



Canadian Food
Inspection Agency

Agence canadienne
d'inspection des aliments

Canada's experiences with the consideration of voluntary third-party assurance programmes as part of our national food safety control systems

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Purpose

- To elaborate on the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) experiences with the consideration of voluntary third-party assurance programmes as part of our national food safety control systems.
- Discuss the benefits and considerations with Canada's approach.

Changing Landscape

- Increasing demand for new and innovative products.
- Evolving, more complex, and integrated systems of production, transportation, and storage.
- Changing role of inspection.
- Shift to outcome-based approaches focused on risk mitigation.

Consideration of voluntary third-party assurance programmes (vTPA)

- Food business operator adherence to vTPA programmes is one of several factors that CFIA considers in its risk-based oversight.
- vTPA programme data can be used to inform risk-based planning and prioritization within CFIA's regulatory framework, resulting in targeted compliance verification.
- vTPA programme may play an important role in helping industry achieve food safety regulatory objectives.
- Food business operator's adherence to vTPA programmes does not replace CFIA's regulatory enforcement authorities; however, it may complement food safety regulatory oversight.

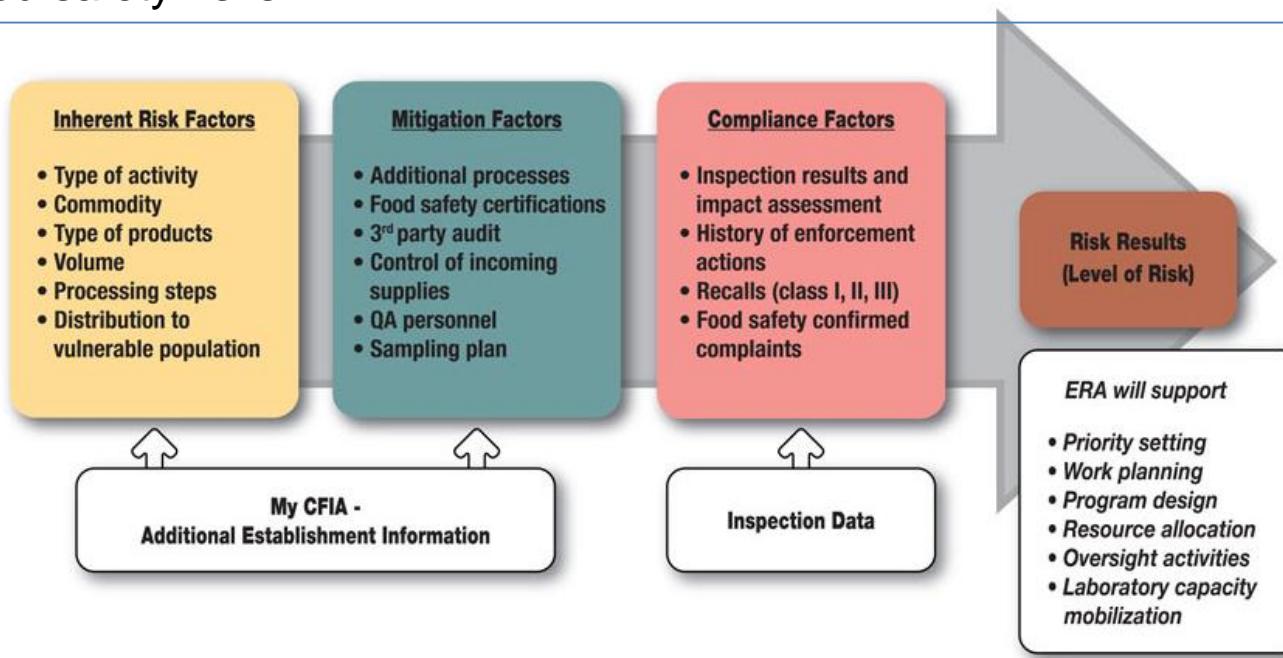
vTPA Programmes Assessment Tool

- CFIA has developed a draft robust assessment process for vTPA programmes, which aligns with the *Safe Food for Canadians Regulations*.
- The draft assessment tool is being piloted with industry partners.
- The results will inform CFIA's future program design through determining whether industry's performance under vTPA is consistent with CFIA's inspection findings.

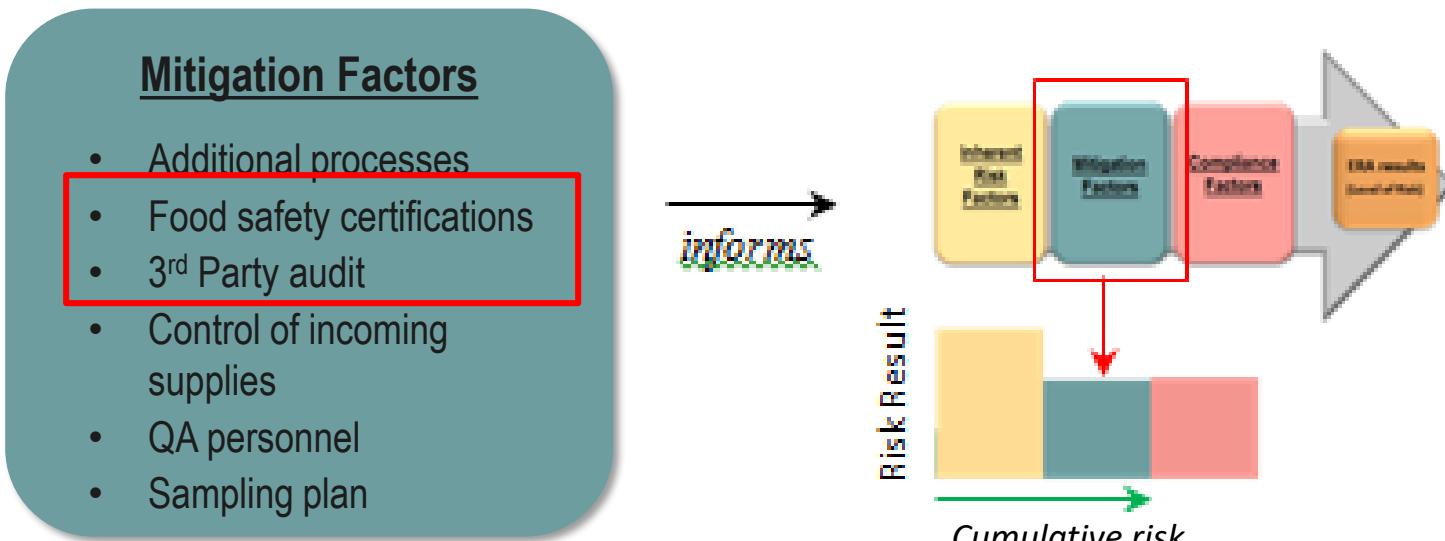
Establishment-based Risk Assessment (ERA) model

The ERA model is a tool for:

- ✓ assessing the food safety risk associated with federally regulated food establishments in a scientific and transparent manner (similar risks treated with similar rigor); and
- ✓ informing the allocation and prioritization of CFIA inspection resources according to food safety risks.



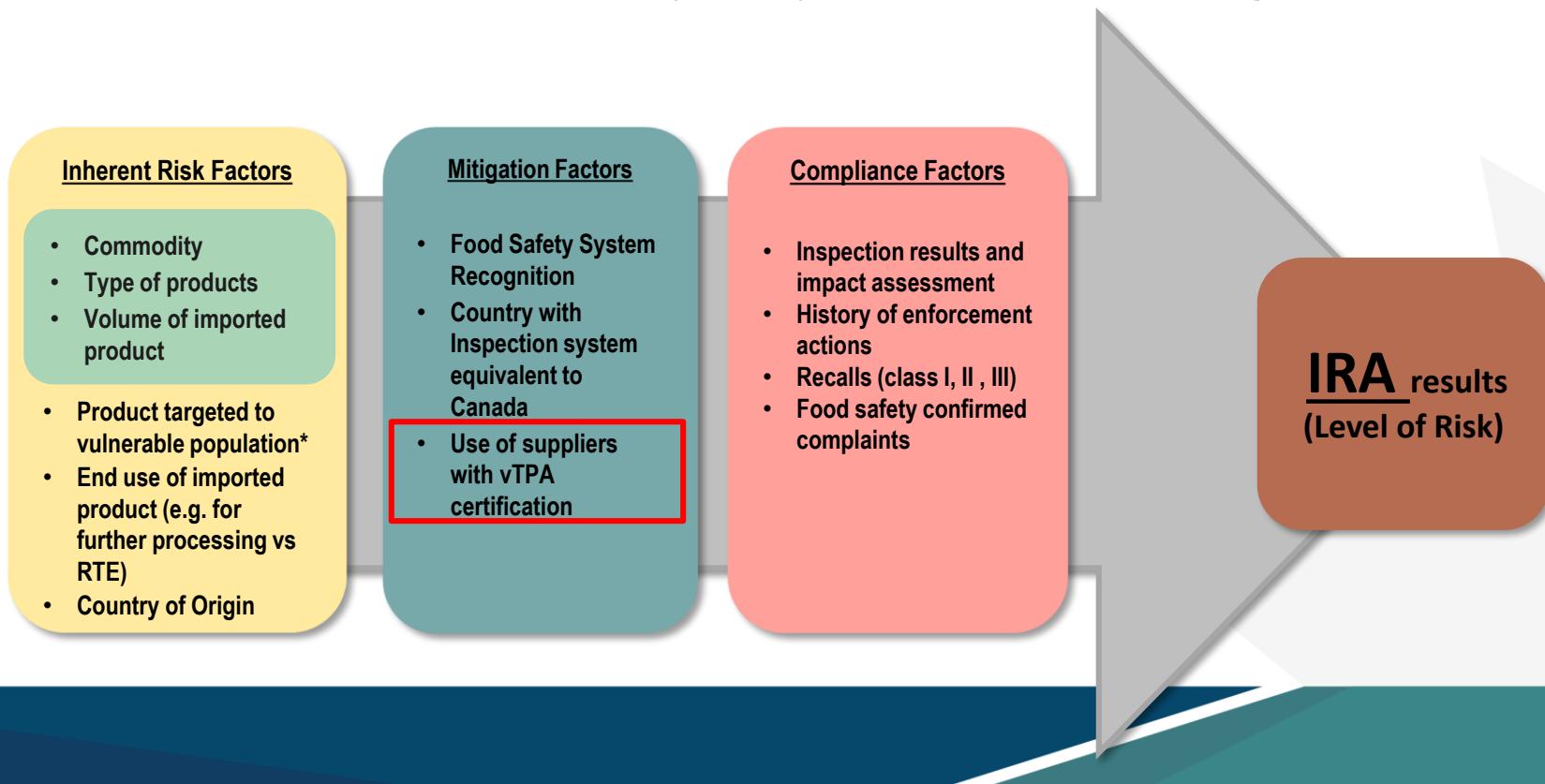
Establishment-based Risk Assessment (ERA) Model – vTPA Programmes



- ✓ The establishment-specific Mitigation Factor information is included in the calculation of the establishment risk result (i.e. measures taken to reduce inherent risk such as incoming controls, certified HACCP schemes, etc.).
- ✓ The combined effect of the implemented mitigation measures applied by the establishment can impact (reduce) the risk (blue bar) of an establishment (e.g., HACCP certification may reduce the risk by 3.5 times depending on the establishment production volume).

Importer Risk Assessment Model (IRA): Under Development

A quantitative, science-based risk assessment tool designed to estimate the risk associated with licensed food importers. The IRA model follows the same ERA's principles when calculating the risk.



Benefits of Considering vTPA Programme Adherence

- Leverages industry's investments in food safety and prevention to inform risk-based regulatory oversight.
- Provides a more informed approach to determining risk and informs where competent authorities should be directing their regulatory oversight.
- Enables possible efficiencies, by taking known, reliable information about adherence to vTPA programme into consideration in risk-based regulatory oversight.
- Provides opportunities to align regulatory approaches with international counterparts.

Key Take Away

- Food business operators adherence to vTPA programmes is one of several factors that CFIA considers in risk-based oversight.
- vTPA leverages industry's investments in food safety to inform regulatory oversight.
- vTPA programme data can be used to inform risk-based planning and prioritization within CFIA's regulatory framework, resulting in targeted compliance verification.
- Food business operators adherence to vTPA programmes may complement CFIA's food safety regulatory oversight and does not replace regulatory enforcement authorities.

References

- The Canadian Food Inspection Agency website: www.inspection.gc.ca
 - [CFIA policy](#)
 - [Establishment-based Risk Assessment Model](#)
- Peer-reviewed articles on the establishment-based risk assessment model:
 - Zanabria, R., et al., Selection of risk factors to be included in the Canadian Food Inspection Agency risk assessment inspection model for food establishments, *Food Microbiology* (2017)
 - Racicot, M., et al., Identification of risk factors to be considered for food establishments' risk assessment models, *Microbial Risk Analysis* (2018)
 - Racicot, M., et al., Quantifying the impact of food safety criteria included in the Canadian Food Inspection Agency risk assessment model for food establishments through Experts Elicitation, *Food Control* (2018)
 - Zanabria et. al. Source attribution at the food sub-product level for the development of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency risk assessment model. *International Journal of Food Microbiology* (2019).
- For questions or comments on the establishment-based risk assessment model please email: cfia.eramodel-modeleere.acia@canada.ca
- For other questions or comments please email: cfia.wto-omc.acia@canada.ca

Questions?