

# Analysis on Enterprises Social Responsibility Based on Food Safety

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**Abstract**—Based on the introduction of the general situation of food safety and enterprise social responsibility (ESR), the paper points out the reasons for the deficiency for food ESR reflected by food safety problem in China mainly includes inner-enterprise and outer-enterprise. The paper proposes some suggestions by solving the external and internal causes to strengthen the consciousness of food ESR in China and guarantee basic food safety in our country such as enhancing internal construction of enterprises, strengthening enterprise responsibility consciousness, improving management ability of enterprises and reinforcing the training of small and medium-sized enterprises, and improving liability force. Optimizing the external environment for promoting the improvement of ESR needs to enhance the supervision of government, improve the construction of the systems relating to food safety in our country, fully play the role of guide of public opinion from news and media and supervision of consumers, and perfect the construction of social responsibility evaluation system.

**Keywords**—food safety; corporate social responsibility; absence; internal construction

## I. INTRODUCTION

With the accelerating process of international economic globalization, the enterprises in China also develop quickly. Enterprises have met many problems while developing rapidly, such as environmental pollution and food safety in which food safety is of critical importance<sup>[1]</sup>. Although food safety has got effective prevention and controlling to some extent, the entire food industry chain is still perilously weak, poisoning incidents including dyeing steamed bread and poison blood popular still enter an area of public concern by various channels constantly. The food safety situation in china is serious at the moment<sup>[2]</sup>.

Food safety is very important. Firstly, food safety not only has close relation with people's right to life and right to subsistence, but also has an influence on social harmony, transformation of government function and international image of the country. Improving enterprise social responsibility (ESR) is conducive to ensuring healthy development of food safety in China<sup>[3]</sup>. Secondly, enterprises are the first person responsible of food safety and social citizenship, which helps the enterprises obtain their own development in the premise of ensuring food safety. Lastly, improving social responsibility of food enterprises is conducive to propelling the construction of social responsibility system in China and promoting social harmony and stability. Therefore, strengthening social

responsibility on food enterprises is of important significance and inestimable economic significance.

## II. STATUS AND REASONS OF ESR IN FOOD SAFETY

### A. Status of food ESR in China

Food is the paramount necessity of the people. The successive exposure of food problem events touches people's sensitive nerves. At present, the seriousness of food safety task in China not only damages people's credibility on food enterprises, but also questions the conscience of food enterprises. According to statistical analysis on the number of complaints accepted by consumer associations at various levels in China, in 2011, there were 607263 complaints from consumer in which 39082 cases related to food, which increased by 12.3% compared with the same period of 2010. There were 26252 complaints relating to food quality safety in 39082 complaints relating to food, which accounted for 67.17% of food complaints (see Table I and Table II).

TABLE I. GOODS AND SERVICES WITH THE TOP RISE OF COMPLAINTS

Category	2011	2010	Growth ratio
Market	30,355	21,189	43.3%
Post and express	6,920	5,281	31.0%
Automobile	16,805	14,093	19.2%
Education or training	3,416	3,028	12.8%
Food	39,082	34,789	12.3%
Financial insurance	3,919	3,775	3.8%
Daily sundry	11,394	10,979	3.8%
Transportation	6,546	6,330	3.4%
Internet	20,654	20,405	

TABLE II. GOODS AND SERVICES WITH THE TOP FIVE COMPLAINTS

2011	Complaints	2010	Complaints
Shoes and clothes	53,708	Shoes and clothes	57,620
Mobile phone	43,810	Mobile phone	47,576
Telecom	41,060	Telecom	43,604
Food	39,082	Food	34,789

According to statistic reports of the Ministry of Health on incidents of food poisoning all over the country from the first quarter to the fourth quarter in 2011, there were 189 reports received by the Ministry of Health in which there were 8531 people poisoning and 137 people dyeing, as shown in Table 3. The events relating to food poisoning in reports at all levels in 2011 reduced by 31 compared with the same period in 2010, so the number of people caused death reduced by 25.5%. But the number of people with food poisoning in the report increased 13.1% (see Table III and Table IV).

TABLE III. QUARTERLY REPORT ON FOOD POISONING EVENTS IN 2011

Quarter	Number of reports	Number of poisonings	death toll
1	13	566	16
2	57	2658	29
3	73	3224	61
4	46	1876	31
Total	189	8315	137

TABLE IV. QUARTERLY REPORT ON FOOD POISONING EVENTS IN 2010

Quarter	Number of reports	Number of poisonings	death toll
1	32	792	27
2	59	1947	59
3	97	3331	80
4	32	1313	18
Total	220	7383	184

### B. Analysis on reasons

Fully solving the problem needs to find out the reasons causing the problem, and the deficiency of food ESR in China is the result of multiple factors.

1) *Internal reasons:* In China, the socialism market economy system was established in the 1990s. In the process of economic transformation in our country, traditional value of the society also suffers from challenges. And the standard of value begins to undergo multiple developments with rapid development of market economy. In social life, people take more consideration on economic value and economic index, but enterprises take more consideration on their own profits. The aggravation of unfair distribution phenomenon and gap between rich and poor phenomenon is full of money interests. Traditional values of people on paying attention to friendship, despising interests, and putting emphasis on overall interests are attacked, and traditional belief and moral orientation for some people begins to shock, which are reflected in enterprises that economic profit becomes the greatest motivator of production and operation for enterprises.

In market economy, every walk of life faces the fierce competition. In order to obtain more commercial profits and win the competition, some enterprises take illicit means to reduce cost, ignore their obligations and pursue money and interests crazily. From Sanlu "melamine" incident of the previous years to the recent "lean meat powder" of Shuanghui and dyed steamed buns, in some small and medium-sized enterprises, production conditions of is extremely harsh, waste water crosses production workshops, and rotten meat products are taken for process, and the place to do business for small retailers is dirty, noisy and disordered, the personnel operate without licenses, and the safety and health condition is bad, these enterprises blindly pursue economic interests, and cause damage on society and the surroundings. Although many large and medium-sized food enterprises express that they can take social responsibility and guarantee food safety positively and actively, in fact, some enterprises take social responsibility negatively and passively, and truly solve the problem of quality to redeem the image after food safety invents

happening, for example, Sanlu "melamine" incident and "lean meat powder" of Shuanghui are the long-standing problems in food industry and face social question and consumer's condemnation. Some enterprises declare their innocence and damages endlessly, even don't implement the recovery of victims, which damages the legitimate rights and interests of victims.

2) *External factors:* As the cell of society, enterprises must have relationship with the society. Western developed countries consider that ESR is the result of many sides working together, and all hope should be not only put in self-awareness awakening of company managers, but also put in the improvement of the quality and depending on the promotion of citizens and social forces. However, under the status that social driving force is relatively weak at present in China, supervision and management of government plays an important role in improving ESR in our country. But frequent food safety incidents in recent years test supervision system of our country, and reflect that supervision and regulation departments of the government has undefined administration authority and has unapparent regulatory intersection responsibility.

Information disclosure system of ESR in our country is still at the starting stage and is imperfect, and it has a long way to catch up with the foreign countries. The disclosure of ESR in our country is not compulsory regulation of the country, and it not only mainly depends on responsibility and obligation of enterprises, but also is conscious and spontaneous behavior of enterprises. With the development of ESR in the global, some large listed companies in China also occasionally publish social responsibility reports to improve their social trust. However, there are the conditions of undefined and incomplete enterprise information disclosure in the social responsibility reports.

Firstly, the implementation of food safety law has achieved remarkable results in China since June 2009, but law enforcement examination of food safety law in Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in 2011 found that matched law system of food safety throughout the country is imperfect. Secondly, the content regulated in laws and regulations of our country is ambiguous. Thirdly, the practical application of some provisions of the laws is not strong. Fourthly, punishment stipulation of food laws and regulations in China is very indistinct. Lastly, some safety standard systems lag behind western countries, which hinder economic development in China.

With various information draw our attention, the role of media including news network is increasingly important, but guiding role of public opinion is two-sided. If the news media pays no attention to social responsibility, abandons the principle of openness, impartiality and fairness, and positively goes for economic value and economic benefits, but in the development of modern society, the life of people not only has close relationship with news media, but also has more and more deep dependence on it. And the negative sides can damages people seriously.

### III. PERFECTING THE COUNTERMEASURES OF ESR OF FOOD SAFETY

#### A. Strengthening internal construction of enterprise

1) *Fostering correct operation concept and enhancing responsibility sense*: Operation concept means the basic views on the future, market, customers and enterprise performance formed in the operating process of enterprise. It not only is an ideological system with enterprise characteristics, but also is the core idea and essence of enterprise. In the development and operation of modern enterprises, we emphasize that the enterprise should obey fundamental principles of the society including custom and honesty which are not only the guarantee of maintaining food safety, but also is the foundation of operation concept foundation for enterprise. We can make use of rigorous and effective national supervision and management system, take examination methods with excellent technical content and legal measures in conformity with the provisions prescribed by law to ensure excellent quality of the products. But the implementation of extrinsic means needs the operation of good internal environment, and one of the most important is to be on the basis of good concept of producers, traffickers and operators. The idea and thought about enterprise operation of entrepreneurs is guiding thought and action platform for enterprise in a certain period of time or at certain times <sup>[4]</sup>.

2) *Improving food safety management ability of enterprise*: Nine of the units, from the tired soil. The key to guaranteeing food safety in our country is the quality of operators operating and selling different kinds of food in food industry. These operators not only must have good cultural, moral and professional quality, but also must have good management ability and have full understanding and management on enterprise operation. Therefore, in order to alleviate the current predicament of food safety and enhance the public confidence on food safety in our county, producers must regulate food production and operation activities and improve quality safety management <sup>[5]</sup>.

The enterprise should enhance self-discipline force to promote the work of enterprise food safety to go smoothly. On the one hand, the enterprise should expand the investment of manpower and materials on self-supervision, establish special quality supervision department, supervise conscientiousness of enterprise and each section of production, and give proper status and importance to the internal supervision department of enterprise as the manager of enterprise. On the other hand, the enterprise should foster correct responsibility and implement effective liability mechanism. And the enterprise not only must establish business leaders accountability and must be responsible for victims and their own products when the products or enterprise have the crisis of damaging the interests of customers, but also fully enhance liability mechanism of enterprise employee and establish post responsibility system.

3) *Strengthening food safety education*: Sheng Qin bear in mind that "Hardships, died comfortably". The food enterprise relating to life and health must foster suffering

consciousness of food safety. The competition of modern enterprise has not been only the competition of hardware requirements including scale and technology but the competition of comprehensive quality of enterprise in which the quality of internal employees is the key. Therefore, the quality of taking social responsibility of food enterprise employees must be strengthened to enhance soft strength of enterprise.

4) *Training and improve the liability of enterprise*: Food workshops not only have low entry barriers and big liquidity, most employees has weak food safety consciousness, inadequate safety knowledge and low quality, but also have small production scale, limited technical condition, and low economic efficiency, and some workshops even just satisfy living needs of their own families, which causes low economic tolerance of enterprise. And the consumer can't claim their legal rights and interests, so quality and security issue brought by food workshops hinders the development of food industry all the time. Improving the liability force of food-workshops enterprise becomes the difficulty and the most intriguing possibility for food security. To this end, food workshops should take an active part in education and training activities developed according to the production characteristics of small workshops, take production technology and management experience matching them, improve production environment, get rid of thirty-three label and improve social responsibility ability.

#### B. Enhancing and optimizing environment

1) *Strengthening supervision*: Strengthening supervision of government can set protective barrier for food safety. In 2010, from the survey on how to see food safety and supply in Well-off Magazine, we find that 91.1% thought that the supervision of government should be strengthened. Although the data doesn't represent the thought of the people all over the country, the data can reflect the aspirations of the public on strengthening supervision of government and maintaining food safety.

2) *Improving supervision level*: Supervision level of government is an important guarantee of ensuring food safety. Because each section of production and marketing of food all relates to national supervision, continuous, the supervision and administration of government on ESR should be promoted constantly, solidly and stably and the external environment should be optimized to maintain food safety. Administration according to law not only is the most fundamental code of conduct of exercising power for government workers, but also is the basis of people evaluating administrative activity <sup>[5]</sup>. Law-enforcing supervision department should strictly administrate by law and create service government ruled by law. The establishment of effective liability mechanism of administrating by law should enhance the force of administrative responsibility accountability on the problems of violating administrative rules and regulations and abusing power. And leadership accountability mechanism should be implemented, the rights should be executed in the scope of legal authority.

Our country should fully learn excellent experience from the foreign countries, perfect the current information disclosure system, increase the national legislation, ensure the effect of the published information by law and form disclosed mandatory provision step by step. Each region and department should enhance information communication; establish the mechanism of sharing information disclosure resources, and track dynamic distribution and processing of food information in a global scale. Our country should take multilevel, multi-modality and multispecies disclosed modes, advertise positively the enterprise with high social responsibility and high quality, promote new enterprises with the enterprise with advantages, and facilitate healthy development of food industry<sup>[6]</sup>.

The necessary law system relating to food safety is imperfect in China, which is the current status of our country and is one of the working priorities. The schedule about food safety of the state council explicitly demanded to enhance the construction of necessary law system in 2010. Every province has positively responded to the appeal of special provisions on safety supervision and management of food products of the state council, has formulated many necessary law systems and has positively promoted the implementation since 2010. For example, Shandong province published the opinion on strengthening supervision and management of food workshops and food vendors in 2011 and definite the responsibility of different departments. And Shandong province took the principles of supervising and guiding the food workshops to promote the development, and regulate various production, circulation, distribution and post-product recovery for guaranteeing food safety and life safety of the masses.

### C. *Perfecting the system of food safety standard*

Food safety not only relates to human health, but also has close relation with stable society and safe economy. Our country should positively learn from overseas experience to perfect food safety standard in our country.

Country, industry and region form American food safety standard which plays the role of reference in the world. And industrial standard formulated by civil society organizations such as AFIA has high authority. The process of formulating American food safety standard was public and transparent, and the public could freely inquire and read after it was released. And with the development of economy and society, American food safety standard is also in the revision.

### D. *Effective supervision of society and guidance of media*

News network media can set up reward system on the basis of concrete situations, encourage the audience and consumer to provide news clue relating to food safety and make exposure or tracking interview, and encourage the whole society to participate<sup>[7]</sup>. And the media should timely publish policies relating to food safety, promote the knowledge about food safety, and invite authorities in food safety or policy release organizations to solve the doubt or problems of the masses, and expose major typical cases which do serious damage to consumers.

With the progress of the society, our country has solved subsistence problem, said goodbye to economic times with inadequate food, and entered the stage of relative overproduction of various commodities such as food and clothes. In current times of economy developing rapidly, consumer has already only considered the price of commodities while buying various consumer products, and the factors such as the quality of commodity, the influence of the product on health have been the problem which is concerned most by the public. However, when the public choose commodities, they start from personal life experience and depend on the accumulated experience and common sense to judge if the commodity is good besides seeing the promotion and package of the commodity. Supervisor, CMS specialist and information collector can be set specially in community, streets and countryside, especially the absorption of rear personnel in charge of taking care of children, because they show more concern on food safety. Perfecting grass-roots supervision of our country has great significance in maintaining food health.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Food safety is not unique to China but is the problem that human face. Food safety has close relation with people's life and safety, and human is equal in front of life. Therefore, for the severe situation of food safety in our country, we must pay attention to the importance of food safety, clearly realize the status of ESR faced by food enterprise in our country, and enhance responsibility consciousness and safety consciousness of the entire industry. But this is a complicated social systems engineering. It not only needs the food enterprise to foster people-oriented concept, produce and operate safely, and clear that the lifelong mission is food safety, but also demands to fully play the function of government, consumer and non governmental organizations for promoting healthy development of the entire food industry and harmonious development of the society.

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