

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS



WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

JOINT OFFICE: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME Tel: 39 06 57051 www.codexalimentarius.net Email: codex@fao.org Facsimile: 39 06 5705 4593

Agenda Item 8

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## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE

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### FOOD LEGISLATION AND FOOD CONTROL ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION

#### 1) UPDATED SURVEY OF NATIONAL FOOD LEGISLATION AND FOOD CONTROL SYSTEMS, CODEX CONTACT POINTS AND NATIONAL CODEX COMMITTEES

#### 2) COOPERATION ACTIVITIES IN FOOD CONTROL AND TRAINING

#### GOVERNMENT COMMENTS

(Finland, Ireland, Hungary, Poland, Slovak Republic, European Community)

### FINLAND

#### OFFICIAL AGENCIES

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

The ministries assume overall responsibility for the development of food legislation. The Ministry of Trade and Industry deals with safety and quality matters related to all foods of non-animal origin as well as market control of all foods. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry takes overall responsibility for the control of primary production and the hygiene of foodstuffs of animal origin. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health deals mainly with the hygiene of foodstuffs of non-animal origin and the hygiene of all foodstuffs at retail level and catering.

The central administrative level is occupied by National Food Agency, which is responsible for directing, planning and developing food control in Finland and for conducting control. Activities cover the control of all foodstuffs from field to table. The National Food Agency guides the municipal food control authorities, state provincial offices and the National Board of Customs, which perform the practical control. The National Food Agency is competent throughout the whole country.

The National Food Agency is a subordinate to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Responsibility for result management is also in the hands of the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The Food Control Cooperation Group is responsible for coordinating result management and operating lines of food control.

The National Food Agency cooperates closely with the National Veterinary and Food Research Institute, The Plant Production Inspection Centre, the National Public Health Institute, The National Agency for Medicines and the Product Control Authority for Welfare and Health.

At the regional level state provincial offices guide and control the compliance with the food legislation in the provinces according to instructions issued by the National Food Agency. The practical enforcement is carried out by local municipal authorities under the direction of the state provincial offices. Local authorities exercise power only on their respective territories,

The analyses needed by the official food control are carried out in laboratories approved either by the National Food Agency or by the National Veterinary and Food Research Institute.

The official food control in Finland is complemented by general requirements that food business operators carry out in-house control. The obligation of a food business operator to ensure the safety of the food he produces or puts on the market was regulated in 1995.

## **IMPORT/EXPORT MATTERS**

The Customs authorities take care of the control of foodstuffs imported from third countries. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is responsible for veterinary border inspections of animals and foodstuffs of animal origin imported to Finland from third countries.

## **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 intensely developed. EU regulations have been transposed into Finland's law and key national food legislation has been reformed. National rules are applied in the absence of Community harmonisation.

## **IRELAND**

### **FOOD LEGISLATION AND FOOD CONTROL MATTERS**

#### 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 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 - which first came into effect in July 1999 and are currently in the process of being reviewed and renewed - outline an agreed level and standard of food safety activity that the agencies must perform as agents of the Authority. The agencies are local authorities - 33 County Councils and Corporations - Health Boards, and Government Departments - Department of Agriculture & Food, the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, and the Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs. The Authority also co-operates with the Radiological Institute of Ireland in regard to the monitoring of radioactivity levels in food where both bodies have statutory duties.

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 (see at the end of the document).

#### Activities of Codex Contact Point and National Coordinating Committee

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 discussed at the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the Codex Committee on General Principles and set out in the report of that meeting (ALINORM 99/33A, Appendix V) and subsequently noted by the CAC at its 23<sup>rd</sup> session.

A broadly based National Codex Committee comprising all the main stakeholders was re-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.

#### 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 in place has grown up piecemeal over the years and owes its origins, broadly, to two sets of influences:

- food safety threats as perceived nationally over the years at different stages of our economic and social development and the response thereto by Government Departments and other relevant authorities as dictated by evolving public health standards and in response to trade requirements. The food safety standards and control systems resulting from these developments have been given statutory expression in domestic legislation in order to ensure their effectiveness.
- 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. In Ireland these 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.

#### Cooperation Activities

At Central Government level, officials have regular contact with their colleagues in other member states of the EU. Some contact is also made through participation in the various committees in Codex. Occasionally bilateral meetings are held with other countries such as the USA. 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) Food Law Enforcement Practitioners - FLEP
- (b) International Federation of Environmental Health - IFEH
- (c) Environmental Health Officers Association (EHOA) - Irish EHO professional body
- (d) 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 laboratory staff maintain regular contacts with their counterparts in other countries via FLEP, through participation in proficiency test schemes and through informal exchanges.

## **HUNGARY**

### **I. COMPETENT AUTHORITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR FOOD CONTROL (FOOD SAFETY)**

The names of the authorities constituting the institution system of food safety are contained in Annex no. 1.

#### **1. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The following authorities performing food safety tasks are supervised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development:

- the Plant and Soil Protection Service,
- the Veterinary and Food Control Service, and
- the National Institute for Agricultural Quality Control.

##### **1.1. Phytosanitary Service**

###### **Organization**

The new special administrative system of institutions of plant and soil protection has been set up on the basis of Act XXXV of 2000 and Decree No. 21/2001 (III. 9.) FVM of the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development. That system provides an adequate structure for meeting the requirements raised by accession to the EU.

###### **Central level**

###### ***1. Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development***

The Minister of Agriculture and Regional Development implements the plant protection tasks through the Plant Protection and Agro-Environment Management Department.

#### **2. Central Plant and Soil Protection Service**

A budgetary organ exercising medium-level control. It is an independent legal entity seated in Budapest, which conducts part of its activity as an independent business unit. The service is headed by a Director-General appointed by the Minister.

###### **Regional level**

###### **1. County Phytosanitary and Soil Protection Services**

Nineteen County Phytosanitary and Soil Protection Services (further on: services), which are responsible for performing tasks of county level. The heads of the services are directors appointed by the Minister, over whom the Minister exercises the employer's rights.

###### **2. Phytosanitary Border Inspection Posts**

Thirty-nine phytosanitary border inspection posts operate in the framework of the services, under the professional guidance of the central service. (Of them, 10 border inspection posts will be upgraded in accordance with the Community requirements.)

###### **Local level**

- The official tasks are carried out by plant protection inspectors belonging to the services.
- The Notary of the local authority proceeds in taking certain phytosanitary measures.

###### ***Laboratories/Institutes***

###### **Central level**

National phytosanitary tasks are performed by the bacteriological laboratory, the quarantine method development and biological control laboratory, the game toxicological and water toxicological laboratories, the virological laboratories and the analytical and method development laboratories.

## Regional level

All (19) county services operate a phytosanitary diagnostic laboratory.

Fourteen county services operate an analytical laboratory responsible for the performance of analytical tests for residues.

### Responsibilities and powers

#### Central level

1. The Minister of Agriculture and Regional Development performs his tasks related to plant health and protection through the Plant Protection and Agro-Environment Management Department.

Plant Protection and Agro-Environment Management Department:

The Department is responsible for directing, supervising and controlling the special administrative institutions involved in plant protection and for co-operation with the other ministries in tasks related to food safety. It may order national control operations in case of the appearance of quarantine pests not indigenous in the country, and deals with the indemnification of producers in connection with phytosanitary measures. It licenses the marketing and use of pesticides and approves the annual testing programme of unprocessed plant products for pesticide residues.

2. The Central Service performs the following tasks:

- organizes, co-ordinates and supervises the work of the services and of the laboratories performing phytosanitary examinations and analytical tests;
- operates and upgrades the phytosanitary information systems;
- organizes and directs the detection of quarantine pests and of non-quarantine pests subject to obligatory investigation, as well as the national eradication campaigns and programmes;
- acts as superior authority (authority of second instance) in cases specified by law;
- lays down the special conditions of entry and handling of import consignments objectionable for phytosanitary reasons and because of residue limits;
- for scientific experimental and variety selection purposes, it authorizes the importation of products subject to import prohibition, and lays down the special conditions of such importation;
- participates in the evaluation of pesticide licensing documents and operates the national phytosanitary register;
- summarizes the data of phytosanitary inspections and analytical tests performed by the county services.

#### Regional level

The plant health related tasks of the county phytosanitary and soil protection services are as follow:

- they operate the phytosanitary border inspection posts and inspect the goods subject to checking during export, import and transit;
- they inspect plants subject to compulsory checking and the production of seeds and young plants (plantlets) at the site of cultivation;
- they perform the detection of quarantine pests and of the non-quarantine pests subject to checking;
- they check the growers for compliance with the rules concerning pest control obligations and the efficiency of pest control measures;
- in cases specified in rules of law, they call upon growers to take control measures, order control measures of public and national interest, and make destruction decisions;
- they may order prohibition or restriction of production, harvesting, storage, import, export, marketing, experimentation, use and application; they may impose quarantine or order the compulsory use of plant protection technologies, check the implementation thereof and issue official phytosanitary licenses;
- they check the marketing of pesticides and the quality of pesticides to be put on the market;

- they notify the competent authorities of any irregularity that comes to their knowledge and poses a hazard to human health and the environment.

#### Local level

- On the local level, the tasks described in the case of the county services are carried out by the phytosanitary inspectors of the county services.
- The Notary of the Local Authority may order compulsory control measures on the territory of the municipality in the event if a non-quarantine pest appears. The Notary also checks the spray calendar of unprocessed plant products sold on the local markets.
- The phytosanitary inspectors working at the phytosanitary border inspection posts check imported products subject to compulsory inspection and take samples from imported goods for pesticide residue tests.

#### Laboratories

The diagnostic laboratories of national competence are capable of performing all tests required by the EU.

The phytosanitary diagnostic laboratories of the county services carry out tests for dangerous pests (harmful organisms) in order to substantiate the official measures to be taken.

Unprocessed plant products are tested for residues by the 14 analytical laboratories of the county services, 8 of which is operating in an international accreditation system (GLP), under the supervision of an independent quality assurance organization. The regular inspections of the laboratories is performed by a national inspectorate designated by a joint decree.

In the case of certain import products (spices, primary food materials of plant origin), the laboratories of the National Public Health and Medical Officer Service (NPHMOS) also participate in pesticide residue testing and in the investigation of violations.

Samples for the laboratory tests are taken by the phytosanitary inspectors of the county services.

#### Controls

##### **Phytosanitary checks**

Phytosanitary checks are carried out by the phytosanitary inspectors of the phytosanitary and soil protection service, while the related tests are performed by the laboratories operating at services of national competence and at the county services.

#### Number of checks (in 2000)

- Checking of import consignments at the border:	55 thousand batches
- Site (habitat) inspections:	
- checking of imported seeds:	2,154 hectares
- checking of seed production:	11,951 hectares
Checking of stored produce:	5180 checks

Number of phytosanitary laboratory tests:

- Bacteriological:	1200 samples
- Mycological and entomological:	8000 samples
- Nematological:	800 samples
- Virological:	3500 samples

#### *Tests for pesticide residues*

Type of tests and the number of samples in 2000:

- market checks	1125
- site (habitat) + export checks	1046
- checks of import consignments at the border and on markets	<u>1424</u>
Total:	3595

Distribution of samples by culture (50 cultures):

18 fruits

28 vegetables

4 arable crops

Number of active ingredients tested for:	130
Total number of tests:	71,361

Results:

residues are not detectable:	60%
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the level of residues is lower than the MRL:	38%
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the level of residues is higher than the MRL:	2%
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#### Sanctions

On the basis of Act XXXV of 2000 on Plant Protection, a plant protection fine ranging from 20,000 HUF to 1,000,000 HUF may be imposed on the violators of phytosanitary regulations. In addition to the plant protection fine, proceedings for infringement of the regulations may be initiated on the basis of Act LXIX of 1999 and Government Decree No. 218/1999 (XII. 29.). In 2000 the service initiated infraction proceedings under that legal title in 51 cases. In the case of such proceedings the phytosanitary authority or inspector is entitled to levy a fine ranging from 500 to 10,000 HUF on the spot.

In the event if a produce contains residues in excess of the maximum residue limit (permitted level) or if the use of a prohibited pesticide is detected, the produce must not be put into circulation and official, administrative proceedings are initiated against the grower and the distributor at the notary of the local authority competent in the given area. After considering the severity and frequency of the case, the notary imposes punitive sanctions (warning and fine) by an official decision, of which he notifies the county services. In the event if active ingredients not allowed for use in Hungary or pesticide levels exceeding the MRL are detected in imported produce, decision on the further fate of such produce is made by the public health authority (NPHMOS).

#### Resources of the organization

##### Financial resources

Annual budget of the organization: 6.6 billion HUF

- of which, 1.9 billion HUF (29%) is state subsidy

- the remaining 4.7 billion HUF is own income.

##### Human resources

*Central, regional and local level:* The total staff size of the Phytosanitary and Soil Protection Service (including the Central Service) is 944. A total of 323 phytosanitary inspectors are employed by the county services. The average staff size of the county services is 22–77.

##### *Laboratories:*

The phytosanitary diagnostic laboratories of the county services have a total staff of 52 on national level.

In the analytical laboratories of the county services a total of 80 specialists perform pesticide residue tests. Half of them are university graduates while the other half are technicians and assistants.

## 1.2. Veterinary and Food Control Service

### Organization

#### Central level:

Administrative tasks in animal health, food control, feed control and animal welfare are performed on central level by the Minister of Agriculture and Regional Development and by the said Ministry (Animal Health and Food Control Department).

#### Regional level:

## County Veterinary and Food Control

## Stations (further on: Station)

The tasks related to animal health, food and feed control and animal welfare are carried out by 19 county Stations and the Veterinary and Food Control Station of Capital Budapest. The area of competence of each station is divided into veterinary districts and regions.

### Veterinary border inspection posts (BIPs)

At present there are 34 veterinary border inspection posts for checking consignments subject to compulsory veterinary checks. The veterinary border inspection posts are integrated in the organization of the Stations but operate under direct technical supervision by the Ministry.

By 31 December 2002, the building of 12 veterinary border inspection posts fully conforming to the EU requirements will be completed on the Ukrainian, Romanian, Yugoslav and Croatian border, at the Budapest Airport and in a port on the River Danube.

#### Local level

- Animal health, food control and feed control tasks of local level are performed by
- district chief veterinarians,
- official veterinarians,
- state veterinarians working at food hygiene branch offices established in specific plants, and
- feed inspectors

At the veterinary border inspection posts, the veterinary checks, food and food control and animal protection tasks related to border traffic are performed by official veterinarians.

#### Institutes/Laboratories

The following institutions of national competence belong to the Veterinary Service:

- National Food Investigation (Control) (NFII),
- Central Veterinary Institute (CVI),
- State Control Institute for Veterinary Biologicals, Drugs and Feeds (SCIVBDF)
  
- 2 regional veterinary institutes
- 6 regional instrumental analytical centres
- 16 county analytical laboratories
- 20 laboratories performing microbiological tests
- Analytical, microbiological, toxicological and radiological *laboratories* operating at the veterinary stations

#### Local level

At some food hygiene branch offices the Station operates a local laboratory.

#### Responsibilities and powers



## Central level

The *Minister* directs the animal health, food and feed control and animal welfare activity and specifies the technical tasks. He has special powers in the following cases:

- In the event of animal disease outbreaks of great economic importance or posing a public health hazard, the Minister – with the approval of the Government – may order the implementation of an eradication programme subsidized by the state; in addition, he declares an emergency because of infectious disease hazard.
- He authorizes the marketing of veterinary medicinal products.
- In agreement with the Minister of Health, he authorizes the manufacture of new foodstuffs.

The *Ministry*: The technical direction of animal health, food and feed control and animal welfare activity, as well as of the supervision of the veterinary and food control service and organization of the implementation of control tasks are in charge of the Animal Health and Food Control Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development, headed by the Chief Veterinary Officer. The structure of the Hungarian public veterinary service is characterized by central control based upon the relevant rules of law.

Acting within its powers as an authority, the Ministry is responsible for the following tasks:

- It operates a surveillance system to determine the regional or national occurrence of certain animal diseases and the prevalence of infection.
- From the animal health point of view, it authorizes the importation of goods into, their transit through and exportation from, the country.
- It authorizes the importation of animals obtained by genetic engineering and the production of feeds and veterinary medicinal products made by the use of genetically modified organisms (in agreement with the Minister of Health and the Minister of Environmental Protection).
- It orders the performance of tests for the detection of residues, harmful and prohibited substances in foods and feeds.
- It authorizes the field-scale production, marketing and importation of veterinary medicinal products.
- It specifies the veterinary medicinal products that can be added to feeds.
- It establishes and operates an information system necessary for the performance of its tasks.
- Licensing of food producing plants approved for exports (slaughterhouses and processing plants)

## Regional level

### *1. Veterinary and Food Control Stations*

A Veterinary and Food Control Station (further on: Station) operates in the capital and in each county. The Stations carry out animal health, disease control, food hygienic, administrative, food and feed quality control and animal protection tasks.

The Station

- organizes a continuous duty and standby service to carry out its tasks;
- maintains continuous liaison with the local authorities, the regional institutes of the NPHMOS, the regional environmental protection authority, the county administrative office, and the General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection;
- participates in the elaboration and operation of the identification and registration system of animals;
- orders the safe disposal of carcasses and by-products of animals that died or were killed because of diseases hazardous to humans, the rendering harmless of infected or contaminated materials and equipment, and determines the method thereof;
- in compliance with the international regulations, it regularly checks the suitability of food production establishments for export production;
- authorises the operation of slaughtering establishments, abattoirs, official butcher's shops, butcher's

shops and other food production establishments, as well as of feed manufacturing and marketing establishments;

- with a view to epidemiological considerations, it restricts or prohibits and sanctions the use and marketing of food raw materials and finished foods of animal and plant origin, specifies the further procedure to be followed and, if necessary, notifies the competent authorities;
- authorises and controls the use, further processing and treatment of by-products originating from food processing establishments for feeding purposes and, if necessary, makes arrangements for their destruction;
- exercises control over the manufacture of veterinary medicinal products, the finished products, their marketing and use;
- supervises the operation of markets, animal fairs, animal shows and animal shelters from the animal health point of view;
- in a manner specified in rules of law concerning the production and marketing of foods, it supervises and checks the following:
  - a) the raw materials, additives, technological adjuvants and packaging materials used for the production of foods,
  - b) the semi-finished and finished food products, irrespective of their place of manufacture or sale,
  - c) the objects that come into contact with foods during their intended use,
  - d) the procedures used for food production and the equipment serving for that purpose,
  - e) the packaging of foods and the labelling and marks used,
  - f) the quality control system of the manufacturer and distributor.
- Performs the feed quality control tasks specified in the relevant rules of law in the field of feed manufacture, marketing and use;
- Organizes the implementation of animal health checks in the production phase, during the transportation of animals, at animal fairs and shows, and at the slaughterhouses.

## 2. *Veterinary Border Inspection Posts*

The Veterinary Border Inspection Posts inspect consignments subject to compulsory veterinary checking (live animals, products of animal origin intended for human consumption and those not intended for human consumption). Checking consists of the following components:

- documentary checks
- identity checks
- physical checks
- animal protection (welfare) checks

### Local level

#### **District Chief Veterinarian**

In his field of competence, the District Chief Veterinarian organizes and directs the work of official veterinarians and reports directly to the County Veterinary Director (Director of the County Veterinary Station).

#### **Official Veterinarian**

- Performs the disease control tasks in the event of animal disease outbreaks or a suspicion thereof and takes the measures necessary for prevention and eradication of epizootic diseases.
- Carries out the meat inspection (post-mortem inspection) of animals slaughtered for public consumption or for other purposes.
- Authorizes the movement of goods within the country.
- Performs the checking of products intended for international trade and subject to compulsory inspection,

in conformity with the relevant regulations.

- Checks whether livestock farmers and distributors comply with the animal health regulations and checks the health status of animals.
- Checks whether food operators and distributors comply with the epidemiological and food hygienic regulations; checks whether foods of animal origin are fit for processing and human consumption.
- Checks whether feed manufacturers and distributors comply with the epidemiological and feed hygienic regulations.
- Supervises the marketing and use of veterinary medicinal products.
- Checks animal feeds from the animal health and feed hygienic point of view, the pastures, the drinking water, the buildings used for housing animals, the animal production machinery and equipment and the applied technology.
- Checks compliance with the animal welfare and protection requirements in animal holdings, on markets, at animal fairs, and during the transportation and slaughter of animals.

### **Veterinarians working at food hygienic offices**

The food hygienic branch offices of the Stations, operating locally in establishments of the food industry, are responsible for continuous supervision of the production and processing activity of slaughterhouses and food processing establishments and for the performance of meat inspection tasks.(ante-, and post-mortem inspections, hygienic control measures and other official measures.)

Institutes, laboratories

The Veterinary Service includes the following institutions of national competence:

#### **National Food Investigation (Control) Institute (NFII)**

The National Food Investigation (Control) Institute performs specific tasks in the co-ordination and implementation of the national food hygiene and food safety programme.

The NFII is responsible for the following activities:

- performs the periodical hygiene checks and qualification of establishments producing foods of animal origin intended for export;
- participates in the technical implementation of plant inspections and on-site laboratory checks made by foreign veterinary authorities (EU, USA);
- relying on its technical expertise and special instrument supply, it organizes and operates the national residue toxicological, microbiological and radiological monitoring system;
- in order to enforce a consistent approach, it co-ordinates the technical activities of the testing laboratories;
- adopts and disseminates up-to-date food testing methods meeting the international requirements;
- gives expert opinions and advice on evaluation of the export hygiene plans of establishments manufacturing products of animal origin, slaughterhouses, cutting plants and processing establishments;
- checks food machinery and equipment for compliance with the hygiene requirements, and issues an expert opinion or certificate of approval on the basis of the results;
- performs the evaluation and approval of food machinery on the basis of hygiene standards;
- has been participating in inter-laboratory comparative quality control tests (proficiency testing) of international level since 1993.

Staff size: 100 persons (52 university graduates)

Budget: approx. 0.5 billion HUF

Central Veterinary Institute (CVI)

The main tasks of the CVI are the diagnosis and on- the-spot investigation of animal diseases, central laboratory work, provision of expert advice, and research. The laboratory tests required for the exportation and importation of breeding animals and propagation materials (semen, ova and embryos) fall within the exclusive competence of the CVI. The Institute operates the central database of the Animal Health Information System.

#### State Control Institute for Veterinary Biologicals, Drugs and Feeds (SCIVBDF)

The SCIVBDF is responsible for the technical evaluation of registration documents of veterinary medicinal products, the official supervision of the manufacturers and the products, and the performance of tests (homogeneity tests) on the basis of which the competent Veterinary and Food Control Station (VFCS) issues the license necessary for the operation of feed manufacturing plants.

#### National Institute for Agricultural Quality Control (NIAQC)

The National Institute for Agricultural Quality Control is directly supervised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development, but does not form part of the institutional system of the Veterinary Service.

The Institute performs the following official tasks in the field of feed control:

Evaluation and approval of all domestically produced and imported feed raw materials, additives, mineral supplements, bioproteins, feeds meeting particular nutritional purposes, and medicines. The type and levels of undesirable and prohibited substances are also taken into consideration during the evaluation.

The laboratory belonging to the NIAQC has been accredited by the National Accreditation Body (NAB) according to the relevant international regulations. On the basis of its tests, the laboratory of the NIAQC authorizes the operation of the Hungarian feed analytical laboratories and conducts inter-laboratory proficiency testing to check compliance with the operating licence.

#### *Control and inspection*

##### *Planning of the controls and inspections*

The Veterinary and Food Control Station carries out its checking and inspection activities on the basis of annual work plans. The specific measures and the plans drawn up by the county organizations are approved and summarized by the Ministry during the planning phase.

The annual work plans specify the number of checks and that of the official samples related to them. Checks are made partly according to a pre-determined programme and partly at random. Sampling may be regular or random. The objective of sampling may be the evaluation of batches or stocks, quality control, test for harmful or prohibited substances, substantiation of decision-making on fitness for consumption, or actual or long-term situation survey in the framework of national monitoring programmes. The sampling base may be constituted by domestic or imported products. The number of samplings to be performed for batch evaluation tests is determined by the size of the product batch. A programme also exists for the hygiene inspections of food manufacturing establishments.

In addition to the sampling planned in the programme, at their own initiative or in the case of consumer complaints the official veterinarians and food or feed inspectors may take further samples. Complaints concerning foods may relate to fitness for consumption or to quality.

##### *Frequency and number of checks in the year 2000:*

Slaughterhouses are supervised on a continuous basis irrespective of the slaughtering activity, while markets are regularly supervised on market days. In the year 2000 the Veterinary and Food Control Service performed the following checks and inspections:

#### **Number of official checks:**

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| • in food production establishments:              | 25,000 |
| • in food distribution (market, trade, catering): | 63,000 |
| • in feed manufacturing plants:                   | 4,338  |
| • in feed marketing units                         | 6,480  |

*Average frequency of hygiene and quality control checks (occasion/year):*

- food production establishments: 4.6
- food shops: 2.9
- feed manufacturing plants: 4.3
- feed marketing units: 1.7

### **Number of checks**

*Meat inspection:*

- red meat (livestock), n 5,000,000
- slaughtered poultry, tons: 159,000

*Inspection of other foods and decision-making on fitness for consumption:* 183,000

*Number of decisions:* 19,700

Quantity of seized foods unfit for consumption (tons): 4,323

### **Sanctions**

Sanctions are enforced by the organs of the Veterinary Service on local and regional level. In the event of violation of laws and other regulations, the veterinary, food control and feed control authorities may take the following measures:

- it may prohibit, restrict or make subject to conditions the operation of the food production establishment, food marketing (retail) unit and machine, equipment or installation, the use, marketing and the putting into use or keeping in use of raw materials, technological adjuvants and packaging materials, etc.;
- it may declare the food unfit for public consumption or of reduced quality, and may restrict or make subject to conditions its use or marketing;
- it may declare the feed unfit for use, order its devaluation and impose a quality protection fine. It may terminate the operation of a plant or sales unit or make their operation subject to conditions. It may restrict the use of products, make their use subject to conditions, or order their destruction
- it may sentence animal health and food safety fines

The method of implementation of decisions made by the veterinary authorities is specified in the relevant rules of law (e.g. in cases of infectious disease emergencies, applications for legal remedy do not have a delaying force).

In the event of suspicion of foodborne intoxications the veterinary authority draws in the proceedings the public health authorities (NPHMOS) or transfers the case for investigation to the NPHMOS.

### **Resources**

*Financial resources*

Budget:

The total budget of the Veterinary and Food Control Service for the year 2000 is 14.6 billion HUF.

*Human resources:*

University graduates

Total staff size of the Service: 1175

On county level: 262

Total number of border post veterinarians: 114

Number of official veterinarians and inspectors: 799

Number of veterinarians working in part time for the service 1600

Qualifications: Veterinarians, food engineers and animal nutrition (feed) engineers

## 2. MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Through the Medical Officer's Service, the public health sector has been participating in the official control of food production and distribution in Hungary for almost one hundred years.

### Organization

#### Central level

1. *Ministry of Health:* In the field of food safety, the Ministry of Health is primarily responsible for legislation, for determining maximum residue limits of environmental contaminants in foods, and for the operation and control of the National Public Health and Medical Officer's Service (NPHMOS) working under its supervision.
2. *National Public Health and Medical Officer's Service:* The Ministry of Health performs the supervision of food safety through its central bodies [the National Medical and Public Health Office (NMPHO) and the National Centre for Public Health, National Institute of Food Hygiene and Nutrition (NCPH-NIFHN)] as well as through its regional organs (county and municipal NPHMOS institutes).

The NPHMOS is an organization of nation-wide powers that performs state tasks. The NPHMOS exercises supervision over the public health and epidemiological conditions of the country, including the supervision of food safety. The head of the NPHMOS, the Chief Medical Officer directly reports to the Minister of Health.

The NPHMOS is an organization committed to the improvement and protection of public health.

#### Regional level

The NPHMOS performs its legal and delegated duties in the field of food safety through its regional bodies, the 19 county and 1 metropolitan NPHMOS Institutes.

#### Local level

The NPHMOS exercises control over food safety through 137 municipal/district NPHMOS institutes in the country and in the capital.

#### **Laboratories**

All the 19 county NPHMOS institutes and the metropolitan NPHMOS institute have a microbiological and food toxicological laboratory. Seven county NPHMOS institutes also have a laboratory suitable for measuring the radioactive contamination of foodstuffs.

#### **Institutions**

The national institute belonging to the system of institutions of NPHMOS is the NCPH – NIFHN.

### Responsibilities and powers

#### Central level

The food hygienic and nutritional health duties falling within the competence of the Ministry of Health are specified by Act CLIV of 1997 on Public Health. Among other things, that Act empowers the Ministry to the determination of microbiological, chemical and radiological limits for foods and the public health requirements of food production and distribution (including requirements concerning the health aptitude of operators engaged in food production), and to the prevention and investigation of foodborne intoxications and infections.

The Ministry of Health performs its above duties through the National Public Health and Medical Officer's Service (NPHMOS). The NPHMOS performs its tasks according to the provisions of Act XI of 1991 on the National Public Health and Medical Officer's Service, as follows:

In the field of food hygiene and nutritional health, the Service

- detects the harmful chemical, physical or biological substances occurring in foods, beverages, consumer goods, cosmetic preparations, children's toys and in the ingredients of materials used for their

preparation, or getting into them during the handling process, elaborates the relevant public health limits and requirements, and checks and enforces the latter during production, processing, storage and distribution;

- investigates the causes of foodborne health injuries in order to take the necessary measures and to prevent new health injuries;
- performs investigations on the alimentation and the nutritional status of the population and on the correlations between nutrition and the health status, and elaborates nutritional recommendations on the basis of the findings;
- participates in the procedure related to the production of foods meeting particular nutritional demands, the manufacture and use of additives and technological adjuvants, food packaging materials, cleaning agent and disinfectants used in the food industry, and the issue of operating licences for food production, processing, packaging, storage and distribution establishments.

The central governing body of the NPHMOS is the National Medical and Public Health Office (NMPHO), which co-ordinates and evaluates the activity of the regional institutes of the NPHMOS. It specifies priority tasks to be performed on national level and supervises their performance. In case of extraordinary food safety events it co-ordinates the necessary official measures by drawing in the partner authorities. It participates in the preparation and evaluation of draft rules of law. It organises and directs technical training.

### Regional level

#### **County/metropolitan institutes of the NPHMOS**

The task of these institutes is to supervise and direct the technical work of municipal institutes belonging to them, perform thematic studies and laboratory tests, and directly carry out activities delegated to them by certain rules of law. Confirmation of compliance with the public health conditions specified for the production of foods meeting particular nutritional demands and of food additives also forms part of their duties. They make decisions on the further fate of batches rejected because of pesticide residues. They carry out the first batch identification testing of imported foods and their repeated testing at 3-year intervals. They authorise and supervise activities involving hazardous chemicals in food production establishments.

### Local level

Duties of the *municipal and metropolitan district institutes of the NPHMOS*:

- participation in issuing operating licenses for food production and distribution establishments (industry, communal feeding, public catering, trade);
- keeping up-to-date records of the licensed (approved) establishments;
- regular inspection of the registered establishments;
- conducting thematic studies at own or central initiative (according to a plan of work);
- investigation of food safety events (foodborne intoxications, foodborne infections( and complaints);
- participation in the hygiene education of staff engaged in food production and distribution;
- participation in the education and information of consumers.

#### **Institutes**

*The National Institute of Food Hygiene and Nutrition (NIFHN) of the National Centre for Public Health* is in charge of the following tasks:

- participates in the preparation of legislation, with especial regard to the determination of maximum residue limits for foods;
- regularly supervises the food microbiological and chemical limits and makes proposal for their amendment;
- performs the comprehensive microbiological, chemical, toxicological and parasitological laboratory analysis of foods. Construction of a laboratory suitable for the analysis of genetically modified foods (GMO) is currently under way;
- performs licensing activity with regard to foods meeting particular nutritional demands, nutriments, new

food additives, new food packaging materials and cosmetics, and authorises the use of cleaning agents and disinfectants in the food industry;

- issues certificates attesting that imported foods to be put on the market conform to the public health requirements;
- issues expert opinion for the manufacture of so-called new foods and foods treated by irradiation, and for the licensing of veterinary medicinal products and pesticides;
- the NIFHN serves as the centre of the rapid hazard alert system related to food safety events (foodborne intoxications, foodborne infections);
- provides technical guidance and consulting to assist the work of the NPHMOS in the field;
- performs nutrition-physiological and nutritional health studies and conducts consumer awareness campaigns.

#### Laboratories

On national level, food analyses are performed by the laboratories of the NIFHN. In addition, all county/metropolitan NPHMOS institutes have a laboratory capable of performing food microbiological, chemical and toxicological examinations. Six of these laboratories also perform regional tasks.

Number of tests performed in the laboratories of the NPHMOS network in the year 2000:

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| • Food samples tested:  | 53,308  |
| • Food microbiological examinations and food chemical analyses: | 216,214 |

The regional laboratories will be upgraded in the framework of the PHARE program in 2001. Owing to a more than HUF 2 billion instrument investment project, these laboratories will be able to perform even the most advanced instrumental analyses.

The RMDSN<sup>1</sup> laboratories operating at the radiohygienic centres of 7 county institutes of the NPHMOS and at the National Centre for Public Health – National Research Institute for Radiobiology and Radiohygiene (NCPH – NRIRR) regularly test foods for radioactive contamination. That network carried out a total of 4597 tests on 2465 food and feed samples in 2000.

The accreditation of laboratories is carried out on a continuous basis. By December 2002 all laboratories will have been accredited. At the end of 2001, the laboratory testing genetically modified (GMO) foods will start its operation in the NIFHN.

#### Controls

The food control activity of the NPHMOS is controlled and supervised in a consistent manner. All three levels of the entire network are staffed with food control specialists having university degrees and specialist qualifications. All staff members of the food control service (medical officers, inspectors with college degrees) have completed the HACCP course approved in the European Union.

*Checks performed on the basis of an annual plan of work:*

The NPHMOS institutes carry out the regular planned checks on the basis of annual plans of work. By taking into consideration the results of risk analysis, they exercise continuous and regular control over the food and catering establishments. In addition, in the framework of programmes elaborated on national level and co-ordinated by the NMPHO they also perform targeted studies on subjects of outstanding importance on an annual basis.

#### *Frequency of checks*

By taking into consideration the risk level of the given type of activity, in average 60–70 percent of the registered units are checked one or two times a year or, if necessary, even more frequently. In the year 2000, a total of 89,405 comprehensive public health checks were carried out in 71,063 food units.

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<sup>1</sup> Radiohygienic Measuring and Data Supply Network



## **Investigation of consumer health complaints and foodborne intoxications**

Every case is investigated, as this is required of the NPHMOS by the relevant rules of law.

### Sanctions

The NPHMOS is an authority with full administrative powers and the right to proceed in cases of infraction of the regulations. It may order and enforce measures to be taken, impose fines for infraction, quality protection and enforcement fines, seize foods and have them destroyed, order the suspension of activities and close down establishments. An appeal lies against its measures, which can also be contested before a court.

The numerical data of official measures taken after checks are as follow:

- Number of binding decisions ordering a measure to be taken in 2000: 5886
- Number of fines imposed for violations or infractions in 2000: 5185
- The total amount of fines: 48,033,000 (HUF).
- Number of quality protection fines in 2000: 1304;
- the total amount of fines: 53,006,000 HUF.

Activity or operation was suspended in 381 cases.

### Resources

#### **Financial resources**

Approximate amount spent on food safety related tasks per year:

Central institutes of the NPHMOS 200 million HUF  
(including the NIFHN)

County/municipal institutes of the NPHMOS: 700 million HUF

#### **Human resources**

The total size of NPHMOS staff carrying out tasks related to food safety is about 600 (this relates only to the specialists and does not include the technical support staff).

## **3. MINISTRY OF ECONOMICS**

### **General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection**

#### Organization

##### Central level

1. *Ministry of Economics*: The organ responsible for legislation related to consumer protection.
2. *General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection (GICP)*: A central office operating under the control of the Ministry of Economics and having responsibilities and powers of its own.

##### Regional level

The General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection performs its duties through a network consisting of 19 county inspectorates and an inspectorate operating in the capital. These inspectorates operate within the Administrative Offices of the Ministry of the Interior.

##### Local level

There is no local level.

##### *Laboratories/Institutes*

The technical background of market control inspections is provided by the Food and Chemical Laboratory of the GICP, as a testing laboratory accredited by the National Accreditation Body (NAB) accredited under no. 501/0649.

## Responsibilities and powers

### Central level

#### 1. *Minister of Economics*

The task of the Minister of Economics and the objective of state participation is to elaborate and submit to the Government for approval the concept of consumer protection policy, make a proposal on the organizational and institutional conditions of implementation, and take or initiate measures for the protection and enforcement of consumer rights.

#### 2. *General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection*

The General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection performs neither licensing nor special authority activities; consequently, its independence is ensured. By virtue of authorisation by laws and decrees, the GICP is obliged to perform market control and supervision activities of general competence, carry out market supervision checks related to the safety of foods and services, and inspect foods and the containers coming into contact with them to ensure their conformity to the requirements (quality and safety).

The most important tasks of the GICP in relation to food safety:

- in the framework of its market supervision activity, the GICP checks compliance with the rules of law and administrative provisions concerning the distribution of goods and the provision of services, it can conduct investigations in matters concerning consumers, and can impose consumer protection fines, unless some other authority has already levied a fine because of the same facts;
- it directs the market supervision tasks related to the control of product safety and operates the Central Market Supervision Information System (CMSIS),
- it performs conformity and safety tests of foods in its accredited laboratory;
- the market supervision directorate directs and co-ordinates the market control activities of the regional market supervision inspectorates;
- it monitors the general terms of contracts affecting consumers, and manage the affairs related to the quality complaints and claims of consumers,
- it issues publications describing the rights of consumers, organise consumer protection training courses, and inform the general public by publishing the findings obtained during its activity;
- it has product comparison tests performed and publishes the results thereof;
- of the authorities, the GICP is the only one which operates a Consumer Relations Office.

### Regional level

#### **County inspectorates**

The market supervision activity is implemented on a regional basis by 19 county inspectorates and one inspectorate operating in the capital. The most important tasks of these inspectorates are the supervision of food trade and checking of the conformity and safety of foods intended for consumption.

#### **Laboratories**

The technical background of market supervision checks is constituted by the Food and Chemical Laboratory of the GICP, a testing laboratory accredited by the NAB under no. 501/0649. This laboratory performs, in accredited status, the comprehensive (quality and safety) testing of the following foods:

cereals, milling and baking products, preserved products, meat and meat products, milk and dairy products, alcoholic beverages and soft drinks, products of the sweets industry, consumer goods, foods intended as dietary supplements, tobacco products, catering, confectionery and communal feeding products.

The laboratory is prepared for the control of food safety, and regularly carries out tests of the following type:

- microbiological-hygienic examinations;
- determination of the quantity of additives, other substances, vitamins, minerals, biological degradation products and metabolites;

- quantitation of toxic heavy metals;
- tests for physical contaminants;
- entomological examinations;
- detection of radioactive contamination;
- detection of irradiated status;
- qualification of organoleptic characteristics;
- examination of packaging and labelling.

## Controls

Both the Consumer Protection Act and Government Decree No. 79/1998 (IV. 29.) Korm. on the safety of goods and services and on the related market supervision procedure have authorised the GICP and the county inspectorates to conduct market supervision checks related to the safety of consumer goods including foods and services (e.g. catering). The control and market supervision activity of the GICP and the regional inspectorates is important as during the distribution phase such events may occur which markedly affect the properties, quality and original condition of foods. Therefore, market supervision checks, to be performed before the foods reach the consumer, are extremely important with a view to the health and safety of consumers.

### *Market checks carried out on the basis of a plan of work*

The tasks of the General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection, as laid down in the plan of work, are determined by the annual plan of work approved by the Minister of Economics and by the internal work plan programme. The checks are aimed at strict testing of food categories likely to present a source of hazard. Therefore, meat and meat products, milk and dairy products, and perishable foods are subjected to repeated inspections and checks every year. Market supervision checks are conducted by taking into account the risk analysis aspects.

### *Checks initiated by the regional inspectorates*

The regional inspectorates also carry out food inspections and checks on local initiative. In the framework of these checks, samples are taken and submitted for testing at the Laboratory of the GICP.

### *Investigation of consumer complaints*

The GICP and the regional inspectorates investigate consumer complaints and claims on a regular basis. This makes market supervision checks more efficient and specific, thereby enabling the identification of hazardous products. Although in the case of foods the number of consumer complaints is relatively low, their investigation is justified by food safety considerations.

### *Number of market supervision checks in the year 2000*

In the past year the GICP carried out 9 national thematic surveys, in the framework of which sales outlets and the foods sold therein were subjected to checks for quality and safety.

Number of units checked by regional inspectors in the framework of the national surveys:

retail units:	7884
wholesale units:	387
Number of laboratory tests:	8265

## Sanctions

By virtue of their administrative powers, the inspectorates have the right to subject the sale of goods to conditions, prohibit their further sale, and initiate infraction proceedings because of the irregularities found. In the case of irregularities affecting a broad range of consumers (e.g. nonconformity related to food safety) the GICP imposes a quality protection fine or, acting as the sole authority, a consumer protection fine.

Because of the irregularities found, the regional inspectors levied quality protection fines amounting to 84

million Hungarian Forints in the year 2000. As a result of the sanctions applied, manufacturers changed or made stricter their technological specifications, provided education and training to their employees, or ordered extraordinary big cleaning with disinfection, or the regular performance of such cleaning and disinfection.

### **Resources**

#### *Human resources*

##### Central level

At the National Market and Consumer Protection Department of the Ministry of Economics, 5 staff members deal directly with issues related to consumer protection and, within that, food safety.

The General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection has a total staff of 170.

10 persons work directly in the field of food quality and food safety control and co-ordination.

In addition, further 20 people working in other fields deal with food safety issues on an occasional basis (employees having law or state administration degrees in the legal and administrative fields).

##### Regional level

The total staff of the regional inspectorates exceeds 170, of which 53 persons are directly involved in food control activities. In case of national surveys that staff is increased to 95–100 persons.

### **Laboratories**

The staff of the Food and Chemical Laboratory consists of 20 persons.

## **II. REGIONAL HARMONIZATION WITH THE EU-LAW OF FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY REGULATIONS**

### **1. CURRENT STATUS OF THE PREPARATION FOR EU ACCESSION**

#### **LEGAL HARMONIZATION**

##### *Food legislation*

Harmonization of Community legislation on foods was started in the first half of the 1990s and was practically completed by the year 2000. Therefore, the only task to be performed before accession is the adoption of any new Community legislation, which is being done on a continuous basis. In accordance with the practice of the EU Member States, amendments of Community legislation come into force within six months of their publication also in Hungary.

The adoption of Community legal instruments has been done in a three-tier system:

- The Food Act (Act XC of 1995) adopts the basic principles and the detailed rules of labelling and official control. It gives the necessary authorization for regulation by way of ministerial decrees and in the framework of the Codex Alimentarius Hungaricus;
- The most important general rules and provisions (e.g. hygiene, residues) are laid down by the decrees issued by the Minister of Health and the Minister of Agriculture and Regional Development.
- The detailed technical rules (e.g. additives, packaging materials, etc.) are contained by the Codex Alimentarius Hungaricus.

##### *Veterinary legislation*

As a result of reviewing the veterinary legislation and co-ordination with EU experts, the parties have stated that a substantial part of the Community veterinary legislation has been adopted.

The plant passport was introduced from 1 July 2002, until accession for internal use in Hungary only.

The amendment of the veterinary framework act, Act XCI of 1995 was passed in 2001. The amended act provided the necessary authorization for the implementation of harmonization in the form of ministerial decrees. Correspondence tables and the corresponding amendments of Hungarian rules of law are being prepared continuously.

##### *Phytosanitary legislation*

## **Legislation on harmful organisms**

Act XXXV of 2000 on Plant Protection and Implementing Decree No. 7/2001 (I. 17.) FVM of the Minister of Agriculture and Regional Development fully adopts the Community legislation on harmful organisms, with the exception of the provisions on protected zones, the use of the plant passport and the reporting obligation to the EU.

The correspondence tables comparing the phytosanitary legislations have been completed. The ministerial decree ensuring complete harmonization is expected to be promulgated in the first half of 2002, and will take effect on the day of accession.

### ***Pesticide licensing, residue testing***

Act XXXV of 2000 on Plant Protection and Implementing Decrees No. 5/2001 (I. 16.) FVM and 6/2001 (I. 16.) FVM of the Minister of Agriculture and Regional Development ensure full harmonization with the exception of rules on the marketing of pesticides. Seventy percent of the MRL values valid in Hungary agree with the Community standards, while 15% are higher and 15% are lower than those. Review of MRL deviations will be completed by the end of 2001. The ministerial decree guaranteeing full harmonization will come into force at the end of 2002.

### ***Feed legislation***

The Hungarian legislation on feeds is partly harmonized with the relevant Community legislation. Act XCII of 1995 on the production and marketing of feeds, and its implementing decrees, i.e. Decree No. 25/1996 (IX. 4.) FM of the Ministry of Agriculture on the production and marketing of feeds and Decree No. 86/1997 (XI. 26.) FM of the Ministry of Agriculture on the Codex Pabularis Hungaricus (Hungarian Feed Codex) guarantee fundamental harmonization.

Community provisions on feeds are being adopted continuously. The decisive majority of these provisions is adopted in the framework of the Codex Pabularis Hungaricus; however, amendment of the act and of the decree regulating marketing is also necessary. Legal harmonization in this field has been accomplished by the end of 2001. In the framework of that harmonization, directives concerning feed raw materials, feed additives, compound feeds, supplementary feeds and feeds manufactured for special purposes have been adopted.

### ***Consumer protection legislation***

All Community legal instruments relating to the consumer protection aspects of food safety have been adopted.

## **III. USE OF THE HACCP SYSTEM BY FOOD OPERATORS**

The description of the HACCP system elaborated by the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission was adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Hungaricus in 1996 (then, following amendment of the Codex text, the description of HACCP in the Codex Alimentarius Hungaricus was renewed in 1998).

In 1997, the competent Ministry started a model project for food operators, first for those producing foods of animal origin and then for operators producing foods of plant origin. That project enabled a broad dissemination of knowledge concerning HACCP and the elaboration of the HACCP system of about 100 plants with the help of professional consulting bodies drawn into the project.

Decree No. 17/1999 (II. 10.) FVM-EüM of the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development and the Ministry of Health requires the compulsory application of the five basic principles of HACCP by the food operators since January of 2002. Based on Decree No. 41/2001 (XII.22.) of the Ministry of Economics, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development prescribes their compulsory use also in the catering trade, as from 1 January 2003 (It amended the Decree 80/1999 (XII. 28.) GM-EüM-FVM). The preparations for introduction have already been started.

Since 1998, the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development has been providing financial support for the establishment of the HACCP system in the framework of the agricultural subsidy system. With support from the Ministry, 155, 295 and 521,966 food operators established their complete system (i.e. not only that comprising only the five basic principles) in 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001, respectively.

Considering the production volume, it can be established that a substantial proportion of the large food producers already possesses a HACCP system, which accounts for more than 80-85% of the Hungarian food production.

## **POLAND**

### **1. Official Agencies**

- Two Polish official agencies: the Inspection of Plant Protection and the Seeds Inspection have been merged and reorganised according to the *Law of March 1, 2002 on Modifications in Organising and Performing Central Agencies of Governmental Administration and Units Subordinated to Them and on the Amendments to Several Acts* (Official Journal <sup>2</sup> No. 25, item 253).

The current name of the new inspection is the Plant Protection and Seeds Service

- “Food Safety Strategy for Poland” has been developed in order to ensure adequate safety and quality of food ‘from farm to table’. The elaboration of such document was initiated by the Committee for European Integration in co-operation with:

- the Ministry of Health and official food control agencies subordinated to the Ministry (i.e.: Sanitary Inspection)
- the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and official food control agencies subordinated to the Ministry (i.e.: Veterinary Inspection, Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection, State Inspection of Purchase and Processing of Agricultural Products, Plant Protection and Seeds Service)
- Office for Competition and Consumer Protection and Trade Inspection subordinated to the Office.

The purpose of the “Food Safety Strategy for Poland” is:

- to ensure food safety throughout the food chain starting with primary production and ending with food distribution and the consumer’s table
- to reduce the risk of food poisoning and infections as well as diet-related health disorders caused by microbiologically, chemically and physically contaminated food
- to prevent biological hazards of food in case of bioattack
- to ensure through proper border control that imported food complies with the same or equivalent standards and health quality requirements as domestically produced food
- to ensure the process of harmonisation of national food law with the European Community regulations and requirements and effective implementation of harmonised regulations
- to ensure efficient and effective official system of food chain control
- to ensure continuous and reliable information flow on food safety for the Government and public opinion
- to improve further vocational training, including post-graduate education, for civil servants and representatives of food production, processing and trade companies

The Minister of Health coordinates „Food Safety Strategy for Poland”.

“Food Safety Strategy for Poland” is carried out, among other things, through legal regulations on food safety, which are harmonised with the requirements of the European Community and are not inconsistent with the Codex Alimentarius.

### **2. Food Legislation**

- The main legal document in Poland, which regulates matters of food and nutrition, is currently the *Law of May 11, 2001 on the Health Conditions of Foodstuffs and Nutrition* (Official Journal No 63, item 634)

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<sup>2</sup> Polish abbr.: Dz. U.

- *The Law of December 21, 2000 on Commercial (Marketable) Quality of Foodstuffs and Agricultural Products* comes into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2003. Under this law the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection (Polish abb. – CIS) and the Inspection for Purchase and processing of Agricultural Products (Polish abb. – ISiPAR) will be joined into a new inspection the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection (Polish abb. – IJHARS)
- Updated Polish food legislation on food safety and quality :
  1. The Law of April 24, 1997 on Fighting Infectious Animal Diseases, Examination of Slaughter Animals and Meat, and on Veterinary Inspection (Official Journal 1999 No. 66, Item 752, as amended – last version in Official Journal 2001, No. 129, Item 1438);
  2. The Law of August 23, 2001 on Feedstuffs (Official Journal No. 123, Item 1350);
  3. The Law of July 12, 1995 on Plant Protection (Official Journal 1999, No. 66, Item 751 and No. 101, Item 1778 and Official Journal 2001, No. 22, Item 248 and No. 76, Item 811).
  4. The Law of March 16, 2001 on Organic Farming (Official Journal No. 38, Item 452);
  5. The Law of June 22, 2001 on Genetically Modified Organisms (Official Journal No. 76, Item 811);
  6. The Law of September 6, 2001: Pharmaceutical Law (Official Journal No. 126, Item 1381);
  7. The Law of January 22, 2000 on General Product Safety (Official Journal 2000, No. 15, Item 179);
  8. The Law of September 6, 2001 on Materials and Products Intended for Direct Contact with Food (Official Journal No. 128, Item 1408);
  9. The Law of March 14, 1985 on State Sanitary Inspection (integrated text: Official Journal 1998 No. 90, Item 575, with further amendments);
  10. The Law of December 15, 2000 on Trade Inspection (Official Journal 2001 No. 4, Item 25 and No. 110, Item 1189);
  11. The Law of September 6, 2000 on Sea Fishing (Official Journal No. 129, Item 1441);
  12. The Law of September 6, 2001 on Contagious Diseases and Infections (Official Journal No. 126, Item 1384);
  13. The Law of July 26, 2000 on Fertilizers and Soil Improvements (Official Journal No. 89, Item 991);
  14. The Law of July 25, 2001 on Manufacturing, Bottling of and Trade in Wine Products (Official Journal No. 128, Item 1401);
  15. The Law of September 6, 2001 on Pre-packed Goods (Official Journal No. 128 Item 1409).

### **3. Cooperation Activities**

Polish official control services are taking part in many PHARE projects, which among other things are: *PL9906.02 Veterinary administration at future external borders, PL0006.04 Veterinary system for laboratories and disease control, PL0104.01 Fisheries market organisation, PL0104.04 Organic farming, PL0104.05 Animal Feeds Control system, PL0104.10 Agricultural Information System.*

Underneath we introduce two of them (further information on other PHARE projects, which Polish official control services participate in, we will forward you in a later period).

Currently starting the PHARE “Food Safety System” project (PLIB/2001/EC/07), which supports realisation of “Food Safety Strategy for Poland” includes: qualification improvement of Sanitary Inspection staff, providing Sanitary Inspection laboratories with technical equipment, staff training, creation of data basis and integrated system of exchanging information on health quality of food.

Another formally endorsed PHARE project is Twinning Covenant (PL 2000/IB/AG07) “Food Control Administration” between Finland and Poland. The beneficiaries of the project are the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection (CIS) and the Inspection for Purchase and processing of Agricultural Products (ISiPAR). The objective of the project is to enhance and assist with the restructuring of the official food control system in Poland in order to make it capable of applying the *acquis communautaire* independently in the same way as a Member State of the EU. The purpose of this covenant is to form an essential part of the concept of

training of Polish food authorities, reinforcement of laboratories equipment and elaboration of accreditation procedure.

Polish Codex Alimentarius Contact Point is acting in the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection<sup>3</sup>. Apart from performing its core functions (in compliance with the Procedural Manual), Polish Contact Point also coordinates meetings that are held in order to achieve consensus on matters that are subjects of Codex Committees Sessions, which Polish delegates are to attend.

In the process of preparation for accession, Poland is a participant in the Transitional Rapid Exchange of Information System on dangerous consumer goods – TRAPEX. Currently the system covers 11 countries: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary.

Coordinating Secretariat for the system is located in Budapest at the General Consumer Protection Inspectorate.

The national liaison office is currently situated at the Office for Competition and Consumer Protection in Warsaw.

The national unit in Poland with responsibilities under the TRAPEX system is the Trade Inspection.

## **SLOVAK REPUBLIC**

### **Official Agencies**

Slovak Food Codex Committee was established by the decision of the Slovak Government No. 325 in May 1996. It sets priorities of national food legislation and watches conformity with the Codex Alimentarius and European Union legislation. The National Codex Contact Point serves as a Secretariat of the National Committee. Structure as well as roles of the Committee and its working groups are defined in the Committee Manual. Activities of the Committee and its Secretariat have continued the same way as described in comment submitted to the CC EURO in March 1998.

Food control means a control of conformity food characteristics with requirements given with the Food Act and Food Codex. Execution of food control is independent from other regulations but those on metrology. The following bodies execute it:

Ministry of Agriculture,

Ministry of Health,

State Health Institute of the Slovak Republic,

Regional State Health Institutes,

State Veterinary and Food Administration of the Slovak Republic,

Regional Veterinary and Food Institutes.

Competencies of the individual bodies are defined clearly. Regarding import/export matters the competencies are following:

- Nutrition for special dietary uses, novel foods and irradiated foods are inspected under guarantee of the State Health Institute
- Fresh fruits and vegetables are inspected in accordance with sanitary and phytosanitary legislation under guarantee of the Central Agriculture Control and Testing Institute.
- The other foodstuffs are inspected under guarantee of the State Veterinary and Food Administration.

An inter-departmental Commission for Watching Food Contaminants, created by the Minister of Agriculture

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<sup>3</sup> Current address of headquarters of the Codex Contact Point:

Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection  
30 Wspólna Street  
00-930 Warsaw, Poland.



had acted since 1993. Its activity was finished in March 2002 and a new Commission on Food Safety (CFS) was created by the decision of the Minister of Agriculture, to enable co-ordination of activities related to food safety and implementation of the acquis in the Slovak Republic. The CFS is composed from representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, State Veterinary and Food Administration of the Slovak Republic, Central Agriculture Control and Testing Institute, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Environment. Representatives of other organisations and experts, incl. consumers and professional associations, are invited to the CFS sessions. Food safety is based on an integrated approach to the entire food chain while the following areas are stressed:

- phytosanitary, veterinary, food and feed issues,
- water and soil,
- development of activities in risk analysis, research and science,
- consumer protection, communication and informing consumers on food safety,
- co-ordination of implementation the food safety principles in the Slovak Republic,
- additional activities and answering actual questions linked to food safety strategy in the country,
- integration of activities of the organisations competent to address food safety issues,
- development of information base and recommendations for competent bodies to create a support system for decision process.

### **Food legislation**

Food legislation is developed under guarantee of the two bodies responsible for food quality and safety - Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Health. All related ministries, professional associations and consumer organisation comment the documents. Governmental Legislation Council and the Slovak Parliament represent the supreme bodies responsible for food legislation approval.

Slovak Food Act entered into force in January 1996. Since then it has been amended three times. The latest amendment from December 2001 brought some important changes in accordance with the EU legislation.

Slovak Food Codex is a complex of documents representing executive provisions to the Food Act. It is composed from a horizontal and a vertical part. The horizontal part involves definitions, food testing issues, general regulations on food hygiene, labelling, food additives, contaminants, materials coming in contact with foodstuffs, irradiated foods, nutrition for special dietary uses, and rules of GMP. The vertical part is composed from 30 chapters that have come in force gradually.

### **Cooperation activities**

#### Cooperation activities under FAO Project

An FAO TCP/SLO/8921(A) Project "Strengthening Food Quality Control" had run in the Slovak Republic in 2000-2001. It was oriented to the following areas: food legislation, food inspection and food laboratory management. Three workshops were organised: "SPS and TBT Agreements", "Food Inspection" and "Analytical methods in food control". Experience of each workshop was formulated as recommendations for the related area. Individual statements of participants to the individual workshops, held within the Project, appreciated training and clamoured for following up activities. The participants to the workshops gained a range of valuable documents including an extensive "Inspection Manual" being utilised since by the national inspection bodies. A set of inspection equipments was provided as a support for next related activities. To improve quality of control results, analytical laboratories of inspection bodies were equipped with selected instruments. A group of selected experts visited Denmark to study a food administration system in the EU country. The Project represented a valuable help at preparing the latest amendment to the Slovak Food Act. The participants of the final workshop to the Project, including representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Regional FAO/SEUR Office concluded that the Project answered successfully the problems of food control strengthening in Slovak Republic.

Finally, it was suggested to organize under the SEUR:

- a national training workshop aimed at development of the HACCP generic schemes,

- an international workshop in the Slovak Republic, aimed at development of the HACCP generic schemes for the other CEE countries,
- an international workshop in the Slovak Republic for the other CEE countries aimed at food sampling, testing and Codex analytical methods,
- distribution the Food Inspection Manual among the other CEE countries.

International Consultancy in Codex Alimentarius was provided within the FAO TCP Projects in other countries. Experience of the Slovak Republic on food legislation and National Codex Committee was shared with Romania (TCP/ROM/6611 (A) "Strengthening the Food Control System", Bucharest 1998) and Moldova (TCP/MOL/8921 "Establishment of maximum permissible limits for contaminants, additives and residues in food", Chisinau 2000).

#### Co-operation activities on food legislation and food control under other projects

Regular collaboration and exchange of information between the Slovak and Czech inspection bodies has continued.

Seminars, workshops, discussions, training courses and study stays of inspectors and analytical experts of food control bodies have followed-up other projects:

#### **In 2001**

- Courses ADEPT (Accession – oriented Dutch European Proficiency Training), Netherland
  - Food Safety First - Bergen
  - Chain Management and Agricultural Development - International Agricultural Centre, Wageningen
- Study stay aimed at new analytical methods for mycotoxins, ISPRA, Italy (1 year)
- Twinning project Spain-Slovakia: HACCP, certification of specific food, ISO 9001-9002
- Twinning project France-Slovakia: Approximation of legislation on wine and new technologies
- Twinning project Germany-Slovakia SR99/IB/AG/03: "Harmonisation of the system for milk quality inspection and creation of a national accredited laboratory
- Twinning project Germany-Slovakia SR98/IB/AG/01: "Harmonisation and implementation of legislation aimed at internal trade and institutional strengthening"

#### **IN 2002**

- Twinning project Spain-Slovakia: "Control and regulation councils for approval of places of origin" for wine and spirits
- Twinning project Netherland-Slovakia PPA 01/SK/9/2: "Development of good hygiene practices within the Slovak agricultural sector"
- Twinning project Netherland-Slovakia: PSO "Quality control system on fresh fruits and vegetables in the Netherland"
- Bilateral agreement of the agriculture ministers of the Slovak Republic and Baden-Württemberg: Transform Project "Support to agro-economy in the Slovak Republic"
- PHARE Project "Food safety - food control"

### **EUROPEAN COMMUNITY**

#### **EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

##### **Part A. Food Legislation and Food Control Matters**

In response to the request for information in the above Codex Circular Letter, the European Commission would like to submit information on the structure, mission, objectives, scope of activities of:

the Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General in the European Commission <sup>4</sup> and the European Food Safety Authority <sup>5</sup>.

## I. Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General

*(Structure of Directorate-General see Annex I)*

The main objective of DG “Health and Consumer Protection” is to ensure a high level of protection of consumers' health, safety and economic interests as well as of public health at the level of the European Union.

In the field of Consumer health and safety protection its main tasks are:

to propose and monitor legislation in the areas of food safety, animal feed and phytosanitary matters in order to protect the consumer;

to manage the European scientific committees concerned with consumer health

to carry out controls within the EU and in third countries to ensure that the prescribed veterinary, food safety and plant health standards are being maintained.

to evaluate and assess possible risks to consumer health in a forward looking way;

to contribute to the safety of consumer products and services in the European Union.

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Five Directorates in the Health and Consumer Directorate-General are mainly involved in ensuring the realisation of the above objectives :

### *Directorate B - Consumer Affairs*

Overall mission is to:

Contribute to the Commission's strategic objective of improving the quality of life of EU citizens by promoting the interests, health and safety of consumers in the internal market, by ensuring the integration of consumer concerns in all EU policies and by complementing the consumer policy conducted by Member States. Contribute to the effective implementation and enforcement by the candidate countries of the same high levels of consumer protection and consumer safety.

Promote consumer interests and high consumer safety standards in international forums and in relations with third countries.

Support consumer organisations and enhance the role of consumer representatives in decision making. Enhance the role of consumers in the internal market by promoting the proper information of consumers and encouraging consumer education.

### *Directorate C - Scientific opinions*

Overall mission is to :

Manage the European Scientific Committees concerned with consumer health whose work is based on the principles of excellence, independence and transparency and to give the necessary support for the formation of the European Food Authority.

Provide the interface between risk assessment and risk management and monitoring of the scientific advisory process.

Harmonise, across the various scientific committees, methodological approaches in the risk assessment process

### *Directorate D - Food safety*

Overall mission is to :

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<sup>4</sup> WEB Page : [http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/index_en.html)

<sup>5</sup> WEB Page : [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/efa/index\\_en.html](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/efa/index_en.html)

Implement and ensure a coherent, harmonised, effective and comprehensible EU food policy at European and national level.

Apply a farm to table approach covering all sectors of the food chain, including feed production, primary production, food processing, storage, transport and retail sale.

Ensure that matters concerning public health, animal health and welfare are at the basis of the development of the legal framework on animal nutrition.

Ensure a co-ordinated and holistic approach towards hygiene concerning food from animal or plant origin, and develop measures against bacteria, virus and prions.

Develop a new approach on controls by defining responsibilities of operators, national authorities and Commission, taking into account the general principle that all parts of the food production chain must be subject to official controls.

Improve monitoring and reporting system for diseases transmissible from animals to man through food and reduce prevalence of these specified zoonoses, including the management of the Community Reference.

Ensure an effective control of the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (BSE, scrapie, etc.). Develop measures to avoid contagion of other animals or contamination of the consumers. Harmonise the TSE Member States actions and the TSE rules from third countries.

Carry out surveillance of all food related risks through management of the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed.

Ensure consumer safety by preventing chemical contamination of food through the setting of limits for contaminants of agricultural and environmental origin in food.

Ensure consumer safety with regard to substances intentionally added to food by establishing the lists of authorised food additives and their conditions of use, reporting on dietary intake of additives in order to identify potential need for action and implementing the evaluation programme for flavourings to establish a list of authorised flavourings.

Ensure that chemical substances contained in food packaging materials do not endanger consumer health by establishing the lists of chemical substances authorised for use in food packaging materials and set limits for their transfer to food.

Ensure that food of animal origin from the Member States and Third Countries does not contain unacceptable levels of residues of veterinary medicinal products, pesticides, heavy metals, etc. Ensure the management of the Community Reference Laboratories in these areas.

Develop the framework for food irradiation.

Provide a high level of protection of consumer interest, whilst protecting public health and ensuring the functioning of the internal market, for foods in general, and for dietetic foods, food supplements and fortified foods in particular.

Provide a high level of protection of public health and consumer interest in respect of novel foods, in particular foods derived from biotechnology.

Prepare the next enlargement of the European Union in the field of Food Safety

*Directorate E - Food Safety: plant health, animal health and welfare, international questions*

Overall Mission is to :

Monitor and contribute to the implementation of the general obligations of the European Union in the area of Food Safety acquired through international agreements approved by the European Institutions within the multilateral organisations or at bilateral level with third countries. This is in particular with relation to WTO.

Manage the DG SANCO participation in the enlargement process relating to Veterinary and Phytosanitary matters.

Manage international agreements signed with International organisations in particular the SPS agreement, derived from the agreement of Marrakech creating the WTO.

Manage the operation of works in the context of the Codex Alimentarius and co-ordinate the different contributions of the Commission with this body in the field of Food Safety

Manage bilateral agreements in the field of Veterinary and Phytosanitary matters between the European Union and individual third countries

Contribute to the safety and the quality conditions of plants and plant production

Manage through legislative acts animal health rules governing the movement of trade in and import of live animals and products of animal origin

#### Directorate F - Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) in Grange

Overall Mission is to :

Promote effective control systems in the food safety and quality, veterinary and plant health sectors

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 European Community policy in the food safety and quality, veterinary and plant health sectors

Evaluate the performance of national authorities in delivering compliance with food safety standards and veterinary controls in respect of live mammals, their products and food derived therefrom

Evaluate the performance of national authorities in delivering compliance with food safety standards and veterinary controls in respect of birds and fish, their products and food derived therefrom

Evaluate the performance of national authorities in delivering compliance with safety and quality standards and veterinary controls in respect of TSE, animal nutrition, import controls, residues and laboratories, and animal welfare.

Evaluate national food safety control systems in respect of food of plant origin and in respect of processing and distribution of foodstuffs

Evaluate national control systems to protect consumer interests in respect of quality and labelling aspects of food

Evaluate national control systems in respect of plant quarantine organisms

Inform stakeholders of the outcome of evaluations

## **II. EUROPEAN FOOD AUTHORITY**

### **MISSION**

The mission of the European Food Safety Authority will be focused on risk assessment. One of its core tasks will be to provide independent scientific advice and support. It will also set up networks for close co-operation with similar bodies in Member States, scientifically assess risks related to the food chain and give the general public information about food risks. It will provide early warning of emerging risks to health in the food supply by constantly monitoring scientific information and data from around the world. Although its main 'customer' will be the Commission, the Authority may also respond to scientific questions from the European Parliament and Member States or initiate its own work independently.

### **SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES:**

The Authority will have a broad remit, allowing it to make scientific assessments of any matter which may have a direct or indirect effect on the safety of the food supply including matters in relation to animal health, animal welfare and plant health. This is essential to avoid repeating the failure to identify in a timely manner emerging risks as was the case with BSE. The Authority will also give scientific advice on non-food/feed GMOs and on nutrition. It will therefore cover all stages of production and supply, from primary production, safety of animal feeds, right through to the supply of food to consumers.

### **TASKS**

The European Food Safety Authority will be responsible for the scientific evaluation of risks, for the

collection and analysis of scientific data, safety evaluations of dossiers put forward by industry for Community level approval of substances or processes, identification of emerging risks, scientific support to the Commission particularly in the case of a food safety crisis and the direct communication to the public and other interested parties of information concerning matters within its remit. The Authority will be included in the Rapid Alert System that will remain, as it is now, managed by the Commission. The Authority will primarily be a risk assessment body; the responsibility for risk management remains with the EU decision-making institutions, the European Commission, the Council of EU Ministers and the EU Parliament. Once established the Authority will develop and issue scientific and technical information on a wide range of matter affecting the safety of the food chain. The Authority shall ensure that the public is rapidly given objective, reliable and easily accessible information. It will play a crucial role in ensuring that information concerning risks from the food supply is communicated in a coherent and consistent manner working with other key food safety bodies, particularly the European Commission and the Member States. Its independence scientific excellence and openness will make the Authority the automatic first port of call on matters relating to food safety.

## ORGANISATION, SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE, SCIENTIFIC PANELS AND STAFF

### Organisation:

The European Food Safety Authority will be a Community agency with its own legal identity, funded from the Community budget but operating independently of the Community institutions. It will be comprised of 4 separate components:

- I) A Management Board,
- II) An Executive Director and staff,
- III) An Advisory Forum,
- IV) A Scientific Committee and 8 panels.

It will act in close collaboration with the Member States by networking and adding a European overview, where appropriate to food safety matters.

### Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels:

In the area of risk assessment, the Authority will assume the responsibilities presently covered by six existing Scientific Committees which address scientific issues in relation with the safety of the food chain: the Scientific Steering Committee, advising on BSE and TSEs, multi-disciplinary questions, and the Scientific Committees on Food, Animal Nutrition, Veterinary measures relating to Public Health, Plants, Animal Health and Welfare. These existing Scientific Committees are composed of independent scientists appointed on the basis of an open call for interests.

The Authority's Scientific Committee and Panels will take over the tasks of these Scientific Committees as soon as their members are nominated. The members of the Scientific Committee and Panels will continue to be independent scientists selected through an open process based on a call for expression of interests. The Authority's permanent Scientific Committee and Panels shall be responsible for providing the scientific opinions of the Authority, each within their own spheres of competence. The Scientific Committee will be responsible for general co-ordination.

It will provide opinions on multi-disciplinary issues falling within the competence of more than one Scientific Panels, and on any issue which may fall outside of the immediate remit of the Panels. It will be composed of the Chairpersons of the Scientific Panels and 6 independent scientific experts who do not belong to any of the Scientific Panels.

The Authority will establish 8 Scientific Panels :

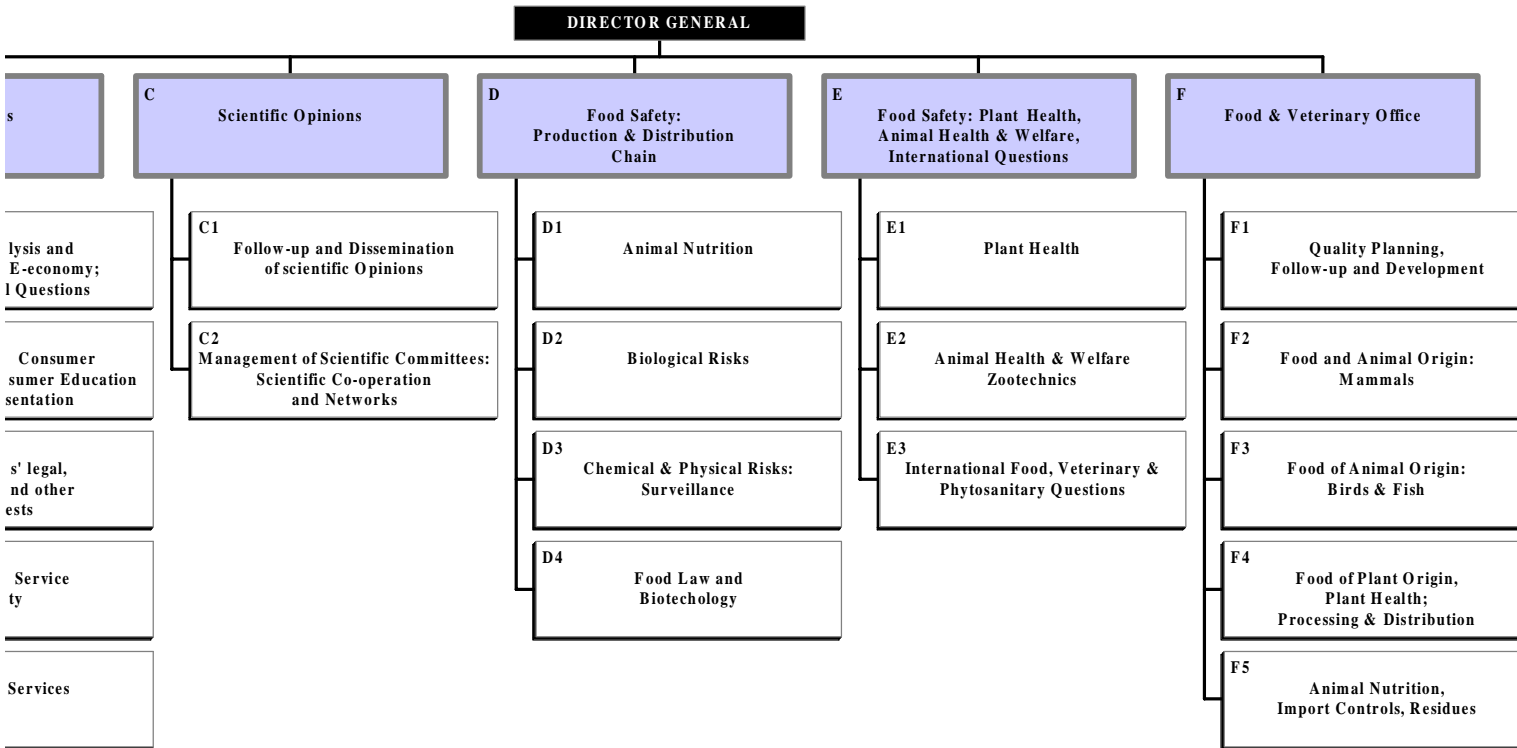
- the Panel on food additives, flavourings, processing aids and materials in contact with food;
- the Panel on additives and products or substances used in animal feed;

- the Panel on plant protection products, their residues and plant health;
- the Panel on genetically modified organisms;
- the Panel on dietetic products, nutrition and allergies;
- the Panel on biological hazards;
- the Panel on contaminants in the food chain;
- the Panel on animal health and welfare.

**Staff:**

After three years the Authority will employ approximately 250 people. About half will be scientific and technical personnel involved in data collection, identification of emerging risks to health, evaluation and support to the scientific committee and panels.

HEALTH & CONSUMER PROTECTION





## ANNEX 1 - IRELAND

### **AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY OF BODIES CONCERNED WITH FOOD SAFETY**

<u>Body</u>	<u>Areas of concern</u>
Food Safety Authority of Ireland	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.	Regulation of plant protection & biocidal products. Control of illegal substances and monitoring harmful residues in various foods. Animal health; use of veterinary medicines. Export approved meat processing plants covering fresh meat, poultry meat, meat products, minced meat and meat preparations. Domestic abattoirs (licensing). 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. Animal feed – all aspects. GM - feed & seed.
Department of Health and Health Boards	General food safety, hygiene, composition including food additives and contamination (e.g. baby milks). Food retailing/wholesaling outlets, manufacturing, packing, distribution and catering trade. Sale of un-pasteurised milk. Labelling (nutritional aspects). Processing of foods which 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	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)	Sale of milk to the public; on farm controls where drinking milk product for direct sale; licensing of dairymen, milk quality at processing plants. Abattoirs catering for domestic market. Retail butchers.
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). Labelling (contents) of pre-packaged foods. Material in contact with foodstuffs.
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 - IRELAND

### LABORATORIES PROVIDING FOOD ANALYSIS SERVICES

<b>Laboratory</b>	<b>Foods Monitored</b>	<b>Range of Tests</b>
Public Analysts Laboratory (3 labs)	All foodstuffs	Contaminants, additives, residues, food authenticity, public complaints, toxins
Pesticide Control Service	Meat, milk, fruit, vegetables, cereals	Pesticide residues
Marine Institute	Fish, shellfish	Contaminants, natural toxins, drug residues, micro-organisms
Central Meat Control Laboratory	Meat	Drug residues, additives, micro-organisms
Food Microbiology Laboratories (7 labs)	All foodstuffs	Micro-organisms
Dairy Science Laboratories (3 Labs)	Milk , Dairy products	Drug residues, contaminants micro-organisms
Local Authority Laboratories (3 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

**Annex no. 1 / Hungary**

