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## China - Peoples Republic of

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### **12th Five Year Plan for National Food Safety Standard-final**

**Report Categories:**

National Plan

**Approved By:**

Scott Sindelar

**Prepared By:**

Melinda Meador and Ma Jie

**Report Highlights:**

On January 30, 2012, the Ministry of Health released the 12<sup>th</sup> Five-year Plan on National Food Safety Standards, and solicits public comments on the Plan.

On June 11, 2012, seven ministries/administrations jointly released the finalized 12<sup>th</sup> Five-year Plan. In comparison with the Draft, the final Plan is more specific in terms of incorporating international standards and experiences in administering the standards, basic standards to be formulated and revised, priorities for food product safety standard work (meat, liquor, food oil, condiment, baby food, dairy, health food), and addresses some new issues, such as formulation of food product safety standards for products that already have international standards, or products that are imported but do not have relevant standards. The Final Plan calls for food safety standard formulation to be transparent and open to public opinions.

This report provides an INFORMAL translation of this document.

**General Information:**

BEGIN TRANSLATION

**“The Twelfth Five-Year” Plan on National Food Safety Standards**

The plan is formulated in accordance with the *Food Safety Law*, its implementing regulations and plans related to national food safety supervision for the purposes of carrying out national food safety standard work and improving the standard system.

**I. Status Quo of Food Safety Standards**

**(I) Achievements.** As mandatory national standards, national food safety standards are important measures in protecting public health and food safety. They are the foundation of scientific administration of food safety and supervision over various (food safety) links, as well as technical tools in regulating food production, sale, and promoting sound development of the industry. Governments of all levels and in all regions attach great significance to food safety standard formulation and revision. In recent years, China has made remarkable achievements in this regard. Before the promulgation of the *Food Safety Law*, there were over 2,000 national standards, over 2,900 industrial standards and over 1,200 local standards on food, food additive and food-related products. A food safety standard system has been established with national standards at the core, supplemented by industrial standards, local standards and enterprise standards.

After promulgation of the *Food Safety Law*, China made more efforts on food safety standard work, and has made new progresses of:

1. Improvement of the food safety national standards system. Relevant government agencies have published administrative measures on national food safety standards and local standards, and measures on putting on record of enterprise standards; they have clarified requirements on standards formulation, revision and administration. Ministry of Health established the Food Safety National Standards Evaluation Committee, a progress in the food safety national standard evaluation system.
2. Accelerated the review and integration of food standards. With emphasis, MOH streamlined and integrated food standards on grains, vegetable oil, meat products, milk and dairy products, alcoholic liquors, spices and beverages. MOH cancelled or modified some standards and indices, and has preliminarily handled problems of overlapping, repetitive and conflicting food standards.

3. Promulgation of new national food safety standards. After promulgation of the *Food Safety Law*, MOH has released 269 national food safety standards covering milk, food additive use, compound food additive, fungi and toxin limit, prepackaged food label and nutriment label, pesticide residue limits and some food additives. MOH also revised the standards on food packing materials, which are more scientific and practical.
4. Promote smooth implementation of national food safety standards. (Relevant agencies) Actively engage in publicity and training on national food safety standards, track evaluation of implemented standards, and guide the food industry to strictly follow the implemented new standards.
5. China is actively involved in formulation of the international food codex. China is the host country of Codex Committee on Food Additives and Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues; it is elected Asian Executive Member of Codex Committee on Food; it hosted the international conferences on food additive codex and pesticide residue codex. Through all these, we learned the experiences (of developed countries) in formulation and management of food standards.

(II) Problem and restraints. Restrained by food industry development and risk assessment, food safety standards could not match development of the food industry, and standard formulated is restrained by risk assessment capacity. As a result, some problems emerge, mainly as follows:

1. The standard system needs to be further improved. Before issuance of the *Food Safety Law*, different ministries, pursuant to their portfolio, formulated national and industrial standards on agricultural product quality safety, food hygiene and food quality. Numerous standards co-exist, some overlap in content, some issues remain unaddressed, and some standards were inconsistent with others.
2. Failure of food safety supervision caused by lack of some key standards or important indices. For instance, China lacks standards on some detection methods and food packing materials.
3. Scientific basis and reasonableness of the standard needs to be further improved. Many food safety standards were issued a long time ago, which lack generality; some standard indices lack risk assessment. As a result, they could not match of food safety supervision requirements and industry development.
4. Publicity, training and implementation of standards need to be strengthened. Food safety standards are voluminous in indices, technical in content, highly compulsory in execution, and they attract close social attention. Therefore, it requires further improvement in standards administration and working procedures. China will improve methods of soliciting and collecting

opinions, and better publicize and interpret standards.

Restraints of national food safety standards are as follows:

1. Basic research lags behind; risk assessment is still in early stage; insufficient data storage of food safety exposure evaluation and backward monitoring and evaluating techniques.
2. Safeguarding mechanism needs to be established and improved. For the moment, China lacks a full-time technical organization for national food safety standard work; lacking people engage in food safety standard work and insufficient funds hinders standard formulation and revision work.
3. China needs to cultivate a standard team. Because of insufficient and scattered professionals, standard research capacity and competence cannot meet the current needs for work.

## **II. Guiding Ideology, Basic Principle and Objectives**

**(I) Guiding Ideology.** With Deng Xiaoping Theory and the important thought of the "Three Represents" as a guide, thoroughly implement the scientific outlook on development, faithfully implement the *Food Safety Law* and its implementing regulations, adhere to the principle of "prevention foremost, scientific management", put the protection of public health as its aim, actively absorb international experiences on the basis of food safety risk assessment, and speed up the streamlining and integration of food standards in China, formulate and improve national food safety standards, and build up the scientific, rational, safe and reliable national food safety standards safeguarding the health of the people in conformity with the situation of China overall.

### **(II) Basic Principles.**

1. Standard formulation in accordance with the law. The legislative aim of the *Food Safety Law* should be reflected in national food safety standards, with the protection of public health as the starting point and final goal, and the requirements for food safety laws and regulations should be implemented, covering food safety requirements that are closely related to health of people.

2. Risk assessment as the scientific basis. National food safety standards should be formulated on the basis of results of food safety risk assessment. Design of standards shall emphasize potential food safety risks for human health.

3. Standard formulation based on situation in China combining with learning from the international standards. National food safety standards should be formulated in compliance with situation in China and development of the food industry. Standards shall take into consideration actual conditions of relevant industries, requirements of standard supervision and continuous improvement of people's living, at the same time, actively learning from the relevant international standards and

management experience, as well as operation of standards.

4. Adhere to the principle of openness and transparency. Improve standard administration; by expanding scope and methods of collecting comments, China encourages the general public, legal persons and other organizations to take an active part in national food safety standard formulation and revision to protect the public's right to know and supervise.

### **(III) Main Objectives.**

—Review and integrate existing food standards. By 2015, complete review and integration of mandatory content in edible agricultural product quality safety standards, food hygiene standards, food quality standards and industry standards; basically solve the problems of overlapping, repetitious and conflicting contents in different standards, and form a relatively comprehensive system of national food safety standards.

—Speed up formulation and revision of national food safety standards. Improve generality, scientific base and applicability of national food safety standards. China aims to establish a national food safety standard system that is in conformity with its situation, industrial development and food safety supervision.

—Improve the administration of national food safety standards. China plans to establish an administration system and working mechanism featuring regulated / open and transparent procedures, which is guided by the government, coordinated by relevant government departments and participated in by the entire society so as to improve scientific and fair review on national food safety standards.

—Strengthen standards publicity and implementation. Relevant government agencies shall launch publicity/trainings to promote learning and implementation of national food safety standards; they will ensure faithful implementation of national food safety standards in food production and distribution so as to further improve the situation of food safety.

### **III. Tasks**

(I) Review and integrate existing food standards in an all-around way. (MOH) shall review mandatory content in edible agricultural product quality safety standards, food hygiene standards, food quality standards and industry standards; by this, (MOH) will solve the problems of overlapping, repetitive and conflicting standards

(MOH) will compare and analyze food safety indices and mandatory quality indices, determine principles and methods before carrying out the review work. By the end of 2013, (MOH) plans to review mandatory contents in the over 2000 national food safety standards and over 2900 industrial

standards. Based on the review work, (MOH) will 1) bring forward opinions whether the standards or technical indices shall remain effective, to be integrated or annulled; and 2) complete integration and elimination of relevant standards by the end of 2015.

(II) Speed up formulation and revision of basic food safety standards. Following the principle of “review and improving the standards simultaneously”, (MOH) will accelerate formulation and revision of national food safety standards by learning from foreign counterparts; with these, (MOH) will improve the Chinese food safety standards, and solve the problems of lacking important food safety standards and inconsistent standards.

(MOH) will lay emphasis on formulation and revision of basic food safety standards, including limits of harmful substances in food (pollutant, fungi and toxin and pathogenic microbe of food), limit of pesticide and veterinary medicine residue, food additive use, food nutrition fortifier use, prepackaged food label and nutriment label, food packaging materials and food additives.

By the end of 2015, (MOH) will revise limit standards of food pollutant, fungi and toxin, pesticide and veterinary medicine residue; it will revise the standards on use of food additive and food nutrition fortifier; (MOH) will formulate pathogenic microbe limit standards of food, define instructive requirement on microbe control in food producing and distribution process, establish guidance on fast food microbe control, and scientifically indicate microbe indices, limits and control requirements of food product; (MOH) will improve relevant standards on materials of food vessels, packaging and processing equipment, and improve food-related standards on the use of food additives in food vessels and packages.

(III) Improve hygiene requirements standard on food production and operation. MOH will formulate and revise regulations and standards on food production and operation for the purposes of strengthening safety control in food production and operation; it will tighten requirements on raw material, production, transportation, storage and hygiene management; in addition, MOH wish to prevent and control food safety risk by regulating food production and operations.

By the end of 2015, (MOH) plans to formulate over 20 national food safety standards, including sanitary regulations for food/food additive producers and operators, good practice for health food production, which will cover the entire process of food production and operation. In addition, MOH plans to further break down the requirements and criteria on food pollution control in food production and operation in accordance with food category, production / operation mode and other features.

(IV) Reasonably set up food products safety standards. Taking into consideration of product characteristics and potential risks, (MOH) will, after risk assessment, give priority to standards of major

food products (such as meat, alcoholic liquor, vegetable oil, spices, infant food, dairy products) and health food products and food additive, set limits on harmful substances in food that are not covered by basic food safety standards; it will also set mandatory quality indices that are related to food safety. (MOH) will take into account generality and coverage of the standards to avoid overlapping or repetition in different standards.

By the end of 2015, (MOH) will formulate and revise safety standards of primary food products (such as meat, alcoholic liquor, vegetable oil, spices, infant food, dairy products, food additive, health food products, aquatic products, grains, beans and beverages). (MOH) will formulate safety standards for food products that have had international standards or import trade but still lack of relevant standards in China.

(V) Establish and improve standards on food testing methods. MOH will establish comprehensive food inspection methods and standard procedures system, focusing on standards on testing methods pursuant to limit indices in national food safety standards.

By the end of 2015, MOH will formulate and revise, with priority, standards of testing methods for various pollutants, fungi and toxin, pesticides, veterinary medicine residue and food additives, as well as food-related products; it will further improve standards on toxicological safety evaluation procedures and detecting methods.

(VI) Improve administration of national food safety standards. MOH will improve the mechanism of extensive opinion solicitation of national food safety standards and protect its smooth channels, so that national food safety standards are scientific, reasonable, safe and reliable.

By the end of 2012, MOH will launch relevant mechanisms regulating tracking and evaluating of national food safety standards. By the end of 2013, China will improve administration mechanism and working procedures addressing standards establishment, formulation, revision, opinion solicitation, standard assessment, assessment commission management, national food safety standard announcement, as well as applying for new standard formulation, enquiry and interpretation, and strengthen risk communication and exchange in the process of standards formulation or revision. All these will guarantee the process more open and transparent.

(VII) Strengthen publicity and implementation of national food safety standards. For the purpose of promoting implementation of national food safety standards, MOH will reinforce publicity, training, counseling, and tracking/appraisal work after promulgation of national food safety standards. It will emphasize publicity of national food safety standards and science popularization, in particular standards that are highly technical and are concerned by the public, and timely answer standard-

related questions. MOH will encourage industries and enterprises to actively implement national food safety standards; relevant supervising authorities shall supervise food safety in accordance with the law and standards, carry out tracking and appraisal of national food safety standards to identify problems in standard implementation, and at an appropriate time to revise and improve national food safety standards.

(VIII) Carry out studies on national food safety standards. MOH will carry out basic studies on food safety standards systematically to make them more scientific and practical.

By the end of 2015, MOH will:

1) Complete the study on application of risk assessment principles in national food safety standards formulation;

2) Complete the study that tracks and compares international food safety standards;

3) Complete the study on design of indices system of microbes in food; and

4) Complete the study on principles of using major functional food additives.

The research results shall be applied in standard work.

(IX) Get more involved in international food codex affairs. Based on its need to develop the Chinese national food safety standard system, China will actively take part in the work of Codex Committee on Food, which is a chance for China to learn and absorb advanced food standard management experience. Such involvement in formulation and revision of international food codex standards also safeguards China's interest in food trade.

By 2015, China will fully participate in various activities of the Codex Committee on Food, and timely track standard work of food codex. It will comprehensively understand the food safety standard system of major trading members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to track their progress of work in food safety regulations and standards, and do a good job in the WTO / SPS notification and review. China will participate in or take lead in formulation/revision of international food standards and technical exchanges that are closely related to interests of China in food trade. China will, in a continuous manner, improve its work as the host country and Asian executive member of the Codex Committee on Food Additive and the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residue.

#### **IV. Safeguard Measures**

(I) Establish a national food safety standards coordination and cooperation working mechanism. China will establish a consultation mechanism of national food safety standards, which is comprised of the Ministry of Health (MOH), the National Reform and Development Commission (NDRC), the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology



(MIIT), the Ministry of Finance (MOF), the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), State Administration of Industry and Commerce (SAIC), State Administration of Quality Supervision and Quarantine (AQSIQ), State Administration of Grain, State Food and Drug Administration (SFDA), National Standards Committee, Certification and Accreditation Administration (CNCA) and the State Council Food Safety Office. Coordination will be strengthened in studying key issues in development of the national food safety standards system. They would coordinate and carry out tasks assigned, break down the tasks specified in the Plan, clarify objectives/responsible agencies; these will facilitate task implementation and supervision. The MOH shall take lead in implementing the Plan, and organize the review, formulation and revision of the standards with relevant government departments. Food supervisory authorities shall collaborate positively in participating in reviewing of national and industrial food standards that are under their jurisdiction; they shall provide routine monitoring / supervising / inspection data, urge relevant industries and enterprises to follow national food safety standards in their production and operation, and collect and summarize the problems of national food safety standards in the implementation process, and inform health departments in a timely manner. Industrial authorities shall take initiative part in the standard system construction and work together to do a good job in standard formulation / revision / publicity, and guide industries to follow the standards.

(II) Increase input into national food safety standard system. The central government will continuously increase funds channeled for formulation and revision of national food safety standards, with emphasis on formulation and revision of key standards specified in the Plan. While guaranteeing sufficient investment, the fund use should be strictly monitored for efficiency and compliance. In establishing technical platforms for various types of standards, it is suggested to make full use of existing research institutions and industrial organizations of food safety standards. Such institutions and organizations are encouraged to participate in formulation, revision, publicity and technical consulting of the standards.

(III) Cultivate talented people for food safety standard work. Establish the National Food Safety Risk Assessment Center and the Secretariat of National Assessment Committee of Food Safety Standards. China would attract more leading talents to engage in food safety standards; the number of professionals for standard study and administration will be increased to strengthen the technical force of food safety standards. China will strengthen standardized training for professionals in key scientific R&D colleges, universities and technical institutions. In addition, China will build a large team of competent experts that engage in standard development, who will carry out formulation and revision

of food safety standards.

(IV) Supervise implementation of tasks. The MOH will adjust the Plan pursuant to requirements on food safety supervision and standard management, formulate annual implementation plan in a timely, dynamical and scientific manner, and conscientiously organize its implementation. At the same time, it will timely organize inspection and assessment of tasks required by the Plan. By strengthening supervision and evaluation, relevant agencies will guarantee implementation of each task.

END OF TRANSLATION