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Envisaging Future | Updating Present

Singapore Food Agency (SFA) continues to forge strong ties with the food industry, achieving significant progress

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Singapore Food Agency (SFA), in close partnership with the food industry, has made significant progress in enhancing food safety and security despite facing multiple challenges over the past five years.Â This collaborative effort has resulted in some key accomplishments.

Transforming farming spaces and optimising farm development

SFA spearheaded an initiative involving industry stakeholders and the public to reimagine Lim Chu Kang's potential as an agri-food hub that can raise food production in a climate-resilient and resource-efficient manner. With the ideas and suggestions from industry stakeholders, potential innovative concepts for the future Lim Chu Kang include stacked farming and centralised waste treatment facilities. These ideas create better efficiencies and lay the groundwork to develop Singapore's flagship agri-food hub of the future.

In further support of the industryâ??s growth and development, SFA introduced comprehensive industry guides tailored for bothÂ sea-basedÂ andÂ land-based farms. These guides aim to expedite farm development, thereby enhancing local food production. Farmers can refer to them for essential information regarding regulations, administrative procedures and timelines for starting their ventures. These guides were developed after receiving feedback from companies, exemplifying how we can all work together to create an environment conducive to the growth of Singapore's agri-food industry.

Responding swiftly to food supply disruptions

In the face of food supply disruptions, the strong industry networks and ties with overseas partners also shine through. From responding to Malaysia's export ban on live chickens to mitigating the threat of disruptions due to disease outbreaks, our proactive measures ensure minimal disruptions to Singapore's food supply. The close partnership between SFA and the

industry has allowed us to adapt swiftly and secure sufficient food sources for Singaporeans. SFA will continue to work with food importers to forge new partnerships and accredit new food sources.

Enhancing the food safety ecosystem

The assurance of food safety is a joint responsibility of the food industry, consumers, and government. All parties have a role to play in ensuring food safety. For example, SFA fortifies the food testing ecosystem through theÂ Laboratory Recognition Programme, a network of private testing laboratories recognised by SFA to provide quality test results. These laboratories are recognised for their capability to support the industryâ??s food safety testing needs. This helps to reduce lead times for food export certification and reinforce consumer confidence. By working hand in hand with industry partners, we maintain high standards of safety so that Singaporeans have access to safe and wholesome food.

Supporting research and innovation in food

As a country with limited resources, we will need to transform our agri-food industry through innovation and technology for our food security needs. TheÂ Agri-Food Cluster Transformation (ACT) FundÂ supports the agri-food sector to adopt technology to enhance its productivity, resilience, and efficiency. Its scope has expanded over time to encompass a broader range of food types and address higher energy costs. To drive innovative research projects in urban agriculture, aquaculture, future foods and food safety, the government has also allocated over $300 million under the Singapore Food Story (SFS) R&D Programme.

Supporting local farms and local produce

Recognising the importance of promoting local produce, SFA works closely with the industry to engage businesses and the public alike.

TheÂ formation of the Alliance for Action (AfA) for Local Produce Demand Offtake and Consumer EducationÂ in February 2023 helps to bridge the gap between supply and demand, while educating consumers on the significance of supporting local agriculture. For instance, the AfA has led to the formation of an industry-level supply and demand aggregator, spearheaded by the Singapore Agro-Food Enterprises Federation (SAFEF). SAFEF will partner traders and food processing companies via longer-term commercial aggregator contracts to better match supply and demand. This gives certainty to both producers and buyers and allows better price negotiations.

Another outcome is the onboarding of businesses to theÂ Farm-to-Table Recognition ProgrammeÂ (FTTRP) which started in March 2023. Under the programme, a green logo is awarded to businesses in the Hotel, Restaurant and Catering sector that procure at least 15% of their fresh produce ingredients from local farms for the following food categories: hen shell eggs, leafy vegetables, beansprouts, fish, mushrooms and quail eggs. Businesses can use the FTTRP logo to brand and market their businesses as being environmentally conscious, using fresher produce and supporting Singaporeâ??s food resiliency.