

# Encouraging Soil Stewardship through the Consumer Market

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## Food & Soil Governance

Food product labels can inform consumers about soil stewardship and empower them to make informed choices based on a product's environmental credentials.

However, claims such as “sustainably farmed” currently tend to avoid regulatory oversight.

## Research Methods

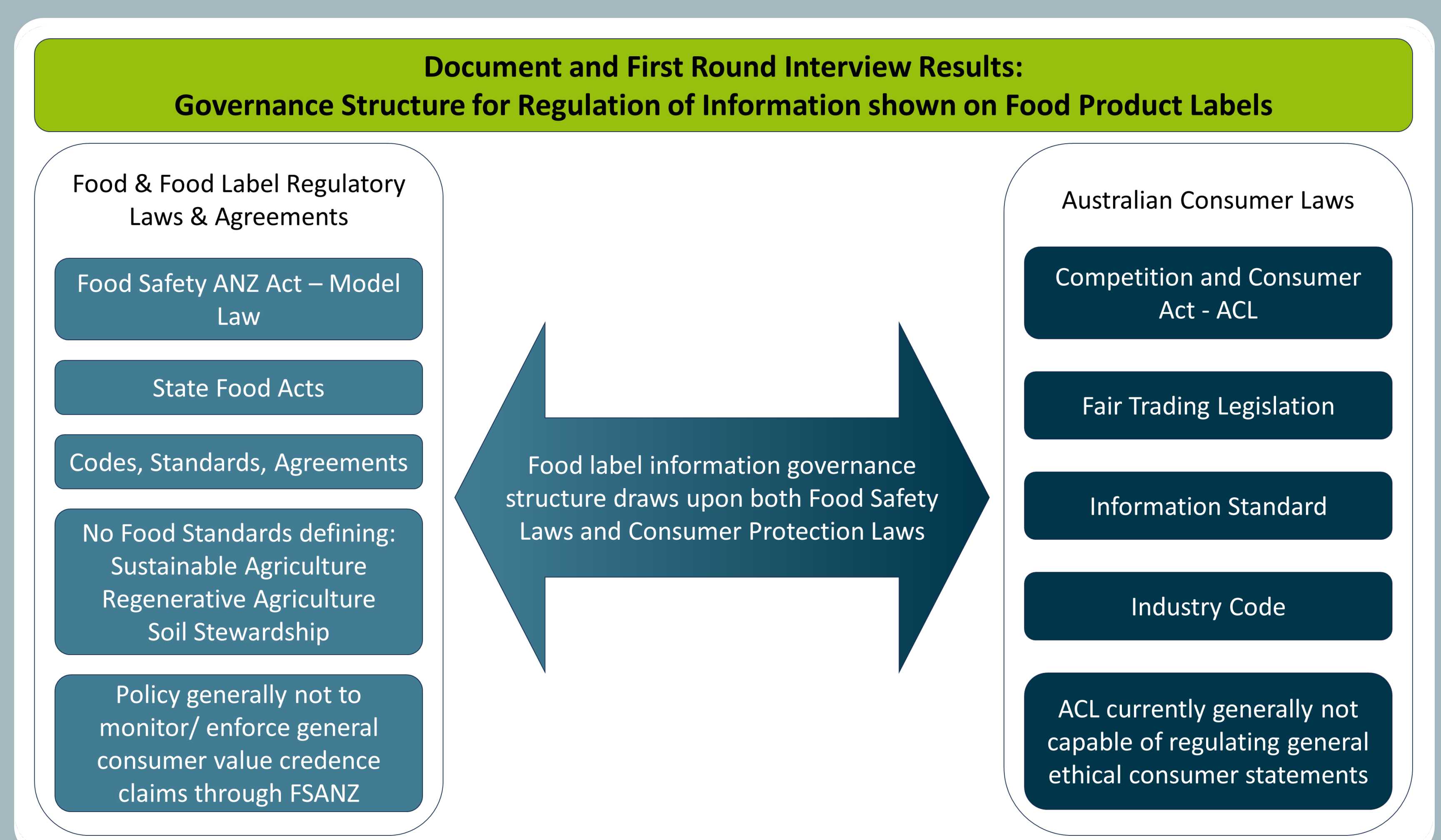
This research investigates the food label governance system that regulates claims made on food product labels. It uses a combination of:

- Document analysis
- Doctrinal analysis
- Semi-structured stakeholder interviews

## Preliminary Findings

It is an offence in every State and Territory to publish false and/or misleading information on food labels; however:

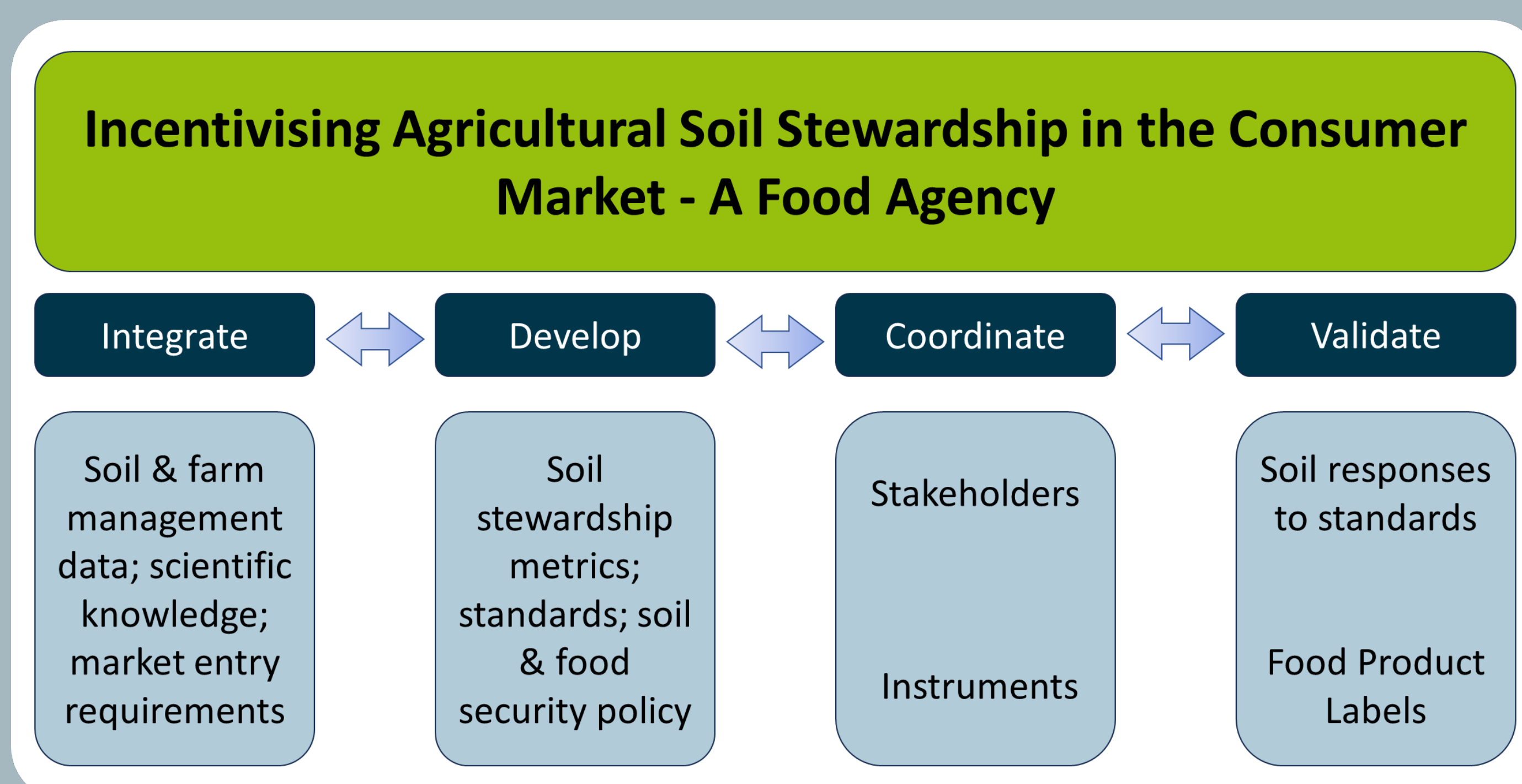
- Claims such as “sustainably-” or “responsibly- farmed” are not adequately monitored by the food regulatory system or consumer law.
- No agreed definitions for as “soil stewardship”, “sustainable agriculture”
- Food labels focus on human health (e.g., ingredients; allergens; use by dates).



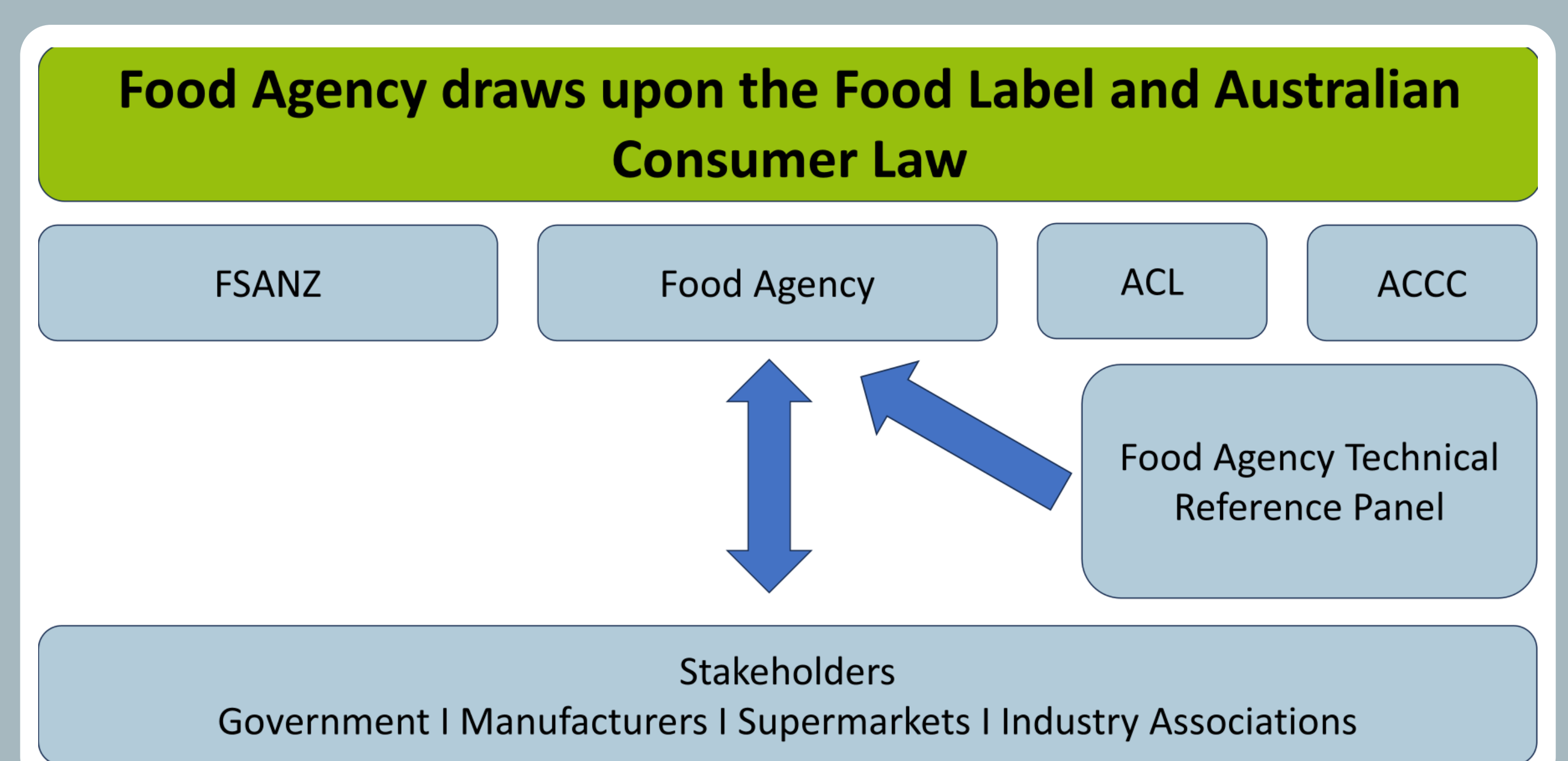
## Preliminary Conclusion

Numerous sources of data, soil scientific knowledge and best practice need to be integrated, validated and presented clearly to stakeholders, including consumers, to increase awareness of soil health and condition.

A Food Agency is needed to integrate various data sources; develop metrics about farm management practices; and develop soil & food governance policy.



This Agency could draw upon existing frameworks to promote and monitor information on soil stewardship on food labels.



## Further Research

A second round of semi-structured agri-food stakeholder interviews will seek feedback on my preliminary research findings and conclusions.