

Food Safety Plan of Catalonia

2017 2021



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Catalan Food Safety Agency

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Introduction

The Food Safety Plan of Catalonia 2017–2021 constitutes a new stage of the project that began in 2007 with the first Food Safety Plan of Catalonia. This project marked a qualitative leap in the Food Safety Policy as it brought about a new strategic and integrated approach regarding the public bodies that have certain responsibilities in this area.

This Plan complies with the mandate put forward in Law 18/2009, of 22 October, on public health, article 43 which establishes that the Food Safety Plan is the reference framework for the public actions of the Government of Catalonia's Administration and of local authorities in this area.

Furthermore, the Interministerial Plan on Public Health (PINSAP) is an instrument established by Law 18/2009, of 22 October, on public health, to implement public intervention regarding the determinants of the health of the population, especially those requiring a collaborative approach from the Government of Catalonia's Public Administration, local Administration and various social sectors. It intends to achieve the improvement and protective objectives regarding health in the most equitable and efficient way possible. It is, therefore, a governance tool that links together the Government of Catalonia and all health determinants, among which food safety must be included. In this context, the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia, despite having its own independent entity, constitutes the instrument that defines the Food Safety Policy within the framework of the Interministerial Plan on Public Health (PINSAP).

The Law on public health envisages that the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia include objectives regarding food safety in the areas covering food safety; health; animal nutrition and welfare; plant health; animal health and phytosanitary products, and subsequent environmental contamination should they directly affect food safety, as well as the set of services, programmes and proceedings that must be developed, and the evaluation and follow-up of mechanisms. Additionally, it is established that the drafting process must ensure the intervention of the administrations, institutions, scientific societies and professionals relating to food safety, as well as the civil society. Finally, the aforementioned Law establishes that, prior to a favourable report from the Food Safety Steering Committee, the Plan has to be approved by the Government of Catalonia on the proposal of those ministries dealing with matters regarding health, agriculture, food, livestock, and fisheries.

The application of the planning methodology regarding objectives, structure and contents of the document, as well as the procedure to follow for its elaboration, guarantee compliance with established specifications of the Law on public health. Specifically, the planning methodology regarding objectives, based on the identification of objectives and the subsequent actions to be taken in order to accomplish them, allows for a systematic evaluation of the results of the actions carried out and application of the necessary corrections in order to generate a constant cycle of improvement.

The experience acquired during these previous stages of the Plan show that the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia is a well-established policy and that work must continue on the areas where intervention is planned with renewed efforts towards the improvement of efficiency and effectiveness.

The application of the strategy, the principles and the criteria envisaged in the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia must allow us to maintain a food safety system that is integrated, modern and effective, one that provides each citizen with the necessary guarantees as well as serving as a support tool for the international projection of the agri-food products from our country.





1

Context and factors to be taken into account



According to data gathered in various opinion surveys, for Catalan citizens, food is one of the main determining factors for their health, with a clear conscience of the importance of diet as a determining factor regarding health. Food in general and the safety of food products in particular are fundamental elements in everyday life. Eating is a vital action which occurs several times a day, making the safety of food products so that they do not represent a health threat an important question and one which is undertaken in a conscious or unconscious manner.

The growing globalization of food markets poses increasingly bigger challenges for those responsible for food safety. The surveillance and control of emerging pathogens or traces of contaminants require the use of new and better analysis and control techniques. Regulations that guarantee innocuousness and quality to consumers and legal security to operators are also necessary. All of this has to be carried out with the highest efficiency, in a time in which the activity of the public administrations has had to adapt to significant budgetary constraints.

Catalonia is integrated in the European Union, making a large part of our food policy strongly influenced by European legislation. The current food safety level in Europe, which is the largest trading block in the world and our main market, is strongly grounded in a network of surveillance and control that offers synergies between different countries and which is continually evolving without losing from sight the common objective of minimising existing risks. Agricultural and livestock operators, the industry, commerce, official control bodies, scientists, politicians and citizens all have responsibilities and roles which are clearly defined regarding the shared objective of food safety.

Citizens expect the authorities and operators to do all that is reasonably possible in order to prevent problems regarding food safety.

Citizens of Catalonia must have the necessary elements at their disposition in order to be able to trust in the safety of the food they consume. Even though we have one of the safest food safety systems in the world, we must not let our guard down and we must continue to work on this. We must be able to quickly identify and address the risks associated with new pathogens, new technology, changes in demographic patterns and food, or those that may arise due to the large volume of international exchange of food in an increasingly globalized world.

Consequences of foodborne diseases upon public health can be significant. The impact is not exclusively circumscribed by the health sector and the distress of those affected. Additionally, it has important economic consequences in the form of medical and labour costs, as well as causing major losses for the agri-food sector. As we have already had the chance to ascertain during recent years, the loss of the trust of both national and international consumers in moments of crisis covered by the media can result in heavy drops in demand of products from the affected areas and even provoke a loss of prestige for the product, the region of origin and in some cases both. This may go as far as to affect other products and origins unrelated directly with the case.



Consumers have high expectations when it comes to the safety and quality of food. While eliminating all risks is impossible, the public expect the authorities and operators to do all that is reasonably possible in order to prevent problems regarding food safety. There is even a certain aspiration of zero risk despite the awareness that it is impossible to provide 100% guarantees at all times, in all circumstances and for all products.

The measures in order to guarantee food safety are already an established matter in our milieu, but they must continually adapt to an increasingly complex production and commercialisation context. In 2003, the Catalan Food Safety Agency (ACSA) was created, currently a specialised ministry of the Public Health Agency of Catalonia (ASPCAT), adding to an official surveillance and control system established to fill in gaps regarding strategic planning, follow-ups and evaluation and communication of risks as well as interministerial and interadministrative coordination and that of the rest of the participants in the food chain, such as economic operators and consumers. After more than a decade of work, the main purpose is still to strengthen the Catalan food safety system and make the endeavours in this area more efficient. There are many public bodies which are involved in this challenge, but we highlight the ministries and public bodies of the Government which are involved in health, agriculture, livestock, fisheries, food, consumption and the environment, as well as local administrations.

The coordination between different bodies, authorities and concerned parties in the food chain is essential in order to adequately protect consumers in a sphere which is both wide and complex. Coordination and cooperation are necessary throughout the whole food chain to share information and experience in order to accomplish efficient and integral management. This coordination reinforces the scientific, technical and operational infrastructure adding benefit to a food safety system which is modern and robust. Through means of a greater collaboration and specific, risk-based intervention, the corresponding authorities can make better use of all available resources in order to improve results. Clarifying the distribution of responsibilities and improving accountability are also key elements in this transversal management policy in which an important role is played by the Food Safety Steering Committee, created by Law 18/2009, on public health, in which the different parties involved in the food chain are represented.

Each time that a new situation or indication of the existence of a risk arises the necessary research and mitigation measures are put into action.

As in many other areas of life, an absolute guarantee regarding safety is never entirely possible because food products, with a few exceptions such as water and salt, originate from biological systems with dynamic variables and multiple incident factors. Each time that a new situation or indication of the existence of a risk arises the necessary research and mitigation measures are put into action. One of the consequences of crisis alerts from previous years has been a significant improvement in administrative systems in Catalonia and Europe, result of greater experience and knowledge.

Consumer information has shown a clear improvement in recent years and the fundamental principles on food safety outlined in the White Paper and Regulation 178/2002 are still in force after more than fifteen years. The principles of continuous and integrated monitoring “from farm to table”, the responsibility of operators, tractability, scientific risk evaluation which is independent from risk management, acting with precaution when faced with scientific uncertainty and the communication of transparent risks all continue to be indispensable elements of the policies on food safety in Europe.

Successful governance of food safety compels governments to define a clear policy and an explicit commitment with citizens. Beforehand, an analysis of the current situation must be carried out to purposefully orientate the policy that is to be applied. It is also necessary to settle on the vision, the mission, the objectives and the measures or interventions that we wish to apply. The interventions or lines of work are numerous, complex, interrelated and complementary. The intervention along the whole food chain, from primary production to consumption; the cross-sectional cooperation; the participation of all concerned parties, and the establishment of priorities drawn from the risk analysis are also essential elements in any modern and mature food safety policy.

The orientation of these policies must be based on identified priority issues, something that implies adequate scientific assessment and permanent analysis of surveillance data on foodborne diseases and the prevalence of hazards in the food chain. It is also necessary to be able to count on human resources with experience and training in order to carry out the planned lines of work and a solid legal foundation on which to base their activities. The defined strategies must bring about concrete actions to guarantee that the principles of the policy are applied and measures are taken in order to achieve the specified objectives. In order to guide all of these requirements in a coherent manner, an integrated strategic plan is essential. The Food Safety Plan of Catalonia, initiated in 2007, constitutes this instrument of strategic planning and monitoring in Catalonia. It is the result of the combined effort of the Government bodies involved in the management of the environment, agriculture, health and consumption and local administrations, in collaboration with the sectors of the food chain and the population as a whole.

The strategy proposed by the Plan envisages a transversal public intervention in food safety based on the implementation of programmes from the areas of evaluation, management and risk communication in an integrated and interrelated way throughout the whole food chain. Also, these interventions must be carried out in accordance with principles of quality, efficiency and coordination, as well the maximum collaboration with all participants in the food chain. This collaboration must be based on interactive communication, transparency and attention to the requirements and concerns of all concerned parties as well as the viability and economic sustainability of the sectors that integrate the food chain.

Associated with each of these fields is series of objectives, indicators and intervention programmes which must be monitored to find out the evolution of the implementation of the actions outlined in the Plan and the extent to which they accomplished the objectives, which are presented with a determined time frame in mind. All of this, with the aim of facilitating the monitoring of the Plan and propelling continuous improvement as well as fostering greater coordination and integration in the established global strategy.

Strategic planning, accompanied by the periodical evaluation of results, is a useful instrument for a general approach to food safety that is also integrated and steered towards the effective achievement of results. This approach offers a whole series of added values that are worthwhile developing: it favours a global, transversal and long-term vision which is something that contributes to the elimination of the inconveniences that come with a partial and short-term vision; it serves as a global and systematic method which can guide analysis and problem solving; it constitutes an instrument for communication and transparency as stated in the definition of objectives and interventions and in the presentation of results; it favours the implantation of a culture in which the efforts of all those involved are aimed towards concrete and shared results as targets that need to be met are established along with the performance measurement parameters.

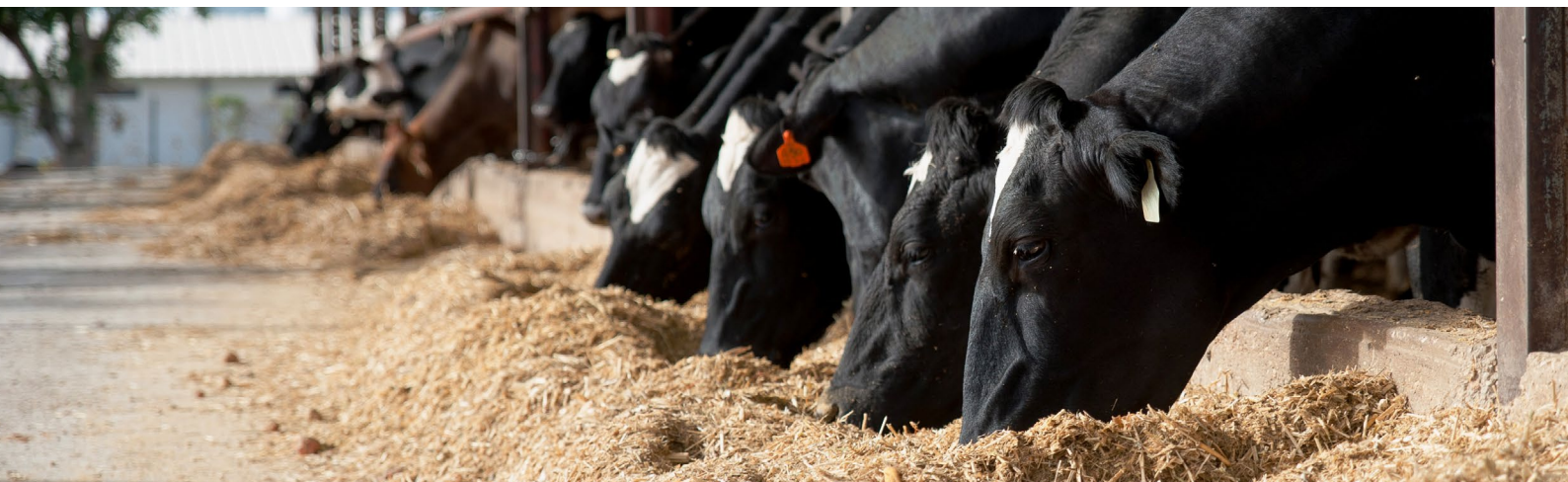
In this way, the incorporation of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and analysis of results are instruments that constitute an enlightening framework for learning and continuous improvement. During the validity of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia, from 2007 up to the present, important measures have been taken in order to improve and modernise food safety. Monitoring systems have been set up to access the current state of food safety in Catalonia based on indicators that allow for the elaboration of an annual report on current food safety in Catalonia, which is approved by the Food Safety Steering Committee and which is published on ACSA's website in the interest of greater transparency and accountability for citizens. During recent years important improvements have also occurred in the execution of official surveillance and control activities in the food chain with procedures becoming more standardised, with a more specific focus based on risk, as well as the implementation of auditing and oversight systems on control systems to boost quality and the continuous improvement in the services provided to citizens in the official surveillance and control of food. For their part, laboratories have continued with their task of developing and maintaining accredited methods of analysis which provide the necessary support for the surveillance and control activities. The integrated "from farm to fork" intervention is increasingly fortified thanks to these improvements.

The ten years of experience provided by the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia have allowed us to carry out an evaluation of results that show a high success level and a level of achievement of objectives and implementation of intended interventions that, according to the available data, is at around 90%.

The food safety system is, now more so than ever, an interconnected network

As always, we must emphasise that food safety is all down to teamwork. The food safety system is, now more so than ever, a network. Many participants are involved in the food chain: farmers, livestock operators, industrialists, retail distributors, restaurateurs and consumers. All of them have to take surveillance and preventative measures regarding food safety and all of them can provide the system with information to improve safety.

For their part, public administrations have inspection staff and analytical surveillance systems, which are significant information gathering systems. Samples are taken, data is collected in situ and operators are also under the obligation to notify about any incident that may pose a risk to product safety. All of this constitutes a safety network that is powerful, complementary and synergistic.



Even so, it is impossible to completely eliminate the occurrence of outbreaks and other incidences regarding food. Should prevention be unable to avoid the incident, the rapid response for identifying causes comes into play alongside the immediate implementation of corrective and mitigation measures. Hence, efficient tracking and immediate response systems are essential both in epidemiological investigation and in traceability, identification and the withdrawal from the market of the affected product, as well as necessary communication with the community when the product may already be in the possession of the public. Through means of alert systems and the rapid exchange of information, any relevant incident identified anywhere within the European Union, and even worldwide via the INFOSAN system which is an alert network operating on a global scale, is communicated to other regions with relevant information regarding the distribution of the products involved and the hazards and measures put in place. This information allows for immediate action regarding the withdrawal of the hazardous products from the market and the reinforcement of surveillance or specific controls. It is also used as an indicator for emerging risks and analysis of the situation in order to improve the existing systems and adapt them to new challenges. This inter-territorial system of information exchange has enormous potential for synergistic effects of multiple control systems working in a network and exchanging relevant data. It is, in itself, a pillar that presently sustains an important part of food safety, as well as reinforcing the system in an exceptional manner. All of this is coordinated by specific units of the European Commission who also periodically carry out audits on the food safety control systems of Member States and third countries.

The food safety hazards that must be prevented and managed are numerous, but due to their frequency and importance it is worthwhile highlighting those caused by *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* and, due to their severity, those caused by *Listeria*. *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* are the agents that are most frequently identified as the cause of foodborne diseases. In previous years, a great deal of effort has been dedicated to combatting these two pathogens.

Even though the *Salmonella* bacteria still causes a relevant number of outbreaks and individual cases of illness, the effort made to reduce this in the primary sector, and especially in eggs and poultry, has resulted in a significant decrease in the prevalence of this pathogen and, subsequently, in the number of outbreaks in humans. There is also intensive work being carried out into reducing the prevalence of *Campylobacter* in the whole of the food chain with the objective of reducing the number of cases in humans, as it continues to be the most frequent pathogen involved in individual cases, along with *Salmonella*. Other pathogens, such as the *Listeria* bacteria, have a much lower occurrence in terms of number of cases of sickness, but the severity of these pathologies means that work must continue to reduce the occurrence to even lower levels if possible. For their part, certain pathogens, some of which can be foodborne, have become more and more resistant to antimicrobial agents, which is something that poses significant health challenges, above all when the illness requires treatment using these pharmaceuticals. To approach this problem there are monitoring systems of resistance to antimicrobial agents which are coordinated with the rest of the European Union states. This set of potential microbiological risks are highly relevant in order to continue working on the application of surveillance, prevention and mitigation measures in order to avoid them posing a future problem.

Chemical contamination and traces are also a priority. Veterinary medicinal products, pesticides and environmental contaminants such as heavy metals and dioxins, may also pose a risk to public health when found to be above certain levels. The Research Programme into Residues in Food of Animal Origin and the specific surveillance programmes for chemical hazards continue operations to detect deviations and put adequate corrective measures into place in every case.

Providing consumers with the accurate information so that they are able to base decisions regarding their consumption on reliable information and on their own requirements is more important now than ever.

Allergens not being stated on labelling or in the information to which the public has access are also a significant problem for public health and food safety because of the growing numbers of people who are sensitive to certain ingredients such as milk, eggs, dried fruit, soya, crustaceans or gluten, among others, which cause allergies or intolerance and which in some cases can put the affected people's lives at risk. Providing consumers with the accurate information so that they are able to base decisions regarding their consumption on reliable information and on their own requirements is more important now than ever. This reliable information includes, along with ingredients, nutritional information and that regarding health properties, as well as best-before and expiry dates. Additionally, ingredients which may cause allergies or intolerance must be indicated on the list of ingredients using a typesetting that clearly differentiates them from the rest. All of this has a direct influence on diet and consumption customs and an important impact on health, economy and sustainability.

The field of adulteration and fraud must also be taken into account and worked on. Cases such as the fraud due to adulteration with horse meat in 2013 and 2014 have shown that, even though there was no immediate risk upon health, this type of practice poses a threat to consumers rights and the supposed quality conformity of product quality which is legally enforceable in accordance with information stated on the labelling, publicity, origin or applicable regulation.

Epidemiological monitoring is key when it comes to the food safety system.

Epidemiological research systems also play an important role. Epidemiological monitoring is key when it comes to the food safety system. Work must continue on the detection and research into outbreaks of food-borne diseases, the investigation of individual cases and the analysis of tendencies in order to determine if control measures are working correctly, as well as to identify elements for improvement. For example, in recent years an analysis system of the current situation of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia has been incorporated, as well as data regarding outbreaks, results from the clinical laboratories' analysis and data on notifiable diseases, information drawn from the Minimum Basic Data Set (MBDS), which gathers data relating to diagnostics effected by the care system. This information, as a whole, allows us to have a more complete vision of the foodborne diseases situation and its impact on the health of the population.

Imports are also a major issue regarding food safety due to the increase in international food trade. Products imported into the European Union are the object of a strict control system based on the authorisation of the countries and establishments of origin, and in the periodical in situ audit by agents at the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) of the European Commission. As well as these controls at the origin, products entering the European Union have to pass an inspection at a Border Inspection Post (BIP) where they can be rejected. If this happens the information generated is immediately incorporated into the information exchange system so that the product cannot be introduced via another point in the European Union if it has already been rejected at a BIP. Should products be granted free movement within the European Union, these imported products circulate and are subject to the same controls as local products, they undergo the same sampling and inspections which are applied to the whole territory, reinforced by the aforementioned warning systems and rapid exchange of information. When an incident is detected, an alert is sent along the entire control network constituted by systems in different countries as well as the Border Inspection Posts. In this way, when an incident is detected controls are reinforced both within the territory of the internal market and at entry points for products.

This shared information may result in the reinforcement of documentary checks or sampling of suspicious products, as well as inspection and auditing missions in the countries of origin that, in unfavourable cases, can enforce the prohibition of the entrance of certain products from certain regions into the European Union. Everything that we have highlighted above builds a solid protective structure for citizens in terms of food safety in which the Food Safety Plan is presented as an instrument that facilitates the overall strategic vision.

Our competitiveness
in a globalized
environment includes
the agri-food sector.

Finally, reference must be made to the economic dimension of food safety in Catalonia. Our competitiveness in a globalized environment includes the agri-food sector, which must form a solid base regarding the safety and quality of food products. Our successful positioning in the national and international market is not viable without the guarantee of food safety and the generation of confidence and credibility in the Catalan agri-food system on the basis of compliance with European and International standards.

Food safety poses economic implementations in our society, as it is a key element of one of our most notable sectors and an essential factor for both its national and international projection. Agri-food production has a defined economic position in Catalonia as it represents near to 4% of GDP, to which we can add catering which provides 1.5% of GDP, and food retail trade which makes up 0.5%. The agri-food industry holds the first position in terms of the volume of business in the industrial sector ahead of other highly defined and well-known sectors such as chemicals, energy and automotive. Additionally, our country continues to be one of the main European agri-food clusters.

The Catalan agri-food industry has a turnover of around 25 billion euros, which makes up approximately 18% of industry in Catalonia. It also provides work for more than 75,000 workers, 20% of workplaces in the Catalan industry. The strategic dimension of the agri-food industry not only involves the volume of production that it generates, but also on its capacity to carry other activities along the whole food chain and create added value right from primary production. Also, it has experienced a great transformation and a strong projection within the international market, something that clearly shows that its capacity to endure economic crises, such as the one that occurred from 2009 onwards, is better than other sectors because it is a sector with a clear acyclic dimension. The evolution of its production has been more stable and the volume of sales in the Catalan agri-food industry even progressively rose during the crisis.

Since 1995 agri-food exportations in nominal terms have quadrupled, while importations have increased at a more moderate rate. The trade flows of the Catalan agri-food balance indicate a positive standing for products of first-stage processing, even though there are deficiencies in animal feed production and other products that make importation necessary.

The sectoral distribution of the agri-food industry in Catalonia shows a notable weight in the meat industry and activities associated with animal production and feed.

The sectoral distribution of the agri-food industry in Catalonia shows a notable weight in the meat industry and activities associated with animal production and feed, which together make up over 50% of the total. Following on, we find the beverage sector where wine and cava are especially highlighted, followed by other sectors such as dairy, that of fats and oils or bread and other products made with flour. In terms of territorial distribution, it must be said that a large amount of primary sector activity is carried out all over the territory, especially in sectors such as livestock, winegrowing and fruit and oil production. For its part, the industry's activity has a certain tendency to concentrate itself in the influential area of Barcelona, although there are a significant number of establishments distributed throughout the territory.

Catalonia has developed into a significant and competitive agri-food activity. The transformation of irrigated areas and extensive commitment to quality products form part of these strategies. Special reference must be made to the option that has made possible the important meat and livestock cluster that has succeeded in generating products with greater added value and achieving an almost balanced agri-food trade in monetary terms. Even so, this model shows some elements upon which attention should be maintained, such as the important requirement to import raw materials in the form of grain (cereals and soya) and manure management, key elements of sustainability.

Another element that should be highlighted is that, even though traditionally considered a sector with relatively simple use of technology, in recent years a clear boost in the innovation and application of new technology following the evident changes in consumer trends. It is also worth mentioning its growth trend, with a higher number of workers and volume of sales; higher levels of education and more qualified workers, and a bigger inversion in means of production, research and innovation.

In the agricultural sphere we must highlight the significant advance in plant health, where application and assessment of the integrated management of plagues has become obligatory, along with the duty of the farmer to be in the possession of a license to apply phytosanitary products which guarantees that they have passed a training course on the topic.

The application of alternative techniques to traditional chemical control has also spread throughout Catalonia, as with biological control, mass trapping and sexual confusion using pheromones, and one of the main success stories has been the elimination of aerial treatments which were commonly carried out against rice worms, fruit flies and olive flies in Terres de l'Ebre.

The future strategy of the agri-food sector must be orientated towards taking advantage of new trends, new technology and new business opportunities.

The future strategy of the agri-food sector must be orientated towards taking advantage of new trends, new technology and new business opportunities. Ecological agriculture, the gradual reduction of the use of chemical pesticides, functional foodstuff, the relation of food with culture and tourism and the increase in the public's interest in pre-prepared dishes are a few examples of opportunities that must be worked on. Even so, this will only be possible if the maximum level of innocuousness and quality of food products and the trust of both national and international consumers is maintained.

Even though the Food Safety Policy has a well-defined strategy and takes into account all of the aforementioned elements, continuous adaptations must be made in accordance with new elements and new information, something which is a constant challenge. It is evident that new circumstances and the context of recent years have conditioned the Food Safety Policy and that key determining factors will continue to appear in the medium and long-term. Some examples of these factors are: the continuous increase of the world population, climate change, overexploitation of resources, the need to produce more food in a sustainable way, the globalization of the food trade, emerging exporting economies (which have increasingly more added value and are participating more and more significantly in the establishment of regulations regarding international trade), pressure on public finances, the increase in inequality, the increase of people with special requirements such as the elderly or people with chronic illnesses and emerging risks and new technology. This group of factors forces us to be aware and to permanently consider intervention in food safety in order to make continuous and hasty adaptations to a policy that must always be orientated towards offering citizens the highest levels of safety, quality and information. The Food Safety Plan, as a frame of reference for public action in this sphere in Catalonia, has been designed as a response to these challenges as the strategy to be followed incorporates evaluation, surveillance and response which must allow us to face future challenges efficiently and with enough flexibility in order to adapt to emerging situations or requirements.



2

Food Safety Policy of Catalonia



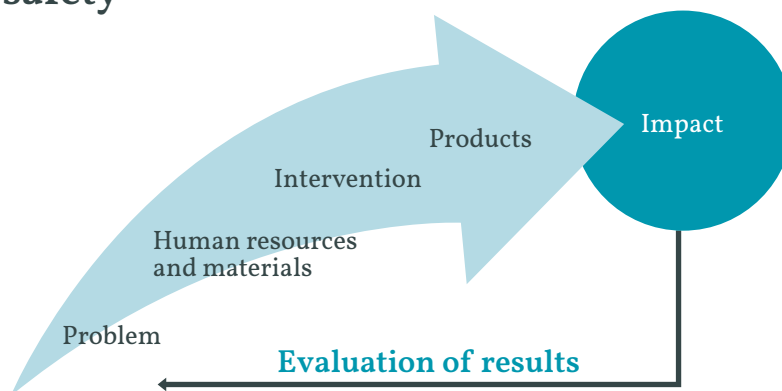


Public policies are the responses given by the government to society's demands and requirements. They include regulations, services, assistance and other interventions orientated towards the resolution of an existing problem or the avoidance of a future one. Public intervention must have a *raison d'être* which is associated the correction or prevention of a situation, which is deflected by certain defined parameters or desirables. This intervention has to be useful, in the sense that it generates an impact upon the correction, mitigation or prevention of the problem.

Public interventions are associated with a theory, which is more or less explicit, regarding how to produce the effects that give it purpose. It is called the *theory of change*, or the *theory of the dynamics of the impact of the intervention*. It involves a logical sequence of hypotheses which explain how the intervention is expected to produce the determined results. In food safety a high level of compliance with safety standards regarding facilities, equipment, self-assessment, training of workers and hygiene of the processes must all contribute to minimalizing the prevalence (presence and concentration) of hazards along the whole food chain. This consequences of this should be the reduction of the consumer's exposure to hazards caused by food and the maintenance of acceptable levels, something that generates a fall in foodborne diseases amongst the public. All of this, as well as the compliance with quality, composition, labelling, animal welfare standards, and other questions related to meeting the legitimate expectations of citizens, must generate a high level of citizen and international trust in the Catalan food chain and its products. In order to generate this chain of results a series of well-defined interventions must be applied, such as the approval of regulations on food safety, the awareness and promotion of sound practices along the whole food chain, the implementation of surveillance systems and official controls, as well as interactive communication, coordination and collaboration measures from all involved parties in the food chain.

In the established theory of change regarding food safety, the interventions to be applied are clearly defined and there is great consensus on the matter. Risk assessment, awareness, the promotion of sound practices, inspection, control via laboratory analysis and the application of adequate measures upon the detection of irregularities are vital elements within this policy. Even so, there is what might be called “the dose effect”, as it is not enough just to apply the proposed measures. They must be applied in sufficient quantity and intensity in order to produce the desired effects. It is therefore vital to ensure the necessary balance in terms of dose/response and cost/benefit from a global perspective taking into account all of the implemented factors.

Public intervention scheme for food safety

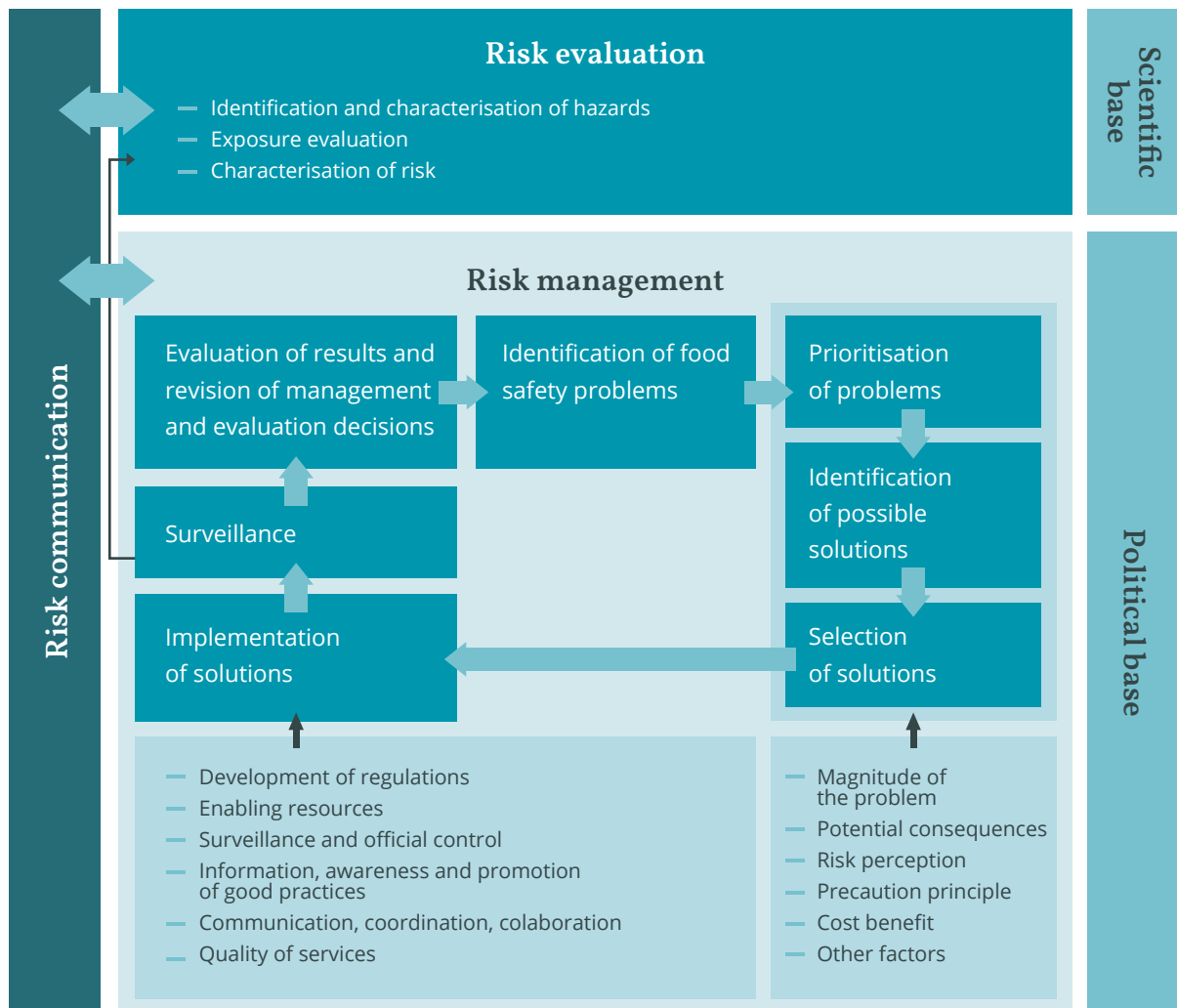


When any public policy is applied it is vital to define a series of parameters, such as: the nature of the problem to be solved, the magnitude, actions to resolve the problem and other alternatives, the frequency and duration of these actions, the design of the intervention, the necessary resources and cost in relation to benefit. Once the proposed interventions or actions have been applied an evaluation must be carried out in order to analyse, amongst other questions: whether the operational objectives, the impact objectives and the expected scope have been achieved, whether the intervention has been implemented as planned and whether resources have been used in an efficient manner.

The Public Policy on Food Safety is a complex policy made up of multiple programmes orientated, mainly, towards achieving a high level of food innocuousness, but also towards meeting the legitimate expectations of citizens in other related spheres as they are a key instrument in maintaining the competitiveness of our country in sectors such as agriculture, livestock, the agri-food industry and, subsequently, touristic exposure. These challenges must be the object of strategic management that takes into consideration all implicated elements and participants.

Experience gathered during recent years has seen the incorporation of key elements in this policy, such as: the “from farm to fork” principle, according to which, adequate measures must be applied throughout the whole food chain, the risk analysis process, which requires an integrated and balanced application of evaluation procedures, the management and communication of risks, the explicit recognition of the responsibility held by the operators throughout the food chain, and the redefinition of the role of public administrations. In this sense, it is important to bear in mind the risk analysis process and its multiple implications, which are briefly summarised in the following chart, as it forms one of the conceptual bases and is a reference for the Food Safety Policy of Catalonia.

Risk analysis process and its multiple implications



In Catalonia, for years the Food Safety Policy has been elaborated on the basis of principles and methodologies such as the prioritisation, planning, quality, efficiency, results analysis, transparency and continuous improvement. This requires explicit commitment and coordinated and complimentary actions that implies a responsibility for the ministries within the Government regarding the environment, agriculture and livestock, public health and consumption, as well as the local administrations who have to carry out an important task in the final phases of the food chain due to their proximity to food retail and to consumers themselves.

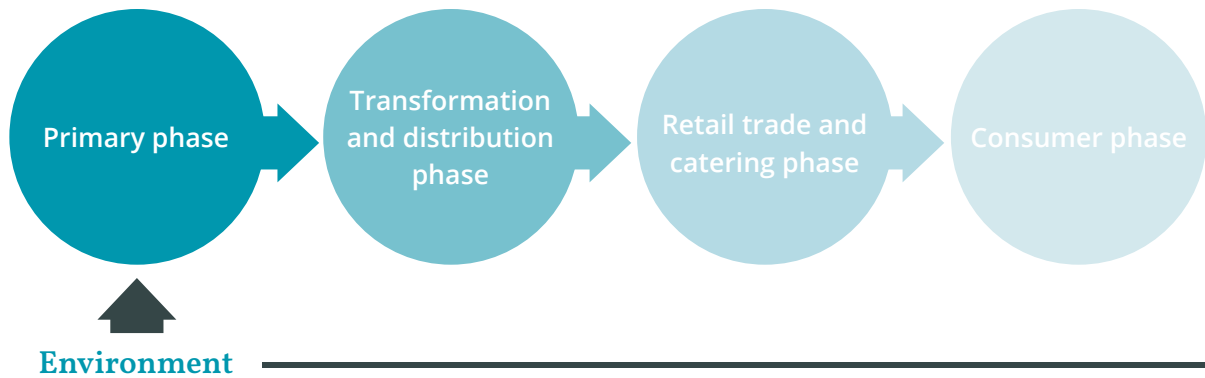
These commitments and this collaboration require the departure from shared objectives, not only between public administrations that are involved in food safety but also the operators in the food chain and citizens themselves.

Furthermore, it is worth remembering that in Catalonia the Food Safety Policy is currently a consolidated policy that only requires modifications regarding a higher or lower degree should there be scientific evidence of this necessity or emerging problems that justify said modifications. It is therefore necessary to maintain identified work lines and continue improving with the application of each action and programme in order to benefit from maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

The food chain, which is the area of action for this policy, involves the necessary phases and stages for the production of food products, which runs from their production to their subsequent consumption. We are basically talking about the primary phase (agriculture, livestock and fisheries), the transformation and distribution phase (industry and large-scale distribution), the retail phase and the consumption phase.



Stages the food chain



In this case, the environment is the immediate setting, with a direct influence on the products in the food chain, especially in the primary phase. For this reason, the Environmental Policy as a whole is considered part of the Food Safety Policy. In Catalonia, all public actions in the food chain respond to a logic which has already been outlined in previous Food Safety Plans. To facilitate the understanding of the applied strategy its theoretical framework must be mentioned, and is stated below in the form of a short description in accordance with the following structure:

- Strategic plan
- Risk assessment and scientific evidence
- Surveillance and control of foodborne diseases
- Integrated risk management throughout the whole food chain
- Communication and collaboration between all concerned parties in the food chain
- Analysis of the situation and transparency
- Support for export projection and internationalization of products from the Catalan food chain

2.1

Strategic plan

In such a complex setting as that of the food chain, Catalan society and its public institutions, the Public Policy on Food Safety has to include a strategic plan that includes all areas where intervention and definition of the role of every managing body is required. As indicated in Law 18/2009, on public health, the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia has to be an indicative tool and reference framework for the public actions of the Government of Catalonia's Administration and establishments in Catalonia regarding food safety.

Planning according to objectives is a useful tool when approaching food safety from a general and integrated focus as it allows for the global and systematic detection of problems, the determination of requirements, the definition of objectives that must be achieved, the necessary interventions and the monitoring and evaluation systems. The use of this methodology and the consideration of the aforementioned set of factors leads to the definition of a mission, a vision, objectives and interventions on the basis of a strategic orientation that takes into account the following elements:

- **Transversal, global and integrated conception** considering the whole food chain, from primary production to consumption as well as all the stages in the risk analysis process and the extent of the current food safety concept in our social environment.
- **Risk assessment actions** in order to continue progress in the knowledge of problems and their possible solutions.
- **Risk communication systems** directed towards a better and more fluid relationship with citizens, and with all participating sectors in the food chain, with the aim to favour the interactive exchange of information, awareness and the application of sound practices.
- **Driving continuous improvement.**
- Orientation towards **the efficiency and quality of services** provided by public administrations.
- **Collaboration and cooperation of all participants** in the food chain in order to maintain alliances between all sectors involved, as well as to develop joint actions, always within a relational management policy for everybody involved.

The strategic plan, embodied in the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia, contributes to the sectoral actions on food safety, brings a sense of togetherness and a sense of belonging to a common integrated, interministerial and interadministrative project. This facilitates the evaluation of results and foments discussion, participation and the consensus of all those involved in food safety, and provides a stimulus and valuable learning framework.

2.2

Risk assessment and scientific evidence

Reference must be made to risk assessment as a scientific base of the Public Policy on Food Safety. Management and communication of food risk must be based on an adequate evaluation of risks, with the objective of finding out the problems and identifying the possible solutions using a scientific approach.

A good part of risk assessment is carried out by international bodies, such as the World Health Organization or the European Food Safety Authority, as it requires a provision of important resources and international consensus. Even so, on a regional or local scale actions orientated towards the individual assessment of the situation in each territory are necessary by gathering of information and carrying out specific research into the territorial situation regarding epidemiological data, the prevalence of hazards or level of exposure according to eating habits.

The risk assessment activities in Catalonia are the responsibility of the Catalan Food Safety Agency (ACSA), which is currently a specialised area of the Secretary of Public Health of the Ministry of Health, also known as the Public Health Agency of Catalonia (ASPCAT). ACSA carries out complimentary activities to the assessment work done by the aforementioned international bodies. ACSA carries out the collection and classification of the existing scientific information from bibliographic sources and studies which are available in order to make this information accessible to risk managers and participants in the food chain. From the evaluation sector it is worth highlighting the work done by groups of scientific experts which complements the tasks done by the Scientific Committee, advisory body for technical matters and food safety scientists in Catalonia in accordance with that stated in Law 18/2009, on public health.

In order to assess the specific risks that may affect Catalonia and provide risk managers with scientific reference material, expert opinions and technical reports are drawn up and scientific studies upon request or own-initiative are encouraged. Amongst these studies we can highlight the one covering contaminants in overall diet, which has been carried out over the last ten years. Furthermore, in order to facilitate access to scientific information to all participants in the food chain, ACSA develops activities aimed at providing the latest scientific and technical information, regarding the current lines of investigation and an updated diagram of hazards in the food chain. It includes reference tools to facilitate better self-monitoring by operators in the food chain and more efficient risk management, based on scientific evidence, by the public managers involved.

2.3

Surveillance and control of foodborne diseases

Surveillance and control activities for foodborne diseases are extremely related to risk assessment and management as they are a specific and direct source of information and are often the trigger of the undertaking of urgent measures. They are a group of activities aimed at detecting foodborne diseases when they appear in the population and adopting additional measures in order to avoid major consequences.

There are legally established procedures regarding the communication of notifiable diseases and epidemic outbreaks. There are some foodborne diseases amongst these notifiable diseases such as brucellosis, trichinosis, anthrax, hepatitis A, cholera, typhoid fever, botulism or gastroenteritis caused by E-coli O157:H7, amongst others, or epidemic outbreaks caused by food, both of biological and chemical origin.

If an outbreak is detected it must always be confirmed urgently and be followed by a study to gather data regarding symptoms, affected people, exposed people, places where the sick have eaten and common food products consumed. Meanwhile, clinical samples from the sick and from food products are taken to identify the type of agent. In this way, immediate inspection control measures are enforced at the establishment or establishments that have participated in the elaboration or distribution of suspicious food products. During the inspection the possible causes of the presence of the etiological agent are investigated and the required samples are taken in order to carry out the corresponding analytical tests. Using this information, the preventative and correctional measures are communicated to the establishments associated with the outbreak and, when necessary, to other establishments that may pose similar risks. Following the investigation of every outbreak, a report covering each of the aforementioned points is produced.

The evaluation study along with the reports of confirmed outbreaks allow us to find out the epidemiological characteristics presented by the foodborne disease outbreaks within a determined territorial area, which is fundamental in order to correctly orientate preventative actions to peter out the incident.

2.4

Integrated risk management throughout the whole food chain

Within the risk analysis process, risk management is one of the key components and is characterised by its complexity and by the large number of activities involved in said management. Public intervention in the risk management area represents an immense effort for the public administrations with responsibilities related to the field. The Food Safety Plan of Catalonia covers all of these activities. In order to facilitate this integrated vision of the interventions, below is a description of the main activities or interventions ordered according to the area or phase in the food chain that they belong to. The set of described activities form the nucleus of the intervention in food safety put forward by the Plan.

2.4.1

The environment

The environment is a possible source of hazard for products in the food chain. Dioxins and other persistent organic pollutants, heavy metals amongst other substances, as well as many microorganisms, can be found in the air, the earth, water or wildlife and can contaminate animals and plants that are destined for food production.

The environmental risk can affect all phases of the food chain but it is especially significant in the activities from the primary phase due to their strong dependence and relation to the environment.

Generally the management of these types of problems is difficult as the majority of persistent pollutants which are found in the environment are the result of emissions produced as a result of decades of human activity without sufficient control, knowledge and/or sense of sustainability, or the intervention of geological, climatic, or biological factors which are difficult to change. However, many emissions have a global effect making worldwide coordinated and simultaneous actions in order to reduce emission and immission a necessity. Just one coordinated and sustained global action can provide the desired results for reducing of the presence of pollutants in the environment. On a local or regional scale, a control for minimising emissions in the environment is the first measure that has to be implemented. These measures must compliment the monitoring of the immission levels in air, water and soil samples in order to find out what the levels are at each moment and determine priorities of action and the need to apply additional management measures.



Biological hazards can be found in the environment in wild species and constitute a reservoir from which the agent can infect domestic food-producing species, and even people should zoonotic agents be present. The causal agents of tuberculosis, brucellosis, trichinosis, or the particular case of anisakiasis are only a few examples of pathogens that can pass from wild animals to the food chain. Therefore, the surveillance and control of biological hazards in wild species is a question that must be considered in a global conception of food safety because of their impact on the health of animals for slaughter as well as the possibility of direct contact with people via food products from hunting and fishing activities. It is also worth mentioning the risk of microbiological contamination of the water used or linked to primary production, such as irrigation water or water resulting from aquaculture and fishing production which also constitutes a potential source of contamination via virus, bacteria and parasites of products in the food chain.

In the same way that environmental factors influence food safety, the activity of the food chain has an effect on the environment. For this reason, food activities must incorporate a series of principles, such as, amongst others: contamination prevention, minimisation of the use of energy resources and lowering the generation of traces.

There is a significant interrelation between the food chain and the environment and it must be managed correctly. The competent ministry in the field of the environment, as well as its specialised agencies, such as the Catalan Water Agency and the Catalan Waste Agency are carrying out actions along these lines. This way, they develop control and inspection activities based on the verification of compliance with the conditions of the authorisations of activities with high environmental impacts. Surveillance of environmental quality levels or the prevalence of pollutants in the environment is also underway. All of this is complimentary to activities aimed at promoting a better management of traces and activities that have an environmental impact.

All of these interventions constitute the Environmental Policy, which is its own independent entity and is independent of the Food Safety Policy, but has a significant interrelation regarding its impact on the quality of our environment, people's health and the safety of food due to its strong relation with the food chain, especially the primary phase.

2.4.2

The primary phase

Experience gathered over the last two decades has shown that many problems can only be tackled effectively with measures applied to the first stages of the food chain. The activities or intervention programmes in the primary phase of the food chain are, therefore, essential in a policy of integrated and transversal management of the food chain. These activities fall under different lines of intervention which are briefly summarised below:

- **Authorisation, registration and planning of activities aimed at facilitating control**, which constitute databases necessary for the design and the implementation of all types of surveillance and control or information and awareness programmes. In addition, in many cases this involves associated procedures for checking compliance with the conditions of legally established food safety regulations, thus constituting part of control intervention.
- **Development and control of the application of good agricultural practices**, especially in fertilisation, plant health, the use of phytosanitary products and non-chemical technical alternatives, which contribute to the reduction of environmental contamination and of the products in the food chain.
- **Development and control of plant health and the correct use of phytosanitary products**, which contribute to maintaining plant health and subsequently reducing the use of pesticides and their incorporation into the environment and food products.
- **Surveillance and control of animal welfare and livestock biosecurity measures**, which are orientated towards the monitoring and reduction of the prevalence of agents which may cause diseases in people and animals, such as a reduction in the use of veterinary medicinal products among which antimicrobial agents and the associated problems of resistance.
- **Development and control of good practices in animal production and nutrition**, such as in the use of animal health products, which contribute towards minimising the incorporation of biological and chemical hazards in food producing animals and their products.
- **Maintenance of information and warning networks** in coordination with authorities throughout the European Union, especially in the spheres related to food and animal welfare.
- **Surveillance and control of production waters and fishery and aquaculture products** to guarantee their safety.

Alongside these lines of work dedicated to minimising the incorporation of hazards into the food chain in the primary phase, it is worth highlighting those activities aimed at meeting the society's other demands and requirements. Actions relating to food, animal welfare and health care for non-zoonotic diseases, as well as plant health or the use of biotechnology, such as genetically modified organisms, contribute to maintaining sustainable production systems from an ethical, economic and ecological point of view which are aimed at satisfying the expectations and requirements of society whilst ensuring their trust in said systems.

In this area it is worth highlighting the control activity regarding conditionality which is carried out in the competent ministry in the field of agriculture and livestock. Conditionality is a set of managerial requirements regarding public health, animal health, plant health, environment and animal welfare, as well as good agricultural and environmental conditions which must be maintained by farmers and livestock operators in order for them to be eligible for support in accordance with the EU regulations. In this way society exercises control over the allocation of economic support to guarantee that it is addressed, preferably, to operators in the primary phase who best respond to the legally established safety and sustainability conditions.

2.4.3

Transformation and distribution phase

Products from the primary phase pass onto the following stage of the food chain, which is called the *transformation and distribution phase*. The processes that products follow during this stage can be more or less complicated. In some cases a simple distribution process is followed with no element of transformation ending in retail trade such as is the case for vegetables or fish which are put on the market in their natural form. In other cases there are complicated transformation and distribution processes to undertake before the final product is made available to the consumer. For example, a pre-prepared packaged meal is the result of the transformation and distribution processes that its ingredients and packaging have followed, and those in which food establishments in different sectors and geographical locations may have been implicated.

The processes followed by foodstuff in this stage and the companies that carry them out are subject to awareness measures and good practice is encouraged alongside a set of official control measures to verify that they are in compliance with the general food safety conditions in terms of facilities, teams, self-monitoring, traceability and staff training.

Therefore, much more specific surveillance and control actions are carried out, especially laboratory analytical controls in order to verify the prevalence of hazards in the products at this stage in the food chain, or the compliance with certain preventative measures which are considered paramount. This set of actions fall under lines of intervention below:

- **Authorisation, registration and planning of activities** with the objective of obtaining the necessary data for the design and implementation of all types of food safety intervention programmes and, in cases with activities related to the elaboration of food of animal origin, the control of compliance with certain conditions prior to the authorization of the activity.
- **Development and control of the application of good hygiene practices.**
- **Official periodic control** to verify that the activities are within the authorization conditions set out in the current regulations.
- **Analytical surveillance and control** of the prevalence of certain hazards in food products.

All of these activities are complemented by **food information and warning networks**, which provide quick response and the withdrawal of products from the market should any type of hazard be detected by any of the constituents in the system. This network has been operational for more than twenty years and brings together information and actions all over the European Union and third countries. It therefore constitutes a synergistic system that substantially improves the efficiency of the surveillance and control of food products thanks to the continuous exchange of information and the coordination of actions.

Alongside these lines of work it is worth highlighting those activities aimed at meeting the society's other demands and requirements. Actions in the area of control for packaging, composition, production systems and agricultural quality involve the protection of people with food allergies or intolerances, but they go beyond innocuousness as they cover the social demand for food which, as well as being safe, meets the principles of information and quality that allow people to make decisions regarding consumption based on reliable information. People must be able to completely trust that the food that they are consuming corresponds with the quality parameters which are legitimately required on the basis indicated in the current regulations and the information provided by the commercial operator responsible for the product, its labelling and its advertising.

2.4.4

Retail trade and catering

From the transformation phase, or directly from the primary phase with no transformation, the food products arrive at the retail trade and catering phase and the public consumption phase.

The retail trade phase consists in the products being placed at the disposition of consumers via sale, transfer or retail service including catering, bars and cafés. This phase is characterised by the high number of companies who intervene in it and its atomisation and geographical dispersion; factors which pose difficulties for the surveillance and control activities.

The local administrations and those of the Ministry of Health are carrying out actions to develop good practice and official control of activities in the retail trade and catering stage, including those of a non-sedentary nature. The main lines of work are based on the control of compliance with the hygiene conditions of the processes and self-monitoring via periodic inspections.

As well as controlling retail and catering activity, controls on the food products made available to consumers must be carried out via labelling and composition control, an area in which a significant role is played by the Catalan Consumer Agency.

Another food control activity with special relevance is the analytical monitoring of foodstuff which is on the market to verify the prevalence of biological and chemical hazards. The Ministry of Health, the Public Health Agency of Barcelona and local administrations are developing special programmes in this respect.

2.4.5

Consumer phase

Transport, storage, handling, elaboration and consumption by end consumers in a domestic environment are all included in the consumer phase. The improvement of conditions in this phase cannot be achieved with official control measures which is why information, awareness, training and promotion of good practice are key activities that must be carried out in a permanent and sustained manner.

2.5

Communication and collaboration between all concerned parties in the food chain

Risk communication is generically defined as an interactive exchange of information and opinions between concerned parties in the food chain (the media, public powers, the scientific community, operators in the food chain and citizens) regarding the nature of the risks and the measures to manage them. From this, a collective culture regarding food safety must be constructed and maintained with common references for all those involved based on transparency and scientific rigour.

In addition to this, the consumer must be given access to adequate information to enable them to make decisions that are based on reliable knowledge and information. Part of the information to be provided must come from public initiative, but it is also necessary to implicate titleholders in the production sectors so that they can provide consumers with all necessary information regarding the products with the incorporation of compulsory and non-compulsory information on packaging and via other means, such as advertising or webpages, amongst other channels.

In order to advance towards achieving this purpose different lines of work are being developed, such as:

- Systems to facilitate communication and coordination between all participants in the food chain through work groups and discussion spaces where a permanent exchange of opinions, experience and knowledge is generated.
- Services of information and response to inquiries from the participants in the food chain, especially consumers.
- Actions regarding the disclosure and access of information through webpages and printed material, seminars and other proceedings that constitute key elements to promote awareness on the matter, the unification of criteria and the application of good practice along the whole food chain.

2.6

Periodic analysis of the situation and transparency

The Food Safety Plan of Catalonia establishes an intervention model based on the definition of objectives to be achieved, monitoring indicators and interventions aimed at generating an impact that improves the current situation until the intended objective is met and to subsequently maintain the objective in a sustainable manner once it has been achieved. One of the objectives implied in this model is the monitoring of the whole food chain in accordance with a series of relevant indicators and construct a control panel which allows us to have a constant objective and global view of the situation in order to make adequate decisions. For this reason, a follow-up on indicators and intervention programmes must be carried out in order to understand the evolution of the implementation of the actions outlined in the Plan and the extent to which they accomplished the objectives or maintained intended objective levels.

One of the most important instruments for monitoring and analysis the food safety situation in Catalonia is the Annual Report on Current Food Safety in Catalonia. The analysis of the situation is carried out with quantitative and qualitative indicators. As well as the data referring to the incidences of diseases, compliance rates are also often used as indicators, defined by the percentage of compliance with current standard established regulations or by international regulations. The existing data is analysed so that conclusions and recommendations can be made that contribute towards a process of constant improvement.

In order to achieve the necessary levels of transparency, this Annual Report, prior to approval by the Food Safety Steering Committee in compliance with Law 18/2009, on public health, it is published on the website of the Catalan Food Safety Agency.

As we can see, the Food Safety Policy is a broad and complex policy with various different elements. Due to its volume and complexity it is necessary to have a reference framework to carry out strategic planning and monitoring, which is the added value provided by the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia.

2.7

Support for export projection and internationalization of products from the Catalan food chain

The Food Safety Plan of Catalonia constitutes a robust support system for the export projection of Catalan companies which operate in the food chain as it offers a coherent and organised set of interventions aimed at generating trust amongst international food markets. The official control interventions are especially important, enhanced by the supervision and auditing of this control, because they have a direct effect on momentum and the verification of compliance with the standards established in European and international food safety regulations and those of bilateral exportation agreements. In order to guarantee loyalty amongst commercial transactions, these controls must be applied both to products destined for exportation and to imported products. In this respect, the Food Safety Policy goes beyond guaranteeing safe food products and rights for citizens and forms a key instrument in international projection and the viability of a very important part of the Catalan economy, such as the companies in the food chain.





Managing authorities



The Food Safety Plan of Catalonia identifies the objectives that must be achieved and the interventions that must be developed by the public administrations involved in food safety. The managing authorities who are responsible for the execution of the Plan's interventions, and ultimately the Food Safety Policy, belong to several public administrations and intervene in the different phases of the food chain within the scope of their respective jurisdictions. Below we will briefly explain the public bodies who are responsible for the execution of the Plan and their functions.

3.1

Ministry of Health

In the Ministry of Health the following bodies stand out:

The **Secretary of Public Health of the Ministry of Health**, also known as **Public Health Agency of Catalonia** (ASPCAT). Its main functions are epidemiological monitoring of communicable diseases and epidemic outbreaks, and the design and execution of health programmes to protect and promote health. In the ASPCAT notably:

- The **Subdirectorate-General of Surveillance and Response to Public Health emergencies**, which is responsible for enhancing surveillance, the prevention and control of communicable diseases and epidemic outbreaks as well as managing, coordinating and promoting actions in public health alert situations and emergencies that require a quick response.
- The **Catalan Food Safety Agency** (ACSA). A specialised section of ASPCAT which carries out evaluation and communication functions regarding health risks involving the food chain, as well as strategic planning in coordination with the actions of the public administrations involved in the area. It promotes the collaboration and participation of all those involved in food safety, such as the production sectors, consumer and user organisations and scientific research centres.
- The **Subdirectorate of Health Protection**, which involves functions regarding the planning, organisation and evaluation of services in the field of risk management and the exercise of healthcare authority within the framework of preventing adverse effects on public health that may arise due to the presence of chemical, physical, and biological agents in the environment and food products.

The execution of programmes in the territory by ASPCAT are carried out by their territorial services with the analytical support of the Public Health Laboratories which perform analysis of water, food and other substrates.

3.2

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food

Within this Ministry the following stand out:

The **Directorate-General of Agriculture and Livestock**, the functions of which are control and development surrounding the improvement of agricultural, livestock and agri-food production, as well as controlling animal and plant health and animal welfare. This Directorate-General is organised into the following subdirectorates:

- The **Subdirectorate-General of Agriculture**, which conducts the evaluation, analysis and orientation of agricultural production, the promotion and control of integrated agricultural production and ecological agricultural production as well as official promotion and control of plant health, including everything related to the official control of production, commercialisation and the use of phytosanitary products. They are also in charge of controlling the management of livestock excrement and fertilisers, developing good agricultural practice and evaluating soil and irrigation water resources.
- The **Subdirectorate-General of Livestock**, which is entrusted with developmental functions for the improvement and official control of livestock production and animal health and welfare, including everything relating to the production, commercialisation and use of veterinary medicinal products. It manages the register of operators in the animal feed sector and in the sub product sphere as well as control actions regarding these types of operators.

The **Directorate-General of Food, Quality and Agri-food Industries**, which is structured accordingly:

- The **Subdirectorate-General of Agri-food Transfer and Innovation**, with functions involving the matters of technological research and innovation, assessment, training and agri-food product laboratories.
- The **Subdirectorate-General of Agri-food Industries and Quality**, whose functions are the elaboration and proposal of the policies and strategies relating to food ordering, quality and the agri-food industries. It covers the promotion of the quality of agri-food products.
- The **Subdirectorate-General of Agri-food Inspection and Control**, which is in charge of the official control of compliance with the quality regulations and the fight against fraud in the agri-food sphere.

The **Directorate-General of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries** which develops, alongside the **Subdirector-General of Fisheries**, organization functions and official control in maritime fishing, marine resources and coast, aquaculture and harvesting protection.

The **Directorate-General of Forests**, which carries out functions in the areas of conservation, the management and improvement of natural heritage and the protection of animals. In this Directorate-General we must highlight the functions of the **Hunting Activity Area** which plans and manages the hunting area, and the **Inland Fisheries Area**, which carries out planning and management functions of fishing and fish farms in inland waters.

The following bodies are also notable:

The **Research Institute of Agri-food Technology (IRTA)**, which is an agri-food investigation institute of the Government of Catalonia attached to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food. The mission of the IRTA is to contribute to the modernisation, competitively and sustainable development of the agricultural, food and aquaculture sectors, to provide healthy food products of a high quality to consumers and, generally, to improve the well-being of the population. It carries out research and development functions such as technological transfer, the publication of research results and the supply of information regarding the progress of research and development projects, amongst others.

The **Poultry Health Centre of Catalonia and Aragon (CESAC)**, a company that came about due to the collaboration between the administrations in Catalonia and Aragon, the private sector and the cooperative sector of Catalan and Aragonese poultry. Its functions include analysis, diagnostic and issuing technical reports related to poultry diseases.

The **Dairy Inter-professional Laboratory of Catalonia**, whose functions are those of analysis, diagnostic and the issuing of technical reports related to milk and processed products and to agreements with the Catalan and government administrations.

The **Catalan Institute of Vines and Wines (INCAVI)**, whose main functions are analysing wines and derivatives, acting as technical advisory body for the regulatory boards of the Catalonia wine designations of origin and of the sector in general, promoting and encouraging improvement in grape cultivation and the quality and studying, investigating and experimenting with processes and techniques.

PRODECA, SA or **Promoters of Catalan Exportation, SA**, a trading company with direct majority participation of the Government. Its objective is the promotion of Catalan agri-food and forestry products, and aiding with exportation, as well as the provision of technical services to agri-food companies.

The **Training Centre of Agro-rural Studies (CFEA)**, which takes charge of the permanent training of workers in The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Action in the following: administrative organisation and quality of service, agricultural, livestock and fish production, the industry and agri-food quality, community policies, rural development and the transfer of technology.

Official control activities are executed by the **Territorial Services of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food**, which has the support of livestock welfare laboratories, the Laboratory of Agriculture and Plant Health and the Agri-food Laboratory of Cabrils.

3.3

Ministry of Business and Knowledge

Within this Ministry the following stand out:

The **Catalan Consumer Agency**, which is an autonomous body currently attached to the Ministry of Business and Knowledge and whose functions include: the official control of information and the safety of products and services made available to consumers and users; the detection and control of fraud, incomplete or misleading information, false advertising and the use of unfair terms; informing and assessing consumers and users regarding their rights and ways of exercising them; the promotion of consumers and user training as well as economic agents; the enhancement of mediation and arbitration; institutional relations and the direct participation of people by means of associations for consumers and users and economic and social agents.



3.4

Ministry of Territory and Sustainability

Within this Ministry the following bodies must be mentioned:

The **Directorate-General of Environmental Quality**, which is in charge of ensuring the rational use of resources in respect to the environment; of managing and directing the administrative intervention system of activities with environmental impact and of coordinating inspections and official controls of activities with a high environmental impact; of encouraging the application of the best possible techniques, managing the European regulation on chemical substances and their environmental issues, sustainable mobility and voluntary environmental schemes as well as managing and directing the accreditation system of collaborating entities in environmental administration, and the surveillance, the anticipation and control of air quality and the protection of the atmospheric environment.

The **Directorate-General of Environmental Policies**, whose functions include: defining sustainable environmental policies applicable to the Government's plans and programmes and enhancing the Strategy process for Sustainable Development in Catalonia by encouraging the incorporation of international sustainable development objectives and criteria into sectoral policies. This Directorate-General carries out functions such as: doing studies and forming proposals related to conservation, management and the improvement of natural heritage; minimising and controlling the impacts upon the natural environment, protected spaces and animal protection; coordinating surveillance, control and inspection measures of the natural environment and encouraging preventative measures for infringements and guiding citizens to promote awareness and actions that respect the environment.

We must highlight the functions of the Ministry of Hunting Activity which plans and manages the hunting area, and the Ministry of Inland Fisheries, which carries out planning and management functions of fishing and fish farms in inland waters.

The **Catalan Water Agency (ACA)**, whose functions include: elaborating and revising hydrological programmes and projects; controlling hydraulic use and the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the water in the hydraulic public domain; controlling, monitoring and inspecting the basic network and other hydraulic installations, the use of the existing surface and groundwater as well as the spillages that may affect surface, ground and marine water; controlling water contamination by means of setting emission limit values and quality objectives for the surrounding environment, as well as coordinating the actions of the administrations involved in supply and sanitation of water in the Catalan territory.

The Catalan Water Agency laboratory, with its headquarters in Barcelona, provides analytical support relevant to the official control activities.

The **Catalan Waste Agency**, one of whose functions is the development and execution of waste management programmes. Also, using its Industrial Area, it carries out: studies relating to the management of industrial waste; promotional measures for prevention and the valorisation of industrial waste; the evaluation of private and public installation projects for managing waste; the control of waste management activities and the production and management of waste from industrial activities; the identification, analysis and characterisation of waste as well as the promotion and control of the adequate treatment of contaminated soil at its own laboratory in Montmeló.

3.5

Local administrations

In compliance with Law 18/2009, of 22 October, on public health, and Legislative Decree 2/2003, of 28 April, which approves the amended text of Catalonia's Municipal and Local Law, the local administrations have, in the food safety sphere, the functions of: management of health risks resulting from the contamination of the environment and, especially, management of health risks concerning water for public consumption and the food products in retail activities, catering (direct sale of foodstuff prepared for consumers, with or without home delivery), its production and local transport.

In this manner, certain local supramunicipal bodies such as councils and county councils carry out coordination functions and give technical, legal and economic support to the city councils for developing official control programmes surrounding public health and consumption.

A special mention must be given to the **Public Health Agency of Barcelona**, which carries out all the functions of a local administration in the city of Barcelona, just as all those in the rest of Catalonia correspond to the Ministry of Health: epidemiological monitoring and protection and health promotion. In this manner, the official control functions of the activities involved in the transformation and distribution of foodstuff both within industries and core markets and retail establishments and collective catering are carried out. However, the **Public Health Laboratory** of the Agency is a supplier plant of analytical services. Its function is to provide a response to the requests of chemical and microbiological analysis of the Agency's own services and the Ministry of Health of the Government of Catalonia. It also provides an analytical offering which is available to other public administrations, companies and other individuals who may require it.



4

Methodology development



Article 43 of Law 18/2009, of 22 October, on public health, states that the Food Safety Plan is the reference framework for public action of the Government of Catalonia's Administration and local administration involved in the matter. It includes the directive lines and deployment of actions and programmes that are carried out to achieve the anticipated objectives.

In compliance with this mandate, when elaborating the first Food Safety Plan of Catalonia, a methodology where the planning principles were the objectives was adopted. This planning system responded to the need to use a method which was constant from a scientific point of view, of proven efficiency and based on a logic or theory of change in which objectives must be met via a set of adequate interventions.

According to this methodology, the process for elaborating a plan is based on a sequence in which, beginning with a mission and taking into account the end objectives, long term objectives are established (8-10 years) which are met by setting operational objectives and interventions of a medium term (4-5 years). This methodology also provides an evaluation procedure that means that results of the application of the Plan can be studied along with the level of achievement of objectives.

Therefore, the methodology of planning by objectives meets the requirements stated in Article 43 of Law 18/2009, of 22 October, on public health, which expressively establishes that the Plan must include the objectives and the levels that must be reached, the group of services, the programmes and actions that must be developed and the evaluation mechanisms to monitor the Plan.

This methodology has been used during the last ten years by the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia with good results and a consistent logic, which is why it will continue being the reference methodology for the new Food Safety Plan of Catalonia 2017-2021.

In order to contextualise this theoretic approach, we must recall some of the basic concepts which are intimately related to the strategic plan and the definition of objectives.

When choosing objectives you must know the existing problems and necessities. A *problem* is the deviation or possible deviation away from a desired situation. It could correspond to a deficient state of health within the population, the prevalence of a hazard, the population's perception or absence of assurance regarding a related question. A necessity is defined as something that has to be done in order to prevent, control or resolve the problem. A necessity comes about when a difference is noted between the situation which is considered optimal and the real situation, and this difference needs to be lessened. It is also possible for there to be a necessity when we want to maintain a situation which is considered acceptable or optimal to avoid the appearance or worsening of a problem. Many of the objectives in the food safety area are related to this second type of necessity as we have a level of food safety which is relatively high.

Problems and necessities can be examined using sources of information from epidemiological data, professional and scientific opinions, data from surveillance programmes and others that fit with the necessities felt or expressed by citizens. However, it is worth remembering that the study of problems and necessities and the study of the evaluation of intervention results use relatively similar methods of data recovery. It is, ultimately, a dynamic process in which evaluation leads to the identification of problems and necessities.

It is also worth remembering that the Food Safety Plan is a strategic planning instrument. Strategic planning is an organised process or set of planned actions that are carried out to achieve a determined mission or results of an organisation or group of organisations with shared objectives as well as envisaging strategies, policies and actions. Under this strategic framework those responsible for execution and the systems or corresponding instruments of evaluation must be identified.

A strategic plan must establish various objectives, specifically defined as intentions, which are precise and quantifiable with the corresponding indicators, criteria for success and time frame aimed at contributing to achieving the anticipated objectives and mission.

In this general planning scheme it is also necessary to establish interventions which are the actions that are carried out with the intention of achieving the predefined objectives.

The Food Safety Plan only covers the strategic part of a cycle of intervention and evaluation of results which is of no use without an operational deployment in the form of programmes, concrete activities for which official bodies involved in food safety are in charge. The implementation of intervention programmes, carried out in a coordinated and complementary manner, should allow for an integrated and efficient food safety system to be maintained, which is the model chosen for Catalonia.

Strategic planning also includes the definition of the structure and general elements that must guide operational planning in the identification of specific and operational objectives, as well as the definition of the lines of work that are to be implemented. The Plan is a general framework that provides coherence for the Food Safety Policy of Catalonia but that leaves the operational planning in the hands of the organisations and bodies that are in charge of its execution. The more detailed definition or deployment of strategic and specific objectives is left to the management bodies so that they can adjust to the peculiarities of each stage of the food chain and each area of intervention.

For a better understanding of the structure and contents of the 2017–2021 Plan, the planning stages according to methodology of planning by objectives is described briefly below.



I Definition of the mission, the vision and the objectives

The *mission* is defined as the final objective to be achieved, the purpose, the direction or general orientation which needs to be addressed. This mission should be subject to a higher specification and realization by determining the objectives, which are the different elements into which the mission can be broken down, the objectives or ultimate goals that constitute the mission. The *vision* is defined as the representation of the ideal situation which we aspire to achieve in the future.

2 Identification of problems

This consists in finding out the existing problems in the food safety area which require intervention in order to prevent them, minimize them, correct them or resolve them.

3 Establishment of priorities

This is the procedure that identifies which questions or problems should be considered first in accordance with a series of criteria regarding their importance, how much we know about them, and the availability of interventions to solve them and the realistic possibility of applying them. The Plan has an already consolidated structure that covers all areas identified as necessary or priority from existing experience, which in most cases is included in the current legislation. Even so, within the Plan, the questions considered as priority are the object of special attention, something which complements the intervention programmes which, as they are permanently being updated, can provide answers to emerging issues and prioritise according to current needs.

4 Establishment of long term objectives (10 years)

Strategic objectives must be defined for each of the areas included in the Plan. It includes specific intentions which are precise and quantifiable with the corresponding indicators, criteria for success and time frame aimed at contributing to achieving a part of the end goals of the Plan. The strategic objectives may be the object of greater realization in the form of specific objectives. In relation to the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia the objectives are divided into the following groups:

- **Health objectives:** refer to the state of health and the current situation of the population in respect to a specific problem and are normally evaluated in terms of morbidity.
- **Risk reduction objectives:** refer to the risk factors affecting health, which must be reduced and which, in the area of food safety, normally refer to the reduction of their prevalence in the different stages of the food chain, the reduction in people's exposure or the conformity of activities in the food chain with legally established safety standards.
- **Objectives that guarantee other issues related to food safety:** refer to issues that do not pose an immediate risk or health problem, but that are directly or indirectly related and which are of relevant importance in a general food safety context. They are issues that affect the trust and the expectations of consumers and the society in general, for example: food quality, labelling, composition or animal welfare.

5 The establishment of medium term operational objectives (5 years)

The operational objectives are directly related and directly translate into the required actions for achieving the specific objectives and represent a mandate for implementing bodies regarding the desired operational situation. Interventions are the activities that must be executed in order to meet the intended operational objectives and, ultimately, to resolve, prevent, control or minimise the occurrence of a specific problem. The definition, programming and implementation of these interventions, as well as the resources that must be mobilized, are tasks that belong to the managing authorities who are responsible for execution. In order to make things simpler, in this document the operational objectives are presented directly as interventions due to their strong correlation.

6 The establishment of evaluation systems for specific objectives and operational objectives and interventions

The evaluation of results is a fundamental element of the Plan. It is important because it allows us to see up to what point the pre-established objectives have been met and it is a key element of guidance for formulating new future objectives as it allows us to see the trends that the problems followed and the efficiency of applied measures. It is important that the evaluation is carried out quantitatively and within a predefined time frame. The formulation of the objective and the evaluation are closely linked as in the first the indicator and the level target should be included. However, in some cases evaluation may require a specific activity because sometimes it is necessary to plan for conducting surveys, analysis, studies and research work specifically aimed at the evaluation process, something which is sometimes limited by budgetary resources.

The Plan and its evaluation system are designed to analyse evolution and carry out comparisons with other areas or periods for which we have data. In order to evaluate the results in this new stage, the method outlined in the first Food Safety Plan of Catalonia from 2007 will be used, the results of which will be divided into different categories:

- **Fully accomplished (CA):** the level indicator reflects the proposed change, in the expected direction, up to levels which reach or surpass the target level.
- **Partially accomplished (PA):** the level indicator reflects the proposed change, in the expected direction, up at least 50% of the target level.
- **Not accomplished (NA):** the level indicator reflects a change, in the expected direction, below 50% of the target level or the change has taken an unexpected direction.

In the case of unaccomplished objectives or those in which evaluation has not been possible, the motives for this must be investigated and solutions found in order to encourage the continued improvement of the evaluation of results.

Only evaluable objectives must be formed, meaning that only objectives that able to provide valid indicators are to be accepted. In order to adequately form each objective one or more indicator is required, from corresponding base levels and in presumed target level in a given time frame. However, an effort must be made to use a common methodology for collecting data so that it can be compared according to time and, if possible, with other areas or territories. The formulation of quantitatively evaluable objectives and with a time limit makes commitment to achieving them easier. Equally, the objective must be feasible, as there is no sense in formulating objectives that are not reasonably achievable.

In order to establish the level that must be met, or the target level, the expert's opinions must be taken into account regarding the likely evolution of each problem, as well as the available data concerning its past evolution and the legally enforceable levels should any be established. The available data regarding the indicators of the Plan is gathered in the Annual Report on Current Food Safety in Catalonia which, prior approval by the Food Safety Steering Committee, is published annually on the Catalan Food Safety Agency's website.

The target level must also be established in a realistic manner so that it is feasible within the given time frame. For this reason, in cases where the prospects of reducing the problem are unfavourable, the formulated objective may inverse or contain the unfavourable trend observed in recent years. In cases which start with an optimal or acceptable situation, the objective should be to maintain the achieved situation.

Operational objectives should be linked to effective, efficient, feasible and accepted interventions. It is worth remembering that food safety is an extremely regulated issue involving obligatory compliance with certain regulations. During the elaboration process of these regulations certain factors have already been taken into account such as severity, social perception and consequences regarding related issues, amongst other things. The fact that legally established aspects are involved incorporates a nature of legal obligation which must be considered when deciding the objectives and interventions that are to be incorporated into the Plan. This element especially affects the choosing of the actions or programmes that are to be implemented and greatly limits the freedom of planning. In this sense, there is still a clear overlap between the planning carried out in Catalonia and the European Union through means of the European regulations. In this case, the current legislation is a condition that constitutes a limitation on planning but also serves as a reference as it clearly aligns with existing international consensus on each issue. The Food Safety Plan brings together the envisaged interventions and objectives on a supranational scale and Catalonia's own attributes to offer a complete and integrated framework for public intervention in food safety in our country.



Strategic orientation



Strategy is defined as a set of planned actions which are carried out to achieve certain end objectives or missions. The strategic orientation of the Plan was developed in the first Food Safety Plan of Catalonia, was continued in the 2012-2016 Plan and should be maintained in the 2017-2021 Plan. Even though it has been covered in detail in previous documents, its basic elements are defined below.

5.1

Vision, mission and objectives

The strategic plan starts with the definition of a vision, a mission and some objectives revolving around the design and structure of the Plan, the definition of objectives and areas of intervention.

Vision of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia

A food chain in which health hazards and other related problems are eliminated or reduced to acceptable levels by means of efficient systems established in a participatory and consensual manner, which implement the operators at each of its stages, from production to end consumption, in a coordinated and complimentary manner. Simultaneously, the administrations involved verify, in an efficient and coordinated manner, compliance with the intended standards and ensure their own compliance to said standards. Equally, citizens, sensitive and well-informed, have full confidence due to the credibility provided by the implemented evaluation, managerial and communication systems.

Mission of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia

To maintain a high level of food safety in Catalonia acting as an indicative instrument and framework which defines, along with the collaboration of all participants in the food chain including consumers, the objectives and interventions developed by the Catalan public administrations and the monitoring and evaluation systems.



Objectives of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia

- 1** To prevent food-related diseases, and reduce the number of incidences and the prevalence to the lowest possible level.
- 2** To prevent and reduce people's exposure to agents capable of causing foodborne diseases to low and acceptable levels.
- 3** To maintain a high level of trust in the Catalan health system both amongst citizens of Catalonia and those of other countries.
- 4** To maintain a high protection level of the interests of citizens of Catalonia in areas and issues related to food safety such as: health; animal welfare and nutrition; plant health, and the quality of products in the food chain.
- 5** To maintain a high level of loyalty amongst commercial transactions in everything related to the food chain.

5.2

Added values provided by the Plan as a framework for strategic orientation

- 1 Periodic evaluation of results aimed directly at continuous improvement.
- 2 It guides collective action by the public administrations towards concrete and shared results.
- 3 It offers an organised, coherent and integrated set of activities and services that cover the entirety of the food chain.
- 4 It facilitates work in a transversal and cross-sectional manner, based on principles of transparency and participation.
- 5 It expresses the commitments of the public administrations involved in food safety.
- 6 It promotes improved management and services for citizens on principles based on sustainability, quality and efficiency.
- 7 It promotes the collaboration and cooperation of all participants in the food chain.
- 8 It periodically evaluates results aimed directly at continuous improvement.

5.3

Conceptual structure of the strategy

The Food Safety Plan defines the strategic part of a cycle of public intervention which is of no use without an operational deployment in the form of programmes and activities which are the responsibility of official bodies involved in food safety. According to the theoretical framework outlined in the Plan, these bodies have to design operational intervention programmes, prioritise and define objectives for the programme as well as enable necessary operations and resources in order for it to be implied. This exercise of implementation must be carried out in a manner that allows for its results to be periodically analysed according to reliable indicators, for conclusions to be drawn and feedback provided for the design of the programme with the necessary corrections in a constant cycle of improvement. The programmes or risk analysis interventions envisaged by the Plan are aimed at providing the best scientific knowledge possible for an adequate risk management and communication. The management programmes must be able to prevent risks and, when necessary, give fast responses to imminent risks. Finally, communication and collaboration interventions must be aimed at the creation of work networks together with a permanent exchange of information and opinions between all people involved.

Another key element to understanding the strategic orientation of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia is the conceptual structure and categorisation of objectives and indicators that will be used for its monitoring and evaluation. This classification is also important in order to understand the general focus and structure of the Plan, which has been modified and has evolved since the first 2007–2010 Plan, to better adapt to changing circumstances and with the aim of making it more simple and practical.

The Food Safety Plan must be aimed, primarily, at protecting the health of citizens from foodborne diseases. For this reason, health objectives are of top priority and monitoring indicators must be established. Even so, foodborne diseases indicators, although very useful for evaluation and monitoring, do not have an absolute value or offer a global vision of themselves because of their complexity and the many different factors that have to be taken into account. There are other parameters to consider for a complete approach to food safety for which objectives and monitoring indicators must be established. This set of parameters must be organised and analysed in a coherent manner on the bases of a logical sequence which allows them to be studied and interpreted with all elements that form food safety in mind.

5.4

Parameters for the definition of objectives and monitoring indicators

The group of parameters for establishing food safety objectives and indicators are detailed below in a logical order of priority. They all have separate limitations which is why they should be considered as a whole. These groups of parameters constitute the theoretic framework for the strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of results.

Incidences of food related diseases in the population

It is the most direct indicator of the level of food safety. Even so, the information that it offers must be complemented by other indicators.

It isn't easy to dispose of detailed information about long term illnesses caused by chemical hazards to which people have been exposed via food products, especially when this involves differentiating between those caused by food products and those caused by other sources of exposure. Equally, there is no complete information regarding individual cases or not so obvious outbreaks with a low number of affected people varying in time and space caused by biological hazards. Lack of reporting in this area is a difficult problem to resolve. However, limiting the strategy and the monitoring of the food safety situation to data surrounding morbidity would be incomplete and would not allow for the proactive and preventative work offered by data on exposure to hazards and their prevalence in food or earlier phases in the food chain.

Exposure of the population to food hazards

This group of indicators are just below the earlier ones in terms of significance. It is especially useful in cases of chemical risks, in which chronic exposure and long term effects are involved, with important interplays with other factors with which it is not possible to establish direct correlations between disease and cause. Determining the levels of exposure requires specific studies which are relatively costly, which is why these studies are carried out on a multiannual basis.

Prevalence of hazards in food at the disposition of the population

This refers to the presence of hazards when the food product is made available to the consumer, normally in retail activities. The indicators in this group do not necessarily correspond with the level of exposure of the population or allow for a direct extrapolation. As, for example, is the case with biological hazards of fresh food: products, heat treatment and the hygiene measures in the preparation and cooking partially or completely eliminate these hazards. This means that exposure occurs when these measures, especially heat treatment have not been correctly applied. With chemical hazards, although they are generally more stable in cooking processes, the levels of exposure and the possibility of them causing adverse effects to health are determined by the concentration of the hazard and the total amount ingested in the context of overall long term diet. Even so, as a general rule a low prevalence (presence and concentration) of hazards and the compliance with maximum legally established limits are linked with less exposure and, therefore, a high level of safety.

Prevalence of hazards in earlier stages in the food chain

The presence and concentration of hazards in the primary phase and those prior to transformation and distribution is, in many cases, a determining factor for prevalence in the food product that eventually reaches the consumer's hands. The indicators in this group do not allow a direct extrapolation of the exposure levels of the population, but they are useful indicators for the situation at each stage and allow us to find out the possible sources of the hazards that may finally reach the consumer through food products. Even though there are barriers at stages before consumption that aid the reduction of the presence and concentration of hazards, there is no doubt that the minimisation in previous phases of the food chain is linked, to a greater or lesser extent, to the decrease in prevalence in food products that are available to the population and, as a consequence, exposure of consumers. Therefore, for example, a lower prevalence of pathogens such as *Salmonella* bacteria in food producing animals should contribute to a drop in prevalence of this agent in previous phases of the food chain. For this reason this group of indicators must be considered in an evaluation of the general situation and serve as a font of important information when defining measures for risk mitigation.

Degree of compliance with preventative measures of food safety which are applicable to activities in the food chain

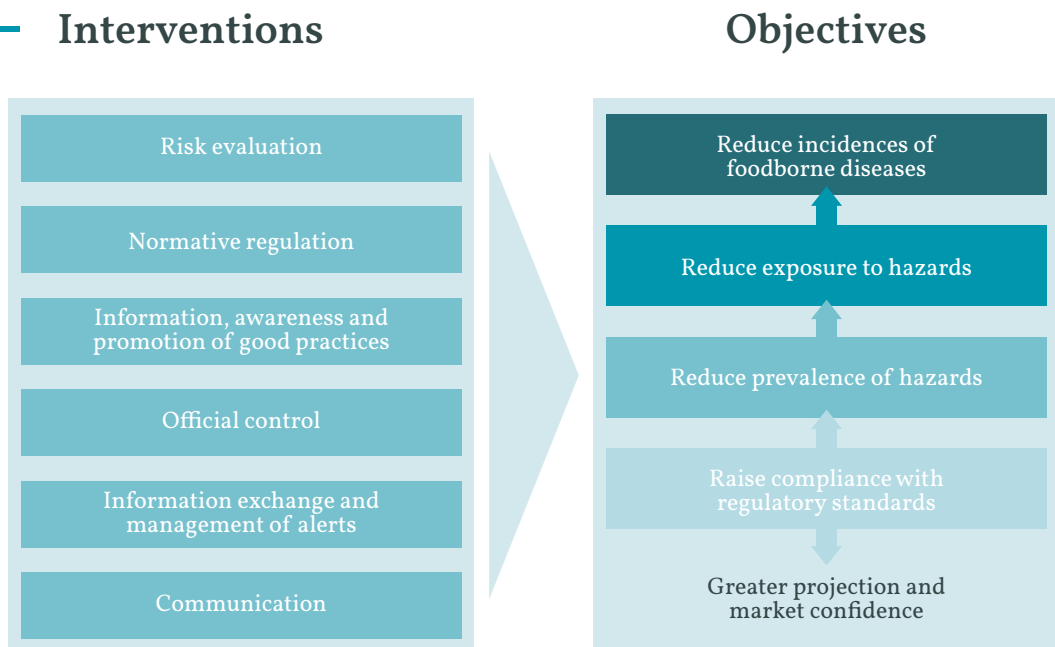
As with the previous two groups, it is not possible to establish a direct correlation between the levels of compliance with the preventative measures and incidence of disease or levels of exposure. Even so, the preventative conditions that must be met by operators in the food chain according to current legislation regarding facilities, processes, self-monitoring and staff training, amongst others, are aimed at preventing the presence of hazards in products in the food chain or reducing them to acceptable levels. Therefore a high level of compliance should theoretically be associated with a higher level of safety. For this reason, the indicators regarding level of compliance must be considered as useful reference points for understanding the situation. It is therefore necessary to establish objectives and monitoring indicators in this area in a global and integrated food safety strategy.



Degree of compliance with current regulations on issues that do not affect food safety

This group of indicators cover all those issues that do not directly affect the safety or health of consumers but do affect their trust and perception, as well as the protection of their interests and the correct functioning of markets. We are referring to issues relating to labelling, composition, quality control, animal welfare, differing denominations, labelling of GMO content, information relating to origin, nutritional values and health, amongst others.

This structure of objectives and indicators respond to a logic which might resemble a chain or a pyramid. The elements or steps in the inferior part contribute to the fulfilment of those in the higher part. However, in order to achieve all of these objectives a series of measures must be taken which correspond with the lines of work and intervention laid out in the Food Safety Plan. The theory of change or logic on which the Plan is based is briefly explained in the following chart:





Structure of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia 2017-2021



The Food Safety Plan of Catalonia establishes an intervention model based on the definition of objectives to be achieved, monitoring indicators and interventions aimed at generating an impact that improves the current situation until the intended objective is met and to subsequently maintain the objective in a sustainable manner once it has been achieved.

One of the objectives implied in this model is the monitoring of the whole food chain in accordance with a series of relevant indicators and construct a control panel which allows us to have a constant objective and global view of the situation in order to make adequate decisions. Within this monitoring of the food chain objective is it recommendable to achieve the greatest level possible of breakdown of data in order to obtain more specific indicators that allow us to work on each area in a more detailed and concrete manner.

The special importance of indicators as essential elements of planning and monitoring should be noted. Indicators are variables, markers or parameters that allow the partial or whole discovery of the existence of a phenomenon and/or its magnitude, as well as measuring changes in regards to its long-term situation. They allow us to evaluate the measure in which objectives for the execution of a plan, project, programme or activity are achieved. With these aims in mind, percentages, rates or other quantifiable elements are used in order to make comparisons.

The group of chosen indicators constitute a control panel or, in other words, the control panel consists of a group of indicators that should allow us to measure the implementation of strategy from different angles: the execution of the actions, the short term results and the impact of the strategy in achieving objectives. The control panel is, ultimately, an essential management tool which allows us to monitor the initiatives promoted by the implementation of the strategy, evaluate the results and support the decision making process.

Using the definition of the goals and in accordance with the risk analysis procedure, the Food Safety Plan has, from the very beginning, established the areas where the definition of objectives and interventions is required. Two large areas were highlighted: the area of risk analysis, in which objectives and interventions in terms of evaluation, management and risk communication were established, and the area of cooperation, efficiency and coordination, in which objectives and interventions addressing the improvements of these instruments were highlighted.

Past experience suggests making a clear distinction between the central objectives or those regarding impact and those of a more instrumental, operational or intermediary character as this allows for a simpler strategy to be constructed which is concentrated on priority objectives. The central objects or those regarding impact which the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia must be orientated towards in this new stage are divided into the following groups or areas:

- Incidences of food related diseases in the population
- Exposure of the population to food hazards
- Prevalence of food hazards at the disposition of the population
- Prevalence of hazards in earlier stages in the food chain
- Degree of compliance with preventative measures of food safety which are applicable to activities in the food chain
- Degree of compliance with current regulations on other related issues that do not affect food safety

Another change is that, within each of these groups, the strategic objectives have been deployed as much as possible in the form of specific objectives.

The rest of the objectives established in previous plans, for example those covering risk analysis, communication, cooperation, coordination, quality of service and efficiency are operational or intermediary objectives necessary for accomplishing the final objectives or those regarding impact of the Plan. They deserve a prominent place, and even a specific section amongst the Plan's interventions, but not amongst the objectives regarding impact or results as we want to give those special importance in this new phase.

However, the existence of a strong interrelation between all of the interventions in the Plan and the intended impact objectives mean that the 2017–2021 Plan can be simplified into two large blocks. On one hand, the objectives and control panel classified and structured into the aforementioned groups, and on the other hand, the set of interventions that must contribute towards the achievement of these objectives, which are also divided into a logical classification and order.

Therefore, the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia 2017-2021 evolves in the direction of a more simple structure which is easier to understand. This new focus fits with the structural scheme shown in the following diagram, in which the nucleus is the impact objectives, which are to be achieved through means of a set of interventions which respond to the principles of risk analysis (evaluation, management and communication) and those of cooperation, coordination and quality of service.

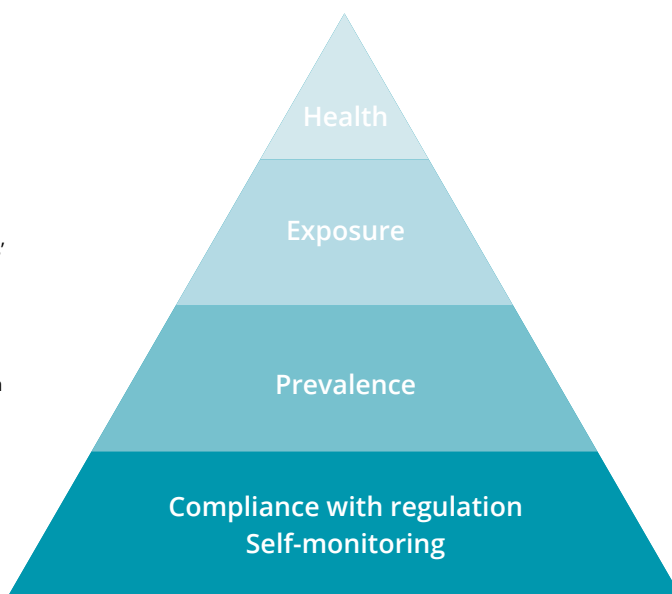
Structural scheme

Interventions



Objectives

- **Risk evaluation**
Dispose of the best scientific knowledge
- **Risk management**
Minimise risks in accordance with principles of prioritisation, prevention and rapid response
- **Management of issues relating to food safety**
Achieving the adjustment of the food chain to citizens' legitimate expectations
- **Communication and cooperation**
Construct common work networks and achieve a high level of knowledge and confidence
- **Quality, efficiency and coordination of the public administration services that intervene in food safety**
Offer efficient and quality services



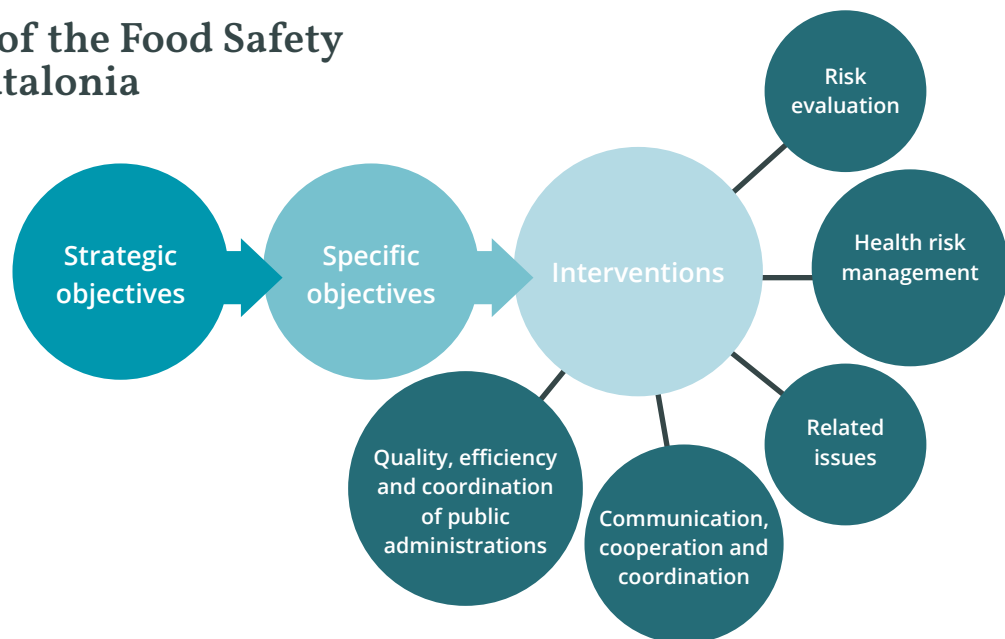


However, the interventions are ordered and classified according to a logical structure which is very similar to that used in previous Food Safety Plans of Catalonia, inspired by the principles of risk analysis, the quality of service, efficiency and coordination. This structure is as follows:

- **Risk analysis interventions**, aimed at providing the best scientific knowledge possible.
- **Health risk management interventions**, aimed at minimising risks in accordance with the principles of prioritisation, prevention and rapid response.
- **Interventions regarding other issues relating to food safety**, aimed at ensuring that the food chain meets the legitimate expectations of citizens in terms of quality, ethics, animal welfare, sustainability, animal and plant health, transparency or other relevant issues.
- **Communication, cooperation and coordination interventions**, aimed at constructing networks of collaborative work, an interactive exchange of information and opinions between all involved parties in the food chain and a high level of knowledge and trust from citizens as a whole.
- **Quality, efficiency and coordination interventions** of services and public administrations that intervene in food safety, aimed at offering efficient and quality services to citizens and agri-food sectors of Catalonia, as well as on an international scale to contribute to our export and tourism projection.

As we have explained, the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia 2017–2021 is structured into two large blocks, which are developed during the following pages in accordance with the following scheme.

Structure of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia



The first block is where the objectives that constitute the control panel and which allow for the monitoring of the Plan are gathered, ordered and classified. The second block contains the different planned interventions in order to achieve the objectives, which are classified by areas and introduced with a brief explanation to facilitate a better understanding of each of them and particularly the public policy on food safety for Catalonia as a whole. For each one of the interventions the bodies responsible for their execution are identified by means of the following abbreviations:

When considering the attribution of interventions, it must be clear that the Public Health Agency of Barcelona, within its territory, has the same food safety powers relating to local administrations and, at the same time, carries out interventions that the Ministry of Health develops in the rest of Catalonia through the Public Health Agency. The interventions assigned to the Public Health Agency of Catalonia and local administrations correspond to the Public Health Agency of Barcelona in the territory of the city of Barcelona.

- **ACA:** Catalan Water Agency
- **ACC:** Catalan Consumer Agency
- **ASP:** Public Health Agency of Catalonia (ASPCAT)
- **ASP-V:** Public Health Agency of Catalonia - Epidemiological monitoring services and emergency response
- **ASP-P:** Public Health Agency of Catalonia - Health protection services and official control
- **ACSA:** Catalan Food Safety Agency (Specialised area of ASPCAT)
- **ΣACSA:** Catalan Food Safety Agency in collaboration with the rest of the public bodies involved
- **AL:** Local administrations
- **ASPB:** Public Health Agency of Catalonia
- **ARC:** Catalan Waste Agency
- **DARP:** Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food
- **DINT:** Ministry of Home Affairs
- **DMA:** Ministry of the Environment



Objectives and management chart





We define objectives as intentions which are expressed in a concrete and quantifiable manner. Objectives must be related to the corresponding indicators, criteria for success and time frame and be aimed at contributing to achieving a part of the end goals of the Plan. In terms of achieving them, we can differentiate strategic objectives and specific objectives.

A control panel is a management tool that allows for the evolution of a certain strategy and the results obtained to be monitored. The series of resulting indicators, as a whole, the elements that make up the control panel and which facilitate the continuous or periodic monitoring of the strategy. It is a very powerful instrument for communicating the established strategy and for measuring its implementation. With this tool all parties involved have within their reach a vision of the whole global strategy, the objectives to be achieved, the work areas and situation at all times, including the existing possible deviations regarding the intended objectives. All of this better improves the understanding of the strategy and the distribution of functions and also facilitates alignment of efforts towards specific shared objectives.

The first Food Safety Plan of Catalonia suggested some strategic objectives which have been worked on during the last few years. The experience gained from this allows for them to be expanded into more specific objectives, on the basis of some strategic objectives that allow us to understand the Food Safety Policy as a whole, they are also specific objectives which are the result of the expansion of strategic objectives and imply a greater concentration regarding the desired situation.

The strategic and specific objectives of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia 2017-2021 are introduced below with the corresponding monitoring indicators and, as a whole, form the control panel of the Plan.

7.1

Strategic Objectives

Number	Statement	Indicators
Food safety		
Malalties transmissibles via alimentària causades per agents biològics		
OE-01	Establish food poisoning at a low level both in global terms and in certain specific areas, such as catering, old-people's homes, school canteens and the domestic area.	Number of outbreaks
OE-02	Minimize the incidences of foodborne diseases of a biological origin.	Incidence
Presence of biological hazards in the food chain		
OE-03	Minimize the presence of biological hazards along all phases of the food chain.	Rate of conformity with the current legislation and/or the internationally accepted benchmarks.
Exposure to chemical agents through food and diseases caused		
OE-04	Maintain the absence of outbreaks of food poisoning from chemical agents.	Number of outbreaks
OE-05	Minimize people's exposure to chemical hazards in their diets.	Rates of conformity of overall diet with internationally accepted benchmarks.
Presence of chemical hazards in the food chain		
OE-06	Minimize the prevalence of chemical hazards in all phases of the food chain.	Rate of conformity with the current legislation and/or the internationally accepted benchmarks.
Adverse reactions to foodstuff		
OE-07	Contribute to minimizing exposure of people who are sensitive to certain food components that may provoke an adverse reaction by providing them with an adequate choice that meets their requirements.	Rate of conformity of food packaging and composition with the current legislation.

Number	Statement	Indicators
Food safety		
General conditions of food safety		
OE-08	Activities in the food chain must be carried out in adequate conditions, in compliance with pre-established standards regarding facilities, equipment, processes, self-monitoring and staff training in order to control food hazards, prevent them, eliminate them and/or reduce them to acceptable levels and guarantee compliance with other compulsory conditions for the trade of products in the European and international market.	Rate of conformity with the legally established conditions.
Issues relating to food safety		
Correspondence of food products with intended qualities		
OE-09	Food products must comply with the qualities outlined in the current legislation and the information provided by operators in the food chain so that consumers can exercise their right to make decisions regarding consumption which meet their requirements and which are based on reliable information.	Rate of conformity with the current legislation.
Animal welfare		
OE-010	Activities in the food chain must take place in a manner that avoids food producing animals being subject to any unnecessary pain or suffering.	Rate of conformity with the current legislation.
Animal and plant health		
OE-11	Activities in the food chain must be carried out in adequate conditions of animal health and nutrition, complying with the current legislation.	Incidence and prevalence of disease in food producing animals. Rate of conformity with the current legislation.
OE-12	Activities in the food chain must be carried out in adequate conditions of plant health, complying with the current legislation regarding the matter.	Rate of conformity with the current legislation.

7.2

Specific objectives

Number	Field	Criteria	Indicators
Food safety			
Biological risks			
Incidences of foodborne diseases originating from biological agents			
O-01	Outbreaks of food poisoning	≤ 1.2 outbreaks per 10 ⁵ hab.	Declared outbreaks per 100.000 habitants/year
O-02	Food poisoning outbreaks in the catering industry	≤ 0.5 outbreaks per 10 ⁵ hab.	Declared outbreaks in catering per 100.000 habitants/year
O-03	Food poisoning outbreaks in old-people's homes	Reduce number of outbreaks by 30%	Number of declared outbreaks in old-people's homes/year
O-04	Food poisoning outbreaks in school canteens	Reduce number of outbreaks by 30%	Number of declared outbreaks in school canteens/year
O-05	Outbreaks of food poisoning in domestic environment	≤ 0.5 outbreaks per 10 ⁵ hab.	Number of domestic declared outbreaks/year
O-06	Incidence of disease caused by Non-typhoidal <i>Salmonella</i>	Reduce number of outbreaks by 30%	Declared salmonellosis outbreaks per 100.000 habitants/year
O-07	Incidence of disease caused by <i>Campylobacter</i>	Reduce number of outbreaks by 10%	Declared campylobacteriosis outbreaks per 100.000 habitants/year
O-08	Incidence of disease caused by <i>Listeria</i>	Reduce number of outbreaks by 10%	Declared cases per 100.000 habitants/year
O-09	Incidence of disease caused by <i>Clostridium botulinum</i>	≤ 0 cases per 10 ⁵ hab.	Declared cases per 100.000 habitants/year
O-10	Incidence of disease caused by <i>E-coli</i> O157:H7	≤ 0.05 cases per 10 ⁵ hab.	Declared cases per 100.000 habitants/year

Number	Field	Criteria	Indicators
Food safety			
O-11	Incidence of disease caused by <i>Yersinia enterocolitica</i>	≤ 0,3 cases per 10 ⁵ hab.	Declared cases per 100.000 habitants/year
O-12	Incidence of echinococcosis or hydatidosis	Reduce number of outbreaks by 10%	Declared cases per 100.000 habitants/year
O-13	Incidence of disease caused by <i>Shigella infection</i>	≤ 0,1 cases per 10 ⁵ hab.	Declared cases per 100.000 habitants/year
O-14	Incidence of disease caused by <i>Anisakiasis</i>	≤ 0,1 cases per 10 ⁵ hab.	Declared cases per 100.000 habitants/year
O-15	Incidence of disease caused by <i>Trichinella</i>	≤ 0,1 cases per 10 ⁵ hab.	Declared cases per 100.000 habitants/year
Presence of biological hazards in the primary phase			
O-16	Pathogenic microorganisms in feed for slaughter animals	Conformity ≥ 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-17	Mycotoxins in feed for slaughter animals	Conformity ≥ 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-18	Compliance with preventative measures for spongiform encephalopathies in animal feed	Conformity ≥ 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-19	Tuberculosis in bovine holdings	Conformity ≥ 99%	Rate of absence of tuberculosis in cattle farms
O-20	Brucellosis in bovine holdings	Conformity ≥ 99%	Rate of absence of brucellosis in cattle farms
O-21	Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)	Absence of cases	Declared bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) cases per year
O-22	Brucellosis in ovine and caprine farms	Conformity ≥ 99%	Rate of absence of brucellosis in ovine and caprine farms

Number	Field	Criteria	Indicators
Food safety			
O-23	Scrapie in sheep and goats	≤ 2 cases per year	Declared cases of sheep/goat scrapie per year
O-24	<i>Salmonella</i> in batches of breeding hens	Conformity ≥ 99%	Rate of absence of salmonellosis in lots of production poultry
O-25	<i>Salmonella</i> in batches of laying hens	Conformity ≥ 99%	Rate of absence of salmonellosis in lots of production poultry
O-26	<i>Salmonella</i> in batches of chickens	Conformity ≥ 99%	Rate of absence of salmonellosis in lots of production poultry
O-27	Prevalence of other transmissible zoonotic diseases in slaughter animals	Conformity ≥ 99%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
Presence of biological hazards in products on the market			
O-28	Presence of biological hazards in products on the market that require cooking before consumption	Conformity ≥ 95%	Rate of microbiological conformity of food products with current legislation
O-29	Presence of biological hazards in products on the market ready for consumption	Conformity ≥ 99%	Rate of microbiological conformity of food products with current legislation
O-30	Presence of biological hazards in the public water supply	Conformity ≥ 99%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
Chemical risks			
Incidences of foodborne diseases originating from chemical agents			
O-31	Outbreaks of food poisoning caused by chemical agents	Absence	Number of declared outbreaks of food poisoning from chemical agents per year
O-32	Exposure of people to chemical hazards in their diets	Conformity ≥ 99%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation and/or the internationally accepted benchmarks

Number	Field	Criteria	Indicators
Food safety			
Presence of chemical hazards in the primary phase			
O-33	Pesticides in plant/vegetable products	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-34	Animal health, water and feed in slaughter houses	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-35	Heavy metals and other indigestible substances in feed destined for slaughter animals	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-36	Banned substances and medicines in feed destined for slaughter animals	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-37	Banned substances and medicines in slaughter animals	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-38	Antibiotics in milk, honey and aquaculture farms	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
Presence of chemical hazards in food products available to consumers			
O-39	Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-40	Heavy metals	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-41	Dioxins and PCBs	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-42	Pesticides	Conformity \geq 99%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-43	Additives and other technological ingredients	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-44	Migrating substances from materials in contact with food products	Conformity \geq 99%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-45	Chemical hazards in the public water supply	Conformity \geq 99%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation

Number	Field	Criteria	Indicators
Food safety			
Adverse reactions to foodstuff			
O-46	Reliability of information and labelling of food products to provide people who are sensitive to certain components in food them with an adequate choice that meets their requirements	Conformity \geq 99%	Rate of conformity of food packaging and composition with the current legislation regarding adverse reactions to food products
General conditions of food safety			
O-47	Food safety conditions applicable to agricultural holdings	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-48	Food safety conditions applicable to livestock farms	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-49	Food safety conditions applicable to fishing and seafood farming	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-50	Food safety conditions applicable to aquaculture holdings	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-51	Food safety conditions applicable to feed production facilities	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-52	Food safety conditions applicable to retail and catering establishments, including those of a non-sedentary nature	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-53	Food safety conditions applicable to retail and catering establishments	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation

Number	Field	Criteria	Indicators
Other issues relating to food safety			
Labelling, information and quality			
O-54	Labelling, composition and food product advertising	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-55	Labelling and GMO content in food products on the market	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-56	Labelling, presentation and publicity of fish products	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-57	Ecological production	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-58	Differentiated quality (PDO, PGI, TSG)	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-59	Integrated production	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-60	Nutritional information	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-61	Nutritional and health claims	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
Animal welfare			
O-62	Animal welfare in holdings	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-63	Animal welfare in transport	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation
O-64	Animal welfare in slaughter houses	Conformity \geq 95%	Rate of conformity with the current legislation

Number	Field	Criteria	Indicators
Other issues relating to food safety			
Animal and plant health			
O-65	Non-foodborne animal diseases	Low incidence and low prevalence	Declared incidence, prevalence and outbreaks of non-foodborne animal diseases in livestock
O-66	Minimisation of chemical pesticides in the fight against crop pests	Proportion of non-chemical techniques used	Growing tendency





Interventions

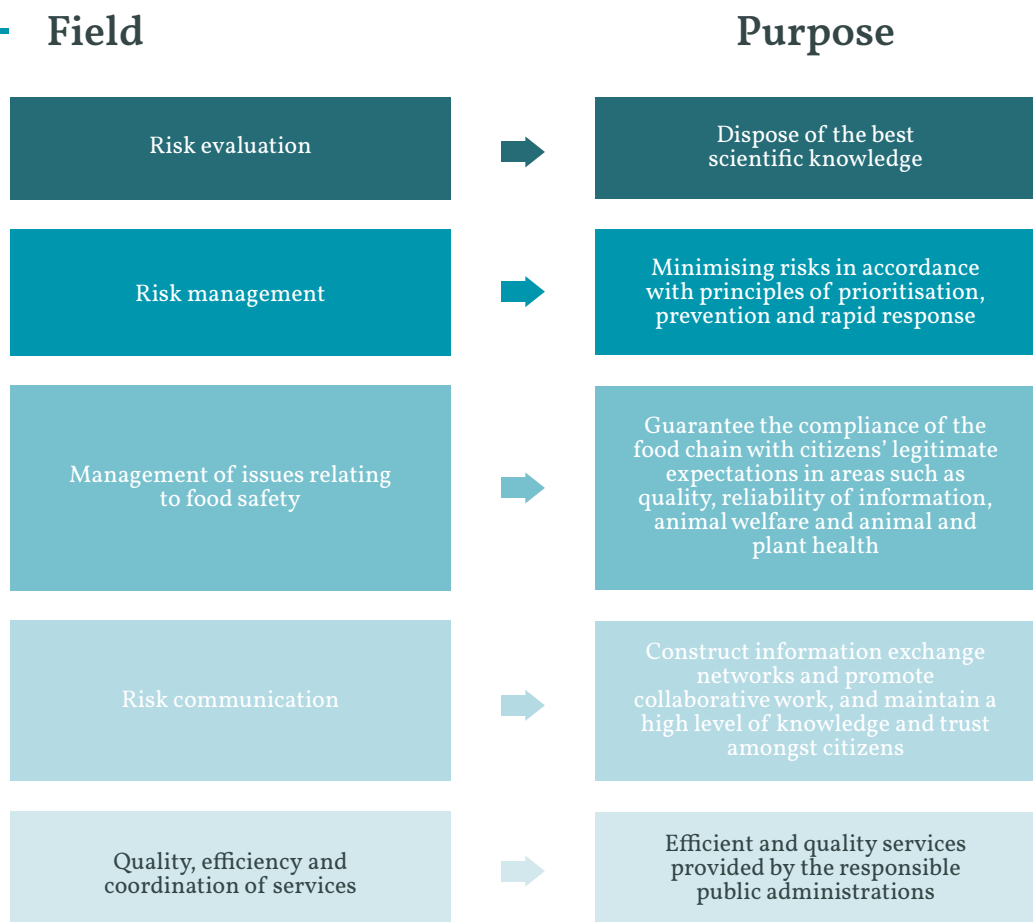


Once the objectives of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia 2017–2021 have been defined, the series of interventions that will ensure that they are met need to be established.

An intervention is any of the actions, activities or programmes that are carried out with the intention of achieving one or more of the intended objectives.

The group of interventions included in the Plan follow a logic which is based on the principles of risk analysis with evaluation, management and communication actions. This structure is complemented by the necessary actions aimed at offering the best possible level of quality and efficiency of the services offered by the public administrations responsible for food safety.

The intervention strategy at the foundation of the set of activities that are described later in this chapter follow a scheme which is summarised in the following chart:



All of the interventions, programmes or actions in this strategy generate strong interrelationships and multiple effects, which sometimes make it difficult to correlate each intervention with specific objectives. For this reason planned interventions must be seen as a package aimed at achieving the set of highlighted objectives. The set of interventions is extensive and complete enough to meet the objectives, and the approach is flexible enough to adjust the intensity or orientation of each of them according to needs of the moment. Therefore, the Food Safety Plan is considered a comprehensive and flexible instrument capable of offering citizens high levels of food safety through means of actions aimed at managing existing hazards alongside continuous evaluation of results and environment to identify emerging risks or necessities which can be tackled quickly and adequately thanks to the flexibility offered by the Plan and its subsequent interventions and the wide margin of action available to the managers of each program or intervention.

8.1

Risk evaluation

Dispose of the best scientific knowledge

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Evaluation of food risks	
I-001	Advisory Scientific Committee on Food Safety
ACSA	<p>The Scientific Committee is the organisation that provides guidance on the technical and scientific aspects of food safety. It is made up of a maximum of sixteen people, experts and people of renowned prestige regarding food safety, from Catalan universities and risk management research centres. It carries out the following functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Elaborate, manage and/or supervise scientific studies on risk evaluation regarding food safety. — Issue reports on the effectiveness of procedures that food companies should apply in order to prevent, eliminate or reduce risks to acceptable levels. — Prompt and carry out scientific evaluation studies on the population's exposure to different risks posed by food products in collaboration with Catalan universities and other public and private institutions. — Propose the creation of work groups made up of external experts to carry out specific scientific studies of risk evaluation. — Analyse data, reports, studies and expertise gathered by management bodies involved in food safety as well as contributions from other organisations. — Assess risk management bodies on issues related to food safety and issue reports about any matter regarding their competence that might be requested.



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Evaluation of food risks	
I-002	Groups of ad hoc experts to evaluate risks
ACSA	<p>One of the functions of the Catalan Food Safety Agency is to provide independent scientific assessment and recommendations regarding all issues related to food safety to offer support to risk management actions.</p> <p>To carry out these functions, a process of researching, compiling and updating information is undertaken on experts and units of Catalan universities and other centres of scientific relevance and their respective areas of expertise in order to contact, if necessary, specific expert knowledge. When necessary, groups of specific experts are formed to support the risk assessment tasks of the organization. These groups are made up of experts from universities and research centres and are constant as they provide a framework of permanent dialogue by networking.</p> <p>The groups' task is based on the revision of information and latest scientific data within a concrete and specific subject matter in order to provide support for the risk evaluation tasks of the Scientific Committee and risk managers.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Evaluation of food risks	
I-003	Network of external experts for the evaluation of food risks
ACSA	<p>In order to guarantee the quality of the evaluation reports on food risks and provide independent scientific and quality assessment of any of the areas regarding food safety, as well as broadening fields of expertise, a network of external scientific experts has been created who can be asked for collaboration or their opinion on specific cases.</p> <p>With this network of external scientific experts we aim to improve the capacity of scientific assessment and evaluation in all areas related to food products and safety and respond in the most efficient and flexible manner especially in the cases which require very specialised work.</p> <p>The incorporation of experts into the network is done through means of an open process based on the presentation and evaluation of a set of obligatory data including information regarding candidates' identity, academic titles, contact details, current professional field, professional experience, education, research and fields of expertise. This data is evaluated by ACSA with the aim of gauging the candidate's suitability for inclusion in the network of experts. Candidates can apply electronically via a form available on the ACSA website.</p> <p>Each time that ACSA requires the support of one or more external experts for a specific scientific task, a list will be drawn up from the network of experts. Subsequently experts with an adequate profile are contacted in order to find out their availability to participate in the proposed task. People who are available must provide a conflict of interest disclosure statement to ensure the absence of any interests that may affect the scientific task. These specific collaborations take place with maximum transparency via publication on the ACSA website of the corresponding information.</p>

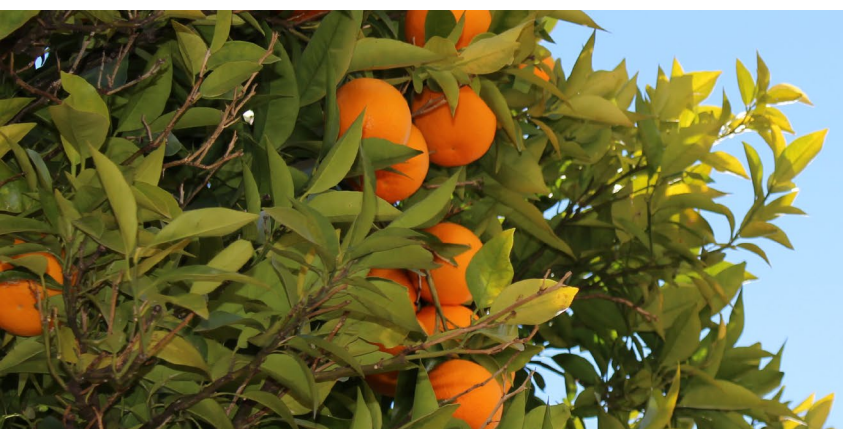
Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Evaluation of food risks	
I-004	Promotion of evaluation studies and support for evaluation and research projects
ACSA	<p>One of the specific objectives of the Catalan Food Safety Agency (ACSA) is to act as a reference centre in Catalonia for the evaluation of health risks related to food. With this aim, Law 18/2009, of 22 October, on public health, states that ACSA should elaborate and promote scientific evaluation studies of the population's exposure to risks and the benefits on health provided by food, taking into account the whole food chain. These studies must be carried out in collaboration with Catalan universities and other public and private institutions.</p> <p>In this context, ASCA coordinates and promotes studies on health risks relating to food and participates in the publication, diffusion and, if necessary, the subsequent implementation of measures drawn from the results of said studies. It also provides support for investigation projects aimed at preventing and resolving problems in the food safety sphere.</p>
I-005	Evaluation of exposure to pollutants in the overall diet of Catalonia
ACSA	<p>The pollutants present in the environment pose a contamination risk for food products and a risk of exposure for the population through diet. At the initiative of the Ministry of Health, in 2000 the first study on the chemical contamination of the most consumed food products in Catalonia was initiated. Once the results were evaluated, some groups of food products were identified that contributed a larger content of environmental contaminants to diet. To expand on knowledge on this matter, ACSA, the Rovira i Virgili University (URV) and the University of Barcelona (UB) set the objective of finding out more about the exposure of environmental contaminants through diet in greater depth and continued the studies as the importance of monitoring the presence of these chemical contaminants in our diet was evident.</p> <p>The objectives of this line of work are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Find out about the level of chemical contamination in the Catalan diet and the long term variations. — Dispose of data to be able to assess the importance of any new situation as data on temporal variation is available. — Compare the results obtained with other studies carried out in other territories. — Estimate the whole amount of chemical contaminant contributed by diet and collate this data with toxicological references, if established. — Evaluate the risks posed by current levels of ingestion by consumers, as well as their evolution over time and diffuse information and advice to citizens.

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Evaluation of food risks	
I-006	Support risk management in food safety by issuing reports, directives and recommendations
ACSA	<p>One of ACSA's lines of work to establish planning and action principles in terms of food safety is to issue reports, directives and recommendations to support risk management in food safety.</p> <p>This procedure can be initiated by the public administrations of Catalonia, sectors related with the food chain and associations for consumers and users as well as the initiative of the ACSA on topics it considers might have an impact on food safety.</p> <p>The task can be carried out through the Advisory Scientific Committee for the corresponding area of the ACSA, or a group of experts created for this purpose with the participation of the appropriate ACSA committees or work groups which are best suited to each case and the material involved.</p> <p>The resulting reports, instructions, recommendations or the directives are issued in writing with a description of the facts or situation; allegations made by parties, should there be any; practical proof, if necessary; risk evaluation that may derive from the issue covered; possible alternatives considered technically viable as adoptable response measures, along with an evaluation of the feasibility of the said alternative applications; details of the extent to which the adoption of said alternative is recommendable and, if necessary, the time scale in which it is to be implemented.</p> <p>The judgement, the principle of order or action is directed to the party or parties who have made the request and to any other appropriate people or institutions.</p>

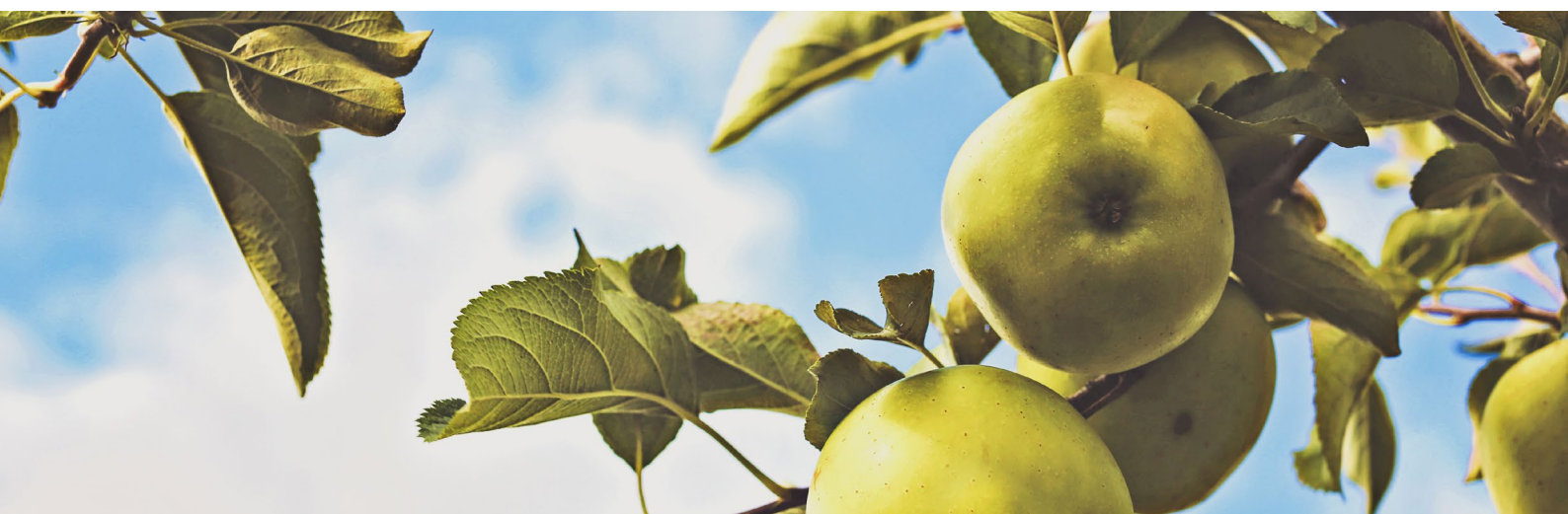


Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Evaluation of food risks	
I-007	Compilation of scientific and technical information and centres and lines of investigation involved with food safety
ACSA	<p>Risk management and communication must be based on scientific information from reliable sources. One of the existing difficulties comes from the dispersion of the information on the matter, something which often makes it difficult for the public administrations and other participants in the food chain to access said information. With the aim of resolving this problem, ACSA has introduced a data collection service which also gathers scientific articles which may be related to food safety. Similarly, in order to have easy and quick access to experts on every subject, a database of centres and lines of research on food safety has been created. The objective of all of this is to dispose of useful information to carry out evaluation, management and risk communication functions.</p> <p>The main objective of the information database is to facilitate a permanent system of gathering of the scientific, technical, epidemiological and statistic information necessary in order to best develop the evaluation methodology of risks and hazards associated with the food chain (food products and feed). This system includes: scientific and technical documentation which is evaluated, classified and updated; permanent information sources on the hazards in the food chain (directories); evaluation studies on exposure to food risks; studies monitoring epidemiological surveillance of food-associated diseases; material and documents disclosing scientific and technical information on food safety; scientific and technical periodicals; training programmes and other activates, such as conferences or workshops, and specific technical reports.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Evaluation of food risks	
I-008	Epidemiological investigation, compilation and analysis of data on food-borne human diseases in Catalonia
ASP-V ASP-V	<p>Epidemiological monitoring of public health consists in gathering, analysing and interpreting all information related to the emergence and spreading of diseases. Catalonia has the Epidemiological Surveillance Network. One of the information systems that feeds into it is that of notifiable diseases, which receives notifications of diseases and epidemic outbreaks of any aetiology subject to declaration by the welfare network. Health professionals who carry out care tasks in Catalonia, in public or private sectors, must report any notifiable diseases and epidemic outbreaks of which they are aware.</p> <p>Another information system is the microbiological notification system of Catalonia, which receives notifications of microorganisms subject to declaration detected in laboratories and centres that form a part of it.</p> <p>The Surveillance Network also has other sources of information, such as the register of hospital discharges and diseases, specific surveillance programmes for determining diseases and sero-epidemiological surveys, amongst others.</p> <p>All of this epidemiological information is key for the analysis of the food safety situation. We must exploit the existing scope for improvement to gain access to the most significant information possible regarding the current situation in order to analyse trends, evaluate results and identify areas requiring more substantial intervention efforts.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Evaluation of food risks	
I-009	Map of hazards in the food chain
ACSA	<p>The Catalan Food Safety Agency, in collaboration with the Autonomous University of Barcelona, has elaborated a comprehensive map of hazards in the food chain in order to make it available to all participants in the food chain. The objective of this map is to offer information regarding the hazards that may be present in the different stages of the food chain, in order to increase the knowledge and awareness of the economic operators and contribute to the adoption of appropriate risk management measures to eliminate and/or minimise them.</p> <p>In the map, the hazards are described and information is put forward regarding those more commonly associated with each food group and permanent updated information is included in the form of epidemiological data, food alerts and descriptions of outbreaks of food poisoning. This information is complemented with a classification of foodstuff, structured into groups of products and processing and the associated hazards.</p> <p>All of this information is presented on an online digital platform where searches can be carried out by hazard or by food. The information regarding hazards in the food chain is the object of permanent revision with the aim of keeping the platform updated.</p> <p>The map of hazards is a tool for improving communication, compiling information about the hazards associated with food and helping companies to introduce their own self-monitoring plans based on hazard analysis critical control points (HACCP).</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Evaluation of food risks	
I-OIO	Risk evaluation for the elaboration of guides to good hygiene practice
ACSA	<p>European regulations on food hygiene state the obligation of introducing self-monitoring systems based on HACCP principles, something which is not always easy for economic operators. This has prompted the development of guides to good hygiene practice (GGHP) and direct collaboration is underway to prepare said guides.</p> <p>The elaboration process of a GGHP obligatorily involves a prior scientific evaluation of risks associated with processes, foodstuff and specific sectors for which they are targeted. One of the first steps that must be followed is identifying the hazards, the measures for minimising them and analysing risks. These tasks must have a solid scientific base and a highly preventive focus. The scientific and technical information gathered by ACSA and the expert knowledge that it works with allows for a rigorous identification and evaluation of the risks associated with each case so that the application of the guide ensures the production of safe products for the consumer.</p> <p>For each project analysed, the possible hazards are evaluated in an individual and specific manner and control measures are proposed that allow, by means of adequate monitoring and verification, for risks to be reduced or kept at acceptable measures.</p>
I-OII	Analysis of the population's knowledge and dietary habits
ACSA	<p>In 2008, the Catalan Food Safety Agency initiated a social analysis project on the knowledge, dietary habits and confidence of citizens regarding food safety in Catalonia. This analysis is carried out periodically using methodology based on different social analysis techniques of a quantitative and qualitative nature. The objectives of this line of work are to analyse the level of knowledge and risk perception associated with food safety amongst Catalan consumers; find out the level of confidence regarding different products, commercialisation channels and the actions of administrations and companies, as well as detecting risk practices amongst consumers.</p> <p>The information gathered from these studies is basic in order to define the risk communication policy and the promotion of good practices and serves as a reference for designing and implementing interventions aimed at improving citizens' knowledge, practices and confidence regarding domestic food safety.</p>

8.2

Risk management

Minimising risks in accordance with principles of prioritisation, prevention and rapid response

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Regulatory framework	
I-O12	Analysis of requirements, participation and promotion of initiatives regarding legislations
DMA DARP ASP AL ACSA	<p>Establishing regulations is a key element of risk management. An effective food safety policy requires clear obligational rules and official control systems to be established which are aimed at verifying their application. The conditions that must be complied with, and the powers of control, are gathered in legal texts so that the actions of the operators and authorities involved in the food chain have the necessary consistency and legal security.</p> <p>The current food regulation is made up of different legal texts of a local, state, intra and extra European nature, and is of a notable level of complexity and volume, as proven by the 2,000 entries in the legislation database of the Catalan Food Safety Agency.</p> <p>The European legislation serves as a common reference of obligatory compliance which already includes risk evaluation and management elements and a strategic focus for food safety problems.</p> <p>It is sometimes necessary to define specifications and break down aspects of the European legislation in order to better adapt it to the reality of each territory and each sector involved by applying principles of simplification and coherence. Similarly, as well as incorporating the established health conditions of European institutions, these legislations establish the juridical framework necessary for exercising official control and other intervention measures, both in administrative law and criminal law, something which must be regulated by territorial bodies with the corresponding responsibilities, as it is an internal issue for each member state and the territorial organisations that it is made up of.</p> <p>Through different participation channels, notably commissions and specific work groups, the Catalan administrations with the collaboration of representatives from food sectors carry out a periodical analysis of the regulatory needs and enforce, when necessary, policy development initiatives. Equally, these groups and commissions also serve as an instrument for the participation of Catalonia in the elaboration and modification process of the legislation of the European Union.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Information, awareness and promotion of good practices	
I-013	Information, awareness and promotion of good practices aimed at all participants in the food chain
DMA DARP ASP-P ACC AL ACSA	<p>An essential area of the integrated Food Safety Policy is that of disclosure, information and awareness. It is only possible to offer food safety guarantees with the availability of a high level of knowledge and unequivocal commitment from all participants in the food chain. Quality and informative material must be elaborated which is adequate to the needs of recipients and all informative, expository and educational channels available must be used in order to inform, raise awareness and promote good practices amongst operators in the food chain as well as citizens when preparing and consuming food.</p> <p>Epidemiological data indicates that almost 80% of all incidences of food poisoning take place in domestic and catering environments, which makes specific intervention necessary. Similarly, it is also necessary to direct effort towards the rest of the operators in the food chain, including those in the primary phase.</p> <p>The principle lines of work in terms of information, awareness and promotion of good practices are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Publishing and distribution of informative and outreach material via websites and printed material. — Distribution of material via local bodies, primary health care centres, schools and all interested parties who should request it. — Design of food safety content to be integrated in curricular material for primary and secondary school education in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. — Disclosure by means of talks and presentations in collaboration with bodies involved in the food chain.



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Information, awareness and promotion of good practices	
I-O14	Promotion of the creation of guides to good hygiene practice (GGHP)
ΣACSA	<p>The guides to good hygiene practice (GGHP) are a valuable instrument for helping operators at all levels of the food chain to develop self-monitoring and the application of good practices.</p> <p>As outlined in the current legislation, companies in the food sector can voluntarily use GGHP as a means of ensuring that hygiene regulations are met. The elaboration of a GBPH provides a series of benefits for sectors, as it facilitates the economic agent's compliance with legislations using the methodology of the system of the hazard analysis critical control points in a way that is adapted to dimensions and risks associated with each type of activity and/or establishment, as it favours a homogenisation of criteria.</p> <p>Public administrations carry out stimulation and promotional actions for said development. There is an administrative procedure of recognition and validation of these documents which takes into account the objectives, extent, representativeness of the applicant in the sector, applicability, elaborating bodies and other judgements regarding suitability. This procedure also anticipates the participation of Public Administration bodies that may be involved, the representatives of the sectors concerned and the consideration of legal issues.</p> <p>There is also a procedure for official recognition of the GBPH. The fact that a guide is granted official recognition ensures that its content is coherent with the legislative context and with the interpretation made by the competent authorities of Catalonia, so that officially recognised guides are the reference document for both people carrying out controls and the managers of food companies.</p> <p>When elaborating these guides, implementation measures are followed such as presentations, courses, seminars and publications aimed at favouring the diffusion and the knowledge of its contents and effective implementation.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Information, awareness and promotion of good practices	
I-014	Promoting the application of good practices in food reuse and donation
ASP-P ACSA	<p>In our society, more than 20% of the population live below the poverty line. At the same time, a large quantity of food is wasted along the whole food chain. Wastage happens in both the primary phase and the distribution phase in homes, restaurants, bars, catering facilities and Catalan businesses. It is calculated that annually in Catalonia the equivalent of the necessary food supply for 500,000 people is wasted.</p> <p>Society is evermore aware of this contradiction, which has seen the increase in initiatives for reuse and donation. Public Administrations carry out actions to support these initiatives and to ensure that they happen in a safe manner. With this objective in mind, they elaborate guides and instructions, publications, information and promotion of good practices specifically targeted at the correct reuse of food, as well as technical advice for social bodies that manage the collection and donation of food. These actions are a vital instrument so that excess food makes its way to people who need it in the safest conditions possible.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and official control	
I-015	Surveillance and control of food safety conditions stipulated in the current legislation
ASP-P ACSA AL	<p>Establishing regulations that clearly define both the general and specific conditions surrounding food safety is one of the key elements of risk management. Non-compliance with these conditions by operators may increase the chance of risks because, under these circumstances, many food hazards can be incorporated into food or increase to unacceptable levels. An effective Food Safety Policy requires efficient regulations to manage risks as well as official control systems to supervise and ensure the application of said regulations.</p> <p>This official control constitutes any form of control performed by the competent authority to verify, by examining and studying objective evidence, compliance with regulations and the current legislation. This official control is programmed according to risks, with adequate regularity and frequency to evaluate conformity with the legally established standards. The facilities, processes, products, teams, self-monitoring, traceability, training of workers and management of waste along the whole food chain is controlled, from agricultural and livestock holdings to retail and catering establishments, as well as feed production facilities and food industries in the context of a global and integrated intervention.</p> <p>The relevant authorities must carry out the necessary measures to promote and verify compliance with the established conditions of the aforementioned current legislation and, in cases of non-conformance, take the necessary measures such as a formal requests for correction, administrative penalties, and withdrawal of authorisation, preventative closure, immobilisation of products or their withdrawal from the market, amongst others.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of agents in the environment that are significant to food safety	
I-016	Authorisation and control of activities with a high environmental impact
DMA	<p>There is an established administrative intervention system of prevention and control of contamination based on the authorisation, inspection and control of activities with an environmental impact. The aim of this system is to achieve a high level of protection for people and the environment as a whole, using instruments which enable us to prevent, minimise, correct and control the possible impacts of public or private activities which might affect the environment, the health and safety of people, and the food chain.</p> <p>The Government of Catalonia, through the Ministry involved with the environment, has the capacity to authorise activities that could potentially be more contaminant. These activities are authorised on the basis of conclusions regarding the Best Available Technology (BAT) published by the European Commission, and emission limits and requirements are fixed to minimize, as far as possible, environmental impact. Regarding the group of activities with a moderate environmental impact, the competence to resolve issues surrounding the environmental license is held by city councils with the prior report of the corresponding municipal or county environmental body, as appropriate. Low environmental impact activities are controlled by the communication regime.</p> <p>One element that has been integrated into the authorisation and environmental licence process is the declaration of environmental impact, which is regulated by Law 6/01, concerning the Directorate-General of Environmental Quality (DGQA) of the Ministry of Territory and Sustainability.</p> <p>For control systems of activities, the public administrations, within their respective area of competency, verify that those in charge of activities posing an environmental impact apply the principle of prevention of contamination, via the application of the adequate measures. Upon commencing an activity, we must check whether said activity and facilities meet the authorisation or the granted license and if they comply with the applicable requirements. This is called <i>initial inspection</i> or <i>initial control</i> according to the regulation that the activity is subject to: authorisation or license respectively.</p> <p>Therefore activities are subject to previous controls, of a periodical nature, in order to guarantee the permanent adequacy of the facilities regarding the fixed requirements by authorisations or licenses.</p>

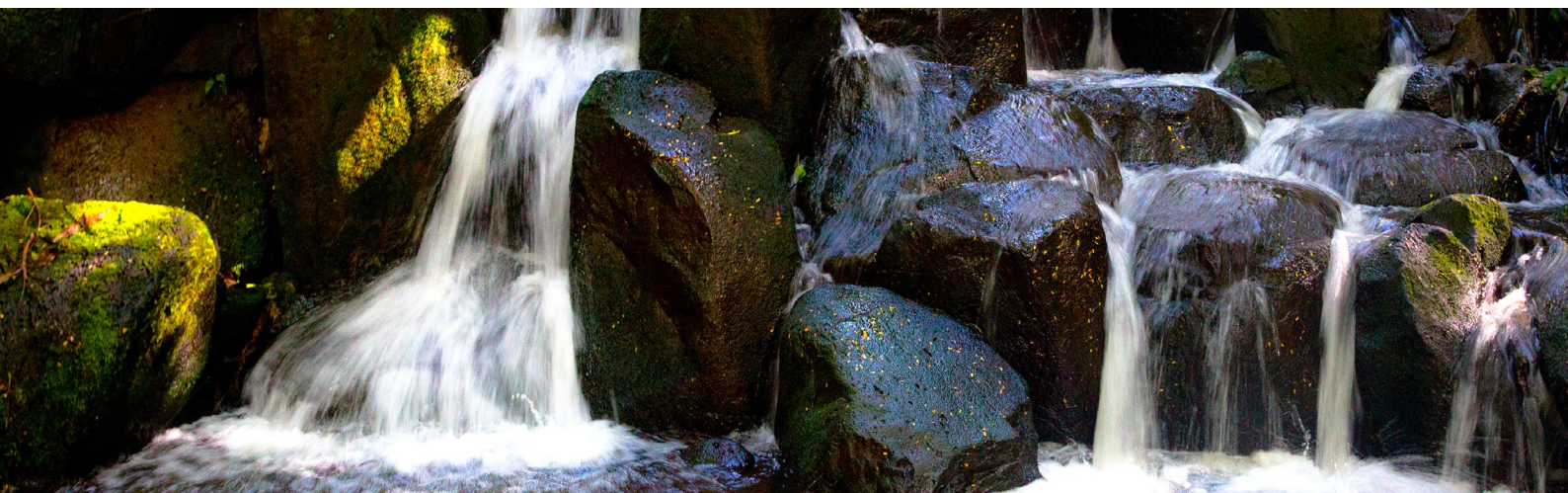
Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of agents in the environment that are significant to food safety	
I-O16	Authorisation and control of activities with a high environmental impact
DMA	<p>Activities subject to environmental authorisation are included in the Plan and the Integrated Environmental Inspection Programme of Catalonia. The frequency of these controls or inspections vary according to the regulation that the activities are subject to. For activities subject to environmental authorisation they occur once every three years in order to evaluate their environmental risk. Inspections or controls are generally carried out by a collaborative body of the Administration, notwithstanding the capacity and the inspection activities of competent authorities.</p> <p>The Catalan Pollutant Release and Transfer Register, known as PRTR-CAT, which forms part of the European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register, annually gathers information regarding emissions in the air, water and soil as well as transfers of waste originating from establishments which emit pollution and waste.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of agents in the environment that are significant to food safety	
I-017	Control of emissions and air quality
DMA	<p>Atmospheric contamination is a process which begins with air emissions by emitters of pollutants into the atmosphere. Once these substances are in the atmosphere they undergo different effects of transport and transformation. As a result of these processes, each part of the territory has a concentration of each contaminant in the atmosphere, which is known as the level of immission (the level present in the environment). The levels of immission or air quality determine the potential effect of a contaminant on health or the environment.</p> <p>The Government of Catalonia, through the Ministry involved with the environment, carries out controls on emission and immission levels. In order to control emissions, continuous measurement controls of emissions are combined with the periodic controls established in the current legislation.</p> <p>In order to carry out continued monitoring of the emissions in the atmosphere from potentially pollutant installations, connection to the Atmospheric Emissions Network of Catalonia (XEAC) by those that cause the most significant emissions has been promoted. This connection allows for constant monitoring of the emissions associated with the sources of the establishments. The contaminants/parameters that are controlled via the XEAC depend on emissions from considerable sources; basically the atmospheric emissions and determined parameters are monitored, such as the suspended particles, hydrocarbons, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, amongst others.</p> <p>For the surveillance of emissions, we have the Monitoring and Forecasting Network of Atmospheric Pollution (XVPCA), which is a basic tool for the evaluation of air quality in Catalonia. The territory is divided into air quality zones (ZQA). Within each air quality zone different areas can be identified according to ground occupation (level 1: urban, suburbia or rural areas) and the type of sources of atmospheric pollutant emitters (level 2: traffic, industrial or remote areas). Daily. Information is sought daily regarding air quality levels and a forecast of immission levels is drawn up for the media. This information is available on the internet.</p> <p>The monitoring of air quality levels entails the determination of pollutants that may pose a potential risk to the population and food safety, such as benzene, the metals (Pb, As, Cd, Ni) or polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (HAP), amongst other pollutants that may impinge on the food chain.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of agents in the environment that are significant to food safety	
I-018	Control of emissions and quality of environmental water
ACA	<p>The publication of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) implied an important change in the management of water which was clearly aimed at ensuring the good condition of water systems, both in quality and quantity, by means of a sustainable use of water based on the long term protection of water resources. This regulation brought about specific management plans for water basins.</p> <p>Catalonia is divided into two hydrographic areas. On one hand, the river basin district of Catalonia (internal water basins), a territory where 92% of the Catalan population live and one which has full competency (Legislative Decree 3/2003, of 4 November). On the other hand, the inter-community water basins, which are shared with other territories of the State. The entire management Plan of the river basin district of Catalonia and the proposals for management plans of the hydrographical demarcations within the territory of Catalonia, is brought together in what is called the Water Management Plan for Catalonia (PGAC).</p> <p>There are four key aspects in order to achieve the sustainability objectives regarding the use of water which are included in these plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Achievement of the good condition of bodies of water and compliance with the principle of non-deterioration. — Rationality regarding the use of resources through its integrated management combined with proper management of demand. — Economic sustainability, including the evaluation of all costs (financial, of resources and environmental) and tending to their full recovery. — Social sustainability, understood as proactive public participation, via processes of information and consultation regarding decisions that are taken. <p>There is a summary document that identifies the bodies of water that make up the water basins of Catalonia and explains in concrete detail the pressure that they are under, the impacts they are suffering and the risks that jeopardise their good condition.</p> <p>The main problems and disturbances that Catalan water systems may experience are, amongst others: water extractions and flow regulation; industrial pollution and contamination due to agricultural practices, urban wastewater or fertiliser of livestock origin.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of agents in the environment that are significant to food safety	
I-018	Control of emissions and quality of environmental water
ACA	<p>There is surveillance and control network aimed at gathering representative information on the general condition of the bodies of water in order to verify the impacts caused by the existing pressures; evaluate the long-term changes to natural conditions produced by natural or anthropogenic causes; establish the requirements and design future control programmes and monitor of the application of measures. Certain analytics are also carried out for the systematic control of the quality of surface and groundwater.</p> <p>With the objective of complying with the directive framework in reference to the special protocol to which water intended for human consumption must be subjected, there is a control network of small supplies, a control on sediment and fish, which is carried out in the terms specified in the Community Directive 76/464, in reference to toxic and hazardous substances, and the control of biological indexes which has been carried out since 1993. The genera parameters are controlled, such as pH, conductivity, dissolved oxygen, TOC, etc. and specifics, such as anions, cations, nutrients, micro biologicals, global organics, metals, industrial solvents, volatile organohalogens, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and chlorinated pesticides, organophosphates and triazines.</p> <p>There is also an on-call team which, in cases of warnings of incidents in public water, ensures the presence of technicians at the site of the incident to monitor and activate appropriate devices for mitigating the harmful effects on public water which may be identified.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of agents in the environment that are significant to food safety	
I-019	Control of reused water
ACA DARP ASP-P	<p>Reusing, understood as the use of water prior to its previous use, has always existed in our country which is understandable if we take into account the water regimes of most of the territory. In this context, reuse has always been seen as an alternative or complimentary source of resources, and consequentially the practice of reusing water has historically been employed.</p> <p>In order to reuse water, a tertiary treatment must be carried out. This is what is known as the regeneration process. Regenerated water is water which is purified in a WTP (wastewater treatment plant) which has been subject to a regeneration treatment and is suitable for reuse in non-oral cases (industrial use, irrigation of golf courses, agricultural irrigation, aquifer recharging). This water which is treated in plants has an adequate sanitary quality for all types of use required.</p> <p>Reused water is subject to a control to ensure that there is no health or environmental risk posed as a consequence of being reused. In Catalonia, this regenerated water is mainly destined for irrigation (agriculture, urban areas and golf courses), for cleaning streets, for recharging aquifers and the generating maintenance flows, amongst other uses.</p> <p>The current legislation regarding the reuse of treated water establishes a series of criteria and procedures which must be met in order to use said waters, aimed at minimising the environmental risks, as well as those to people and food safety. Different categories of regenerated water aptitude are outlined according to quality, defined using some basic parameters. This way, high quality regenerated wastewater can be used for crop irrigation. Regenerated water of a lower quality can be used for the irrigation of industrial crops which are not for consumption. In any case, in order to reuse wastewater a licensing or authorisation process must be followed in which compliance with necessary quality criteria is verified according to the intended use of said water. This licensing or authorisation includes a series of obligations regarding periodic self-monitoring of quality parameters by the licensee.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of agents in the environment that are significant to food safety	
I-020	Environmental control of livestock excrement
DARP ACA ARC ASP-P	<p>The management of livestock excrement is a key element for holdings, with the objective of ensuring the correct use of agricultural resources and the adequate management of waste, to avoid contamination of aquifers, particularly due to nitrates. In Catalonia specific management plans elaborate and monitor each livestock holding. These plans are evaluated by the corresponding ministry involved with agriculture and livestock. Excrements can be managed in agricultural plots or outside of the agricultural framework by means of waste managers or composting plants and thermal drying or cogeneration facilities, areas controlled by the Catalan Waste Agency (ARC). In this sense, it is worth mentioning Decrees of designation of vulnerable zones, in the elaboration of which the ministries involved in agriculture, environment and health participate and which have the aim of reducing the concentration of nitrates in aquifers and water for human consumption, by establishing some restrictions in the application of livestock excrement in more vulnerable areas.</p> <p>Applying organic waste to the soil is a recovery operation which is done for the benefit of agriculture or an ecological improvement in the soil. When said application is planned for agricultural soil, an application plan is carried out on the soil with includes the characterisation of the ground, the data of the plots and crops and the justification of the application dose (a criteria of nitrogen, iron, etc.).</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of agents in the environment that are significant to food safety	
I-021	Control of waste management
ARC	<p>The correct management of waste has a direct relation with food safety as it allows us to minimise disposal into the environment of components that otherwise may have constituted a source of contamination for products in the food chain.</p> <p>The Catalan Waste Agency (ARC) carries out a series of actions that, as a whole, contribute in a direct or indirect manner towards the safety of the food chain. Their interventions are based on the principles of prevention, recovery, waste disposal in landfill, deployment of management models, infrastructures and disclosure and training activities.</p> <p>In this sense, the main activities are the management of municipal waste, based on the format of targeted collecting and the treatment of all waste; the management of industrial and construction waste, which places a special emphasis on the prevention, recovery, treatment, recycling, disposal of rubbish and protecting the soil; the investigation and recuperation of contaminated ground; the management of livestock excrement and the management of meat waste that cannot be used in the production of feed, amongst other issues.</p> <p>This intervention involving waste management contributes to minimising the impact on the environment and therefore the contamination of the environment and, consequently, the products in the food chain.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of agents in the environment that are significant to food safety	
I-O22	Health monitoring of wildlife and hunting
DMA DARP ASP-P	<p>The objective of this intervention is to find out about the health situation of wildlife in Catalonia, prevent the spreading of disease between wildlife domestic animals, and protect public health.</p> <p>The transmission and contagion of diseases amongst wildlife is a problem that must be taken into account when dealing with eradication of certain diseases. Because of the close phylogenetic relationship between wild and domestic species, many of the agents that cause diseases are the same amongst all of them. For example, this is true of brucellosis and tuberculosis, diseases which have long been the subject of official eradication programmes, but of which cases are still detected in the territory. Even though the prevalence of both diseases in domestic animals is very small, it is important to carry out a surveillance of its presence amongst wild animals, especially in those areas where contact with domestic animals is more probable. Trichinosis and bird flu are also diseases that must be highlighted and are also subject to wildlife vigilance actions.</p> <p>The main activities are carrying out the active checking of animals captured during hunting or specific programmes, which is complemented with the passive surveillance of animals with symptoms of a specific disease or found dead without obvious signs of trauma. There are also controls on treatment rooms of hunting meat which is destined for human consumption, where an official vet carries out a <i>post mortem</i> inspection to detect possible pathologies and the systematic analysis for trichinosis in species which are susceptible to suffer from it.</p> <p>Animals in general and especially wildlife are considered a possible source of emerging diseases. Therefore, the health monitoring of wildlife is essential for the control of these diseases, as in many cases they are zoonotic diseases which may affect the health of livestock, the production and livestock commercialisation and hunting, as well as affecting the conservation of wildlife.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of agents in the environment that are significant to food safety	
I-023	Coordinated system for monitoring the waters of the Ebro river and the foodstuff within its area of influence
ACA DARP ASP-P	<p>The coordinated system for monitoring chemical contamination of the waters of the Ebro river and the foodstuff within its area of influence was established in June 2005 due to the results of the study: <i>Presència de contaminants en els sediments dels sistemes aquàtics de Catalunya</i> ('Presence of pollutants in the sediment of the water systems of Catalonia'), which the Spanish National Research Council and the Autonomous University of Barcelona elaborated in December 2003.</p> <p>The study indicated that in the sediment of the Flix reservoir there were high concentrations of metals, such as mercury, chromium, nickel, cadmium and zinc; persistent organic pollutants (POP), such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB), Hexachlorobenzene (HCB), pentachlorobenzene, polychlorinated naphthalenes (PCN), polychlorostyrene, DDT and its derivatives, as well as natural radionuclides from the uranium chain, which could pose a contamination threat to the whole length of the river Ebro which is situated downstream.</p> <p>The coordinated system integrates the surveillance and control actions carried out by the different ministries of the Government in Catalonia regarding these pollutants. The objective of this system is to combine forces in order to ensure the safety of the water and food, to achieve a high level of protection for people's health and deal with possible emergency situations.</p> <p>With this objective, the pollutants detected in the residue of the Flix reservoir which may pose a health risk are controlled in food of aquatic origin and foodstuff cultivated in areas close to regions which the river flows through; water for public consumption from the supply areas of the Flix, the deep water of the reservoir and the surface water of the river Ebro, from the Flix reservoir to the mouth of the river.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Register of activities	
I-024	Register of agricultural and food industries
DARP	<p>The Register of Agricultural and Food Industries (RIAAC) has the aim of disposing, in a permanent and updated fashion, of all the necessary information on food, agriculture, livestock, forest and fishery industries in order to elaborate control and developmental policies in these areas.</p> <p>The operators in said register who are food producers, as well as complying with the general conditions applicable to all industrial sectors, must comply with the food legislation to meet technical requirements and those regarding food safety, food quality or the evolution of commercial use, and the new directives regarding control and inspection. This implies the necessary coordination and complementation with the Health Register of food industries and products, and the application of this to the sectors or productions that it does not cover, such as the feed sector.</p> <p>Other motives, of a productive, commercial and economic nature, have generated the necessity of agro-industrial development policies and/or intervention mechanisms in markets, resulting in the need, both by Administration as by the industrial sector, to have full information about the sector to facilitate the decision making process. The RIAAC covers this need.</p> <p>Establishments in Catalonia which carry out agricultural, food, forest or fishery activities as well as the elaboration, manipulation or transformation of products are entered into the register.</p> <p>Owners of industrial establishments which carry out these activities are required to include in the register: the first installation, any substantial variation, the cessation of activity, changes in ownership and relocation of industrial elements on the register.</p> <p>The register contains the basic data which allows for the identification of the establishment and its location, as well as complimentary data, such as the physical quantification and geographical provenance of the raw materials and the intermediary products used, the concession of subsidies and inversions, the connection with base producers, the capacity and characteristics of storage, and a description of manufacturing lines.</p>

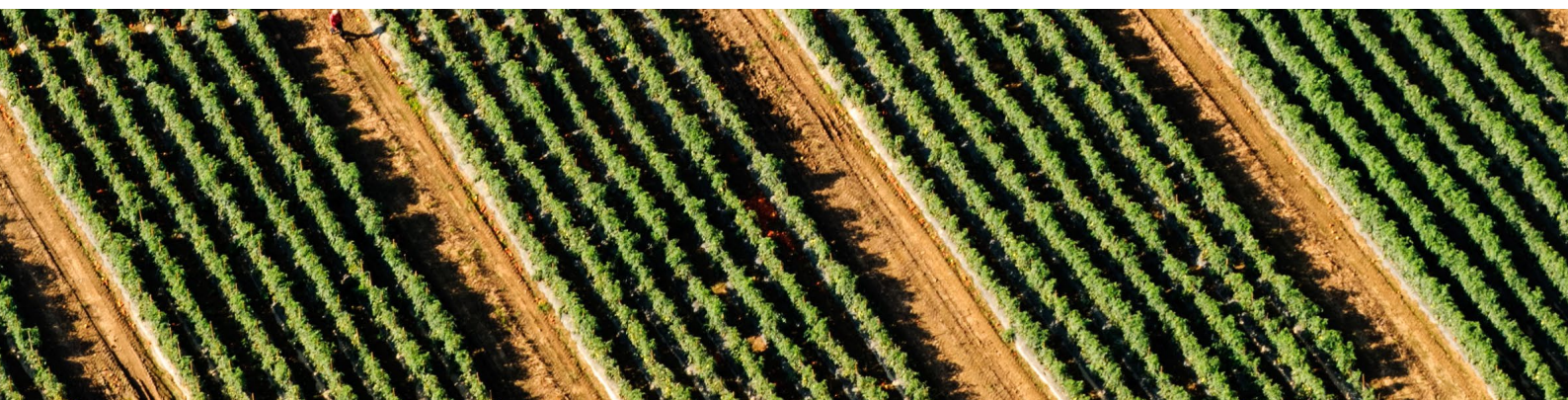
Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Agricultural production	
I-025	General Register of Agricultural Production
DARP	<p>The General Register of Agricultural Production (REGIPA) is created by the Royal Decree 9/2015 and is nourished by the data that producers give to the Single Agricultural Declaration (DUN). Agricultural holdings that carry out their activity within the area of primary agricultural production with the exception of those holdings whose services are aimed at production entirely for private domestic consumption are included on this register.</p> <p>Annually, farmers provide REGIPA, via the DUN, with their identification and contact details as well as the relation of SIGPAC plots and premises with their operation, with indications of crops, surface and types of self-monitoring that they undertake.</p> <p>The REGIPA is the database upon which the hygiene risk of the holdings is calculated and it carries out an official control programme regarding hygiene and primary agricultural production and the use of phytosanitary products.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Agricultural production	
I-O26	Promotion of good practice, control and management of agricultural fertilisers
DARP ACA ASP ARC	<p>Organic and mineral agricultural fertilization is generally done using livestock excrement and mineral fertilisers. It has significant productive, economic and environmental implications. Fertilizing well means applying the necessary nutrients at the right time. It's a question of correctly managing resources and minimising the costs and impact on the environment and food safety, always with an optimum harvest in mind.</p> <p>The promotion of these good practices is done by the Office of Fertilization and Management of Livestock Excrement, a virtual and technical space to promote and execute these actions.</p> <p>Due to the progressive increase of the use of nitrogen fertilisers in agricultural activity, despite the fact that holdings are optimising the dosage, methods or time of application, the presence of nitrates in water, particularly groundwater, is a substantial problem which must be considered amongst other non-agricultural sources of nitrogen in waters, such as gardens or golf courses.</p> <p>Currently, chemical or mineral fertilisers stand out because they are easy to use and transport, and they provide an almost immediate availability of nutrients. In spite of these advantages, the significance of livestock in Catalonia means that livestock excrement is still the most important source of nitrogen available for agriculture. For this reason intensive farming holdings have, for the most part, serious difficulties in applying all the nitrogen generated by livestock excrement as fertiliser. All livestock holdings must have and apply a management plan for livestock excrement and record this in a management book. Equally, certain non-livestock agricultural holdings, situated in vulnerable areas, must have a management book of nitrogen fertilisers.</p> <p>Other organic fertilisers include sewage sludge and compost from solid urban waste. The application of sewage sludge to the ground is legislated and must comply with series of requirements, such as, amongst others: that it be treated in a chemical or thermic manner so that the fermentation power is reduced significantly as well as the health hazards involved in its use and that the level of heavy metals is not above a certain point.</p> <p>The promotion of good agricultural practices and the control of products, such as fertilisers, is aimed at achieving a significant improvement in the presence of nitrates and other possible pollutants in water and soil, which will consequently result in a reduction in the presence in drinking water and food.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Agricultural production	
I-O27	Official control of hygiene of primary agricultural production
DARP	<p>This line of work has the objective of controlling the holdings that carry out primary agricultural production activities in terms of hygiene, and the associated risks in said production, including those originating from the use of phytosanitary products. It also includes the control of hygiene conditions in the production of sprouts and seeds involved in the production of sprouts.</p> <p>Inspections consist in documental control, viewing of the installations and taking of samples when necessary. Amongst the parameters that must be analysed are the phytosanitary products, nitrates or mycotoxins, such as microbiological analysis like Salmonella, verotoxigenic <i>E. coli</i> and <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> especially in establishments that produce sprouts.</p> <p>Should non-compliances be detected, the farmer is given advice in order to solve the observed deficiencies and so that, if irregularities are verified, they adopt the appropriate measures to correct this. When necessary, the relevant dossier in accordance with current regulations is proposed.</p>
I-O28	Control of agricultural soil
DARP	<p>Soil is a vital resource that requires a lot of time to form and regenerate but which can be destroyed very quickly. Amongst the multiple functions of an environmental, economic, social and cultural nature for which soil serves we can highlight the following: the production of biomass; the storing, filtering and transformation of elements; reservoir of biodiversity; carbon sequestration; source of raw materials; physical and cultural setting for human activity; geological and archaeological heritage, etc. For this reason, conversation regarding this matter is essential.</p> <p>Agricultural activity is closely linked with soil: preparatory work of sowing/planting, fertilisation, amendments, phytosanitary treatments, etc. In this sense, agricultural practice are constantly changing its physical, chemical and biological properties.</p> <p>There are many regulations aimed at the protection of this resource. The DAR is responsible for the control of compliance to said legislation as well as the elaboration of the soil inventory and control, the monitoring and evaluation of its fertility and supervision of compliance with the fertilising legislations. Subsequently, over the years the Ministry takes samples from all over Catalonia mainly with mapping and agronomic aims. In any case, they are aimed at obtaining knowledge and preserving this resource which is so valuable and practically non-renewable on a human scale, and which has a close relation to the safety of the products in the food chain, especially in the primary phase.</p>

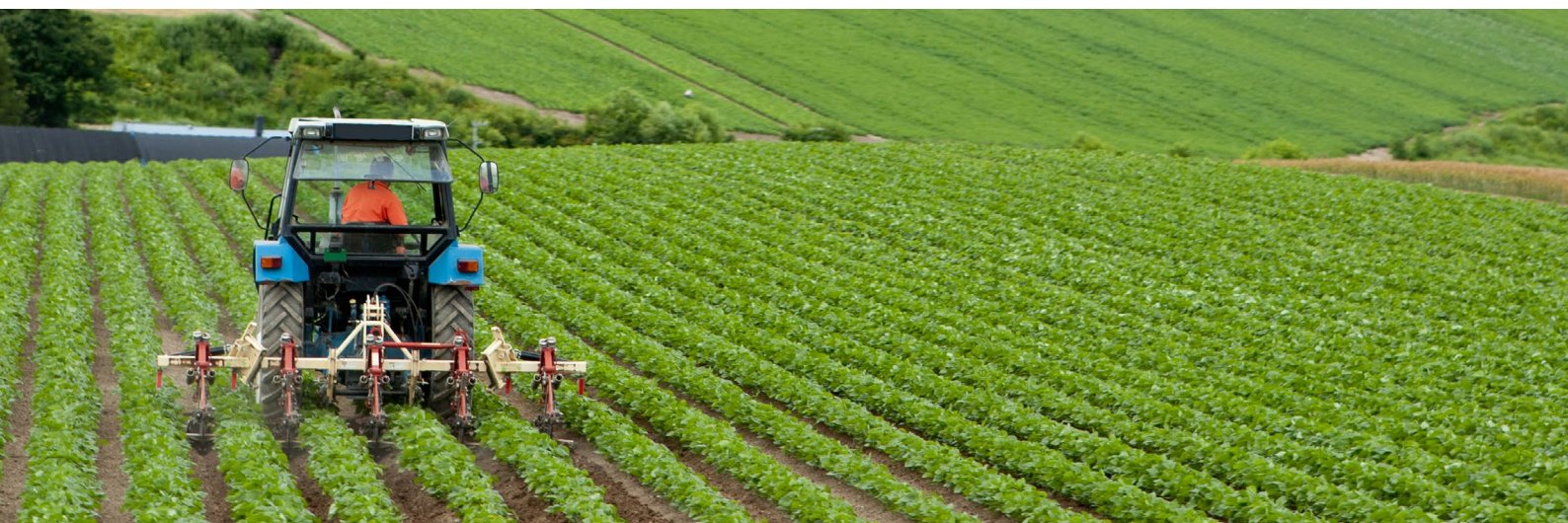
Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Agricultural production	
I-029	Control of irrigation water
ACA DARP ASP-P	<p>Agricultural activity, like the rest of human activity, has the challenge of both developing and keeping the environment in mind. Agricultural holdings, especially those of an intensive nature, provide food of a sufficient quantity and quality, and a high level of food safety, and they have to do this using good agricultural practices. To ensure that farmers and livestock handlers adopt these good agricultural practices they need to be aware of them and have access to the associated information and training. The implementation of techniques to assess the farmers and livestock handlers who form one of the key groups implicated in good management of holdings is also required.</p> <p>The control of irrigation water is a transversal responsibility in which several different bodies are involved, such as the Catalan Water Agency (ACA) or other Ministries involved in agriculture and health, as it has implications of an environmental, agricultural and public health nature. Added to the control the sources of contamination and the parameters of quality of surface and groundwater carried out by the ACA, are the controls of the Ministry of Agriculture, which take into account aspects such as health effects, agronomic effects on crops and the long-term effects on the soil which could affect health, such as the accumulation of heavy metals in the soil.</p> <p>A special mention must be given to the control carried out on the reuse of wastewater. In this case, the Ministry of Health has a relevant role in the authorisation procedure when regenerated wastewater is destined for use that could have repercussions on public health.</p>





Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Agricultural production	
I-030	Promotion of good agricultural practices
DARP	<p>Intensive agriculture, which can provide food in a sufficient quantity and quality and which allows for a high level of food safety, also has to face the challenge of achieving a high level of environmental quality. In order for this, the whole agricultural sector must follow good agricultural practices. To ensure that farmers and livestock handlers adopt these good agricultural practices they need to be aware of them and have access to the associated information and training. The implementation of techniques to assess the farmers and livestock handlers who form one of the key groups involved in resolving any problem that may arise are also required.</p> <p>Strategies for divulging these good agricultural practices are elaborated and executed, especially in the area of fertilisation and also in those of hygiene and the use of phytosanitary products. These strategies are based on a series of objectives such as the adoption, by the sector, of a code of good agricultural practices; ensuring good management of livestock excrement (manure, chicken droppings, etc.) and, in general, nitrogen fertilisers (livestock excrement, composts, mineral and nitrogen fertilisers, etc.) in order to avoid the contamination of water with nitrates originating from agricultural sources, and optimising the nitrogenous fertilising of soil using the best knowledge on crop's reaction to fertilisation.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Agricultural production	
I-031	Register and periodical inspection of phytosanitary application equipment
DARP	<p>The inspection of phytosanitary application equipment (PAE) is regulated by the legislation of the European Union which establishes a framework of community action to achieve a sustainable use of pesticides. Before going ahead with periodic inspection, the PAE (phytosanitary application equipment) must be registered in the official register of agricultural material (ROMA), in accordance with the current legislation.</p> <p>The objective of the periodic inspection of the PAE's is to evaluate the state and functioning of the phytosanitary equipment to achieve the correct application on agricultural crops. The inspection has the aim of ensuring that the phytosanitary treatment equipment, as an agricultural machine, meets the security regulations regarding the operator and third parties, and the environmental regulation and food safety in order to protect the user and the agricultural environment around them and the crops.</p> <p>The inspections are carried out by the Technical Inspection Phytosanitary Application Equipment (ITEAF), who have been authorised by competent official bodies.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Plant health and phytosanitary products	
I-032	Control and eradication of crop pests
DARP	<p>One of the main tasks carried out by the Plant Health Service of the Ministry of Agriculture is the surveillance and monitoring of pests. They carry out actions aimed at avoiding the introduction and spreading of quarantine pests; combatting certain pests in a collective manner; implementing non-chemical combatting techniques which provide an alternative to the use of pesticides, to improve the use of phytosanitary products, herbicides and phyto regulators, and to avoid unnecessary treatments, all by promoting the integrated management of pests, the alternative fight towards optimising the use of phytosanitary products in order to reduce the inclusion of these substances in the food chain.</p> <p>Quarantine pests are those that have potential economic importance and which figure on the state list or the European Union. When a pest is added to the quarantine list this limits the introduction and circulation of potential carriers in order to minimize the risk of them being introduced into free areas. When a source is detected or suspected, the Administration must verify this. If it is confirmed, plant-health measures must be taken in order to eradicate the pests. The objective is to avoid the introduction and spreading of new especially dangerous pests in Catalonia. Monitoring and control allow for the incidence of pests to be reduced, something which not only has economic benefits but also represents a reduction in the use of phytosanitary products.</p> <p>From the investigation process, the distribution and incidence of pests in the area is determined so that the obligatory preventative and control measures can be applied, as well as establishing new lines of work using many techniques, particularly of a biological nature. The promotion of plant defence groups, the disclosure and recommendation of different ways of combatting, application, diagnosis, evaluation, selection techniques and combatting pests are key to learn more about and be able to better fight the harmful agents and avoid their spreading in the most effective way. Phytosanitary warnings and pest datasheets are used to inform and advise farmers of the best techniques and optimum moments for controlling pests.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Plant health and phytosanitary products	
I-032	Control and eradication of crop pests
DARP	<p>When necessary specific campaigns are run aimed at the collective combatting of pests that are difficult to control individually in certain areas. All of these treatments are carried out using products which present a low hazard to people, wildlife and the food chain. Whenever possible, alternative combatting techniques are used, such as the use of pheromones and other attraction methods in techniques for mass capturing and sexual confusion with the aim of reducing chemical treatments.</p>
I-033	Control of the commercialisation of phytosanitary products
DARP	<p>The objective of this programme is to control compliance with legislation that applies to establishments that manufacture, store and commercialise phytosanitary products, and control and verify that the phytosanitary products put on the market are duly registered and comply with the quality requirements outlined in the legislation. Therefore, the aim is to avoid the circulation of phytosanitary products that do not comply with minimum quality levels, and in this way to ensure the efficiency of the phytosanitary treatments and their security both for the users and for the food chain.</p> <p>This programme entails the control of establishments, which must be registered in the Official Register of Establishments and Pesticide Services; the control of the Official Book of Movements (LOM), and the control of the qualification of staff and the storage conditions of the products. Additionally, a quality control of products is carried out relating to the identity of the active substances, labelling and packaging, the concentration of the active substance and the control of the physicochemical properties.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Plant health and phytosanitary products	
I-034	Control of the use of phytosanitary products
DARP	<p>This line of work is aimed at the monitoring and control of the correct use of phytosanitary products. The main objectives are to verify that companies treating phytosanitary products are registered in the Official Register of Producers and Operators of means of phytosanitary defence; to check that the people who carry out the application have the corresponding license for said application; to control the recording of transactions, users' contracts and the types of treatment carried out.</p> <p>It also involves the inspection of agricultural holdings in order to verify the correct use of phytosanitary products by verifying the holding register and the direct applications to fields; the analysis of plants, soil and water to check the repercussion of treatments on the environment; the monitoring and controlling to make sure that products are being used in accordance with the content of the current legislation, and that unauthorised or banned products are not being used. Also, they check whether an advisor on the integrated management of pests is available, which is obligatory for certain crops, and that those applying the products have an applicator's license.</p>
I-035	Surveillance and control of phytosanitary products in fruits and vegetables
ASP-P DARP	<p>The Ministry responsible for agriculture and health carry out various monitoring activities for phytosanitary residue. Correctional action is also applied in cases where vegetables are above the maximum residue levels (MRLs) established in the current legislation.</p> <p>This line of work is associated with the Coordinated programme for monitoring residues in the European Union, which is of a community nature and is aimed at gathering data and disposing of information about the level of residues from pesticides in certain vegetable products, previously established, which form an important or significant part in European's diet, with the aim of being able to calculate the dietary exposure of people to pesticides in food.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Plant health and phytosanitary products	
I-036	Promotion of the sustainable use of pesticides to reduce the risks to human health and the environment
DARP	<p>The European Union has developed a strategy for sustainable use of pesticides to reduce the impact on human health and the environment, as well as achieving a more sustainable use of pesticides and a significant global reduction of their usage and risks.</p> <p>In Catalonia there is an action plan in place that is aimed at achieving a sustainable use of phytosanitary products, the reduction of risks and the effects of the usage of phytosanitary products on human health and the environment by promoting the integrated management of pests and alternative approaches or techniques, like the use of non-chemical methods to reduce, as much as possible, the dependency on the use of pesticides.</p> <p>This line of work includes the commercialisation, the application and rational and sustainable use of phytosanitary products, and is applied to all phytosanitary activities, both in the agricultural sphere and in forest production and different professional areas: commercial distribution, service companies, advisors and professional users.</p> <p>The significant drive towards the use of alternative techniques over chemical ones is also to be highlighted, which is supported by agri-environmental subsidies of the PDR 2014/2020. These techniques are managing to eliminate the traditional aerial treatments for certain pests and reducing a large number of chemical treatments.</p>





Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Plant health and phytosanitary products	
I-037	Training and information of the applicators of phytosanitary products and pesticides
DARP	<p>Informing the farmer of new pests and phytosanitary products that can be used is a basic action to promote the adequate and efficient use of phytosanitary products. With these objectives different techniques for disposing said information are employed, amongst which we have highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Pest datasheets. Each sheet gives a description of the pest and the species of agricultural interest which may be affected, as well as specific parts aimed at providing a deeper insight into the biology of the pest, the symptoms, the damage that it can cause and the best measures to take to control it. — Phytosanitary informative sheets. These sheets describe the most effective techniques for controlling the main harmful organisms that affect vegetables. <p>Different to pest datasheets which give general information about the main pests and do not change overtime, the phytosanitary sheets are renewed periodically and give up to date information regarding the latest control techniques.</p> <p>All of these publications, edited by the Plant Health Service, complement the information provided in monthly phytosanitary warnings.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Plant health and phytosanitary products	
I-038	Phytosanitary warning system
DARP	<p>This is an activity that has the objective of informing and giving advice to farmers about the techniques and the best moments to treat the pests, and developing integrated combatting programmes to avoid unnecessary treatments, so that the use of phytosanitary products is minimized subsequently benefiting the food chain and the environment.</p> <p>The animal health technical services elaborate the warnings from the monitoring of pests and diseases, meteorological data and data from the field to form a projection of the evolution of pests and find out the most adequate moments and techniques so that the application of treatments has maximum efficiency and effectiveness.</p> <p>Farmers in Catalonia can find information quickly regarding the evolution of pests and diseases which may affect their crops by means of the monthly warnings, seven automatic phone machines, by e-mail and SMS messages. For more specialised advice, the farmer can become a member of a plant defence group (ADV).</p>
I-039	Support for the activities of plant defence groups
DARP	<p>The objective of this activity is to promote the creation of farmers groups for the common fight against pests and to develop control and prevention programmes which are alternative to conventional systems.</p> <p>A Plant Defence Group (ADV) is a farmers' association to collectively combat pests and diseases, and to promote the integrated management of pests, create networks for monitoring pests and carry out mass combatting activities. They function in collaboration with the public administrations. Annually, they establish an action programme in agreeance with the technical guidelines of the Plant Health Service.</p> <p>The ADV's are included in a register that is managed by the Plant Health Service. The ADV's receive subsidies from the DARP as support towards the contraction of technicians and the implementation of specific actions or those put forward by administration. The ADV's have collaborated with warning stations, as well as in the investigation, monitoring and coordinated combatting of pests.</p>

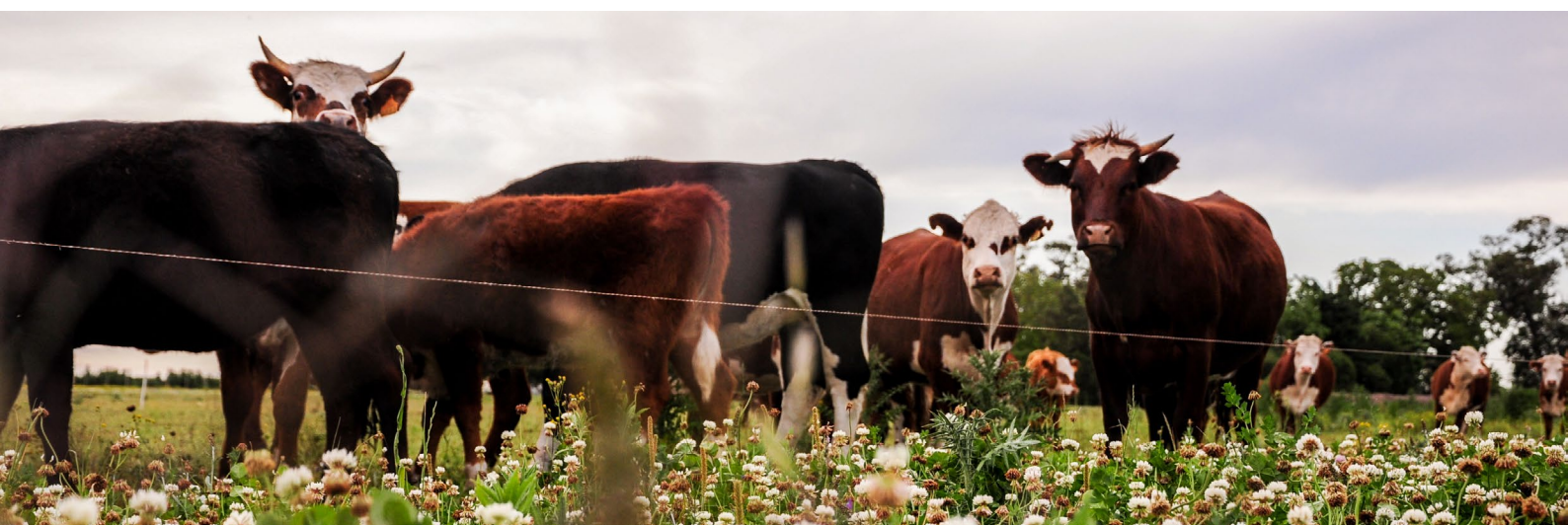
Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Veterinary medicinal products	
I-040	Surveillance and control of the production, commercialisation and application of veterinary medicinal products to food producing animals
DARP	<p>The production, distribution and application of veterinary medicinal products in adequate conditions is a key element for minimizing the presence of residues of medicinal products in food destined for consumers. The aim of this intervention is to verify that veterinary medicinal products put on the market are duly authorised and registered, that they comply with the quality and labelling requirements explained in the legislation, and that they are used according to the conditions established in the current legislation.</p> <p>All actives substances destined for medicinal products for use on food producing animals must follow an authorisation procedure and the fixed maximum limits of residue accepted as non-harmful in end products. This scientific evaluation procedure is the responsibility of the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products with the participation of the European Commission and the member states.</p> <p>Veterinary medicinal products are elaborated from these active ingredients. Each medicine, its composition, presentation and other characteristics, are examined by state evaluation committee in order to be authorised and included in the state Register of veterinary medicinal products. No veterinary medicinal product can be put on the market if it does not dispose of the necessary authorisations and is not registered in the corresponding official register.</p> <p>The whole chain of production, distribution and dispensation of veterinary medicinal products is subject to register and control. The laboratories that manufacture veterinary medicinal products are authorised and registered by state agencies of medicines. Establishments that distribute and dispense exclusively veterinary medicinal products are authorised by the Ministry of Agriculture, while establishments that distribute and dispense medical products for human and veterinary use are authorised by the Ministry of Health.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Veterinary medicinal products	
I-040	Surveillance and control of the production, commercialisation and application of veterinary medicinal products to food producing animals
DARP	<p>The technicians who are responsible for the pharmaceutical services of the centres of distribution and dispensary of veterinary medicinal products also have to be authorised and, should they be responsible for more than one distribution centre, a work plan must also be authorised.</p> <p>The application of these medicines to food producing animals is also subject to strict regulations: compulsory veterinary prescription, identification of treated animals, control of dosage, waiting time and register of information corresponding to each treatment applied.</p> <p>All of the above elements are the object of surveillance and control by the competent ministries involved in livestock and health.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Veterinary medicinal products	
I-041	Management of veterinary medicinal products alerts
DARP	<p>The main objective of an alert is to protect the health of animals, people or the environment when a possible risk is detected due to the defect or alteration in the quality or safety of a veterinary medicinal product, or when non-authorised veterinary medicinal products are put on the market. These alerts can be for quality, safety or commercialisation.</p> <p>In accordance with the current legislation which regulates veterinary medicinal products, the authorities can adopt the precautionary measures that they see fit as a consequence of the inspections carried out when, from a veterinary pharmacovigilance point of view, a possible risk is detected. The precautionary measures that are carried out in these cases are: the veterinary medicinal products are withdrawn from the market and the use of said products is prohibited; activities are suspended; the publicity and the provisional closure of establishments, centres or services; the elaboration, prescription, dispensation and supply of products is suspended.</p> <p>The responsible public administrations evaluate all of the information obtained and arrange the alert and the appropriate precautionary measures for each case. From this moment, a rapid notification mechanism is put into practice to alert different associations, the Council of Veterinarians of Catalonia and all distribution and dispensation centres of veterinary medicinal products so that they take subsequent action following the established precautionary measures. Controls are also carried out, both in laboratories where veterinary medicinal products are elaborated and medical distribution and dispensation centres in order to verify that the alert has been managed correctly and that the batches of affected products have been withdrawn from the market in an effective manner.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Animal feed	
I-042	Authorisation and registration of animal feed establishments and SANDACH
DARP	<p>With the aim of adjusting activities related to the feeding of animals to the requirements defined by the European Union, establishments that manufacture, commercialise and transport animal feed products must comply with a series of safety and traceability regulations, as well as conditions regarding the registration and authorisation of the establishments.</p> <p>Decree 81/2012 creates and regulates in Catalonia the Register of Animal Feed Establishments and SANDACH. The regulation defines <i>feed</i> as any substance or product, including additives, destined for the oral feeding of animals, including those that have been totally or partially transformed. The register of operators or feed establishments is also regulated and they have to apply for the relevant authorisation for the inscription of all of the establishments that are in their charge and must notify of any significant change to their activities.</p> <p>Additionally, the manufacturers must communicate their annual production data to the competent ministry of agriculture and livestock.</p> <p>This group of measures bring about the improvement in efficiency of the official surveillance and control programmes regarding animal feed.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Animal feed	
I-043	Surveillance and control of feed producing establishments
DARP	<p>The objective of this line of work is to control the activity of feed manufacturing and intermediary companies, including livestock holdings that carry out the activity for the consumption requirements of their own livestock, in order to verify the quality and safety of the products.</p> <p>Establishments or intermediaries that dedicate themselves to the elaboration, manufacture, importation, exportation, distribution, transportation or commercialisation of animal feed products must give details of the activity that they carry out for inscription in the register and, depending on the product, require prior authorisation in order to carry out said activities.</p> <p>There is an animal feed control plan which includes inspections of operators, establishments and livestock holdings. This Plan includes the verification of the requirements of all these types of operators, the taking of samples and checking of labelling. The samples are analysed for the presence of indigestible or banned substances, the microbial load, components of animal origin, GMO content and the comparison between labelling and real composition. In Catalonia a high level of control of raw materials is applied by the sector itself by the Association for the Promotion and Control of the Quality of Raw Materials (QUALIMAC), which controls the raw materials mainly from third countries, which is something that indicates the high level of professionalism and awareness of the sector and the effective application of self-control systems in the primary phase, which is one of the bases of our safety model for the food chain.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Animal feed	
I-044	Management of alerts for animal feed
DARP	<p>The main objective of the animal feed alert network is to avoid that animal feed that may pose a serious, direct or indirect risk to human health or the environment be consumed by animals. In the European Union there is a rapid alert system which was created to communicate the direct or indirect risks to the health and safety of consumers. Following the approval of Regulation (EC) No. 178/2002, a rapid alert system was established specifically for food products that also includes feed. This European system is known as the RASFF (Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed) and includes the member states of the Union, as well as the countries in the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Third countries do not form part of this network, however, the Commission communicates with countries that may be affected by the origin or destination of the products, this way the authorities can adopt the necessary measures.</p> <p>Alerts are issued when the product is already in circulation with the objective of stopping any feed that poses a risk from reaching animal consumption, which is why they require the immediate intervention of the competent authorities. There are also exchanges of information and news (not alerts) when immediate action is not required by the authorities.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Animal feed	
I-045	<p>Surveillance and control of animal by-products not intended for human consumption (SANDACH)</p>
<p>ARC DARP ASP-P</p>	<p>Animal by-products not intended for human consumption (SANDACH) are entire bodies or body parts, and the products derived which are unsuitable for human consumption. According to the risks that they pose they are divided into one of the following three categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Category 1 (high risk): may contain pathogens, residues or pollutants which require specific management and very concrete destinations aimed at destroying or eliminating them. — Category 2 (medium risk): may contain certain pathogens or residues from medicines or contaminants that, due to their characteristics, can be valorized during compost, the manufacturing of fertilisers and soil correctors or soil improvement products biogas production. — Category 3 (low risk): originating from animals that have passed a veterinary inspection and can be used to make domestic animal food, raw materials for animal feed and technical products (cosmetics and medicines). <p>Livestock holdings, fish farms, slaughter houses and other installations in the food industry, food wholesalers and retailers, fisheries and aquaculture may generate SANDACH.</p> <p>The public administrations carry out official controls on these companies to verify the correct management of the SANDACH's and to ensure that materials that may pose a risk do not make their way into the food chain. The Ministry responsible for agriculture and livestock has the competences of surveillance and control regarding the collection, transport, storage, manipulation, transformation, application and elimination of category 3 materials and subsequent transformed products. The Catalan Waste Agency is responsible for the authorisation, registration, inspection and control of the collection, transport, storage, manipulation, transformation, application and elimination of materials from categories 1 and 2.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Livestock production	
I-046	Register of livestock holdings
DARP	<p>The legislation of regulation and management of livestock holdings establishes the obligation to dispose of a general Register of livestock holdings which covers the livestock holdings with production animals that are raised or maintained for production, as well as the collection, storage and distribution facilities for the genetic material of production animals, the commercial operators with or without facilities, facilities for the concentration of animals, the grazing lands, the facilities for equestrian practices, facilities for equestrian leisure and the integrator companies.</p> <p>The holdings are divided into different sub-holdings for each species, and they are classified in a zoo technical manner according to their productive purpose. The foremost activities within this area are the authorisation and registration of livestock holdings, the verification of the accuracy of data and the compliance of the holdings with authorisation conditions and the constant updating of the register's database. The general Register of livestock holdings includes computerised information regarding, amongst others details, data of geographical location (coordinates), health status, capacity and census, etc.</p> <p>The objectives of the Register of livestock holdings are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — To have an exhaustive knowledge of each of the livestock sectors: the number of holdings, territorial distribution, classification by types of production, structural situation, productive capacity, etc. — To improve the register by applying some minimal requirements to which all types of holdings must comply (health, hygiene, animal welfare, environmental) and, as a consequence, improve both the competitiveness and the health of the holdings, without hindering the achievement of a high level of environmental sustainability. — To dispose of up to date information which can be applied to all types of control and alert programmes in terms of animal health and animal health products, amongst others.

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Livestock production	
I-046	Register of livestock holdings
DARP	<p>The inscription in the Register of the commencing of the livestock activity or the modification of registration data can be done by two types of procedures depending on the activity and type of livestock holdings: authorization and/or communications:</p> <p>Subject to the prior authorisation procedure upon commencing livestock activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The livestock holdings (which are different from small-capacity holdings and those for self-consumption) of porcine, bovine, ovine, caprine, equine, poultry, rabbit, beekeeping, fur and hunting big game. — The livestock holdings with other species of animals that are raised or kept for food production or products of animal origin for human consumption. — Special holdings: facilities for the concentration of animals (with the exception of commercial operators without facilities for storing animals), collection centres for genetic material, facilities for equestrian training and general practice and facilities for equestrian leisure. <p>Subject to a procedure of communication upon commencing the activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Small-capacity holdings and those for self-consumption — Centres that only store genetic material — Grazing lands <p>The legislation of regulation and management of livestock holdings also establishes the obligation to dispose of a directory of operators in the livestock sector, which must contain livestock commercial operators who do not dispose of housing facilities, distributors of genetic material, integrator companies and livestock associations, breeding organisations and private companies of hybrid breeding pigs, which, prior to commencing the activity, must communicate said intention to the county office of the Ministry involved in livestock in order to be included in the directory.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Livestock production	
I-047	Surveillance and control of livestock holdings
DARP	<p>The Programme of Official Control of Hygiene of Primary Livestock Production is the control instrument on the matter in accordance with the specifications of the Community regulations. The object of this programme is to guarantee hygiene using the controls related to the verification of compliance with general hygiene requirements, the holding registers, information on the food chain and the specific animal health requirements.</p> <p>The official control is especially focussed on facilities, introduction and movement of animals, animal feed, water for animal consumption, veterinary medicinal products, management and exploitation mechanisms, the preparation of animals for slaughter, storage and the use of hazardous products, and measures of control of traceability and the management of operating registers.</p> <p>Should non-compliances be detected, the farmer is given advice in order to solve the observed deficiencies and so that, if irregularities are verified, they adopt the appropriate measures to correct this. When necessary, the corresponding dossier in accordance with current regulations is offered.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Livestock production	
I-048	Surveillance and control of the identification, registration and movements of animals
DARP ASP-P	<p>Animal identification systems allow animals to be traced throughout their whole lives, from their birth right up to their death, and are the key piece for achieving traceability of food products of animal origin. All species of bovine, ovine, caprine and equine animals have to be individually identified using different systems according to the species (double ear-tag for bovines, double ear-tag and ruminal bolus for ovine and caprine livestock, injectable transponder for equines), and must dispose of identification documentation and be registered in computerised up to date animal identification databases. Animals from the porcine species, ovine and caprine for fattening, poultry and rabbit are identified in batches and this is always done before they leave the holding of origin.</p> <p>Equally, all movement of livestock must be accompanied by the mandatory health documentation for movement which verifies the health level of the original holding and that of the destination. For the movement of livestock destined for fattening or slaughter within the territory of Catalonia, and when epizootiological circumstances allow and the health qualifications and the operation are appropriate, the livestock handlers dispose of the health documentation that they fill in themselves. Equally, for movement of animals destined for reproduction or for movements outside of Catalonia a health certificate, issued by official veterinary services, for movement is necessary.</p> <p>All information in the different documents which accompany the animals are introduced into the traceability system of the DARP, who then communicate said information to the MAGRAMA database. For intra-Community movements the TRACES system (Trade Control and Expert System) is used. This is a computerised system that allows the exchange of information between the veterinary authorities, through which veterinarians emit the health certificates for exchanges and all animal movements and products of animal origin that, due to their nature or provenance, the European Union considers it necessary for them to be noted. When a livestock remittance, or one of certain products of an animal origin, is sent to another state, the official veterinary services from the county office at the origin, once the animals have been inspected, introduce the data into TRACES, issue the health certificate and send a message to the relevant authority at the animal's destination.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Livestock production	
I-048	Surveillance and control of the identification, registration and movements of animals
DARP ASP-P	<p>Thanks to this communication, the arrival of these animals is recorded and a visit to the farm can be carried out in order to verify the state of health of the animals and the accompanying documentation and, if necessary, take samples and verify, at the laboratory, that the animals comply with the established health requirements in the European legislation.</p> <p>The activity of the transport and commercialisation of livestock is considered a critical control point in the production chain, as it poses a risk for the spreading of animal diseases. This fact, together with animal welfare regulations, enforces the necessity that all operators and transporters involved comply with specific conditions and an intensification of the controls on livestock movement activities. With these goals, the official Register of transporters and methods of transport also exists where all operators that carry out this activity must be registered.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Livestock production	
I-049	Surveillance and control of medicine residues in livestock holdings
DARP ASP-P	<p>The investigation Plan for residues in livestock holdings is a surveillance and control programme based on the taking and analysis of samples of water, feed, urine, straw and skin at the livestock holdings to verify the correct use of veterinary medicinal products and to investigate the possible use of illegal substances.</p> <p>The current legislation establishes the control measures and the investigation plan of substances, or of their metabolites, which can be administered to animals, to ensure detection in any phase: both in the elaboration of these substances and in the acquisition or transformation of products of animal origin. Similarly, it establishes that the monitoring of residues and substances can be carried out along the whole production chain of animals and products of animal origin: live animals, their excrement and biological liquids, any animal organ or tissue, products of animal origin or feed and water. For this reason, one part of the investigation plan of residues is carried out in the primary phase of the food chain and in the distribution and transformation phase. The sampling of live animals, feed and water for animals is carried out by the Official Veterinary Service of the Ministry of Agriculture DARP (primary phase). The sampling of products of animal origin for human consumption, is carried out by the Official Veterinary Service of the Ministry of Health (transformation and distribution phase). More than 10,000 samples are analysed annually in official laboratories with conforming results in more than 99% of cases in previous years. In cases of non-conformity, the administrative or legal measures are taken against those responsible and measures are taken regarding the affected product.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Livestock production	
I-050	Surveillance and control of hygiene and health conditions in the primary production of milk
DARP ASP-P	<p>The Programme of control and evaluation of hygiene and health conditions in the primary production of milk establish a set of precise actions that command the production and industrial sector of this field to obtain milk of the highest quality destined for human consumption, in accordance with the best possible production techniques. It also establishes the procedure to facilitate verifying that the milk commercialised in Catalonia meets the requirements of the current legislation.</p> <p>This activity is aimed at detecting the possible cases of non-compliance in terms of milk production by carrying out appropriate checks in each phase of production from the holding to the unloading dock of the milk purchaser or industrialist. Coordinated actions between the different control agents are undertaken and checks are made that producers and operators of the sector carry out the obligatory controls, have an efficient control system and rapid response to problems that are detected.</p> <p>Controls are aimed at the investigation of the presence of inhibitors, germs and somatic cells in milk produced on the holdings. Additionally, when all of the tanks arrive at the collection centre, the purchaser takes a sample of the raw milk that has been transported which is immediately analysed with a detection kit for antibiotics before they are unloaded. If the commercial kit detects residues of antibiotics an investigation is opened with the aim of finding out the motive and putting the opportune actions to amend it.</p> <p>An identification database is available for the milk sector, which includes the registration of all operators and matters of the sector. This data is transferred to the LETRAQ (Milk, Traceability, Quality), which is the tool used for the management of the traceability and quality of the milk sector. All control laboratories communicate the analysis results and control samples taken in the milk holdings to the LETRAQ database, to determine the parameters of somatic cells, bacteriology and presence of inhibitors, and the results of the samples of from transport tanks relative to the presence of inhibitors. Additionally, this system generates alerts to communicate non-compliance in somatic cells and bacteriology associated with the responsible livestock holdings and positive results to the inhibitor test. When necessary, commercialisation of the milk from all holdings where serious non-compliance has been detected is banned until correction is proven.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Animal health	
I-051	Support for the application of biosafety measures in animal holdings and transport
DARP	<p>The concept of biosafety refers to the group of health measures regarding the management, design and training applied to avoid the entrance of infectious agents in livestock holdings or to minimize their diffusion. Currently, the critical points of livestock holdings and how said points favour the entrance and spreading of infectious diseases are well known. To evaluate the level of biosafety, the location of the holdings must be known (one of the most important factors to take into account) as well as the health status of the zone, the livestock density, the distance between holdings, the types of holdings that are nearby, the existence of landfills nearby or waste treatment plants that may increase the numbers of rodents or birds, the presence of roads or pathways nearby, the frequency of the passing of livestock lorries or materials that may increase the risk of contamination, and the climatic, hydrological and topographic characteristics of the zone where the holding is located.</p> <p>The biosafety measures affect the design of the holdings: restriction and control of access, clothing, physical barriers to impede the entrance of birds, flies, domestic animals, rats, amongst others, as well as the way they function: health programmes with veterinary controls, vaccines, serological controls, verification of the health status of the animals brought into the holdings, continuous training of staff, disinfection of footwear and clothing before entering the holdings and cleaning and disinfection programmes.</p> <p>The Ministry of Agriculture carry out actions aimed at promoting and giving support to the application of biosafety measures with training activities and the distribution of material and advice.</p> <p>Since 2015 the Biosafety Plan has been applied to porcine holdings under which the veterinarians of the ADS carry out a survey to evaluate the level of biosafety of all Catalan porcine holdings and advise farmers to implement better structures and operations to raise the level of biosafety on farms.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Animal health	
I-052	Surveillance of foodborne animal diseases, combatting and eradicating them
DARP ASP-P	<p>The Ministry of Agriculture, in accordance with the European and state legislation, and in collaboration with livestock sectors, implement programmes that have the objective of monitoring, combatting, controlling and/or eradicating animal diseases. The actions carried out following the framework of these programmes include the diagnostic testing of animals, paramyxovirus vaccination, obligatory sacrifice of infected animals, elimination of carcasses and restrictions of movements, according to the diseases and final objective of the programme.</p> <p>In case of the possible appearance of animal diseases predefined action plans are needed which allow for surveillance and prevention actions to be exercised, as well acting in an efficient and certain way should a source be identified, so that it is eliminated as soon as possible and therefore the impact of the disease on the livestock herd is reduced. These plans exist for notifiable diseases with a high risk of spreading and they are drafted in accordance with the corresponding Community regulations.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Animal health	
I-052	<p>Surveillance of foodborne animal diseases, combatting and eradicating them</p>
<p>DARP ASP-P</p>	<p>In the fight against animal diseases there are four types of action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Prevention programme: including specific measures regarding the epidemiology of the disease and measures of a transversal nature, such as biosafety, the declaration and research into suspected diseases, the control of movements and training of staff. — Monitoring programmes: involving taking random samples from animals that are suspected of suffering from the disease, clinical visits to the holdings in order to detect the presence of sick animals, or the monitoring and research into the vector of the disease when necessary. — Alert plans: are applied when cases in other countries have been declared and a risk is posed to the welfare of Catalonia. This consists in the revision and control of movements of consignments of animals which are possibly effected; information and immediate disclosure to all sectors involved; intensification of the surveillance and prevention programme measures; the taking of samples and urgent analysis of animals from the risk zone and animals which are suspected to be suffering from the disease. — Emergency plans: they are initiated when there is a well-founded suspected case of the disease in Catalonia. This entails the confirmation of the disease, the delimitation of protection and surveillance areas, the sacrifice of affected animals and the elimination of carcasses in such a way that spreading is avoided and, in cases of zoonotic diseases, the effect on human health. <p>Within this area the controls carried out on slaughter houses are also worth mentioning, where official veterinary services carry out ante and post mortem inspections and, in certain cases, specific analysis that provides an extra identification tool for pathologies and information regarding the health of the animal.</p> <p>Following on, we will continue to describe the specific interventions that fit into the area of surveillance, combatting and eradicating animal diseases, surveillance and control programmes that cover bovine, ovine, caprine and poultry welfare.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Animal health	
I-053	Surveillance and control of bovine diseases
DARP	<p>Diseases which are the object of combatting and eradication measures are: bovine brucellosis, bovine tuberculosis, bovine spongiform encephalopathy and bluetongue disease.</p> <p>The diseases that do not currently affect Catalan livestock and which are the object of surveillance and risk minimisation measures to avoid their presence are: contagious bovine pleuropneumonia and enzootic bovine leukosis.</p> <p>In order to control these diseases, the following programmes are currently being carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Health Programme of bovine livestock, the object of which is to achieve the eradication of brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis and to keep Catalonia free of contagious bovine pleuropneumonia and bovine leukosis. — Serological, virological, entomological and vaccination surveillance Programme to prevent and combat bluetongue. — Prevention and monitoring of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (EET). <p>Out of these diseases, brucellosis, bovine tuberculosis and bovine spongiform encephalopathy can all be foodborne. The objective of the action techniques for these programmes is the early detection by means of analytic tests and the quick elimination of affected animals and/or herds. With this goal, risk-based controls are established, as well as detailed and intense operating procedures for infected or possibly infected herds, as well as regulating the movements of animals according to the risk of each type of herd. Additionally, action is carried out regarding other susceptible domestic species and wildlife for a more effective control of each disease.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Animal health	
I-054	Surveillance and control of ovine and caprine diseases
DARP	<p>The main zoonotic disease of possible foodborne transmission that affects sheep and goats and which is the object of combat and eradication measures is ovine and caprine brucellosis. For this reason, specific measures are applied.</p> <p>Within the Catalan territory, it remains obligatory to carry out sanitation of ovine and caprine brucellosis. The DARP annually contracts the service of veterinarians to carry out these sanitary tasks, in accordance with the directives laid down by the Ministry of Agriculture. The objective is to decrease the prevalence of the disease in herds by sacrificing animals found to be positive and evacuating holdings with high prevalence. Veterinary observation is established in holdings with a recent positive animals. A specific protocol is applied to ovine and caprine herds with a low prevalence and herds with new positive results, which consists in carrying out complementary tests to confirm or rule out the disease and to eliminate positive animals.</p>
I-055	Surveillance and control of significant Salmonella outbreaks in public health and poultry holdings
DARP	<p>In Catalonia and the rest of Europe, salmonellosis is one of the main foodborne zoonotic diseases. In compliance with Regulation (EC) No. 2160/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and its previous modifications, the Ministry of Agriculture established a control programme of salmonellosis diseases (<i>S. enteritidis</i>, <i>S. typhimurium</i>, <i>S. hadar</i>, <i>S. virchow</i>, <i>S. infantis</i>) in breeding, laying and fattening hens, breeding and fattening turkeys.</p> <p>These programmes are based on the application of measures such as self-monitoring and official controls, the implementation of strict biosafety regulations at holdings, the implementation of the good hygiene practice guides, the prohibition of the use of antimicrobial veterinary medicinal products to control the disease, preventative vaccination and control of positive batches. All of this contributes to the reduction of the prevalence of these pathogens in holdings. Another objective is to avoid eggs from poultry farms where a case of <i>Salmonella</i> that is relevant to public health has been detected being destined for fresh human consumption.</p>

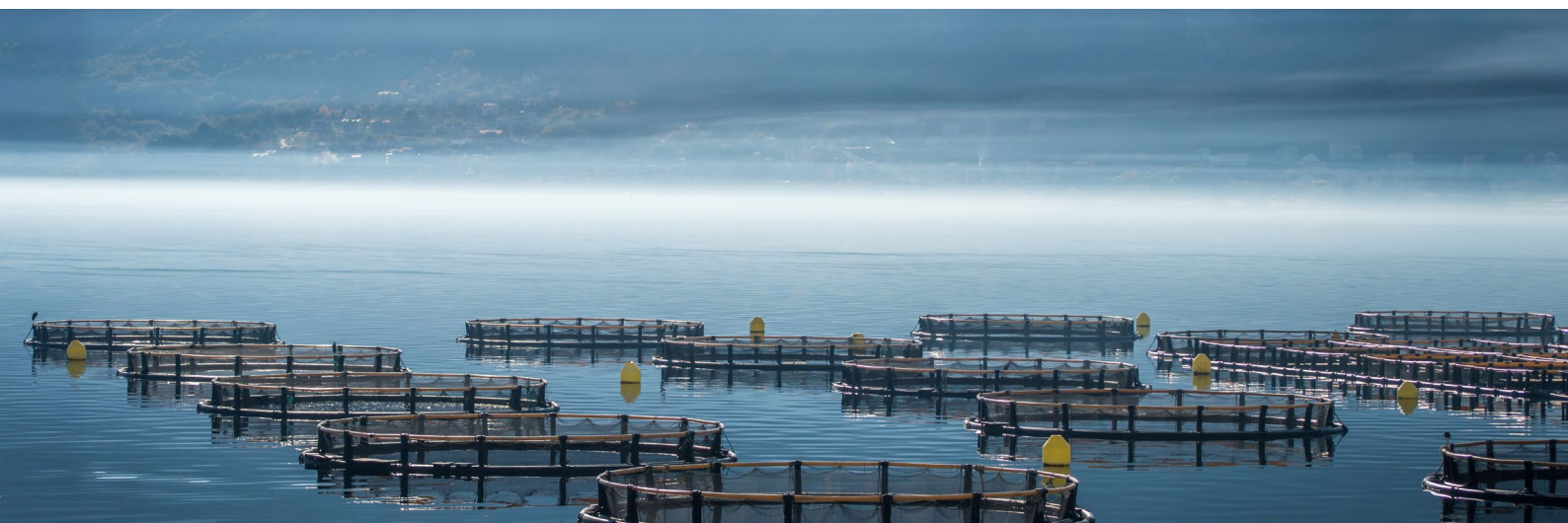
Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Animal health	
I-056	Surveillance and control of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies
DARP	<p>Since 1989, within the European Union, a group of actions has been carried out to manage the risk of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (EET) in animals, in strict collaboration between all member states and the European Commission. EET's are one of the most profusely regulated food safety issues in the European setting, due to potential risk, the severity of effects on people's health, the economic consequences and the decrease in the confidence of consumers.</p> <p>In Catalonia, the Ministry of Agriculture carries out surveillance and control operations of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies in bovine, ovine and caprine welfare in the primary phase of the food chain. The group of official control operations are based on the surveillance and control of livestock holdings for the detection and declaration of suspicions; the taking of samples and analysis of dead or sacrificed animals at the holdings which are not destined for human consumption; the control of products used for feeding animals; epizootic measures of investigation and eradication when cases of the disease are confirmed in order to find out the origin of the animals or products that may be at risk of being affected; the sacrifice and destruction of animals which may form part of the risk populations and of any other product that may pose a foodborne disease risk; as well as the removal of carcasses to centres specialising in the destruction of carcasses, as both on-site burial and incineration are prohibited.</p> <p>Animals destined for slaughter houses to be sacrificed for human consumption are subjected to an <i>ante mortem</i> veterinary inspection and, once sacrificed, a detection test for EET in cows or sheep over a certain age. The presence of prions in wild species which are susceptible to EET.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Animal health	
I-057	Support for the operations of livestock health defence groups
DARP	<p>The improvement of animal health and the efficiency of livestock production requires a high sanitary level that can only be achieved through collaboration throughout the sector, both for combatting and eradicating disease and to maintain defence structures against emerging and spreading risks. For this reason, the competent public administrations promote the development of structures and actions by the livestock sector to improve the conditions and raise the productive and sanitary levels of livestock products.</p> <p>A Livestock Health Defence Group is an association which is made up of farmers with the aim of raising the health and zoo technical levels of their holdings by establishing and executing prophylaxis programmes, combatting animal diseases and improving hygiene conditions. Each Livestock Health Defence Group is considered a unit both in terms of the development of the health programme and the subsidies available to them. The competent public administrations carry out economic and technical support operations to boost the creation and continuity of these associations. The main activities in this area are the distribution of subsidies, territorial restructure to improve effectiveness and the management of coordination operations regarding sanitary co-responsibility in the fight against the diseases that affect livestock.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Fishery and aquaculture	
I-058	Surveillance and control of extractive fishing and seafood farming hygiene
DARP	<p>The general objective of the surveillance and control of extractive fishing and seafood farming hygiene is to avoid or minimize the risks in primary production in order to guarantee the food safety of fish and seafood products, verifying that primary producers comply with the current legal requirements regarding the control of hazards and good hygiene practice in primary production.</p> <p>The specific actions that are carried out are: the control of the operator responsible for the primary production and operations connected to extractive fishing to verify their capacity to reduce the introduction of biological, chemical or physical hazards which could affect the food safety of their production; the control of work processes to guarantee a good methodology which ensures the perfect quality and hygiene of the product; the control of any source of contamination that may pose a risk by adopting hygiene measures and practices; the verification of hygiene conditions in tools, machinery, vessels and all elements that directly intervene in the processing and manipulation of the product, from the means of transport to the first sale, and the control of fishing boats and their auxiliary vessels to verify that they comply with the structural and equipment requirements established by the legislation.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Fishery and aquaculture	
I-059	Surveillance and control of hygiene in aquaculture production
DARP	<p>The general objective of this line of intervention is to avoid or minimize the risks in primary production to an acceptable level in order to guarantee the food safety of aquaculture products, verifying that primary producers comply with the current legal requirements regarding the control of hazards and good hygiene practice in primary production.</p> <p>The specific actions that are carried out are: the control of the operator responsible for the primary production and operations connected to aquaculture to verify their capacity to reduce the probability of the introduction of hazards which could affect the food safety of their production; verify control regarding the growing medium of cultivated organisms, which will consequently be destined for human consumption, the control of any source of contamination that may pose a health risk; verification of the inexistence of cross-contamination processes that may pose a risk to the health status of the product; the control of work processes to guarantee good methodology to ensure perfect quality and hygiene; the verification of hygiene conditions of the facilities, elements and machinery that directly intervene in the processing and manipulation of the product, including the sacrifice or transport of live animals, and verify the monitoring of traceability of the product allowing an adequate tracking at any point in the cultivation process.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Fishery and aquaculture	
I-060	Surveillance and control of water quality, molluscs and toxic phytoplankton
DARP ACA	<p>The surveillance programme for water quality, molluscs and toxic phytoplankton consists in the surveillance and monitoring of hazards to the aquatic environment to guarantee that the molluscs, echinoderms and tunicates extracted from the Catalan coastline comply with the sanitary requirements outlined by current legislation and therefore helping to guarantee the best safety conditions for their consumption.</p> <p>The Catalan coastline is divided into declared production areas ordered in sequence from the south to the north of the territory. The production zones are classified into categories A, B or C depending on the faecal contamination levels (<i>E. coli</i>) that they present, in accordance with the legally established reference values. Type A zones are for molluscs not requiring purification; type B zones where purification is obligatory and type C, where extraction is prohibited.</p> <p>According to necessity, microbiological analysis is carried out in production zones as well as analysis of environmental parameters (salinity, temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen and chlorophyll in the water), the levels of heavy metals and organohalogens, toxic dioxins and furans.</p> <p>Another important facet of the surveillance programme is the determination of the presence of potentially toxic phytoplankton in production water and the toxins that said phytoplankton may produce, which could accumulate in molluscs. Phytoplankton is made up of a group of microalgae which other animals feed on, including molluscs. The toxins that are monitored are the amnesiac toxin (ASP), the diuretic toxin (DSP) and Paralytic toxin (PSP).</p> <p>The surveillance programme promotes the regular monitoring of toxic phytoplankton and toxins. Specific operations are carried out to intensify sampling when species of toxic microalgae phytoplankton in water reach potentially dangerous levels or biotoxins in molluscs are found to be above permitted levels. When biotoxins in molluscs exceed the referenced levels, extraction in the affected zones is prohibited and the whole sector is made aware as well as certain competent bodies. The prohibition remains in place until the analysis indicates that levels have returned to normal.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Fishery and aquaculture	
I-06I	Control of seafood production zones
DARP	<p>Regulation (EC) No. 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004, in which specific regulations for the organisation of official controls of products of animal origin destined for human consumption are established, states that the competent authority is to control the classified production zones where the collection of bivalve molluscs has been prohibited or is subject to special conditions, to guarantee that products hazardous to human health are not commercialised.</p> <p>In compliance with this regulation production zones must be regularly checked to verify that no illegal practices at the origin, source and destination of live bivalve molluscs.</p> <p>The aim of said controls is to verify that bivalve molluscs are not extracted from classified production zones where collection is prohibited and control that bivalve molluscs collected in classified or reclassified zones have the corresponding documentation.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control in the primary phase	
Conditionality	
I-062	Linking receipt of economic support by primary phase operators to compliance with the food safety conditions in the context of European legislation on conditionality
DARP	<p>Conditionality was amongst the main elements of the PAC reform in 2003, which consists in linking economic support to compliance with the legal managerial requirements and good conditions, including food safety.</p> <p>The legal requirements are a series of regulations regarding agricultural, environmental, public health, animal health, plant health and animal welfare conditions, defined in the Community legislation.</p> <p>Farmers and livestock holders can only opt for the full amount of PAC payments on the condition that they comply with the conditionality requirements. By applying the conditionality criteria we guarantee that agricultural activity receiving Community support contribute to achieving a series of values assumed by the European society and that the perception of this support is of greater legitimacy due to the added value contributed.</p>

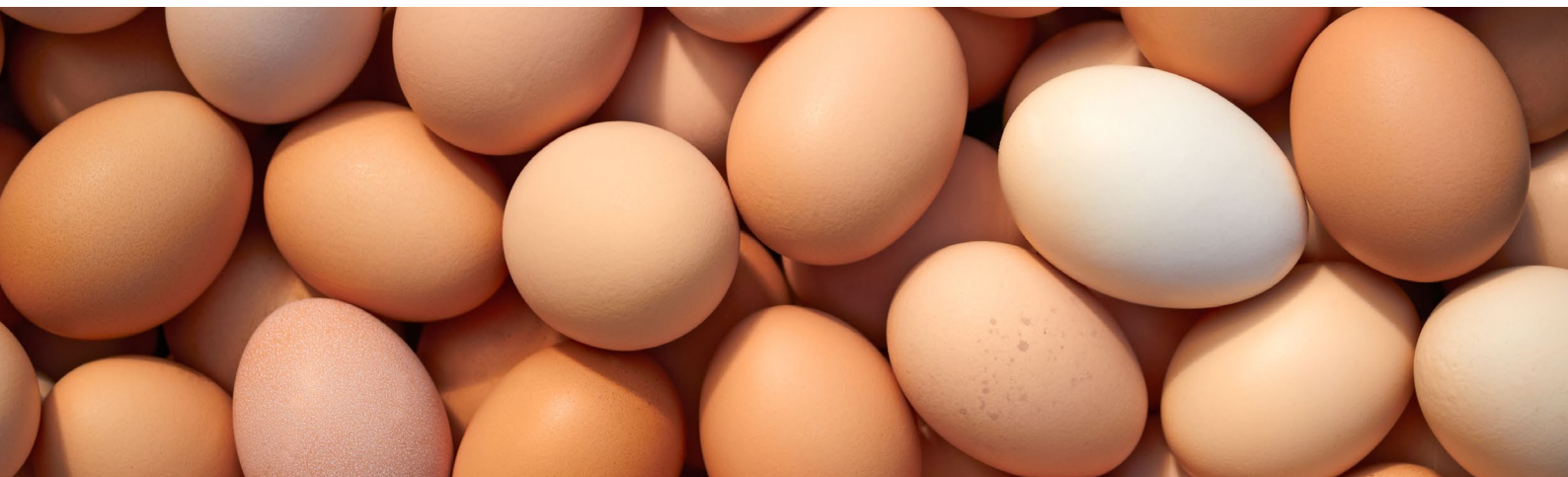


Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of the transformation and distribution phase	
I-063	Authorisation and registration of food industries
ASP-P	<p>Every establishment in Catalonia which dedicates itself to food operations must apply to be included in the official register that corresponds with their activity. The owners of the food companies and establishments, the companies that distribute water using mobile tanks and cisterns and mass institutional catering, must communicate the commencing of their services to the Public Health Agency of Catalonia in order to be included in the Sanitary Registry of Industries and Food Products of Catalonia (RSIPAC). Consequently a census of industries is formed which contains information regarding identification data, location and operations of the establishments.</p> <p>Industries belonging to sectors dealing with food of animal origin must request authorisation before commencing activities. The request for authorisation, in these cases, is simultaneous with the request to be included in the RSIPAC.</p> <p>The census is updated at the request of interested parties or as a consequence of surveillance and control operations of the Public Health Agency of Catalonia. The existence and reliability of our register is fundamental in order to achieve an adequate programme of official control and to facilitate emergency operations.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of the transformation and distribution phase	
I-064	Surveillance and control of food industries
ASP-P	<p>The food industries registered in the Sanitary Registry of Industries and Food Products of Catalonia (RSIPAC) are the object of official surveillance and control carried out periodically on a risk-based frequency. Said inspections are carried out by official control inspectors of the Public Health Agency of Catalonia and the Public Health Agency of Barcelona.</p> <p>The objective of the general control programme for establishments is to verify compliance with requirements established in the current legislation regarding the registration of establishments, hygiene, facilities, management of the elimination of animal by-products not intended for human consumption (SANDACH) and labelling of foodstuff. This control system evaluates compliance with food safety conditions established in the Community regulations</p> <p>The evaluation of compliance is done via inspection visits and sample taking. Should non-conformities with current legislation be detected measures are taken in order to rectify this. These measures range from formal requests for correction to withdrawal of authorisation and ending the operation, as well as the initiation of disciplinary proceedings or immobilisation or withdrawal of products from the market, among others.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of the transformation and distribution phase	
I-065	Assessment of self-monitoring procedures in food operations
ASP-P	<p>The assessment of procedures based on the system of hazard analysis critical control points (HACCP) has the aim of checking that the operators of procedures in the transformation and distribution phase of the food chain control the significant hazards associated with their activity and are able to produce and/or distribute safe food in a consistent manner.</p> <p>The seven principles of the hazard analysis critical control points (HACCP) and the prerequisites are checked to ensure that they have been designed in an effective and efficient manner and are correctly implemented, meaning that the system maintains and ensures the objective of producing safe food. The technique applied is the assessment, consisting of a systematic and independent examination to determine whether activities and results correspond to those laid out in plans, if they are effectively implemented and if they are appropriate to achieve the objectives.</p> <p>The official evaluation Programme for proceedings based on the HACCP prioritises the interventions according to the risk and intervention point in the food chain, so that establishments most at risk are focussed.</p> <p>Should conclusions drawn from the assessment indicate that correctional or preventative action is required, the company must elaborate an action plan, the implementation of which is verified afterwards with a follow-up assessment.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of the transformation and distribution phase	
I-O66	Surveillance and control of the public water supply
ASP-P	<p>The official surveillance and control of the public water supply has the objective of monitoring the health hazards associated with water for human consumption in order to obtain adequate and sufficient information to evaluate the risks to the population's health and determine the most appropriate options for managing them.</p> <p>The management of the supply of water for human consumption must be carried out in a way that minimises the sanitary risks of users and consumers. The Programme is aimed at promoting the introduction of self-monitoring and management protocols into the supply and understanding the sanitary conditions of the supplies and water that is available to the population by means of surveillance and control operations based on inspection and analysing samples.</p> <p>The guarantee of safe domestic distribution of water to the population requires coordinated action between the Government of Catalonia, the city councils and the companies who manage said supplies, which are the three tiers granted responsibility regarding drinking water by the current legislation. From a sanitary point of view, the correct management of an installation means carrying out certain systematic actions, predefined and programmed into the protocols of the company, which are: information regarding the supply zone, sample taking for self-monitoring, notification procedures to inform users about non-compliance and provide information, procedures for applying corrective measures in cases that could affect the quality of water supplied and staff training</p> <p>Should non-compliance with quality criteria be detected, the cause must be investigated and ensure that corrective or preventative measures are applied as soon as possible to protect the health of the affected population.</p> <p>Finally, it must be highlighted that consumers must receive sufficient and relevant information regarding the quality of water for human consumption, exceptional situations, corrective and preventative measures, as well as all aspects that may affect supplies and which may pose a risk to the health of the population.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of the transformation and distribution phase	
I-067	Surveillance and control of chemical residues in food of animal origin
ASP-P	<p>The Research Programme into Residues in Food of Animal Origin (PIR) is a sampling and analysis programme, the main objective of which being to gather information on the residues of substances that may pose a risk to the health of consumer. This intervention is carried out in the transformation and distribution phase of the food chain and is complemented with the surveillance and control of chemical residues in livestock holdings in the primary phase.</p> <p>Community regulation establishes the minimum number of samples that must be analysed per species or food of animal origin in relation to the production of the previous year. As it is a random sampling programme, the taking of samples has to take into account a series of criteria, such as the information available on the producer and production system, indicators of the use of pharmacological substances, gender and age of the animal. Substances that have to be investigated are unauthorised substances, veterinary medicinal products and environmental pollutants.</p> <p>As well as gathering information for the surveillance area, this programme is used as a combat tool against the fraudulent or negligent use of the substances under investigation, such as veterinary medicines or illegal growth enhancers, amongst others. With this commitment, since the beginning of 1989, the necessary procedures have been adapted from a legal and administrative point of view so that, in cases where infractions of regulations are detected, appropriate criminal or administrative proceedings can be initiated.</p> <p>Independent of the random plan, there is a group of actions that official veterinarians of slaughterhouses carry out upon the detection of animals suspected of containing residues because of their conformation, background of the farm of origin or other exterior signs. The suspicion that an animal may contain residues involves an operation that consists of the immobilisation and sample taking of tissue from the animal or the whole batch, depending on the chemical residue in question. In such cases, the samples are gathered with unequivocal identification of and correspondence with the individual to which they belong, as animals with a result of non-compliance are judged unfit for human consumption.</p>

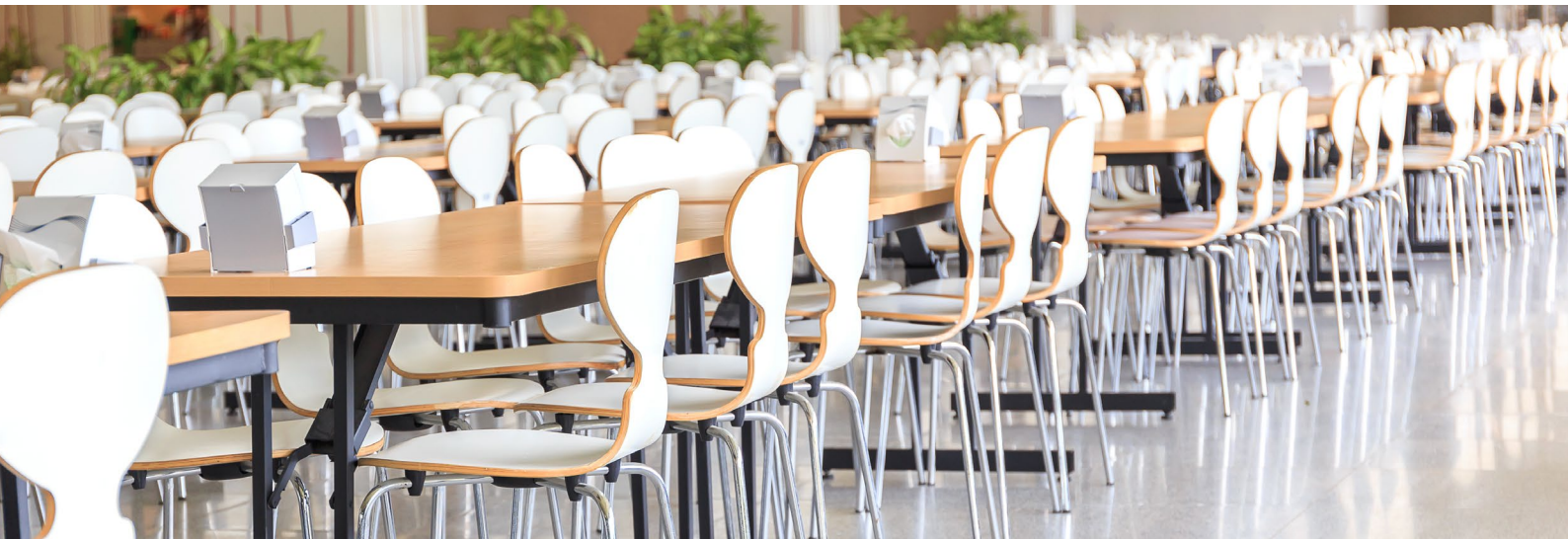
Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of the transformation and distribution phase	
I-068	Health inspection of animals sacrificed for human consumption
ASP-P	<p>The official veterinarians of slaughterhouses and wild game treatment rooms carry out the inspections of sacrificed animals in order to control that meat is obtained in accordance with the current legislation and to prevent the commercialisation of meat which may pose a risk to human or animal health.</p> <p>With the exception of the cases confirmed by regulation, in which the <i>ante mortem</i> inspection is done in the place of origin, the official veterinary must carry out an in situ <i>ante mortem</i> inspection of all animals before they are sacrificed to determine whether they present any alteration that may pose a risk to human or animal health, paying special attention to notifiable zoonotic and epizootic diseases. They also verify the compliance and management that the commercial operator carries out in terms of the documentation and identification of animals destined for slaughter.</p> <p>The animal carcasses and offal must be subject to a post mortem inspection. In this inspection special attention is paid to signs that may suggest that the animals suffer from a zoonotic or notifiable epizootic disease. When necessary, supplementary examinations are carried out and/or laboratory tests to establish a diagnostic or detect the presence of residues or pollutants in quantities higher than authorised maximum residue levels (LMR), and the non-compliance of microbiological limits or any other factor that might necessitate the declaration of meat unfit for human consumption such as, for example, the contamination of meat due to non-compliance with hygiene rules during the sacrifice and preparation of the carcass.</p> <p>The Official Veterinary Service (SVO) keep a register with the information resulting from the inspections with the aim of including them in the corresponding database and communicating them to the competent authorities and the operators who must be informed in order to take the relevant management measures. Meat derived from animals who passed the official veterinary inspection favourable are subject to sanitary labelling under the supervision of official veterinary services.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of the transformation and distribution phase	
I-069	Surveillance and control of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies in animals destined for human consumption
ASP-P DARP	<p>The Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) Surveillance Programme of animals is founded upon two great pillars. On one hand, active surveillance, consistent with the direct research of cases by means of laboratory tests on animals without clinical signs and, on the other hand, passive surveillance, based on the investigation of cases where clinical signs, disorders or evidence of the disease is observed which may lead to the diagnosis of cases.</p> <p>The surveillance and control of slaughter houses is fundamental for gathering and analysing bovine samples from subpopulations indicated in the current legislation. Order PRE/1550/2013 establishes the compulsory analysis of cows older than 48 months subject to urgent sacrifice or suspected of having a zoonotic disease if they were born in UE25 countries, those older than 30 months sacrificed in a normal manner and those older than 24 months urgently sacrificed or suspected of having a zoonotic disease if they were born in non-UE25 countries. The animals are the object of precautionary intervention in order to obtain the analysis results. Additionally, independent of the analytical results, the systematic separation of tissues that may be susceptible to transmitting the pathogen agent, known under the name: specified risk material (SRM) is carried out, and withdrawal from the food chain.</p> <p>Also, laboratory tests are carried out on a random percentage of sheep more than 18 months old destined for human consumption, with the intention of epidemiologically investigating ovine scrapie, and on a random percentage of goats more than 18 months old destined for human consumption, by doing a quick laboratorial diagnosis for the EET causal agent.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Information exchange and management of alerts	
I-070	Rapid information exchange and alert system
ASP-P	<p>Since 1978, in the European Union there has been a rapid alert system which was created to communicate the direct or indirect risks to the health and safety of consumers. Following the approval of the Regulation 178/2002, a rapid alert system was established specifically for food products, including feed. This European system is known as the RASFF and includes the member states of the Union, as well as the countries in the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Third countries do not form part of this network, however, the Commission communicates with countries that may be affected by the origin or destination of the products, so that authorities can adopt the necessary measures.</p> <p>There are two alert systems within our territorial area: that of food for human consumption, which is managed by the Ministry of Health, and that of food for animal consumption, which is managed by the competent Ministry involved in agriculture or livestock.</p> <p>The system includes three information levels: notification of alerts, should the immediate adoption of action be required; notification of information, when immediate action is not necessary but the information may be useful to avoid future situations, and issue of notices, information of interest related with food safety in general.</p> <p>Initiating a transmission via the RASFF can be done from any contact point of any member state and must be channelled, through the Commission, to the different contact points. In appropriate cases, consumer associations or affected parties are also contacted, such as those concerning allergies or celiac disease.</p> <p>The objective of the SCIRI is to guarantee, with the collaboration of the operators in the food chain, the food safety of foodstuff consumed by citizens by identifying, locating and withdrawing foodstuff from the market that may pose a risk to consumers.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of retail trade and catering	
I-071	Surveillance and control of retail trade and catering
AL ASP-P	<p>Food retail establishments and commercial and social catering establishments, including those of a non-sedentary and permanent nature, are the object of official surveillance and control on a regular basis by official inspectors of the Ministry of Health and local administrations. The activities carried out are the inspection of establishments following a specific protocol to verify both the structural and equipment conditions and general hygiene, the elaboration processes, manipulations, hygiene and health conditions relative to products or any other element relevant to food safety. Different aspects relating to the introduction of a self-monitoring system in the establishments are also verified. Should non-compliance be detected, correctional measures are adopted ranging from the requirement of the operator to attend disciplinary proceedings, suspension of activity and withdrawal from the market of products that may pose a risk.</p> <p>These types of activity are carried out in retail establishments and those institutional catering, such as campsites with a dining room, touristic accommodation, resorts, commercial dining rooms, colonies or youth hostels, school canteens, old people's homes and hospitals.</p> <p>Competence regarding food hygiene in food establishments carrying out their activity exclusively on municipal territory, as is the case with institutional catering and retail trade, are the responsibility of the city councils in accordance with the regulations outlined in the Law of Healthcare Standards of Catalonia and the Municipal Law and Local Regimen of Catalonia. The city councils, in order to develop these functions, can request technical support from staff and media in the regions and in the sanitary sectors of the province where they are. Therefore, the inspectors ascribed to the Ministry of Health, in compliance with agreements signed with the local administrations, also carry out inspections on these types of establishments when the district does not dispose of its own health inspectors or when they require this type of support.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of retail trade and catering	
I-072	Surveillance and control of the health risk in collective canteens of child and youth accommodation
ASP-P	<p>In order to minimize the risk of outbreaks of food poisoning in child and youth accommodation, in these types of establishments a specific programme of surveillance and control exists.</p> <p>This specific programme is aimed at controlling the conformity with the legal requirements in the aim of protecting the health of users, which is why structural conditions are checked alongside equipment and general hygiene, the elaboration processes and the training and hygiene of handlers, as well as other factors that may pose a health risk to the kitchen and canteen in order to elaborate the corresponding annual reports.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of retail trade and catering	
I-073	Analytical surveillance and control of the biological and chemical safety of foodstuff made available to consumers
ASP-P	<p>Public Health Agency of Catalonia (ASP) designs and executes different surveillance programmes of biological and chemical hazards and technological ingredients integrated in the Surveillance System of Foodstuff in Catalonia (SIVAL). SIVAL is the official control instrument via which the surveillance, in a global and continuous manner, and control of the safety of food produced and/or commercialised in Catalonia is carried out with the aim of protecting the health of people at risk that may be associated, establishing risk management measures aimed at minimising said risks and issuing recommendations to the population. In the city of Barcelona, it is the Public Health Agency of Barcelona which designs and executes these controls by means of the Research Programme into the Health Quality of Foodstuff (IQSA).</p> <p>The objective of these programmes is to analyse foodstuff that is in the commercialisation phase, available to the consumer, which is why samples are gathered in retail establishments. The samples are analysed in accredited and designated official control laboratories.</p> <p>One of the notable characteristics of these programmes is their open and dynamic character, something that allows for the incorporation of these parameters which at any given time could be of special interest, be it to control recommendations from official bodies, or alerts, scientific interest, etc.</p> <p>Should results that do not conform with the current legislation be detected, the corresponding control actions are put into action, such as informing the inspection service and the necessary investigation and control measures which may result in the establishment responsible being inspected, new analysis, the generation of an alert or disciplinary proceedings, amongst other measures depending on the case in question.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and control of retail trade and catering	
I-074	Surveillance and official control relating to adverse reactions to foodstuff
ASP-P ACC	<p>The prevalence of intolerance and allergies in adults is estimated to be between 1 and 3% of the population, whilst in children it's between 4 and 6%. Given the consequences on health, which in some cases can be extremely serious, protection measures have been established to protect these groups of the population. Effectively, the most necessary measures are aimed at ensuring reliable information by means of more exhaustive labelling of foodstuff, indicating the presence of all ingredients with allergenic effects present in the product, so that the people affected can make consumption decisions which are adequate to their needs.</p> <p>The Catalan Consumer Agency annually develops systematic control campaigns including labelling control protocols and sample taking control of several parameters relating to the composition. This programme takes into account the programmed actions in previous years, the introduction of new regulations, sectors of economic activity of general interest or those which repeatedly receive complaints from their customers. In order to guarantee systematic and transversal control of the market, a wide range of food products are controlled and one of the aspects analysed is the presence of products that may produce allergies or intolerances and their inclusion on the list of ingredients of the analysed products.</p> <p>The ASP designs and executes the Surveillance Programme of Allergens and Intolerance-Provoking Substances, integrated in the Surveillance System of Foodstuff in Catalonia (SIVAL), which is the instrument that ASPCAT uses to monitor, in a global and continuous manner, the safety of food produced and/or commercialised in Catalonia. The objective is to analyse foodstuff that is in the commercialisation phase, available to the consumer, which is why samples are mainly gathered in retail establishments. Samples are taken and analysed to verify whether potentially allergenic ingredients are correctly identified on labelling. In the city of Barcelona, the Public Health Agency of Barcelona carries out a similar intervention in the Research Programme into the Health Quality of Foodstuff (IQSA). Equally, the Catalan Consumer Agency carries out allergen controls on a periodic basis.</p> <p>Should results that do not conform with the current legislation be detected, the corresponding control actions are put into action, as well as informing the inspection service and the necessary investigation and control measures which may result in the establishment of origin being inspected, new analysis, the generation of an alert, disciplinary proceedings, or other measures depending on the case in question.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Epidemiological Investigation and management of outbreaks	
I-075	Surveillance and epidemiological investigation
ASP-V	<p>Epidemiological monitoring of public health consists in gathering, analysing and interpreting all information related to the emergence and spreading of diseases with the aim of achieving its effective control.</p> <p>In Catalonia, epidemiological monitoring in food health is centred around diseases for which, due to their intensity and severity, the level of transmissibility and admission of preventative measures are considered a priority control target. For this reason, the Epidemiological Surveillance Network exists.</p> <p>One of the information systems that feeds into it is that of notifiable diseases, which receives notifications of diseases and epidemic outbreaks of any aetiology subject to declaration by the welfare network. Professionals who carry out care tasks in Catalonia, in public or private centres, must report any notifiable diseases and epidemic outbreaks of which they are aware.</p> <p>Another information system is the microbiological notification system of Catalonia, which receives notifications of microorganisms subject to declaration detected in laboratories and centres that form a part of it.</p> <p>The Surveillance Network also has other sources of information, such as the register of hospital discharges and diseases, specific surveillance programmes for determining diseases and sero-epidemiological surveys, etc.</p> <p>All information derived from these systems is key to understanding the situation of the health impact of foodborne diseases and to define the strategy and priorities for food safety.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Epidemiological Investigation and management of outbreaks	
I-076	Declaration, investigation, collection and information analysis systems on food poisoning and other foodborne diseases
ASP-V ASP-P	<p>Food poisoning is a health problem for which the investigation and management of outbreaks and their causes are a fundamental aspect regarding epidemiological surveillance, the minimising of effects and prevention of further outbreaks. Fast identification of contaminated food and its subsequent withdrawal from the commercial chain, as well as intervention in the causal factors of the outbreak are basic elements in the management of each outbreak. Also, valuable information is obtained on the etiological agent, the carrying food and the errors in the manipulation of said food. This information is important in relation to the design and evaluation of official control programmes and other preventative action the reduce incidences.</p> <p>A suspected outbreak must always be declared urgently. An epidemiological investigation is initiated immediately in order to gather data. The gathering of information is preferably carried out by means of a personal interview survey including data regarding the filiation, consumption, or not, of each of the foodstuff that may be suspicious and, in case of diseases, the symptoms presented and the evolution of said symptoms. Whenever possible, clinical samples are taken of the diseases in order to determine their aetiology.</p> <p>Equally, an inspection of the establishment or establishments that have participated in the elaboration or distribution of suspicious food products is carried out. During the inspection the elaboration process and verification of the adequacy of space and facilities are investigated and food samples are taken in order to carry out the corresponding analytical tests. Using this information, the preventative and correctional measures are communicated to the establishments associated with the outbreak and, when necessary, to other establishments that may pose similar risks.</p>

8.3

Management of other issues relating to food safety

Guarantee the compliance of the food chain with citizens' legitimate expectations in areas such as quality, reliability of information, animal welfare and animal and plant health.

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Information, awareness and promotion of good practices	
I-077	Information, awareness and promotion of good practices regarding issues relating to food safety
DARP ACSA ACC DMA ASP	<p>In the framework of the integrated policy of intervention in food safety, there is a series of areas that do not directly affect food safety but that do effect consumer's confidence. These areas are, amongst others: animal welfare, animal health, plant health, agri-food quality, new technologies and new ingredients, such as genetically modified organisms (GMO), aspects relating to the composition, labelling and publicity of foodstuff, and sustainability.</p> <p>Quality and informative material must be elaborated which is adequate to the needs of recipients and all informative, expository and educational channels available must be used in order to inform, raise awareness and promote good practices amongst operators in the food chain as well as citizens when preparing and consuming food. This line of intervention contributes to achieving balance between the legitimate interest of production sectors and those of consumers for mutual benefit, as well as the efficiency, productivity and interests of society as a whole.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and official control	
I-078	Surveillance and control of agri-food quality, combatting fraud, control of the composition of foodstuff and the veracity of the information presented to consumers on labelling and in advertising
DARP	<p>The Ministry of Agriculture applies the programme to combat agri-food fraud. The aim is to guarantee the protection of economic interests of participants in the agri-food chain, including the consumers, and to guarantee legal transparency and competence of commercial transactions.</p> <p>With this objective in mind, inspections are carried out to detect fraud, adulterations and other similar infractions committed in the production and commercialisation of agri-food products. The aspects of agri-food which are investigated are: the properties (nature, identity, composition and origin), the adequate use of official signs of quality attributed officially, the identity and activity of agri-food operators and the quantity of food supplied or declared.</p> <p>The diversity of agri-food products, the increase in production volumes, dispersion within the market, new technologies, the internationalisation of markets and the sophistication of fraud means that the inspections to combat fraud must be founded on an assessment and investigation methodology exclusively aimed at obtaining evidence that proves the illegal character of these activities and identifies the perpetrator.</p> <p>In Catalonia the current legislation grants inspections to combat fraud all necessary powers to comply with their functions, such as access to premises and documentation, carrying out controls and verifications and adopting appropriate measures when an infraction is suspected such as, for example, the immobilisation of products, the withdrawal from the market or suspension of manufacturing activity, as well as initiation of disciplinary proceedings should it be necessary.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and official control	
I-079	Control of integrated production
DARP	<p>Integrated production is a production system aimed at obtaining food of a high nutritional and organoleptic quality with the application of production methods which are both sustainable and respect the environment and rural surroundings. They are subject to a strict control and certification system.</p> <p>Unlike organic production, integrated production permits the use of agrochemical synthetic products (fertilisers, phytosanitary products, etc.), if said use is restricted to certain authorised materials, which have previously been evaluated by technical committees and that the specified technical regulations regarding integrated production are followed for each crop. The aim of this integrated production is to obtain high quality products, minimise the use of agrochemical products, reduce residues and optimise production methods with a complete integration of all available resources.</p> <p>The quality and safety of products is guaranteed with an official certificate. The control and certification system is obligatorily applied to all agricultural companies which use the production system. Only products that strictly comply with the integrated production regulation are certified. These products are identified by the image of a ladybird, which is the trademark of integrated production in Catalonia. The organisation in charge of applying this control system is the Catalan Council of Integrated Production (CCPI), which is a public cooperation supervised by the Ministry of Agriculture.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and official control	
I-080	Control of ecological production
DARP	<p>The regulation that covers this production method is applied to all products, of agricultural, livestock and aquaculture origin, that are commercialised or are to be commercialised as ecological. His system includes all production, elaboration, manipulation and commercialisation activities of these types of products, of both vegetable and animal origin.</p> <p>In order to guarantee that ecological products are produced in accordance with the requirements established by the European regulation on ecological production, activities carried out by operators in all phases of production, preparation and distribution of ecological products are subject to a control system which is applied to all ecological operators and includes a series of precautionary measures and specific controls aimed at guaranteeing the consumer compliance with the production regulation regarding the qualification of commercialised products.</p> <p>All ecological operators receive an annual control visit in terms of an evaluation of the risk of irregularities or infractions, as well as compliance with the established requirements by regulations. Some of them receive additional control visits.</p> <p>Authority regarding the control of ecological production is granted to the Catalan Council of Ecological Agricultural Production (CCPAE), a control authority in the form of a public corporation, under the administrative supervision and ward of the DARP. The system of control and certification of the CCPAE meets the requirements for bodies that certify products and is accredited by the ENAC by means of the European regulation UNE-EN ISO/IEC 170665.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and official control	
I-081	Control of differentiated quality
DARP	<p>Law 14/2003, on agri-food quality, and Decree 285/2006 which develops it, has two basic aims: to promote the use of quality markers and to establish the protection mechanisms of agri-food quality and the fight against fraud. La Law 14/2003 regulates the following protection figures: protected designation of origin (PDO), protected geographical indication (PGI), geographical indication (GI) for spirits, traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG), mark of agri-food quality (Q label), alimentary craftsmanship and “products of the earth”.</p> <p>The different protection figures respond to different definitions and concepts, but all have, amongst their <i>raison d'être</i>, to guarantee of quality to consumers, as they provide a way of evaluating the added value of production. The PDO, PGI, TSG, and IG are quality regimes which are established by European regulation. The rest are exclusively regulated in the area of Catalonia.</p> <p>The PDO and the PGI are markers of origin and quality that denote products originating from a concrete geographical zone which fundamentally owe their properties and characteristics to the geographical environment in which they are partially or entirely produced and elaborated (depending if they are PDO or PGI). Despite the differences in definitions, all types of markers benefit from the same type of protection.</p> <p>The TSG's are quality markers that are not limited to a geographic zone. They protect agri-food products obtained by traditional production methods and recipes.</p> <p>The Ministry of Agriculture, via the Directorate-General of Food, Quality and Agri-food Industries, has authority regarding the inspection, verification and control of quality. The certification of differentiated quality linked to a geographic origin (PDO or PGI) and traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG), before commercialisation, can be delegated to control and certification bodies registered with Register of control and certification bodies of agri-food products of Catalonia.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and official control	
I-O82	Register of control and certification bodies of agri-food products of Catalonia
DARP	<p>The Register of control and certification bodies of agri-food products of Catalonia has the objective of registering bodies dedicated to the control and/or certification of products accompanied by a protected designation of origin, protected geographical indication or by a mark of quality, and products that originate from ecological agricultural production, integrated production, products with specific characteristics and the production specification of meat which is voluntarily labelled (mutton-lamb, poultry, etc.), eggs, the Q mark of milk, wines (year and variety), and other quality or production markers established by the established legislation. Registration in this register is obligatory for those certification and control bodies that wish to act in Catalonia regarding agri-food quality.</p> <p>According to Decree 17/2012, of the 21 February, amending Decree 285/2006, which is developed in Law 14/2003, on agri-food quality, the Register of control and certification bodies of agri-food products of Catalonia is structured into two sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — SECTION A: Section including bodies dedicated to the control and/or certification of products accompanied by a PDO, PGI, TSG, DG, or PGI, of products originating from the wine sector and products that originate from ecological agricultural production, and others that the legislation may state, for which the Community legislation requires official controls to be carried out, alongside verification of compliance of production specification which must be done by the competent authority or by the delegation of said competence to a control body. — SECTION B: Section including control and certification bodies of products accompanied by a the Q label, integrated production, the production specification of voluntarily labelled meat, and other markings of quality or production method that legislation establishes, for which the Community legislation doesn't state the official control of production specification, and therefore said control must be carried out by the competent authority or by the delegation of said competence to a control body.

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and official control	
I-083	Control of labelling, presentation, publicity and documentation, accompaniment of marine resources to fish auctions, cold storage, and retail markets and during transport
DARP ACC ASP-P	<p>The current legislation regarding labelling, presentation, publicity and documentation of fishing resources states the basic commercialisation conditions of the fishery products and has the objective of regulating the standardisation of these products and their correct identification for the purposes of transparency in the market and greater consumer information along the whole commercialisation chain, from the first sale to arrival with the final consumer.</p> <p>Due to the vast variety of fishery products available, the consumer must have precise information regarding the species and its origin, not only regarding where it was caught, but also the production method, catching method or marine cultivation as well as its essential characteristics. With this objective actions aimed at verifying compliance with regulations regarding labelling, presentation and publicity are implemented in order to guarantee traceability of fishery resources and commercialisation via legal channels, in accordance with the food safety and labelling regulations that are in force.</p> <p>Marine products are subject to a labelling, presentation and documentation control before being sold to the destined retail establishments, to cool storage and during road transportation. Also in the retail phase, to fish mongers, by the Catalan Consumer Agency.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and official control	
I-O84	Surveillance and control of animal welfare
DARP ASP-P	<p>The object of this intervention is to verify the correct application of the European legislation regarding Animal welfare by means of inspections of livestock holdings carried out by the official veterinary services of the Ministry of Agriculture, technical and documental verification of the methods of transportation at the time of registration in the register carried out by the official veterinary services of the Ministry of Agriculture, controls <i>en route</i> carried out by police bodies along with the official veterinary services of the Ministry of Agriculture, and the control of arrival and unloading of animals at the slaughter house and during sacrifice carried out by the official slaughter house veterinary surgeons of the Ministry of Health.</p> <p>Training programmes have been designed and developed for staff, specifically technicians, transporters, managers and caretakers covering both the welfare of animals in holdings and in transportation and moments before and during sacrifice.</p> <p>The main control areas in animal welfare are: facilities, equipment, feeding, temperature, ventilation, lighting, food and water access, available space, freedom of movement, cleaning and disinfection, handling, transport, stunning and sacrifice.</p> <p>In cases of non-compliance of a mild nature, a request for correction and with a time limit is issued and, in cases of serious non-compliance of if the mild non-compliance has not been corrected within the time frame, disciplinary proceedings are initiated.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and official control	
I-085	Monitoring, combatting and eradicating non-foodborne animal diseases
DARP	<p>Amongst animal diseases there is a large group which, whilst neither transmittable to people nor foodborne, could have a serious repercussion on the international commerce of food or the image and trust that consumers have in the food chain. The diseases that affect livestock may affect the international commerce of animals and their products and eventually be a reason for the blocking of exportation. In the interests of consumer confidence and international food trade, we must guarantee the highest health levels in slaughter animals whether they can affect human health or not. For this reason surveillance, combat and eradication programmes are applied to all food producing species, including rabbits, bees and farmed fish.</p> <p>In collaboration with livestock sectors, the DARP implements programmes that have the objective of monitoring, combatting, controlling and/or eradicating animal diseases. Many types of activities are carried out according to the disease in question. The main actions carried out are: the diagnostic testing of animals, paramyxovirus vaccination, obligatory sacrifice of infected animals when necessary, elimination of carcasses and restrictions of movements.</p> <p>There are also predefined action plans of surveillance, prevention and rapid or effective response should a source appear, in order to eliminate it as quickly as possible and therefore minimise the impact of the disease on livestock herd. In Catalonia the main non-foodborne diseases which are subject to this type of measures are: bluetongue disease, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, enzootic bovine leukosis, scrapie in sheep, African swine fever (PPA), classic swine fever (PPC), swine vesicular disease (MPV), Aujeszky's disease, Newcastle disease, avian influenza and West Nile virus. These last two cases are also transmissible zoonotic diseases.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and official control	
I-086	Surveillance, official control and measures for combat and eradication in plant health
DARP	<p>Just like with animal health, problems in plant health can also affect international commerce of food and consumer confidence. The Ministry of Agriculture carries out actions relating to the disclosure of different ways of combatting pests which are key to learning more about and being able to better fight the harmful agents and avoid their spreading in the most effective way.</p> <p>Another notable element is the surveillance and control of quarantine pests, which is a specific group of pests and diseases that have potential economic importance and which figure on the European Union list. When a pest is added to the quarantine list this limits the introduction and circulation of potential carriers in order to minimize the risk of them being introduced into free areas and, as a consequence, the free trade of affected vegetables. When a source is detected, or if the possibility exists, Administration must verify its presence and, if it is confirmed, plant-health measures must be taken in order to eradicate the pests. The Plant Health Service registers and inspects all providers of vegetable plant material and authorises the issue of phytosanitary passports if they are free of quarantine pests and comply with the technical regulations of the Community legislation.</p> <p>The objective is to avoid the introduction and propagation of new, especially dangerous, pests into Catalonia that could bring about serious economic and social damage and lead to an increase in the use of pesticides, especially those that the EU has published in material regarding emergency measures (channelled apple snail, <i>Xylella fastidiosa</i>, etc.).</p> <p>When necessary, collective combat measures are applied against the pests. These are specific campaigns which are aimed at the collective combatting of pests that are difficult to control individually in certain areas. All of these treatments are carried out using techniques and products which present a low hazard to people and the environment. Whenever possible, alternative pest combatting techniques are used, opposed to chemical methods, such as the use of pheromones and other attraction methods in techniques for mass capturing and sexual confusion with the aim of reducing chemical treatments.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and official control	
I-087	Surveillance and control of compliance with the current legislation regarding genetically modified organisms (GMO)
DARP ACC ASP-P	<p>Genetically modified organisms can be defined as organisms whose genetic material (DNA) has been altered in some way that does not occur naturally by coupling or natural recombination. This technique allows transferring selected individual genes from one organism to another, even between unrelated species.</p> <p>Even though the surveillance and control of activities regarding GMO carried out by public administrations begin in the primary phase, they also occur along the rest of the food chain. The objective is to protect consumer rights to have access to reliable information and of free circulation regarding authorised genetically modified products.</p> <p>The public interventions in the matter are, mainly: the regulation and control of GMO's that may be put on the market and the bodies that operate with GMO's; the regulation and control of the coexistence between producers working with GMO and those that operate with ecological, integrated or conventional agricultural systems; the control of compliance with regulations regarding traceability of GMO's; the surveillance and control of compliance with the regulation regarding the commercialisation and labelling of plant material and the commercial cultivation of genetically modified plants, and the control of traceability and labelling of feed and food made available to consumers.</p> <p>Controls are carried out via inspections of companies and regulatory sample taking at food retail establishments taking into account the products that are likely to include GMO's. The samples are the object of laboratorial analysis to determine whether GMO's are present (qualitative analysis) and, should said result be positive, its quantification is processed.</p> <p>Should regulatory non-compliances be detected in relation to the presence of GMO's in the food product, disciplinary proceedings are initiated against the sales agent and the traceability of the product is investigated to determine its producer, distributor and the manufacturer or importer. Incidences related to GMO's are communicated through the alert systems and exchange of information.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Surveillance and official control	
I-088	Control of the composition of foodstuff and the veracity of the information presented to consumers on labelling and in advertising
ACC AL	<p>The Catalan Consumer Agency carries out control activities aimed at verifying, investigating and controlling the adequacy of food products which are on the market within reach of consumers with current guidelines on market discipline and consumer protection. Food products that are put on the market must adjust to the rules and quality regulations that control them, give adequate information regarding the nature, identity, quality, composition, quantity, duration, origin or provenance and manufacturing or collection. Attributions, effects or properties that the product does not have do not need to be indicated, and neither do particular characteristics shared by similar products. In general, information regarding their characteristics must be presented in an adequate and veracious manner.</p> <p>Programmed periodical control of food products include the annual programming of sample taking and the analysis of food products within reach of consumers for their commercialisation. Within this programmed control, samples are taken to analyse composition and adequacy parameters in accordance with the legislation that governs them, as well as mandatory information and labelling. It also includes the study and investigation of the publicity of the products and services to verify the accuracy of the information provided. Within the parameters for the selection of sample taking, the inspections prioritise those in which some type of non-compliance has been detected regarding labelling or if products have been reported, are on offer or new consumer brands, as well as the study and investigation of the publicity of products and services to verify the accuracy of the commercial communication. Additionally, other specific campaigns are carried out annually in relation to the labelling and publicity of certain food products, such as allegations or nutritional information.</p>

8.4

Risk communication

Construct information exchange networks and promote collaborative work, and maintain a high level of knowledge and trust amongst citizens

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Dialogue and participation	
I-089	Communication and coordination systems between the different participants in the food chain
ΣACSA	<p>In a general and integrated food safety strategy the exchange of information and opinions between the people responsible for evaluation and risk management, the consumers, food companies, the academic community and other parties concerned is vital. This exchange includes the explanation of data, opinions and risk analysis results, as well as the analysis of scientific, technical and health protection criteria upon which decisions related to risk management are founded.</p> <p>In this line of work, joint work committees must be articulated and maintained with all participants in the food chain, the public administrations and consumers, in order to share information and concerns, to carry out the joint analysis of existing problems and to design coordinated lines of action that allow for a greater efficiency in the prevention of food safety problems and in the solution of those that may exist.</p> <p>Within this line of work several work forums of special importance must be highlighted, such as the Food Safety Steering Committee, with representation of the competent ministries of the Government, the local administrations and operators in the food chain. This Committee is the directive organ for the specific evaluation and communication topics of the benefits and risks of food safety. Its main functions are to give information regarding the proposed Food Safety Plan, and approve the Annual Report on Current Food Safety in Catalonia, to approve criteria for communication in the area of food safety, and analyse and propose the actions that must be taken using scientific reports.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Dialogue and participation	
I-089	Communication and coordination systems between the different participants in the food chain
ΣACSA	<p>There are also other sectoral work forums which are key in this area of intervention: the Work Committee of Consumers and Users, the Monitoring Committee of Bovine and Ovine Meat Safety, the Monitoring Committee of Poultry Safety, the Monitoring Committee of Milk Safety, the Monitoring Committee of Porcine Safety, the Monitoring Committee of Apiculture Safety and its Products, the Monitoring Committee of Fish Safety and Fishery Products, and the Work Group on Food and latex Allergies.</p> <p>The main objective of these groups is the debate the current state of the situation in each specific sector, exchange information and propose actions of improvement in order to achieve the highest level of food safety. The number of committees is extended or adjusted as necessary in order to have representatives from all the main participants in the food chain.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Dialogue and participation	
I-090	Code of commercial good practice along the food chain in Catalonia
DARP	<p>The agreement of the Code of good commercial practice (CBPC) was signed on the 29 July 2011. The Ministry of Agriculture was the precursor and coordinates its meetings. It is voluntary and already has more than 18 member affiliations, representatives from agri-food production, industry and distribution.</p> <p>The main objectives of the CBPC agreement are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — To improve the commercial practices so that they are more transparent, streamlined and efficient. — To improve the information and perception of the consumer surrounding agri-food products and the way the sector works. — The valorization of agri-food products in terms of quality, greater food safety, higher sustainability and respect for animal welfare. — To improve the commercialisation, growth and focus of the market. — To improve performance and technological development. — To promote channels that favour the commercialisation of local production. — The implementation of tools to communicate and resolve conflicts between companies and all types of operators. <p>The general objective of the CBPC agreement is the valorization of products and a higher level of food safety. These issues are those to be addressed, envisage appropriate actions and for them to be approved at the Joint Committee meetings, which is the body responsible for interpreting and monitoring the CBPC agreement.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Knowledge and information	
I-091	Gathering of information on the level of knowledge, perception and confidence that the consumer has regarding food safety
ΣACSA	<p>The gathering of information regarding the knowledge, perception and confidence that the consumer has regarding food safety is an important element for the analysis and definition of new strategies and continuous improvement in food safety. Multiple sources are used in order to gather information, such as surveys, press, radio, television, social networks, inquiries or complaints, amongst others. The information obtained must allow for the characterisation of the level of knowledge that citizens have regarding food safety, as well as their perception and confidence at all times with the view to propose concrete actions of continuous improvement in these areas in order to achieve the closest approach to the vision of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia.</p>
I-092	Promoting communication and exchange between experts, public administration, and professionals in the media
ΣACSA	<p>The complexity of the food chain and its multiple implications prove the necessity to deeply understand the most important determinants of public perception of food safety and to reinforce the participation of the actors that determine this perception. In this sense, the media is one of the main determinants regarding the citizen's perception of their safety concerning food.</p> <p>The media doesn't just broadcasts specific pieces of information or fail to broadcast others, it creates statements of opinion and marks social agendas regarding what is and isn't troubling at a given time.</p> <p>Taking this necessity into account, the dialogue points between the communicators that are dedicated to spreading information on food safety topics and the different specialists in the sector must be maintained, with the ultimate aim of achieving the best coordination possible and generating a common food safety culture. In order to achieve these objectives, analysis activities must be developed regarding the press coverage of food safety in Catalonia and, therefore, regular contact must be made in the form of meetings, seminars or panel discussions with journalists and specialists from the different areas to debate terms of interest on the matter.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Knowledge and information	
I-093	Awareness, promotion and disclosure of knowledge and good food safety practices
ACSA DMA DARP ASP ACC AL	<p>The activities surrounding the disclosure of information on food safety are key in order to maintain high levels of safety on the matter. Work must be continued on the elaboration and improvement of informative material which is of quality and adequate to the needs of the recipient. A maintenance effort must be made and all informative, expository and educational channels that are available thanks to new information and communication technologies must be used. We must raise awareness, inform and promote good practices along all phases of the food chain in order to achieve and maintain the highest level of food safety possible at all times according to available knowledge.</p> <p>Epidemiological data indicates that more than 80% of all incidences of food poisoning take place in domestic and catering environments, which makes specific intervention of a sustained nature necessary in order to raise awareness and give basic hygiene advice to highlight the main contributing factors. Also, awareness and promotion initiatives for good practice which are aimed at the rest of the areas along the food chain, from primary production to industrialisation, must not be put aside.</p> <p>An element that has proven key in communication in previous years has been the features available via the internet (webpages, apps, social networks, etc). The competent public administrations must continue with the maintenance and improvement of this disclosure and communication channel that has proven essential. The internet is an instrument of enormous potential for food safety and a tool to facilitate work and diffuse information to citizens and professionals on topics related to this field. Thematic spaces are structure using this medium where information on matters of interest can be found and exchanged, in real time. Communication, editing of audio-visual material and printed material are also key, as well as the organisation of seminars, conferences and other communication forums, which are also key tools in this policy.</p> <p>The promotion of the participation of aforementioned influencers is also important, such as health professionals, teachers or catering and retail food sale professionals, as well as those institutions which are closer to citizens, such as shops.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Knowledge and information	
I-093	Sensibilització, foment i divulgació de coneixement i pràctiques correctes en seguretat alimentària
<p>ACSA DMA</p> <p>DARP</p> <p>ASP</p> <p>ACC</p> <p>AL</p>	<p>The lines of work that must continue to be promoted in this area are: the publication of information on scientific and political management reports; the editing and distribution of information; the organisation of seminars, forums, workshops and informative meetings with influencers, such as professionals from the education, health, retail, catering and media sectors as well as representatives consumer associations; the design and update of food safety content aimed at its subsequent integration into curricular material for primary and secondary education, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, and disclosure by means of talks and presentations in collaboration with shops, amongst other actions.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Knowledge and information	
I-094	Food legislation database
ACSA	<p>Food legislation is a key instrument for risk management. It guarantees a high level of health protection for people and consumer interests, as well as ensuring an effective function of the domestic market. It is founded mainly on an analysis of risks based on the available scientific evidence and is subject to constant evaluations and revisions according to new data that becomes available. It references all aspects of the agri-food production chain, from production, transformation, transport or distribution, to the management of foodstuff and feed. It constitutes an essential tool both for the economic operators and for the competent official bodies of health monitoring and official control of foodstuff.</p> <p>The large number of legal guidelines, the updates and the constant renovations make it necessary to adequately manage this information, to have a database that keeps us permanently updated regarding the legislation and, once the documents are indexed, allows us to carry out active searches in subject areas of interest. Making said database available to economic operators and the public in general contributes to guaranteeing a high level of knowledge regarding the rules to be followed and health protection. The ACSA carries out this activity with the aim that all of this gathered information be available to all interested parties.</p> <p>The food legislation database consists of an ordered, updated and classified directory of the normative provisions in terms of food safety which have been approved and published in official journals, in particular the <i>Official Journal of the European Union</i>, where most food safety regulations applicable to Catalonia are published. It contains links with the European legislation and the so-called <i>consolidated texts</i>, which are non-official documents that integrate a basic legislative provision with its modifications and corrections in one single text. The database is updated daily by technical staff from the ACSA and involves the revision of official journals, the selection of provisions of interest and introduction into the database. It constitutes a consultation tool for the existing legislation in this area for any person or company, as it is a free-access tool.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Knowledge and information	
I-095	Response to inquiries regarding food safety
ASP ACC AL ACSA DMA DARP	<p>The response to inquiries is a service aimed at citizens as a whole and in particular at participants in the food chain, such as those involved in related activities or consumers themselves. Inquiries from individuals, professional associations or other bodies are the object of a management procedure which culminates in the requested reply being delivered to the interested party or organisation. Inquiries can be sent in written form, by e-mail or by telephone.</p> <p>This line of work is a very useful instrument regarding communication, as it allows first-hand knowledge of the doubts and questions asked by certain sectors, and the reply offered contributes to providing coherence and coordination to the criteria of the food safety sector by the corresponding authorities.</p>
I-096	Management of complaints
ASP ACC AL ACSA DMA DARP	<p>Citizens, companies and business associations or consumer organisations can issue complaints to the corresponding food safety administrations communicating the alleged violations observed.</p> <p>Complaints form a very valuable collaborative instrument regarding the public Administration and the exchange of information. Also, complaints generate managerial actions, because upon the receipt of a complaint a case is opened and inspection services verify whether the alleged facts are true and if an offence has indeed been committed. The case may end with the application of various measures aimed at the correction of the observed non-conformities, such as the demand, the withdrawal of the products from the market or the closure of the establishment if necessary, as well as the issue of an administrative penalty to the manufacturer, the seller or service provider who committed said infraction.</p> <p>Complaints are also a useful information source regarding the issues that most concern citizens, and those that managers of the specific case must analyse and decide whether to take general measures when dealing with a widespread problem.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Crisis management	
I-097	Management and communication systems in case of a food safety crisis
ASP ACSA DARP ACC AL DMA	<p>The general action procedure for managing food crisis and emergency situations specifies the actions that must be taken as well as the communication strategy. This procedure establishes a decision-making and coordination system in order to optimise health protection in such situations and provide citizens with the correct information. This process forms the basic principle of transparency, which is configured as a manifestation of the right of citizens to have adequate knowledge of the collective health issues that imply a risk.</p> <p>Crisis situations do not always imply a risk to the health of the population through foodstuff, but they may come about due to the citizens' perception at any given time. There is a difference between a crisis situation and an alert situation. An alert situation is associated with one or more hazards and can be managed through pre-established management measures that are aimed at eliminating the health risk. On the other hand, a crisis situation is not always associated with a health risk, the measures to be required must be determined on a case-by-case basis and require a specific communication strategy which guarantees transparency and is able to preserve or recuperate the confidence of citizens. If necessary, the pre-established food safety measures are applied simultaneously with the additional communication measures required by each crisis.</p> <p>The general action procedure for food crisis and alert situations has the objective of promoting an adequate coordination of efforts and determining the most fitting measures to apply, depending on the available scientific information. Once the crisis is over a report is elaborated which compiles the development, experience acquired and improvement measures that should be applied to similar future situations.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Crisis management	
I-098	Risk communication Plan
ASP ACSA DMA DARP ACC AL	<p>The coordinated systems of the rapid exchange of information, such as the RASFF, carry out communication between competent authorities regarding alerts and other information relevant to food safety. The number of communications processed by these systems is extremely broad. Only in some cases, under special circumstances, is it necessary to communicate a risk to the public. This communication must be carried out in accordance with objective and standardised criteria, which requires the existence of a risk communication plan.</p> <p>According to the planned procedure, communication with the public must be carried out when: current available information is suspected to pose a hazard capable of harming members of the public who use or consume the product; the product has been distributed and there is no possibility of the immediate paralyzation and complete withdrawal from the market, including units that may already be in the possession of citizens, as well as other suspicions that, although they do not comply with the above conditions, provoke a demand for social or media information. Analysis of the situation and communication initiative are the responsibility of the competent authorities who must act in a coordinated and adequate manner suited to their skills and their territorial responsibility.</p> <p>The procedure involves rapid communication using the media, such as audio-visual channels, the press and the internet. It also envisages a system for monitoring and updating information, as well as the communication regarding the end of the risk situation when said situation is considered finalised.</p>

8.5

Quality, efficiency and coordination of services

Efficient and quality services provided by the responsible public administrations

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Quality of interventions	
I-099	Planning and monitoring of the integrated Food Safety Policy
ACSA DMA DARP ASP ACC AL	<p>The Food Safety Plan of Catalonia, defined by Law 18/2009, of 22 October, on public health, is the reference framework for the public actions of the Government of Catalonia's Administration and of local authorities in this area. It includes the directive lines and deployment of actions and programmes that are carried out to achieve the anticipated objectives of the Plan. The drafting process of the Food Safety Plan must ensure the intervention of the administrations, institutions, scientific societies and professionals relating to food safety, as well as the civil society. It is the responsibility of the Food Safety Steering Committee to issue information regarding the proposed Food Safety Plan before its subsequent approval. The Government, on the motion of those ministries dealing with matters regarding health, agriculture, food, livestock and fisheries approves the Plan.</p> <p>The Food Safety Plan has a validity of 5 years and must include objectives regarding food safety in the areas covering food innocuousness; the health, nutrition and welfare of animals; plant health; animal health and phytosanitary products, and subsequent environmental contamination should they directly affect food safety, as well as the set of services, programmes and proceedings that must be developed, and the evaluation mechanisms of objectives and monitoring the Plan.</p> <p>The Food Safety Plan is the main instrument for the planning and monitoring of the Food Safety Policy of Catalonia.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Quality of interventions	
I-100	Periodic analysis of the food safety situation in Catalonia
ACSA DARP ASP ACC AL DMA	<p>Law 18/2009, of 22 October, on public health, establishes the mandatory elaboration of an Annual Report on Current Food Safety in Catalonia. This document gathers together all the most relevant information and analyses the situation. The report must be approved by the Food Safety Steering Committee.</p> <p>The analysis of the food safety situation is carried out from indicators that highlight health risks by means of data regarding prevalence and exposure to hazards; the real effects on people's health from data regarding incidence of diseases and the level of compliance with current regulations in areas such as safety, quality, animal welfare and other issues related to food safety. Therefore, information is gathered that can be used to estimate the situation in terms of the perception of citizens and the society as a whole.</p> <p>The information and conclusions gathered together in this analysis document constitute a reference for all those involved in food safety in a collective collaborative context aimed at continuous improvement, as well as an instrument of transparency for the responsible authorities.</p>
I-101	Periodic monitoring of the implementation of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia
ACSA DARP ASP ACC AL DMA	<p>The Food Safety Plan of Catalonia establishes an intervention model based on the definition of objectives to be achieved, monitoring indicators and interventions aimed at generating an impact that improves the current situation until the intended objective is met and subsequently maintained in a sustainable manner. One of the objectives implied in this model is to monitor the whole food chain in accordance with a series of relevant indicators and construct a control panel which allows us to have a constant objective and global view of the situation in order to make adequate decisions. Surveillance of the indicators and intervention outlined in the Plan is carried out periodically, in order to understand the evolution of the implementation and the extent to which objectives have been accomplished. All of this, with the aim of facilitating compliance with the Plan and propelling continuous improvement as well as fostering greater coordination and integration in the established global strategy.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Quality of interventions	
I-102	Quality of service provided by the official laboratories
ASP DARP ACC AL DMA	<p>The official control laboratories maintain a high level of quality in order to guarantee the competence of the centre in carrying out tests and analysis with official validity within the areas for which the laboratory has been accredited. An official laboratory must have the necessary accreditation for the services that it offers as a provider of analytical results from samples taken from official control services. This accreditation requires a substantial effort of standardisation and quality of the analytical techniques employed. The accreditation is carried out by an independent organisation that accredits laboratories in accordance with the criteria of the legislation.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Coordination	
I-103	Coordination systems with other supra-territorial institutions with responsibilities regarding food safety
DARP ASP ACSA	<p>The coordination between administrations, and especially with the European Union, are carried out through different bodies and mechanisms, amongst which the Government of Catalonia's Administration, to discuss agriculture, livestock, health, environment and consumption policies. The different bodies of the Government of Catalonia participate in function of their respective competencies and work for coordination with the European institutions using different mechanisms.</p> <p>Coordination activities are carried out in terms of developing legislations and the application of food safety intervention programmes. One of the European Commission's missions is to ensure uniform compliance with the responsibilities of the authorities of each Member State regarding food safety. One of their control instruments for this matter is the specialised food safety office, from which periodic assessment visits are carried out in member states. Each time such an action is carried out in our country, a series of preparation and coordination actions must be carried out to facilitate the assessment and its subsequent monitoring.</p>





Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Coordination	
I-104	Food Safety Steering Committee
ΣACSA	<p>The Food Safety Steering Committee is a directive organ for the specific evaluation and communication topics of the benefits and risks of food safety. It is made up of representatives from the competent ministry involved in health, one of which is the president of the Commission: of the competent ministry involved in agriculture, food, livestock and fishery, one of which is the vice-president of the Commission; as well as the competent ministries involved in the environment, consumption and commerce. There are also representatives from shops, the business organisations from the food sector, the most representative agricultural organisations, the Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives of Catalonia, the consumer associations and most representative associations related to food quality and safety.</p> <p>The functions of the Food Safety Steering Committee are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Issue a report regarding the proposed Food Safety Plan. — Approve the Annual Report on Current Food Safety in Catalonia. — Approve the criteria for communication within the food safety sector. — Analyse and propose the actions that must be adopted from scientific reports. — Propose the appointment of members of the Advisory Scientific Committee on Food Safety.

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Coordination	
I-105	Interministerial and interadministrative coordination
ΣACSA	<p>In order to promote the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the services offered by the public administrations, cooperation between organisations that act in the sector of food safety in Catalonia must be encouraged. Therefore, an adequate level of coordination must be maintained with other state and European bodies of a highlighted importance regarding food safety. This line of work must facilitate, coordinate, exchange, inform and design projects for the evaluation, vigilance, control, prevention and communication of food safety.</p> <p>For this reason, as an instrument of coordination, collaboration and cooperation, the Catalan Food Safety Agency (ACSA) maintains activity in the work group of interministerial and interadministrative coordination. Included in this group are representatives from the Government whose responsibilities cover health, agriculture, livestock, fishery, consumption, the environment, as well as representatives from the local administrations of Catalonia. Its objective is to define the work lines of the Government's ministries involved in food safety according to the existing guidelines, the needs of each ministry and the risk situations or potential risk situations that may arise, to monitor activities and share information on food safety. This group defines the priority lines of action, the exchange of information and the approval of agreements and their subsequent monitoring. Therefore, this group is a strategic instrument and one for allocating responsibilities and action according to the competences of the different ministries. This group actively participates in the elaboration of the Food Safety Plan of Catalonia and the Annual Report on Current Food Safety in Catalonia.</p> <p>There are also specific work groups who have the mission of analysing problems, creating possible solutions and developing agreements, in order to implement the necessary actions of intervention. The duration of these groups can be stable when trying to create a permanent dialogue space between different bodies or <i>ad hoc</i>, when they are created to resolve or approach a concrete topic which is of concern or interest at a specific time, for example evaluating a law. These work forums must be dynamic, flexible and interactive.</p> <p>For the concrete case of pesticides, the Government of Catalonia created the Interministerial Commission of pesticides and biocides, by means of Decree 447/2004, as the origin of planning and coordinating actions in this area. This Commission, which includes the participation of several Government ministries, is registered with the Ministry of Agriculture.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Coordination	
I-106	<p>Coordination, results analysis and promotion of actions of improvement resulting from reports that European institutions, third countries and other international bodies carry out in Catalonia in the food safety sphere</p>
<p>ASP DMA DARP ACC AL ACSA</p>	<p>The state, regional and local governments work in order to apply the community legislation and international agreements and deals in their respective territories by carrying out official controls on producers, manufacturers, food traders along the whole food chain. The European institutions, third countries and other international bodies periodically verify that the legislation and/or agreements are correctly applied by carrying out audits in the member states and the third countries that export to the EU.</p> <p>Periodically, European institutions and third countries with commercial agreements carry out audits of the official food controls carried out by the responsible authorities in Catalonia. The results of each audit carried out are included in a report containing conclusions and recommendations. Recommendations are formed for the competent authority so that they can correct any detected non-conformities. The competent authority must present an action plan setting out how it plans to remedy the deficiencies and said plan is monitored and evaluated through a series of follow-up activities.</p> <p>Each time that an activity of this type is carried out in a member state, a series of preparation and coordination actions must be carried out in coordination with the competent organisations. Support and collaboration must be planned with the audit visit, it must be monitored and the results must be analysed afterwards, and the actions that it has been necessary to implement must be followed according to the conclusions and recommendations suggested in the final report.</p> <p>The correct function of the official control and the correction of possible non-conformities detected is a key element to maintaining the European and international marketing of Catalan food products open.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Coordination	
I-107	Institutional cooperation and coordination with the security forces, prosecutors and judicial authorities in matters that might constitute a crime in the area of food safety
DMA DARP ASP ACC AL ACSA	<p>In the area of food safety certain practices that could be classified as a crime under the Criminal Code are detected. These are practices that are expressly classified as crimes against public health or criminal fraud, something which means they are within the scope of the judicial authorities, who must collaborate with the public administrations in general. Even though it is not frequent, occasionally these types of practices are discovered within the food chain. One of the most well-known examples in the sector is the production and use of illegal substances to promote the fattening of animals.</p> <p>If the official control authorities detect any of these practices, communication and coordination practices are put into function with safety, fiscal and legal authority bodies in order to take the necessary measures which are adequate to each case. The activities enforced in these cases are the necessary steps for the investigation and gathering of proof with the aim of understanding the facts and the corresponding sentence being awarded by the legal authorities. In these cases, official control services provide technical support for the actions carried out by the safety services and the legal authorities.</p> <p>Even though they are very costly in terms of resources, these investigations usually provide valuable information regarding action guidelines and techniques used for the commission of crimes, something which helps to improve the monitoring and control systems in the food chain.</p> <p>Other lines of collaboration and coordination are the processing of reports of administrative infractions by the safety bodies or the support of said safety bodies in inspection services when circumstances necessitate their participation.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Training, information and qualification of agents	
I-108	Training and information systems of staff at the service of the public administrations
DMA DARP ASP ACC AL ACSA	<p>All staff in charge of carrying out official interventions regarding food safety must receive the adequate information in their area that enables them the capacity to fulfil their role competently and consistently. The official bodies responsible for food safety of the Government of Catalonia and the local administrations develop a great number of continuous training activities for their staff by means of annual or multiannual training programmes, either directly or through cooperation agreements with other organizations and institutions. The objective of this training is to permanently broaden and update knowledge regarding food safety, with special emphasis on current legislation. Each annual training programme is designed from the global evaluation of training actions carried out during previous years and the technical training necessities detected whilst performing the functions that are the responsibility of the staff. The training is complemented with the provision of documentation and data relating to evaluation, management, communication and risk, programmes and results of official control, all accessible directly or through computer applications, intranet or webpages, amongst other instruments.</p> <p>Special importance is given to the requirements in terms of training outlined in the EU regulations, including Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004, on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules (Official Journal of the European Union L 165 of 04.30.2004).</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Supervision and evaluation	
I-109	Official supervision and control systems regarding food safety
DARP ASP ACC AL	<p>Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, establishes that authorities in the area of food safety must supervise official controls that they carry out with the aim of achieving the objectives that are envisaged in the Regulation and others that are fixed by food safety rules.</p> <p>Every organisation, in order to improve the way it works, needs to have objective information regarding itself and its operation, as it is the first step towards being able to make decisions based on evidence that lead to improvement. The official bodies that intervene in the food safety fields must have internal control systems aimed at the continuous improvement of operation and provision of services. Internal supervision activities consist in the periodic control, carried out by those responsible, of the execution of each programme to verify the adequacy of the actions and resources in relation to objectives, compliance with the regulations and established procedures, as well as the promotion of improvements in design and execution should they be necessary.</p> <p>The responsible bodies develop documented procedures, protocols, procedures, instructions and criteria defined within their own programmes, in which they give information and describe in a detailed manner each of the steps or actions that must be taken by the agents in charge of official control. The existence of these standardisation instruments do not guarantee that these are followed in all cases. In order to ensure this, it is necessary to develop supervision activities of official control with verification or supervision of the compliance with the aforementioned documented procedures. By means of this supervision, we can determine whether the official control complies with the objectives and criteria previously established in the food risk management programmes. This supervision is normally carried out by central, regional and territorial services following a hierarchical or functional order.</p> <p>The supervision of official control fits into the field of action lines regarding the quality of official bodies of control, which integrates interventions to improve the quality of actions and to effectively and efficiently achieve the food risk management activities.</p>

Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Supervision and evaluation	
I-IIIO	Internal auditing of official control of the food chain
DARP ASP ACC AL ACSA	<p>Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, establishes, in its Article 4.6, that competent authorities must be internally audited or can order external audits regarding official control and, according to the result, will take the best measures to guarantee that they are achieving the objectives of the Regulation.</p> <p>Audits are characterized as being carried out by an independent body or unit responsible for the program and in accordance with a specific methodology which is recognized internationally. Auditing is a systematic and independent examination which is carried out to determine whether the activities and processes satisfy the previously established dispositions or standards of reference, whether they comply with what is stipulated in the documentary procedure, if they are applied in an effective manner and if they are adequate for achieving fixed objectives, constituting a valuable instrument for diagnostics and improving official food control organisations.</p>



Number Managing authorities	Interventions
Transparency and information to citizens	
I-III	Transparency and information to citizens
DMA DARP ASP ACC AL ACSA	<p>We must continue to make updated information which is easy to understand available to citizens regarding the interventions which are carried out regarding food safety and the results obtained. This activity must be permanent in times between crises and reinforced in moments of crisis.</p> <p>This intervention consists in continuing to make the necessary objective data available to the public regarding food safety issues, in such a way that the information is accessible and useful. All information related to reports and controls must be made available to citizens, as well as aiding with comprehension of the information provided and promoting risk prevention and good practices in the domestic phase of the food chain, in which the majority of food safety measures are in the hands of the consumer.</p> <p>Making all available information available to citizens is essential with the objective of maintaining public confidence in the food chain and in its safety, as well as providing a better understanding of the situation, the risks and the measures taken at times of crisis. In this way a permanent reference of information is maintained, of transparency and accountability to citizens and promotes participation and exchange of information regarding food safety as well as a common food safety culture.</p>

