



# Korean Imported Food Safety Control and Inspection System



Ministry of Food and  
Drug Safety



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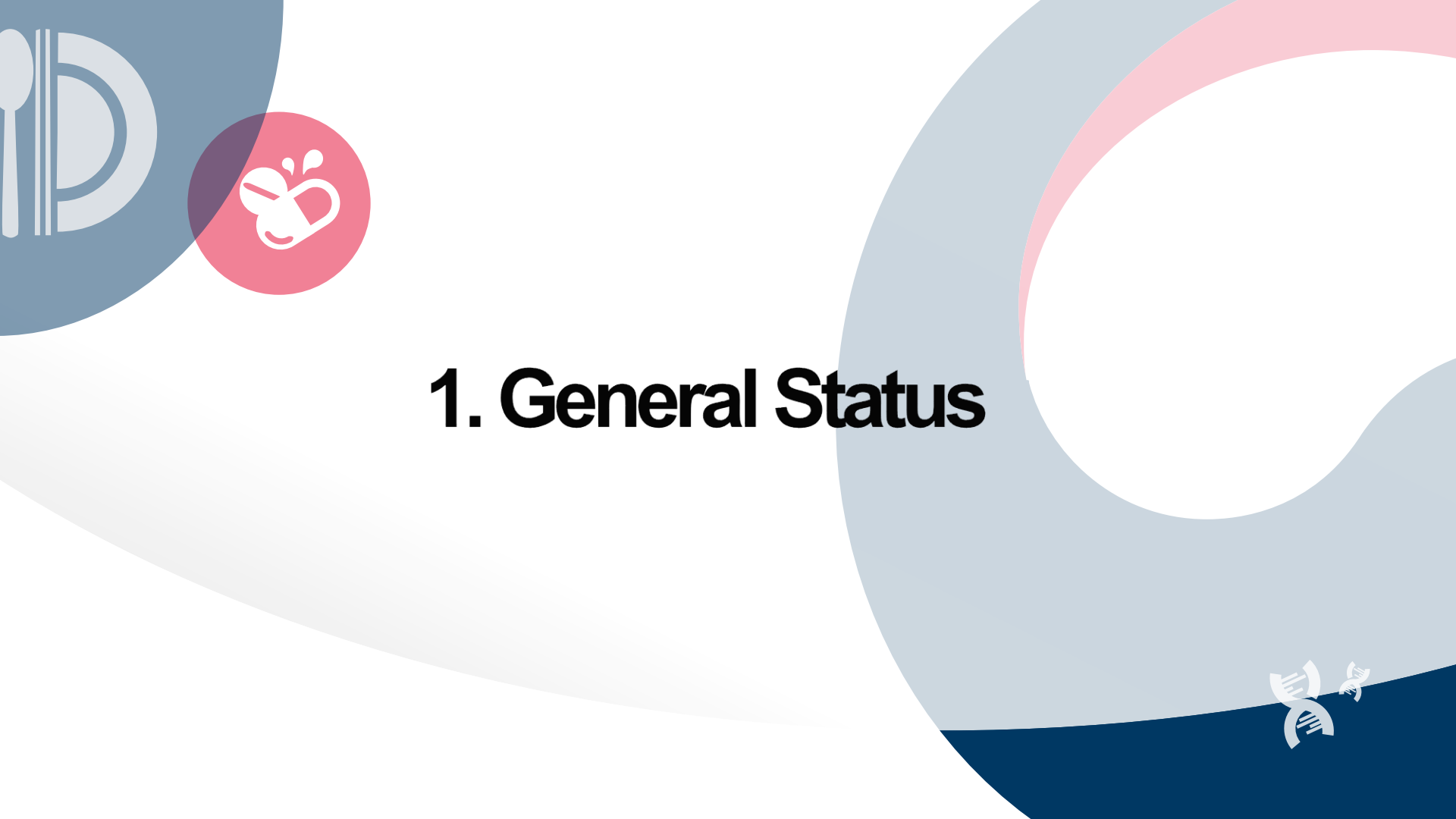
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# 1. General Status

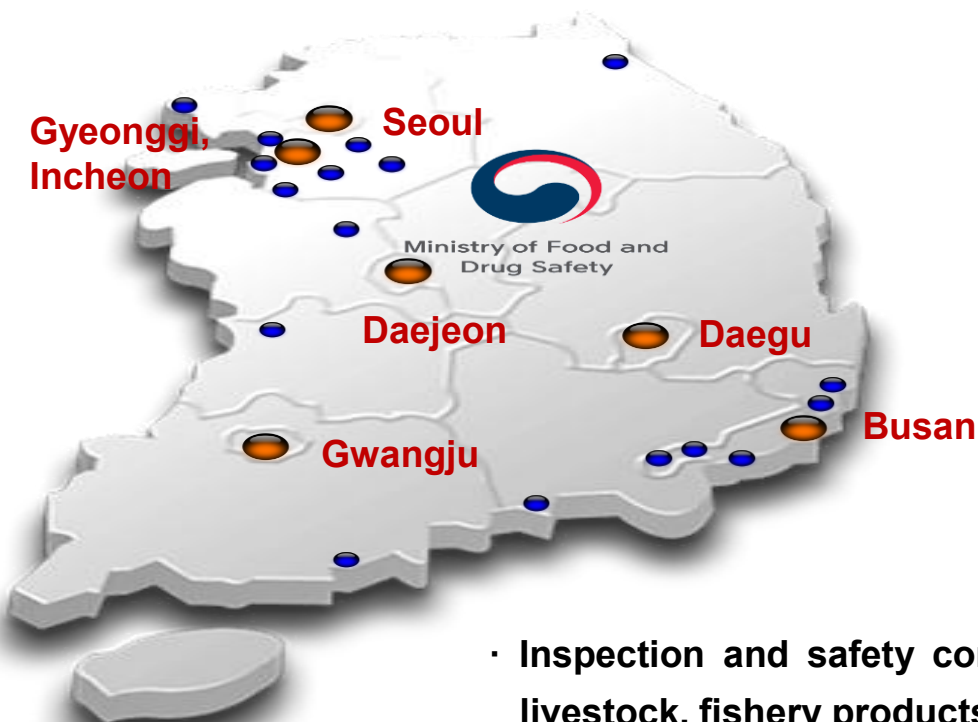


# Organization of Imported Food Safety Control in MFDS



# Structure for Imported Food Safety Control in MFDS

## Regional Offices and Imported Food Inspection Centers



6 Regional Offices

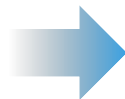
17 Imported Food Inspection Centers

- Inspection and safety control of imported food, agricultural, livestock, fishery products and processed food

**Purpose** to ensure the safety of imported foods, advance quality, deliver precise information, and support fair trade practices and public health improvement.

**Previous Law(divided into 4)**

- ✓ Food Sanitation Act
- ✓ Livestock Products Sanitary Control Act
- ✓ Health Functional Foods Act
- ✓ Act on Prevention of Livestock Epidemics



**Special Act**

- ✓ Unify administrative procedures for imported food and improve efficiency
- ✓ Civil complaint handled with more convenience

**Existing Law**

- ✓ Inspection centered on customs clearance phases



**Special Act**

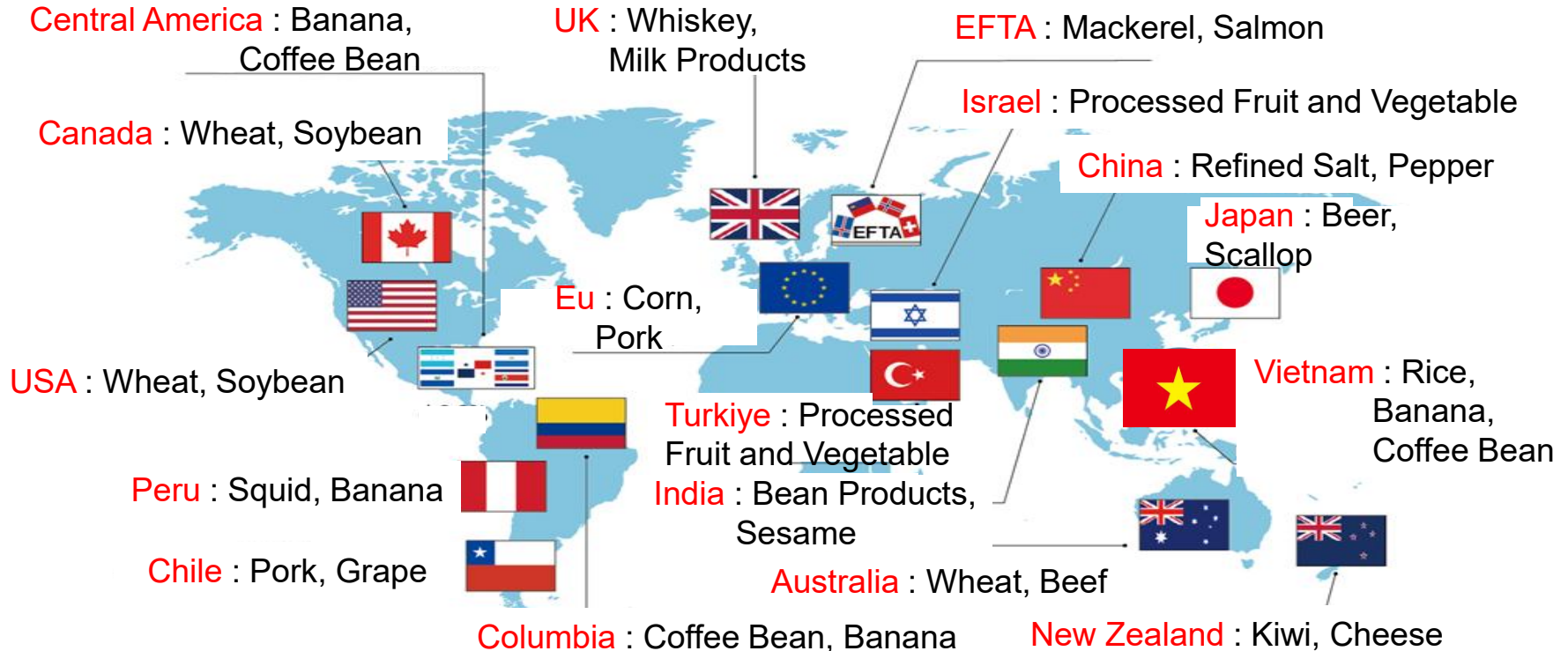
- ✓ pre-import phases
- ✓ customs clearance phases
- ✓ distribution phases

# Items Subject to Import Declaration

- **(Food)** All kinds of food including agricultural and fishery products
- **(Food additives)** Materials used in food for sweetening and coloring, etc. in the process of manufacturing, processing or preserving food
- **(Food utensils)** Utensils used for eating or containing food, which come into direct contact with food or food additives
- **(Containers and packages)** Items containing or packing food or food additives
- **(Health functional food)** Food manufactured or processed using raw materials or ingredients that are useful for the human body
- **(Livestock products)** Meat, raw milk, edible eggs and processed livestock products using them, etc.

# Status on Imported Food

As of **2023**, Korea imports food products from **165 countries**.  
(**Weight of Imported Food : 18,382,546 ton**)





## Import Declaration-Inspection in 2023 (792,374 cases)

	Processed Food	Health Functional Food	Food Additives	Food Utensils, Containers, and Packages	Agricultural Products	Livestock Products	Fishery Products
Import Declaration Case	311,888	12,462	38,419	151,106	72,062	122,241	84,196
Non-compliance Case	665	75	29	260	265	41	31
Non-compliance Ratio (%)	0.21	0.60	0.08	0.17	0.37	0.03	0.04



## **2. Key Policies for Imported Food Safety Management**



# Safety Control System for Imported Food

## Prior to Importation

- Registration of a foreign food facility
- On-site inspection of foreign food facility
- Registration of Good Importers
- Designation of an institution for sanitation of overseas food
- Import Sanitation Assessment for Livestock Products
- Registration of foreign establishments, etc.
- Revocation of registration of foreign establishments, etc.

## Customs Clearance

- Import declaration, etc.
- Import inspections, etc.
- Inspection orders

## Distribution Stage

- Traceability of imported food
- Development and execution of distribution management plan
- Access, inspections, and collection
- Order to take training course

**Triple Safety System**

**Establishing a more strengthened imported food safety control system**

# Registration of Foreign Food Facilities

- ✓ A person who intends to import food, etc. into the Republic of Korea or person who establishes and operates a foreign food facility\* **shall register matters** such as the name and location of, and items manufactured by the foreign food facility concerned, with the Minister of Food and Drug Safety before he or she files an import declaration.

\* Foreign food facility: a facility located abroad (including a ship where fishery products are produced or processed) where imported food, etc. (excluding livestock products) is produced, manufactured, processed, treated, packaged, stored, etc

- ✓ **The registration validity is 2 years, with the option to extend within the 2-year range.**

→ (Reject) Where the importer, etc. has failed to register such matters or registers them **by fraud or other improper means.**

# On-Site Inspection on Overseas Establishments

- ✓ **An on-site inspection on an overseas establishment may be conducted through prior consultation with the government of an exporting country or an overseas establishment**
  1. Where an on-site inspection **deems necessary to prevent hazards in imported food, etc.**
  2. Where the Minister of Food and Drug Safety deems that it is necessary to confirm facts about safety information on imported food, etc. collected at home and abroad
- ✓ **Where an on-site inspection is refused, interfered with or evaded (including where no answer is made without good cause), or where imported food, etc. is likely to cause hazards according to the result of on-site inspection but not having implemented corrective measure and measures to prevent a re-occurrence, measures to suspend import of food from the overseas establishment may be taken.**

# HACCP Certification System

- A certification system for foreign manufacturers (excluding livestock) using HACCP to manage hazards and ensure safe food import under Import Food Safety Management Standards.

- **Target and enforcement date**

- \*(Voluntary) Target: Overseas manufacturing establishments seeking HACCP certification, enforcement date: '21.7.1

- \*(Mandatory) Target: Overseas cabbage kimchi manufacturing establishments

- Enforcement date:

- (2021) Import volume of 10,000 tons or more → (2022) Import volume of 5,000 tons or more

- (2023) Import volume of 1,000 tons or more → (2024) All cabbage kimchi manufacturing establishments

# Outstanding Importer System

- **Registration is available for operators who inspect the hygiene management of overseas manufacturers according to the Minister of Food and Drug Safety's standards (at least once a year)**

- (Applicable Foods) Food, food additives, equipment and containers/packaging, health supplements, and meat products.

- \* Excluding primary production items like agricultural, forestry, and fishery products, as well as meat, raw milk, edible eggs, and packaged meats.

- (Required Documents) Details about the registered products, hygiene management inspection reports from overseas facilities, and registration documents for foreign manufacturers.

- \* For health functional foods: Information on the type and name, manufacturing and processing methods, and ingredient names and ratios used

- **Registration is valid for 3 years and can be extended within this 3-year timeframe**

## ※ Preferential actions for registered products include

- Listing the names and locations of top importers on the official website
- Permitting the display of the excellent importer logo on packaging
- Exempting products with proven safety over time from certain documentation and on-site inspections

# Registration and Revocation of Foreign Establishments

✓ **A foreign establishment\* registered may request to the Minister of Food and Drug Safety(MFDS) before the import declaration via the government of an exporting country**

- An on-site inspection of the registered foreign food establishment may be conducted in order to examine and verify the registration.

\* International facilities responsible for slaughtering, milking, manufacturing, processing, and storing livestock products to be imported

✓ **Requesting the government of an exporting country to **make corrections or suspending the importation** of livestock products **or revoking the registration** of the foreign establishment**

- Where the foreign establishment is registered by fraud or other improper means
- Where the foreign establishment has failed to register modifications
- Where an on-site inspection is refused or it is deemed inappropriate based on the result of on-site inspection, etc.



# Import Sanitation Assessment

## Livestock Products

- ✓ **Conducting an import sanitation assessment on the actual sanitation control status of livestock products of the exporting country for each livestock product and the requirements for import sanitation for each exporting country or each livestock product will be publicly notified according to the results of import sanitation assessments**
  - 1. Where the government of an exporting country requests Korea to permit the importation;
  - 2. Where reassessment on the sanitary control of the exporting country is deemed necessary according to changes, etc. in international standards of the Codex
- **The importation of livestock products shall be limited to countries or regions where the import sanitation requirements are notified.**
- **A health certificate for export issued by the government of an exporting country according to the form on which it has consulted with Minister of the MFDS should be attached.**

# Import Sanitation Assessment

## Food Subject to Special Sanitation Control

- ✓ **An audit of the actual sanitation control status, etc. in the exporting country may be conducted for food subject to special sanitation(fishery by-products) control which is not controlled for human consumption in an exporting country**
  - Heads of fish, intestines of fish and mollusks
- ✓ **Import of food subject to special sanitation control can be imported only when the import sanitation assessment result is appropriate.**
  - Attaching a health certificate for export upon import
- ✓ **Those who install and operate foreign food establishments for food subject to special sanitation control shall register the foreign food facility with the minister of MFDS via the government of an exporting country.**

# Registration of Import Food & Related Products Business

## Import and sales business of imported food, etc.

- Business of importing and selling imported foods, etc.

Import  
declaration

Reporting  
agency

## Imported food, etc. reporting agency business

- Business that handles import declaration processes for importers and distributors of imported foods and related items.

- Business that imports imported foods and similar products by purchasing on behalf of consumers from overseas cyber malls and other sources.

Purchasing  
agency

Storage  
facility

- Storage business for imported foods and products that require import declaration

## Online buying service for imported foods and related products

Storage services for imported foods and similar items.

- ✓ **"Anyone wishing to conduct the above business must register with the MFDS.**
- ✓ **Before registering, a 4-hour training is required, and 3 hours of refresher training must be completed each year.**



### **3. Korean Imported Food Inspection System**



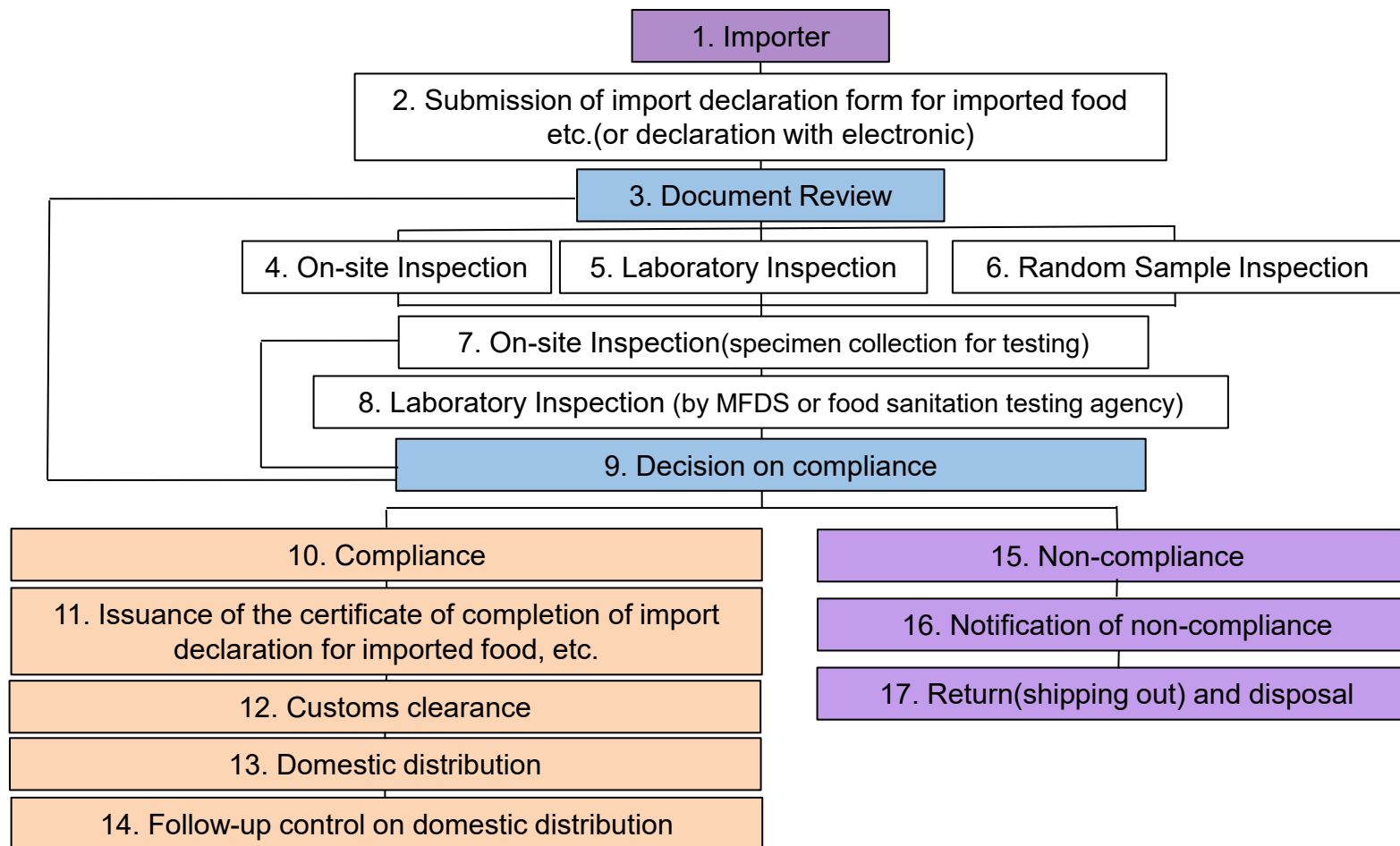
# Import Declaration

- **Business operators must declare imported foods and related products for import if they intend to use them for sale or business purposes**
- Required inspections by authorities or inspection agencies before customs clearance is finalized

## <Prohibited Activities>

- ✓ Making import declarations using false or fraudulent methods
- ✓ Using or selling products for different purposes than those declared
- ✓ Re-importing products that have been deemed non-compliant
- ✓ Importing products that violate standards and specifications

# Inspection Procedures for Imported Food, etc.



# Inspection Procedures for Imported Food, etc.

## Document Review (2 days)

- Inspection to review submitted documents to determine their suitability
- Target :
  - Acquisition of foreign currency (excluding tourism)
  - Raw materials for manufacturing its own products
  - Products for research and investigation
  - Same imported food from the same company, etc.

Import declaration received

Review of import declaration

Classification of type(item code)  
of food, etc.

Identification of the same food  
in the same company and  
non-conformity history, etc.

Screening by inspection type

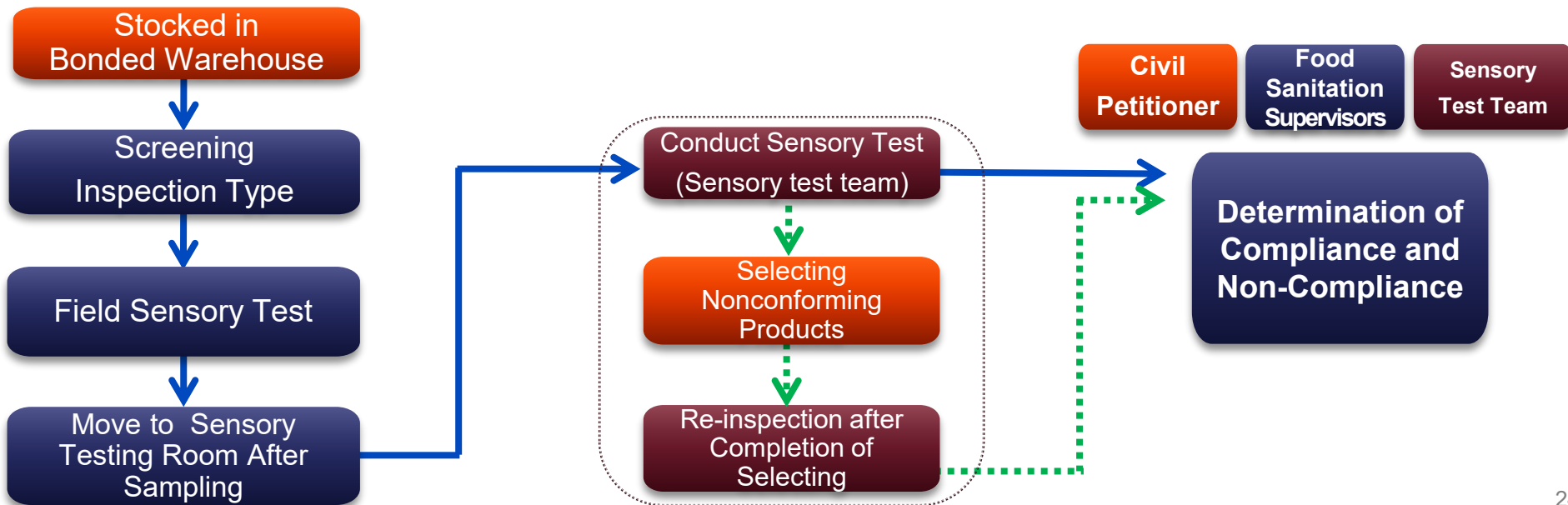
Determination of suitability for  
document inspection

Issuance of import declaration  
confirmation certificate

# Inspection Procedures for Imported Food, etc.

## On-site Inspection (3days)

- Inspection to determine suitability by combining the property, taste, condition, odor, color, labelling, packaging condition and inspection history of the product
  - \* By **Sensory test team**(Sensory test team leader and inspector)
- **Target : Agricultural and forestry products** that have not established standards and specifications, and **imported food** that on-site inspection is necessary among the products for document review.





# Inspection Procedures for Imported Food, etc.

**Laboratory  
Inspection  
(10 days)**

- **Target: Products imported for the first time, food for which issues have been raised domestically and internationally, imported food with a history of non-compliance, etc.**

- **Tests performed by physical, chemical, and microbiological methods**

**Random  
Inspection  
(5 days)**

- **Target: Food samples extracted according to a random sampling plan among food subject to document and sensory tests, etc.**

# Imported Food Inspection Order System

- **The Minister of Food and Drug Safety may order importers to have their products tested by designated inspection agencies if:**
  1. Harmful substances identified by the Minister are found in imported foods, either in the country or abroad.
  2. Imported foods consistently fail inspection or entry processes.
  3. There are concerns about potential hazards for imported foods, raised domestically or international

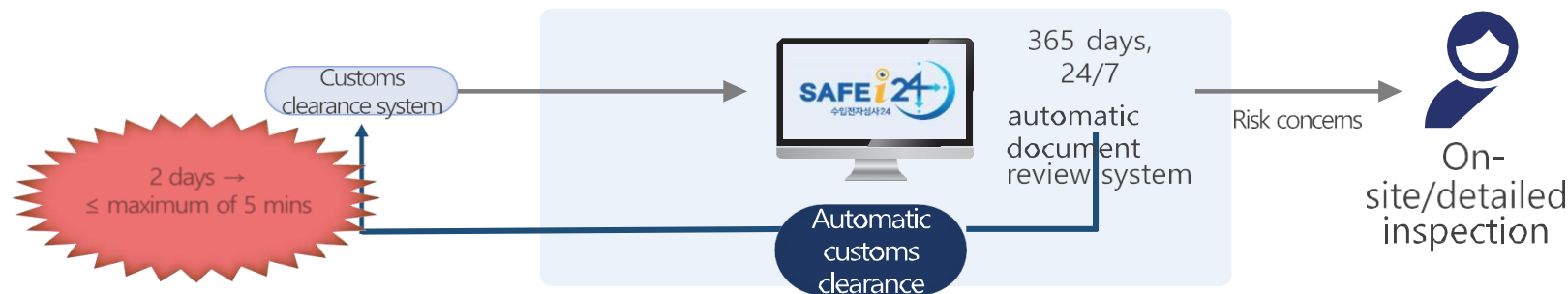
- **In the event of issues with imported foods, businesses are required to track distribution history to determine the cause and implement necessary measures**
  - (Target Foods) Infant foods, health supplements (with sales over 100 million KRW), formulated milk powders, foods for pregnant and breastfeeding women, and imported foods applying for distribution history tracking registration
  - (Registration Details) Business name and address, product names, country of manufacture or production, and overseas manufacturing sites (workplaces)

- Transition of import declaration document review at customs office from manual format (done by inspectors) to digitalized format

❖ SAFE-i 24 : Smart, Automatic, Fast, Evaluation Import inspection System that operates 24/7, 365 days a year Automatic review of import declaration details and categorization of inspection types by applying

❖ rule-based inspection algorithm

- Automatic review of 261 categories such as whether prohibited substances were used, Korean labelling requirements, whether there is a non-compliance history



- ❖ The 1<sup>st</sup> domestic government agency that operates its administrative measures (automatic measures) through a fully automatic system

# e-Cert (Electronic Health Certificates for Livestock and fishery products)



What is  
Health  
Certificate?

In cases of livestock and fishery products with mutually agreed sanitary conditions between the countries, the exporting country will **issue health certificate to ensure the safety of each exporting product**

\* Target : (livestock products) All 63 exporting countries, (fishery products) 10 arranged countries



What is  
Electronic  
Certificate?

**Submission of paper certificate** at the time of import declaration  
⇒ **Exchange of Electronic Data** through a system established between the countries



Expected  
Benefits

- ① Reduce carbon emissions,
- ② Increase in trust in the certificates between the countries,
- ③ Reduce in cost for businesses

✓ **Applied Countries**

- . (Livestock products) Australia, Chile, Thailand, Brazil, New Zealand
- . (Fishery products) Chile, Philippines, Norway, Russia, Peru

✓ **Countries in Process**

- . (Livestock products) EU, USA
- . (Fishery products) Thailand, Vietnam

✓ **To be... (e-Cert Ratio of Total Import Declaration Cases)**

Imported FoodI	~'23	'24	'25	'26	'27	'28
Livestock products	25%	37%	68%	92%	96%	97%
	Australia, Chile, Thailand	Brazil, New Zealand	USA	EU	Canada	Mexico
Fishery products	21%	28%	35%	76%	77%	92%
	Chile, Philippines, Norway	Russia	Peru, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia	China, Australia, Spain, Argentina, Ecuador	Taiwan, India, Uruguay	USA, Canada, Japan

# Support for Exported Food

## Main Task

- ☑ **Guide** to the other country's **system** in relation to **livestock products** and **support for food exports** such as **sanitary inspection and consulting at workplaces**

\* Exportable countries / 11 countries / 469 places // (main export item) Samgyetang, infant formula, etc.

- ☑ Performing **trade pending issues** such as WTO SPS and **cooperation in food safety control** among countries


\* Reflection internal norms from international norms against changes in the trade environment (equivalence evaluation), policy explanations, etc.

## Major Export Status

- ☑ **(United States)** Heat-treated processed poultry products (2014~)
- ☑ **(China)** Heat-treated processed poultry products(2013~) and dairy products (2016~)
- ☑ **(Singapore)** Processed poultry products and processed pork products (2020~)
- ☑ **(Malaysia)** Dairy products (2015~)
- ☑ **(Japan)** Heat-treated processed meat (poultry and pork) products (2018)
- ☑ **(Vietnam)** Poultry (2010~)
- ☑ **(Canada)** **Processed beef** (containing more than 2% of beef) **products** (2023.4~)
- ☑ **(EU)** Heat-treated processed poultry products (2012.12~)

# Imported Food Information Site

http://www.impfood.mfds.go.kr



수입식품정보마루  
Imported Food Information Maru

전자민원

알림자료

안전정보

통계정보

고객지원

☰ 🔍

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1 해외제조업소 조회

2 위치포

3 수입식품검사결과

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NEW

NEW



# Thank You!



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