

# **Philippines Farm Registration and Inspection**

by

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## **Introduction**

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) is responsible in leading the implementation of the legislations pertaining to the food quality and safety and use of harmful substances on fisheries and aquatic products in the Philippines. By virtue of European Council Directive 95/190/EEC, it is also the designated CA to implement EU laws, laying down the health conditions for the production and placing on the EU market of fish and fishery products from the Philippines. The BFAR is an independent budgetary institution that implements the policies at all the stages of food chain "from farm to fork".

To strengthen the food safety management and facilitate the implementation of food quality and safety programs, the Fisheries Inspection and Quality Assurance Services (FIQAS) was created to operate directly under the supervision of the Director. Further, to properly execute the official control for food safety programs a national farm registration program of farms supplying raw materials to accredited establishments was implemented in 2005.

The Fish Health Section (FHS) which is responsible to maintain healthy and wholesome aquaculture (SEAFDEC Millennium Conference) spearheads the registration of aquaculture farms, residue and health monitoring, as well as provides diagnostic services, technical and advisory assistance to the aquaculture industry. Its monitoring program includes residue and disease surveillance and reporting system, aquatic animal health certification, implementation of quarantine procedures, assessment of the health status of stocks of selected fish and the management of other aquatic resource farms in the Philippines.

The mandate of the FHS to implement official control of the residues lies in the Republic Act 8550 and its succeeding implementing Administrative Orders, Fisheries Office Orders and Memorandum Circulars

## **Food Safety Management**

### ***Central Office***

At the central office the food safety management for Fisheries Inspection and Quality Assurance Service (FIQAS) which is directly under the Office of the

Director is composed of five units: the Fish Product Testing Laboratory (FPTL), the Marine Biotoxin Laboratory (MBL), the Administrative Support and Product Certification Unit (ASPCU), the HACCP-based Fish Inspection Unit (HFIU) and the Fish Health Section (FHS). To ensure the safety and quality of fishery and aquaculture products for export, the FIOAS implements a HACCP-based inspection program. Residue Monitoring Program and the coordinated certification program. Please see Figure 1.

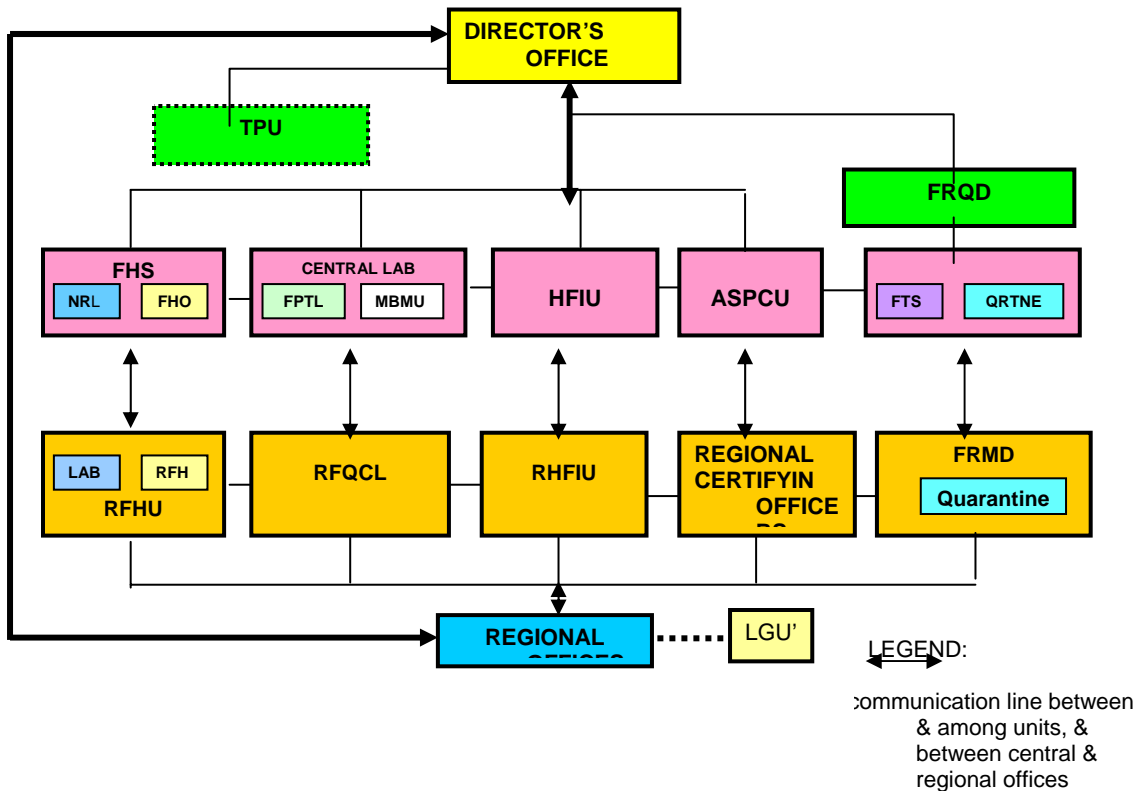
The FPTL and MBL are in charge of providing services to other units in their respective fields. The HFIU is responsible for the inspection of accredited fish processing plants based on 94/356/EEC, 91/493/EEC and to ensure consistent compliance with EU requirements as per 91/493/EEC, the new European Food Law, and other relevant national rules and regulations on the export of fishery and aquaculture products.

The ASPCU is responsible for the issuance of product health certificates for fishery and aquaculture products for export to the EU and other markets.

The HFIU supervises the overall inspection of fish processing plants and certification of fishery and aquaculture products for export in coordination with the BFAR Regional Offices.

**Figure 1. Structure of Fisheries Inspections and Quality Assurance Services and the Quarantine Division**

**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BFAR UNITS INVOLVED IN THE NATIONAL FOOD INSPECTION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE SERVICE (FIQAS)**



**Legend:**

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 1. TPU    | - Trade Policy-making Unit                            |
| 2. ASPCU  | - Administrative Support & Product Certification Unit |
| 3. FIQAS  | - Fish Inspection & Quality Assurance Service         |
| 4. FRQD   | - Fisheries Regulatory & Quarantine Division          |
| 5. NRL    | - National Reference Laboratory                       |
| 6. HFIU   | - HACCP-based Fish Inspection Unit                    |
| 9. FO     | - Field Operations                                    |
| 10. RFQCL | - Regional Fish Quality Control Lab                   |
| 11. FPTL  | - Fishery Product Testing Lab.                        |
| 12. RHFU  | - Regional HACCP-based Fish Inspection Unit           |
| 13. MBMU  | - Marine Biotoxin Monitoring Unit                     |
| 14. FRMD  | - Fisheries Resource Management Division              |
| 15. LGU   | - Local Government Unit                               |
| 16. FTS   | - Foreign Trade Section                               |
| 17. QRTNE | - Quarantine Section                                  |
| 18. FHS   | - Fish Health Section                                 |

***Regional Offices***

At the regional offices, the food safety management is under the responsibility of BFAR regional directors located in 15 regional offices. Figure 2. Each has a Fish Health Unit, linked to the central FHS, and a Fishery Inspection unit, linked to the HFIU and central laboratories

**Figure 2. Philippine map showing the location of the BFAR Fish Health Laboratories.**



## Farm Registration

The Fish Health Section sustain to healthy and wholesome aquaculture, and implement a fish health management: with a holistic approach to disease management and food safety through an integrated approach to aquaculture, taking into account all of the inputs, practices and outputs from seed to the final consumer. SEAFDEC Millennium Conference, there are two prioritized areas **disease control** which includes monitoring surveillance and diagnosis of disease of aquatic animals and **food safety** residue monitoring.

Program includes responsibilities like : 1) Preparing in coordination with APSCU, HFIU, BAI and FPA the national control plans on residues in aquaculture products; 2) Developing and implementing the residue monitoring plan for all aquaculture products; 3) Surveying diseases on aquaculture farms; and 4) Operating a laboratory that can perform analysis in bacteriology (*Vibrio*, *Aeromonas*), parasitology (Protozoan and metazoan parasites), molecular biology (Polymerase Chain Reaction for white spot syndrome virus and koi herpes virus) histopathology (fish and shrimps) and water quality (basic water quality parameters like ammonia, oxygen, hydrogen sulphide);

The FHS is located in Quezon City consists of eight permanent specialists, three of whom are veterinarians and five contractual employees. **Table 1** The Chief of the FHS together with two veterinarians are in charge of the preparation of national list of registered farm.

**Table 1. Staff of the Fish Health Section**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Functions and Responsibilities</b>
Simeona E. Regidor	Chief of the FHS	DFTech	Over-all head of the section
Mercedita A. Bantaya	Supervising Aquaculturist	BS Med Tech	Fish kill investigation and pollution
Juan D. Alabaladejo	Supervising Aquaculturist	DVM, MSc.	shrimp health
Joselito R. Somga	Senior Aquaculturist	DVSM, MSc	Finfish health, disease surveillance and reporting
Abegail A. Albaladejo	Senior Aquaculturist	BS Fisheries, MA	Seaweed health
Sonia S. Somga	Aquaculturist II	DVSM, MSc	Residue laboratory
Marygrace N. Quintero	Aquaculturist I	BS Fisheries	Fish kill investigation and pollution
Judith Mae Arvesu	Aquaculturist I	BS Chem.	Analyst for residue laboratory
Marylou Cabello	Clerk II	BA	Administrative staff
Ma. Theresa Fortez	Contractual	BS Chem.	Analyst for residue laboratory
Chad Ryan Mallari	Contractual	BS Biology	Analyst for microbiology
Dwan Marciano	Contractual	BS Chem.	Analyst for disease diagnostics
Larissa Navarro	Contractual	DVM	Analyst for disease diagnostics
Jenny Hernandez	Contractual	BA	Administrative support

### ***Regional Offices Infrastructures***

The 15 Regional Directors in coordination with the Bureau Director are responsible for the field implementation of farm registration and official control of fish and fishery food safety and quality assurance in their respective regions. Figure 1. For this purpose, they are in command of:

- 44 BFAR Designated Regional Fish Health Officers (1 to 5 officers per region);
- 15 Fish Health Laboratories for monitoring the residues (1 laboratory per region), as well as some satellite laboratories in some regions;
- Vehicles for officers' transportation;
- Specific budget line for the Fish Health Units;
- Technical support from the Central Office.

### **Farm registration management and infrastructures**

The farm registration is implemented by the FHS in coordination with the 15 BFAR Regional Offices. The regional Directors have full responsibility over their area of jurisdiction. However, matters of policy-determining nature still lie under the jurisdiction of the Bureau Director. The organizational structure and coordination between regional and central offices is presented separately in Figure 3.

National and Regional Fish Health Officers:

- Register aquaculture farms; Figure 4 shows mechanism for farm registration
- Monitor the hygiene of production;
- Disseminate information and educate the aquaculture chain operators on the need of aquatic animal feeds, veterinary drugs and products registration prior to their marketing and usage;
- Conduct surveillance and monitoring of aquatic animal feeds, veterinary drugs and products in their areas of responsibility; Figure 5 shows the mechanism for farm visits and action plans
- Recommend regulatory actions on any violations on policies and guidelines on the registration, manufacture, distribution and usage of aquatic animal feeds. Figure 6 shows mechanism for the health certification for export of aquacultured fish and fishery products
- Assist in planning, directing and supervising national programs on aquatic feeds, veterinary drugs and products control;
- Assist in the registration, evaluation and inspection of establishments engaged in the manufacture, distribution and sale of aquatic animal feeds drugs and products premixes and water solubles, whenever necessary.

**Figure 3. Organizational structure for farm registration coordination between regional and central departments**

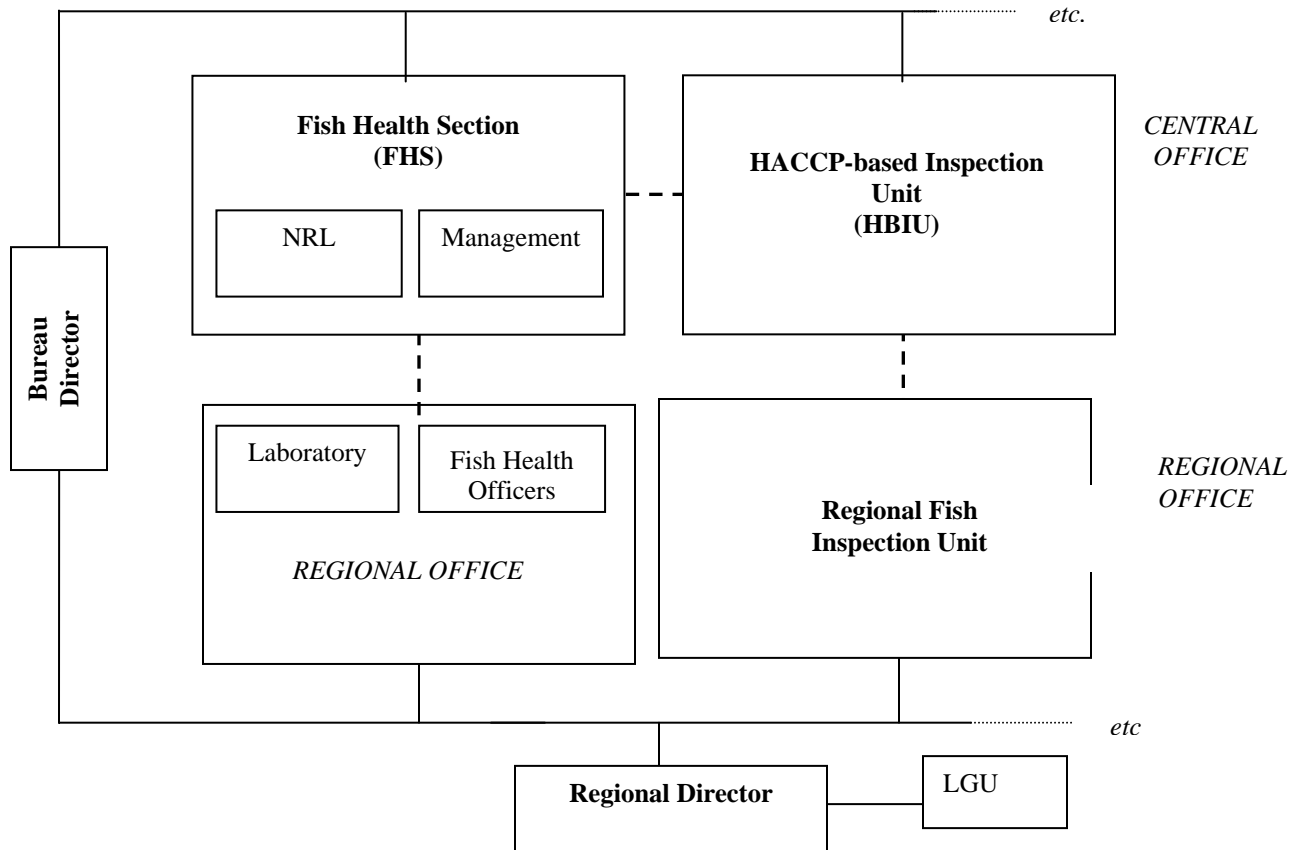
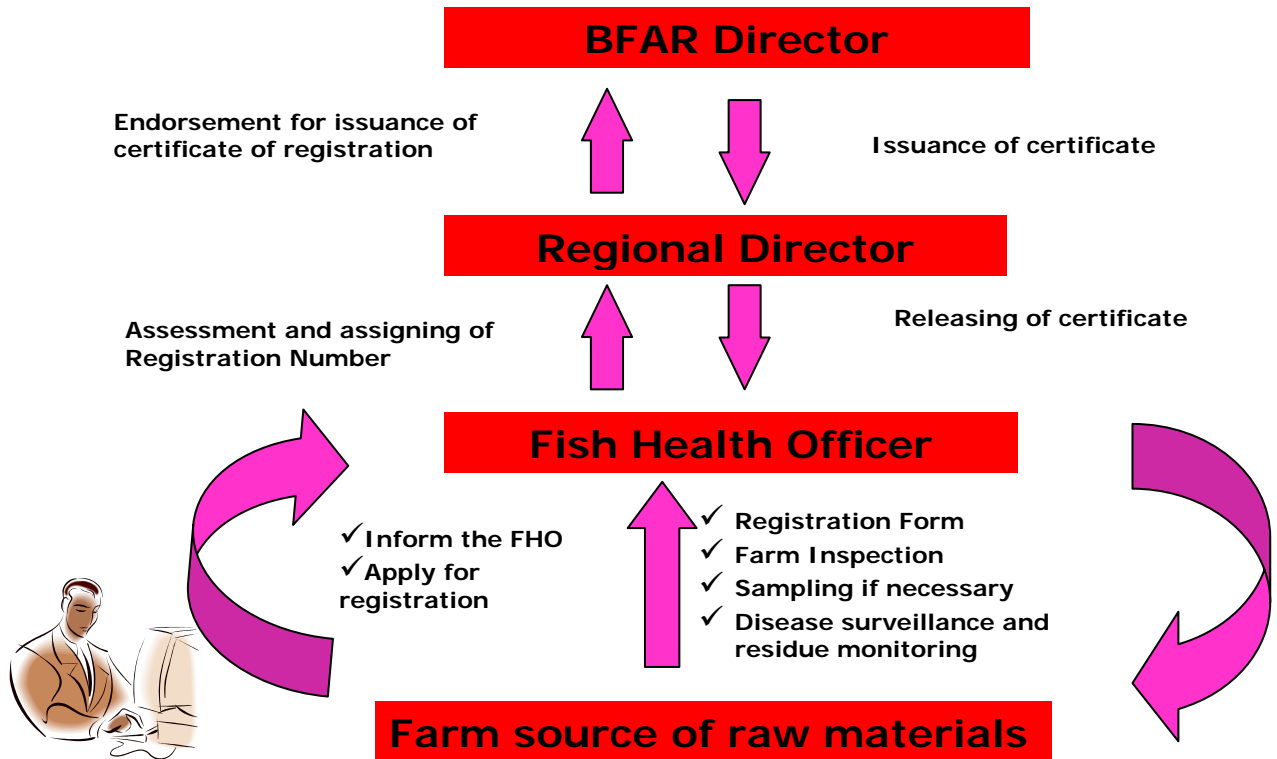




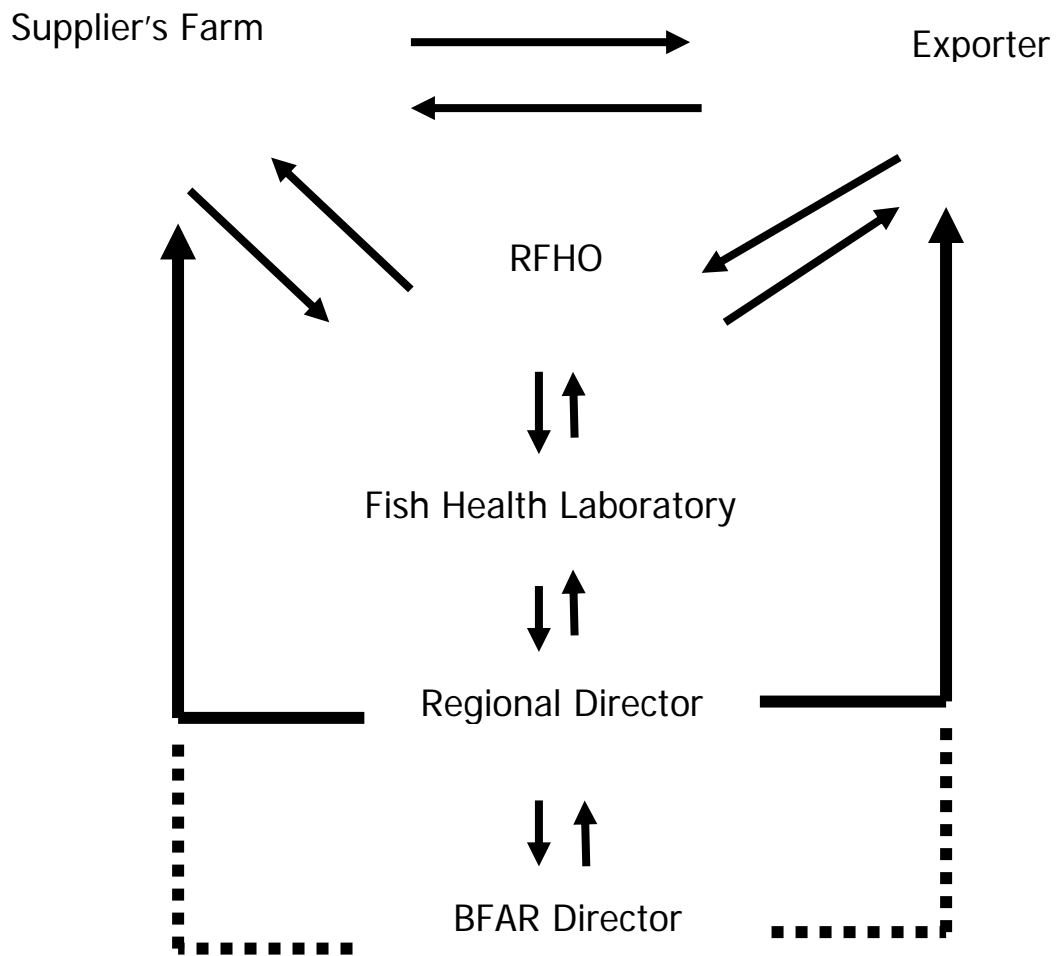
Figure 4. Mechanism for Farm Registration

# Farm Registration



**Figure 5. Farm Monitoring, Surveillance and process of action and control measures**

### On-Farm Monitoring



**Figure 6. Issuance of Health Certificate**

