

“The Final Report Securing Safety of “Health Foods”” and Safety Evaluation

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< Summary >

The final report on ensuring the safety of “health foods” was issued in July 2008 by Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, Japan. The development of guidelines for safe manufacturing steps is one of the basic purposes of this report. According to the report there are three essential measures for achievement of this goal: (1) safety evaluations, (2) manufacturing oversight and quality control, and (3) introduction of a third-party accreditation system. However as foods take various forms, it is difficult to establish one single standard for all foods. This becomes even more so because the standards or criteria for the safety of each food based on history of consumption varies widely by the individual even among the people who are engaged in food manufacturing.

For the evaluation for food safety, it is necessary to collect information on the history of safe use and hazards such as the occurrence of side effects and toxic substances. If the safety of foods cannot be secured by this information alone, it is necessary to supplement the information with additional scientific evidence.

It is important for people in the food industry to take the initiative by introducing voluntary safety evaluations of food manufacturing steps and thereby gaining necessary experience in the collection of information on the safe use and safe intake of their products.