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Recently, much attention has been paid to the safety of food. In particular, consumers are concerned with pesticides, animal drugs, toxic heavy metals and additives in food. To assure the safety of food in general, standards and specifications are set in each country. Furthermore, an international organization, the Codex Alimentarius Commission (FAO/WHO), establishes international food standards and specifications. In Japan, the Food Sanitation Law was amended in May 2003. Based on this law, a positive list system for pesticide residues in food will be adopted within three years. Two years ago, some cases related to nonpermitted food additives and flavoring substances occurred. Many of the nonpermitted food additives and flavoring substances are used widely in other countries. Therefore the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) has officially announced the food additives that it intends to designate hereafter to harmonize the items listed for use as food additives. Thus several procedures for establishing food standards and specifications are now being finalized to ensure the safety of food. In this mini symposium, how the procedures are progressing will be presented by six speakers in relation to the internationalization of the standards and specifications for food. We hope that this mini symposium will deepen the understanding of the audience with regard to food standards and specifications.