

NSW Food Safety Plan 2026-2030

Safe food, clear choices. A thriving NSW.



Food safety is fundamental to the health, wellbeing and confidence of the people of New South Wales. As our food system evolves, so too must our approach to regulation to ensure we protect consumers while enabling innovation, supporting industry growth and responding to emerging risks.

This plan sets out a clear, modern and risk-based approach to food safety for 2026–2030. It reflects the NSW Government’s commitment to healthy communities, a strong economy, and effective public services and aligns with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development’s Statement of Intent.



Industry snapshot

The NSW food industry contributes over **\$100 billion** to the state’s economy each year. The NSW Food Authority regulates the food industry from farm to plate to make sure food is safe to eat.

Regulated food businesses (2025-26)



2,388
manufacturers



787
dairy



290
eggs



1,216
food service to
vulnerable persons



58,976
retail and food service



238
shellfish



105
plant products



2,809
meat



951
seafood



7,672
transport

Our purpose

Protect public health by ensuring food is safe from farm to plate, while supporting a strong and innovative food industry.

Our vision

A modern, trusted food safety system that protects public health and empowers people to make informed decisions about food safety and potential health risks.



The challenge

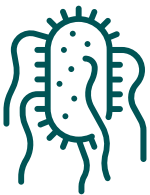
The NSW food system is evolving rapidly, transforming how food is produced, distributed and consumed. Key drivers of change include:

- new technologies reshaping food products and business models
- climate change altering risk profiles, including emergence and spread of pathogens
- global supply chains increasing in complexity, connectivity and vulnerability
- consumers expecting innovation, greater transparency and absolute assurance of safety.

Meeting these challenges requires a coordinated, risk-based and future-focused regulatory approach to prevent harm, prepare for emerging risks and respond proportionately.

This will be achieved through the Food Authority’s strategic outcomes. Together, they strengthen risk management, enable proportionate regulation and drive continuous improvement to protect public health.

Strategic outcomes



1. Reduced foodborne illness in NSW

Healthy communities: Reducing foodborne illness is the primary objective of the food safety system. We will target the highest risk hazards, respond to emerging threats and work collaboratively across the food chain.

What we will do	What success looks like
Lead whole-of-chain initiatives to reduce <i>Campylobacter</i> and <i>Salmonella</i> .	Reduced rates of <i>campylobacteriosis</i> and <i>salmonellosis</i> .
Identify, assess and manage emerging food safety risks.	Fewer foodborne illness outbreaks and hospitalisations.
Strengthen effective allergen management across the food system.	Fewer hospitalisations due to food-related anaphylaxis.
Use data and intelligence to target prevention and early intervention.	Reduced economic burden of foodborne illness on the NSW community.



2. A safe and innovative food economy

A strong economy: Support innovation and growth while maintaining robust food safety protections that give consumers confidence and provide regulatory certainty to industry.

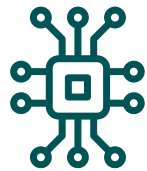
What we will do	What success looks like
Support the development of clearer regulatory pathways for novel foods and emerging technologies.	Predictable regulatory approvals.
Enable safe innovation across the food sector, including sustainable and circular food systems.	Growth in safe, innovative and sustainable food products and new business models.
Contribute to the modernisation of national food standards and regulatory guidance.	National food standards that are contemporary, evidence-based and fit for purpose.
Work collaboratively with industry and across government to address emerging opportunities and challenges.	High industry confidence in the regulatory system and increased investment in food innovation.



3. Effective risk-based regulation

Trusted and efficient regulation: Regulatory effort is targeted where it matters most.

What we will do	What success looks like
Implement new national standards for berries, leafy vegetables and melons.	Strong compliance rates with new standards.
Deliver targeted, intelligence-led risk-based compliance programs.	Improved compliance in priority risk areas.
Strengthen assurance through third-party and national frameworks.	Greater consistency in regulatory outcomes across NSW.
Continuously review and improve regulatory approaches to focus effort where it delivers the greatest benefit.	Reduced regulatory burden for low-risk, compliant businesses and more efficient use of resources.



4. A modern, intelligence-led regulatory system

Better use of data and technology: Food safety regulation is driven by data, analytics and real-time intelligence.

What we will do	What success looks like
Expand real-time surveillance, whole genome sequencing and intelligence capabilities.	Faster detection and response to food safety risks and outbreaks.
Integrate predictive analytics and artificial intelligence to support regulatory decision making.	More targeted intelligence-led compliance and enforcement.
Deliver a state-wide digital inspection platform.	Improved efficiency, consistency and timeliness of regulatory services.



5. Informed and empowered consumers and businesses

Customer-centric services: Consumers and businesses are equipped to understand and manage food safety risks.

What we will do	What success looks like
Deliver targeted education and awareness campaigns.	Improved understanding of food safety risks and requirements.
Expand industry training and resources to support compliance.	Increased uptake of education, training and resources.
Provide clear, accessible information on regulatory changes, including food labelling.	Greater awareness and understanding of regulatory changes.
Improve the customer experience to make it easier to access advice and meet obligations.	Strong levels of customer trust, satisfaction and engagement.



Our enablers

Digital and AI-enabled regulation

- Use AI to enhance risk identification and compliance targeting.
- Automate data collection, analysis and reporting processes.
- Enhance digital service delivery for industry and consumers.

Data and intelligence

- Strengthen data governance, integration and sharing.
- Develop integrated, whole-of-system insights.

Workforce capability

- Develop and retain specialist regulatory, scientific and analytical capability.
- Strengthen leadership, technical skills and succession capability.
- Foster a culture of continuous learning and innovation.

Partnerships

- Collaborate across government, industry, community, and research.
- Leverage third-party assurance systems.



Implementation

The NSW Food Safety Plan 2026–2030 will be delivered through annual operational plans and aligned with NSW Government performance and accountability frameworks.

Progress will be monitored against defined outcomes and targets, supported by regular reporting, evaluation and continuous improvement.

Looking ahead

A safe food system is essential to protecting, supporting and developing a healthy, resilient and prosperous NSW. The Food Authority will continue to evolve as a modern, trusted regulator — protecting public health while supporting a dynamic and innovative food industry.

