



## The Main Roles of FSC

### 1. Risk assessment

The Commission's most important role is the implementation of risk assessments of the effects on human health of hazardous substances that may be found in foods, which include E. coli bacteria (O157:H7), prions, food additives, and pesticides. In other words, the Commission scientifically assesses the possibility and severity of adverse effects on health covered by ingesting hazardous substances contained in foods.

The Commission assesses risk when requested by the risk management bodies, mainly the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. In addition, it also determines areas where it is necessary to assess risk on its own initiative, and conducts "self tasking assessment."

The FSC is in a position to make recommendations through the Prime Minister to the ministers of the relevant risk management bodies regarding policies to be implemented on the basis of the results of risk assessments.

### 2. Promoting risk communication

Risk communication is an inseparable part of the risk management framework for the protection of public health. Through risk communication, information and opinions are shared among stakeholders including consumers. Along with conducting risk communication on matters related to risk assessments in areas of high public concern, the FSC also plays a supporting role by collaborating with the risk communication conducted by risk management bodies.

FSC strives to ensure transparency, by, in principle, making the Commission's meetings (in principle held every Thursday) and the meetings of the Expert Committees open to the public, and by posting the minutes of all meetings on the Commission's website.

#### Risk assessment activities and public meetings conducted by FSC

○ Risk assessment activities → 538 items (July 1, 2003 to February 29, 2008)

○ Public meetings → 315 meetings (July 1, 2003 to February 29, 2008)

Following are the key themes for the meetings which have been planned and hosted by FSC.

- Risk assessment related to measures against BSE in Japan
- Risk assessment related to methylmercury in seafood
- Genetically modified foods
- Drug-resistant bacteria
- Avian influenza
- Risk assessment related to foods for specified health uses containing soy-isoflavone
- *Shokuiku* (Food education)

