

Obama wants single food safety agency

To understand America's fragmented [food safety](#) inspection system, consider a slice of frozen pizza. The pepperoni is examined by the Agriculture Department, the cheese and tomato sauce by the [Food and Drug Administration](#), each agency using its own methods for inspecting and testing.

If someone gets ill sampling that slice's tasty goodness, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention might sound the alarm, but it would fall to the [F.D.A.](#) to pressure the pizza maker for a recall.

The Obama administration wants a single new agency to sweep all that away: the [Food Safety Administration](#), a colossus that would be housed within the Department of Health and Human Services to "provide focused, centralized leadership, a primary voice on [food safety](#) standards and compliance with those standards," the administration said in its new budget request.

At least 15 government agencies — from the Environmental Protection Agency to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration — have some role in making sure the food Americans eat is safe, according to the Government Accountability Office, a situation that has defied streamlining for decades.

And the Obama administration's new push to untangle that web is already running into opposition from some food safety experts, consumer groups and the inspectors who would be most affected.

The federal government, they say, does not do well with big.

Entrenched bureaucracies have always been difficult to reconcile. The Agriculture Department and the F.D.A., the two main food safety agencies, have for decades carried out different mandates, operated different types of inspections programs, and required different levels of training and education for inspectors. Long-running turf battles between the agencies would inevitably complicate efforts to consolidate them, experts say.

Read full, original article: [Obama Proposes Single Overseer for Food Safety](#)