

# The Australia New Zealand Food Regulation System



Australia and New Zealand share a Food Regulation System, made up of policy, laws, standards and processes. The System is underpinned by a treaty between the two countries and an agreement between the Australian, state and territory governments for a national approach to food regulation. The system involves all levels of government, to help ensure a safe and healthy food supply.

The System's **vision** is for communities in Australia and New Zealand to have a safe and healthy food supply, be empowered to make informed choices about their food, and benefit from thriving food economies.

Its **mission** is to support a world-class collaborative food regulation system focused on improving and protecting short- and long-term public health and safety by:

- developing evidence-based food policy guidelines, standards and initiatives, which are implemented by individual jurisdictions and at the border
- collaborating on a consistent approach to implementation and best practice regulation
- collaborating on responses to food safety incidents and emerging threats to public health
- engaging and driving dialogue with the food system and associated stakeholders, including industry peak bodies, public health organisations and health agencies.

## Food System Outcomes

Over the long term, we will work together with a view to achieving four outcomes. Work will be prioritised under each of these outcomes every three years in a way that is evidence-based, transparent and inclusive of stakeholders.

Safe and suitable food

Healthy food supply

Informed and empowered consumers

Thriving food economies



## Roles

The system comprises a complex network across all levels of government in Australia and New Zealand.

- **Food ministers in Australia and New Zealand** are responsible for the system and for setting food policy through the Food Ministers' Meeting, and its subcommittee, the Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC).
- **Australian Government, State and Territory Health and Agriculture or Primary Industry Departments and New Zealand Government** develop food regulation policy, including to address chronic conditions and obesity and work together to develop consistent implementation approaches across the System.
- **Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)** is an independent authority responsible for developing food standards consistent with the policy set by the ministers. The standards are collectively known as the Food Standards Code and adopted into state, territory and New Zealand food legislation.
- **Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry** implements, monitors and enforces food regulation for imports in Australia and exports. Should a food incident involve imported or exported food, DAFF will also be involved.
- **New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries** implement, monitor, and enforce food regulation, manage food recalls, and respond to food incidents in New Zealand.
- **Jurisdictional regulators** implement, monitor, and enforce food laws in Australian states and territories, manage food recalls, and respond to food incidents.
- **Local governments** are typically councils and monitor and enforce food laws in each local government area under the guidance of jurisdictional regulators (or the Ministry for Primary Industries in New Zealand).

## Governance and approach

*The Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of New Zealand Concerning a Joint Food Standards System (the Treaty)* sets out the agreement between Australia and New Zealand and includes the key objectives of the two parties. The Government of Australia and all states and territories are also party to the Food Regulation Agreement which covers similar objectives within Australia.

These agreements are supported by consistent values, practices and behaviours adopted by food ministers and jurisdictional regulators. These include consideration to:

**Develop domestic food regulatory policy and policy guidelines for setting domestic food standards that:**

- improve and protect short- and long-term public health and safety proportionate to risk and based on sound evidence
- provide information to support consumers to make informed choices to support a healthy diet
- support public health objectives to reduce chronic disease related to overweight and obesity
- reflect a broad view of public health and safety whilst supporting safe innovation
- use clear and efficient decision-making
- include input from stakeholders and collaboration with agencies responsible for food safety.

**Harmonise food standards within Australia and between Australia and New Zealand that:**

- support efforts to harmonise domestic and export food standards
- encourage consistency between domestic and international food standards.

**Implement domestic food regulation and standards by:**

- ensuring they can be enforced by regulators, and do not place an unreasonable cost on industry or consumers
- providing adequate information to enable informed choice, communicate and action decisions in a timely, transparent and collaborative way
- providing strategic oversight, including developing a strategic plan with refreshed priorities and measures of performance, every 3 years.

**Promote a consistent approach to the compliance and enforcement, through:**

- nationally agreed policy, standards and enforcement procedures that reflect best practice
- ensuring consumers have continued confidence that the food they eat is safe and healthy through a trusted food regulatory system.

## System partners and stakeholders

The system works with a range of other stakeholders to achieve its goals. These include other regulators, research institutions, the food industry and professional associations, public health bodies and consumer groups.

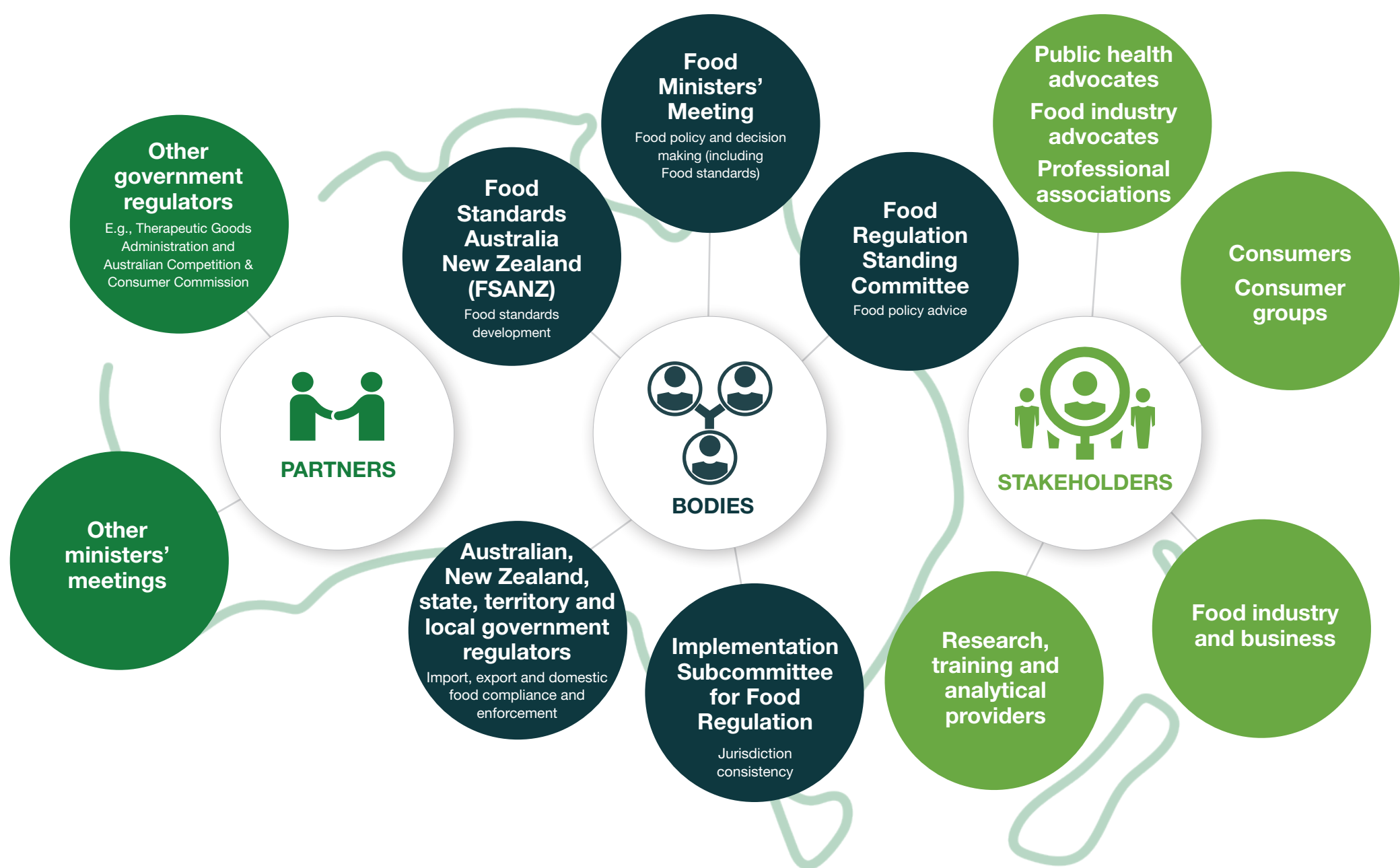
**By working together, we achieve better outcomes for all.**

Everyday people interact with our food system: growing food, processing food, storing food, transporting food, preparing food, selling food and consuming food.

Markets and consumers expect that industries and business will meet high food standards. To ensure food meets these expectations, all those actively engaged throughout the food supply chain have a role to play. Industries and business have the primary responsibility for the safety of imported food, food produced domestically and exported food. Government has a role to put in place robust regulatory processes and to verify that standards and guidelines are being met and these are future ready. Consumers also play a role in how they handle food, use information, and prepare food.

# The Australia New Zealand Food Regulation System

From paddock to plate, we all share responsibility for food...



## Rules

- Australia, New Zealand, state and territory legislation
- Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code
- New Zealand specific food standards
- Other regulatory schemes

## Agreements

- Food Regulation Agreement (and model food legislation)  
*Australia*
- Food Standards Treaty and Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement  
*Australian and New Zealand*

