



Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada

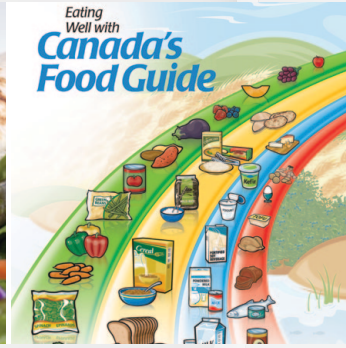
HEALTHY AND SAFE FOOD FOR CANADIANS FRAMEWORK



Nutrition Facts

Per 4 crackers (20 g)

Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 85	
Fat 2 g	3 %
Saturated 0.3 g	2 %
+ Trans 0 g	
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 90 mg	4 %
Carbohydrate 15 g	5 %
Fibre 3 g	12 %



www.healthycanadians.gc.ca

Canada

PROMOTION

**Helping consumers
make informed
choices for healthy
and safe food**

PREVENTION

**Maintaining strong
rules for the food
industry**

PROTECTION

**Identifying and
addressing food
safety risks**

© 2013 Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada
(Government of Canada), all rights reserved.

Use without permission is prohibited.

P0874-13

HEALTHY AND SAFE FOOD FOR CANADIANS FRAMEWORK

Whether shopping at a chain grocery store, a fish market, or a neighbourhood butcher, Canadians want to know the food they purchase for themselves or their families is safe, and they want to be able to **make informed decisions about healthy eating**.

Under the Minister of Health, the Government of Canada has brought together under one portfolio the three organizations that are responsible for meeting these expectations:

- **Health Canada** develops food safety and nutrition standards and policies, assesses food safety risks, and promotes healthy eating through initiatives like *Canada's Food Guide*.
- **The Canadian Food Inspection Agency**, guided by the Government's **Safe Food for Canadians Action Plan**, verifies that industry is meeting federal food safety and regulatory requirements, and sets standards to detect and prevent risks to Canada's food supply.

- **The Public Health Agency of Canada** conducts food-related illness surveillance and outbreak investigations, and provides advice to Canadians on how to protect themselves during an outbreak.

Aligning these three federal organizations under one minister ensures clear focus, strong partnerships and timely communication.

The **Healthy and Safe Food for Canadians Framework** illustrates how the Government is working to promote healthy and safe food choices to consumers, prevent food safety risks, and protect Canadians when unsafe products enter the marketplace.

PROMOTION

Helping consumers make informed choices for healthy and safe food

Canada's Food Guide — *Canada's Food Guide* is the most trusted source of nutrition information in Canada. Available in 12 languages, the *Guide* translates the science of nutrition and health into practical healthy eating advice so families can make healthy choices at home, at the grocery store, and when eating out.



Safe food handling guidance —

There are approximately 4 million cases of food-related illnesses in Canada every year. Many could be prevented by following four food handling practices - clean, separate, cook and chill.

While all Canadians can be affected by food-borne illness, adults aged 60 and over, pregnant women, children aged 5 and under, and people living with a compromised immune system are at greater risk of serious and even life-threatening complications. Being aware of food safety risks and the steps that Canadians can take to protect themselves and their family is very important.

The Government of Canada communicates safe food handling information through the Healthy Canadians website (healthycanadians.gc.ca), through public notices, food recall warnings, social media and investments to promote healthy living, including healthy eating.



Informative food labels — Labels found on most pre-packaged food and drinks give important information to help Canadians make healthy and safe choices.

Through Health Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the Government requires that food labels present mandatory nutrition information and are truthful and not misleading.

As part of the 2013 Speech from the Throne, the Government committed to consulting with Canadian parents to improve the way nutritional information is presented on food labels.



PREVENTION

Maintaining strong rules for the food industry

Stronger food safety regulations under the *Food and Drugs Act* —

Health Canada sets food safety and nutrition rules to protect Canadians. Recent changes to the *Food and Drugs Act* mean that Health Canada is now able to act faster to approve healthy and safe food additives to address health and safety concerns.

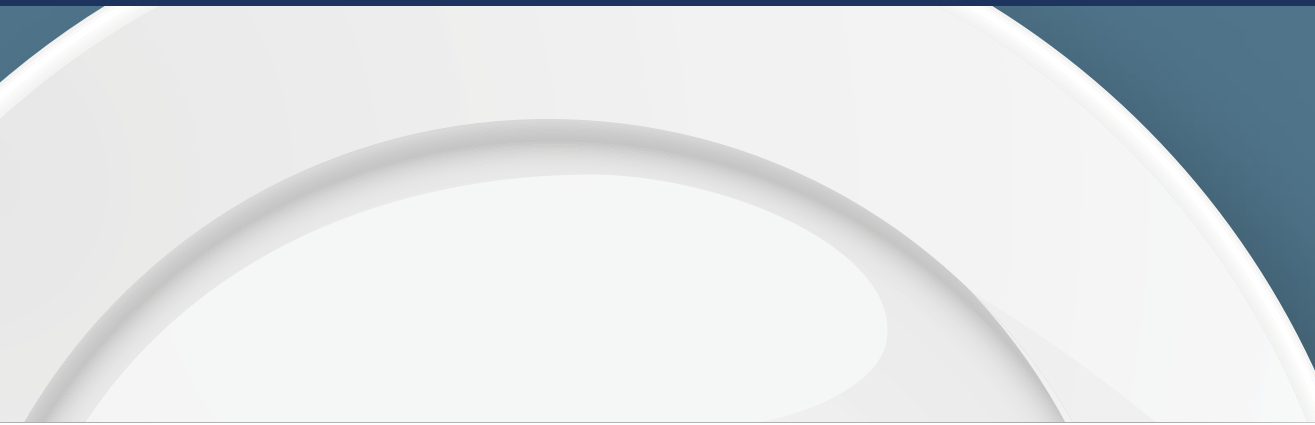
***Safe Food for Canadians Act* —** The Government recently passed the *Safe Food for Canadians Act* to make Canada's food system safer and stronger for consumers. The new Act focuses on three important areas to better protect Canadians: guarding against food tampering, deceptive practices and hoaxes; stronger regulations that will allow the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to track food through all stages of preparation and distribution more effectively; and improved controls that hold importers accountable for the foods that they bring into the country. The Agency is working with consumer groups and industry to bring the Act into force.

Enhanced controls for pathogens such as *E. coli* and *Listeria* —

The Government recently enhanced federal regulations to reduce the risks posed by *E. coli* and *Listeria*.

Controls and testing requirements for *E. coli* in meat plants producing raw beef have been strengthened. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is also increasing testing and oversight to further minimize the risk of potentially unsafe meat products entering the marketplace.

The Government has developed targeted awareness campaigns about listeriosis aimed at high-risk and vulnerable populations, is monitoring and testing more food products, and is introducing tests to identify *Listeria* more quickly at food laboratories around the country.



Minimizing food safety risk — Work is underway to more effectively verify that industry is meeting Canada’s stringent food safety requirements.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is developing a more systematic and risk-based inspection approach to oversee foods, particularly those that pose the greatest risk for consumers. No matter where they are working, food inspectors will inspect food consistently. The Agency is making sure that its inspectors have modern tools and even better training so they can better identify unsafe products and practices as well as more effectively enforce stronger food regulations. Concurrently, the Agency is modernizing science facilities and equipment and increasing testing capacity at its food laboratories.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is also working on new food regulations that would require food manufacturers and processors to be licensed and use recognized preventive control plans. Regulatory guidance and advice will be provided to industry and inspectors through 16 centres of expertise across the country.

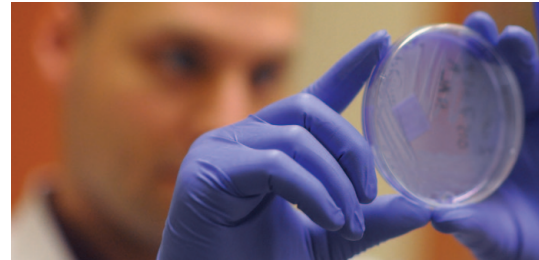
Surveillance for prevention — The Public Health Agency of Canada coordinates FoodNet Canada, a surveillance system that collects detailed information about food-borne illness in Canadians and traces those illnesses back to their sources. This helps governments, industry and other food safety partners prioritize risks, measure the effectiveness of food safety activities, and review measures to prevent diseases from occurring.

PROTECTION

Identifying and addressing food safety risks

National illness surveillance — The Public Health Agency of Canada leads several national surveillance systems and networks to track food-borne illnesses, help identify and respond to outbreaks and inform public health planning among all partners. Two of these systems include:

- The National Enteric Surveillance Program which flags unusual increases in illnesses and helps identify trends and detect potential outbreaks early, and
- PulseNet Canada, a national web-based network that links most federal, provincial and territorial public health laboratories with those at the Public Health Agency of Canada, to share and compare the genetic “fingerprints” of bacteria during routine surveillance and outbreaks.



Testing for contaminants and other chemicals — Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada labs have a 24/7 capacity to track food safety hazards like *Listeria* and *E. coli*. They also monitor chemical levels found in foods to make sure they remain within acceptable levels.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency regularly samples and tests food for high-risk pathogens such as *E. coli*, *Listeria*, and *Salmonella*. It also tests for residues of veterinary drugs, agricultural chemicals, metals and contaminants and reports its findings to Canadians. If levels pose a health risk to Canadians, the Agency takes immediate action to ensure products are seized or recalled.



Food safety investigations and recalls — When dealing with potentially unsafe food, the Health Portfolio acts as quickly as possible to collect information and make decisions.

Once potentially unsafe food is identified, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency immediately advises the public and verifies that industry has removed the recalled products from store shelves. Approximately 3,000 food safety investigations happen each year resulting in nearly 250 food recalls. The Agency posts food recall warnings online and distributes them via media and social media.

Based on feedback from consumers, the Agency has recently made changes to the way it alerts Canadians about food that might cause serious health consequences. Food recall warnings are now easier to understand and include information on what triggered the recall and what consumers should do with recalled products.

When an outbreak of food-borne illness involves more than one province or another country, the Public Health Agency of Canada leads the investigation and co-ordinates information-sharing between federal and provincial/territorial ministries of health. Outbreak Central, a web-based application, allows partners across Canada to share results of outbreak investigations. The Agency also issues Public Health Notices and uses the media and social media to communicate about outbreaks that pose a risk and provides advice on how to protect from infection. It also maintains regular contact with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States to share information about outbreaks that might cross borders.

COMMITTED TO WORKING TOGETHER FOR CANADIANS

These activities highlight some of the examples of how the Government of Canada **promotes healthy eating, prevents food safety risks, and protects Canadians from unsafe food.**

Together, the three organizations that make up the Health Portfolio are committed to keeping Canadians informed of the work the Government is doing on their behalf.

For additional information on healthy and safe food, please:

- Visit the Healthy Canadians website at www.healthycanadians.gc.ca
- Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/HealthyCanadians
- Follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/CFIA_Food
- Sign up for food recall warnings and allergy alerts at www.inspection.gc.ca/recalls
- Refer to Canada's Food Guide at www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php

