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## The loonguard research institute and the 2017 conference for food and medicine governance<sup>\*</sup>

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**Abstract.** Pblematic food safety issues are emerging in contemporary societies, especially those undergoing economically and socially rapid developments. In such context, failures in market and governance mechanisms present challenging situations for serving quality and trust-worthy foods and medicine to people. Meanwhile, scientific progresses are slowed down due to unavailability of critical information regarding good practices for food and medicine governance.

**Keywords.** Food, Medicine, Governance.

**JEL.** H12, E62, H50, H69.

### Conference Notes

**P**roblematic food safety issues are emerging in contemporary societies, especially those undergoing economically and socially rapid developments. In such context, failures in market and governance mechanisms present challenging situations for serving quality and trust-worthy foods and medicine to people. Meanwhile, scientific progresses are slowed down due to unavailability of critical information regarding good practices for food and medicine governance.

Against this backdrop, a group of scientists and practitioners set out to initiate the 2017 Conference for Food and Medicine Governance in China, and more importantly, the Loonguard Research Institute as a long-lasting platform for multi-disciplinary (i.e., Agriculture and Forestry Economic Management, Management Science and Engineering, Logistics Management and Engineering, Food science and engineering, Agribusiness, Information and Communication Management and Engineering, Public Health and Preventive Medicine, and Pharmacy) and cross-sector (i.e., Public administration, industry, and academia) knowledge and resources integration. The co-initiators are constituted of professors from Peking University, Tsinghua University, Zhejiang University, Jilin University, Renmin University of China, Sun Yat-Sen University, Sichuan University, Southeast University, Central South University, South China University of Technology, Nanjing Agricultural University, Jiangnan University, South China Agriculture University, China Pharmaceutical University, Hohai University, Jinan University, Guangdong University of Finance and Economics, Guangzhou University, Queen Mary University of London, and Cheng Shiu University. The co-initiators are also constituted of practitioners and visionary leaders from the China Association for Quality Promotion, Global Innovation Center, China Mengniu Dairy Company, Danong Technology Co., Ltd., China Food Safety Newspaper, The Maternal and Child Health Hospital of Hunan Province, Hunan Fangsheng Medicine Co. Ltd.,

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Guangzhou SUIJIA Logistics Co. Ltd., Fly Team Consulting, and Wenda ingredients Asia Pacific.

The Conference was in Nanjing, China, co-held by the Food Safety Management Research Center (South China Agricultural University), National Institute of Drug Dependence (Peking University), and Institute of Food Safety Risk Management (Jiangnan University). Three major themes and keynote speeches were: Intelligent prevention and control of diseases and drug abuse, Pharmaceutical distribution system reform, and Food supply chain visualization.

The major goals of the Loonguard Research Institute include but not limit in innovating scientific research, sharing academic/practical resources, promoting industry-academic collaborations, and strengthening integration of “hard” (e.g., engineering) and “soft” (e.g., business management) sciences, in order to realizing the socio-technological systems of food and medicine supply chain visualization. Based on core technologies of internet, Internet-of-Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), and big data analyses, supply chain visualization sets to increase key stakeholders’ (e.g., the customers’) visibility of every part of food and/or medicine production and distribution. Such system can offer great benefits in facilitating governance and decision-making for quality and safety. The ultimate goal is to enhance the health level of a market (segment), an economy, a nation, and even people worldwide.

To achieve these goals, the Loonguard Research Institute has signed strategic collaboration agreements with universities, the Global Innovation Center and Danong Technology Co., Ltd., to develop information and mobile applications, promote international academic exchanges, and build food quality and safety assessment labs, respectively. A potential example application is 5G mobile communication technology in the fresh (pork) meat supply chain. Using IoT and AI, text-, image-video-based data and information about the production and distribution of pork including feeding, medication, health condition, processing/fabrication, packing shipping, et al., all of which can be viewed directly at the consumption end.

Constructive comments were offered by more professionals participating in the conference and the collaborative research activities of the Institute. These comments include a need to focus on practical problems with large impact, more needs to increase mutual understandings between partner organizations operating in diverse professional areas, to reduction of informational asymmetry between supply and demand, and the institutionalization (e.g., setting up rules and business models) for the cross-sector and cross-discipline collaboration and innovation mentioned in this article.

For the future prospects, there are still a lot of meaningful efforts to do. For example, one of the most urgent imperatives is to increase mutual identification between academia, industry, and even public governance, to effectively transform academic and technological efforts to business applications. After all, the importance of food and medicine safety is evident because it is so critical for the livelihood and happiness of people, who are the cornerstone of the sustainable development of the world.



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