

Editorial

Nourishing minds and bodies: the imperative of food safety and security

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In the intricate tapestry of human existence, few threads are as fundamental and indispensable as food (Morawicki and Díaz González, 2018). It sustains us, fuels our endeavors, and serves as a cornerstone of culture and society (Fardet and Rock, 2020). Yet, amidst the abundance and variety, lurks a silent menace – the specter of unsafe and insecure food (Tariqujjaman *et al.*, 2023). This editorial endeavors to shed light on the critical importance of food safety and security, emphasizing the pivotal role of the Asian-Australasian Journal of Food Safety and Security (AAJFSS) in advancing knowledge and safeguarding public health in this domain.

At the core of AAJFSS's mission lies a commitment to fostering rigorous scientific inquiry into all facets of food safety and security (Islam *et al.*, 2017; Rahman *et al.*, 2018; Hiya *et al.*, 2019). Through its multidisciplinary approach encompassing fields such as food microbiology, risk assessment, nutrition, and policy, the journal serves as a beacon of insight in a complex landscape (Hossain *et al.*, 2017a; Monir *et al.*, 2017a; Ali *et al.*, 2019; Sultana *et al.*, 2020; Uddin *et al.*, 2021; Ohiduzzaman *et al.*, 2022). By providing a platform for the dissemination of high-quality research, AAJFSS facilitates the exchange of ideas and innovations crucial for addressing the multifaceted challenges confronting food systems today (Ahmed *et al.*, 2022; Aktar *et al.*, 2023).

One of the cornerstones of AAJFSS's credibility is its stringent adherence to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) guidelines. Upholding the highest standards of integrity and transparency in the publication process is not merely a formality but a moral imperative. It ensures that the knowledge disseminated through the journal is reliable, trustworthy, and ethically sound, thereby bolstering the confidence of readers and stakeholders in the findings presented. Moreover, AAJFSS's commitment to inclusivity and accessibility is exemplified by its indexing in prestigious databases such as CAB Abstracts, Global Health, Chemical Abstract Service (CAS) and Google Scholar (CAS, 2023). These affiliations not only enhance the visibility and impact of published research but also democratize access to valuable insights for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers across the globe. The ongoing efforts to seek inclusion in additional databases like DOAJ, Scopus, Pubmed, and WoS further underscore the journal's ambition to reach wider audiences and contribute to the global discourse on food safety and security.

In an era characterized by unprecedented global challenges, the imperative of food safety and security has assumed paramount significance (King *et al.*, 2017). The interconnected nature of food systems, coupled with emerging threats posed by climate change, globalization, and technological advancements, necessitates a comprehensive and proactive approach to safeguarding public health (Vermeulen *et al.*, 2012; Wijerathna-Yapa and Pathirana, 2022). Herein lies the pivotal role of AAJFSS as a catalyst for knowledge generation and dissemination. Consider, for instance, the burgeoning field of food microbiology. As our understanding of microbial ecology and behavior evolves, so too do the strategies for mitigating risks associated with foodborne

pathogens and contaminants (Al-Mamun *et al.*, 2023; Mazlum and Atasever, 2023). By providing a platform for cutting-edge research in this domain, AAJFSS enables the development of novel interventions and technologies aimed at ensuring the microbial safety of our food supply. Similarly, the journal's coverage of food process systems design and control is instrumental in optimizing production processes to minimize hazards and enhance quality. From farm to fork, every stage of the food chain presents unique challenges and opportunities for intervention (Islam and Mukta, 2017; Rahman *et al.*, 2023). Through interdisciplinary collaborations and evidence-based inquiry, AAJFSS facilitates the design of resilient and sustainable food systems capable of meeting the needs of a growing global population. Furthermore, AAJFSS's emphasis on policy matters in nutrition and food safety underscores the recognition that scientific insights must be translated into actionable policies and regulations. In an era of rapid globalization and trade liberalization, the need for harmonized standards and regulatory frameworks has never been greater (Haque *et al.*, 2022; Kaysar *et al.*, 2023). By engaging policymakers, industry stakeholders, and civil society actors, AAJFSS plays a vital role in shaping the discourse and driving positive change at the intersection of science, policy, and practice.

As we navigate the complexities of the 21st century, the pursuit of food safety and security must be viewed through a holistic lens that transcends disciplinary boundaries and national borders. The challenges we face – whether they be foodborne illness outbreaks, food fraud incidents, or the pervasive scourge of malnutrition – demand collective action and sustained commitment from all stakeholders (Haque *et al.*, 2022). In this endeavor, AAJFSS serves as a linchpin, uniting researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in a shared mission to nourish minds and bodies, safeguarding the health and well-being of present and future generations.

Throughout our journey, we take immense pride in the publication of a total of 75 scientific papers, each significantly contributing to the vast field of food safety and security. These papers showcase a diverse range of research endeavors, covering essential disciplines such as food microbiology, risk assessment, public health nutrition, and the policy landscape surrounding food safety (Hossain *et al.*, 2017b; Monir *et al.*, 2017b; Adhikary *et al.*, 2018; Akhter *et al.*, 2018; Haque *et al.*, 2018; Hasan *et al.*, 2018; Bristy *et al.*, 2019; Islam *et al.*, 2019; Sarker *et al.*, 2020; Abit *et al.*, 2021). Through the unwavering dedication of our esteemed authors and the meticulous review process facilitated by our committed reviewers, each article featured in the AAJFSS has deepened our comprehension of the intricate challenges confronting global food systems. Ranging from pioneering discoveries in microbial ecology to inventive strategies for food process systems design and control, our journal remains a driving force for transformative research that not only informs policy but also empowers professionals and safeguards public health.

Since its inception in November 2017, the AAJFSS has emerged as a beacon of excellence and innovation in the realm of food safety and security research. With a steadfast commitment to advancing knowledge and fostering collaboration, the journal has provided invaluable support to the global community of researchers, practitioners, and policymakers dedicated to ensuring the safety and security of our food supply. Through its rigorous peer-review process and dedication to publishing high-quality scientific papers, AAJFSS has cultivated a vibrant scholarly ecosystem where groundbreaking discoveries are made, shared, and implemented for the betterment of public health and well-being. As we celebrate the journal's contributions to this vital field, we also look forward to the continued growth and impact of AAJFSS in the years to come.

The Asian-Australasian Journal of Food Safety and Security occupies a unique and indispensable position in the realm of scientific publishing. Its unwavering commitment to excellence, integrity, and inclusivity sets a gold standard for scholarly inquiry in the field of food safety and security. As we confront the myriad challenges and opportunities on the horizon, let us draw inspiration from the journal's ethos and redouble our efforts to create a world where safe, nutritious, and sustainable food is not merely a privilege but a universal right.

Ethical approval and informed consent

Not applicable.

Data availability

Not applicable.

Conflict of interest

None to declare.

Author's contribution

Conceptualization, formal analysis, writing-original draft preparation, review and editing: S. M. Lutful Kabir. The author has read and approved the final version of the published editorial.

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