

[Taiwan]

Ensuring Food Safety: An Important Challenge Today

—Food safety management in Taiwan—^{*1}

Ching-Chuan SU,¹ Da-Chen CHU²

World Health Day was celebrated on 7 April 2015, with World Health Organization (WHO) highlighting the challenges and opportunities associated with food safety under the slogan “From farm to plate, make food safe.” As the WHO puts it so succinctly—food safety is a shared responsibility. Like any other country, food safety is highly concerned in Taiwan. By collecting the information of different stages of the food chain and following the from-farm-to-table principle, it allows Taiwan Food and Drug Administration (TFDA) to have a better understanding of the food chain as the quality and safety of food depend on the efforts of everyone involved in the complex chain of food production, processing, transport, preparation and consumption.

TFDA manages food safety in the following aspects. First, optimize food safety laws and regulation. The latest amendment was published on 4 February 2015, some key points including the establishment of a dedicated interagency food safety commission, strengthened management measures on food industries and increased fines and criminal charges. Second, enforce source management. Certain designated products need to make a registration before putting on the market, such as food additive, special dietary

food for people having certain disease. Furthermore, promote food safety global cooperation, enhance supervision and control over food products from farm to table, reinforce ability of risk assessment, and enhance consumer protection and risk communication.

For rapid exchange information, we establish Taiwan international food safety authority network (TIFSAN) to combine and handle all the food safety information from pre-market control, international incidents, border control, post-market control and information from business or consumer. We hope we will be able to connect with other food safety information rapid alert systems in the world. Considering the food safety management is more complex these days, our challenges and focus would be the emerging food safety issues, gaps between the management and general public’s expectation, increasing amount of imported food, the need of capacity building, and short of resources. Meanwhile, our prospects is to establish an integrated, accountable and science-based regulatory system to ensure safety and quality of food products, and also build up the official communication and collaboration channel with relevant international agencies.

^{*1} This article is based on a presentation made at the Symposium “Ensuring Food Safety: An Important Challenge Today” held at the 30th CMAAO General Assembly and 51st Council Meeting, Yangon, Myanmar, on September 23-25, 2015.

¹ President, Taiwan Medical Association (intl@tma.tw).

² Supervisor, Taiwan Medical Association (intl@tma.tw).

**The 30th CMAAO Assembly & 51st Council Meeting
-Symposium-**

**Ensuring Food Safety
An Important Challenge Today**
Food Safety Management in Taiwan

Ching-Chuan SU, M.D. Ph.D., President
Jerry-Y.H. CHU, M.D. Ph.D., Vice Secretary General
Taiwan Medical Association

Outline

- Food Safety Management in Taiwan
- Challenges and Future Prospect
- Organization of TFDA



2

Food Safety Management in Taiwan

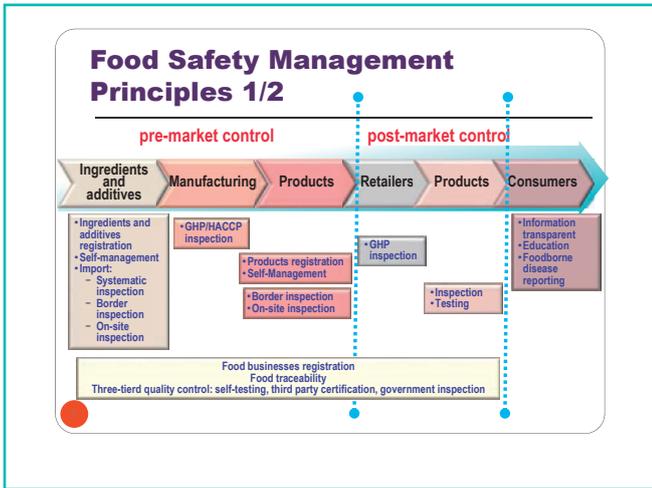
3

Food industry in Taiwan

- Over these years, the number of Taiwan's food factories is around **5,000 to 6,000** establishments. At the end of 2012, there are 5,235 establishments.
- According to the information from Taiwan's Ministry of Economic Affairs and Statistics Department, the output value of Taiwan's food industry is **6,412 billion(NT\$)** in 2013, which is one of the important manufacturing industries in Taiwan.
- Food imports reached 2,080 billion(NT\$) in 2013, representing a slight growth of 1.5% in 2012. Key growth items include slaughtering meat, dairy products, baked cereal products, animal and vegetable oils, and non-alcoholic beverages.

(ITIS Food Industry 2014)

4



Food Safety Laws and Regulations

- **Act Governing Food Safety and Sanitation**
 - Food safety and sanitation
 - Food quality
- **Regulations** were developed according to this Act.
- Principles for establishing food safety regulations :
Follow the SPS Agreement
 - Scientific evidence: result of risk assessment, regulatory reference of other countries, case of practical condition, analytical method, etc.
 - International standards are adopted if assessed to be satisfactory
 - ✓ Codex standards
 - ✓ Major trading partners



7

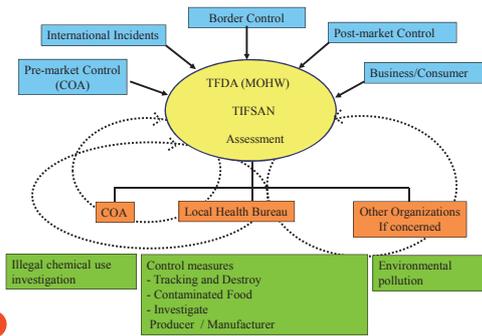
Interagency Coordination

- **Board of MOHW(TFDA), COA and EPA**
 - TFDA: Food products.
 - COA: Raw agriculture materials on farms and slaughterhouses.
 - EPA: Contaminants in water, soil.
- **Food Safety Committee under Executive Yuan**
 - Established in June 2009(Food and Drug Safety Committee), Premier of the Executive Yuan is the chair to negotiate the related policies among agencies.
- **Food Safety Office under Executive Yuan**
 - Established in October 2014, responsible for supervising and coordinating the promotion of inter-ministerial food safety management.



8

TIFSAN: Taiwan's International Food Safety Authority Network



9

Challenges and Future Prospect

10

Challenges and Focus

- ❖ The emerging food safety issues
- ❖ Gaps between the management and general public's expectation
- ❖ Increasing amount of imported food
- ❖ The complexity for food safety management
- ❖ Ability of food industry
- ❖ Short of resources
- ❖ Capacity buildings are required



11

Future Prospect

Eight action plans for Act Governing Food Safety and Sanitation:

- Strengthen **registration** system in food business.
- Improve **food tracking and tracing** system.
- Control the source of **food additives**.
- Establish a **self-management** mechanism for food businesses.
- Complete **genetically modified food ingredients** management.
- Encourage to report illegal activities.
- Significantly **increase the penalties**.
- Establish a **food safety protection fund**.

12

Win-Win-Win Situation



13

Organization of TFDA

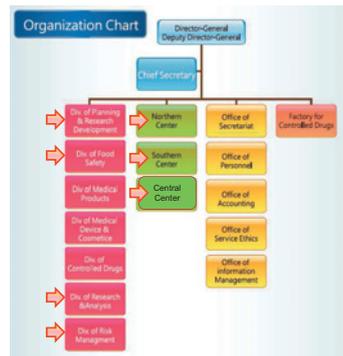
14

Food Safety Management Organizations

- ❖ TFDA streamlines the food safety, pharmaceutical, medical devices & cosmetics, and analysis affairs and operates on January 1, 2010.
- ❖ TFDA develops the policies and regulations for food safety management, and takes charge of border inspection on imported food.
- ❖ Local health bureaus conduct the post-market inspection and testing, TFDA coordinates health authorities' food safety measures.
- ❖ Interagency network for food safety is developed.

15

Organization of TFDA (Involve Food management)



16

Responsibilities of Divisions Centers

- ❖ **Division of Food Safety**
 - Food safety and sanitation policies, laws and regulations.
- ❖ **Centers for Regional Administration**
 - The inspection at ports-of-entry for food importing; coordination of post-market inspection and testing for local health bureaus.
- ❖ **Division of Risk Management**
 - Organizational risk management, preparedness and response to emergency events; the accreditation of food laboratories.
- ❖ **Division of Research and Analysis**
 - Development of testing methods for food safety and sanitation.

17

Thank you for your attention!

<http://www.fda.gov.tw>
<http://consumer.fda.gov.tw/>

18