

Communication 040/2026

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Strengthening food safety: Memorandum of Understanding signed to strengthen cooperation with Australia and New Zealand

On 2 July 2026, Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) and the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) signed a Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) in Berlin, which strengthens cooperation between the two institutions in the domain of food safety.

In addition to signing the joint declaration, representatives from both organisations exchanged views on, amongst other things, current issues in the area of risk communication, the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in crisis prevention and management, and the risk assessment of PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances).

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is an independent, statutory authority that forms part of the Australian Government's Department of Health. Its focus is particularly on setting standards for safe food in Australia and New Zealand. In Australia, FSANZ also coordinates food monitoring and the food recall system, and actively conducts research. It also supports the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in its inspection of imported food. FSANZ was represented by Christel Leemhuis, Director-General of Public Health. On behalf of the BfR, its President, Andreas Hensel, signed the Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI).

Bilateral discussions between the leadership of the BfR and FSANZ on issues relating to possible further cooperation had already taken place during the 7th Annual Meeting of the International Heads of Food Agencies Forum in Auckland in April 2026.

More specific objectives have now been set out in the memorandum of understanding. The JDI focuses on cooperation and collaboration between the institutions, particularly in the domain of scientific research. The exchange of knowledge will further enhance the health and safety of consumers on both sides. In the long term, the scope for establishing working groups is also to be expanded. In future, this cooperation may also include joint workshops

and training programmes, regular meetings, and scientific and technological collaboration based on mutual interests.

Further information on international cooperation can be found on the BfR's website

Communication on international cooperation

<https://www.bfr.bund.de/en/notification/working-together-for-safe-food/>

About the BfR

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is a scientifically independent institution within the portfolio of the German Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity (BMLEH). It protects people's health preventively in the fields of public health and veterinary public health. The BfR provides advice to the Federal Government as well as the Federal States ('Laender') on questions related to food, feed, chemical and product safety. The BfR conducts its own research on topics closely related to its assessment tasks.

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