

Roles of the food and
drug administration
and the united states
department of agr...



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The key difference between a cheese pizza and a pepperoni pizza is the meat. However, in America two entirely different government agencies are accountable for inspecting each of those pizzas (Galarza). The pepperoni pizza will go through three different United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspections: At the slaughterhouse, pepperoni-making facility, and the pizza factory (Galarza). The three inspections are necessary because that pizza contains meat. On the other hand, the cheese pizza only needs to be inspected by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), after the food has received its label (Galarza). A clear majority of the food Americans eat has either been inspected by a branch of the FDA called the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) or the USDA. Understandably, there is confusion between the FDA, and USDA. For example, the FDA will inspect shelled eggs, while the USDA will inspect egg-based product including frozen, liquid, and dehydrated (Galarza). Another example is the FDA regulates the food chickens receive, however, the facilities the chickens are kept in fall under the USDA (Galarza). This all sounds confusing, and that's because it is. President Donald trump wanted to put an end to the confusion and consolidate federal food safety under the United States Department of agriculture (Flynn). Obama also wanted to shift all food safety to one department, however, he wanted it housed under the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which, is under the Food and Drug Administration (Flynn). Currently, neither President was successful because congress will not grant either the power to reorganize government. The challenges are even more pronounced when foods become recalled, and bacterial outbreaks occur. Both divisions are needed to ensure food safety, however, they do very different jobs.

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The names FDA and USDA are sometimes used interchangeably; however, they shouldn't be. Both departments regulate meat, specifically, poultry and fish, and they also both regulate eggs, but who does what is extremely specific, and even health food inspectors can get it wrong. For example, USDA regulate domestic poultry, but the FDA regulate non-specific poultry. The same rules hold true while inspecting red meat, all domesticated meat is regulated by the USDA, and non-specific by the FDA. One of the more confusing areas of regulations are eggs. The outside of the shells is inspected by the FDA, but any egg-based product gets regulated by the USDA. Now, it becomes apparent on why on department-controlled food safety.

First, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) was founded in 1906 by Harvard Washington Wiley, who at the time was a chemist for the United States Department of Agriculture. In 1906, The Pure Drug and Food Act was passed due to the book "The Jungle", written by, Upton Sinclair. This book described the harsh, and unhygienic work conditions in Chicago. Overall, the purpose of the FDA from 1906 to current times has not changed. The FDA still wants to protect the public health by ensuring that food is safe, wholesome, and sanitary.

The Food and Drug Administration deals with a broad range of topics including tobacco products, genetically modified foods (GMO), nutrition labels, and even packaging on foods. The department does its best to protect the general population, but some of the practices are out dated. For example, in 1969, President Richard Nixon requested that the United States

Food and Drug Administration reevaluate the processes used to approve <https://assignbuster.com/roles-of-the-food-and-drug-administration-and-the-united-states-department-of-agriculture/>

additives in food (Eaglstein). He was aware that even then the techniques used they were not up to par because of new technology produced. The main additives researched were the ones labelled “ generally recognized as safe (GRAS) (Maffini). Fast forwarding to 2018 the same problems persists. Similarly, a study has shown that that thousands of chemicals have entered the food industry. However, the FDA has been slowly considering the impact on ingesting these food additives even in small amounts. In particular the chemical perchlorate has been found in trace amounts in various food(maffini). What is all the fuss about this compound? Perchlorate is found in various explosive deses such as fireworks, and rocket fuel. This man-made chemical is known to disrupt the endocrine system, and it specifically targets the thyroid hormone (Maffini). As matter of fact perchlorate inhibits the transport of iodine to the thyroid hormone (Maffini). This compound is a man-made chemical that was not well understood in the 1950’s, but that is not true today. This is one way that shows that the regulatory system in place is weakened by years of limited resources (Maffini). The laws and regulations that were founded 70 years ago are still being used as the golden standard, but with all the resources on hand that should not be the case.

Not only is the FDA in control over food additives but they are also over foods that have been genetically modified (Servick). For instance, genetically modified salmon was approved for consumption in 201(Pollack). While, this does not appear to be harmful it could have some serious consequences. AquaBounty Technologies made the argument that their fish were safe for consumption, and for the environment back in the

1950's (Pollack). However, that still has scientist concerned on what would happen to the wild salmon if one of these salmon happened to escape. Wenonah Hauteur, executive director of Food & Water Watch, said it best." This unfortunate, historic decision disregards the vast majority of consumers, many independent scientists, numerous members of Congress and salmon growers around the world, who have voiced strong opposition (Pollack)," The issue is not that the food was genetically modified, it is the procedures that AquaBounty used were outdated. To make matters worse the salmon being manufactured do not have to be labelled genetically modified (Pollack), therefore the consumer does not have a clue what they are really eating.

Moving on to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The United States Department of Agriculture was founded by Abraham Lincoln. He signed a law that protected both the farmer, and the consumer. There are several divisions that fall under the USDA, and a few include: The Food Safety and Inspection Services (FSIS), and the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), and Foreign Agriculture Services (FAS).

The Food and Safety and Inspection Services play a massive role for the USDA. This division will send inspectors to establishments that handle food. The Food and Safety Inspectors will follow the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP). There are seven stages in following the HACCP, and those are:

- Conduct a Hazard Analysis.
- Identify Critical Control Points.

- Establish Critical Limits.
- Establish Monitoring Procedures.
- Establish Corrective Actions.
- Establish Verification Procedures.
- Record Keeping Procedure.

The above steps help to ensure that the general public doesn't develop a foodborne illness. Microbial foodborne illness is a top concern for the food industry, and it contributes to over 9,000 deaths. In addition, roughly 75% of food related illness is due to mishandling of food in the work place (Bean). The number one issue in food service operations is improper holding times, and that directly impacts the temperature in which that food is being served (Bryan). The next major issue is employee sanitation, and that includes: Cross contamination, improper handwashing, and personal hygiene (Bryan). The HACCP based training has been enforced in the food and retail industries in all 50 states (Lokunarangodage). Increased training and certification requirements are being implemented, and it's making an impact.

Not only does the United States Department of Agriculture monitor food service safety but they also set the nutritional guidelines. The agency that handles nutrition both in schools and in the American household is called the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS). The FNS dictates what schools can and cannot serve. Also, FNS regulates the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Women Infants and Children food assistance (WIC) (Mauer). The goal to having these benefits was to help reduce the risk of obesity (Molitor). In 2012, 16.9% of child and 34.9% of adults were obese.

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The SNAP benefits were primarily created to help low income families obtain the nutrition they needed (Molitor). Finally, the National school lunch program was established in 1946 by the USDA. It was designed to give children a balanced, nutritional meal. The above divisions are implemented to help the American people

In conclusion, both the FDA and USDA are present to ensure food and environmental safety. At times it can be confusing on who does what. As stated above the FDA primarily regulates scientific research, harmful chemicals in food, and medications. Some of the research techniques may have been outdated, however, the over all purpose is to help citizens of the United States. The USDA is primarily in charge of foods, especially meats, and to regulate the food manufacturing facilities. Also, the USDA is responsible for ensuring that children get the proper nutrition needed, whether that be at school or in low income houses.

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