

1. Risk assessment

FSC's core role is risk assessment of food-associated hazards that are potentially contained in food (e.g. food additives, pesticides and so on). According to this mission, FSC releases assessment reports, in which a risk of hazard ingestion is practically expressed in form of possibility and severity of adverse health effects under certain conditions.

Risk assessments are mostly conducted based on risk managers' requests (mainly from MAFF, MHLW and CAA) but occasionally FSC initiates a risk assessment on its own decision, the scheme called 'self-tasking assessment'. Following the notification of assessment reports to risk managers, FSC can opt to make recommendations in the name of the Prime Minister regarding effective policies that the risk managers may adopt in response to the assessment results.

2. Raising awareness through risk communication

Risk communication is a key element in appropriately controlling the risks and public health protection, targeting stakeholders including consumers to share information and exchange opinions regarding food safety. FSC emphasizes risk communication on food-related hazards that especially catches attention of the general public. The process of risk communication is also coordinated with risk managers and local governments so that the operation can be smooth and effective.

FSC's Commissioners meeting is held every Thursday to give final decision to the individual scientific assessment reports drafted by each Expert Committee, or FSC Working Group. All the meetings, except for those that discuss company's or individual's intellectual properties, are open to public to ensure transparency of their discussion and decisions. Minutes are posted on the Commission's website.

3. Emergency response

As a part of daily activity, FSC, CAA and risk managers keep close ties to each other to collect and analyze information, in preparation to minimize damages and public health protection in case of food poisoning outbreaks. In an emergency situation with potential harm to the public health, the government will work as a whole to prevent expansion and recurrence of such damage in a swift, appropriate and harmonized way. Major role of FSC in this situation is to provide scientific information or to rapidly release statement to the public through media, government PR and the internet.