

Abstract

Assessing Food Safety and Quality Compliance: An Evidence from Vegetable Industry [†]

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Abstract: The aim of present research was to assess and document the practices for prevailed food safety and quality standards as employed by small scale growers and market managers in the vegetable supply chains of Pakistan. For this purpose, cross-sectional data were collected from two provinces (Sindh and Punjab) of Pakistan targeting commercial vegetables, i.e., potato, tomato, onion, and chilies. Information regarding the food safety and quality were recorded during field survey from all the supply chain participants, i.e., growers, harvesters, processors, traders, and exporters through well-designed questionnaires. The collected data adherence with the standard requirements and identifying constraints of chain actors were analyzed using descriptive analysis. Results showed that many practices such as soil and ground water contamination, pesticide and fungicide residuals, microbial contaminants, infected labour, diggers, packaging migrants, clothes, surfaces and non-food grade containers may enhance the chances of food borne diseases among consumers. Therefore, training needs have been identified for all stakeholders that need to be addressed which will develop their understanding about the quality requirements and safety regulations. It will create opportunity in the advanced markets at national and international levels and new opportunities may arise to enhance stakeholders' income.

Keywords: vegetable supply chain; food safety and quality; small-scale farmers; Pakistan

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