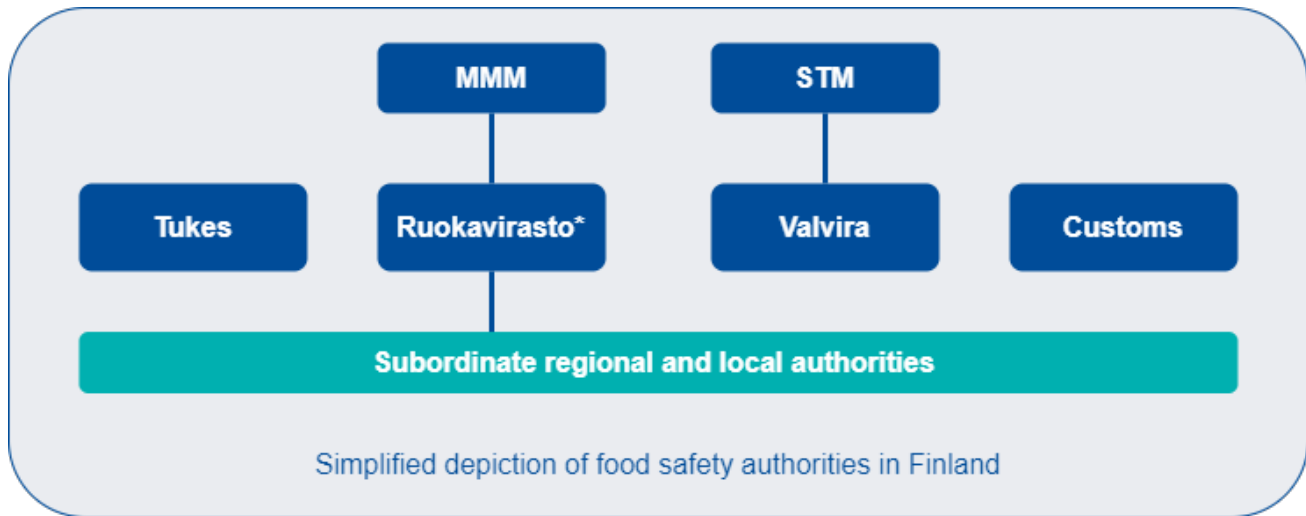


# Finland:Finland

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The Finnish Food Act is the central legal foundation for food legislation in Finland. Infringement of food regulations can lead to measures under criminal law and consumer damage claims under civil law, whereby the final decision rests with the courts. Governmental measures with regard to food safety are often based on scientific risk assessments. However, the final decision on the legality of governmental measures rests with the courts.

While there is no strict institutional separation of risk assessment and risk management in Finland, procedural aspects of risk assessment and risk management are separated, and risk assessments are done independently from risk management..

Most risk assessments are publicly available.


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## Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

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<b>Name</b>	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
<b>Acronym</b>	MMM
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agricultural policy, food and feed safety</li><li>• Risk management</li><li>• Codex Contact Point</li></ul>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	
<b>Location</b>	Helsinki
<b>URL</b>	<a href="http://mmm.fi/en/frontpage">http://mmm.fi/en/frontpage</a>

Ministerial responsibility for food and feed safety is centralised in Finland within the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MMM). It bears the policy and legislative responsibility. The MMM's responsibility for animal products encompasses all processing stages except distribution.

The Ruokavirasto is a specialist authority within the portfolio of the MMM. It is responsible for planning, steering, developing and undertaking food control on a national basis. It is also responsible for national risk assessments related to food, feed, animal health and plant health. The portfolio of the MMM also encompasses the Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke), whose remit is to engage in research concerning agriculture and food economy. Luke also focusses on the improvement of farm animal welfare and risk assessments related to it.

There are three National Reference Laboratories attached to the MMM, pursuant to Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004.

## Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

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<b>Name</b>	Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
<b>Acronym</b>	STM
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nutrition policy</li><li>• Risk management</li><li>• Risk communication</li></ul>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	
<b>Location</b>	Helsinki
<b>URL</b>	<a href="http://stm.fi/en/frontpage">http://stm.fi/en/frontpage</a>

In the food sector, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (STM) deals with public health and nutrition policy, including legislation on drinking water, GMO propagation, irradiation and radioactivity. The Board of Gene Technology at STM is responsible for coordinating activities under the EC genetic engineering directives. In addition to this, the STM has coordinated an interdisciplinary network of administrative liaison officers who work on issues related to the safe application of nanotechnology.

The National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health (Valvira) is a specialist authority within the portfolio of the STM. The portfolio of the STM also encompasses other government authorities such as the National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), which undertakes research on public health and conducts nutritional risk assessments, and the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority (STUK), responsible for environmental risk assessments and other tasks.

## Finnish Food Authority

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<b>Name</b>	Finnish Food Authority
<b>Acronym</b>	Ruokavirasto
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk assessment</li><li>• Risk management</li><li>• Risk communication</li><li>• Research</li><li>• EFSA Focal Point</li><li>• RASFF contact point</li></ul>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	
<b>Location</b>	Seinäjoki, several regional seats
<b>URL</b>	<a href="https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/en/">https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/en/</a>

Ruokavirasto (Finnish Food Authority), established in 2019, continues the activities of the Finnish Food Safety Authority (Evira). Ruokavirasto operates under the MMM and is the central authority in the field of food and feed safety in Finland. Ruokavirasto plays a leading role in the development and implementation of the national food control programme covering the food chain from “farm to fork”. Some of the inspections are carried out directly by Ruokavirasto, but the main responsibility for the inspections is assigned to regional and municipal authorities.


Ruokavirasto is also responsible for scientific risk assessments and conducts research on food safety. The risk assessments are conducted independently from risk management. Ruokavirasto also acts as the link to consumers and organises risk communication in the field of food safety.

The Finnish Zoonosis Centre located within Ruokavirasto forms a cooperation body between Ruokavirasto and the National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL). This ensures close cooperation between relevant experts in the field of food safety as well as animal and public health. The centre coordinates the monitoring of zoonoses, foodborne outbreaks, and antimicrobial resistance and also compiles the results.

Ruokavirasto’s area of work extends beyond food safety to include, for instance, veterinary medicinal products. The regulatory agency for veterinary drugs, however, is the Finnish Medicines Agency (Fimea).

## Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency

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<b>Name</b>	Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency
<b>Acronym</b>	Tukes
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk assessment</li><li>• Risk management</li><li>• Risk communication</li></ul>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	
<b>Locations</b>	Helsinki, Tampere, Rovaniemi
<b>URL</b>	<a href="http://www.tukes.fi/en">http://www.tukes.fi/en</a>

The Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (Tukes) supervises and promotes technical safety and conformity, together with consumer and chemicals safety in Finland. Tukes is the regulatory agency for pesticides and it assesses the risks of pesticide residues. Tasks

related to pesticides are under the remit of Ministry of Employment and the Economy.

## National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health

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<b>Name</b>	National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health
<b>Acronym</b>	Valvira
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk assessment</li><li>• Risk management</li></ul>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	 
<b>Location</b>	Helsinki
<b>URL</b>	<a href="http://www.valvira.fi/web/en/front-page">http://www.valvira.fi/web/en/front-page</a>

In the field of food safety, the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health (Valvira) is responsible for the supervision of tap water. In addition to this, Valvira supervises pesticide residues in alcohol products.

## Finnish Customs

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<b>Name</b>	Finnish Customs
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk management</li></ul>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	    
<b>Location</b>	Helsinki
<b>URL</b>	<a href="http://www.tulli.fi/en/frontpage">http://www.tulli.fi/en/frontpage</a>

Finnish Customs (under the Ministry of Finance) is the competent authority for the import of food of non-animal origin. (Ruokavirasto controls the import of animal-based foodstuffs such as meat, fish and milk). Customs also inspects some of the so-called 'combined foodstuffs', which include refined animal-based ingredients in addition to ingredients of a plant origin.

## Regional and local levels

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Finland is divided into six regions which are managed by Regional State Administrative Agencies. These regional agencies are under the Ministry of Finance. The regions are further subdivided into self-governing municipalities. Food control as well as control of animal health and welfare is carried out by 62 local environmental health care control units which report to the municipalities.

In addition, controls in the area of animal identification, registration, animal feed and plant health are carried out on behalf of Ruokavirasto by 15 regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (supervised by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy).

## Article 36 institutions

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### Institutions involved in the EFSA network pursuant to Article 36 Reg. (EC) No. 178/2002

1. University of Helsinki (Helsingin yliopisto)
2. Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luonnonvarakeskus - Luke)
3. Finnish Food Authority (Ruokavirasto) (EFSA Focal Point)
4. Finnish Environment Institute (Suomen ympäristökeskus - SYKE)
5. National Institute for Health and Welfare (Terveyden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos - THL)
6. University of Turku (Turun yliopisto)
7. Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (Turvallisuus- ja kemikaalivirasto - Tukes)

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**This page was last edited on 22 November 2022, at 14:10 from FuzzyBot.**