THREE-YEAR WORK PROGRAMME

National Committee for Food Safety

(CNSA)

Prof. Antonio Gasbarrini · EFSA Advisory Forum · 11 June 2026

CNSA: Conceptual and Methodological Evolution of Food Safety

Italian National Committee on Food Safety — First Year of Mandate (Ministerial Decree, July 2025)

Mandate and Policy Alignment

In its first year of mandate, the **CNSA has pursued a conceptual and methodological evolution of food safety in Italy**, consistent with the guidance of the Quadripartite (WHO, FAO, UNEP, WOAH) and the One Health Joint Plan of Action 2022–2026.

A New Risk Assessment Paradigm

Food safety risk assessment can no longer be understood through a classical paradigm. In line with WHO's mandate, **it must become collaborative, integrated and multidisciplinary, oriented towards the active prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).**

Shift in Scope

The CNSA's work marks the transition from a model historically focused on foodborne disease prevention towards a profoundly renewed paradigm. **Food safety is now conceived as a tool to ensure products that are not only microbiologically and toxicologically safe, but healthy and nutritious, actively contributing to NCD prevention and overall human well-being**.

From Foodborne Disease Prevention to Prevention 4.0

A paradigm shift aligned with the Cross-Agency One Health Task Force — four defining qualities

CLASSICAL MODEL

Traditional risk assessment

- Reactive to individual hazards
- Microbiological / toxicological
- Sectoral and compartmentalised
- Single-discipline perspective
- Focus: foodborne disease

CNSA

One Health
OHAP 2022–2026

PREVENTION 4.0

Collaborative, integrated, multidisciplinary

- Proactive — anticipates risk
- Collaborative — interinstitutional cooperation
- Integrated — human, animal, environment
- Multidisciplinary — diverse scientific expertise
- Focus: NCD prevention + holistic well-being

PROACTIVE

Anticipates risks rather than responding to events

COLLABORATIVE

Interinstitutional and multi-sectoral cooperation

INTEGRATED

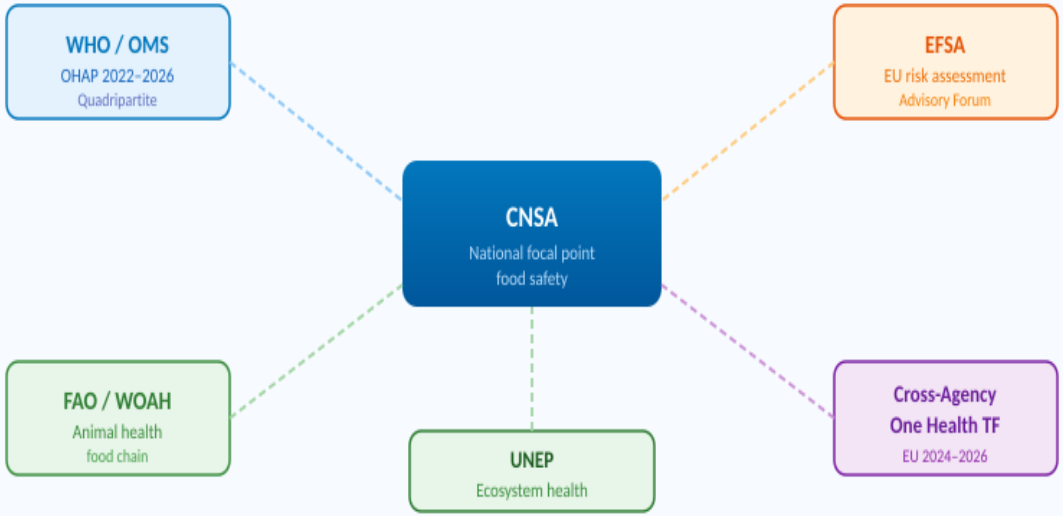
Human, animal and environmental health as one system

MULTIDISCIPLINARY

Diverse and complementary scientific expertise

Institutional Value and One Health Governance Framework

CNSA's role in European food safety governance — EFSA, WHO Europe, One Health Joint Plan of Action



Public Communication and Institutional Relevance

We are working for a press conference:
it will be a high-profile scientific and institutional communication event, returning to the public, media and stakeholders the **CNSA's contribution to the innovation of national food policy through a One Health lens.**

Italy as an Active Partner in EU Risk Assessment

The event will highlight the CNSA and the Ministry of Health as key actors in European food safety governance, aligned with EFSA, WHO Europe and the One Health Joint Plan of Action, consolidating **Italy's role in the evolution of integrated risk assessment models.**

Prevention 4.0: Four Pillars of the CNSA Approach

CNSA as an institutional instrument for collaborative, integrated and multidisciplinary food safety risk assessment

PROACTIVE

Oriented towards risk anticipation rather than event response. The assessment framework drives food policy towards primary prevention of NCDs, moving beyond a purely reactive logic.

COLLABORATIVE

Built on interinstitutional and multi-sectoral cooperation between the Ministry of Health, EFSA, WHO, FAO, WOAH, UNEP and national scientific authorities.

INTEGRATED

Convergence of human, animal and environmental health within a unified framework, consistent with the OHAP 2022–2026 of the Quadripartite.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY

Seven Working Groups, 13 experts, complementary thematic areas, from the Mediterranean diet to nanoplastics, endocrine disruptors to circular economy.

Scientific Structure: Seven Working Groups and Thematic Areas

13 experts across 7 Working Groups (WG) — documentary basis for scientific opinions

The 13 experts of the CNSA: 7 Working Groups – 7 scientific opinions, covering the following priority thematic areas:

WG 1 — **Mediterranean Diet** and Food Safety

WG 2 — **Meta-inflammation** and Food Safety

WG 3 — **Cooking Methods** and Food Safety

WG 4 — **Dysphagia and Products** and Food Safety

WG 5 — **Micro- and Nanoplastics** in the Food Chain

WG 6 — **Circular Economy & Food Waste** Recycling and Safety

WG 7 — **Endocrine Disruptors** and Food Safety

Priority Areas 1–2 · Mediterranean Diet & Meta-inflammation

Key evidence

PA1 · Mediterranean dietary model (UNESCO heritage): traditional practices (home preserves, fermentation) carry microbiological and chemical risks.

PA2 · Metainflammation: food contaminants (pesticides, heavy metals, endocrine disruptors) modulate inflammatory processes through the gut microbiota axis, contributing to obesity, diabetes and metabolic syndrome.

CNSA Actions

- **PA1** · Characterise microbiological and chemical risks in traditional Italian preserves; develop safe preparation guidance
- PA1 · Integrated risk assessment approaches for chemical, biological and physical hazards in Mediterranean dietary patterns
- **PA2** · Assess role of food contaminants and additives in metainflammatory processes and microbiome modulation
- PA2 · Identify vulnerable population groups; support nutrigenomics studies on dietary exposure, metabolic health and epigenetic response

Priority Areas 3–4 · Micro/Nanoplastics & Circular Economy

Key evidence

- **PA3 · Nanoplastics**: internalisation, tissue migration, immune responses; Eurobarometer 2025: 63% of EU citizens rate microplastics as high food safety risk
- PA3 · Identify analytical and toxicological knowledge gaps; contribute to ongoing EFSA mandate (European Parliament request)
- **PA4 · Circular economy** introduces emerging contaminants (heavy metals, microplastics, resistant pathogens) into agri-food production ecosystems with profiles still under characterisation

CNSA ACTIONS

- PA3 · Analyse environmental impact on primary and processed food; provide evidence-based information to citizens
- PA4 · Identify and characterise emerging risks from recovered materials, by-products and food surpluses; establish criteria to distinguish safe from higher-risk practices
- PA4 · Develop risk assessment methodologies integrating sustainability, traceability and environmental benefits (One Health approach; SDG 12.3, Farm to Fork)

PA3: EFSA specific mandate on microplastics (European Parliament) · Member State collaboration highlighted at the 97th Advisory Forum (October 2025) · PA4: One Health approach as working basis

Priority Areas 5–6–7 · Cooking Methods · Dysphagia · Endocrine Disruptors

Key evidence

PA5 · High-temperature **cooking** generates genotoxic compounds (PAHs, HAAs, acrylamide); emerging technologies require updated safety recommendations.

PA6 · **Dysphagia**: rheologically unstable food poses clinical risk in elderly and neurological patients.

PA7 · PFAS, pesticides and veterinary drugs act as complex mixtures with epigenetic, endocrine and microbiota effects.

CNSA Actions

- **PA5** · Assess risks in key Italian cooking methods (frying, grilling, charcoal); develop evidence-based recommendations to reduce exposure to heat-induced neoformed contaminants (PAHs, HAAs, acrylamide)
- **PA6** · Define priority risk profile for dysphagic populations; establish national texture criteria (UNI 11941:2024); standardise texture-modified diet protocols in hospital, residential and home-care settings
- **PA7** · Integrated dietary risk assessment for PFAS, pesticide and veterinary drug residues (mixture approach; vulnerable populations); propose Adverse Outcome Pathways and epigenetic endpoints in coordination with EFSA/EREN

Conclusions

The CNSA Three-Year Work Programme 2026–2028

- Integrates food safety, food security and sustainability within a methodological framework consistent with Regulation (EC) No 178/2002
- **Adopts a One Health approach, recognising the interdependence of human health, animal health and environmental integrity**
- Addresses emerging scientific priorities (DM, meta-inflammation, circular economy …)
- Ensures interinstitutional coordination and Italy's contribution to EFSA scientific assessments
- **Places consumer health protection at the centre through independent, evidence-based assessments**
- ▶ **Reaffirms the transformation of food safety as an active tool for the prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs): from reactive risk control to proactive health protection**

Thank you for your attention