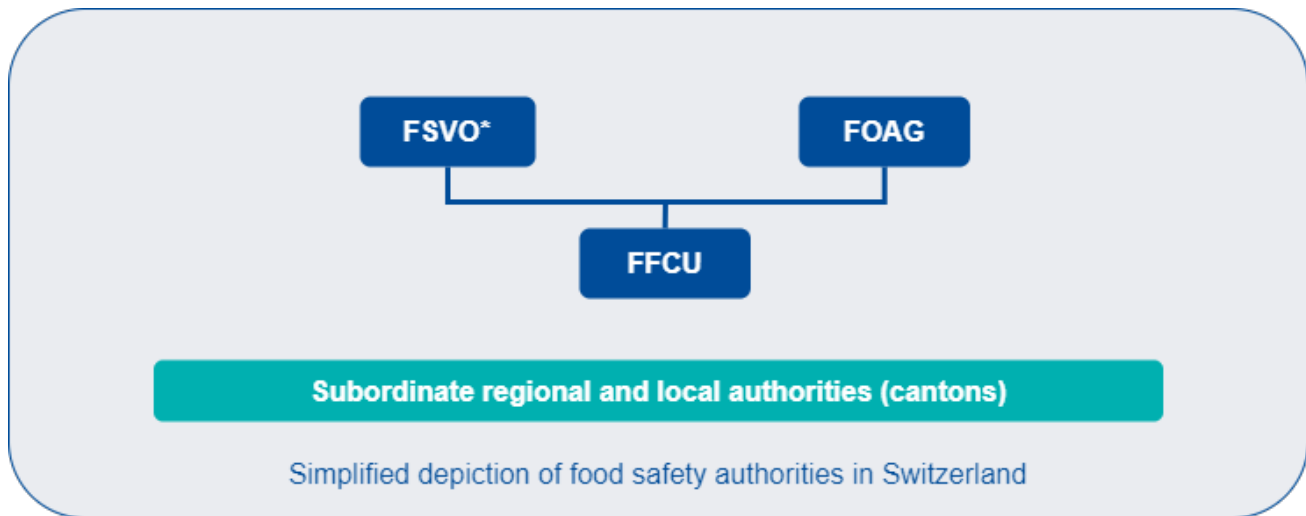


Switzerland

Last updated on 20 October 2023.



*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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The Federal Act on Foodstuffs and Utility Articles is the central legal foundation for food law in Switzerland. Also relevant in this area is the Federal Act on Agriculture and related ordinances on feed, animal health, animal welfare, as well as the import, transit and export of animals and food of animal origin.

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 based on scientific risk assessments. However, the final decision on the legality of governmental measures rests with the courts.

In Switzerland, there is no institutional separation of risk assessment and risk management. However, different divisions of the Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office (FSVO) are in charge. While food safety laws are enacted at the national level, implementation and control at the regional level is the responsibility of the cantons.



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Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office

| | |
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| Name | Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office |
| Acronym | FSVO |
| Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Risk assessment• Risk management• Risk communication• Codex Contact Point• RASFF contact point• EFSA Focal Point• Research |
| Responsibilities |  |
| Location | Bern |
| URL | http://www.blv.admin.ch |

The Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office (FSVO) is part of the Federal Department of Home Affairs. The office is responsible for risk assessments and risk management in the area of animal health and welfare, food safety and consumer protection.


The FSVO is also responsible for the safety of utility articles, such as toys and cosmetics. In addition, the FSVO monitors and controls the import, export and transit of livestock and domestic animals, animal products, food, and internationally protected flora and fauna (CITES Convention). In close collaboration with the Swiss Federal Customs Administration, the FSVO is responsible for the control of foodstuffs and utility articles at the border.

In cooperation with importing countries, the FSVO also issues veterinary documents for the export of animals and animal products.

The FSVO is the regulatory authority for plant protection products.

The regulatory authority for veterinary drugs is the Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products (Swissmedic), while risks associated with residues of veterinary drugs in food of animal origin are covered by the FSVO.

Federal Office for Agriculture

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Name | Federal Office for Agriculture |
| Acronym | FOAG |
| Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Risk assessment• Risk management |
| Responsibilities |  |
| Location | Bern |
| URL | http://www.blw.admin.ch |

The Federal Office for Agriculture (FOAG) is an office of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research and is responsible for agricultural policy, safety of food of plant origin during primary production and safety of animal feed. Together with the cantons and farmers' organisations, the FOAG implements decisions by the people, the parliament and the government.

The FOAG is responsible for risk assessments and risk management in the area of animal feed. Actual control and inspection activities are carried out by the research institute

Agroscope.

Federal Food Chain Unit

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Name | Federal Food Chain Unit |
| Acronym | FFCU |
| Activities | • Risk management |
| Responsibilities |  |
| Location | Bern |
| URL | http://www.blk.admin.ch |

On behalf of the FOAG and FSVO, the Federal Food Chain Unit (FFCU) audits the implementation and enforcement of national legislation by federal and cantonal authorities in the area of plant health, feed safety, food safety, animal health and animal welfare. The FFCU also prepares and coordinates the implementation and evaluation of the multi-annual national control plan (MANCP).

Regional and local levels

Switzerland consists of 26 federal states, the cantons. They are responsible for the enforcement of food safety and agricultural legislation. Cantonal food control authorities are responsible for food safety inspections. Cantonal veterinary offices are responsible for the enforcement of legislation concerning animal health, animal welfare and veterinary medicinal products. They inspect livestock prior to slaughtering and conduct meat inspections. Both cantonal authorities report to the FSVO.

Collaboration with EFSA: Switzerland has observer status for the Advisory Forum, Focal Point network and some of the scientific networks, in which mainly delegates of the FSVO participate.

Access to the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) is limited to notifications concerning food of animal origin.

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