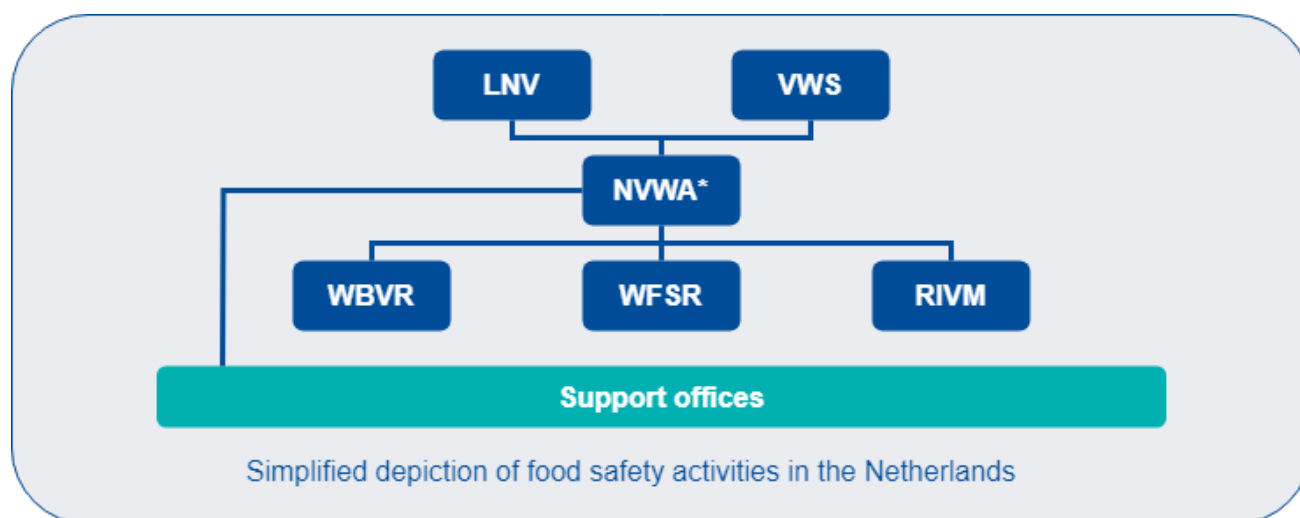


Netherlands

Last updated on 26 July 2024.



* Host institution of the national EFSA Focal Point. For information on the EFSA Focal Point network, please see the EFSA website.

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European regulations and the Dutch Food and Commodities Act are the central legal foundations for food legislation in the Netherlands. 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. Government measures with regard to food safety are often based on scientific risk assessments.

Based on the Dutch “Independent Risk Assessment Act” from 2006, risk assessment and risk management are largely institutionally separated. Risk assessments are published on the Internet unless there are statutory provisions that prohibit it.

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Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport

Name	Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport
Acronym	VWS
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health policy, food safety • Risk management
Responsibilities	
Location	Den Haag
URL	https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-health-welfare-and-sport

The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) pursues a ‘good food’ policy mainly based on recommendations and guidelines prepared by the Health Council of the Netherlands. VWS is responsible for health policy and safety of food of non-animal origin and prepares draft legislation in this area. VWS bases risk management measures on risk assessments conducted by the Office for Risk Assessment and Research (BuRO), an independent unit within the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA). The VWS portfolio includes food supplements, novel foods, mineral water, drinking water, botanicals, residues of plant protection products and veterinary medicinal products and genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in the food of non-animal origin segment. Its area of work extends beyond the field of food safety to cosmetics and consumer products.

Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

Name	Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality
Acronym	LNV
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural policy, food and feed safety • Risk management
Responsibilities	
Location	Den Haag
URL	https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-agriculture-nature-and-food-quality

The Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) is responsible for agricultural policy and safety of food of animal origin (i.e. during primary production by farmers, growers and fishermen). LNV prepares draft legislation in this area and ensures the traceability of food of animal origin.

In the Netherlands, it is the responsibility of the food producers to ensure safe foods and to conduct appropriate day-to-day quality controls. The government supervises this self-control system (“supervising the supervisor”).

LNV bases risk management measures on risk assessments prepared by the Office for Risk Assessment and Research (BuRO), an independent unit within the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA).

The portfolio of LNV includes zoonoses, GMOs and residues of plant protection products and veterinary medicinal products in animal feed. The area of work of LNV extends beyond food safety to plant health, plant protection, animal health and animal welfare. LNV is the regulatory authority for plant protection products and veterinary medicinal products.

Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority

Name	Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority
Acronym	NVWA
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Risk assessment• Risk communication• Risk management• EFSA Focal Point• RASFF contact point
Responsibilities	
Location	Utrecht
URL	https://english.nvwa.nl/

The Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA) is an independent agency in LNV and a delivery agency to VWS. In April 2010, three authorities (VWA, PD (National Plant Protection Organization, NPPO) and AID) were merged into one authority named NVWA. NVWA has been operating as a single authority since January 2012. The three main tasks of NVWA are the implementation and supervision of food safety control and inspection activities, risk assessment and risk communication. NVWA is also responsible for incident and crisis management, including technical and scientific support and advising LNV and VWS on risks. Within NVWA, risk management is functionally separated from risk assessment.

NVWA has small support offices in the country to provide logistical support to the inspectors. In addition, the number of laboratories has been reduced to two laboratories in Zwijndrecht and Groningen for product safety, and one in Wageningen for plant health (National Reference Centre (NRC) - Plant Health, National Plant Protection Organisation, pursuant to Official Controls Regulation (2017/625/EU)). NRC in NVWA coordinates the European Reference Laboratories (EURLs) for Bacteriology and Virology.

NVWA also has an Intelligence and Investigation Service (NVWA-IOD) that focusses on organised and international crime.

NVWA has access to several National Reference Laboratories in the field of food safety, pursuant to Official Controls Regulation (2017/625/EU).

The area of work of the NVWA extends beyond the field of food safety to animal health, animal welfare, plant health and non-food consumer products.

The independent Office for Risk Assessment and Research (BuRO) conducts risk assessments and advises the ministers of LNV and VWS on food and consumer product safety and on animal health and welfare. BuRO is a scientific unit that is independent, and its scientific opinions are free of political, social or scientific interests. BuRO also identifies new health risks, prepares risk reduction recommendations, and recommends preventive measures to ensure food and feed safety. Another main area for BuRO is the transparent communication with the public. BuRO is active in the areas of food safety, novel foods, food supplements, GMOs, zoonoses, animal feed, animal health, veterinary medicinal products, animal welfare, residues of plant protection products, plant health and non-food consumer products.

Regional and local levels

The Netherlands is divided in 12 provinces and 355 municipalities. Food and feed inspections are coordinated from the central seat in Utrecht and supported by regional NVWA offices.

Article 36 institutions

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

1. Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA) (EFSA Focal Point)
2. National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM)
3. Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
4. Board for the Authorisation of Plant Protection Products and Biocides (Ctgb)
5. Wageningen Research
6. Utrecht University
7. Wageningen University
8. Erasmus University Medical Centre Rotterdam
9. Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG)
10. Maastricht University
11. Leiden University
12. University of Applied Sciences Utrecht
13. Gezondheidsdienst voor Dieren (GD)

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