

**Speech by Minister of State for Trade and Industry and National Development,  
Lee Yi Shyan, at AVA's Food Safety Awards Night on 13 July 2012**

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Mr Koh Soo Keong

Chairman, Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority

Ms Tan Poh Hong

CEO, AVA

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen,

1 Good evening. I am delighted to join you tonight to celebrate the achievements of our local food industry in food safety excellence.

2 Let me first acknowledge the efforts by every company in the food industry in ensuring that we continue to uphold our high food safety standards. We can only achieve this through consistent investments in our people and processes, with discipline and attention to details.

3 AVA will continue to assist the industry, especially the small and medium-sized

enterprises (SMEs), in acquiring new capabilities on food safety. AVA also partners SPRING Singapore, e2i, and the Singapore Accreditation Council to assist food manufacturers to improve their food safety standards.

4 In terms of outreach, we are raising the safety standards of the industry through education. AVA has conducted 19 seminars covering the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (or HACCP) system, Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), Good Warehousing Practices (GWP) and trade-specific food safety management systems. These initiatives benefited more than 1,800 participants.

5 Even as we strive to maintain high food safety standards, Singapore has to refine our strategy for enhanced food security.

6 AVA has recently reviewed our food security roadmap in consultation with our industry partners and companies. The review reaffirms that food source diversification remains a key strategy to bolster supply resilience. We will also explore strengthening the industry's sourcing capabilities in ASEAN.

7 Beyond source diversification, we need to do more to enhance our food security. To underscore the importance of food security, MND is forming an Inter-Ministry Committee to look into this. In particular, the Inter-Ministry Committee will study two broad areas:

8 First, to reduce food wastage. According to a 2011 United Nations' Food and

Agriculture Organisation study, about one third of food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted globally. This loss or wastage can occur anywhere along the food chain, from initial agricultural production, to processing and retail, and to final consumption. In Singapore last year, National Environment Agency's (NEA) figures show that 675,000 tonnes of food waste was generated, which constituted about 10% of our total waste output.

9 We can enhance our food security by reducing our food wastage. I urge our importers, processors, wholesalers and retailers to continue to innovate processes and cut food wastage.

10 At the same time, we must continue to find ways to boost the industry production capacity and resilience. The Inter-Ministry Committee will review our food supply chains holistically -- from importers, processors to retailers -- to see if we can do something to improve the resilience of supply. We will also work with our partners to enhance their capabilities in business continuity planning.

11 AVA launched the Food Fund in December 2009 to help our companies and farms to improve their productivity through research and development, farm capability upgrading and food diversification programmes. I am heartened to note that 53 companies have successfully applied for funding support from the \$20 million Food Fund to-date.

12 In conclusion, let me reiterate that we will continue to ensure our food safety and

security will be enhanced, so that safe and nutritious food is available, accessible and affordable to all of us in Singapore. To this end, we will need to work with our industry partners. I look forward to more collaboration between AVA and the industry players in the coming years.

13 Let me congratulate all the award recipients for your commitment to food safety and partnership with AVA. Thank you.