Safe Food Production Queensland

# Business Plan and Implementation Strategy 2022-2023

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# AGENCY OVERVIEW

Safe Food is established under the *Food Production (Safety) Act 2000*. It is a statutory body, reporting to the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries.

Safe Food is a unit of public administration under the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001* and a statutory body under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and *Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982*.

## OBJECTIVES

Safe Food's objectives, outlined in the *Food Production (Safety) Act 2000*, are to:

- ensure that the production of primary produce is carried out in a way that makes produce fit for human or animal consumption and maintains food quality
- provide for food safety measures for the production of primary produce consistent with other State laws relating to food safety.

Safe Food is also responsible for the development of regulations (food safety schemes) for food safety for primary production sectors. These food safety schemes establish controls for food safety risks in sectors where the level of risk warrants the introduction of legislative controls.

Safe Food also administers voluntary food safety arrangements under national standards and codes of practice that are not yet compulsory under food safety legislation.

In conjunction with its co-regulatory partners, Queensland Health and the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), Safe Food plays a role in responding to food safety incidents and recalls in areas of primary production and processing.

## ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Safe Food is subject to the provisions of the *Food Production (Safety) Act 2000*, is obliged to be independent in the exercise of its functions.  Safe Food has a five-person Board consisting of three independent members with expertise in various fields appointed by the Governor in Council, along with representatives of the Chief Executives of Queensland Health and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The governance structure of Safe Food comprises the following:

- the Minister
- the Board
- the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Safe Food has 35 full time equivalent (FTE) staff. The CEO is employed by contract under the Act and appointed by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Board.

> Safe Food is committed to providing the community as well as our strategic partners with the confidence that Queensland's food supply chain will deliver quality product to both domestic and global markets.
>
> As the State regulator, Safe Food's regulatory activity is harmonised with national and international standards giving Queensland a strong platform for trade and for consumer protection.

# Strategic Plan 2020-2023

| | Strategic priorities | Key deliverables |
|---|---|---|
| **Expand our positive influence and impact** | Understand emerging best practice and drive changed behaviour across the whole food industry landscape | • Establish the future Safe Food Queensland Business Model<br>• Continue to lead the establishment of a horticulture program for Queensland<br>• Design and pilot the Safe Food Data Hub and supporting resources. |
| **Lead the way in regulation innovation** | Work with industry to help develop agency best practice and provide guidance in regulation | • Develop a 5 to 10 year landscape analysis<br>• Develop a cross-agency collaboration model for food regulation in Queensland<br>• Develop and commence implementation of a range of priority strategies including regulatory, compliance and enforcement and digital strategy. |
| **Transform our corporate capabilities** | Ensure we have the right systems, processes, capacity and capability to realise our vision and fulfil our purpose | • Design and commence a Workforce Strategy and annual workforce plans<br>• Expand the Learning Management System<br>• Develop and commence the implementation of the ICT Strategy. |
| **Strengthen our scientific contribution** | Influence national and international food safety practices through rigorous scientific contribution in the niche domain of safe food production | • Develop and publish an Applied Science Strategy<br>• Establish the Safe Food Queensland Industry Science Partnership Program<br>• Establish the Safe Food Queensland University Partnership Program |

## Our vision

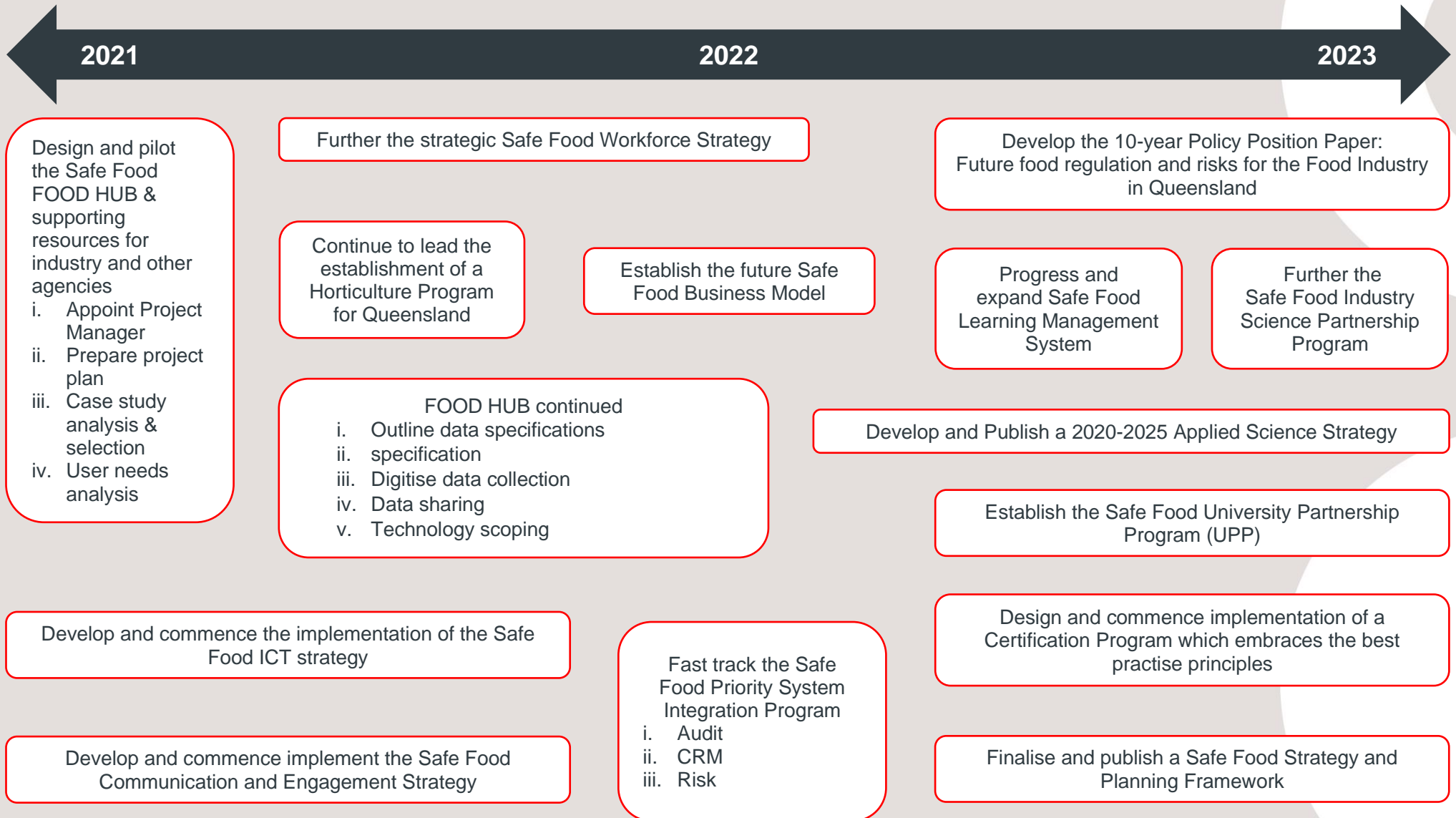to be the trusted authority for food safety in Queensland

## Our values

accountability, respect, integrity and creativity.

## Our purpose

to provide confidence that food produced in Queensland is safe; through innovative and effective regulation which supports industry growth.

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## A STRATEGIC ROADMAP – FUTURE VISIONING AND PATHWAY MOVING FORWARD

**2021**　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　**2022**　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　**2023**

Design and pilot the Safe Food FOOD HUB & supporting resources for industry and other agencies
i. Appoint Project Manager
ii. Prepare project plan
iii. Case study analysis & selection
iv. User needs analysis

Further the strategic Safe Food Workforce Strategy

Develop the 10-year Policy Position Paper: Future food regulation and risks for the Food Industry in Queensland

Continue to lead the establishment of a Horticulture Program for Queensland

Establish the future Safe Food Business Model

Progress and expand Safe Food Learning Management System

Further the Safe Food Industry Science Partnership Program

FOOD HUB continued
i. Outline data specifications
ii. specification
iii. Digitise data collection
iv. Data sharing
v. Technology scoping

Develop and Publish a 2020-2025 Applied Science Strategy

Establish the Safe Food University Partnership Program (UPP)

Develop and commence the implementation of the Safe Food ICT strategy

Design and commence implementation of a Certification Program which embraces the best practise principles

Fast track the Safe Food Priority System Integration Program
i. Audit
ii. CRM
iii. Risk

Develop and commence implement the Safe Food Communication and Engagement Strategy

Finalise and publish a Safe Food Strategy and Planning Framework

# HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS (KPIs)

## PRIORITY 1
### Expanding our positive influence and impact

- Increased awareness and recognition of Safe Food's brand and contribution to the food safety agenda
- Best practice guidance on food safety requirements for the horticulture industry
- A communication strategy to engage with the horticulture industry of Queensland to understand the risks to food safety and any existing risk management systems
- Identification of emerging risks and new trends in food safety technology

## PRIORITY 2
### Leading the way in regulation innovation

- Advances in data and analytics and behavioural economics to ensure high rates of compliance and a culture of food safety across the State
- Stronger and more collaborative relationships between Safe Food and other government agencies regarding role and responsibilities to achieve food safety
- Greater client engagement and satisfaction with services provided by Safe Food
- An accreditation information pack to assist persons or businesses considering commencing activities

## PRIORITY 3
### Transform our corporate capability

- A bespoke workforce strategy and plan that ensures there are the right people for the right roles
- Increased number of clients utilising the Safe Food online learning management system
- Greater stakeholder engagement and collaboration between Safe Food and industry
- Website usability and mobile friendly (responsive)

## PRIORITY 4
### Strengthening our scientific contribution

- An increase in scientific data-driven decision-making throughout the agency
- Innovative solution to improve operational delivery model implement
- Better partnerships and collaboration with Universities

## FOCUS STRATEGIC PROJECTS FOR 2021-2022

# Food Hub – The digital future of Safe Food

**BACKGROUND**

Under the *Food Production (Safety) Act 2000* Safe Food Production Queensland (Safe Food) has the capacity to develop and implement alternative compliance arrangements that improve food safety performance and lessen the regulatory burden on accreditation holders.

To date, Safe Food has successfully entered alternative arrangements with accreditation holders in several industry sectors across meat, dairy, eggs, seafood and horticulture (seed sprouts). The development of these compliance monitoring arrangements was based on a partnership approach with representatives from small, medium, and large businesses across each industry sector.

Through our engagement with the different industry sectors, Safe Food established standard operating procedures that reflected best practice and agreed on non-regulatory performance targets through-chain where information already collected by the business could be shared. Business profiles and microbial baseline surveys were undertaken to validate the nominated key performance targets were effective in reducing the prevalence of foodborne pathogens through-chain.

The performance of each businesses food safety system was monitored against the industry agreed targets using information sharing arrangements at defined intervals. As part of this collaborative approach, Safe Food also partnered with industry to develop a response framework, for responding to alerts when their production systems deviated from expected performance targets.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE**

One of the current challenges using this approach is that the various monitoring tools and operating systems used by Safe Food to manage accreditations and shared information are not fully integrated. This means the method of data collection and information touch points for system users are not seamless, and there is a manual requirement to scan and analyse business information and provide reports back to accreditation holders. This ties up both Safe Food and industry resources and slows response to new or emerging areas of food safety risk.

The existing operating systems also do not give accreditation holders access to all their information collected by Safe Food that would assist them in making informed decisions about managing their ongoing compliance. By having access to actionable customised data and reporting capability in near real time will be critical particularly too small to medium businesses with limited resources. It will help them increase their capability to better manage food safety risks, and also to keep up with the market influences and remain viable.

Opportunities will also exist under this program of work to use other information collected by other government agencies, which may impact on the business's operations (e.g. public health alerts, weather events, foodborne illness data, animal health alerts, as well as information relating to supply chain disruptions to essential inputs).

While we do have some operating systems in place which are quite mature – there is large variation in the digital maturity internally and across industry. By upgrading our CRM software and moving all this information into one hub – accreditation holders will be able to view their own information, (e.g. notifications, alerts and data) and see de-identified data to allow comparison and performance benchmarking.

**STRATEGIC OUTCOMES**

The Food Hub will allow for greater coordination of the systems used to monitor food safety performance across industry. The Food Hub will optimise opportunities to use data sharing arrangements to improve the delivery of regulatory services and improve food safety performance through better analysis of shared data.

# Horticulture Program for Queensland

**BACKGROUND**  As requested from the Minister for Agriculture Industry Development and Fisheries and Minster for Rural Communities, Safe Food is investigating developing an alternate best practice regulatory models across all horticulture, this project will review the current approach as it applies to horticulture and provide a through chain best practice solution to reduce food safety risks.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE**  The aim of the Ministerial Horticulture Project Working Group ('the Working Group') is to propose a best practice solution to effectively manage food safety risks in horticulture along the supply chain that minimises the impost on both industry participants and government agencies.

Under the current regulatory framework for food safety, risks are managed by industry sector and on an individual business basis. This approach does not sufficiently recognise the benefits of a through-chain systems approach to food safety management.

Deliverables through the completion of this project include:

- gain an understanding of the current operating, commercial and regulatory environment for the industry, including industry/third party schemes and programs. This will include documenting and mapping the current landscape based on a stocktake of government initiatives and legislative frameworks relevant to horticulture, a stocktake of non-government initiatives and schemes
- review of current models and approaches
- explore alternative best practice regulatory models
- explore the potential to consolidate business compliance reporting against a range for matters beyond food safety, and
- design a practical approach/model for the industry that drives best practice through the whole supply chain.

**STRATEGIC OUTCOMES**

We will understand the supply chain of horticulture, including regulatory schemes which influence production systems and regulatory and volunteer systems (such as industry schemes, commercial arrangements and export arrangements) in place to mitigate against food safety risks. From this understanding of the current environment a practical model/s will be completed that drives best practice for industry and the whole supply chain.

## STRATEGY ACTIVATION

### Design and pilot the Safe Food Data Hub and
### Supporting resources for industry and other agencies

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| **August 2021** | Recruit and appoint Safe Food Hub project manager and Project Manager, Digital Strategy. |
| **September 2021** | Prepare project plan. |
| **October 2021** | Case study group analysis and selection.<br><br>Evaluate and select three industries representative of Queensland's food supply chains to pilot the data monitoring approach:<br>   a.  Developing food supply chain<br>   b.  Advanced food supply chain<br>   c.  Aggregated food supply chain<br><br>From each of the three selected industries, the project will identify businesses to participate in the case study (the "case study group"), creating a total of 3 case study groups (The number of businesses selected for participation within the case study group will vary depending on the size of the industry, the availability of businesses to participate and project resources.)<br><br>Government regulators from BQ and DES, who regulate and require data from the case study group will be invited to participate ("case study regulators"). |
| **December 2021** | Conduct user needs Analysis.<br><br>Conduct research on the users of the proposed data monitoring model, including users of the external portal, data analytics tool and dashboards. This research will determine the users' underlying needs and requirements from the model, to inform the design of the solution. |
| **March 2022** | Outline data specification.<br><br>Agree the data needed to demonstrate compliance with regulatory requirements. Liaise with the case study group, Safe Food Science & FIRST Teams and other participating regulatory agencies |
| **April 2022** | Digitise data collection.<br><br>a.  Identify and implement a suitable method to digitise the collection of data from the case study group, for example, via an app, spreadsheet upload, automated interface/API<br>b.  The project will meet both separately and jointly with each case study group and the case study regulators, to agree the data to collect and collection method (e.g. via app, spreadsheet upload, or automated interface). The project will identify and navigate any legal and regulatory issues impeding the collection and sharing of data, including privacy and security, creating a formal data-sharing process that utilises the proposed external client portal. The project will then implement the agreed collection and sharing processes. |

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| **May 2022** | Data Sharing.<br><br>Agree and implement a data-sharing process with case study regulators via external client portal. |
| **June 2022** | Technology scoping. The project will scope, evaluate and select a data analytics tool to implement.<br><br>Using this tool, the project will develop dashboards from the data collected from the case study group to monitor compliance with food safety regulations.<br><br>The project will develop an external portal to communicate the results to the case study group and share data with case study regulators. The project will provide training on the use of the analytics tool and portal. |

## Continue to lead the establishment of a Horticulture Program for Queensland

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| **July 2021** | Undertake a stock take of regulatory and non-regulatory programs lead by Queensland government agencies that have interaction between government and the horticulture industry. |
| **August 2021** | a. Agree on an indicative supply chain schematic.<br>b. Document current legislative provisions and agency administrative responsibilities.<br>c. Carry out a gap analysis to assist in identifying areas for improvement in the existing arrangements.<br>d. Document current export requirements and specifications for key export commodities. |
| **September 2021** | a. Map the role and interaction (both regulatory and advisory) that each agency currently has with businesses and operators within the horticulture industry (Farm through to retail).<br>b. Document existing industry schemes or initiatives which may be used to verify compliance, quality or performance including administrative ownership/reporting and audit schemes. |
| **October 2021** | a. Complete an industry survey to identify any data or information is currently capture by industry participants to monitor performance at strategic steps along the food chain, including on farm activities.<br>b. Outcome Map the scope and coverage of the different industry schemes operated in Queensland and any supporting or administrative relationship. |
| **November 2021** | a. Identify any gaps in coverage or areas of overlap with existing arrangements.<br>b. Develop a best practice model with industry and partnering agencies, including control and verification points for food safety and other legislative schemes (e.g., biosecurity or WHS). (This is a hybrid of the Safe Food Baseline approach which makes use of data exchange with industry to verify performance and compliance). |
| **December 2021** | Proof test the model with Industry representatives. |

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| **January 2022** | a. Refine the model and agree roles and responsibilities of each agency and industry at a high level.<br>b. Propose the working model, with supporting tools, for verifying compliance and reporting.<br>c. Develop an implementation plan. |
| **February 2022** | Seek Government approval. |

## Design and commence a Safe Food Queensland
## Workforce Strategy and Annual work plans

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| **November 2021** | Workforce strategy is an extension of the strategic plan. Executive Management to set workforce strategic priorities that will support overarching vision and strategy for Safe Food.<br><br>Review and enhance existing professional development systems and continue to provide for on-going training and continued professional development of staff. |
| **January 2022** | Preform a gap analysis on current and future skill matrix and capabilities. Team leaders to develop long and short-term strategies to manage core and strategic functions. |
| **February 2022** | Review HR framework and supporting policies and procedures.<br><br>Review and evolves role descriptions, so that evolves into the new skills sets required for Safe Food. |
| **March 2022** | Ensure Safe Food has the capacity and resources to successfully implement the three-year strategic plan. Our culture will support our ability to implement the plan and ensure our actions are aligned to our shared vision and purpose. |
| **April 2022** | Finalise Strategy and submit to Board for approval. |

## Develop and commence implementing the
## Safe Food Communication and Engagement Strategy

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| **September 2021** | Complete revision of Strategy and provide to EMG for consideration and/or endorsement. |
| **October 2021** | Finalise Strategy and commence implementation. |

## Develop and commence the implementation of the Safe Food Queensland ICT strategy

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| **October 2021** | CIMS: Complete transition of poultry cims to .net platform. |
| **December 2021** | CIMS: Complete transition of egg cims to .net platform. |
| **January 2022** | Complete project management and programs management framework. |
| **March 2022** | SEPP transition. |
| **June 2022** | Records management transition project:<br>a. complete digitisation of high-risk accreditation records.<br>b. commence review of remaining hard file accreditation records and publish records management plan for these records.<br><br>CIMS: Complete Red meat transition to .net. |