

Research on Disclosure of Food Safety Information

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Abstract: In recent years, food safety events occur frequently in China, which have become problems which are widely concerned by the whole society at present. Improvement of management philosophies, supervision modes, technical means and other aspects is deeply integrated with information disclosure for solving current problems of food safety in China effectively from the current perspectives of current theories and practice. Firstly, current administrative supervision cost of governments can be lowered. Secondly, functions also can be converted, and food safety governance modes can be improved effectively, thereby further solving the problem of food safety. Disclosure of food safety information is proposed on the basis of current survey and research in the paper, thereby proposing corresponding strategies of development.

Keywords: Food safety, information disclosure, government supervision, information asymmetry.

1. Introduction

Food safety information is very important content in construction of the modern food safety guarantee system. Currently, there is a problem of information asymmetry in China food market, thereby leading to prominent problems of market failure, etc. to a great extent. The supply problem of food safety information can be actually emphasized in order to effectively alleviate the supply and demand problems in current food market.

2. Important significance of strengthening food safety information disclosure

2.1 Improvement of the safety management level of the government on the food chain through information disclosure

Firstly, certain authenticity and validity should be guaranteed aiming at the information related to information disclosure. Information should be disclosed from more comprehensive perspectives, and such information is both positive and negative, thereby improving the information acquisition ability to a brand-new level from many aspects.

Secondly, control means can be objectively strengthened; it is extremely important content in current food safety management, maximum strengthening of control means is the most important objective to realize food safety information disclosure from a certain extent, thereby actively controlling and managing food safety. Anticipated objectives can be realized through corresponding control means, thereby effectively increasing the exposure degree of enterprise food safety images.

2.2 Strengthening of food enterprise quality through information disclosure

Fraud behaviors are frequent in current market of food consumption. Such phenomenon is produced by the following important reason: people are lack of corresponding understanding on enterprise credit information. Governments should give full play to values and help enterprises to provide practical and effective detailed description as an important regulator in market orders. Enterprise product quality information and credit archives information shall also be released at any time under necessary circumstances. If some products are defective during production, enterprises should recall the products for own benefits aiming at consumers.

2.3 Avoidance of safety risk through information disclosure

Consumers should further master corresponding information resources, thus regulating food manufacturers. Current consumer groups in China are less mature, which are lack of corresponding self-protection consciousness sometimes. Therefore, consumers should further understand current

situation of food safety, and be familiar with policy formulation in food safety management. Meanwhile, information of consumers in the aspect of food safety also can be increased. Self-protection also can be strengthened during improvement of consumers' food safety awareness.

3. Status of food safety management in China

3.1 Shuanghui clenbuterol event

“Weekly Quality Report” 3.15 special action -’Bodybuilder Pig’ Truth was broadcast in CCTV News Channel at 9:00a.m. on March 15, 2011. The following chaos was revealed in the program that ‘farmers added illicit drug clenbuterol’, regulators accepted bribes and loosened regulation, agents contacted inside, and the downstream manufacturers purchased intentionally’. It was more troubling that such pigs fed with clenbuterol openly entered Jiyuan Shuanghui Food Co., Ltd. under Henan Shuanghui with the reputation of ‘testing for 18 times and feeling assured for 18 times’. Test of ‘clenbuterol’ was not included in the 18 tests according to regulation of the company.

3.2 Event of soaking anchovies with formalin in Qingdao

Chengyang Bureau Branch of Quality Supervision received a report from a citizen that a black workshop near Chengma Road of Chengyang District processed anchovies illegally at 9:00a.m. on April 12, 2011. In the city, related management departments immediately dispatched relevant personnel for law enforcement and investigation of the event within short time.

3.3 Melamine event

The melamine event should be discussed from its cause. Many infants eating milk powder produced by Sanlu Group suffered from kidney stones according to discovery. Then, chemical raw material-melamine was discovered in the milk powder produced by Sanlu Group. Official data show that 39965 infants and young children accepted outpatient treatment consultation and have recovered, 12892 patients were hospitalized, and 4 patients died due to use of infant formula milk powder as of September 21, 2008.

Table 1 Ranking of food with most concern from customers

Food name	Proportion
Dairy products	41.0%
Meat and meat products	39.8%
Grain processing products	37.1%
Edible oil	33.6%
Beverage & wine	31.0%
Snacks	29.4%
Vegetables and fruits	23.9%
Condiments	21.5%
Egg and egg products	19.2%

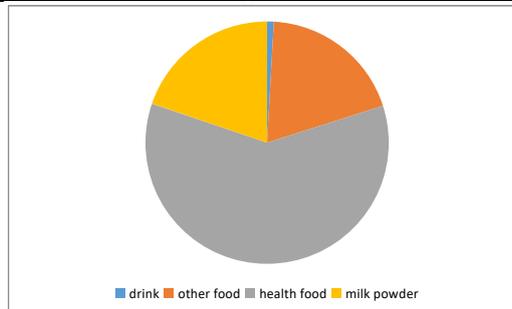


Fig. 1 Handling capacity of exposed substandard food in 2016

Statistical data in table 1 and figure 1 shows that consumers are generally lack of confidence on dairy and meat products due to influence of the time of ‘melamine’ and ‘clenbuterol’. The ratio in the aspects of grain processing products, edible oil, etc. is also high. In fact, we have to admit that events in the above nature and form are only the tip of the iceberg. The categories about the events emerge endlessly. People pay more and more attention to food safety problems. ‘Gutter oil’ and similar words

occur frequently. Their root causes are investigated, one reason is insufficient supervision of the state, and the loss of enterprise ethics and social responsibility is another more important reason.

4. Main problems of food safety information disclosure in China

4.1 Weak information acquisition ability

First of all, there are 200 thousand workers related to health supervision in China at present from the aspect of monitoring personnel structures. Though the quantity is huge, the proportion of food inspection and supervision technicians in China still has gap from global developed countries. Existing data shows that Japan is representative in Asian countries. The proportion of food health management personnel is 1:15800. However, Netherlands is representative in European countries, and the proportion of food health management personnel is 1:22300. Currently, China proportion at the aspect is 1:40000. Gap is clearly observed according to the data comparison. In addition, most supervision work in China depends on the basic part at the foundation. Therefore, relevant supervision personnel have low quality. Food safety testing is not able to fully meet the needs of the situation development.

Secondly, key testing technology and equipment show that China is lack of corresponding testing means for supporting at present aiming at some pollutants, especially new pollutants. Therefore, overall quality level of food can be reflected comprehensively. China is also lack of methods and techniques for supervision and testing aiming at some internationally recognized foodborne hazards.

4.2 Insufficient relevant laws and regulations

Current foreign legal and regulatory level shows that enterprise business responsibility is described and emphasized to certain extent in China 'Enterprise Law'. For example, it is regulated in item 1, article 5 of 'Enterprise Law' that enterprises should bear 'social responsibility', thereby 'greening moral responsibility law'. However, the performance of law shows that the measures adopted for solving enterprises violating laws and regulations in the law. Existing legislation of corporate social responsibility is messy in the aspect of systems, which are mainly scattered in several laws such as 'Labor Law', 'Product Quality Law', 'Laws for Protection of Consumers' Rights and Interests', 'Law for Environmental Protection' and 'Social Security Law'. A powerful and more systematical system is not formed at present. Related organs must be based on existing laws for constant optimization and perfection during the process of development in the future, many contents of enterprise ethics construction and corporate social responsibility are blended in the development, thereby food safety can be maximally protected.

4.3 Lagged construction of food websites among various functional departments

4.3.1 Lack of special column of food

When the website information of all food safety supervision departments in China is analyzed, it is obvious that current food safety information is scattered and disorderly. More seriously, only general administration of food quality supervision is equipped with corresponding special column, which is not transparent. It is difficult for the mass to discover relatively effective information.

4.3.2 Less release of online information

Information disclosed by various functional departments shows that relevant policy information is less. Information is disclosed simply in the shallow level, which is not in-depth actually. Therefore, the disclosure of food safety information is more backward from another aspect, and unique information of respective departments is not available.

5. Solution strategies of food safety information disclosure

5.1 Strengthening website construction of functional departments

In recent years, food safety problems frequently happen, and the problem about food safety has received widespread attention from the public. Current investigation shows that the attention on food safety is constantly increased among urban consumer groups in China, wherein the population focusing on food safety accounts for 71.8%, and consumers without focus on food safety accounts for

0.6%. Therefore, the setup of food safety special column can further assist related interest parties to select food.

5.2 Perfecting construction of legal systems

In the process of enterprise development, the function of external environment can not be ignored. Establishment and perfection of sound laws and systems must produce certain binding force on enterprises in the industry objectively especially for the food industry, and enterprises' moral selection can be improved to certain level objectively.

Table 2 Liability of food safety problems

Responsible party	Percentage
Food enterprise	84.8%
Government department	80.8%
Industry association	17.7%
Media	10.9%
Consumers	5.2%

The contents in the above table show that enterprises bear important responsibility in the aspect of food safety. However, the responsibility undertaken by the government can not be ignored. Formulation and implementation of food safety information disclosure systems are important contents in current construction of democracy and legality society from the objective level. Government information disclosure is formulated for one important purpose of realizing resources sharing and expanding utilization limit of resources, thereby working employees in the government can enforce according to law, and the administration efficiency can be greatly increased.

5.3 Establishment and perfection of food safety risk analysis system

5.3.1 Risk assessment of chemical contamination

Key objects involved in the assessment process include pesticides, veterinary drugs and some food additives. Therefore, standard procedures for risk assessment should be formulated strictly in the actual assessment process. The procedures should be actually implemented. In the field of research, the study of toxicology should be emphasized to determine the harmful effects of chemical hazard to human health.

5.3.2 Risk assessment of biological factors

A very important influence factors is the microbial contamination among food safety problems in China. Therefore, it is necessary to mainly study it in an important position, thereby determining the influence of different groups maximally. It is worth mentioning that risks should be assessed aiming at quantitative assessment event of population exposure and health effect.

6. Conclusion

In recent years, Chinese governments at all levels should give more attention to disclosure of food safety information disclosure in the process of food safety supervision in order to be able to effectively ease the current problem between supply and demand of food safety information, and allow consumers to get market information. Problems in current China food safety information disclosure process are described in the study of the paper. Perfection strategies are proposed from many perspectives. Both governments and enterprises should perfect construction of laws and regulations, and participate in information construction.

7. References

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