

# **An Analysis on the Practice of Food Certification and Accreditation System in Taiwan (*Food Safety Study Series No. 4*)**

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In response to the recent food scandals occurred in Taiwan, the government has been trying to strengthen the framework and capability of the food safety governance system. In the White Paper on Food Safety published by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in January 2016, the government attempts to enhance collaboration with local governments, improve management system for food retailers, and increase public participation in order to make the food safety governance system better.

The team has investigated the framework and independence of certification and accreditation agencies in Taiwan, as well as the strategies that the government uses to manage the certification and accreditation system. Based on the previous research results, the team plans to go further to include local governments, food retailers, and civil organizations into the research project next year. Despite that most food safety policies were made by the central government, local governments play an important role in implementation. The incentive and ability of local governments to collaborate with the central government to put food safety laws and regulations into practice is influential to the effectiveness of food safety system. Therefore, the 2017 project will include the analysis of local governments' role and capability in the governance of food safety system.

In addition, food retailers have the market power to influence the development of the certification and accreditation system. If they recognize the value of food labels and support the certification and accreditation system, then producers are encouraged to get certified. The team will incorporate the analysis of food retailers' opinions on food labels and certification system.

Civil organizations are also important for a sound food safety governance regime. They are watchdogs who can help to monitor the development of certification system and food safety policies. The team will organize an expert panel consisting of representatives from civil organization interested in food safety. Their feedbacks on certification system and policies will be collected and used for drafting policy suggestions.

More specifically, the 2017 project will focus on five issues essential to the practice of food certification and accreditation system. The first one is the collaboration of central and local governments in the management of certification and accreditation system. The second

is the opinions of food retailers on current certification and accreditation system. The third is the feedbacks of civil organizations on certification system and policies. The fourth is the comparative study between U.S. and Taiwan's certification system and laws, as well as European countries and Taiwan's certification systems and laws. The last one is the survey on consumers' preferences of different food labels. Taken as a whole, the 2017 project will collect and analyze the opinions of local governments, food retailers, civil organizations, and consumers to form policy suggestions on certification and accreditation system. The team aims at publishing a book featuring the design and practice of certification and accreditation system in Taiwan at the end of 2017. Hopefully, the book will offer some useful suggestions for government agencies and future reform on the food certification and accreditation system.