

A Study on the Administration of Food Safety Policy in Taiwan

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Food safety has drawn the public's attention because of several food incidents in the last few years in Taiwan. For instance, the U.S. beef event, the melamine incidents, and the plasticizer incidents have decreased consumers' confidence and governments need to improve food safety management. In order to raise consumers' confidence, governments may need to amend current rules or to enact new laws. However, this study focuses on the enforcement of food safety management.

In Taiwan, three agencies are charged of the enforcement of food safety regulations at the central government level. The Environmental Protection Administration (TEPA) protects the air, water, soil, and underground water from pollution. The Council of Agriculture (TCA) is responsible for the sanitation and safety control of agricultural products until they are sent away from wholesale markets. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) at the Department of Health (DOH) is charged of the management of food safety policy.

At the local level, the health bureaus, agriculture department, and the department of environmental protection at the city/municipal level are responsible for the policy enforcement. In other words, the central agencies are responsible for the establishment of the standards governing the permissible tolerance of substance which is harmful to human health, and the regulations governing the spot check and examination method. The local agencies enforce the rules. This study aims to examine the institutional arrangement, enforcement strategies, and management of these three agencies and tries to provide policy recommendations.