

Strictly Enforcing Food Safety Standards

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Statistics recently released by China National Center for Food Safety Risk Assessment show that in the past seven years, China has issued 1,224 food safety standards and more than 20,000 food safety indexes.

These standards are technical definitions for food safety and also legal references for relevant law enforcement. The National Health and Family Planning Commission, together with relevant authorities, clarified overlapping and even conflicting standards and at the same time, added urgently needed new safety standards concerning heavy metal contamination and organic pollutants.



However, loose implementation of these standards is an even more serious problem and also poses threat to food safety. Most of the food safety incidents in recent years resulted from the failure to implement standards, rather than the absence of safety standards.

The quantity of standards will not necessarily ensure food safety. Whether food safety standards can really help to protect the public from danger depends on how effectively the standards are implemented.

Looking back on the many food safety incidents in recent years, another striking issue is that the punishment for officials or law enforcement personnel failing to do their duty is far from enough, despite the Supreme People's Procuratorate's regulations demanding severe punishment for such officials.

To set up standards is only the first step. How to effectively enforce these standards is another big challenge for watchdogs and even the whole society.