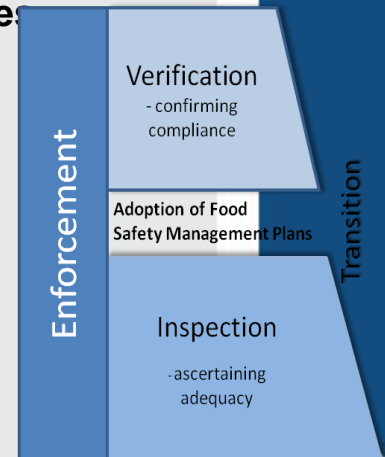
Verification

- Risk based verification
- Responding to issues

Inspection

- Risk based inspection
- Responding to issues

simplified



Verification Model

Assessing Compliance Verification Model

Low

Maturity of Food Business

High

Characteristics of food business:

- Capability poor
- Want to beat the system
- Poor commitment to meeting requirements
- Higher risk to ADFCA and consumers
- Requires investment

Characteristics of food business:

- Strong capability
- Commitment to high standards
- Have a food safety management system
- Lower risk to ADFCA and consumers
- Little investment required

Higher

ADFCA Focus of Resources

Lower

Actions and Interventions:

- Assistance with food safety management system
- Training
- High frequency of verification
- More in-depth checks performed

Actions and Interventions:

- Little assistance required
- Training minimal
- Verification frequency and intensity lower
- Checks focuses on the FSMS

P4: Labelling and Composition

Position

ADFCA realizes that labelling and composition is primarily a responsibility on the UAE federal level. Suitability and safety is part of labelling and labelling is vital to provide key information to the consumer. ADFCA recognises the importance of proper labelling

Rationale

Labelling of food provides the consumer with a significant amount of food safety and suitability as well as nutritional information. Appropriate controls on labelling ensure that the consumer has the information necessary to make purchase decisions that coincides with food safety and healthy choices

Description

Balance is needed on deciding what label information is mandated. Composition standards manage risks to the consumer associated with benefits and concerns.

The elements of a food labelling and composition regime cover six distinct areas: General provisions that apply to all food, Substances that might be added to food, Contaminants and toxicants, Foods requiring pre-market assessment (other than substances that might be added to food), Microbiological and processing requirements, Specific food product standards

P5: Halal

Position

ADFCA acknowledges that for the majority of its population, halal is a paramount ethical matter of their beliefs and culture and is an integral component of food “suitability”. ADFCA also recognises there are broader government, Federal and regional interests in this area. Nonetheless, at the Emirate level, Halal features and requirements are explicitly identified within the food regulatory program.

Rationale

As a predominantly Islamic society, Abu Dhabi needs to ensure that its Islamic population have sufficient confidence that the foods they consume meet the requirements of Halal.

Description

- For Islamic consumers to have confidence that the food supply aligns with their belief system, three key areas must be satisfied including
 - All the food products they consume are Halal.
 - Appropriate physical separation between Halal and non-Halal foods
 - Halal foods are appropriately and truthfully labelled.

P6: Tools

Position

ADFCA appreciates that a risk based food regulatory program must be associated with a range of risk-based tools developed by experts in a range of fields. ADFCA is committed to identifying the most appropriate tools, developing them and providing them to the majority of food businesses. ADFCA also recognises that there are some businesses that will choose to develop their own tools and that these will need to be assessed and approved by ADFCA

Rationale

Food businesses need to acquire tools in order to document the activities and processes they intend to follow and enhance the competency model in order to comply with legal requirements and to deliver safe and suitable food.

Description

There are a range of key tools that feature in the risk-based food regulatory program, including Food safety management systems, codes of practice, guidance to industry and training of food handlers

Risk-Based Tools



P7: Competencies

Position

ADFCA mandates the competency levels of key players in the food regulatory program in order to ensure clarity on the expectations as to the skills and knowledge levels required of the players.

Rationale

Identifying and mandating competencies ensures that those with roles in the food regulatory program are appropriately skilled and knowledgeable to safely deal with food.

Description

In Abu Dhabi, where a large part of the food industry is conducted by a wide number of ethnic groups of varying educational ability and language skills, competencies needs to be identified and mandated to enable appropriate training to be conducted as a fundamental component of the food regulatory program. Those employed by ADFCA or performing key tasks in related areas (such as training) must be appropriately skilled and have competencies appropriate to their functions

P8: Incident response (recall and withdrawal)

Position

ADFCA recognizes the importance to be prepared to assist or lead incident responses.

ADFCA embarks on developing the necessary protocols and code of practice for food businesses concerning incident management to assist them meet their responsibilities in this area.

Rationale

A range of potential food safety incidents exist, varying in their likely threat to human health and impact on the integrity of the food safety program.

Description

In these emergency situations it is critically important that accountabilities are clear and there must be appropriate understandings with other Abu Dhabi official entities prior to any emergencies occurring.



P9: Powers of Officers

Position

ADFCA Officers, including the Director-General, shall have legislated powers to discharge their responsibilities within the food regulatory program

Rationale

The Director-General needs powers to ensure the effective operation of the food regulatory regime. Officers/inspectors also need powers within the food safety regulatory regime to undertake their role.

Description

The powers of each of the Director-General and officers are set out by the law. Officers must be able to perform their functions fully without fear of legal action. They must be protected from civil or criminal liability where they exercise their powers in good faith and with reasonable cause

P10: Offences, Penalties and Enforcement

Position

The food regulatory program administered by ADFCA has an effective offence and penalty regime to deal with those people or business entities that do not comply with requirements.

Rationale

Offences are needed so that those operating in the food safety sector are clear on the nature of any transgressions they might generate. Penalties need to be applied accordingly to punish those who transgress.

Description

Offences and penalties will vary according to the risk or harm to public health and safety resulting from the action or inaction or the extent to which the action or inaction is deliberate, as opposed to accidental or unknowing.

P11: Consumer Awareness and Food Sector Education

Position

ADFCA recognises that consumers have responsibility for food they purchase and that many food events occur in the home or wherever consumers handle food themselves. It is therefore imperative to the food chain system that an effective consumer awareness strategy is developed and implemented that aims at attitude and behavioural change.

ADFCA also recognizes that mandating requirements, for food businesses do not lead to changed behaviours which requires time. Hence, a food sector support program entailing education and support is needed to assist in effecting change.

Rationale

Consumers need assistance to ensure they deal with food safely for themselves and their families. The food sector needs assistance and guidance to comply with requirements and to take responsibility for delivering safe and suitable food.

P11: Consumer Awareness and Food Sector Education

Description

Key considerations of consumer awareness and food sector education strategies are set out which aims to build attitude commitment and behavioural change.

Key steps in building community/business commitment



Determining the future

Develop Detailed Policy Implementation plan (including updating regulatory framework for alignment)

Thank You