



## Policy Solutions for Sri Lanka's Emerging Food Safety Issues

First posted on <http://www.ifpri.org/news-release/policy-solutions-sri-lankas-emerging-food-safety-issues>

### International Experts Outline Food Safety Risks, Regulations, and Impact of Urbanization

Colombo, Sri Lanka – On Monday, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the Ministry of Primary Industries, and the Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka began a two-day international workshop in Colombo on emerging food safety and quality risks in South Asia and Sri Lanka.

Like other South Asian nations, Sri Lanka's population has grown significantly in recent years, most notably in urban areas. The Colombo metropolitan region now makes up more than a quarter of the country's population. Moving food from rural areas into cities to feed these growing urban populations presents new challenges to food safety.

P.K. Joshi, Director for South Asia at IFPRI, presented key findings from the institution's [2017 Global Food Policy Report](#), an annual analysis of developments in food policy around the developing world, which focuses this year on how urbanization is changing food, health, and development. The report finds that as populations move into cities, management of value chains plays a critical role in ensuring food safety.

"Urbanization is driving huge changes in how small farmers connect with markets to sell their goods, the choices people make about their diets, and the way that food systems are governed," said Joshi. "Here in Sri Lanka, farmers are working to meet urban food demand and improve food safety through enhanced networks and

increased access to technology.”

Cities provide opportunities for rural smallholders to raise their incomes by connecting to larger urban markets and typically more wealthy urban consumers. For urban consumers, small farmers can provide an important source of diverse and nutritious foods. But the links between these areas in the developing world are often weak or broken, hindering growth and development.

The workshop featured an address from the Honorable Daya Gamage, Minister of Primary Industries, on the challenges and opportunities Sri Lanka faces in managing food safety risks. Bandula Wickramaarachchi, Secretary of Ministry of Primary Industries, provided opening remarks. Other presenters included H.M.G.S. Palihakkara, Ex-Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Former Governor Northern Province, and Brenda Barton, Country Representative of the World Food Programme.

Additionally, food safety experts from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka discussed changes in the region's food system, including rising urban consumption and the new challenges it presents for policy makers to adopt stringent food quality standards.

###

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) seeks sustainable solutions for ending hunger and poverty. IFPRI was established in 1975 to identify and analyze alternative national and international strategies and policies for meeting the food needs of the developing world, with particular emphasis on low-income countries and on the poorer groups in those countries. [www.ifpri.org](http://www.ifpri.org).