



***World Food Spice Congress***  
***Delhi February 2010***  
***Christine Majewski***



# **Food Safety & Risk Assessment by European Regulators.**

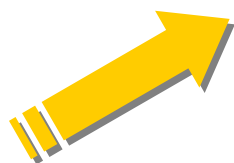
- European Community comprises 27 sovereign states
- Internal market between all 27 – no internal barriers to trade
- Risks based legislation - need to build confidence of consumers in the trading of foods around the internal market from member state to member state
- Maintain the even playing field – same rules – same costs etc etc

## Origins

- 1990s - Succession of food scares (e.g. BSE, dioxins)
- Loss of consumer confidence in safety of food chain
- Damaged trust in public authorities
- Creation of agencies to handle food issues nationally
- Need to re-cast EU food safety system and policy

## EFSA has three main goals

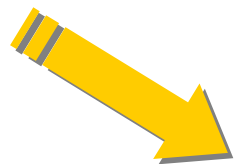
Make a  
significant  
contribution to:



Improve EU food safety

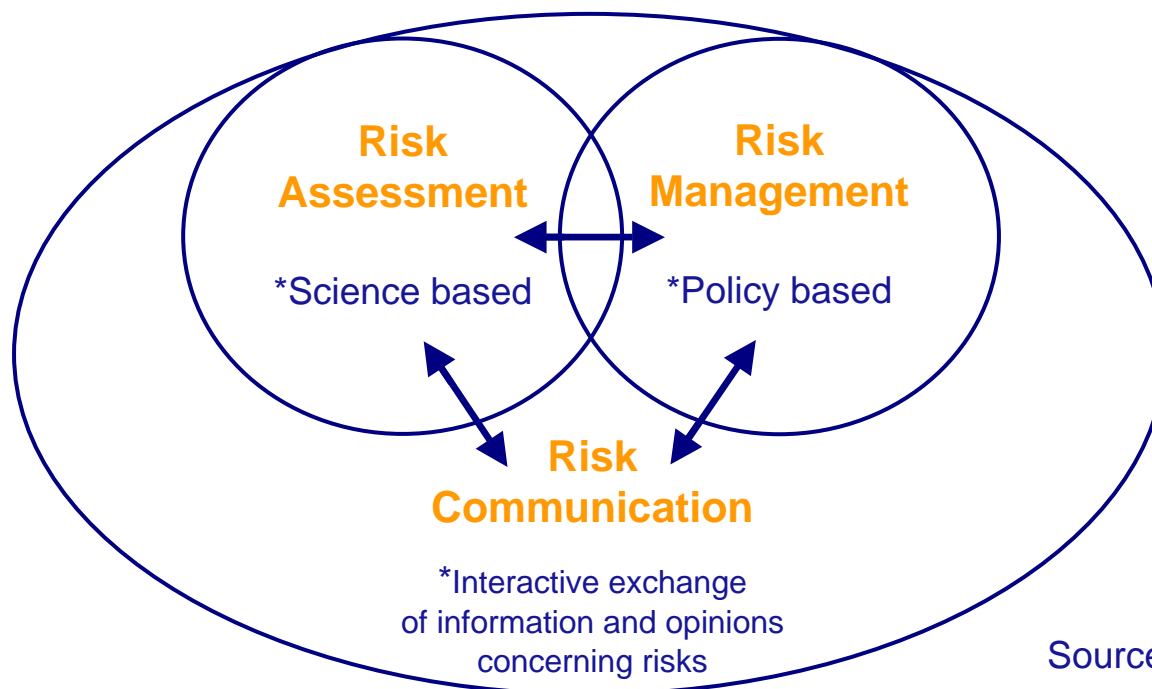


Re-build consumer  
confidence in EU food safety



Re-build confidence of  
trading partners in the EU  
food supply

## Framework



Source: WHO/FAO 1997

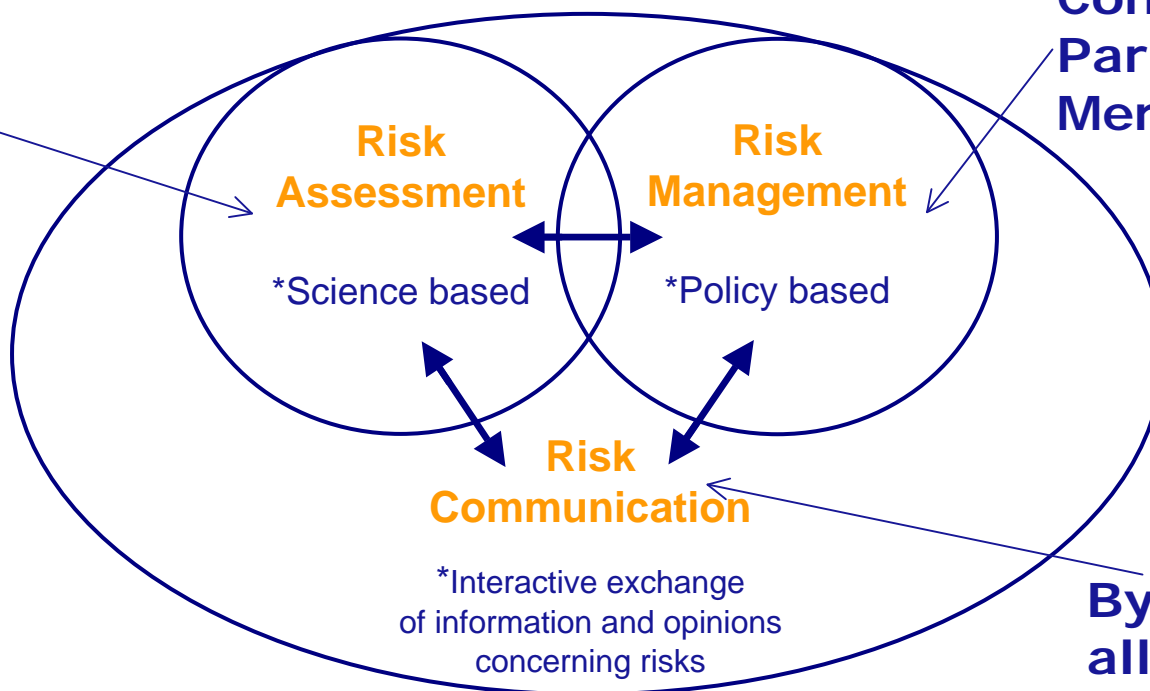


Need for close cooperation between risk assessor and risk manager

## Framework

EFSA,  
Member  
States

European  
Commission,  
Parliament,  
Member States



Need for close cooperation between risk assessor and risk manager

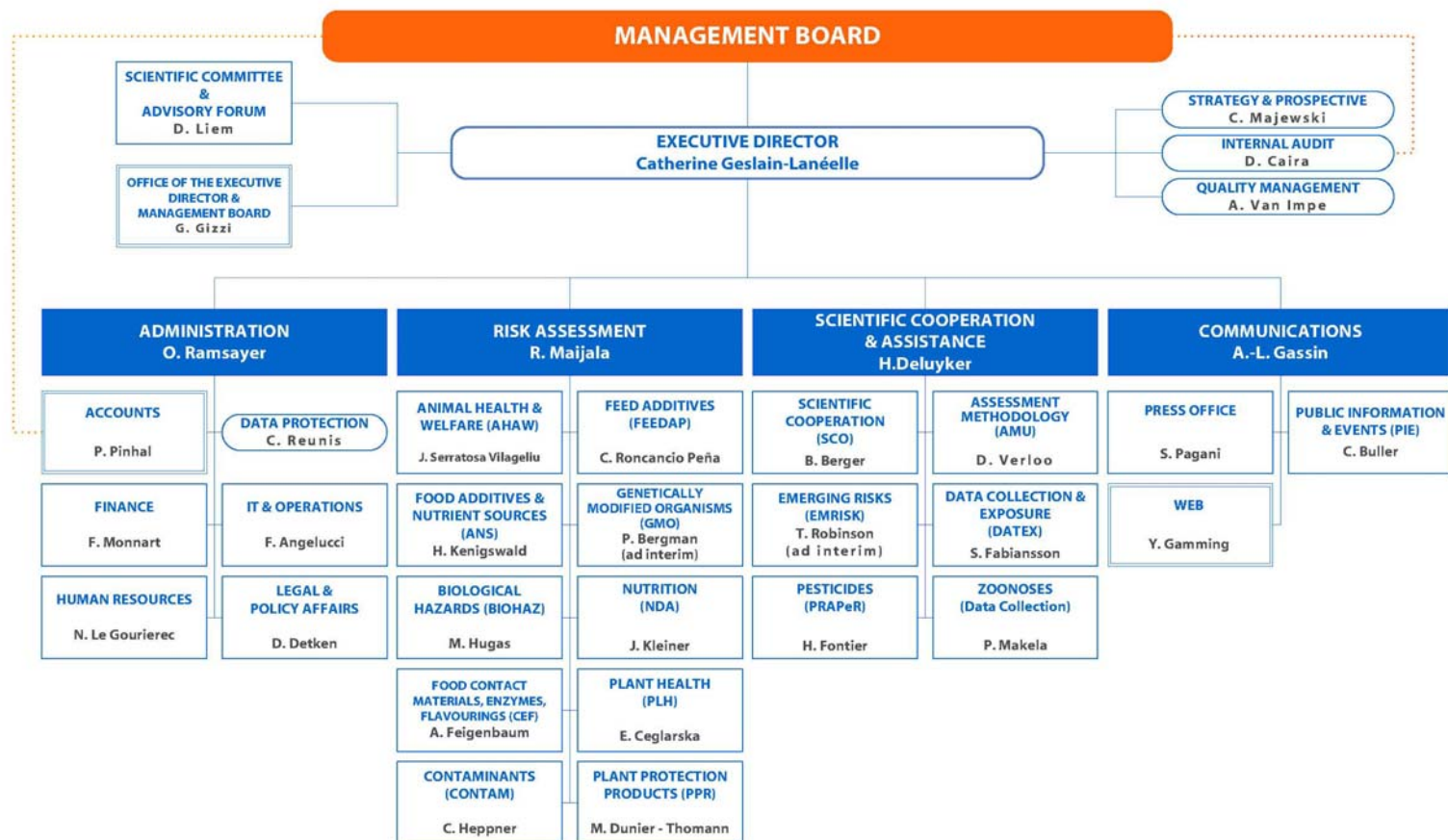
## The main features

- Risk assessment separated from risk management
- EFSA advises but is not part of European Commission
- EFSA evaluates the risks and advises the European Commission, Member States governments and Parliament of its findings. These are also published immediately
- European Commission takes EFSA's advice to formulate proposals for European food law
- The European Commission works with the European Parliament and Member States to achieve agreement on their proposals



## EFSA's tasks

1. Provide scientific advice, opinions, information, and technical support for Community legislation and policies
2. Collect and analyse data to allow characterisation and monitoring of risks
3. Promote and coordinate development of uniform risk assessment methodologies
4. Communicate risks related to all aspects of EFSA's mandate



**Organisational chart 2009**



## Scientific Panels

- Animal health and welfare (AHAW)
- Food additives and nutrient sources (ANS)
- Biological hazards (BIOHAZ)
- Food contact materials, enzymes, flavourings (CEF)
- Contaminants (CONTAM)
- Feed additives (FEEDAP)
- Genetically modified organisms (GMO)
- Nutrition (NDA)
- Plant health (PLH)
- Plant protection products (PPR)

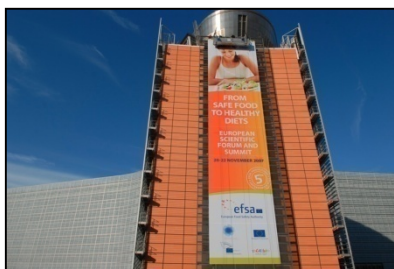


## Scientific Committee and Panels

- 10 Scientific Panels
- Independent scientists selected based on their proven excellence
- Open meetings as appropriate
- Mandatory commitment of independence
- Declaration of Interest (annual and per meeting)

# What EFSA does

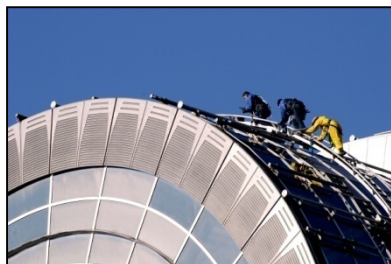
## Who can task EFSA?



European Commission



EU Member States



European Parliament



European Food Safety Authority  
Self-tasking

## Core values

- Scientific excellence
- Independence
- Openness
- Transparency
- Responsiveness

## EFSA today

### *Where are we in 2009?*

- Based in Parma, Italy
- About 1200 external scientific experts and advisers
- 1700 scientific outputs
- 12 Scientific Colloquia on key topics
- Budget: €80 million
- 450 staff

## EFSA in Parma



EFSA's Official seat:  
Palazzo Ducale



EFSA's operational seat:  
"DUS" building



## Strategic objectives

Strategic Plan 2009-2013

1. Provide an integrated approach to delivering scientific advice, from field to plate;
2. Timely, high-quality evaluation of products, substances and claims subject to regulatory authorisation;
3. Collate, disseminate and analyse data in the fields within EFSA's remit;
4. Position EFSA at the forefront of risk assessment in Europe and internationally;
5. Reinforce confidence and trust in EFSA and the EU food safety system;
6. Assure the responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness of EFSA.

## EFSA and its Advisory Forum

- Representatives from national food safety authorities/bodies with role equivalent to EFSA
- One representative per Member State, may bring specialist support
- Commission represented as observer
- Special invitees (accession countries, observers from Norway, Iceland, Switzerland)

## Purpose

**Provide appropriate, consistent, accurate and timely communications on food safety issues to all interested parties, stakeholders and the public at large, based on the Authority's risk assessments and scientific expertise.**

## Context

27 Member States with different attitudes and perceptions regarding:

- **Risk**
- **Food safety**
- **Diet, nutrition and health**

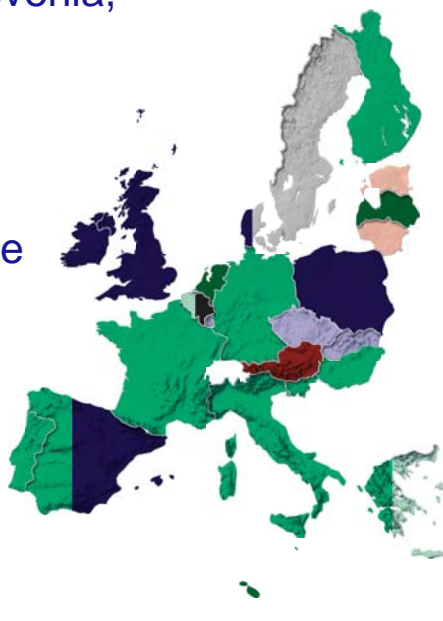
## Risk perceptions: Top Concerns

**PESTICIDES:** Greece, Italy, Hungary, France, Portugal, Slovenia, Germany, Spain, Finland

**NEW VIRUSES LIKE AVIAN INFLUENZA:** Malta, Latvia, The Netherlands

**RESIDUES IN MEAT:** Cyprus, Greece, Belgium

**FOOD HYGIENE OUTSIDE HOME:** Poland, United Kingdom, Denmark, Ireland, Spain



**CONTAMINATION BY BACTERIA:** Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Slovakia

**POLLUTANTS LIKE MERCURY OR DIOXINS:** Belgium

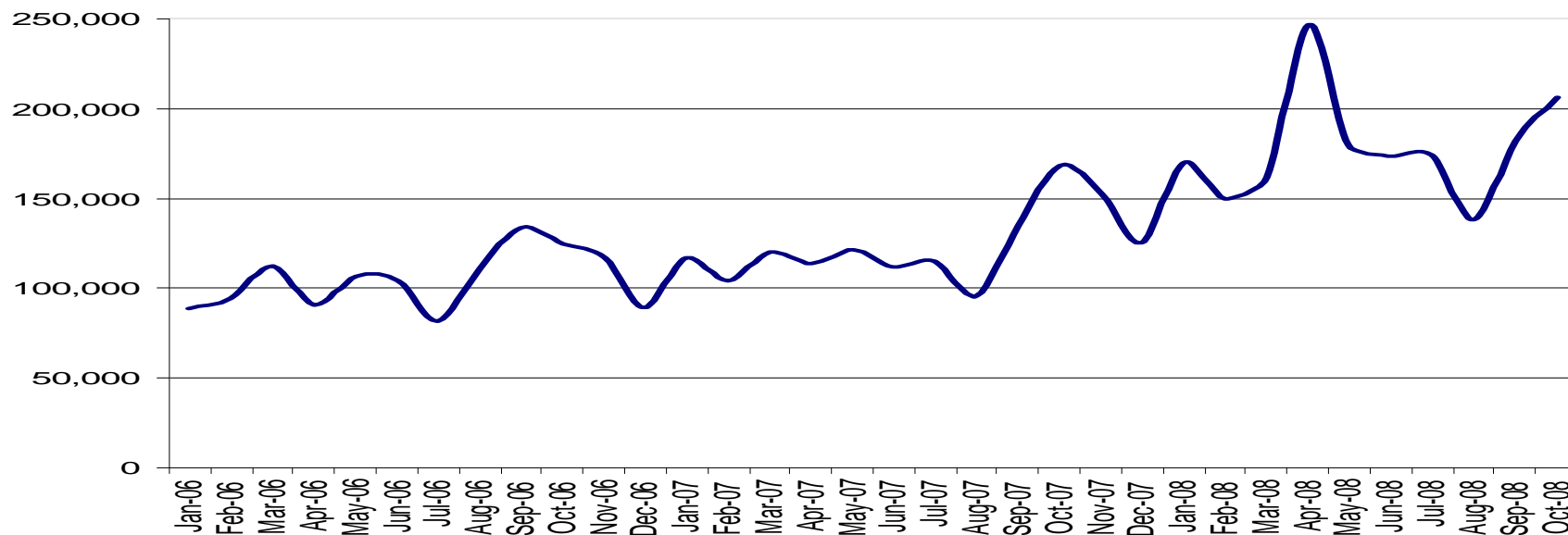
**GMOs:** Austria

**ADDITIVES:** Lithuania, Estonia

**WELFARE OF FARMED ANIMALS:** Denmark, Sweden

## EFSA online

- Europe-wide reference on food and feed safety
- ~150,000 visits per month (average)
- Over 21,000 subscribers to *EFSA Highlights* email alert
- OVER 2.3 million visits in 2009



## EFSA online



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### European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is the keystone of European Union (EU) risk assessment regarding food and feed safety. In close collaboration with national authorities and in open consultation with its stakeholders, EFSA provides independent scientific advice and clear communication on existing and emerging risks.

[Who we are](#) | [What we do](#) | [Key values](#)

### Press Releases & News Stories



#### EFSA's role and activities in plant health

The introduction and spread of plant pests among food crops is a serious threat that can have far-reaching economic, social and environmental consequences. A new topic section on plant health provides an overview of EFSA's role and activities in

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## Highlights 2009

- Animal cloning (final opinion adopted)
- Dioxins in Irish pork (response to urgent request)
- Nanotechnology (consults on draft opinion)
- Melamine (response to urgent request about Chinese contamination)
- 2007 report on infectious diseases transmissible from animals to humans
- Nutrition and health claims
- Food additives
- Corporate issues (Strategic plan, Cooperation agreement with Japan)



## Vision

“My vision is for EFSA to become globally recognised as the European reference body for risk assessment on food and feed safety, animal health and welfare, nutrition, plant protection and plant health”

- *Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle, Executive Director of EFSA*

- **Objective I** - To support the EU in its international commitments – Multi-lateral and bilateral level
- **Objective II** - Ensure access to international scientific data and information to provide a strong basis for risk assessment and the identification of emerging risks
- **Objective III** - Participation to risk assessment at the international level
- **Objective IV** - To promote coherence in risk communications and build awareness of EFSA's activities at the international level

## Future challenges...

- Globalisation
- Climate change
- New technologies
- Socio-demographic changes
- Food security
- Citizens confidence – matching expectation
- Belief in science in protecting citizens

