

# REFORM OF THE FOOD SAFETY SYSTEM – THE CASE OF BALKAN COUNTRIES

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# **Balkan countries**

- **Slovenia- EU member since 2004**
- **Bulgaria- EU member since 2007**
- **Romania – EU member since 2007**
- **Croatia, Macedonia – EU candidates**
- **Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania- signed agreement on association and stabilization with EU**

# Situation in Ex- Yu before reforms

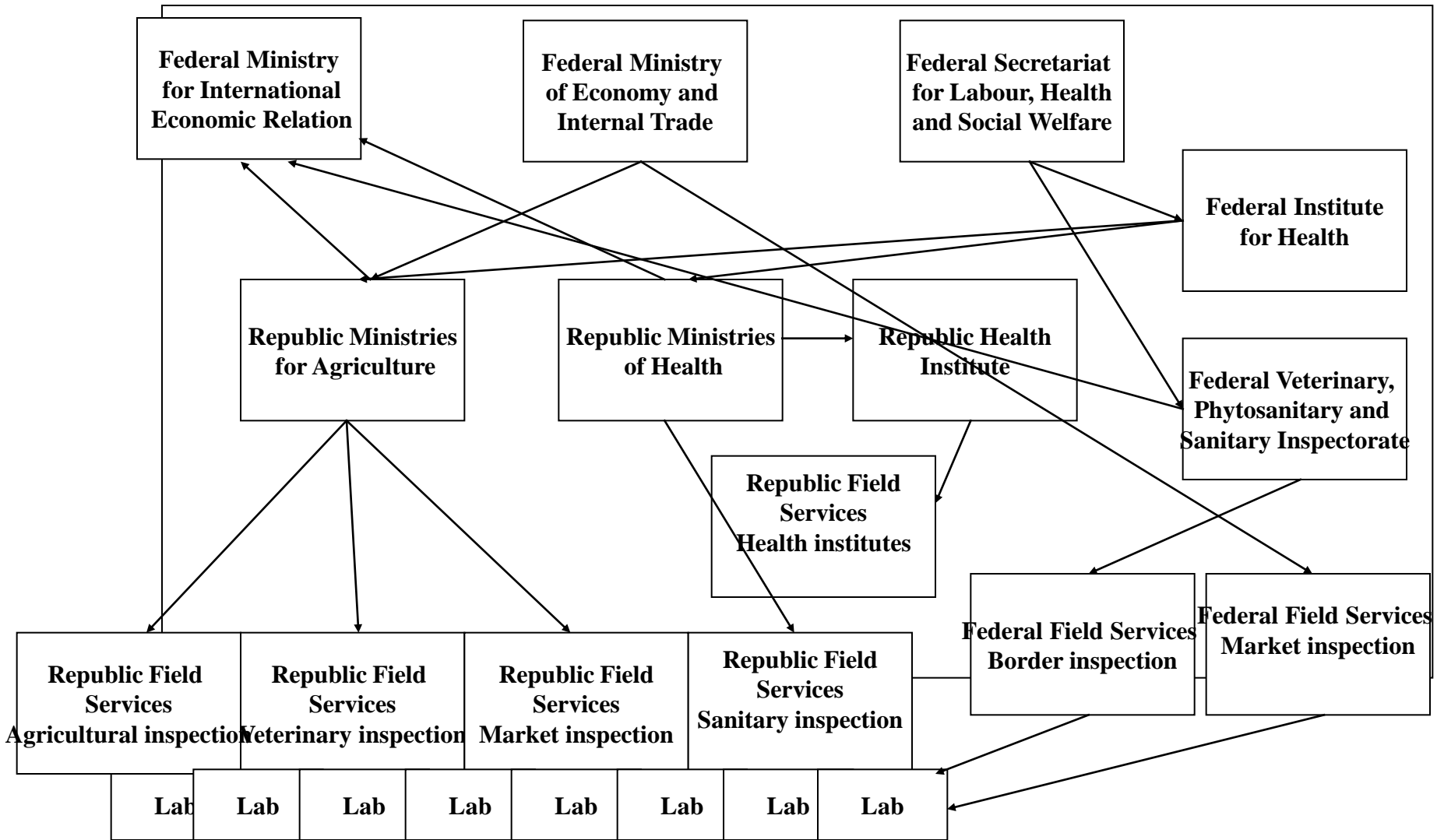
- **Laws and regulations from 1970s-1980s**

**Lack of capacities in ministries, labs, no communication between governmental bodies, Codex Alimentarius standards treated as private ownership in the Federal Standardization Office, new pathogens not tested, no risk assessment, no scientific base for regulations, list of additives not in line with Codex**

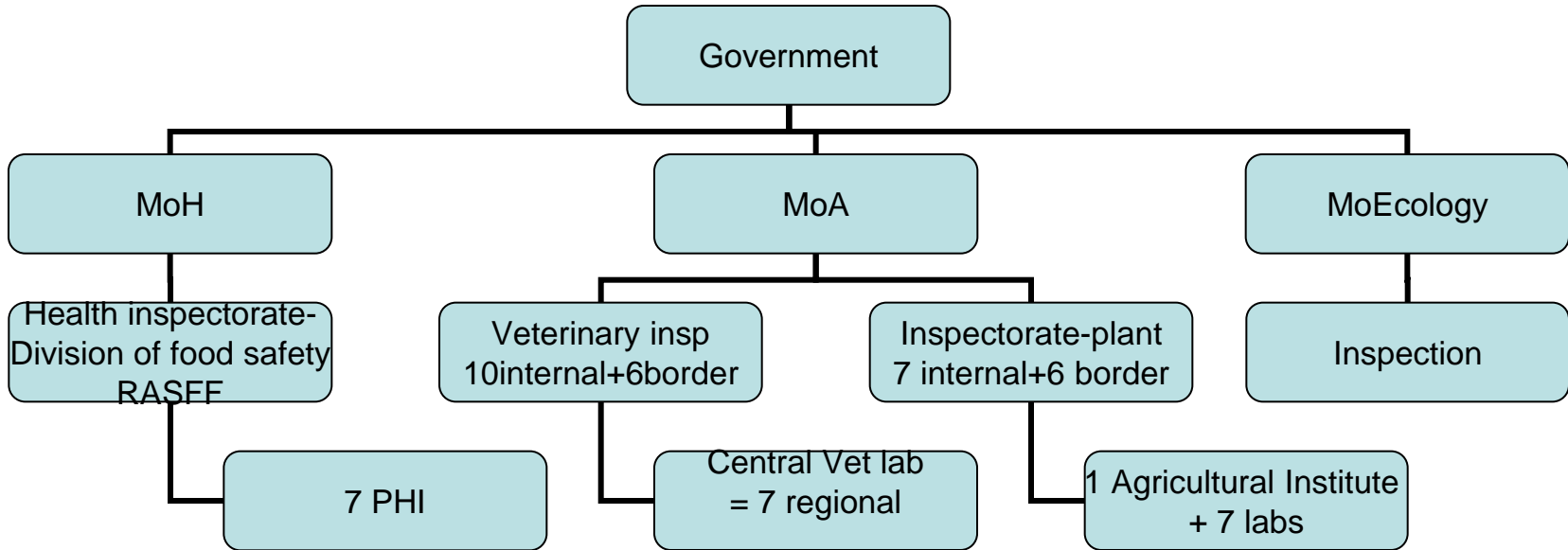
- **Followed with a lot of regulations and instructions not internationally recognized**
- **Major part of the food trade -internal trade between republics of YU**
- **Main external partner- EU**
- **30% trade - other Balkan countries, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, other**

**Barriers in trade, testing of imported products, delay at customs, costs, bans**

# Ex-Yugoslavia food safety system in 1989



# Slovenia- the roadmap



**1990-1998 Revision of legal documents from ex-Yu, capacity building in inspection and labs**

**1998 Association and stabilization agreement with EU- remarks: to complete the veterinary and phytosanitary inspection system at future external EU borders; continue to implement the quality control system; complete animal identification; continue aligning animal welfare standards, animal waste treatment; modernization of meat and dairy plants, residue and zoonosis control programs.**

**2004 Full harmonization of legislation to EU, redefinition of responsibilities**

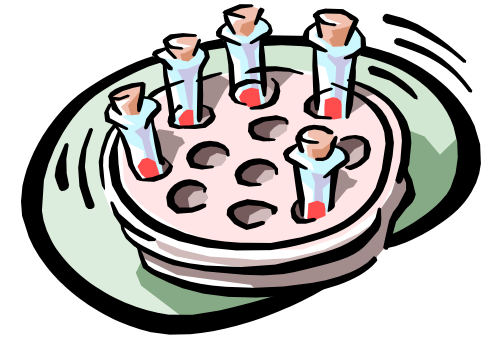
# Slovenia – a long way ahead

- Since 2005 - 25 FVO inspections and 2 general review missions
- Multiannual Control Plan 2007-2009 according to EC 882/2004 the first report July 2008
- By 2008: Animal identification completed, traceability in Veterinary sector provided
- 2009:
  - Training of inspections to be continued and results evaluated
  - Check lists for poultry slaughterhouses to be developed
  - *Quality Assurance of the Inspection performance: ISO 9001 MOH and training for Veterinary inspectors in internal auditing*
- Positive example of coordination among agencies: Inter-ministerial panels
  - on pesticide use
  - on preparation of the Multiannual plan to be submitted to the European Commission
  - Interministerial joint forum on auditing of inspection performance.
  - Monthly coordination meetings at Regional Offices -regional heads MOH inspectors and Vet inspectors
  - Risk based inspection:
  - Plans for audits (2-12 per year depending on risk assessment)
  - Check lists developed and in use in inspection and in production facilities

# Serbia – 9 years of changes

- **START: Regulation on additives in 2000**
- **EU funds: 2000-2004 Reform of laboratories-** resulted in assessment of the whole Food Safety system
- Equipment, specialization, capacity building and accreditation for 34 labs- MoH and MoA
- Specialized labs (milk, meat, plant health, seed)
- Private labs, labs at food processing facilities accredited
- **Following projects:**
  - Basic laws (FS, veterinary, phytosanitary, on plants, GMO), >60 sub-law documents
  - Capacity building in inspection, Animal identification,
  - Reform in dairy sector (legislation, practices, tests), land registry reform, registration of producing capacities...
  - **Participation in international forums- Codex, IPPC, OIE**
  - **2005-2009** Animal identification mostly accomplished

In 2009 to sign agreement with WTO



# Serbia- Industry is proactive

- **Private sector started:**
- HACCP, ISO 9001, ISO 22000, GAP, BRC, organic farming-training, implementation and certification
- **The Government followed:**
- HACCP based model required by Veterinary Law and draft FS law
- Governmental subsidies for HACCP since 2006 - more than 2000 premises
- City of Belgrade 2009 – 100 subsidies for HACCP
- Vojvodina province 2007,2008,2009 – 100 subsidies per year for HACCP

- **International donors:**
- IFC- 2006-2008: HACCP training for 180 companies; 25 pre-assessment, 5 implementations
- USAID- HACCP training and implementation in 100 factories
- 2009 USAID with MoA- subsidies up to 5000 euro for QMSs

## INDIRECT EFFECTS OF IFC ACTIVITIES:

2008: Training of all inspectors in principles of HACCP

# Serbia-

## a lot of work remained

- **Division of responsibilities:**

- **MoA** : **Veterinary office**- legislation & international trade

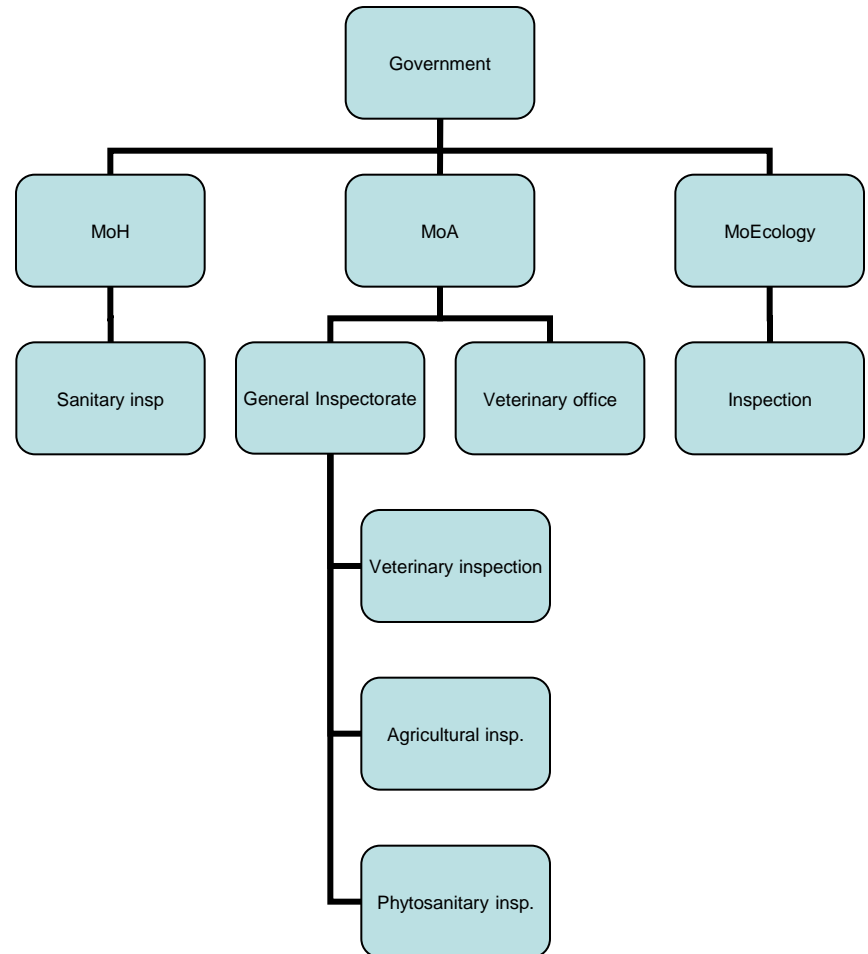
**General inspectorate**

**FVO 2008:** Training traceability of raw material, Central base of producers (individual and factories), registration of animals, new animal health certificates eradication programs- animal health, corrections in hygiene, HACCP in premises, better coordination among authorities

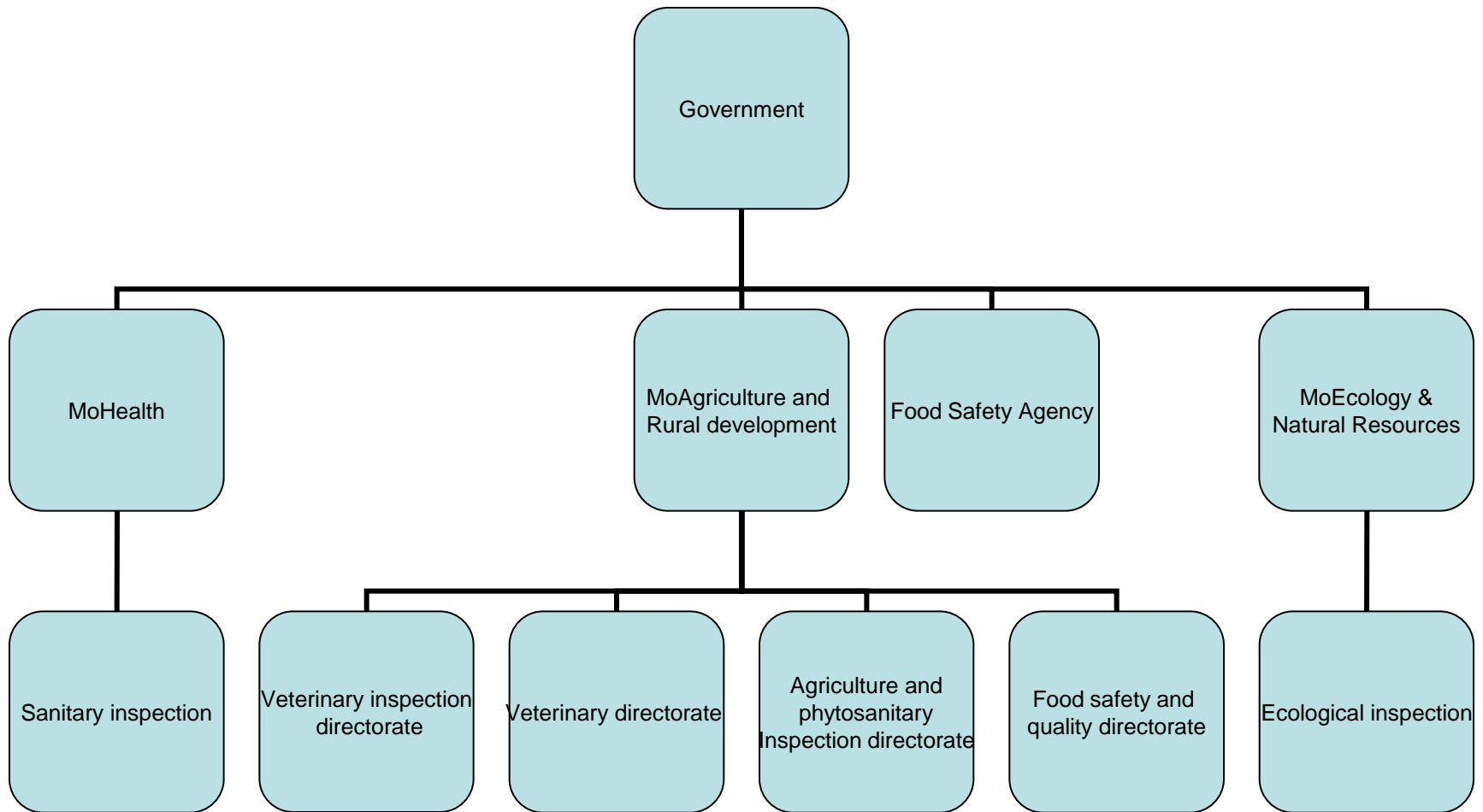
- **MoH:** FS Law, water, novel and dietetic food, GMO

**Sanitary Inspection:** food of non-animal origin, retail, catering

- **MoEcology:** waste



# Croatia- serious improvements



**FSAgency - Consumers' protection; Risk analysis –coordination and data gathering between ministries; health, veterinary, agriculture institutes and laboratories, 8 scientific committees- help in drafting legislation, manuals for inspection, MOA contact point with EFSA, RASFF contact point.**

# Croatia- 15 years of work

- 1994 Law on plant protection
- 1997 Reg on animal identification
- 1998 IPPC- signed convention
- 1998 Law on veterinary drugs
- 2000-2003 Division of responsibilities and cooperation among inspections
  
- 2003 Veterinary law, Reg on veterinary-sanitary conditions for premises
- 2006 Reg on animal welfare
  
- 2004: Food Safety Agency
  
- 2007 Food Law – HACCP mandatory
  
- 2008: Law on seeds and planting material, Regulations on Microbiology, Pesticides, Additives, Registration of food premises, Animal feed...
  
- **All legal documents issued since 2000 are harmonized with EU**

# Croatia-preparing for accession to EU

- **2004-2008 International donors- training in HACCP for inspectors**
- **By 1.january 2009 HACCP mandatory in all premises**

## **2005-2007 : 4 inspections FVO -RESULTS:**

**- New ordinances according to “EU hygiene package” :presently there are 164 State Vet inspectors. Planned increase to 276:State vet inspectors 96 and 180 veterinarians officially recognized by Vet. Inspection will be trained to perform inspection.**

**-Classification of food premises in 4 categories- only first category for export to EU**

**-Laboratories to be further upgraded. Written results from lab investigations to be disseminated between all interested counterparts**

# Bulgaria after joining the EU- problems to be solved

## Problems with SPS measures:

Enforcement of existing regulations  
Low coordination among authorities  
Not fully harmonized legislation

**DG Sanco 2008:** ISO 17025 – in the beginning stage,  
HACCP- to strengthen internal control in production facilities  
Trichinella plan by 1.5.2008 to be implemented  
Endemic blue tongue

## Sector specific barriers to trade reviews have been made: *FAO:2008*

- Managers claim- 20% of their working time lost in finding ways how to implement regulations
- Each food premise is inspected by 19 inspections per year
- 14 days for veterinary inspection- animal food producers
- Import- 8 days to receive the certificate (food from non EU countries)

# Romania after joining the EU- problems still exist

- In 2005, less than 50% of raw milk delivered to milk processing establishments in Romania was compliant with EU requirements
- 387 meat, poultry, fish and dairy establishments in Romania from Jan 2007-Jan 2010 to upgrade to EU standards- **labels-product not to be sold at EU market**
- In 2008- those only for domestic market, out of stock or destroyed by end 2008. The same for: semen, ova, embryos.

# Romania- one inspection service

- **National Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority (ANSVSA)** – at central level and in 42 counties
- **Covering the whole food chain**
- **Specialists- veterinarians, medical doctors, food technologists, chemists, microbiologists, biotechnologists**
- **Veterinarians control food of animal origin and feed**
- **DG Sanco 2008: training for inspectors- theory and practice, sampling procedures and testing, only labs with accredited methods for official control, national accreditation body- ILAC full member**

# Cooperation in CEFTA

- **Trade agreements (Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Kosovo, Moldova)**
- **Customs 1%**
- **Bilateral and multilateral cooperation**
- **Exchange of documents (Ex-YU)**
- **Exchange of trainers**
- **Common training programs- 2008 OIE- SANCO on animal health for Serbia&Montenegro**
- **Scientific cooperation – EU projects, NATO for peace....**
- **Participation on meetings of producers associations**
- **Fairs (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Zagreb)**
- **International forums- common standing**
- **RCC- CEFTA + Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey- exchange of experiences**

# **Good examples from Balkan countries**

- **Decision to adapt food safety system in line with EU requests and models**
- **Division of responsibilities**
- **Implementation of HACCP as a model for food safety system in food production and catering and GAP in primary production**
- **Safety and quality of raw material improved and still improving**

# **Good examples from Balkan countries- part 2**

- **International scientific knowledge and experiences implemented**
- **Local level of knowledge and skills augmented**
- **Strengthened institutions involved in food safety**
- **Consumers' trust improved**
- **Steady upward improvements in Slovenia and Croatia**
- **In Serbia MoA supported reform from the beginning**
- **Export of food increased- in the CEFTA region and to the EU**

# Lessons learned

- **Food safety must be a governmental priority**
- **Capacity building in all structures of the food safety system is needed**
- **One inspection agency is the most efficient solution- if not good inter-sector cooperation should be secured**
- **International knowledge and support along with experiences from countries that have gone the similar road are valuable**
- **Audits from EU inspection bodies give important guidelines**
- **Joining to EU is just a step, but not final**

# Lessons learned- part 2

- **Reform of legislation should be accompanied with reform of inspection and testing, but also, with support to food producers at all levels to fulfill all requirements of a modern and functional food safety system**
- **Food industry is vitally interested in export and they have to be active members of the food safety reform- to induce changes in the food safety system and implement positive practices properly**