

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
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HEALTH
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INFORMATION ON NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEMS AND CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN FOOD STANDARD SETTING (CL 2006/21-EURO, PART A)

Information submitted by Austria (page 1), European Community (page 4), Finland (page 13), France (page 16), Ireland (page 18), Lithuania (page 23), the Netherlands (page 28) and the United Kingdom (page 30)

AUSTRIA

Food Safety and Control in Austria

The national legal basis for food safety and control is the Austrian Food Safety and Consumer Protection Act of 2006 which integrates provisions resulting from EC Regulations on food safety, food control and food hygiene.

In Austria, the Federal Ministry of Health and Women has the overall responsibility for food safety and food safety legislation. It coordinates the activities of the food inspection authorities of the nine Federal Provinces and of laboratories designated for analyses of official samples.

In pursuance of the annual federal control plan the authorities of 9 Federal Provinces carry out on-site inspections of enterprises and take samples. They are responsible for administrative measures and punitive actions in the case of a violation of legal provisions.

Import controls for food of non-animal origin are carried out by food inspectors. Imported food of animal origin is controlled by border veterinarians.

The Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety (AGES = Agentur für Gesundheit und Ernährungssicherheit GmbH, www.ages.at) and the institutes for food-testing of three Federal Provinces analyse the food samples taken by the food inspectors and render expert opinions. All laboratories which analyse official samples are accredited for the European Standard EN ISO/IEC 17025.

AGES was established 2002 to bundle competencies and expertise in research and control along the food chain from primary production to consumers and encompasses also human epidemiology. AGES was additionally put in charge of the inspection of drugs and medical devices in 2004.

AGES is a state owned exempt limited company under Austrian law. The Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management and the Minister of Health and Women act as agents of the Republic of Austria in their respective fields of competence.

On legal grounds a Federal Office was established in parallel to AGES as authority of first instance for the execution of laws regarding agricultural means (seed, seedling, plant variety protection; plant protection; plant protection products; feed, fertiliser) and marketing standards for fruit, vegetables and fish. However, the Federal Office does not act as authority in relation to food which is in the remit of the Ministry of Health. As regards risk analysis, AGES and Federal Office are responsible for risk assessment, risk management, and risk communication regarding feed.

Regarding food legislation AGES is responsible solely for risk assessment, while risk management is executed by the Ministry of Health and Women and both bodies contribute to a coordinated risk communication.

Food Legislation

In 2006 Austrian food legislation was streamlined and recasted by the Austrian Food Safety and Consumer Protection Act of 2006, which in addition assigns responsibilities for enacting directly applicable EC-legislation (Regulations) to national administrative bodies.

<http://www.bmgf.gv.at/cms/site/themen.htm?channel=CH0006&news=CMS1131203367956>

Cooperation with Other Countries

Austrian food officials and experts from both the central competent authorities and national institutes have contact to colleagues at the EU level and within international organisations, e.g. Codex, OIE or IPPC.

Food Quality and Control in Austria

The assurance of the best possible supply of high-quality foodstuffs is an official objective of the Austrian agricultural policy laid down in the Farm Act of 1992.

Food quality and food safety are regarded as integrated components of an Austrian sustainable food production model. Emphasis is placed on high food quality within an integrated and comprehensive approach to the entire food chain.

Labels guarantee specific qualities:

The “*AMA Quality Label*” (AgrarMarkt Austria) is an origin and quality symbol. It labels foodstuff of specific higher quality and guarantees identification of origin and independent control.

The “*AMA Organic Seal*” may only be used for organically produced foodstuff complying with the requirements laid down in the general principles of the Codex Alimentarius Austriacus, 3rd edition, Chapter A 8, and Regulation (EEC) no. 2092/91. It is subject to stringent quality and monitoring requirements.

Both labels are controlled by accredited private control bodies.

Private labels: Numerous private labels promising higher food quality are on the market. Private labels are based on private standards which reflect specific concerns and interests of the respective groups or associations. The standards of these trademarks are controlled according to internal provisions.

As to Protected Designation of Origin, Protected Geographical Indication and Traditional Specialities Guaranteed the Austrian Food Safety and Consumer Protection Act of 2006 (BGBl. I Nr. 136/2006) stipulates provisions for controls in accordance with Council Regulation 509/2006 and Council Regulation 510/2006.

Codex Alimentarius Austriacus

Food safety and food quality have a long-standing tradition in Austria. In 1891 a scientific commission was founded in the Austro-Hungarian Empire which developed a collection of standards and product descriptions for a wide variety of foods, the Codex Alimentarius Austriacus. Although lacking legal force, the Austrian

Food Code has been successfully used as a reference by the courts to determine standards of identity for specific foods. The present-day FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius has derived its name from the Austrian code.

Today's Austrian Codex commission is an advisory body for the Minister of Health and Women having its legal basis in the Austrian Food Safety and Consumer Protection Act of 2006. It undertakes the task of publishing the Austrian Food Code. Codex recommended standards may be higher than legal standards.

The work of the Austrian Codex Commission is supported by a number of subcommittees. The subcommittees cover food commodities, object commodities, organic farming, food inspection, contaminants and residues in food, food additives, flavourings and enzymes, food labelling, cosmetics and food contact materials. Rules of procedure govern the collaboration between the Commission and the subcommittees. In general, 2-3 commission sessions take place annually.

The Austrian Codex Commission is characterised by its efforts towards consensus-building in a transparent way within representatives of society (Federal Ministry of Health and Women; Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management; Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour; Federal Ministry of Finance; Federal Chamber of Labour; Austrian Federal Economic Chamber; Austrian Trade Union Federation; Austrian Chambers of Agriculture; Association for consumer information; Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety; scientists and experts nominated by social partners). The transparent decision-making process of Codex guarantees broad support of the recommendations.

National advisory body to FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius (“WECO”)

Alongside the Austrian Codex Commission the Austrian Food Safety and Consumer Protection Act of 2006 establishes a national advisory body to FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius. Its main task is the coordination of national positions with regard to international food standards. This is done using the expertise of the Austrian Codex subcommittees. Therefore, WECO shows a similar structure to that of the Austrian Codex Commission, notably regarding members which represent the civil society. However, it has its own terms of reference and Steering Committee. Consideration of consumer interests is ensured by representatives of the Ministry for Social Affairs and Consumer Protection and of the “Verein für Konsumenteninformation” (Association for consumer information) in WECO and in its Steering Committee.

Activities of Austrian Codex Contact Points

The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management acts as FAO/WHO Codex national contact point in accordance with Codex rules of procedure. Documents received are forwarded electronically to the Ministry of Health and Woman, the relevant Codex Austriacus subcommittees and to other interested parties.

The Federal Ministry of Health and Women acts as contact point with regard to the European Codex coordination. The Ministry compiles national comments or proposals concerning FAO/WHO Codex, prepares written comments and is in charge of the official correspondence with the EU.

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The European Union has built up a significant body of laws on food safety which are binding in all countries of the Union and which partially apply to non-EU-countries exporting animals, animal products, plants and plant products to the EU. Legislation on food safety is indeed largely harmonised at European level. The Member States are responsible for the implementation of EU rules and have the possibility in certain sectors under certain conditions to complement the EU legal framework and go further. In addition, the primary responsibility for ensuring that the EU laws are respected rests with the twenty-five Member States.

In these comments, information is provided on the structure and organisation of the official services responsible at European level for food legislation and food control, cooperation activities with other countries on food legislation and food control matters, consumer participation in Codex work at European level and use of Codex standards at EC level.

The central goal of the European Commission's food safety policy is to ensure a high level of protection of human health and consumers' interests in relation to food, taking into account diversity, including traditional products, whilst ensuring the effective functioning of the internal market.

The Commission's guiding principle, primarily set out in its White Paper on Food Safety¹ published in January 2000, is to apply an integrated approach from farm to table covering all sectors of the food chain, including feed production, primary production, food processing, storage, transport and retail sale.

Official Services of the European Commission involved in food safety legislation and food safety control

At the European Commission level, food safety legislation and food safety controls are under the responsibility of the Directorate General for Health and Consumer Protection (organisational chart annexed).

The EU integrated approach to food safety aims to assure a high level of food safety, animal health, animal welfare and plant health within the European Union through coherent farm-to-table measures and adequate monitoring, while ensuring the effective functioning of the internal market.

The implementation of this approach involves the development of legislative and other actions:

- To assure effective control systems and evaluate compliance with EU standards in the food safety and quality, animal health, animal welfare, animal nutrition and plant health sectors within the EU and in third countries in relation to their exports to the EU;
- To manage international relations with third countries and international organisations concerning food safety, animal health, animal welfare, animal nutrition and plant health;
- To manage relations with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and ensure science-based risk management.

Food safety activities cover the entire food production chain, ranging from animal health and plant health to the labelling of food products, as well as animal welfare.

The European Commission Directorate General for Health and Consumer Protection comprises 3 Directorates directly in charge of food safety matters. Two of these directorates are in charge of food legislation, i.e. by managing existing legislation and by drafting and submitting to the European Parliament and Council of the EU legislative proposals, most of which fall under the codecision procedure.

The third directorate in relation to food safety is the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO). The Commission, in its role as guardian of the European Community Treaties, is responsible for ensuring that Community legislation on food safety, animal health, plant health and animal welfare is properly implemented and enforced. As a Commission service, the FVO plays an important role in fulfilling this task.

The mission of the FVO is, through its evaluations, to:

- promote effective control systems in the food safety and quality, veterinary and plant health sectors;

¹http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/library/pub/pub06_en.pdf

- check on compliance with the requirements of EU food safety and quality, veterinary and plant health legislation within the European Union and in third countries exporting to the EU;
- contribute to the development of EU policy in the food safety and quality, veterinary and plant health sectors,

and to inform stakeholders of the outcome of evaluations.

The FVO works to assure effective control systems and to evaluate compliance with EU standards within the EU, and in third countries in relation to their exports to the EU. The FVO does this mainly by carrying out inspections in Member States and in third countries exporting to the EU.

Each year the FVO develops an inspection programme, identifying priority areas and countries for inspection. In order to ensure that the programme remains up to date and relevant, it is reviewed mid-year. The findings of each inspection carried out under the programme are set out in an inspection report, together with conclusions and recommendations. The FVO makes recommendations to the country's competent authority to deal with any shortcomings revealed during the inspections. The competent authority is requested to present an action plan to the FVO on how it intends to address any shortcomings. Together with other Commission services, the FVO evaluates this action plan and monitors its implementation through a number of follow-up activities.

The FVO is based in Grange, Co. Meath, Ireland. The number of staff working in the FVO has increased from 74 in 1997 to its present complement of more than 160. Of these, more than half are inspectors, who participate regularly in on-the-spot inspection missions, with the balance consisting of management and support staff. Staff are organised in six units with different responsibilities within the FVO.

Scientific advice and risk assessment relating to food safety is now the task of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). EFSA provides the European Commission with independent scientific advice on all matters with a direct or indirect impact on food safety. It is a separate legal entity, independent from the other EU institutions. The establishment of EFSA was one of the key measures contained in the Commission's White Paper on Food Safety. The Regulation 178/2002/EC providing a legal basis for the Authority was formally adopted on 28 January 2002. EFSA's work covers all stages of food production and supply, from primary production to the safety of animal feed, right through to the supply of food to consumers. It collects information and analyses new scientific developments so it can identify and assess any potential risks to the food chain. It can carry out scientific assessment on any matter that may have a direct or indirect effect on the safety of the food supply, including matters relating to animal health, animal welfare and plant health. EFSA also gives scientific advice on non-food and feed GMOs as well as on nutrition in relation to EU legislation. It can communicate directly with the public on any issue within its area of responsibility.

Update on Food Legislation

The EU integrated approach to food safety aims to assure a high level of food safety, animal health, animal welfare and plant health within the European Union through coherent farm-to-table measures and adequate monitoring, while ensuring the effective functioning of the internal market.

The most important pieces of legislation are the following:

Regulation (EC) no 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety

The food law aims at ensuring a high level of protection of human life and health, taking into account the protection of animal health and welfare, plant health and the environment. This integrated "farm to fork" approach is now considered a general principle for EU food safety policy. Food law, both at national and EU level, establishes the rights of consumers to safe food and to accurate and honest information. The EU food law aims to harmonise existing national requirements in order to ensure the free movement of food and feed in the EU.

The food law recognises the EU's commitment to its international obligations and has been developed and adapted taking international standards into consideration, except where this might undermine the high level

of consumer protection pursued by the EU. The Regulation establishes the principles of risk analysis in relation to food and establishes the structures and mechanisms for the scientific and technical evaluations which are undertaken by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

Depending on the nature of the measure, food law, and in particular measures relating to food safety must be underpinned by strong science. The EU has been at the forefront of the development of the risk analysis principles and their subsequent international acceptance. Regulation EC 178/2002 establishes in EU law that the three inter-related components of risk analysis (risk assessment, risk management and risk communication) provide the basis for food law as appropriate to the measure under consideration.

Clearly not all food law has a scientific basis, e.g. food law relating to consumer information or the prevention of misleading practices does not need a scientific foundation. Scientific assessment of risk must be undertaken in an independent, objective and transparent manner based on the best available science. Risk management is the process of weighing policy alternatives in the light of results of a risk assessment and, if required, selecting the appropriate actions necessary to prevent, reduce or eliminate the risk to ensure the high level of health protection determined as appropriate in the EU.

In the risk management phase, the decision makers need to consider a range of information in addition to the scientific risk assessment. These include, for example, the feasibility of controlling a risk, the most effective risk reduction actions depending on the part of the food supply chain where the problem occurs, the practical arrangements needed, the socio-economic effects and the environmental impact. Regulation EC/178/2002 establishes the principle that risk management actions are not just based on a scientific assessment of risk but also take into consideration a wide range of other factors legitimate to the matter under consideration.

Food safety and the protection of consumer interests are of increasing concern to the general public, non-governmental organisations, professional associations, international trading partners and trade organisations. Therefore, the Regulation establishes a framework for the greater involvement of stakeholders at all stages in the development of food law and establishes the mechanisms necessary to increase consumer confidence in food law. This consumer confidence is an essential outcome of a successful food policy and is therefore a primary goal of EU action related to food. Transparency of legislation and effective public consultation are essential elements of building this greater confidence. Better communication about food safety and the evaluation and explanation of potential risks, including full transparency of scientific opinions, are of key importance.

New rules on food hygiene

Regulations 852/2004/EC, 853/2004/EC, 854/2004/EC and Directive 2004/41/EC. In the White Paper on Food Safety the European Commission outlined a radical revision of the Community's food safety hygiene rules, under which food operators right through the food chain will bear primary responsibility for food safety. The new regulations, to come into force progressively until 2006, merge, harmonise and simplify detailed and complex hygiene requirements previously contained in a number of Council Directives covering the hygiene of foodstuffs and the production and placing on the market of products of animal origin. They innovate in making a single, transparent hygiene policy applicable to all food and all food operators right through the food chain "from the farm to the table", together with effective instruments to manage food safety and any future food crises throughout the food chain.

The revised rules are based on the following key measures :

- Implementation of a "farm to table" approach;
- Introduction of a "Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points" system (HACCP) for all food business operators to identify any step in their activities which is critical to ensuring food safety and ensure that adequate safety procedures are identified, implemented, maintained and reviewed;
- Registration or approval for certain food establishments;
- Development of guides to good practice for hygiene (GHPs) and for the application of HACCP principles by food business operators;
- Set-up of a special provision to ensure flexibility for food produced in remote areas (high mountains, remote island) and for traditional production and methods.

Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules

The following key principles are at the basis of this regulation, which for the first time at European level establishes a coherent and harmonised framework for both controls at national and Community levels:

- The official controls by Member States shall enable them to verify and enforce compliance with national and Community feed and food law; for that purpose, official controls must be carried out regularly and must be defined on the basis of risk.
- The authorities in the Member States that are competent for performing official controls shall meet operational criteria that guarantee their efficiency, effectiveness and impartiality.
- Staff performing official controls shall have received adequate training in order for them to undertake their duties competently.
- Specific control tasks may be delegated to an independent body only under strict conditions.
- Methods of sampling and analysis shall be validated in accordance with internationally accepted protocols, including those based on performance criteria, and be carried out by laboratories accredited for that purpose.
- Where non-compliance is identified during official controls, appropriate measures shall be taken, including administrative measures and criminal sanctions. These measures and sanctions shall be effective, dissuasive and proportionate.
- Contingency plans shall be drawn up setting out measures to be implemented in case of feed and food emergencies.
- Member States shall proceed to regular controls of feed and food imports. Where official controls require action by more than one Member State, the competent authorities of the Member States concerned shall afford each other administrative assistance. This assistance may be extended to active co-operation including on-the-spot controls of Member State experts in another Member State.
- In co-operation with the Member States, a Community framework for the development and operation of national control systems shall be developed taking account of existing best practices and of the experience of the Commission's control services. It will be based on agreed criteria for the performance of these systems, and lead to clear guidelines on their operation. Community guidelines will be developed for that purpose.
- Inspections and audits by the Commission's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) shall be organised to verify the effectiveness of national control systems.
- There must be a Community framework for the training of control staff in the Member States in order to ensure a uniform level of decision taken by such staff. Special attention is paid to the needs of developing countries.

Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 October 2002 laying down health rules concerning animal by-products not intended for human consumption

This Regulation, adopted on 3 October 2002, is, after the TSE Regulation adopted in 2000, a key action of the White Paper on Food Safety and is a major component of the Commission strategy to combat and eradicate feed-borne food crises such as BSE, foot and mouth disease, swine fever and dioxin contamination. It is key to the exclusion of dead animals and other condemned materials from the feed chain and to the safe processing and disposal of the 16 millions of tonnes of animal by-products produced in the Union each year.

Under the Regulation, only materials derived from animal declared fit for human consumption following veterinary inspection may be used for the production of feeds. It also bans intra-species recycling, so-called "cannibalism". It sets out clear rules on what must and may be done with the excluded animal materials, imposing strict identification and traceability system requiring certain products such as meat and bone meal and fats destined for destruction to be permanently marked to avoid possible fraud and risk of diversion of unauthorised products into food and feed.

The Regulation introduces new alternative disposal methods such as biogas, composting and co-incineration. It creates a new transparent, comprehensive and directly applicable legal framework that replaces and

simplifies a multitude of scattered directives and decisions which have developed over more than a decade in response to internal market requirements and crisis situation.

Overview of EU legislation on GMOs

EU legislation on GMOs has been in place since the early 1990s. This specific legislation has two main objectives:

- To protect health and the environment and,
- To ensure the free movement of safe and healthy genetically modified products in the EU.

The entire corpus of GMO legislation has recently been amended, leading to the creation of a new legal framework. Its main legal instruments are as follows:

- Directive 90/219/EEC, as amended by Directive 98/81/EC, on the contained use of genetically modified microorganisms (GMMs). This Directive regulates research and industrial work activities involving GMMs (such as genetically modified viruses or bacteria) under conditions of containment, i.e. in a closed environment in which contact with the population and the environment is avoided. This includes work activities in laboratories.
- Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release into the environment of GMOs applies to two types of activities:
 - The experimental release of GMOs into the environment, i.e. the introduction of GMOs into the environment for experimental purposes (for example in connection with field tests) is regulated by Part B of the Directive;
 - The placing on the market of GMOs (GMOs from now on being defined as a product containing GMOs or consisting of such organisms), for example the cultivation, importation or transformation of GMOs into industrial products, is mainly regulated by Part C of the Directive;
- The placing on the market of GMO food and feed or food and feed products containing or consisting of GMOs is regulated by Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on genetically modified food and feed. In the presence of a food/feed product containing GMOs or consisting of such organisms, the applicant has in reality a choice: (1) either the application in its entirety is uniquely subject to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003, applying the "one door, one key" principle, in order to obtain an authorisation for the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment in accordance with the criteria laid down by Directive 2001/18/EC, and the authorisation to use this GMO in food or feed in accordance with the criteria laid down by Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003, or (2) the application — or part of the application — is submitted both under Directive 2001/18/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003.
- Intentional and unintentional movements of GMOs between Member States of the European Union and third countries are regulated by Regulation (EC) No 1946/2003 on transboundary movements of genetically modified organisms, with the exception of intentional movements within the Community.

All these instruments lay down the conditions which, for example, a company or university research department must satisfy before being allowed to develop, use or market a GMO or a food product derived from GMOs.

GMOs and food products derived from GMOs which are placed on the market must also satisfy labelling and traceability conditions. These conditions are laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 and Regulation (EC) No 1830/2003 concerning the traceability and labelling of genetically modified organisms and the traceability of food and feed products produced from genetically modified organisms and amending Directive 2001/18/EC.

Various other instruments have been adopted in connection with this legislation. These include:

- Commission Regulation (EC) No 641/2004 of 6 April 2004 on detailed rules for the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the application for the authorisation of new genetically modified food and feed, the notification of existing products and adventitious or technically unavoidable presence of genetically modified material which has benefited from a favourable risk evaluation.

- Commission Regulation (EC) No 65/2004 of 14 January 2004 establishing a system for the development and assignment of unique identifiers for genetically modified organisms.
- Commission Recommendation 2004/787/EC of 4 October 2004 on technical guidance for sampling and detection of genetically modified organisms and material produced from genetically modified organisms as or in products in the context of Regulation (EC) No 1830/2003.

Cooperation activities

At bilateral and subregional level, the Member countries of the EU evidently cooperate on a daily basis. They have the same legal framework and their authorities meet on a regular basis at European Commission (e.g. Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health) and Council levels, in addition to their direct cooperation between competent authorities, including exchange of officials.

The EU has developed a series of trade facilitation agreements with non-EU countries, the main of which being the following:

- EU-Andorra agreement

- EU-Canada Veterinary agreement :

- Agreement between the European Community and the Government of Canada on sanitary measures to protect public and animal health in respect of trade in live animals and animal products.
- Commission Decision of 16 February 2005 approving on behalf of the European Community amendments to the Annexes to the Agreement between the European Community and the Government of Canada on sanitary measures applicable to trade in live animals and animal products.
- Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters with the Government of Canada on the modifications of Annex V and Annex VIII to the Agreement between the European Community and the Government of Canada on sanitary measures to protect public and animal health in respect of trade in live animals and animal products.

- EU-Chile agreement:

- Agreement establishing an association between the European Community and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Chile, of the other part. (Annex IV - Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures applicable to trade in animals and animal products, plants, plant products and other goods and animal welfare).
- Council Decision of 18 November 2002 on the signature and provisional application of certain provisions of an Agreement establishing an association between the European Community and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Chile, of the other part.
- Decision 1/2003 of the Joint Management Committee of 24 October 2003 concerning the rules of procedure.

EU-EFTA agreement

EU-Faroe Islands agreement

- Council Decision of 15 November 1999 concerning the conclusion of a Protocol on veterinary matters supplementing the Agreement between the European Community, of the one part, and the Government of Denmark and the Home Government of the Faroe Islands, of the other part.
- Protocol supplementing the Agreement between the European Community, of the one part, and the Government of Denmark and the Home Government of the Faroe Islands, of the other part.

EU-Mexico Veterinary agreement

- Decision 2/2000 of the EC-Mexico Joint Council of 23 March 2000 (Article 20).

EU-New Zealand agreement

EU-San Marino Veterinary agreement

- Interim Agreement on trade and customs union between the European Economic Community and the Republic of San Marino - Joint Declaration - Declaration by the Community
- Decision 1/94 of the EC-San Marino Cooperation Committee of 28 June 1994 on Community veterinary regulations to be adopted by the Republic of San Marino

EU-USA agreement:

- Council Decision of 16 March 1998 on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Community and the United States of America on sanitary measures to protect public and animal health in trade in live animals and animal products.
- Commission Decision of 28 November 2003 approving on behalf of the European Community amendments to the Annexes to the Agreement between the European Community and the United States of America on sanitary measures to protect public and animal health in trade in live animals and animal products
- Commission Decision of 2 December 2003 on health certificates for the importation of animal products from the United States of America
- Commission Decision of 4 May 2005 approving on behalf of the European Community amendments to the annexes to the Agreement between the European Community and the United States of America on sanitary measures to protect public and animal health in trade in live animals and animal products
- Commission Decision of 2 February 2006 approving on behalf of the European Community amendments to the annexes to the Agreement between the European Community and the United States of America on sanitary measures to protect public and animal health in trade in live animals and animal products

EU-Switzerland agreement:

- Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on trade in agricultural products (Annex 11)
- Decision 1/2003 of the Joint Veterinary Committee on Trade in Agricultural Products of 29 July 2003 concerning the adoption of its Rules of Procedure
- Decision 2/2004 of the joint veterinary committee on trade in agricultural products of 9 December 2004 amending Appendices 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 11 to Annex 11 to the Agreement.
- Decision No 1/2005 of the Joint Veterinary Committee set up under the Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on trade in Agricultural Products of 21 December 2005 on the amendment to Appendix 6 to Annex 11 to the Agreement.

As regards developing countries, the EU is currently extending its programme on food safety matters in order to help these countries to comply with the EU rules when exporting food products to the EU.

National Codex Contact Point and Other National Structure for Codex matters

The Codex Contact Point for the European Community is constituted by the Health and Consumer Protection Directorate General of the European Commission. The EC Codex Contact Point fulfils all the 9 tasks described in the Procedural Manual and in particular coordinates with the EC Member States for the establishment of EC positions for Codex meetings and EC replies to Circular Letters in close cooperation with the Council of the European Union according to Council Decision 2003/822/EC.

The Member States of the EC and the European Community are members of the Codex Alimentarius. The European Community and the Member States of the EC attempt to present joint comments on issues discussed in Codex Committees, which are within the competence of Community legislation. The procedure is described in the Council Decision 2003/822/EC on the accession of the European Community to the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Official Journal of the European Union L 309 of 26.11.2003). These comments are presented in the EC position papers. The Directorate General for Consumer and Health Protection acts as the contact point and co-ordinates this work.

Consumer Participation

The EC has established a European Codex Contact Point. It is managed by the Directorate Health and Consumer Protection of the European Commission. Its main role is to ensure the coordination between the Commission Services and the Member States (via the Council of the EU), with which EU common positions are established. It is also the direct point of contact with the Codex secretariat.

The EC has established a system of consultation with consumer organisations via direct contacts and in the context of an advisory body: the European Consumer Consultative Group. In its Decision ([2003/709/EC](#)) of 9 October 2003, the European Commission created the European Consumer Consultative Group (ECCG).

This body replaced the Consumer Committee as the Commission's main forum for engaging with consumer organisations.

The ECCG:

- Constitutes a forum for general discussions on problems relating to consumer interests.
- Gives an opinion on Community matters affecting the protection of consumer interests.
- Advises and guides the Commission when it outlines policies and activities having an effect on consumers.
- Informs the Commission of developments in consumer policy in the Member States.
- Acts as a source of information and soundboard on Community action for the other national organisations.

The ECCG meets four times a year in Brussels (the first meeting had place on 2nd October 2003).

It consists of:

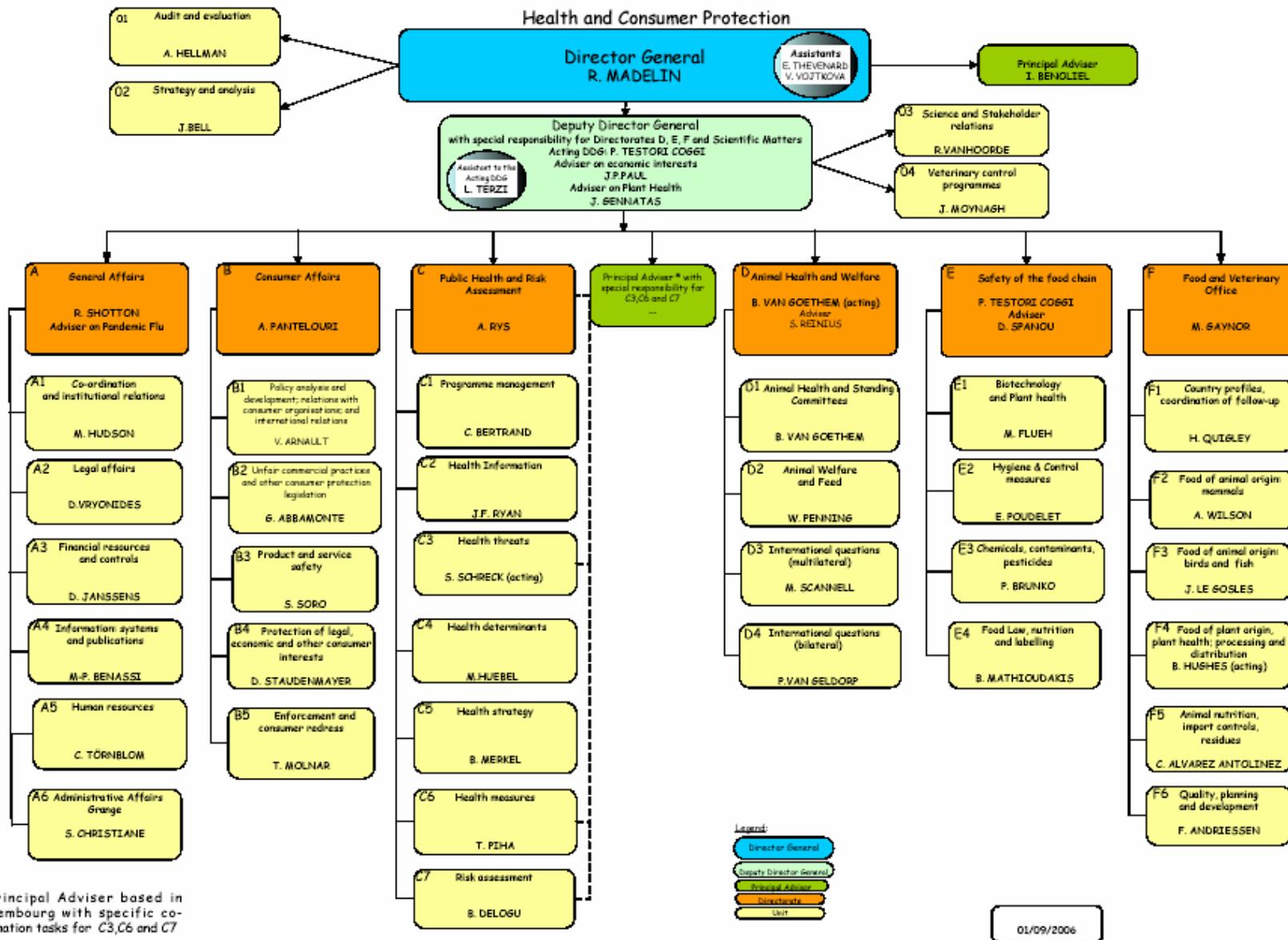
- one representative of national consumer organisations per Member State;
- one member from each European consumer organisation (BEUC and ANEC);
- two associate members (EUROCOOP and COFACE);
- Two EEA observers (Iceland and Norway).

There are no direct public consultations prior to development of European common positions for Codex meetings, but consultations with relevant stakeholders and representative organisations as detailed above. In addition, the final EC common positions are posted on the EU website².

The EC has identified independent consumer NGOs (e.g. the European Consumers' Organisation - BEUC, Association of European Consumers – AEC). The EC encourages the participation of these NGOs in Codex meetings either directly or via their representatives (e.g. Consumer International).

Annex: (see next page)

² http://ec.europa.eu/food/fs/ifsi/eupositions/eupositions_list_en.html



* Principal Adviser based in Luxembourg with specific co-ordination tasks for C3, C6 and C7

FINLAND

National Food Control System

(i) Official Agencies

In Finland the food safety system is organised on four levels, comprising ministries, central administrative level, regional level and local level.

Three ministries have a role in food safety. The ministries assume overall responsibility for the development of food legislation. The ministries are also responsible for general planning and supervision of food control.

- The *Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry* (MAF) takes overall responsibility for the control of primary production and the hygiene of foodstuffs of animal origin. The MAF also promotes the protection of consumer health by preventing infections spreading from animals to people. The MAF prepares legislation on food safety, animal health and welfare, plant health and plant production and feed.

- The *Ministry of Social Affairs and Health* (MSAH) deals with the health and hygiene of foodstuffs, water, tobacco, alcoholic beverages, radioactivity and contained use and deliberate release of GMOs. Veterinary medical products are authorised by the National Agency for Medicines which operates under the auspices of the MSAH.

- The *Ministry of Trade and Industry* (MTI) is responsible for ensuring the health-related quality as well as other quality of foodstuffs and to protect consumer rights. The MTI draws up legislation e.g. on composition of food, on contaminants contained in food, on food contact material, on food labelling etc.

In conjunction with the MAF operates the Cooperation Group for Food Safety, which coordinates the performance management of the Finnish Food Safety Authority (Evira) and common operating lines of the three ministries in food control.

In conjunction with the MTI operates the Advisory Committee on Foodstuffs and the Novel Food Board.

The Finnish Food Safety Authority (Evira) started on 1 May 2006 and operates under the auspices of the MAF. Evira substituted former National Food Agency, National Food and Veterinary Research Institute and Plant Production Inspection Centre as well as some executive tasks of the MAF. Evira has staff of 753. This number includes 116 persons responsible of the meat inspection on slaughterhouses. Evira is the central competent authority of food safety, animal health and welfare and plant health and plant production. Evira is responsible for directing, planning and carrying out control of the whole sector. Evira also acts as a national reference laboratory of animal diseases, of residues in foodstuffs of animal origin and of feed. Evira is also responsible for scientific risk assessment and scientific research of food safety and animal health and welfare. In addition Evira authorises inspectors and samples who work mainly on control of plant health and organic production. Evira authorises also border inspection veterinarians.

The Food Act also assigns Evira the following specific tasks:

- provision of guidance to the State Provincial Offices on auditing the municipal authorities,
- direct supervision of large scale slaughterhouses and of integrated meat and fish plants,
- planning and implementation of the residue control programme for foodstuffs of animal origin,
- responsible for food control where special expertise is required,
- assessment of Guidance to Good Hygiene Practice,
- national contact point for RASFF,
- management of communication of consumer and risk information.

Evira comprises four departments: control of agricultural production, control of foodstuffs and veterinary services, research on animal diseases and foodstuffs and administration. In addition there are two separate units: communication and risk assessment. The key processes of the organisation are food safety, animal health and welfare and plant production ja plant health.

Evira must draw up a national food control programme, covering the entire food chain. This control programme must be reviewed as necessary, but at least once in every three year. Evira also has responsibility for the preparation of the single integrated multi-annual control plan in accordance with the Article 41 of the Regulation (EC) No 882/2004.

Evira is empowered under the Food Act to take direct administrative coercive measures against operators in a particular municipality where the municipality has taken insufficient actions to prevent serious health hazards.

Regional administration consists of six State Provincial Offices, which are under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior. The State Provincial Offices are responsible for planning, steering and monitoring food and veterinary control and monitoring compliance with food law and other legislation concerning animal health and welfare as well as veterinary services in their respective regions. The Finnish Food Act also assigns them following specific tasks:

- auditing of the municipal food control authorities,
- evaluation of the control plans of the municipal authorities and checking compliance with these plans.

At the local level the major task of the municipal food control authorities is to take care of the practicalities of food control. The work includes performing inspections, advising business enterprises and approving plans regarding in-house control. Municipal control authorities take care of the control of intra-community trade of foodstuffs of animal origin. Food control at the municipal level is part of environmental health work. Municipal food control authorities exercise power on their respective territories. The municipalities enjoy an extensive degree of self-administration.

Currently there are some 230 municipal food control units. The Finnish Government decided in 2003 to begin a process of merging municipal food control authorities to reach 50-85 control units. This does not necessarily involve reducing the number of municipalities. This process is still underway.

Each municipality must draw up a municipal food control plan taking into account the national food control programme. Municipalities are required to have a quality management system. The Food Act includes a provision which imposes the obligation on municipalities to collect fees from business operators for certain types of inspection activities.

Finnish customs, under the auspices of the Ministry of Finance, is the competent authority for food and plant health control at import. The customs authorities consist of the National Board of Customs, five customs districts and the Customs Laboratory. The customs check at import point (specifically in the importer's warehouse) relate to food of non-animal origin that have not yet been placed on the market. In case of non-compliance, the necessary measures can be directed at the entire consignment before it reaches any consumer by the customs offices. According to the Finnish Food Act the customs authorities are also competent market control authorities concerning foodstuff of non-animal origin in inner market. The control is carried according to the national control plan made in co-operation with Evira and the sampling is done at the places of destination.

The Customs Laboratory carries out physical, chemical and microbiological analyses and GMO analyses for food chain control. Domestic products are also analysed on the bases of research contracts between the Board of Customs and Evira.

(ii) Food Legislation

The Finnish food legislation is for the most part harmonised with EU legislation. Since joining the European Union in 1995, food legislation has been intensively developed. EU legislation has been transposed into Finland's law and key national food legislation has been reformed. National rules are applied in the absence of Community harmonisation.

A new food law, the Finnish Food Act entered into force on 1 March 2006. The Food Act covers issues earlier covered by the Food Act, by the Act on Food Hygiene of Foodstuffs of Animal Origin and by parts of the Health Protection Act. The Food Act applies to food, to conditions in which food is handled and to food business operators and food control at all stages in the production, processing and distribution of food.

(iii) Cooperation with other countries

At the central governmental level Finnish officials have regular contacts with their colleagues in other EU Members States especially in the Council Working Groups and in the Commission Standing Committees and Working Groups. Preparation of the food legislation fall under the responsibility of the officials of the ministries. However the officials of Evira also participate to that work within their expertise. In addition Finnish officials have regular contacts with their counterparts in other EU Member States via networks operating under Commission Working Groups. This unofficial cooperation gives useful information for interpretations of the legislation, for the food control etc. Finnish officials at the central and regional level have participated to the training programmes organised by the European Commission and the Food and Veterinary Office FVO.

Scientist dealing with the food safety as well as the laboratory staff are also deeply involved in the international cooperation.

In Finland food safety officials have a long tradition to have close cooperation with their colleagues in other Nordic countries.

Finnish official have also been involved in the projects proving technical assistance for new EU Members States and for the countries outside the EU (TAIEX, Phare etc.)

Finnish officials participate actively in the work within the various Committees of Codex Alimentarius.

Via an active international cooperation Finland would like to ensure, that the food legislation as well as the food control practises are in accordance with the international agreements related to food safety, animal health and welfare and plant health and plant production.

NATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR CODEX MATTERS

CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN STANDARD SETTING

- (i) Finland has a National Codex Contact Point (Secretary General of the Advisory Committee of Foodstuffs).
- (ii) The Advisory Committee of Foodstuffs under the Ministry of Trade and Industry is the national Codex Committee.
- (iii) Public consultations has not been hold when developing national positions for Codex Meetings, but national positions for Codex meetings are prepared in cooperation with the sub-committees of the Advisory Committee on Foodstuffs. In these sub-committees are also representatives of the independent consumer NGOs.
- (iv) Independent consumer organisations have not been invited to participate in Codex meetings.
- (v) In the Advisory Committee of Foodstuffs (National Codex Committee) are representatives of the independent consumer NGOs. Under the Advisory Committee of Foodstuffs are several sub-committees for specific issues (like food additives and contaminants, food labelling, food hygiene, residues of veterinary drugs in food etc.). In these sub-committees are also representatives of the independent consumer NGOs. National positions for Codex meetings are prepared in cooperation with these sub-committees.
- (vi) In Finland there are two consumer NGOs participating in the Codex Process at the national level: The Finnish Consumers' Association (Suomen Kuluttajaliitto ry) and The Consumers (Kuluttajat-Konsumenterna ry).

FRANCE

En réponse à la lettre circulaire CODEX LC 2006-21 EURO, les autorités françaises ont l'honneur de présenter un point d'information relatif au système d'évaluation et de gestion des risques en matière de produits phytopharmaceutiques, matières fertilisantes et supports de culture.

En 2000 le système français réformé en matière de sécurité sanitaire des aliments et de santé animale, avait été présenté au CCEURO. On avait instauré la séparation de l'évaluation et de la gestion des risques sanitaires par la création de l'agence française de sécurité sanitaire des aliments (AFSSA), en charge de l'évaluation des risques sanitaires. La gestion des risques sanitaires (législation et contrôle) demeure de la responsabilité des Ministères en charge de l'Agriculture, de la Consommation et de la Santé. Cette séparation se poursuit avec l'extension de ce principe au secteur des produits mentionnés ci dessus.

I Présentation générale du dispositif préalable et limites identifiées

Une loi et un décret d'application récents ont transféré à l'agence française de sécurité sanitaire des aliments **l'évaluation des produits phytopharmaceutiques, matières fertilisantes et supports de culture.**

Auparavant, l'évaluation n'était pas entièrement confiée à un évaluateur indépendant :

- **L'évaluation des risques toxicologiques** était confiée à des experts de différents organismes scientifiques ou des experts indépendants, avec l'appui d'une structure scientifique **mixte** au sein d'un établissement public dédié à la recherche agronomique.
- **L'évaluation des bénéfices** pour la protection des végétaux était confiée aux experts de l'administration centrale du ministère de l'agriculture et de la pêche.
- **Un comité d'homologation**, composé d'experts et de représentants des administrations, examinait les conclusions des deux évaluations et proposait au ministre une décision.

Ce dispositif ne respectait pas entièrement le principe de séparation de l'évaluation et de la gestion du risque et s'est en outre révélé incapable de faire face à l'afflux de nouvelles demandes (innovations des industriels, évaluations menées au niveau européen, demandes d'autorisation de produits similaires autorisés ailleurs dans l'UE...). Le système était engorgé et les délais de traitement des demandes d'homologation de plus en plus longs. Les agents de l'État mobilisés pour faire face à cet engorgement ne pouvaient plus participer correctement aux travaux réalisés dans d'autres enceintes, notamment auprès des institutions de la Communauté européenne.

II Objectifs du nouveau dispositif

Le nouveau dispositif achève la séparation de l'évaluation et de la gestion du risque et permet le développement des moyens d'expertise pour traiter l'ensemble des dossiers. Une même agence d'évaluation indépendante, l'AFSSA, réalise désormais l'évaluation des **risques**, des **bénéfices** et la **synthèse bénéfice/risque** et fournit des propositions sur les **conditions d'emploi**. Cet avis sert de base à la décision du gestionnaire (ministre de l'agriculture), le cas échéant après consultation des autres administrations gestionnaires du risque, selon une procédure simplifiée et limitée aux nouvelles préparations.

Les moyens structurels nécessaires sont financés par l'État et le fonctionnement est financé grâce aux revenus d'une taxe payée au dépôt des dossiers par les professionnels de la protection des plantes. À l'issue d'une période transitoire, la structure d'évaluation au sein de l'AFSSA sera auto-financée tout en améliorant les délais de traitement.

Pour l'avenir, on envisage une taxe fiscale affectée à l'AFSSA dont une partie serait rétrocédée au budget de l'État pour financer les activités de gestion du risque, notamment les contrôles de l'utilisation des produits.

Les services de l'État vont ainsi pouvoir se recentrer sur leurs missions de gestion du risque et sur leur mission réglementaire.

III La mécanique réglementaire

Le nouveau dispositif a nécessité d'élargir le champ de compétences réglementaire de l'AFSSA et la composition du conseil scientifique (experts en agronomie, santé des végétaux et santé des travailleurs) ainsi que de son conseil d'administration (représentants des industries de la protection des plantes).

Les délais de traitement des dossiers de demande d'autorisation de mise sur le marché, sont :

- de **dix mois pour l'évaluateur** et de **deux mois pour le décideur** dans les cas d'évaluation « lourde » (nouvelles substances, nouvelles préparations, extensions d'usage majeur),
- de **cinq mois pour l'évaluateur** et de **un mois** pour le décideur dans l'ensemble des autres cas,
- pendant une période transitoire de 2 ans environ, les délais pourront être multipliés par trois.

IRELAND**A. Food Control Systems & Consumer Participation in Food Standard Setting****a) National Food Control System****(i) *Official Agencies***

Ireland has an extensive framework of legislation and official controls in place to ensure food safety. The establishment and continuous updating of these controls and their enforcement involve the combined activities of a number of departments and agencies operating at both national and local level augmented by a wide spectrum of medical, veterinary and scientific experts who provide specialist support services. In general, responsibility for food safety policy rests with central government departments, which are Competent Authorities under EU food legislation, while these, together with a number of other national/regional/local agencies, undertake food safety enforcement activities on behalf of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI).

The FSAI, which was established in 1998 and commenced operations on 1 January 1999, is a statutory, independent, science-based body dedicated to protecting public health and consumer interests in the area of food safety and hygiene. It comes under the aegis of the Minister for Health and Children. It has a board of 10 and is supported by a 15 member Scientific Committee and a 22 member Consultative Council.

The FSAI is responsible for the enforcement of all food safety legislation in Ireland. It carries out its enforcement functions through 'service contracts' with official agencies. These contracts outline an agreed level and standard of food safety activity that the agencies must perform as agents of the Authority. The agencies are certain Government Departments (Department of Agriculture & Food, the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources), the local authorities (33 County Councils and Corporations), the Health Services Executive, the Marine Institute, the Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs and the National Standards Authority. The Authority also co-operates with the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland in regard to the monitoring of radioactivity levels in food - where both bodies have statutory duties - and with the Revenue Commissioners in respect of activities at border inspection posts.

A brief overview of the present structure and organisation of the official agencies involved and the roles they play is given in Annex I while a breakdown of the laboratories providing food analysis services is described in Annex 2.

(ii) *Food Legislation*

In Ireland the responsibility for food safety legislation policy resides with the relevant government departments in particular the Department of Health & Children, the Department of Agriculture and Food, and the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources. In common with other western countries, Ireland has an extensive framework of arrangements in place for ensuring food safety. It is based on a number of distinct elements, viz.:

- Designation of standards critical to public health which must be observed in relation to food and to the people, animals and processes involved in the different areas of the food chain.
- A system of controls - based on approval, licensing, inspection, testing and scientific analysis - to ensure adherence to prescribed standards.
- An administrative framework staffed by appropriately qualified and skilled personnel to monitor and enforce the prescribed standards.
- Effective legal, financial and other sanctions for failure to observe the standards.

The control system now in place has evolved over the years. While it owes its origins, broadly, to governmental responses to food safety threats at various stages as dictated by evolving public health standards and/or trade requirements, it is now firmly rooted in our membership of the EU where the drive to

harmonise technical standards has served to focus increased attention on food safety in member states both collectively and individually. The most notable development, in recent times, has been the adoption of the so-called *Hygiene Package* aimed at consolidating and simplifying a raft of existing measures into 5 broad instruments. These lay down general rules for the production of all food with specific rules for meat & meat products, bivalve molluscs, fishery products, milk & dairy products, eggs & egg products, frogs' legs & snails, animal fats & greaves, gelatine & collagen. In this regard, Ireland is currently engaged in drawing up an integrated multi-annual food & feed control plan for 2007 and future years that will give effect to the various controls in place from farm to fork.

In Ireland all EU derived standards and control arrangements take effect either directly, in the case of Regulations, or indirectly in the case of Directives, following their transposition into domestic legislation within a specified period. The body of Irish food law stemming from this process is and continues to be strongly influenced by developments in Codex as a result of the historical participation in Codex over the years by Ireland, other member states and the EU as a whole.

Arising out of the above a complex and comprehensive body of food law is in place in Ireland which is too voluminous to describe here. This is constantly changing and evolving in response to a variety of internal, EU and internationally derived factors. The FSAI has compiled a compendium of food legislation in Ireland and maintains this on its website, www.fsai.ie/legislation/index.asp

(iii) Cooperation with Other Countries

At Central Government level, officials have regular contact with their colleagues in other member states of the EU. There is also considerable contact through participation at meetings in Brussels dealing with the development of food legislation, and also contact with other food-relevant international organisations including the various committees in Codex. In addition, Ireland regularly plays host to visiting groups of food control officials from many countries including those from the broader European region.

Irish food control officials operating at local/regional level maintain contact with their overseas counterparts mainly through meetings, conferences, workshops, seminars, study tours, etc. held by the following organisations:-

- (a) Council & Commission Workgroups for food legislation in Brussels
- (b) Food Law Enforcement Practitioners – FLEP
- (c) International Federation of Environmental Health - IFEH
- (d) Environmental Health Officers Association (EHOA) - Irish EHO professional body
- (e) Chartered Institute of Environmental Health - CIEH

Officials also take part in study tours to a number of countries in Europe and temporary workplace exchanges are arranged from time to time whereby officials from other European countries spend time working with one of the regulatory agencies in Ireland and vice versa. Irish officials participated with TAIEX in the audit of the new member states of the EU.

Irish laboratory staff maintain regular contacts with their counterparts in other countries via networks such as FLEP, through participation in proficiency test schemes and through informal exchanges.

Scientists working on food safety in Irish research organisations are also heavily involved in collaborative research projects with their counterparts across Europe and beyond.

National Codex Contact Point & Other National Structures for Codex Matters

(i) Activities of Codex Contact Point

The Irish Codex Contact Point function is discharged by an officer of the Department of Agriculture and Food who actively undertakes the 9 Core Functions of CCP's set out in page 99 of the 15th Edition of the Codex Procedural Manual.

(ii) *National Codex Committee*

A broadly based National Codex Committee comprising all the main stakeholders was established in Ireland in 2001. It meets on a regular basis and provides a forum to enable all relevant Departments, NGO's, consumers and industry bodies to make known their views, in a structured way, for consideration in the formulation of the official national position on all Codex issues. Further details on this are available under "Food Safety" on the DAF website - www.agriculture.gov.ie

CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN STANDARD SETTING

In Ireland the main consumer representative organisations are routinely consulted on food related safety and consumer protection issues including proposals for legislation of both national and EU origin. A number of formal arrangements are in place for such consultation including the Consumer Liaison Group of the Department of Agriculture and Food, FSAI's Safety Consultative Council and a web-based consultation system also operated by the FSAI. The bodies listed in Annex 1 also provide consumers with information on food safety through a variety of other channels such as helplines, info-centres, libraries, websites, etc. There is extremely active participation by consumers via the media, particularly national radio. Given the national coverage of the relevant media programmes and the high level of consumer participation, this is a very effective method of ensuring that the needs and demands of consumers are met. The FSAI has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Consumers Association of Ireland (CAI) that covers inputs by CAI to the food safety agenda.

Ireland also has, through the various methods summarised above, taken action to facilitate consumer participation in Codex standard setting in regard to the "measurable objectives" set out in points (iii) through (vi) of CL 2006/21-EURO.

It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that Irish consumers have every opportunity to be involved, through their relevant NGO, in the preparatory process used to formulate the Irish position on a variety of Codex issues.

ANNEX 1

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY OF BODIES CONCERNED WITH FOOD SAFETY

<u>Body</u>	<u>Areas of concern</u>
Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)	Enforcement of all food safety legislation through service contracts with Govt. Departments, Health Boards & Local Authorities. Co-ordination of Irish input into the EU programme of Scientific Co-operation in Europe (SCOOP). Irish Contact Point for the EU Rapid Alert System for Foodstuffs (RASFF). Certification for Export of non-animal derived food produced in Health Board approved premises. Competent Authority for novel foods. Operation of the Food Safety Training Council setting standards for training in retail, food-service and manufacturing businesses.
Food Safety Promotion Board	All-Island body with over-arching responsibility for communicating/promoting food safety information to consumers.
Department of Agriculture and Food.(DAF)	DAF is a Competent Authority under legislation relating to: Regulation of plant protection & biocidal products. Control of illegal substances and monitoring harmful residues in various foods. Animal health; use of veterinary medicines. Large scale approved meat processing plants covering fresh meat, poultry meat, meat products, minced meat and meat preparations. Imported meat products. Eggs & egg products. Milk processing plants and farms supplying them, including all aspects of processing, handling, storage and placing on the market. Cereals, potatoes, fruit and vegetables, sugar, jams/jellies/marmalades, cocoa, coffee, fruit juices, spirit drinks, wine. Material in contact with foodstuffs. Animal feed – all aspects. GM - feed & seed.
Department of Health & Children (DoHC) and Health Boards	General food safety, hygiene, composition including food additives and contaminants, food supplements and foods for particular nutritional uses. Food labelling. Food retailing/wholesaling outlets, manufacturing, packing, distribution and catering trade. Food processors that are not the responsibility of other Departments. Bottled flavoured waters including soft drinks, brewing and distilling industries. Bottled water.
Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources (DMNR)	In relation to both domestic and export markets - fishing vessels, wholesale and auction markets, fish processing establishments, shellfish purification centres, transportation and labelling of fish products, shellfish production areas and aquaculture installation.
Local Authorities (Veterinary Service)	On-farm controls where drinking milk product for direct sale; licensing of dairymen. Low capacity abattoirs and meat processing plants.
Department of the Environment, Local Authorities & Environmental Protection Agency	Public drinking water supplies. Potable water Directive.
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment & Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs	Food products - producers of raw materials and finished product (under Consumer Protection Legislation).
Irish Medicines Board	Substances in veterinary medicines.
Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland	Ionising radiation levels in individuals, animals, fauna, poultry, eggs, crops, fish, seaweed, or any food, soil, minerals, air or water.

ANNEX 2

LABORATORIES PROVIDING FOOD ANALYSIS SERVICES

<i>Laboratory</i>	<i>Foods Monitored</i>	<i>Range of Tests</i>
Public Analysts Laboratory (3 labs)	All foodstuffs	Contaminants, additives, residues, food authenticity, public complaints, toxins
DAF's Pesticide Control Service	Meat, milk, fruit, vegetables, cereals	Pesticide residues
Marine Institute	Fish, shellfish	Contaminants, natural toxins, drug residues, micro-organisms
DAF's Central Meat Control Laboratory	Meat	Drug residues, additives, micro-organisms
Food Microbiology Laboratories (7 labs)	All foodstuffs	Micro-organisms
DAF's Dairy Science Laboratories (3 Labs)	Milk , Dairy products	Drug residues, contaminants micro-organisms
DAF's Regional Veterinary Laboratories (2)	Milk and water.	Micro-organisms
DAF's Central Veterinary Research Laboratory	Dust samples from egg farms.	Salmonella.
Local Authority Laboratories (2 labs)	Meat	Drug residues, micro-organisms
Radiological Protection Institute	All foodstuffs	Radioactivity
State Laboratory	Milk, cereals, veg., animal feed	Nutrients, drug residues, additives and contaminants
Irish Equine Centre	Animal feed	Bone spicules (microscopic)

LITHUANIA**B. Food Control Systems & Consumer Participation in Food Standard Setting****a) National Food Control System****(i) *Official Agencies***

Responsibilities of the different ministries and institutions are described in the Law on Food of the Republic of Lithuania. Responsibility for food safety including import/export in Lithuania is divided in the following way:

1. Within the sphere of its competence the **Ministry of Health:**

1) shall lay down the following mandatory requirements for food, taking into account the assessment of risk to human health based on scientific research: maximum permitted levels of pesticides and contaminants in food, requirements for the safety of food additives and nutritious matter, the safety of foodstuffs for particular nutritional purposes, irradiated, genetically or otherwise modified food, novel foods or food prepared using unconventional methods, safety requirements for articles, intended to be in contact with food, requirements for food hygiene and control, the procedure for the introduction of hazard analysis and critical control points system at food handling entities, requirements for health of persons handling food, their health examination procedures and obligatory hygiene training;

2) shall co-ordinate implementation of the policies of food safety, wholesome nutrition of the population and reduction of food-borne morbidity;

3) shall develop and approve programmes for food safety and improvement of nutrition of the population, monitor the nutrition of the population, food safety and food-borne diseases, promote habits of wholesome nutrition and discharge other functions laid down by the mentioned Law and the other legal acts;

4) shall establish the mandatory food labelling requirements.

2. Within the limits of its competence the **Ministry of Agriculture:**

1) shall implement the policy on improved quality of food products and raw materials, production of organic agricultural products, and enhancement of the competitiveness of Lithuanian products on the international market;

2) shall develop and approve programmes for the improvement of food quality, production and marketing of wholesome, organic food, shall establish the mandatory requirements for the assessment of quality and composition of food, the assessment of raw materials quality, growing of plants for food and their placement on the market as well as for using and control of plant protection means;

3) shall establish the mandatory requirements for labelling of foodstuffs intended for marketing.

3. Within the limits of its competence the **Ministry of Economy:**

1) shall implement the food trade policy;

2) shall establish the requirements for foodstuffs trade.

4. Within the limits of its competence the **State Food and Veterinary Service (SFVS):**

1) shall implement the policy for official control and monitoring foodstuffs safety and reduction of the morbidity of animals intended for food;

2) shall establish the mandatory requirements for safety of raw materials of animal origin food; for hygiene and control of animal origin food handling and its placing on the market; hazard analysis and critical control points system at handling entities of the food of animal origin;

3) shall monitor contamination of animals and raw materials of animal origin food with harmful substances.

Lithuania has an extensive framework of legislation and official control in place to ensure food safety. The establishment and continuous updating of these controls and their enforcement involve the combined activities of a number of departments and services, centers operating at both national and local level augmented by a wide spectrum of medical, veterinary and scientific experts who provide specialist support services. In general, responsibility for food safety policy rests with central government departments, which are Competent Authorities under the EU food legislation, while these, together with a number of other national/regional/local agencies, undertake food safety enforcement activities on behalf of the State Food Veterinary Service.

National Nutrition Centre (NNC) of Ministry of Health

NNC co-ordinates implementation of food safety, wholesome nutrition and reduction of food-borne morbidity policies in Lithuania.

NNC is responsible for drafting legal acts on:

1. Hygiene of foodstuffs
2. Food additives
3. Food contaminants
4. Pesticide residues,
5. Microbiological criteria
6. Food labelling
7. Food supplements
8. Novel and genetically modified food
9. Materials intended to come into contact with food
10. Food for special dietary uses
11. Drinking and mineral water
12. Food irradiation, etc.

NNC carries out regular monitorings of food consumption in the country, executes risk assessment procedures, takes part in food standards development and consumers education.

A brief overview of the present structure and organisation of the official agencies involved and the roles they play is given in Annex I while a breakdown of the laboratories providing food analysis services is described in Annex 2.

(ii) Food Legislation

Food safety is being regulated by following major laws of the Republic of Lithuania:

1. Law on Food (approved on 2000).
2. Law on Drinking water (approved on 2001).
3. Law on Veterinary (approved on 1992).
4. Law on Plant Protection (approved on 1995).

The Minister of Health lays down mandatory requirements for food safety taking into account the assessment of risk for human health based on scientific research, EU legislation and Codex Alimentarius standards. It is responsible for health and safe foodstuff consumption of inhabitants as well as for their healthy living. The basic type of legal acts is Hygiene norms approved by the Minister of Health.

The National Nutrition Centre (NNC) under Ministry of Health is a headquarter for food legislation and responsible for coordination of healthy and wholesome nutrition of population. The NNC drafts legal acts on

foodstuffs and nutrition and executes risk assessment. The NNC has compiled a compendium of food legislation in Lithuania and maintains this on its website, www.rmc.lt

The Minister of Agriculture issues orders on quality of foodstuffs, products of organic agriculture and their labelling.

The Director of State Food and Veterinary Service issues orders in the field of official food control, food hygiene supervision, animal health, welfare and drugs.

The food legislation system is directed to tight governmental responses to food safety threats at various stages as dictated by evolving public health criteria and/or trade requirements. It rooted by membership of the EU where the drive to harmonise technical standards has served to focus increased attention on food safety. The most notable development, in recent times, has been the negotiation and adopting of the so-called EU *Hygiene Package* aimed at consolidating and simplifying a raft of existing measures into 5 broad instruments. In this regard, Lithuania is currently engaged in drawing up a multi-annual control plan for 2007 and future years. In Lithuania all EU derived legal norms and control arrangements take effect either directly, in the case of Regulations and Decisions, or indirectly in the case of Directives, following their transposition into national legislation within a specified period. The body of Lithuanian food law stemming from this process is and continues to be strongly influenced by developments in Codex as a result of the historical participation in the Codex activities.

Designation of legal limits critical to public health is stated in relation to food and to the humans, animals and processes involved in the different areas of the food chain. system is based on approval, licensing, inspection, testing and scientific analysis - to ensure adherence to prescribed standards. An administrative framework is staffed by appropriately qualified and skilled personnel monitors and enforces the prescribed standards. Effective legal, financial and other sanctions are applied for failure of legal limits.

Arising out of the above a complex and comprehensive body of food law is in place in Lithuania which is too voluminous to describe here. This is constantly changing and evolving in response to a variety of internal, EU and internationally derived factors.

(iii) Cooperation with Other Countries

At Central Government level, officials have regular contact with their colleagues in the other Member States of the EU. There is also considerable contact through participation at meetings in the various EU Commission and Council committees and working groups located in Brussels dealing with the development of food legislation, and also contact with other food-relevant international organisations including the various committees in Codex.

Lithuania works in close collaboration with FAO and since 2000 participates in CEECFOODS programme (Cooperation of Central and East European Countries in Food Composition Activities) and NordBalt network (exchange of food safety information between Nordic and Baltic Countries). In 2003-2004 relevant institutions of Lithuania took part in international MATRA project managed by Nyderland's "Strengthening of Food Surveillance and Food Safety". The NNC cooperates with UNICEF in the area of breastfeeding promotion and of elimination of iodine deficiency disorders in Lithuania. In 2006 NNC joined the network of foodstuffs composition databases compilers which links over 40 institutions in the EU. In 2003-2004 SFVS together with German twinning partners carried out PHARE project "Strengthening of Food Safety Control, Food Control Laboratories in Lithuania".

Lithuanian laboratory staff maintains regular contacts with their counterparts in other countries via networks, through participation in proficiency test schemes and through informal exchanges.

Scientists working on food safety in Lithuanian research organisations are also heavily involved in collaborative research projects with their counterparts across Europe and beyond.

NATIONAL CODEX CONTACT POINT & OTHER NATIONAL STRUCTURES FOR CODEX MATTERS

(i) Activities of Codex Contact Point

The Lithuanian Codex Contact Point function was appointed to National Nutrition Centre in 10 July 1992 by the Resolution No 668 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.

(ii) National Codex Committee

National Codex Alimentarius Committee was established on the 18th of December 1997 by the order of the Director of Lithuanian Standards Board. It comprised from all main stakeholders, met on a regular basis and provided a forum to enable all relevant institutions, departments, NGO's, consumers and industry bodies to make known their views, in a structured way, for consideration in the formulation of the official national position on the Codex issues.

The main objectives for Codex Alimentarius Committee activities were stated:

- Formulate the country response to the proposals of the Codex Alimentarius Commission;
 - Represent the country at various Codex meetings and events;
 - Advise the government on the best possible decision as regards Codex standards and their implementation;
 - Improve the quality of foodstuffs and health;
 - Improve the state policy of health quality among Lithuanian population;
 - Review and, as necessary, revise of existing standards.
- National Codex Alimentarius Committee was established by comprising representatives from:
- National Nutrition Centre under the Ministry of Health
 - Kaunas Technological University
 - State Food and Veterinary Service
 - Ministry of Agriculture
 - Ministry of Economy
 - Institute of Food of the Kaunas Technological University
 - Fishery Department under the Ministry of Agriculture
 - Association of Lithuanian Consumers
 - Association "Eurochem – Lithuania"
 - Food Engineering Centre

CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN STANDARD SETTING

Lithuanian public organisations for the protection of consumers' rights in ensuring the consumers' interests in the spheres of food safety, quality and information:

- 1) conduct consumer opinion polls about food safety and quality and publish an overview of the results of the survey in the media;
- 2) either at the request of a consumer or on its own initiative apply to the court for violation of the consumer's rights or his lawful interests;
- 3) collect information from the producers and traders about food safety and quality;
- 4) establish information and consultation centres, and test laboratories for the examination of food safety and quality;

5) notify the National Consumers Rights Protection Board and the food control authority about violations of legal acts regulating food safety and quality and make proposals about a more effective protection of consumers' rights;

6) take part as an observers at the meetings of the National Consumers Rights Protection Board.

The headquarters institution **National Consumer Rights Protection Board** coordinates state institutions' activities on protection of consumers. The Board being comprised of the Chairman, 4 Members and the administration has been functioning since August 2001. The work procedure of the Board is established by the Law on Consumer Protection and other laws as well as the procedure rules adopted by the Board.

Board's activities:

- Coordinates state institutions' activities on protection of consumers;
- Protects consumers' public interest;
- Undertakes control on advertising;
- Within the limits of its competence applies action measures intended by law to trespassers infringing the Law on Consumer Protection, Law on Products Safety and Law on Advertising;
- Organizes and carries out education of consumers, sellers, producers and services providers;
- Provides information for consumers about unsafe products, which have appeared or may appear on the market;
- Organizes the exchange of information with the European Union and Member States;
- Represents the Republic of Lithuania in the European Union and international organizations in consumer rights protection field.

There are more than 20 public and non-governmental institutions related with food and nutrition which take part in drafting of national food acts and provide own position concerning EU law.

It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that Lithuanian consumers have every opportunity to be involved, through their relevant NGO, in the preparatory process used to formulate the Lithuanian position on a variety of Codex issues.

NETHERLANDS**A. Food Control Systems & Consumer Participation in Food Standard Setting****b) National Food Control System***(i) Official Agencies*

The responsibility for food safety policy within the Netherlands rests with central government departments. The Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (VWA) is responsible for the enforcement of all food safety legislation in the Netherlands.

The Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (VWA) was set up on 10 July 2002. Developments in the international sphere demanded one national authority, responsible for supervision, risk assessment and risk communication. Two organisations, the Inspectorate for Health Protection and Veterinary Public Health (KvW) and the National Inspection Service for Livestock and Meat (RVV), were brought under the Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority, operating as separate services. From 1 January 2006 they have been combined into one Agency.

The task of the Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority is to protect human and animal health. It monitors food and consumer products to safeguard public health and animal health and welfare. The Authority controls the whole production chain, from raw materials and processing aids to end products and consumption.

The Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority is an independent agency in the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) and a delivery agency for the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. The three main tasks of the Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority are: supervision, risk assessment and risk communication. Other important activities are incident and crisis management and policy advice for the Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. A significant part of its work involves liaising with other ministries. Maintaining international contacts is also of vital importance.

An overview of the present structure and organisation of the official agencies involved can be found on the English website of the [Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority \(VWA\)](#).

(ii) Food Legislation

The Dutch food legislation is for the most part harmonised with EU legislation. EU legislation has been transposed into the Netherlands's law and key national food legislation has been reformed. National rules are applied in the absence of Community harmonisation.

For more information please refer to the [General Food Law](#) of the European Union.

(iii) Cooperation with Other Countries

At Central Government level, officials have regular contact with their colleagues in other member states of the EU. There is also considerable contact through participation at meetings in Brussels dealing with the development of food legislation, and also contact with other food-relevant international organisations including the various committees in Codex. In addition, the Netherlands regularly plays host to visiting groups of food control officials from many countries including those from the broader European region.

Dutch officials also partake in the projects providing technical assistance for new EU Members States and for the countries outside the EU (TAIEX, Phare etc.)

Dutch scientists working on food safety in research organisations are also involved in collaborative research projects with their counterparts across Europe and beyond.

NATIONAL CODEX CONTACT POINT & OTHER NATIONAL STRUCTURES FOR CODEX MATTERS

(i) *Activities of Codex Contact Point*

The Dutch Codex Contact Point function is discharged by an officer of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV).

(ii) *National Codex Committee*

The Codex activities are coordinated by the Dutch codex-team, which has been established by the department of Food Quality and Animal Health within the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. All Dutch codex activities are organised under the supervision of the codex-team. This team consists of a Codex Contact Point (CCP) and a Codex Coordinator. The codex contact point is responsible for the organisation of the national preliminary meetings and for the distribution of documents from the head office of the codex in Rome and the Netherlands.

The CCP develops and maintains good communication between the business world and the consumers, including a national website and newsletter.

The codex coordinator is responsible for general coordination of the codex-team and developing the Dutch strategy in relation to Codex.

Regular meetings are held with the heads of delegation from all the committees, in which the Netherlands partake, to discuss various codex issues.

In the Netherlands, the heads of delegation and their alternates of the committee are either from the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) or from the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport.

CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN STANDARD SETTING

The Dutch positions for the Codex-meetings are determined by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport after consultation with the business world and consumer organisations by drawing up “position papers”. This document forms the basis for the position the Netherlands takes in during the EU Council Working Groups in Brussels and the Codex Committee meetings.

To be able to produce a widely accepted position paper, a preliminary national meeting is organised by the head of delegation prior to each committee meeting. All kinds of organisations are invited to take part in this meeting, amongst others; this includes consumer organisations, research institutes, the business world and other NGO’s. These organisations share their valuable expertise and viewpoints, so that these can be considered in the formulation of the position paper.

UNITED KINGDOM

National Food Control System

i) Official Agencies

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) was established in April 2000. The FSA is responsible for protecting consumer interests in relation to food safety and standards in the United Kingdom and leads on issues such as quality, composition (including additives and contaminants) and labelling of food, and the hygiene aspects of meat and milk production. The Agency is accountable to the UK Government through Health Ministers and through the equivalent devolved authorities in respect of the Scottish Parliament, National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Enforcement of food legislation, including the inspection and sampling of food at all stages of production, distribution, storage and sale, is generally the responsibility of local government. Under the Food Standards Act 1999, the Agency has statutory powers to strengthen influence over enforcement activity to ensure national priorities and objectives will be delivered. The Act also provides the Agency with powers to monitor and audit local authority food law enforcement services. These powers are put into effect through the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement. The Agreement came into effect fully on 1 April 2001. It sets standards of performance to ensure the effectiveness and consistency of food law enforcement and outlines the Agency's monitoring and audit schemes. The Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) is responsible for the co-ordination of the practical aspects of enforcement work and the Agency works closely with this organisation.

The Meat Hygiene Service has enforcement responsibility in relation to hygiene, inspection and welfare in licensed fresh meat, poultry meat and game establishments. In Northern Ireland, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) operates a centralised meat inspection service.

DEFRA (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), and equivalent organisations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, aim to help the farming and food industries operate as efficiently as possible. In England, Scotland and Wales, the departments operate an animal health and welfare strategy.

Other government departments have interests in various aspects of food law and standards. For example, the Health Departments are consulted and contribute where eating for health and infant feeding are concerned.

ii) Food legislation

UK food law is generally harmonised with EU legislation.

The Food Safety Act 1990 came into force on 1 January 1991. It updated previous legislation and provided an extensive legal framework under which Ministers can draw up regulations in accordance with the powers given to them by the Act. This includes the power to implement EC food law in the UK.

The Food Standards Act 1999 established the Food Standards Agency and sets out its main objective of protecting public health in relation to food and the functions that it assumed in pursuit of that aim. The Act gave the Agency the powers necessary to enable it to act in the consumer's interest at any stage in the food production and supply chain.

iii) Cooperation with other countries

Officials from the FSA have regular contact with counterparts in other EU Member States in the various structures of the European Union, as well as bilaterally.

The FSA also has a large amount of bilateral contact with countries outside the EU, sharing information and experiences and hosting study visits.

National Codex Contact Point and Other National Structures for Codex matters

i) The UK Codex Contact Point is an official of the Food Standards Agency who fulfils the 9 core functions of CCPs set out in the Codex Procedural Manual. The contact point is within the EU and International Strategy Branch which co-ordinates all the UK's Codex activities.

ii) A National Codex Consultative Committee has been established for every sub-committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. These committees meet before every Codex committee session and in advance of EC coordination meetings. Members include other government departments, non-governmental bodies, consumer and industry bodies and other parties with an interest in the subject matter. They are updated regularly and their views are taken into consideration when agreeing the UK position on a given subject.

Consumer Participation in Standard Setting

As described above there is a well established mechanism for consumer participation in standard setting in the UK. In addition, the FSA carries out numerous formal consultations, inviting the views of the food industry, consumers and others on topics ranging from proposed changes in regulations to new food policy initiatives, examples of which can be found at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/consultations/>

Consequently, UK consumers have the opportunity to be involved in the preparatory process; the measurable objectives set out in (iii) – (vi) of CL 2006/21-EURO are considered met.

The FSA has 'putting the consumer first' as a principal core value. In the Codex context it pays particular attention to the views of Consumers International and other representatives of consumer opinion.

ANNEX 1

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY OF BODIES CONCERNED WITH FOOD SAFETY

Body	Subordination	Areas of concern
National Nutrition Centre	Ministry of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drafting of mandatory requirements for food, taking into account the assessment of risk to human health based on scientific research: maximum permitted levels of contaminants in food, requirements for the safety of food additives and nutritious matter, the safety of foodstuffs for particular nutritional purposes, irradiated, genetically or otherwise modified food, novel foods or food prepared using unconventional methods, safety requirements for articles, intended to be in contact with food, requirements for health of persons handling food, their health examination procedures • elaboration the policy on the food safety, wholesome nutrition of the population and reduction of food-borne morbidity • developing and taking part in programmes for the food safety and improvement of nutrition of the population, monitoring the nutrition of the population, food safety and food-borne diseases, promotion of habits of wholesome nutrition • drafting the mandatory requirements for food labelling
Ministry of Agriculture	Government	drafting the mandatory requirements for quality and placement on the market of foodstuffs and feedingstuffs;
State Plants Protection Service	Ministry of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drafting the mandatory requirements for growing of plants for food as well as for using and control of plant protection measures; • phytosanitary control, control on conformity of fresh fruits and vegetables to their marketing standards;
The State Seed and Grain Service under the Ministry of Agriculture	Ministry of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drafting the mandatory requirements for quality and placement on the market of seeds and propagating materials; • control on conformity of seeds, propagating and other materials;
State Food and Veterinary Service	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting the mandatory requirements for food control and safety of raw materials of animal origin food • official control of food safety and quality at all stages of food production (starting from the harvesting of plants, growing of animals and finishing with the supplying food to the consumers) as well import and export

ANNEX 2

LABORATORIES PROVIDING FOOD ANALYSIS SERVICES

Laboratory	Foods Monitored	Range of Tests
<i>National Veterinary Laboratory (NVL) of State Food and Veterinary Service has been accredited according to EN ISO/IEC 17025:2000</i>	All foodstuffs	Contaminants, additives, residues, food authenticity, public complaints, toxins, microbiological agents
<i>National Public Health Centre Laboratory (NPHC) of Ministry of Health has been accredited according to EN ISO/IEC 17025:2000;</i>	All foodstuffs	Contaminants, additives, residues, food authenticity, public complaints, toxins, microbiological agents