International Measurement Confederation (IMEK0)
TC 23 "Metrology in Foods and Nutrition"
7th IMEKOFOODS International Conference. Worldwide food trade and consumption: quality and risk assessment
25-27 October 2023, Maisons-Alfort/Paris, France

The FoodSafety4EU Digital Platform - A new Digital Platform for the Food Safety System of the Future

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FoodSafety4EU is a Horizon 2020 project (Grant agreement ID: 101000613) to support the European Commission (EC) in shaping the food safety system of the future and to support the EC in its endeavour in aligning research, policy and innovation with societal needs and perspectives and improving food safety across Europe. The goal is to develop a platform to help to collaborate citizens, scientists, companies, the EC, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and food safety authorities in Europe. As part of the project, a digital platform was developed containing a website and applications to support different user groups in various use cases. The objectives of the digital platform are to digitalise existing knowledge and practices, bring knowledge together in one place, support and activate the food safety community, and boost collaboration between members.

Requirements for the digital platform were collected in different workshops and subsequently analysed. Based on the outcomes, a software specification was written describing how the website and the apps look like and what functionalities they offer. The specification was double checked with stakeholders and finally implemented. The digital platform is built around four questions that a user normally has when coming to a new platform: What is the community doing? How can the user benefit from the community? How can the user join the community and how can the user participate in the community? The strongest emphasis is put on the benefit question as incentives are good drivers to keep members involved.

The digital platform supports working group with dedicated spaces on the website to announce information and outcomes and with community of practice spaces to share messages, documents, and events. The platform allows to find experts and projects in different food safety topics, to get in contact with involved persons, and to conduct survey using a questionnaire tool. A knowledge center is designed as modern and digital library offering articles, glossary, policies, strategies, debates, funding opportunities, practices, innovative solutions, reports, videos, and scientific publications. Finally, the digital platform provides information about news and events and a subscription page to participate in the community.

Keywords: FoodSafety4EU, digital platform, food safety, community platform

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