

Health Canada - Food Directorate

General Information	
Lead Department	Health Canada
Partners	Partners within Health Canada include the Veterinary Drug Program (VDP), Population and Public Health (PPHB), the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB), and the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA). Outside partners include: other federal departments and agencies, in particular the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO); provincial/territorial governments and some municipalities. Others involved in the food safety system include the food industry, hospitals and non-governmental agencies, and academia.
Effective Date	Ongoing, mature program
Expiry Date	Ongoing
Web Site	http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/food-aliment
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to protect and improve the health of the people of Canada through science-based policies and programmes related to safe and nutritious food; • to develop policy, set standards, and conduct research, surveillance, pre-market review, and risk assessment, in such areas as food additives, chemical and microbiological contaminants, nutrients, novel foods, and food components and processes; • to assess the effectiveness of the activities of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency as related to food safety.
Roles and Contributions	<p>In Canada, food safety is a shared responsibility.</p> <p>Health Canada <i>Food Directorate</i> develops policies and standards relating to the safety and nutritional value of food sold in Canada and assesses the effectiveness of the Canada Food Inspection Agency's activities related to food safety.</p> <p><i>VDP</i> To address the safety, effectiveness, and quality of veterinary drugs.</p> <p><i>Population and Public Health Branch</i> conducts surveillance, investigates outbreaks of foodborne disease and promotes and supports the ability of Canadians to strengthen and maintain their healthy eating practices by fostering and creating supportive environments and providing leadership in areas of policy, programs, knowledge development, education, and public awareness.</p> <p><i>First Nations and Inuit Health Branch</i> supports culturally relevant community nutrition programs in First Nations and Inuit communities. Access to a safe, acceptable and affordable food supply and the development of understanding or knowledge about all aspects of both traditional and modern food ways are addressed collaboratively.</p>

Pest Management Regulatory Agency is responsible for regulating the use of substances that claim to have a pest control use. It also regulates other substances, such as formulants, adjuvants and contaminants, that are contained in pest control products.

Other Federal Government agencies

Canadian Food Inspection Agency is responsible for providing all federal inspection services related to food safety, economic fraud and trade-related requirements.

Provincial and territorial governments have jurisdiction over public health matters, which extend to food manufactured, traded and sold within their borders. Provincial governments inspect food-processing establishments, food retail facilities, and the food service sector. In some provinces, municipal governments are also involved in regulation enforcement. In general terms, provincial legislation that refers to or parallels the federal requirements allows for the inspection of all establishments where food intended for human consumption is kept for sale.

Food industry has the primary responsibility for the safety of its products and for providing appropriate information to permit consumers to make informed choices.

Information on activities is publicly available through standard reporting and the web-site (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/food-aliment>).

Use of polling/survey data with regard to public understanding and recognition of the Food Directorate's role and contributions has been inconsistent. An example of where it has been used with good effect has been in the recent review of nutrition labelling.

One of the objectives of the funding provided for in the Federal Budget of 1999 was to establish a policy development capacity, comprising an open decision-making process and mechanisms for full public consultation (e.g., selected public hearings, etc.) With the creation in Health Canada of the Office of Consumer and Public Involvement, it is anticipated that this will improve. The Food Directorate is committed to improving the decision-making process incorporating a variety of mechanisms to involve the public, ensuring full access to information and transparency to formulate and develop policies, legislation, standards etc.

Resources	
Funding	<p>Some 450 people work in the Food Directorate in locations throughout Canada (Ottawa, Halifax, Longueuil, Toronto, Winnipeg, and Burnaby).</p> <p>The annual budget is in the order of \$36 million.</p>
Tracking and Reporting	<p>The Food Directorate has a comprehensive planning and reporting system (PMRS) which links to the departmental financial reporting (SAP/FIRM).</p> <p>Information on spending is available in Annual Reports (DPR/RPP), available through the Health Canada web site: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/.</p>
Measurement and Reporting	
Outputs / Outcomes	<p>Long-term outcomes as stated in the Report on Plans and Priorities include a reduction in food-borne diseases and in the incidence of diet-related chronic diseases; and improved nutritional status of Canadians (both generally and in targeted areas). There are no identified outputs at this time.</p> <p>At present, there is no standard method for outputs and outcomes to be monitored, measured and assessed. As part of the Performance Measurement and Development Project (PMDP), work is currently underway to develop and implement a performance measurement framework model and system for the Food Directorate which is flexible, and facilitates conceptual and statistical consideration of complex, multi-element performance logic models. The objectives for this system include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it will facilitate the achievement of valid, reliable results; • it will guide performance measurement work effectively, whether the primary intent is in outputs, short-term outcomes or long-term outcomes; and • it will be equally useful when used with acute, infectious disease as with chronic, degenerative disease. <p>A prototype version of this Performance Measurement system was developed, and “proof of concept” was demonstrated in 2001/2002. The key deliverable for March 30, 2002 is demonstration of the Food Directorate’s Performance Measurement Framework (with its accompanying model and toolkit for information management and information analysis) when used with several performance measurement scenarios which represent a range of the work done by the Food Directorate.</p>
Indicators	<p>The FD PMDP work in 2000/2001 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assembling an inventory of food safety results in other countries, which included a logic model of potential indicators/measures of outputs, and outcomes; • investigating potential sources of information within Health Canada that may be used to measure results; • developing a common framework with which to develop performance measures; and • training selected personnel in developing logic models and establishing performance measures for the chosen outcomes.

Public Reporting	Details of the evaluation program have yet to be determined. The results of our performance will be available on our web site. Other means of public reporting include public accounts and departmental performance reports.
Involving Canadians	
Provisions for Citizens to Participate in Developing Social Priorities and Reviewing Outcomes	No methodology has yet been developed.
Feedback Mechanisms to the Public	No methodology has yet been developed.
Service Commitments	
Public Availability of Eligibility Criteria	No methodology has yet been developed.
Existence and Availability of Service Commitments	No methodology has yet been developed.
Measurement and Public Reporting	No methodology has yet been developed.
Appeals and Complaints	
Existence, Availability and Communication of Mechanisms	No methodology has yet been developed.
Tracking and Public Reporting	No methodology has yet been developed.
Mobility	
Existence of Measures	Not applicable ¹ as the Food Directorate deals with food safety and nutrition issues rather than programs that deal with post-secondary education, training, health and social services and social assistance.

¹Not applicable: when the section does not apply.