STANDARD SUMMARY PROJECT FICHE
Project Number 2002/000-180-01-06

1. BASIC INFORMATION
1.1 Désirée Number: 2002/000-180-01-06
   Twinning Number: HU02/IB/AG-06

1.2 Title: Food Safety Office

1.3 Sector: Agriculture

1.4 Location: Hungary

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 Overall Objective(s)

The effective implementation of the EU food control Acquis via establishment of Food Safety Office.

2.2 Project purpose

To assist the establishment of the Food Safety Office and to fully apply the acquis communautaire so as to co-ordinate and to make the control of food of animal and non-animal origin more effective.

2.3 Accession Partnership and NPAA priority

The recently revised Accession partnership includes the following Food Safety related priorities:

Free Movement of Goods
- Continue implementation of the food acquis, and develop and implement an action plan to promote HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) for the entire food industry.
- Complete reinforcement of market surveillance and conformity assessment structures, also in the food industry; ensure effectiveness of implementing structures in all sectors.

Agriculture
- Continue the overall upgrading of food processing establishments with a view to meeting EC food safety standards, in particular in the dairy and meat sector.
- Complete transposition of legislation in the veterinary and phytosanitary field (legislation on transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, plant passports, maximum residue levels, animal nutrition) and ensure implementation and enforcement.

The NPAA reflects the animal health and food safety control strategy of the Hungarian Government and clearly defines the harmonisation tasks to be implemented. It includes a specific priority on the "Establishment of Food Safety Office"
2.4 Contribution to National Development Plan: Not applicable

2.5 Cross Border Impact: Not applicable

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1 Background and justification:

The Act No. 2001/22 which is the amendment of the Animal Health Act of the year 1995 was approved by the Government on the 6\textsuperscript{th} of June 2001 and came into force on the 6\textsuperscript{th} of July 2001. Point 9 of article 45 of Act 2001/22 provided for the establishment of a food safety organization. The Minister of Agriculture and Regional Development and the Minister of Health have signed an official agreement in September 2001 on the establishment of the National Food Safety Office and they defined that the National Food Safety Office is operating with national authority under the competency of the MARD under the direction of the Minister of Agriculture and Regional Development. The Minister is obliged to report directly to the Parliament. The Office should closely collaborate with the relevant authorities of the different ministries. (The exact translation of the content of the agreement is provided in Annex 4.)

(i.) The main difference between the present institutions and the authorities listed below and the new Food Safety Office is that the office will be an independent body with the task of supervising of the institutions and authorities in the food safety process and making their operations more efficient. The institutions listed below would officially control only special areas of the food chain while the Office will have a total overview on the whole food. For this reason Hungary has decided to establish the Office following the practice of most of the Member States so as to enable the “stable to table” coordination of food safety. Naturally the office will rely on the database and examinations partly available at the current institutions. The office will summarise, evaluate the group of data available at different institutions for the same food-processing phase. One of the most important tasks of the office is to collect data from the currently functioning institutions and to evaluate them. In this way new practices on how to enforce food safety can be promoted. The office will rely on the data collected by the different institutions.

There has been around 0.35 millions of Euro allocated for the year 2001 for the establishment of the Office.

Co-ordination between the different authorities will be organised according to the following lines:
- The highest level of co-ordination is the Government of the Hungarian Republic.
- The Government is assisted primarily in its general co-ordination activity in the field of food safety by several inter-ministerial committees.
The Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Economic Affairs take part in the committees. The committees have been set up in order to clarify the exact tasks of the different bodies in food safety topics.

Hungary already has a functioning food safety control system based on the following institutions which are under the competence of the relevant Ministries:

**List of the related authorities:**

- **Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development (MARD), which includes:**
  - Animal Health and Food Control Department
  - Plant Health and Agro-Environmental Department
  - Food Industry Department

  The following national bodies also operate under the authority of MARD:
  - National Food Investigation Institute
  - Central Veterinary Institute (CVI)
  - State Control Institute for Veterinary Biological, Drugs and Feeds (SCIVBDF)
  - Veterinary and Food Control Service (VFCS)
  - Plant and Soil Conservation Services (PSPS)
  - National Institute for Agricultural Quality Control (NIAQC)
  - National Institute for Wine Qualification (NIWQ)

- **Ministry of Health (MoH), which includes:**
  - National Public Health and Medical Officers’ Service (NPHMOS)

  The following bodies operate under the authority of the NPHMOS:
  - National Institute of Food Hygiene and Nutrition (NIFHN)
  - National Centre for Public Health

- **Ministry of Economic Affairs (MoE), which includes:**
  - General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection (GICP)

**3.2 Linked activities:**

**HU9004-02-06 Development of quality control**

The project financed the procurement of laboratory for the County Veterinary and Food Control Stations of Bács, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Hajdú-Bihar, Somogy and Veszprém counties.

**HU9703-0306 Development of the Food Hygiene Control**

The project provided assistance in developing an EU-conform documentation system of food quality control and delivers some equipment for the National Food Investigating Institute.

**HU0003-01 Food Hygiene and Animal Welfare**
HU0003-01-01 laboratory supply project – The project helps modernising the food control laboratories such as National Food Investigation Institute, National Institute for Veterinary Drugs and six Regional Animal Health and Food Control Stations.

HU/2000/IB/AG/01 twinning project on Food Hygiene and Animal Welfare to transpose and implement the EU food hygiene control system. The project started in August 2001 and is providing a study tour in France to experience the French Food Safety Office.

### 3.3 Results:

- Hungarian Food Safety Office established and operational;
- Mandate and tasks of the Food Safety Office defined;
- Operation guidelines for the Hungarian Food Safety Office defined and in line with the EU requirements;
- Staff of the Agency properly trained and ready to fulfil its tasks;
- Staff of other Food Safety Institutions trained on new food safety developments and food hygiene control techniques;

### 3.4 Activities:

Project activities include the preparation and implementation of one twinning light and one twinning arrangement on food safety.

#### 3.4.1 HU/2002 Twinning light

**The scope of the twinning light project:**

The twinning light is supposed to provide assistance in the course of the establishment of the Food Safety Office. It shall contribute to the creation of the legal and institutional framework of the Office. It will also cover preparatory activities for the full-fledged twinning arrangement. It shall include the following:

- Assistance in the drafting of the legal frames of the Office.
- Assistance in the course of the definition of the Office’s tasks and statutes.
- Assistance in the course of the definition of the competency and internal work distribution.
- Elaboration of a draft training plan for the Office.

Expected Results:

- Legal documents founding the establishment of the Office are drafted and submitted for acceptance.
- The tasks and statutes of the Office are set.
- The human resources plan of the Office is ready for approval.
- Organigram of the Office is ready for approval.
- Training plan is ready for approval.

3.4.2. HU/2002 Twinning – Food Safety Office

The twinning covenant will cover technical harmonisation, staff training, surveying food safety offices and its information system. The relevant EU directives are listed in Annex 5 as well as the related Hungarian regulations.

The scope of the twinning project (tasks of the PAA):

- Developing curricula and conducting training in Hungary and abroad for food safety experts on new food safety developments and food hygiene control techniques, and methods used in EU countries at the Food Safety Authorities/Agencies.
- Assist in organising data supply amongst the institutions responsible for the official control of foodstuff.
- Reviewing the workflow, documentation and testing capacities of the different partner institutions, and drawing up development plans.
- Assist the elaboration of the food stuff policy, the co-ordination of the implementation and operation of the policy.
- Assist the improvement of co-ordination of the food safety related actions executed already by different responsible authorities.
- Assist the elaboration of the way of collection, management and evaluation of the available food safety related information.
- Assist the publication activity related to food safety operations.
- Assist to establish the relation to the European Food Safety Authority and assist continuous information exchange as well with international organisations related to food safety.

The duration of the project and the presence of the PAA will last 12 months.

Guaranteed results of the twinning project:

- Food Safety Office established and operational.
- Curricula developed and Hungarian food safety experts trained.
- Proper Co-ordination system among Food Safety Institutions established.
- Operational guidelines for the Agency are available.
- Tasks, organigram and internal work distribution defined.

Profile of the PAA

The applicant shall:

- Have 10 years experience in food safety, including food hygiene.
• Have 5 years experience in Government Organisations co-ordinating implementation of Food Safety, and related administrative matters.
• Have knowledge of problems related to establishing new organisations.
• Have experience with inter-ministerial steering committees or co-ordination bodies.

**Short and medium term experts**

Areas not directly covered by the PAA can be taken over by short- and medium-term experts within the limits of the budget as stated in section 5 of the present fiche. One of the main tasks will be to conduct joint trainings together with Ministry of Economics and Ministry of Health. The exact and detailed assignments will be subject to the preparation of the technical Covenant and the recommendations of the twinning partner(s).

3.5 **Lessons learned**

Under the Annual Assessment Report R/HU/AGR/00043 recommendations were made which are relevant to the current project. Design recommendations concerning indicators of achievement (point 2.3 of the Report), and other relevant recommendations under point 6.2 of the Report have been addressed while drafting the current project fiche. The Implementing Agency and the Project beneficiaries will ensure that management recommendations will be addressed as appropriate.

4. **INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK**

Overall, technical and administrative aspects of implementation shall be the responsibility of the Agricultural Phare Office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development.

A Ministerial Commissioner has recently been appointed with the task of preparing the establishment of the Office and preparing the draft decree establishing the Office remits and functions. The office of the Ministerial Commissioner will manage the professional implementation of the Project. (The Office of the Ministerial Commissioner will be located at MARD, H-1055 Budapest, Kossuth tér 11.)

5. **DETAILED BUDGET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phare</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Total Phare (=I+IB)</th>
<th>National Cofinancing*</th>
<th>IFI</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Investment Support</td>
<td>Institution Building</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.23</td>
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<td>1.13</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Government co-financing for the twinning activity is an estimated indicative amount and will not be part of the budget of the twinning covenant. It provides an indication of the resources in cash or in kind that the beneficiaries will have to mobilise to cover the necessary counterpart expenses arising from the implementation of the twinning.

6 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Implementing Agency

The Implementing Agency of the project is the Central Finance and Contracting Unit, which is responsible for tendering and contracting.

The CFCU contracts are:

**PAO:** Ms. Judit Rózsa, director general
CFCU, Public Finance Office,
H-1052 Budapest, Deák Ferenc u. 5.
Tel.: +36-1-327-3652, +36-1-327-3650
Fax.: +36-1-327-3572, +36-1-327-3573
e-mail: judit.rozsa@ahh.gov.hu

The Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development will be responsible for the technical part of the project in terms of design, evaluation, follow up and monitoring. The Head of Directorate for Integration Affairs will act as Senior Programme Officer. His contacts are:

**SPO:** Dr. László Vajda, Head of Directorate
Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development,
H-1055 Budapest, Kossuth tér 11.
Tel.: +36-1-331-3578
Fax.: +36-1-301-4663
e-mail: laszlo.vajda@fvm.hu

6.2 Twinning

**Twinning**

Based on the transposition plan, the twinning experts will work together with the expert staff of the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Economic Affairs on the harmonisation of the food hygiene control.

The beneficiary institution will be the newly established Food Safety Office. The Head of the Office will be the Project Leader on the Hungarian side. Pending the establishment of the Office the contact persons will be

- Dr. Diána Bánáti, Ministerial Commissioner, MARD (Office of the Ministerial Commissioner: H-1055 Budapest, Kossuth tér 11.)

6.3 Non-standard aspects
The Practical Guide for Phare, ISPA and SAPARD contract procedures and Twinning Manual will strictly be followed.

6.4 Contracts

The program shall be implemented through one twinning light of 0.150 M€ and one twinning covenant of 0.750 M€.

7. IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract</th>
<th>Start of Tendering</th>
<th>Start of Project Activity</th>
<th>Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twinning</td>
<td>06/2002</td>
<td>01/2003</td>
<td>12/2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

All participating Hungarian institutions are equal opportunity employers. No discrimination of whatever nature will be applied.

9. ENVIRONMENT

The project has no discernible negative effect on the environment.

10. RATES OF RETURN

Not applicable

11. INVESTMENT CRITERIA

Not applicable

12. CONDITIONALITY AND SEQUENCING

- Appointment of person responsible for the establishment of the Agency that will also serve as the counterpart for the implementation of the project.
- A draft decree, prepared as a result of the twinning light, containing the provisions (tasks, statutes, competency) for the establishment of the Food Safety Office will have to be adopted before the twinning project will start operations. The document will also incorporate a legal basis allowing the Office to collect data and information and on the basis of which it can co-ordinate and advise activities (including control activities) of the various institutions.
- Failure to respect the above conditionalities might lead to the cancellation of the project (or parts of it) and reallocation of funds to other performing projects.
ANNEXES TO PROJECT FICHE

1. Logical framework matrix in standard format

2. Detailed implementation chart

3. Contracting and disbursement schedule by quarter for full duration of programme (including disbursement period)


5. List of relevant Laws and Regulations and Translation of the related Draft Ministerial Decree

6. Organization of the food safety control in Hungary, tasks of the institutions involved
## ANNEX 1

**LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR**

**Food Safety Office**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme number</th>
<th>2002/000-180-01-06</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contracting period expires</td>
<td>30/11/04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disbursement period expires</td>
<td>30/11/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total budget : 1.13 Meuros</td>
<td>Phare budget : 0.9 Meuros</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall objective</th>
<th>Objectively verifiable indicators</th>
<th>Sources of Verification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The effective implementation of the EU food control and Acquis</td>
<td>• Food Safety Office established and experts trained by the end of 2003</td>
<td>• Decree and related documents (tasks, competency, statutes, organigram)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project purpose</th>
<th>Objectively verifiable indicators</th>
<th>Sources of Verification</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • To assist the establishment of the Food Safety Office | • Organisation and procedures of the Food Safety Office are defined and Agency operational by the end of 2003. | • Reports of the Food Safety Office  
• MARD monitoring reports  
• Project reports | • All facilities in place for the control of food safety measures  
• Funds available for prevention and containment measures |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Objectively verifiable indicators</th>
<th>Sources of Verification</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Hungarian Food Safety Office established and operational;  
• Mandate and tasks of the Office defined  
• Operation guidelines for the Hungarian Food Safety Office defined and in line with the EU requirements;  
• Staff of the Agency properly trained and ready to fulfil its | • All twinning arrangements, studies, training services and supplies completed and delivered in time and at the right levels of quality and quantity, as planned  
• Food Safety Office starts to operate.  
• Definition of the exact tasks of the different authorities regarding the control on food of animal and non animal origin by the end of 2003  
• Agreements signed and operational | • Hand over notes  
• Progress reports by the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development  
• Operational and contractual documents of the Food Safety Office | • Trained staff can be retained.  
• Appropriate PAA available and covenant executed  
• Inter-ministerial co-operation |
Staff of other Food Safety Institutions trained on new food safety developments and food hygiene control techniques

Inter-ministerial co-ordination mechanisms established; by the end of 2003

Inter-ministerial agreement and meeting minutes continues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevant services</td>
<td>One twinning light contract</td>
<td>High quality project management ensured throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twinning light project</td>
<td>One twinning covenant for the Food Safety Office (including the training experts)</td>
<td>Agreement between the Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twinning project</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Preconditions

Staff and co-financing available when required
## ANNEX 2

### Detailed Implementation Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twinning light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Twinning</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **1-7**: Tendering phase
- **8-9**: Implementation phase

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13
###ANNEX 3

**Contracting and disbursement schedule by quarter for full duration of programme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Contracting</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Twinning light</td>
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<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Twinning</td>
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<td>0.750</td>
<td>0.750</td>
<td>0.750</td>
<td>0.750</td>
<td>0.750</td>
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<td>0.750</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total (cumulative)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>0.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.9</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disbursement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total (cumulative)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>0.15</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.55</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX 4


Translation of the official Agreement:

Preliminary events
During the production of raw materials, the production of food, during the sales and consumption, it is necessary to deal with number of risk factors. This issue requires harmonised risk assessment technology.

This issue is handled with special care all over Europe. There are organisations with national responsibility in each country and these are the mainly competent organisations related to food safety and health-protecting-consumption.

The aim of the establishment of the National Food Safety Office

Independent, highly qualified office responsible for each level of the direction, co-ordination of the production, storage, sales and consumption of food stuffs. The main task of the office is the assurance of the nutrition related health status of the public.

The reasons for establishing the Agency

- The harmonised overview of the complex procedures, the fast reaction to the new challenges, the publication of the necessary information
- The harmonisation of the co-ordination between the different authorities which still have some overlaps
- One of the requirement for the EU accession is the establishment of the Office

The tasks of the National Food Safety Office

- The elaboration of the Food- and Nutrition Policy, the co-ordination of the implementation and operation of the policy
- The co-ordination of the food safety related actions executed already by different responsible authorities
- The collection, management and evaluation of the available food safety related information
- The scientific support and suggestions in case of misdemeanours for the Governmental decisions
- Data supply, publication
- Continuos relation to the European Food Safety Office established in the EU, and continuos information exchange as well with national and international organisations related to food safety
- Scientific support

Connections of the National Food Safety Office
The Office executes its inter-sectoral tasks independently from the already functioning institutions and official tasks at the different ministries. The tasks of the animal health, the soil- and plant protection authorities at the ministry of agriculture, the food- and nutrition health authorities at the public health ministry and the consumer protection authority at the ministry of economics will remain unchanged. The activity of the Office is going to be based on the work of the former authorities.

It is necessary to assure that the NFSA reach relevant data and information from the different authorities. The NFSA keeps contact with public organisations, with other governmental and non-governmental organisations, institutions. Collects, evaluates and forwards information to the organisations being involved in its system. The NFSA is responsible to provide necessary information to the public.

**The situation of the National Food Safety Office in the structure of the Government**

The National Food Safety Office is operating with national authority under the competency of the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development under the direction of the Minister. The Minister is obliged to report directly to the Parliament. The Agency is strictly collaborating with the authorities of the different ministries.

Dr. Vonza András
Minister of Agriculture and Regional Development

Dr. Mikola István
Minister of Health

The Minister of Economics was informed on the former agreement.
ANNEX 5

EU regulations

Proposal for
2000/0179 Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin
2000/0181 Council Regulation laying down the animal health rules governing the production, placing on market and importation of products of animal origin intended for human consumption

HUNGARIAN regulations

The Act No. 2001/22 which is the amendment of the Act No XCI/1995 on Animal Health. The Article 45, point 9, on the responsibility of MARD to establish the Institutional frames for food control.
ANNEX 6

Organization of the food safety control in Hungary, tasks of the institutions involved

1. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The following authorities performing food safety tasks are supervised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development: the Plant and Soil Protection Service, the Veterinary and Food Control Service, and the National Institute for Agricultural Quality Control.

1.1 Veterinary Service

Organization

Central level:
Administrative tasks in animal health, food control, feed control and animal welfare are performed on central level by the Minister of Agriculture and Regional Development and by the said Ministry (Animal Health and Food Control Department).

Regional level:
County Veterinary and Food Control Stations (further on: Station)
The tasks related to animal health, food and feed control and animal welfare are carried out by 19 county Stations and the Veterinary and Food Control Station of Capital Budapest. The area of competence of each station is divided into veterinary districts and regions.

Veterinary border inspection posts (BIPs)
At present there are 34 veterinary border inspection posts for checking consignments subject to compulsory veterinary checks. The veterinary border inspection posts are integrated in the organization of the Stations but operate under direct technical supervision by the Ministry.

By 31 December 2002, the building of 12 veterinary border inspection posts fully conforming to the EU requirements will be completed on the Ukrainian, Romanian, Yugoslav and Croatian border, at the Budapest Airport and in a port on the River Danube.

Local level

- Animal health, food control and feed control tasks of local level are performed by
- district chief veterinarians,
- official veterinarians,
- state veterinarians working at food hygiene branch offices established in specific plants, and
- feed inspectors

At the veterinary border inspection posts, the veterinary checks, food and food control and animal protection tasks related to border traffic are performed by official veterinarians.

Institutes/Laboratories
The following institutions of national competence belong to the Veterinary Service:

- National Food Investigation (Control) (NFII),
- Central Veterinary Institute (CVI),
- State Control Institute for Veterinary Biologicals, Drugs and Feeds (SCIVBDF)

- 2 regional veterinary institutes
- 6 regional instrumental analytical centres
- 16 county analytical laboratories
- 20 laboratories performing microbiological tests

- Analytical, microbiological, toxicological and radiological laboratories operating at the veterinary stations

Local level
At some food hygiene branch offices the Station operates a local laboratory.

Responsibilities and powers

Central level
The Minister directs the animal health, food and feed control and animal welfare activity and specifies the technical tasks. He has special powers in the following cases:

- In the event of animal disease outbreaks of great economic importance or posing a public health hazard, the Minister – with the approval of the Government – may order the implementation of an eradication programme subsidized by the state; in addition, he declares an emergency because of infectious disease hazard.
- He authorizes the marketing of veterinary medicinal products.
- In agreement with the Minister of Health, he authorizes the manufacture of new foodstuffs.

The Ministry: The technical direction of animal health, food and feed control and animal welfare activity, as well as of the supervision of the veterinary and food control service and organization of the implementation of control tasks are in charge of the Animal Health and Food Control Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, headed by the Chief Veterinary Officer. The structure of the Hungarian public veterinary service is characterized by central control based upon the relevant rules of law.

Acting within its powers as an authority, the Ministry is responsible for the following tasks:

- It operates a surveillance system to determine the regional or national occurrence of certain animal diseases and the prevalence of infection.
- From the animal health point of view, it authorizes the importation of goods into, their transit through and exportation from, the country.
- It authorizes the importation of animals obtained by genetic engineering and the production of feeds and veterinary medicinal products made by the use of genetically modified organisms (in agreement with the Minister of Health and the Minister of Environmental Protection).
- It orders the performance of tests for the detection of residues, harmful and prohibited substances in foods and feeds.
It authorizes the field-scale production, marketing and importation of veterinary medicinal products.

It specifies the veterinary medicinal products that can be added to feeds.

It establishes and operates an information system necessary for the performance of its tasks.

Licensing of food producing plants approved for exports (slaughterhouses and processing plants)

Regional level

1. Veterinary and Food Control Stations

A Veterinary and Food Control Station (further on: Station) operates in the capital and in each county. The Stations carry out animal health, disease control, food hygienic, administrative, food and feed quality control and animal protection tasks.

The Station

- organizes a continuous duty and standby service to carry out its tasks;
- maintains continuous liaison with the local authorities, the regional institutes of the NPHMOS, the regional environmental protection authority, the county administrative office, and the General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection;
- participates in the elaboration and operation of the identification and registration system of animals;
- orders the safe disposal of carcases and by-products of animals that died or were killed because of diseases hazardous to humans, the rendering harmless of infected or contaminated materials and equipment, and determines the method thereof;
- in compliance with the international regulations, it regularly checks the suitability of food production establishments for export production;
- authorises the operation of slaughtering establishments, abattoirs, official butcher’s shops, butcher’s shops and other food production establishments, as well as of feed manufacturing and marketing establishments;
- with a view to epidemiological considerations, it restricts or prohibits and sanctions the use and marketing of food raw materials and finished foods of animal and plant origin, specifies the further procedure to be followed and, if necessary, notifies the competent authorities;
- authorises and controls the use, further processing and treatment of by-products originating from food processing establishments for feeding purposes and, if necessary, makes arrangements for their destruction;
- exercises control over the manufacture of veterinary medicinal products, the finished products, their marketing and use;
- supervises the operation of markets, animal fairs, animal shows and animal shelters from the animal health point of view;
- in a manner specified in rules of law concerning the production and marketing of foods, it supervises and checks the following:
  a) the raw materials, additives, technological adjuvants and packaging materials used for the production of foods,
  b) the semi-finished and finished food products, irrespective of their place of manufacture or sale,
c) the objects that come into contact with foods during their intended use,
d) the procedures used for food production and the equipment serving for that purpose,
e) the packaging of foods and the labelling and marks used,
f) the quality control system of the manufacturer and distributor.

- Performs the feed quality control tasks specified in the relevant rules of law in the field of feed manufacture, marketing and use;
- Organizes the implementation of animal health checks in the production phase, during the transportation of animals, at animal fairs and shows, and at the slaughterhouses.

2. **Veterinary Border Inspection Posts**
The Veterinary Border Inspection Posts inspect consignments subject to compulsory veterinary checking (live animals, products of animal origin intended for human consumption and those not intended for human consumption). Checking consists of the following components:
- documentary checks
- identity checks
- physical checks
- animal protection (welfare) checks

**Local level**

District Chief Veterinarian
In his field of competence, the District Chief Veterinarian organizes and directs the work of official veterinarians and reports directly to the County Veterinary Director (Director of the County Veterinary Station).

Official Veterinarian
- Performs the disease control tasks in the event of animal disease outbreaks or a suspicion thereof and takes the measures necessary for prevention and eradication of epizootic diseases.
- Carries out the meat inspection (post-mortem inspection) of animals slaughtered for public consumption or for other purposes.
- Authorizes the movement of goods within the country.
- Performs the checking of products intended for international trade and subject to compulsory inspection, in conformity with the relevant regulations.
- Checks whether livestock farmers and distributors comply with the animal health regulations and checks the health status of animals.
- Checks whether food operators and distributors comply with the epidemiological and food hygienic regulations; checks whether foods of animal origin are fit for processing and human consumption.
- Checks whether feed manufacturers and distributors comply with the epidemiological and feed hygienic regulations.
- Supervises the marketing and use of veterinary medicinal products.
- Checks animal feeds from the animal health and feed hygienic point of view, the pastures, the drinking water, the buildings used for housing animals, the animal production machinery and equipment and the applied technology.
- Checks compliance with the animal welfare and protection requirements in animal holdings, on markets, at animal fairs, and during the transportation and slaughter of animals.
Veterinarians working at food hygienic offices

The food hygienic branch offices of the Stations, operating locally in establishments of the food industry, are responsible for continuous supervision of the production and processing activity of slaughterhouses and food processing establishments and for the performance of meat inspection tasks. (ante-, and post-mortem inspections, hygienic control measures and other official measures.)

Institutes, laboratories

The Veterinary Service includes the following institutions of national competence:

National Food Investigation (Control) Institute (NFII)

The National Food Investigation (Control) Institute performs specific tasks in the co-ordination and implementation of the national food hygiene and food safety programme.

The NFII is responsible for the following activities:

- performs the periodical hygiene checks and qualification of establishments producing foods of animal origin intended for export;
- participates in the technical implementation of plant inspections and on-site laboratory checks made by foreign veterinary authorities (EU, USA);
- relying on its technical expertise and special instrument supply, it organizes and operates the national residue toxicological, microbiological and radiological monitoring system;
- in order to enforce a consistent approach, it co-ordinates the technical activities of the testing laboratories;
- adopts and disseminates up-to-date food testing methods meeting the international requirements;
- gives expert opinions and advice on evaluation of the export hygiene plans of establishments manufacturing products of animal origin, slaughterhouses, cutting plants and processing establishments;
- checks food machinery and equipment for compliance with the hygiene requirements, and issues an expert opinion or certificate of approval on the basis of the results;
- performs the evaluation and approval of food machinery on the basis of hygiene standards;
- has been participating in inter-laboratory comparative quality control tests (proficiency testing) of international level since 1993.

Staff size: 100 persons (52 university graduates)
Budget: approx. 0.5 billion HUF

Central Veterinary Institute (CVI)

The main tasks of the CVI are the diagnosis and on-the-spot investigation of animal diseases, central laboratory work, provision of expert advice, and research. The laboratory tests required for the exportation and importation of breeding animals and propagation materials (semen, ova and embryos) fall within the exclusive competence of the CVI. The Institute operates the central database of the Animal Health Information System.

State Control Institute for Veterinary Biologicals, Drugs and Feeds (SCIVBDF)
The SCIVBDF is responsible for the technical evaluation of registration documents of veterinary medicinal products, the official supervision of the manufacturers and the products, and the performance of tests (homogeneity tests) on the basis of which the competent Veterinary and Food Control Station (VFCS) issues the license necessary for the operation of feed manufacturing plants.

National Institute for Agricultural Quality Control (NIAQC)

The National Institute for Agricultural Quality Control is directly supervised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, but does not form part of the institutional system of the Veterinary Service.

The Institute performs the following official tasks in the field of feed control:
Evaluation and approval of all domestically produced and imported feed raw materials, additives, mineral supplements, bioproteins, feeds meeting particular nutritional purposes, and medicines. The type and levels of undesirable and prohibited substances are also taken into consideration during the evaluation.

The laboratory belonging to the NIAQC has been accredited by the National Accreditation Body (NAB) according to the relevant international regulations. On the basis of its tests, the laboratory of the NIAQC authorizes the operation of the Hungarian feed analytical laboratories and conducts inter-laboratory proficiency testing to check compliance with the operating licence.

Control and inspection

Planning of the controls and inspections
The Veterinary and Food Control Station carries out its checking and inspection activities on the basis of annual work plans. The specific measures and the plans drawn up by the county organizations are approved and summarized by the Ministry during the planning phase.

The annual work plans specify the number of checks and that of the official samples related to them. Checks are made partly according to a pre-determined programme and partly at random. Sampling may be regular or random. The objective of sampling may be the evaluation of batches or stocks, quality control, test for harmful or prohibited substances, substantiation of decision-making on fitness for consumption, or actual or long-term situation survey in the framework of national monitoring programmes. The sampling base may be constituted by domestic or imported products. The number of samplings to be performed for batch evaluation tests is determined by the size of the product batch. A programme also exists for the hygiene inspections of food manufacturing establishments.

In addition to the sampling planned in the programme, at their own initiative or in the case of consumer complaints the official veterinarians and food or feed inspectors may take further samples. Complaints concerning foods may relate to fitness for consumption or to quality.

Frequency and number of checks in the year 2000:
Slaughterhouses are supervised on a continuous basis irrespective of the slaughtering activity, while markets are regularly supervised on market days. In the year 2000 the Veterinary and Food Control Service performed the following checks and inspections:

Number of official checks:
- in food production establishments: 25,000
- in food distribution (market, trade, catering): 63,000
- in feed manufacturing plants: 4,338
- in feed marketing units: 6,480

Average frequency of hygiene and quality control checks (occasion/year):
- food production establishments: 4.6
- food shops: 2.9
- feed manufacturing plants: 4.3
- feed marketing units: 1.7

Number of checks

Meat inspection:
- red meat (livestock), n 5,000,000
- slaughtered poultry, tons: 159,000

Inspection of other foods and decision-making on fitness for consumption: 183,000

Number of decisions: 19,700
Quantity of seized foods unfit for consumption (tons): 4,323

Sanctions
Sanctions are enforced by the organs of the Veterinary Service on local and regional level. In the event of violation of laws and other regulations, the veterinary, food control and feed control authorities may take the following measures:
- it may prohibit, restrict or make subject to conditions the operation of the food production establishment, food marketing (retail) unit and machine, equipment or installation, the use, marketing and the putting into use or keeping in use of raw materials, technological adjuvants and packaging materials, etc.;
- it may declare the food unfit for public consumption or of reduced quality, and may restrict or make subject to conditions its use or marketing;
- it may declare the feed unfit for use, order its devaluation and impose a quality protection fine. It may terminate the operation of a plant or sales unit or make their operation subject to conditions. It may restrict the use of products, make their use subject to conditions, or order their destruction
- it may sentence animal health and food safety fines

The method of implementation of decisions made by the veterinary authorities is specified in the relevant rules of law (e.g. in cases of infectious disease emergencies, applications for legal remedy do not have a delaying force).
In the event of suspicion of foodborne intoxications the veterinary authority draws in the proceedings the public health authorities (NPHMOS) or transfers the case for investigation to the NPHMOS.

Financial resources

Budget:

The total budget of the Veterinary and Food Control Service for the year 2000 is 14.6 billion HUF. The composition of that budget is as follows:

- state subsidy: 3.9 billion HUF
- own income: 10.3 billion HUF
- payments to personnel (wages and salaries): 6.8 billion HUF
- material-type expenditures: 5.2 billion HUF
- development costs: 2.5 billion HUF

The official service meets the majority (about 80%) of its annual budget from its own income, and a smaller part comes from the central budget as subsidy. According to the rules of law currently in force, an administrative service fee is payable for the checks.

PHARE support

PHARE projects so far implemented in the animal health sector:

1993: in a value of 3.27 M EURO

- Information technology (IT) hardware: 0.5 M EURO
- Reconstruction of the Rábafüzes border inspection post: 0.25 M EURO
- IT (hardware) of the cattle identification and registration system: 0.16 M EURO
- Study tours, telephone lines, workshops, international experts: 0.3 M EURO
- Setting up veterinary offices at 4 border inspection posts: 0.1 M EURO
- Technical assistance: 0.5 M EURO
- Purchase of laboratory instruments: 1.5 M EURO
  (for the NFII, the SCIVBDF and the CVI)

1995: in a value of 1.9 M EURO
(for the modernization of the animal health sector)

Technical assistance (foreign experts): 199,276 EURO
Complementing the hardware of the Animal Health Information system: 839,960 EURO
Reconstruction of the foot-and-mouth disease laboratory of the CVI: 860,764 EURO

1997: in a value of 470,000 EURO
Modernization of food inspection and control
Purchase of equipment (for the NFII): 300,000 EURO
Technical assistance: 170,000 EURO

Ongoing PHARE projects related to animal health

1998: 4.932 M EURO
Construction of veterinary border inspection posts: 2.014 M EURO (Záhony, Letenye, Röszke)
Purchase of hardware for the animal health information system: 1.918 M EURO
Purchase of laboratory instruments: 999,802 EURO (CVI, SCIVBDF, NFII)

2000: 8 M EURO (+3.6 M EURO co-financing)
Completion of border inspection establishments at Záhony and construction of such establishments at Ferihegy Airport: 1.7 M EURO
“Twinning” in food control and animal welfare: 1.4 M EURO

Instruments for the regional food testing laboratories 3 M EURO
Development of the animal registration system: 0.6 M EURO
Technical assistance (software): 1.3 M EURO

Equipment supply status
Part of the specialists employed by the Service use own cars.

Information technology: The national network of the Animal Health Information System has been completed. Its central server and database can be found in the Central Veterinary Institute. The Animal Health and Food Control Department of the MARD, the County Stations and the Veterinary Border Inspection Posts have on-line connection to the system, as do the veterinary institutions (NFII, SCIVBDF, CVI).

Through a semi-on-line connection, the district chief veterinarians also can have access to the system. Plans have been made to establish access links for official veterinarians and veterinarians employed at the larger food hygiene offices as well.

On the basis of the development plans, the Food Hygiene Subsystem of the Animal Health Information System is to be developed in the near future.

Human resources:
University graduates

Total staff size of the Service: 1175
On county level: 262
Total number of border post veterinarians: 114
Number of official veterinarians and inspectors: 799
Number of veterinarians working in part time for the service: 1600

Qualifications: Veterinarians, food engineers and animal nutrition (feed) engineers

1.2 Phytosanitary Service

Organization

The new special administrative system of institutions of plant and soil protection has been set up on the basis of Act XXXV of 2000 and Decree No. 21/2001 (III. 9.) FVM of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. That system provides an adequate structure for meeting the requirements raised by accession to the EU.

Central level

*Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development*

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development implements the plant protection tasks through the Plant Protection and Agro-Environment Management Department.

*Central Plant and Soil Protection Service*

A budgetary organ exercising medium-level control. It is an independent legal entity seated in Budapest, which conducts part of its activity as an independent business unit. The service is headed by a Director-General appointed by the Minister.

Regional level

*County Phytosanitary and Soil Protection Services*

Nineteen County Phytosanitary and Soil Protection Services (further on: services), which are responsible for performing tasks of county level. The heads of the services are directors appointed by the Minister, over whom the Minister exercises the employer’s rights.

*Phytosanitary Border Inspection Posts*

Thirty-nine phytosanitary border inspection posts operate in the framework of the services, under the professional guidance of the central service. (Of them, 10 border inspection posts will be upgraded in accordance with the Community requirements.)

Local level

– The official tasks are carried out by plant protection inspectors belonging to the services.
– The Notary of the local authority proceeds in taking certain phytosanitary measures.

Laboratories/Institutes

Central level
National phytosanitary tasks are performed by the bacteriological laboratory, the quarantine method development and biological control laboratory, the game toxicological and water toxicological laboratories, the virological laboratories and the analytical and method development laboratories.

**Regional level**

All (19) county services operate a phytosanitary diagnostic laboratory. Fourteen county services operate an analytical laboratory responsible for the performance of analytical tests for residues.

**Responsibilities and powers**

**Central level**

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development performs his tasks related to plant health and protection through the Plant Protection and Agro-Environment Management Department.

*Plant Protection and Agro-Environment Management Department:* The Department is responsible for directing, supervising and controlling the special administrative institutions involved in plant protection and for co-operation with the other ministries in tasks related to food safety. It may order national control operations in case of the appearance of quarantine pests not indigenous in the country, and deals with the indemnification of producers in connection with phytosanitary measures. It licenses the marketing and use of pesticides and approves the annual testing programme of unprocessed plant products for pesticide residues.

The Central Service performs the following tasks:

- organizes, co-ordinates and supervises the work of the Services and of the laboratories performing phytosanitary examinations and analytical tests;
- operates and upgrades the phytosanitary information systems;
- organizes and directs the detection of quarantine pests and of non-quarantine pests subject to obligatory investigation, as well as the national eradication campaigns and programmes;
- acts as superior authority (authority of second instance) in cases specified by law;
- lays down the special conditions of entry and handling of import consignments objectionable for phytosanitary reasons and because of residue limits;
- for scientific experimental and variety selection purposes, it authorizes the importation of products subject to import prohibition, and lays down the special conditions of such importation;
- participates in the evaluation of pesticide licensing documents and operates the national phytosanitary register;
- summarizes the data of phytosanitary inspections and analytical tests performed by the county services.

**Regional level**

The plant health related tasks of the county phytosanitary and soil protection services are as follow:

- they operate the phytosanitary border inspection posts and inspect the goods subject to checking during export, import and transit;
• they inspect plants subject to compulsory checking and the production of seeds and young plants (plantlets) at the site of cultivation;
• they perform the detection of quarantine pests and of the non-quarantine pests subject to checking;
• they check the growers for compliance with the rules concerning pest control obligations and the efficiency of pest control measures;
• in cases specified in rules of law, they call upon growers to take control measures, order control measures of public and national interest, and make destruction decisions;
• they may order prohibition or restriction of production, harvesting, storage, import, export, marketing, experimentation, use and application; they may impose quarantine or order the compulsory use of plant protection technologies, check the implementation thereof and issue official phytosanitary licenses;
• they check the marketing of pesticides and the quality of pesticides to be put on the market;
• they notify the competent authorities of any irregularity that comes to their knowledge and poses a hazard to human health and the environment.

Local level
• On the local level, the tasks described in the case of the county services are carried out by the phytosanitary inspectors of the county services.
• The Notary of the Local Authority may order compulsory control measures on the territory of the municipality in the event if a non-quarantine pest appears. The Notary also checks the spray calendar of unprocessed plant products sold on the local markets.
• The phytosanitary inspectors working at the phytosanitary border inspection posts check imported products subject to compulsory inspection and take samples from imported goods for pesticide residue tests.

Laboratories

The diagnostic laboratories of national competence are capable of performing all tests required by the EU.

The phytosanitary diagnostic laboratories of the county services carry out tests for dangerous pests (harmful organisms) in order to substantiate the official measures to be taken.

Unprocessed plant products are tested for residues by the 14 analytical laboratories of the county services, 8 of which is operating in an international accreditation system (GLP), under the supervision of an independent quality assurance organization. The regular inspections of the laboratories is performed by a national inspectorate designated by a joint decree.

In the case of certain import products (spices, primary food materials of plant origin), the laboratories of the National Public Health and Medical Officer Service (NPHMOS) also participate in pesticide residue testing and in the investigation of violations. Samples for the laboratory tests are taken by the phytosanitary inspectors of the county services.

Controls
**Phytosanitary checks**

Phytosanitary checks are carried out by the phytosanitary inspectors of the phytosanitary and soil protection service, while the related tests are performed by the laboratories operating at services of national competence and at the county services.

Number of checks (in 2000)

- Checking of import consignments at the border: 55 thousand batches
- Site (habitat) inspections:
  - checking of imported seeds: 2,154 hectares
  - checking of seed production: 11,951 hectares
- Checking of stored produce: 5180 checks

Number of phytosanitary laboratory tests:

- Bacteriological: 1200 samples
- Mycological and entomological: 8000 samples
- Nematological: 800 samples
- Virological: 3500 samples

**Tests for pesticide residues**

Type of tests and the number of samples in 2000:

- market checks 1125
- site (habitat) + export checks 1046
- checks of import consignments at the border and on markets 1424

Total: 3595

Distribution of samples by culture (50 cultures):

18 fruits
28 vegetables
4 arable crops

Number of active ingredients tested for: 130
Total number of tests: 71,361

Results:

- residues are not detectable: 60%
- the level of residues is lower than the MRL: 38%
- the level of residues is higher than the MRL: 2%

**Sanctions**

On the basis of Act XXXV of 2000 on Plant Protection, a plant protection fine ranging from 20,000 HUF to 1,000,000 HUF may be imposed on the violators of phytosanitary regulations. In addition to the plant protection fine, proceedings for infringement of the regulations may be initiated on the basis of Act LXIX of 1999 and Government Decree No. 218/1999 (XII. 29.). In 2000 the service initiated infraction proceedings under that legal title in 51 cases. In the case of such proceedings the phytosanitary authority or inspector is entitled to levy a fine ranging from 500 to 10,000 HUF on the spot.
In the event if a produce contains residues in excess of the maximum residue limit (permitted level) or if the use of a prohibited pesticide is detected, the produce must not be put into circulation and official, administrative proceedings are initiated against the grower and the distributor at the notary of the local authority competent in the given area. After considering the severity and frequency of the case, the notary imposes punitive sanctions (warning and fine) by an official decision, of which he notifies the county services. In the event if active ingredients not allowed for use in Hungary or pesticide levels exceeding the MRL are detected in imported produce, decision on the further fate of such produce is made by the public health authority (NPHMOS).

2. MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Through the Medical Officer’s Service, the public health sector has been participating in the official control of food production and distribution in Hungary for almost one hundred years.

Organization

Central level

Ministry of Health:
In the field of food safety, the Ministry of Health is primarily responsible for legislation, for determining maximum residue limits of environmental contaminants in foods, and for the operation and control of the National Public Health and Medical Officer’s Service (NPHMOS) working under its supervision.

National Public Health and Medical Officer’s Service:
The Ministry of Health performs the supervision of food safety through its central bodies [the National Medical and Public Health Office (NMPHO) and the National Centre for Public Health, National Institute of Food Hygiene and Nutrition (NCPH-NIFHN)] as well as through its regional organs (county and municipal NPHMOS institutes).

The NPHMOS is an organization of nation-wide powers that performs state tasks. The NPHMOS exercises supervision over the public health and epidemiological conditions of the country, including the supervision of food safety. The head of the NPHMOS, the Chief Medical Officer directly reports to the Minister of Health.
The NPHMOS is an organization committed to the improvement and protection of public health.

Regional level
The NPHMOS performs its legal and delegated duties in the field of food safety through its regional bodies, the 19 county and 1 metropolitan NPHMOS Institutes.

Local level
The NPHMOS exercises control over food safety through 137 municipal/district NPHMOS institutes in the country and in the capital.
Laboratories

All the 19 county NPHMOS institutes and the metropolitan NPHMOS institute have a microbiological and food toxicological laboratory. Seven county NPHMOS institutes also have a laboratory suitable for measuring the radioactive contamination of foodstuffs.

Institutions
The national institute belonging to the system of institutions of NPHMOS is the NCPH – NIFHN.

Responsibilities and powers

Central level
The food hygienic and nutritional health duties falling within the competence of the Ministry of Health are specified by Act CLIV of 1997 on Public Health. Among other things, that Act empowers the Ministry to the determination of microbiological, chemical and radiological limits for foods and the public health requirements of food production and distribution (including requirements concerning the health aptitude of operators engaged in food production), and to the prevention and investigation of foodborne intoxications and infections.

The Ministry of Health performs its above duties through the National Public Health and Medical Officer’s Service (NPHMOS). The NPHMOS performs its tasks according to the provisions of Act XI of 1991 on the National Public Health and Medical Officer’s Service, as follows:

In the field of food hygiene and nutritional health, the Service
- detects the harmful chemical, physical or biological substances occurring in foods, beverages, consumer goods, cosmetic preparations, children’s toys and in the ingredients of materials used for their preparation, or getting into them during the handling process, elaborates the relevant public health limits and requirements, and checks and enforces the latter during production, processing, storage and distribution;
- investigates the causes of foodborne health injuries in order to take the necessary measures and to prevent new health injuries;
- performs investigations on the alimentation and the nutritional status of the population and on the correlations between nutrition and the health status, and elaborates nutritional recommendations on the basis of the findings;
- participates in the procedure related to the production of foods meeting particular nutritional demands, the manufacture and use of additives and technological adjuvants, food packaging materials, cleaning agent and disinfectants used in the food industry, and the issue of operating licences for food production, processing, packaging, storage and distribution establishments.

The central governing body of the NPHMOS is the National Medical and Public Health Office (NMPHO), which co-ordinates and evaluates the activity of the regional institutes of the NPHMOS. It specifies priority tasks to be performed on national level and supervises their performance. In case of extraordinary food safety events it co-ordinates the necessary official measures by drawing in the partner authorities. It participates in the preparation and evaluation of draft rules of law. It organises and directs technical training.
Regional level
County/metropolitan institutes of the NPHMOS
The task of these institutes is to supervise and direct the technical work of municipal institutes belonging to them, perform thematic studies and laboratory tests, and directly carry out activities delegated to them by certain rules of law. Confirmation of compliance with the public health conditions specified for the production of foods meeting particular nutritional demands and of food additives also forms part of their duties. They make decisions on the further fate of batches rejected because of pesticide residues. They carry out the first batch identification testing of imported foods and their repeated testing at 3-year intervals. They authorise and supervise activities involving hazardous chemicals in food production establishments.

Local level
Duties of the municipal and metropolitan district institutes of the NPHMOS:
• participation in issuing operating licenses for food production and distribution establishments (industry, communal feeding, public catering, trade);
• keeping up-to-date records of the licensed (approved) establishments;
• regular inspection of the registered establishments;
• conducting thematic studies at own or central initiative (according to a plan of work);
• investigation of food safety events (foodborne intoxications, foodborne infections( and complaints;
• participation in the hygiene education of staff engaged in food production and distribution;
• participation in the education and information of consumers.

Institutes
The National Institute of Food Hygiene and Nutrition (NIFHN) of the National Centre for Public Health is in charge of the following tasks:
• participates in the preparation of legislation, with especial regard to the determination of maximum residue limits for foods;
• regularly supervises the food microbiological and chemical limits and makes proposal for their amendment;
• performs the comprehensive microbiological, chemical, toxicological and parasitological laboratory analysis of foods. Construction of a laboratory suitable for the analysis of genetically modified foods (GMO) is currently under way;
• performs licensing activity with regard to foods meeting particular nutritional demands, nutriments, new food additives, new food packaging materials and cosmetics, and authorises the use of cleaning agents and disinfectants in the food industry;
• issues certificates attesting that imported foods to be put on the market conform to the public health requirements;
• issues expert opinion for the manufacture of so-called new foods and foods treated by irradiation, and for the licensing of veterinary medicinal products and pesticides;
• the NIFHN serves as the centre of the rapid hazard alert system related to food safety events (foodborne intoxications, foodborne infections);
• provides technical guidance and consulting to assist the work of the NPHMOS in the field;
• performs nutrition-physiological and nutritional health studies and conducts consumer awareness campaigns.
**Laboratories**

On national level, food analyses are performed by the laboratories of the NIFHN. In addition, all county/metropolitan NPHMOS institutes have a laboratory capable of performing food microbiological, chemical and toxicological examinations. Six of these laboratories also perform regional tasks.

Number of tests performed in the laboratories of the NPHMOS network in the year 2000:

- Food samples tested: 53,308
- Food microbiological examinations and food chemical analyses: 216,214

The regional laboratories will be upgraded in the framework of the PHARE program in 2001. Owing to a more than HUF 2 billion instrument investment project, these laboratories will be able to perform even the most advanced instrumental analyses.

The RMDSN\(^1\) laboratories operating at the radiohygienic centres of 7 county institutes of the NPHMOS and at the National Centre for Public Health – National Research Institute for Radiobiology and Radiohygiene (NCPH – NRIRR) regularly test foods for radioactive contamination. That network carried out a total of 4597 tests on 2465 food and feed samples in 2000.

The accreditation of laboratories is carried out on a continuous basis. By December 2002 all laboratories will have been accredited. At the end of 2001, the laboratory testing genetically modified (GMO) foods will start its operation in the NIFHN.

**Controls**

The food control activity of the NPHMOS is controlled and supervised in a consistent manner. All three levels of the entire network are staffed with food control specialists having university degrees and specialist qualifications. All staff members of the food control service (medical officers, inspectors with college degrees) have completed the HACCP course approved in the European Union.

*Checks performed on the basis of an annual plan of work:*

The NPHMOS institutes carry out the regular planned checks on the basis of annual plans of work. By taking into consideration the results of risk analysis, they exercise continuous and regular control over the food and catering establishments. In addition, in the framework of programmes elaborated on national level and co-ordinated by the NMPHO they also perform targeted studies on subjects of outstanding importance on an annual basis.

*Frequency of checks*

By taking into consideration the risk level of the given type of activity, in average 60–70 percent of the registered units are checked one or two times a year or, if necessary, even more frequently. In the year 2000, a total of 89,405 comprehensive public health checks were carried out in 71,063 food units.

Investigation of consumer health complaints and foodborne intoxications

Every case is investigated, as this is required of the NPHMOS by the relevant rules of law.

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\(^1\) Radiohygienic Measuring and Data Supply Network
Sanctions
The NPHMOS is an authority with full administrative powers and the right to proceed in cases of infraction of the regulations. It may order and enforce measures to be taken, impose fines for infraction, quality protection and enforcement fines, seize foods and have them destroyed, order the suspension of activities and close down establishments. An appeal lies against its measures, which can also be contested before a court.

The numerical data of official measures taken after checks are as follow:
- Number of binding decisions ordering a measure to be taken in 2000: 5886
- Number of fines imposed for violations or infractions in 2000: 5185
- The total amount of fines: 48,033,000 (HUF).
- Number of quality protection fines in 2000: 1304;
- the total amount of fines: 53,006,000 HUF.

Activity or operation was suspended in 381 cases.

Resources

Financial resources
The funds appropriated to food control form part of the budget of the NPHMOS. Therefore, the data of the food control budget are based on task-proportional estimations for the year 2000 and serve only as a rough estimate.

Approximate amount spent on food safety related tasks per year:

Central institutes of the NPHMOS (including the NIFHN): 200 million HUF
County/municipal institutes of the NPHMOS: 700 million HUF

Amount derived from PHARE funds
(amounts relate to the overall development of the NPHMOS)
Laboratory development: 2.25 billion HUF
Laboratory accreditation: 127 million HUF
Further education and training: 38 million HUF

Equipment supply status
The NPHMOS has a vehicle fleet of 314 cars; however, this is not sufficient for providing a car for the food inspections in every case.

The central and county institutes of the NPHMOS have central servers and are provided with LAN and E-mail access. The necessary information technology (IT) background is available also in the municipal institutions of the NPHMOS. The integrated nation-wide network is currently being developed; the server of the central database is already available.
Human resources

In addition to its food safety tasks, the NPHMOS also performs other (public health, epidemiological, health protection and public health administration) duties. All staff members participating in public-health food control activities possess university degrees and have acquired the necessary food safety and food hygienic knowledge, including the information related to official control and sampling, in the framework of school-system-based education and continuous further training. Food control activity is carried out by specially trained medical officers and public health and epidemiological inspectors having food hygienic knowledge and degrees from institutions of higher education specialising in the given field. All staff members have completed the HACCP training. The laboratory testing of foods is performed by food microbiologists and engineers specialising in chemistry. The county institutes also employ other university graduates (lawyers, architects, chemists, biologists, environmental protection engineers, etc.), partially to deal with tasks related to foods and nutrition.

The total size of NPHMOS staff carrying out tasks related to food safety is about 600 (this relates only to the specialists and does not include the technical support staff).

Central level
In the central institutes of the NPHMOS (NMPHO and NIFHN) a total of 120 persons perform duties related to food control.

Regional level
In the county institutes of the NPHMOS a total of 160 persons perform food control and food testing tasks.

Local level
In the municipal institutes a total of 290 persons perform tasks related to food control and testing.

3. MINISTRY OF ECONOMICS

General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection

Organization

Central level

Regional level
The General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection performs its duties through a network consisting of 19 county inspectorates and an inspectorate operating in the capital. These inspectorates operate within the Administrative Offices of the Ministry of the Interior.

Local level
There is no local level.

**Laboratories/Institutes**

The technical background of market control inspections is provided by the Food and Chemical Laboratory of the GICP, as a testing laboratory accredited by the National Accreditation Body (NAB) accredited under no. 501/0649.

**Responsibilities and powers**

**Central level**

*Minister of Economics*

The task of the Minister of Economics and the objective of state participation is to elaborate and submit to the Government for approval the concept of consumer protection policy, make a proposal on the organizational and institutional conditions of implementation, and take or initiate measures for the protection and enforcement of consumer rights.

**General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection**

The General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection performs neither licensing nor special authority activities; consequently, its independence is ensured. By virtue of authorisation by laws and decrees, the GICP is obliged to perform market control and supervision activities of general competence, carry out market supervision checks related to the safety of foods and services, and inspect foods and the containers coming into contact with them to ensure their conformity to the requirements (quality and safety).

The most important tasks of the GICP in relation to food safety:

- in the framework of its market supervision activity, the GICP checks compliance with the rules of law and administrative provisions concerning the distribution of goods and the provision of services, it can conduct investigations in matters concerning consumers, and can impose consumer protection fines, unless some other authority has already levied a fine because of the same facts;
- it directs the market supervision tasks related to the control of product safety and operates the Central Market Supervision Information System (CMSIS);
- it performs conformity and safety tests of foods in its accredited laboratory;
- the market supervision directorate directs and co-ordinates the market control activities of the regional market supervision inspectorates;
- it monitors the general terms of contracts affecting consumers, and manage the affairs related to the quality complaints and claims of consumers,
- it issues publications describing the rights of consumers, organise consumer protection training courses, and inform the general public by publishing the findings obtained during its activity;
- it has product comparison tests performed and publishes the results thereof;
- of the authorities, the GICP is the only one which operates a Consumer Relations Office.
Regional level

County inspectorates
The market supervision activity is implemented on a regional basis by 19 county inspectorates and one inspectorate operating in the capital. The most important tasks of these inspectorates are the supervision of food trade and checking of the conformity and safety of foods intended for consumption.

Laboratories
The technical background of market supervision checks is constituted by the Food and Chemical Laboratory of the GICP, a testing laboratory accredited by the NAB under no. 501/0649. This laboratory performs, in accredited status, the comprehensive (quality and safety) testing of the following foods:
cereals, milling and baking products, preserved products, meat and meat products, milk and dairy products, alcoholic beverages and soft drinks, products of the sweets industry, consumer goods, foods intended as dietary supplements, tobacco products, catering, confectionery and communal feeding products.
The laboratory is prepared for the control of food safety, and regularly carries out tests of the following type:
- microbiological-hygienic examinations;
- determination of the quantity of additives, other substances, vitamins, minerals, biological degradation products and metabolites;
- quantitation of toxic heavy metals;
- tests for physical contaminants;
- entomological examinations;
- detection of radioactive contamination;
- detection of irradiated status;
- qualification of organoleptic characteristics;
- examination of packaging and labelling.

Controls
Both the Consumer Protection Act and Government Decree No. 79/1998 (IV. 29.) Korm. on the safety of goods and services and on the related market supervision procedure have authorised the GICP and the county inspectorates to conduct market supervision checks related to the safety of consumer goods including foods and services (e.g. catering). The control and market supervision activity of the GICP and the regional inspectorates is important as during the distribution phase such events may occur which markedly affect the properties, quality and original condition of foods. Therefore, market supervision checks, to be performed before the foods reach the consumer, are extremely important with a view to the health and safety of consumers.

Market checks carried out on the basis of a plan of work
The tasks of the General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection, as laid down in the plan of work, are determined by the annual plan of work approved by the Minister of Economics and by the internal work plan programme. The checks are aimed at strict testing of food categories likely to present a source of hazard. Therefore, meat and meat products, milk and dairy products, and perishable foods
are subjected to repeated inspections and checks every year. Market supervision checks are conducted by taking into account the risk analysis aspects.

**Checks initiated by the regional inspectorates**
The regional inspectorates also carry out food inspections and checks on local initiative. In the framework of these checks, samples are taken and submitted for testing at the Laboratory of the GICP.

**Investigation of consumer complaints**
The GICP and the regional inspectorates investigate consumer complaints and claims on a regular basis. This makes market supervision checks more efficient and specific, thereby enabling the identification of hazardous products. Although in the case of foods the number of consumer complaints is relatively low, their investigation is justified by food safety considerations.

**Number of market supervision checks in the year 2000**
In the past year the GICP carried out 9 national thematic surveys, in the framework of which sales outlets and the foods sold therein were subjected to checks for quality and safety.

Number of units checked by regional inspectors in the framework of the national surveys:
- retail units: 7884
- wholesale units: 387

Number of laboratory tests: 8265

**Sanctions**
By virtue of their administrative powers, the inspectorates have the right to subject the sale of goods to conditions, prohibit their further sale, and initiate infraction proceedings because of the irregularities found. In the case of irregularities affecting a broad range of consumers (e.g. nonconformity related to food safety) the GICP imposes a quality protection fine or, acting as the sole authority, a consumer protection fine.

Because of the irregularities found, the regional inspectors levied quality protection fines amounting to 84 million Hungarian Forints in the year 2000. As a result of the sanctions applied, manufacturers changed or made stricter their technological specifications, provided education and training to their employees, or ordered extraordinary big cleaning with disinfection, or the regular performance of such cleaning and disinfection.

**Resources of the organization**

**Financial resources**

**Budgetary resources**
The regional inspectorates of the General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection operate within the organizational framework of county administrative offices supervised by the Ministry of the Interior. Accordingly, they receive subsidy from the budget of that Ministry.
The General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection is an independent budgetary institution. In 2000 its entire budgetary allocation is 1300 million HUF $4.88$ million EUROS of which, the food department and laboratory of the GICP has a budget of 230 million HUF $865,000$ EUROS.

PHARE funds
In the framework of the Cop 96, 97, 98 PHARE programmes the GICP received a Community subsidy of 3.6 million euros for modernisation of market supervision and the laboratories.
Planned budget for the year 2001:
In the framework of the PHARE programme:
purchase of food testing and sampling equipment in a value of 2 million Euros is planned, which will be supplemented by a further institutional investment of 180 million HUF (0.67 million euros).

**Human resources**

**Central level**
At the National Market and Consumer Protection Department of the Ministry of Economics, 5 staff members deal directly with issues related to consumer protection and, within that, food safety.

The General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection has a total staff of 170.
Ten persons work directly in the field of food quality and food safety control and co-ordination.
In addition, further 20 people working in other fields deal with food safety issues on an occasional basis (employees having law or state administration degrees in the legal and administrative fields).

**Regional level**
The total staff of the regional inspectorates exceeds 170, of which 53 persons are directly involved in food control activities. In case of national surveys that staff is increased to 95–100 persons.

**Laboratories**
The staff of the Food and Chemical Laboratory consists of 20 persons.

Qualification: All employees of the General Inspectorate of Consumer Protection and the regional inspectorates who participate in food control and food inspection have special qualifications acquired at relevant institutions of higher and secondary education, and their continuous further training is guaranteed.

To ensure efficient market supervision work, a continuous training programme is available for the staff engaged in food control and inspection. That training includes familiarisation with, and adaptation of, up-to-date testing methods. The TWINING programme of PHARE has been a useful complement to that programme.

The staff members of the regional consumer protection inspectorates have received special training in food control and possess abundant experience gained during several decades of work in this field.

**Equipment supply status**
The laboratory has up-to-date testing techniques, measuring instruments and equipment which ensure the technical standard required for the fastest possible determination of the safety of foods. The high technical and professional standard of the laboratory is indicated by the fact that the laboratory has been successfully prepared for international accreditation in the framework of the TAIEX programme of PHARE, which has been accomplished by the laboratory without any objections (preparing company: TÜV Nord Anlagen Technik GmbH).

The first stage of development of the market supervision network and laboratory has been completed by making use of the PHARE tenders won. As a result of that development,
• a modern laboratory has been set up (with laboratory units for classical analytical tests, microbiology, metal analysis, radiochemistry and toxicology),
• the building up of on-line connection between the county inspectorates and the GICP has been completed,
• the supply of field inspectors with portable computers and mobile phones has been completed,
• the field work personnel have been supplied with basic equipment necessary for on-site checks (temperatures, balances, etc.),
• the inspectors carrying out field checks have received the electronic database summarising the available food safety documents,
• the regional inspectorates have been supplied with mobile refrigeration equipment that can be installed in cars,
• a sample delivery car of controlled temperature (–24 °C) and provided with refrigeration equipment has been put into operation to facilitate professional sampling and the performance of rapid tests all over the country.

By the use of PHARE funds, one mobile laboratory and three sample delivery cars of cooled air space will be purchased in the framework of the Cop 2001 programme, mainly for use in rapid on-site checks of foods and toys.