



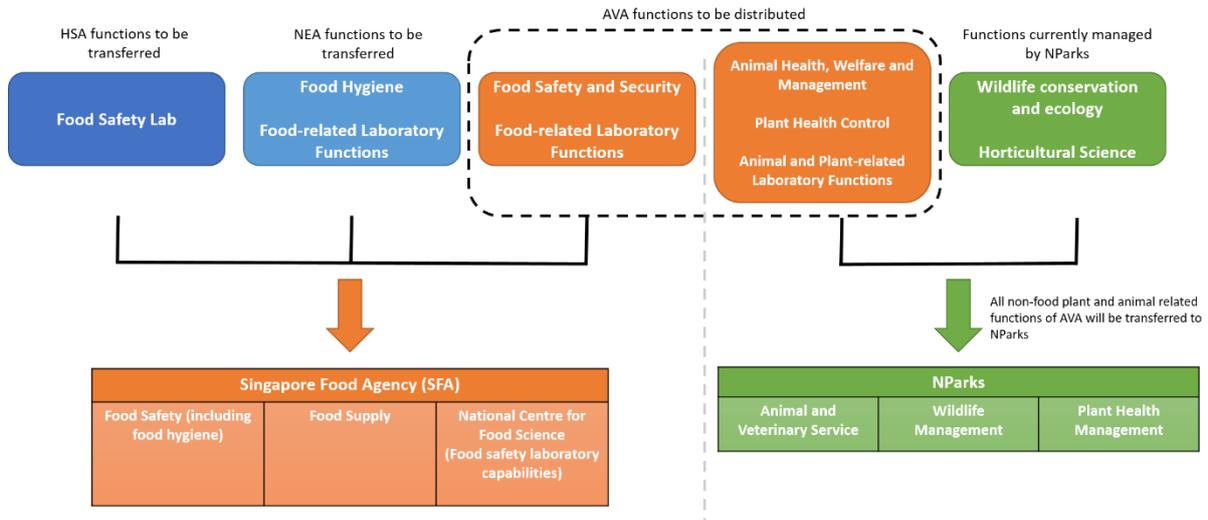
**NEW SINGAPORE FOOD AGENCY TO OVERSEE FOOD SAFETY AND SECURITY
THE NATIONAL PARKS BOARD TO OVERSEE ANIMAL AND WILDLIFE
MANAGEMENT, AS WELL AS ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH**

*Consolidation of functions and integration of expertise will enhance service delivery and
deepen capabilities*

The Singapore Food Agency (SFA), a new statutory board, will be formed under the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources (MEWR) to oversee food safety and security. SFA will bring together food-related functions currently carried out by the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA), the National Environment Agency (NEA) and the Health Sciences Authority (HSA). The integration will enhance regulatory oversight over all food related matters from farm to fork and further strengthen our food safety regime. It will facilitate better partnership with food businesses to develop new capabilities and solutions, and seize future opportunities. SFA will also provide better services to Singaporeans and businesses by harmonising regulations across the three agencies.

2 In parallel, all non-food plant and animal related functions of AVA will be transferred to the National Parks Board (NParks) under the Ministry of National Development (MND). NParks will become the lead agency for animal and wildlife management, as well as animal and plant health, and will work closely with the community and other stakeholders to enhance Singapore's positioning as a City in a Garden.

3 Mr Lim Kok Thai, Chief Executive Officer of AVA, will be concurrently appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (Designate) of SFA.



Lead Agency to Develop Food Supply and Industry – “From Farm to Fork”

4 As the lead agency for food-related matters, SFA will partner food businesses to strengthen capabilities, tap on technologies to raise productivity, undertake research to develop new lines of business, and catalyse industry transformation. This will be done in collaboration with economic agencies such as EDB, Enterprise Singapore and A*STAR. Our local producers can provide vegetables and fish supplies that are protected from adverse environmental conditions by tapping into innovative technologies in high-tech farming and aquaculture that enable intensified production via controlled processes. Examples include vertical vegetable farms that optimise space, and indoor fish farming that reuse treated water. By working closely with all stakeholders, SFA will strengthen Singapore’s food security and resilience against geopolitical risks and climate change, and position our companies to seize exciting opportunities in the future economy.

5 SFA will also facilitate more business-friendly regulations with oversight of all food safety and food security policies. For example, by harmonising licensing standards and combining existing licenses for food businesses, including farmers, food manufacturers, food retailers and food service operators, businesses will be able to adapt and transform their business models seamlessly and look at new ways to grow their operations. SFA will be better positioned to engage food establishments that are currently licensed by NEA and AVA, and support them on their plans.



6 AVA, NEA and HSA have been working together to regulate food safety across the food supply chain, from production, import and manufacturing to retail. SFA brings together all food-related resources and capabilities to enhance food safety, and will oversee food safety regulations across the entire chain. A dedicated agency will strengthen our management of foodborne disease outbreaks to protect public health, through closer coordination of responses to food-related issues, including product tracing and recall, and engagement of various stakeholders and the public. This enables the SFA to address lapses more quickly and more holistically, and streamline public feedback to one point of contact.

7 To deepen our capabilities in food safety, a National Centre for Food Science (NCFS) will be established under SFA to consolidate the food laboratory capabilities of the three agencies under one roof. The NCFS will bring together key competencies in food diagnostics, and research and development in food safety to ensure that food continues to be safe for consumption and standards are benchmarked internationally.

8 Minister for the Environment and Water Resources Masagos Zulkifli said: “Safeguarding Singapore’s food supply is increasingly challenging due to the complexities of global food supply chains as well as the impacts of climate change. We are already seeing the effects of climate change, such as plankton blooms from warmer sea waters and increasingly erratic rainfall patterns. The formation of the SFA is timely as Singapore aims to turn our food challenges into strategic advantages. The SFA will work closely with industry and R&D partners to develop new solutions and products, and seize global opportunities in the food industry. These could include climate-resilient farming solutions, advanced food manufacturing techniques, and food products with the Singapore quality assurance. Doing this will help make our food supply future-ready, and provide good jobs to Singaporeans in the food industry.”

City in a Garden

9 Singaporeans appreciate living in a City in a Garden. However, given our dense urban living environment, there is a need to carefully manage how people co-exist harmoniously with wildlife and domestic animals. The transfer of AVA’s plant and animal related functions will allow NParks to provide one-stop service to Singaporeans and stakeholders on animal management and animal welfare issues, manage human-animal interactions, and improve the detection of and response to zoonotic diseases.



10 A new Animal and Veterinary Service (AVS) will be formed under NParks, as the main touch-point on animal-related issues for pet owners and businesses, and animal welfare groups. It will also take on AVA's current role as the first responder for animal-related feedback, and continue to uphold high standards in animal welfare and health.

11 With a comprehensive overview of urban and natural ecologies, NParks will be better positioned to manage human-animal interactions as they become increasingly complex and interrelated in the future. Combining NParks' expertise in wildlife conservation and horticultural science, and AVA's in animal and plant health, and animal management, will ensure that efforts to conserve Singapore's natural heritage are holistic and science-based.

12 Second Minister for National Development Desmond Lee said: "While we have done well to balance urban development and conservation of our natural heritage, there are opportunities to achieve greater synergy by bringing together the plant and animal roles. All of us have a collective responsibility to protect our flora and fauna. With NParks as the lead agency for animal and wildlife management, as well as animal and plant health, we will work more closely with stakeholders to develop a science-based management approach, with holistic strategies and more effective responses."

13 The formation of SFA and the transfer of functions to NParks will take effect on 1 April 2019. In the interim, AVA, NEA, HSA and NParks will continue to carry out their existing functions. The agencies will continue to consult and engage stakeholders and industry partners. As part of the re-organisation, they will also revisit and fine-tune regulations and processes.

**Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources & Ministry of National Development
26 July 2018**