Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

World Health Organization

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS
INTERNATIONAL FOOD STANDARDS



The new global burden of foodborne diseases - 2026: what it means for food safety stakeholders

Language: English

09/July/2026
14.00 - 15.30 CEST

Plenary Hall, Centre International de Conférences de Genève (CICG)

SIDE EVENT

Background:

The 2026 edition of the WHO estimates of the global burden of foodborne diseases, released in June 2026, provides the most comprehensive update to date . The new analysis shows that, in 2021 alone, unsafe food caused 866 million illnesses and 1.5 million premature deaths across 42 foodborne hazards. Young children bear a disproportionate share of this burden, accounting for nearly one third of all cases, with the heaviest impact observed in the African and South-East Asia regions.

The findings also highlight the strikingly high mortality linked to metal exposures in food, which substantially increases the overall burden. Together, these results underscore the need for a revised global strategy, one that prioritizes data-driven, effective prevention measures and sustained long-term investment in improved food (or food safety, or food control) systems.

This session brings together experts, risk managers, policymakers, consumers, and industry representatives to interpret the new estimates and explore how they can be translated into practical, real-world actions that strengthen food safety and protect public health.

Time (CEST)	Agenda	Speakers
14:00-14:05	Welcome	Luz de Regil, WHO
14:05-14:10	Opening remarks	Allan Azegele, CAC chair
14:10-14:15	Keynote address	Sebastien Goux, European Commission
14:15-14:30	WHO estimates of the global burden of foodborne diseases: Methods and key findings	Yuki Minato, WHO
14:30-15:00	Applications of the WHO estimates in real life practices	Catherine Bessy, FAO
15:00-15:25	Panel discussion Example questions: Moving from data to actions, what are the implications of these new estimates in real life practices? What's the implication for risk managers? Private sectors? Policy makers? What did we do well, what are the areas for improvement?	• Amanda Lasso Cruz, Costa Rica • Mohamed Taha Ibrahim, UAE • Mamodou Bah, Gambia • Christiane Wolff, WTO • Others (TBC)
15:25-15:30	Closing remarks	Catherine Bessy, FAO

[1] https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/foodborne-diseases-estimates