

Country Profile: France

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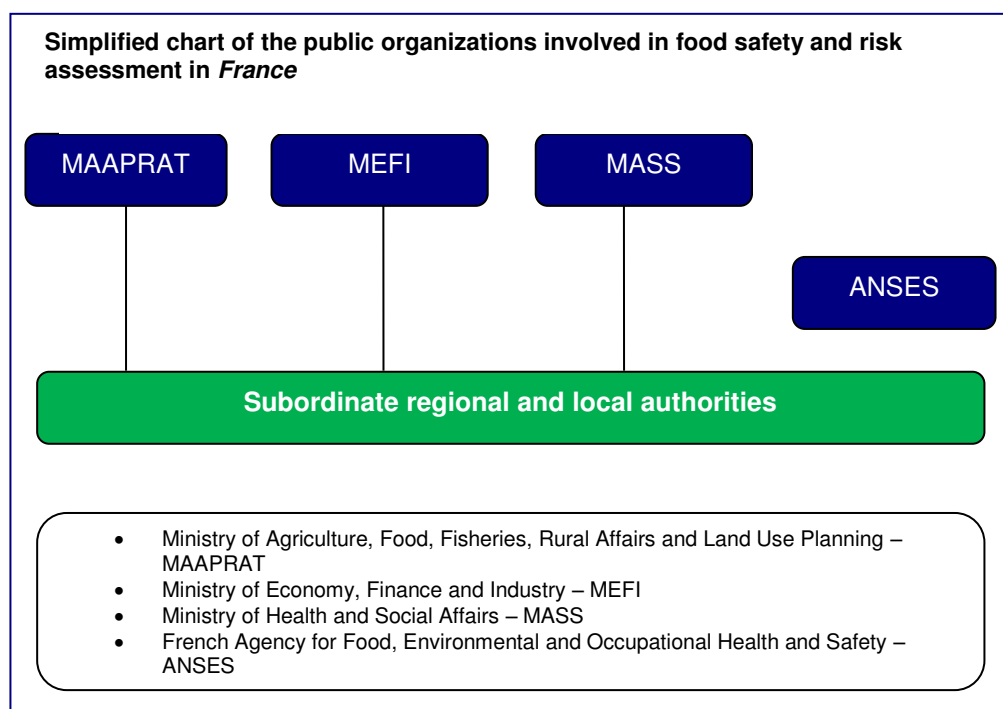
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Country Profile: Franceⁱ

I – Key priorities for risk assessment

- Use of weight of evidence approach for risk assessment
- Uncertainties in risk assessment
- Cumulative and aggregate exposure assessment to chemicals
- Nutritional benefits and risks
- National food observatory
- Consumer phase in risk assessment
- Risk based microbial criteria
- Harmonization of risk assessment methodologies

II – Major public actors involved in food safety (including risk assessment, management and communication)



Main public organisations involved in food safety and roles – France

Organisation	Main areas of remit (in term of risk assessment/ management/ communication)	Risk assessment	Risk management	Risk communication
MAAPRAT – Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries, Rural Affairs and Land Use Planning	Prepares draft legislation in food safety area and is also responsible for control and inspection. MAAPRAT uses risk assessments prepared by ANSES. MAAPRAT is also responsible for risk communication. MAAPRAT's portfolio encompasses plant protection products, including residues, veterinary medicinal products, GMOs and zoonoses plant health and animal health and welfare		x	x
MEFI – Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry	Responsible for consumer policy including state food inspections of all products of non-animal origin. The MEFI uses risk assessment from ANSES. The portfolio of the MEFI includes food supplements, novel foods, mineral water, residues of plant protection products and GMOs in food of non-animal origin. MEFI is also involved in risk communication activities.		x	x
MASS – Ministry of Health and Social Affairs	MASS prepares draft legislation in the field of mineral and drinking water and is responsible for state drinking water inspections. MASS uses the risk assessments from ANSES. MASS is in charge of investigations on foodborne diseases. Another main area of MASS is risk communication.		x	x
ANSES – French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety	ANSES is responsible for risk assessment in the area of food safety, environmental and occupational health. ANSES also identifies (re)emerging health risks and prepares recommendations for risk management measures. ANSES is also active in the area of risk communication and conducts and participates in research.	x		x

The 1998 Act on health monitoring and safety control of products intended for human beings is the central foundation for food legislation in France.

Infringement of food regulations can lead to measures under criminal law and consumer damage claims under civil law, whereby the final decision rests with the courts. Government measures with regard to food safety are based on scientific risk assessment. However, the final decision on the legality of governmental measures rests with the courts.

In France risk assessment and risk management are institutionally separated. Risk assessments, scientific opinions and other statements are published on the Internet unless prohibited by statutory provisions.

France consists of 26 regions and 101 departments (five departments are located overseas). Feed and food inspections are carried out by regional and local offices of MAAPRAT and MEFI. Public authorities in the departments are also offices of the national ministries and report to the central government.

Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Fisheries, Rural Affairs and Land Use Planning (MAAPRAT)

Tasks of MAAPRAT:

- Agricultural policy, food safety
- Risk management
- Risk communication
- RASFF Contact Point

Website: <http://agriculture.gouv.fr>

MAAPRAT is responsible for agricultural policy, the safety of food of animal or plant origin and the safety of animal feed. MAAPRAT prepares draft legislation in this area and is also responsible for control and inspection. MAAPRAT uses risk assessments prepared by ANSES as the scientific foundation for risk management measures. MAAPRAT is also responsible for risk communication.

MAAPRAT's portfolio encompasses plant protection products, including residues, veterinary medicinal products, GMOs and zoonoses.

The area of work of MAAPRAT extends beyond food safety to plant health, plant protection, animal health and animal welfare. In France there are two RASFF Contact Points, one is at MAAPRAT the other at MEFI.

Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry (MEFI)

Tasks of MEFI:

- Consumer policy, food safety
- Risk communication
- Risk management
- RASFF Contact Point

Website: <http://www.minefe.gouv.fr>

The MEFI is responsible for consumer policy including state food inspections of all products of non-animal origin. The MEFI uses risk assessment from ANSES as the scientific foundation for management measures.

The portfolio of the MEFI includes food supplements, novel foods, mineral water, residues of plant protection products and GMOs in food of non-animal origin (other aspects with regard to GMOs are covered by the High Council for Biotechnologies). The MEFI is also involved in risk communication activities

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (MASS)

Tasks of MEFI:

- Health policy, food safety
- Risk communication
- Risk management

Website: <http://www.sante.gouv.fr>

MASS deals with health policy and food safety. MASS prepares draft legislation in the field of mineral and drinking water and is responsible for state drinking water inspections. MASS uses the risk assessments from ANSES as the scientific foundation for management measures. In collaboration with MAAPRAT, MASS is in charge of investigations on foodborne diseases. Another main area of MASS is risk communication.

French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety (ANSES)

Tasks of ANSES:

- Risk assessment
- Risk communication
- EFSA Focal Point
- Research, scientific & technical support

Website: <http://www.anses.fr>

ANSES is responsible for risk assessment in the area of food safety, environmental and occupational health. ANSES is supervised by five ministries, three of which have responsibilities in the area of food safety and risk management. These ministries use risk assessments prepared by ANSES as basis for risk management measures. ANSES also identifies (re)emerging health risks and prepares recommendations for risk management measures. ANSES is supported by national experts in 16 scientific advisory panels and related ad hoc working groups. ANSES is also active in the area of risk communication. ANSES actively conducts and participates in research. Eleven laboratories, holding numerous reference mandates (65 national, 12 OIE, 9 EU, 1 FAO and 1 WHO) are attached to ANSES.

In the area of food and feed safety, the activity of ANSES covers novel foods, food supplements, nutrition, drinking and mineral water, plant protection products, plant health, residues of veterinary medicinal products, animal health and welfare. ANSES is also responsible for the assessment of the safety of GMOs in the food and feed sector.

The National Agency for Veterinary Medicinal Products (ANMV) is a part of ANSES, and is the regulatory authority for veterinary medicinal products.

III – Food safety alerts management in FRANCE

1. Does the competent authority (or authorities) for food safety have an established mechanism to evaluate and react to food safety crises (crises management mechanism)?	Yes
2. If the reply to Q1 is yes, does this mechanism include a committee or a body with pre-determined representatives?	Yes
3. If there is an established mechanism for crisis management (the reply to Q1 is Yes):	
3a. Do actors with risk assessment capacity participate directly in this mechanism?	Yes
3b. Do actors with risk management capacity participate directly in this mechanism?	Yes
3c. Do actors with risk communication capacity participate directly in this mechanism?	Yes

IV – Characteristics of the food sector in France

Number of enterprises¹: 13 500

% of the industrial sector: 19%

% of the industrial workforce: 19%

% of industrial turnover: 159 billion with 12 billion value added, 16.5% of added value in French industry

Top subsectors (in terms of number of enterprises): Meat processing (2,462), manufacture of pastry/bakery products and pasta (1,336), manufacture of dairy products (1,250) and processing of fruit and vegetables (1,082). The meat and dairy industries account for 41% of employees in the agri-food sector.

Top subsectors (in terms of turnover): The meat and dairy industries account for 38% of total revenue and 41% of employees in the agri-food sector. In 2011, the dairy industry revenue was € 25.5 million. French wines and dairy products such as cheese and butter are famous worldwide. In 2011, dairy products exportations represented € 6,179 million (17.7% of French agrofood exports) and wine exportations represented a revenue of € 7,171 million.

The agrofood industry is also contributing significantly to the health of French economy. France is one of the world's biggest producers and exporters of food worldwide. In 2011, the agrofood sector represented €159 billion in revenues (including small retail businesses), making it the leading sector in French industry and far ahead of the automotive industry. With €12 billion in added value, the agrofood sector produces just over 16.5% of added value in French industry. It represents the second French trade surplus with a 14% increase in sales in one year.

In 2011, the agrofood industry employed 576,325 people. This figure makes it the largest employer of the industrial sector in France, with 19.4% of industrial sector employees, 18.8% of its total revenue. 50% of employees work in firms composed by 250 employees or more. The agrofood industry is composed of 13,500 firms. 97% of them are either small-medium-sized enterprises (SME) (less than 250 employees) or small office/home offices (SOHO) (between 10 and 20 employees).

In 2011, with a production of € 151 billion, France was the largest agricultural producer in Europe (it produced 19% of all European agricultural goods). Agrofood production in volume has increased by 3.6% between 2010 and 2011. French agrofood industries transform 70% of the French agricultural production.

V –Civil Society Organisations

UFC-Que Choisir - Union Fédérale des Consommateurs

Web: www.quechoisir.org

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¹INSEE-ESANE restatement of French Office of Statistics and Studies (SSP) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry. <http://www.insee.fr>