SPS audits and inspections the European Union approach

EU-Taiwan international food trade seminar

March 2016

European Union

- Union of 28 Member-States
- Common rules for:
  - **Single market**
  - **Intra-Union Trade**
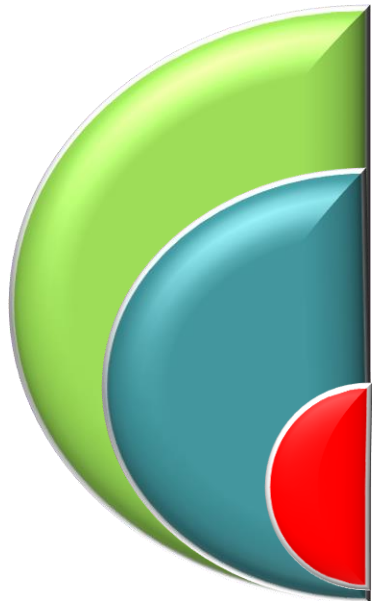 - **Imports**

Harmonised SPS Policy in EU

- **Full integration – harmonisation to provide high level of protection at ALL level of food chain**
  - **Science-based**
  - **Elaborate**
  - **Enforced**
  - **Transparent**
- **Whilst guaranteeing open and safe trade**

Controls:
Audits and inspections within the EU

- Clear attribution of roles (Reg. No 882/2004)

- Differentiation between inspections and audits

- Several layers of official controls

- Specific feature of the European Union: Audits from the Commission

Controls process

COM

➤ verifies how the competent authorities ensure enforcement of EU standards, and their functioning in practice
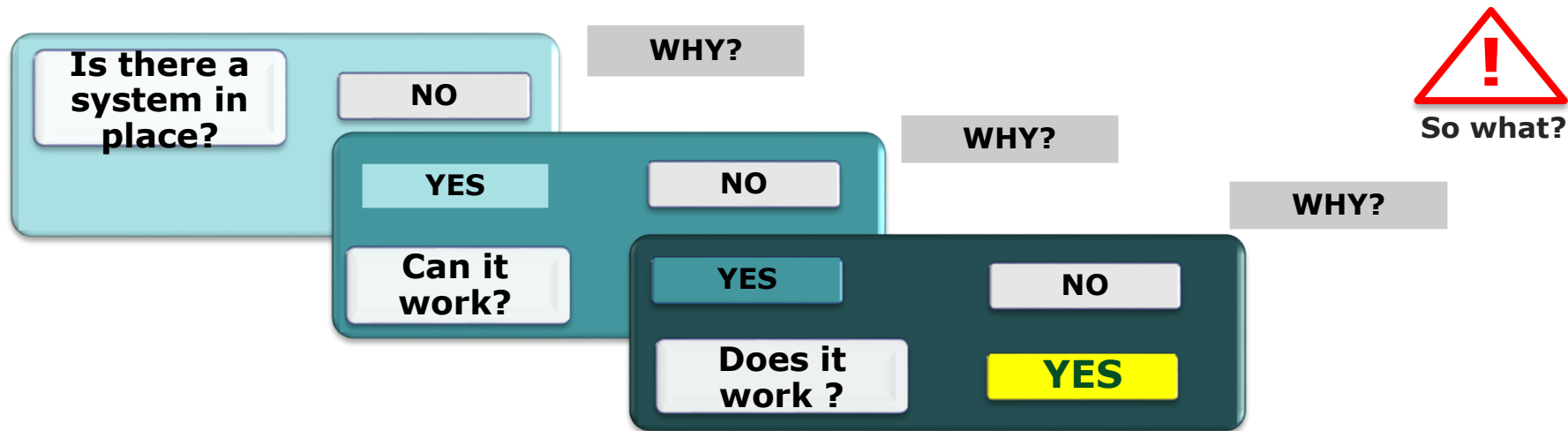 ➤ Audits

National Authorities

➤ carry out official controls to enforce EU standards
  ➤ Inspections

Operators

➤ apply EU standards (primary responsibility)

How do we do it? → System audits

Is there a system in place?
NO
WHY?

YES
NO
WHY?

Can it work?

YES
NO
WHY?

Does it work?
YES

So what?

Food Safety

Principles for auditing

- *Audits*
  - ➢Independence
  - ➢Evidence-based approach
  - ➢According to set international standards

- *Auditors*
  - ➢Ethical conduct
  - ➢Fair presentation
  - ➢Due professional care

➢ **In a transparent manner**
  - ➢**: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.htm**

Food Safety

Based on international standards
(Codex Alimentarius – CAC/GL 26–1997)

- ***System audits***
  - ➤Evaluation of official inspection and certification systems rather than specific commodities or establishments
  - ➤Guarantees high level of safety
  - ➤Resource and trade-friendly

- ***Sampling of establishments***
  - ➤EU audits also include inspections of a sample of the establishments involved.
  - ➤inspections are planned, open to scrutiny, and performed on the basis of internationally recognised audit methodologies (in line with ISO 19011).

- ***Costs of audit***
  - ➤ Costs fully paid for by the European Union (travelling/accommodation of EU auditors) Guarantee objective and un-biased results.

Food Safety

Reporting on the results

➢ **According to procedures**
   ➢ Regulation (EC) No 882/2004
   ➢ Operating Manual of Procedures
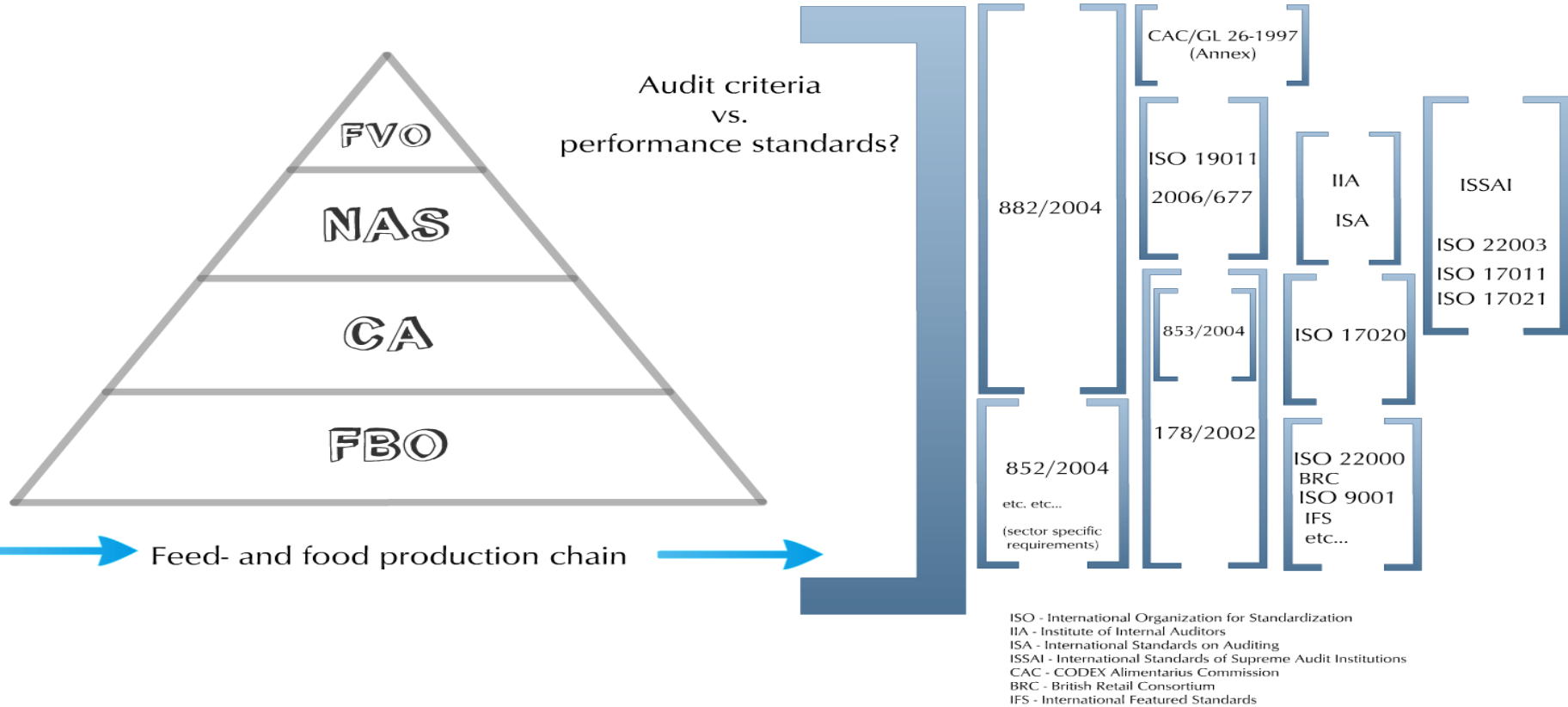
➢ **with a timely delivery**
   ➢ Preparation
   ➢ Set deadlines

➢ **In a transparent manner**
   ➢ Clear standards established
   ➢ Draft reports sent for comments
   ➢ Publication of reports on internet: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.htm

SOP and WI "

Guidance documents

Food Safety

Audit criteria vs. performance standards?

FVO
NAS
CA
FBO

Feed- and food production chain

882/2004

852/2004

etc. etc...

(sector specific requirements)

CAC/GL 26-1997 (Annex)

ISO 19011
2006/677

853/2004

178/2002

IIA
ISA

ISO 17020

ISO 22000
BRC
ISO 9001
IFS
etc...

ISSAI

ISO 22003
ISO 17011
ISO 17021

ISO - International Organization for Standardization
IIA - Institute of Internal Auditors
ISA - International Standards on Auditing
ISSAI - International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions
CAC - CODEX Alimentarius Commission
BRC - British Retail Consortium
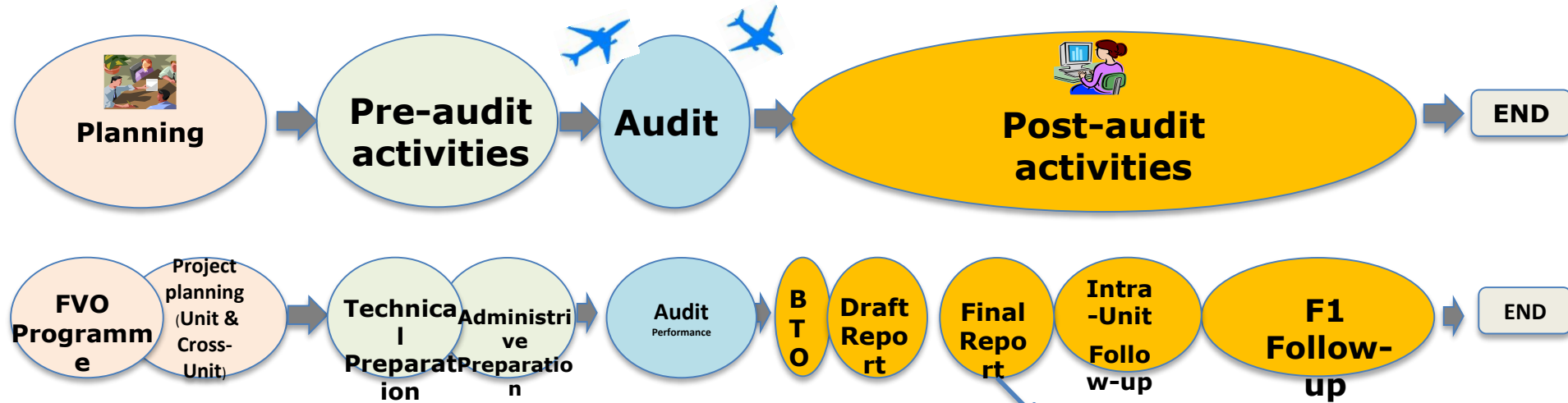IFS - International Featured Standards

Verifications and standards

- *In EU countries:*
  - **Compliance with European legislation**
  - **Performance of systems – in real life!**
- *In trading non-EU countries:*
  - **Compliance of certification requirements**
  - **Equivalence of systems – reliability of guarantees**
  - **International standards**

Audit cycle

Use of reports

- Assess performance and identify:
  - **Systemic risks**
  - **Areas for improvement**
  - **Good practices /systems**
  - **Fitness for purpose of standards**
- Tool for policy makers
- Summaries in country profiles

Transparency is key....

Making best use of resources – international rules

....To ensure trust among partners