

12th International Training Course

'Harmonisation of Fruit and Vegetables Quality Assessment'



**FOOD INSPECTION IN MAURITIUS with focus on fruit
and vegetables**

Shalini A. NEELIAH

**Senior Research & Development Officer
Food Technology Laboratory
Ministry of Agro-Industry and Fisheries
Mauritius**

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sneeliah@mail.gov.mu

FOOD INSPECTION IN MAURITIUS with focus on fruit and vegetables



A. Introduction

⌘ MAURITIUS- An overview

- ☑ Member of ACP, SADC, COMESA, Indian Ocean Rim

- ☑ Classified as an upper middle income economy by the World Bank and a developing country by the WTO

A. Introduction

⌘ FCS also needed in Mauritius (MRU)

☑ For consumer health protection

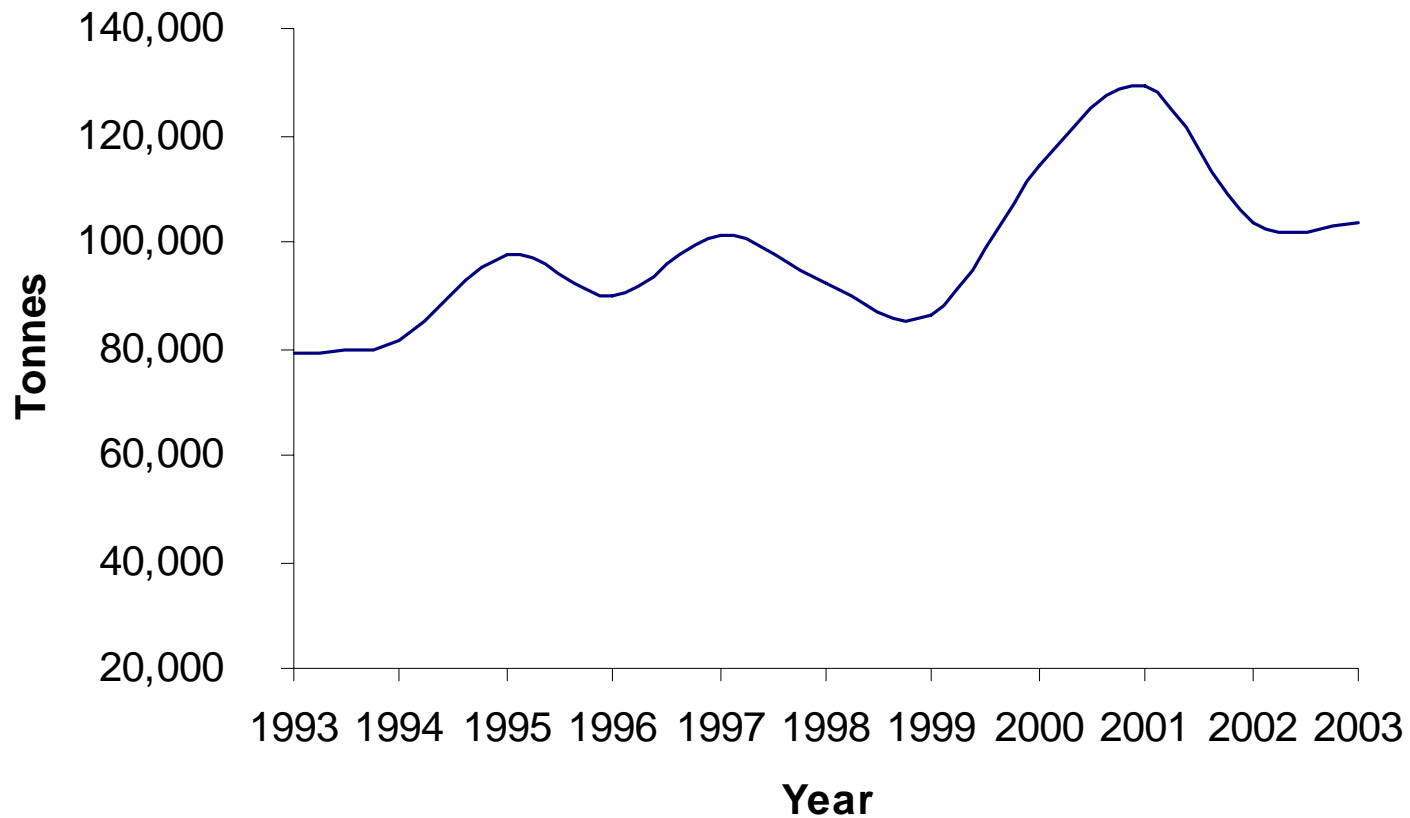
☑ Fraud prevention

☒ MRU has a small proportion of food locally manufactured, on large, medium and small scales

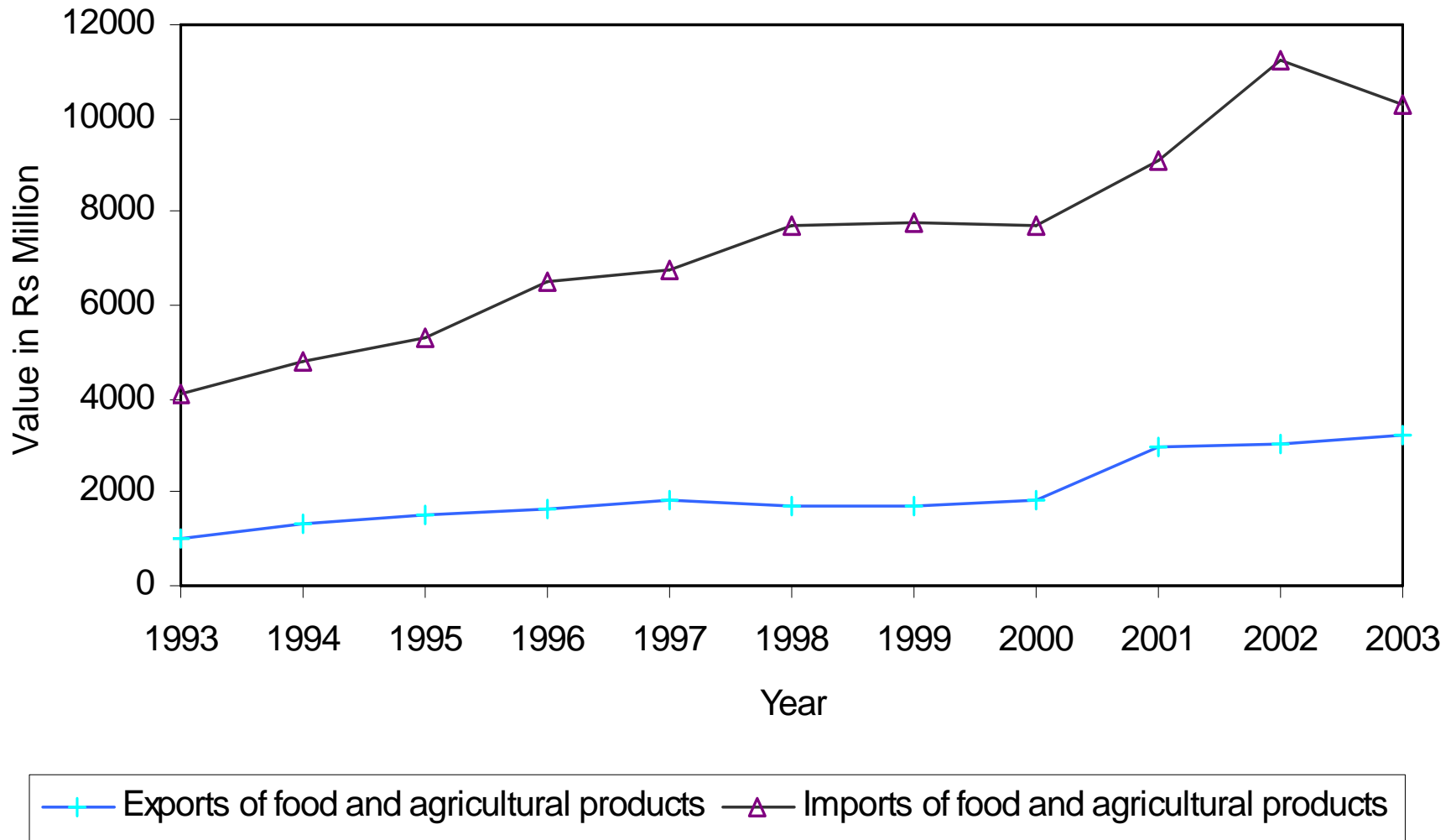
☒ MRU exports food mainly to the European Union and is visited by some 700, 000 tourists annually

☒ MRU is a net importer of food (Australia, UK, India, South Africa)

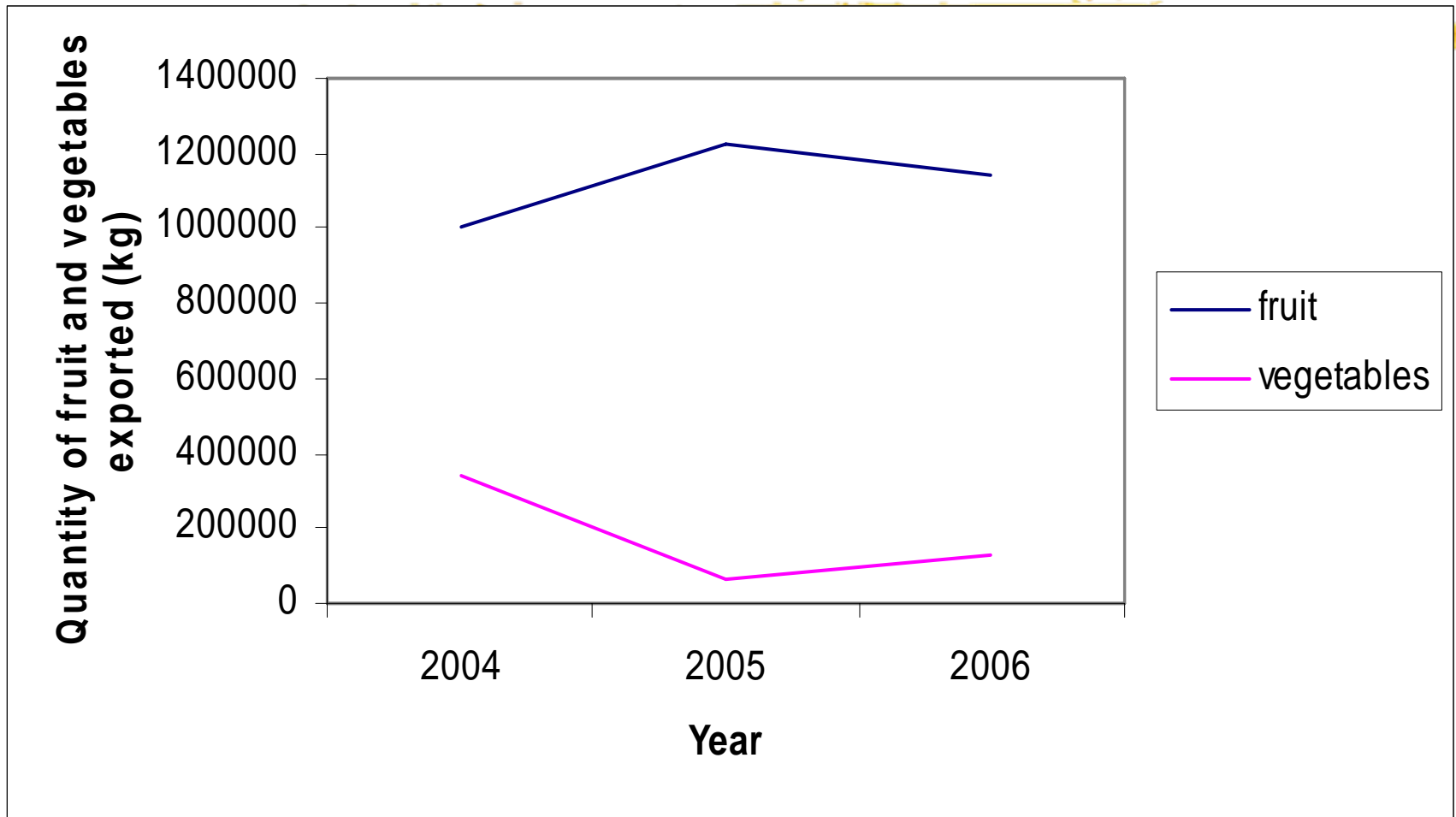
Foodcrop production in Mauritius (1993-2003)



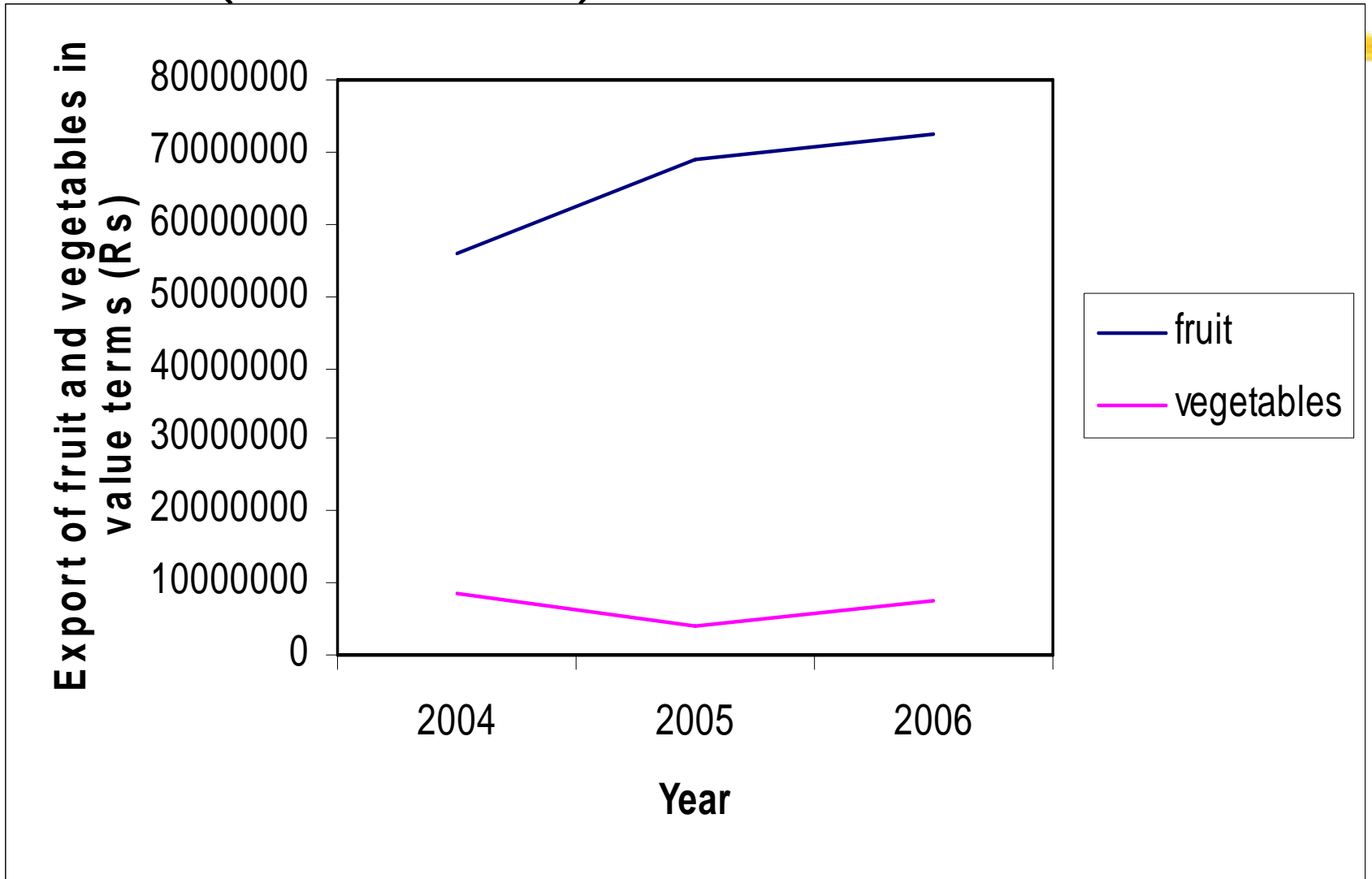
Food imports and exports in MRU in value terms



Volume of fruit and vegetable export (2004-2006)



Fruit and vegetable export in value terms (2004-2006)



Objectives



The Mauritian FCS

- ⌘ Elements of FCS
- ⌘ Focus on inspection

B: Main elements of FCS

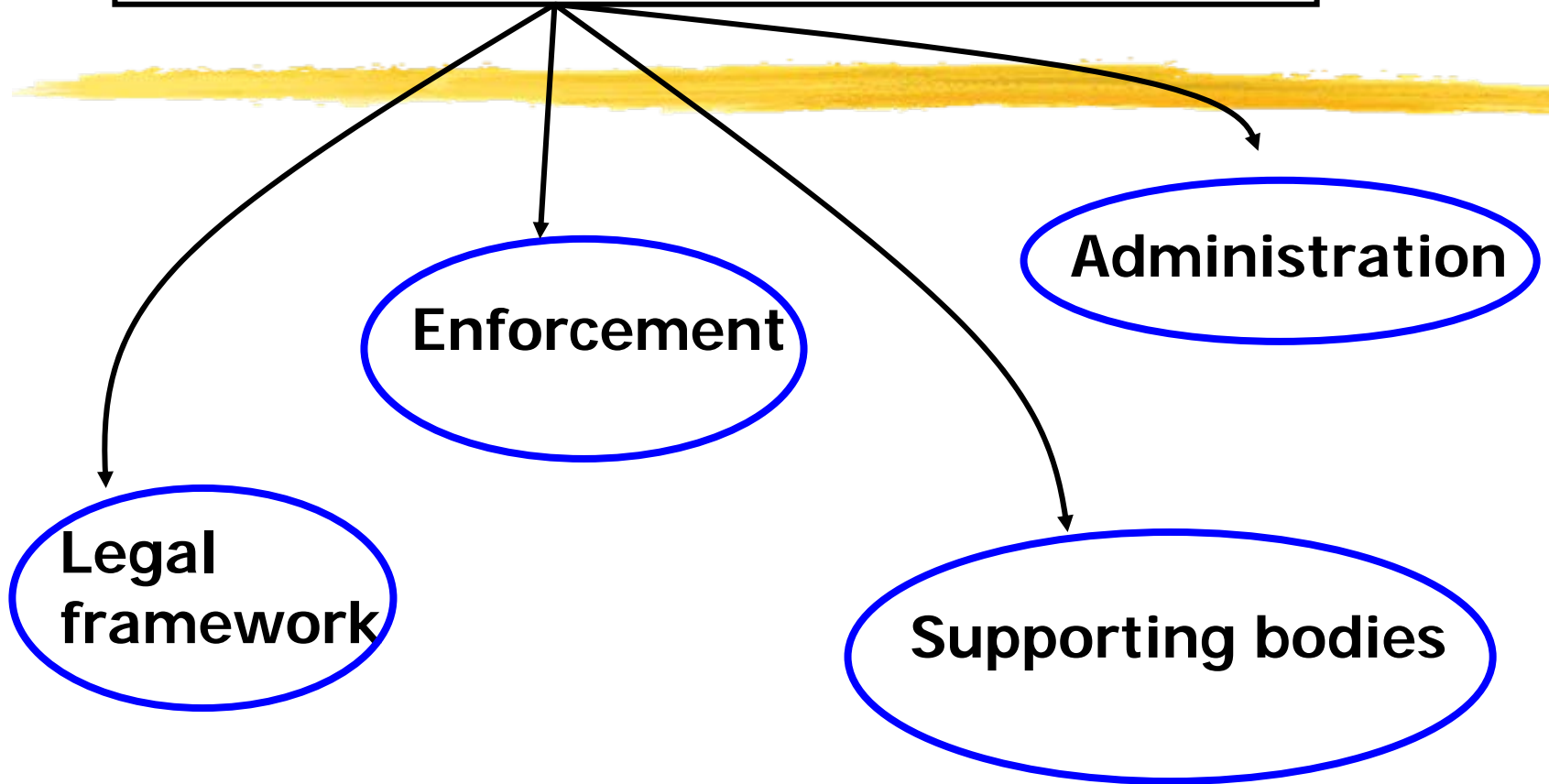


Figure 2.0: Main elements of a FCS

B. Main Elements Of A FCS

⌘ 1. Legislative frame-work

☑ 1940 to 1998: legislation under the FCS was the Food and Drugs Act 1940

☑ **FOOD ACT** 1998

☑ Operational since January 2000 together with Food Regulations 1999

⌘ This Act provides powers to relevant authorities to:

☑ check and seize any suspicious food for analysis

⌘ Ability to make regulations

B. Main Elements Of A FCS

2. Legislative framework

- ⌘ Regulations are based mostly on Codex norms
 - ☒ Food labelling regulations, Examination and sampling of food, Food hygiene, Additives and Contaminants
 - ☒ Vertical regulations, e.g regulations on
 - ☒ Tomato, Vegetable and vegetable product (Part XIX) and
 - ☒ Fruit, fruit product and soft drink (Part XXIV)
- ⌘ **GMO ACT-Genetically Modified Organisms Act 2003**
- ⌘ To provide for measures to regulate the responsible planning, development, production, use, marketing and application of GMO

B. Main Elements Of A FCS

2. Legislative frame-work

⊞ Plants Protection Act (2006)

- ⊞ Prevention, control and elimination of plant pests
- ⊞ Protection of plant resources
- ⊞ Setting up of phytosanitary measures
- ⊞ **PART IV – IMPORT AND EXPORT**
- ⊞ **Import: “Any plant, plant product and other regulated article imported into Mauritius shall, upon importation, be subject to inspection at the point of entry, or at its final destination, by an officer.”**
- ⊞ Import of fruit and vegetables

B. Main Elements Of A FCS

3. Administration and Enforcement

- ⌘ Administration and enforcement of food and food-related laws rather complicated in MRU
- ⌘ Central A & E for Food Act 1998: MOH
- ⌘ **MOH shares its responsibilities with some departments of the MOA and local authorities**
 - ☑ Some overlapping
- ⌘ Health inspectorate
- ⌘ Under Food Act 1998, only 'authorised officers'
- ⌘ They are assisted in their task by Health inspectors working in local authorities who carry out inspections in markets

Inspection and certification of fruit and vegetables in Mauritius- Role of MOA

⌘ Bodies that are involved in control of both import and export (fruit and vegetable-F&V)

⌘ National Plant Protection Office- NPPO

✉ moa-pathology@mail.gov.mu

⌘ Food Technology Laboratory- FTL will be involved in the testing of fruit and vegetables prior to export

✉ moa-dairy-chem@mail.gov.mu

NPPO

⌘ **Export Inspection and Certification**

- ⌘ Phytosanitary certification and inspection of plant and plant products for export in conformity with the requirement of the quarantine regulations of the importing country.
- ⌘ Prospective exporter or their agent has to notify the NPPO, at least 48 hours prior to actual date of shipment.
- ⌘ The exporter or his agent has to present the consignment either at the plant quarantine office or arrange for inspection at his premises.
- ⌘ Transport, labour and other facilities for opening, sampling, repacking etc shall be borne by the exporter.
- ⌘ Consignment has to be free of soil and pest free.

NPPO

⌘ Fee for inspection:

- ⌘ **Commercial**-(i) Phytosanitary certificate - Rs. 50.00
- (ii) Inspection - Rs. 100.00; (iii) Treatment of plant/plant part with pesticides. More than 25 units - Rs. 75.00

⌘ Procedure for litchi export

- ☑ Meeting with exporters and other stakeholders at NPPO to fix date for first batch of litchi to be exported (generally end of Oct)
- ☑ Before harvest, exporter contacts NPPO
- ☑ One officer delegated full time for onsite phytosanitary inspection at packing house
- ☑ Brix –16-22 allowed

NPPO

- ⌘ **Import Inspection and clearance of incoming agricultural commodities**
- ⌘ Importer or his agent to notify the officer at Port of entry immediately upon arrival or in advance in case of perishable consignments.
- ⌘ A certificate of inspection is issued if the consignment on inspection is found free of pests and in conformance with local import conditions.
- ⌘ Otherwise: a detention certificate/re-shipment or destruction of the consignment at importer's costs and without compensation.
- ⌘ The chargeable fee for inspection and clearance is Rs. 100.00.

FTL



⌘ Recently established

•Antibiotic sensitivity testing

⌘ Funded by the Government

⌘ Most of the Officers posted have undergone training in specific areas.

⌘ **FTL has been set up to fulfill new obligations that are to guarantee safety and quality of our food supply, with emphasis to food geared towards export.**

FTL

- ⌘ Perform chemical and microbiological analyses in view of certifying food and agricultural products being exported to EU.
- ⌘ Carry out Food Surveillance and Monitoring Programmes for Food Contaminants.
- ⌘ Function as National Codex Office.
- ⌘ Establish and review standards for agricultural produce.
- ⌘ Developing and providing educational, research and promotional material or training respecting food safety.
- ⌘ Function as a documentation centre for food science and technology.
- ⌘ Become a Centre for Food Technology Research and Development.

B. Main Elements Of A FCS

4. Supporting Bodies

Analytical services

- ☒ Government Analyst Division
- ☒ Central Laboratory: food and drinking water
- ☒ Private laboratory in the process of being accredited: the Société Générale de Surveillance: food analysis and HACCP certification

Standards body

Mauritius Standards Bureau

- ☒ Sets appropriate standards defining products and containing specifications for food
- ☒ Control of weights and measures
- ☒ Testing of products

B. Main Elements Of A FCS

4. Supporting Bodies

Consumer organisations

- ☒ Institute for Consumers' Protection

- ☒ Association des Consommateurs de L'île Maurice

Research Organisations: MRC, UOM, AREU

Projects linked to quality in horticultural sector

Drafting of Mauritian Standard for Litchi by National Technical Codex Sub-Committee on fruits and vegetables

APEXHOM in collaboration with NRI/AREU-MAURIGAP and "Improving Quality in the horticultural sector"

PRPV funded by EU and IOC-plant protection, capacity building for growers (use of pesticides) and laboratories involved in pesticide residue testing

Conclusion

- ⌘ MRU has the main elements of a FCS
- ⌘ MRU slowly but surely moving towards a better food control system
- ⌘ It is our objective to improve the current inspection system, hence this training!
- ⌘ We would like to hear from your own experience in setting an inspection system for fruit and vegetable quality assurance both for domestic, import and export markets.