

# T & L UPDATE

BFFF TECHNICAL AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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**British Frozen Food Federation**

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# FOREWARD

## WELCOME FROM SU DAKIN

### In this issue

We've provided a summary of the long awaited Elliott Report into the Assurance and Integrity of UK Food Supply Networks; commissioned by the Government in the wake of the horsemeat crisis in early 2013.

You will also find the latest reports and information on foodborne viruses, an emerging and increasingly important consumer protection issue. Additionally there are several updates on food contaminants including acrylamide, chlorates and quaternary ammonium compounds.

### What we are working on

As December 13 looms we know that all food businesses will be preparing for final implementation of the new food labelling requirements; both Regulation 1169/2011 on Food information to consumers and Regulation 1379/2013 the Fish CMO labelling requirements become mandatory for anything produced from this date.

The BFFF Technical Expert Group has been working with our Primary Authority Partners at Cambridgeshire County Council to develop 'Assured Advice' to support compliance with the new requirements. All current advice is available in the Technical Guidance section of the BFFF website: <http://bfff.co.uk/technical/guidance/>

We are also finalising new guidance on:

- Prepacked, Non prepacked and Prepacked for direct sale
- Labelling requirements for wholesalers supplying caterers
- Labelling as Frozen

We will let you know as soon as it is available.

In the meantime we hope that you find the T&L useful and informative and do let us know if there any topics you would like to see covered in future issues.



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**Please contact BFFF if you would like to receive additional / back copies of this newsletter**

**We do hope that you find T&L a valuable read.**



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# PRIMARY AUTHORITY

## BRDO PRIMARY AUTHORITY NEWS

### Forthcoming upgrades for the PA Register

The BRDO are continuing to explore ways of improving the experience of users of the Primary Authority Register. Enhancements to be delivered in the next upgrade include:

- An improved CSV upload indicating any errors made when uploading details of business premises
- A field for businesses to add a unique property reference number (UPRN) that will be included in the XML file.
- Menu changes so administrators can find direct and coordinated partnerships more quickly
- A 'Where's my Partnership' menu option to identify the status of a pending application
- A click through to the partnership relationship page from the Public Register and the Map View
- A new option that identifies when a user last logged in and the ability to delete users

### Free Shared Learning: Exclusive to Primary Authorities

BRDO is to host a free shared learning day in London on October 29th to bring together a cross-section of primary authorities to discuss topics and approaches openly. Speakers will come from some of our most experienced primary authorities.

This free one-day event is aimed at those responsible for managing a primary authority offer to businesses, constructing cost recovery policies, ensuring officer competence, holding initial meetings with prospective primary authority businesses, etc.

There will be a focus on quality and delegates invited to share their views on 'what good looks like.'

Sessions will also focus on;

- how to ensure competence and resilience for the future as well as think about new models for delivery;
- coordinated Primary Authority and how it could work for you;
- how Inspection Plans could deliver benefits for your business partners; and
- using social media and achieving sector consistency.

You can book a place through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/pw2ajke>



### Accounting for the impact of Primary Authority

Four years after Primary Authority was put in place the BRDO are seeking your help to review its implementation. They want to understand its impact and identify possible changes to maximise its benefits and reduce any downsides. This will help create a strong evidence base to inform future operational and legislative changes. Many of you will be contacted to participate in research in the next few months.

### Investigating back office integration

BRDO are looking into the best ways of integrating PA Register data with external back office IT systems, and discussions are ongoing with Civica and fire authorities. An update will be provided shortly.

## ACTIVITY OF EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

### EU REPORT REVEALS FOOD TAXES REDUCE CONSUMPTION

A study has been undertaken by the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) to see the effects of food taxes. While health effects of food taxes are not the primary focus, it notes that health effects are critically important, as improved nutrition and health are the driving motivations for many of the implemented food taxes.

As a long-standing issue for the public health community, EPHA considers that pricing interventions do produce meaningful changes in patterns of food consumption and a reduction in diet-related diseases, particularly when applied to sugar, saturated fat and/or salt together (multi-nutrient approach). Such interventions may also lead to an increase in reformulation efforts, resulting in the wider availability of healthier options. Moreover, these days it is well established that consuming fruit and vegetables contributes to maintaining good health and reduces the risk of chronic disease.

Low socio-economic groups that are more prone to obesity are also the most sensitive to changes in food prices. Therefore, applying a multi-nutrient tax to unhealthy food, as well as subsidising healthier food choices such as fruits and vegetables, can be seen as a solution to promoting their further consumption.

The study can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/khxfek4>

### EFSA OPINION ON EXTENDING 'USE BY' ON SALMONELLA IN EGGS

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) have published the outcome of an investigation they carried out at the request of the European Commission, on whether extending the storage time of eggs at home, at retail or in catering would increase Salmonella food poisoning risks. The EFSA experts focussed on the risk to consumers posed by Salmonella enteritidis, the bacteria responsible for causing the highest number of egg-borne outbreaks in EU.

The team looked at the consequences of extending the sell-by date and best-before date for eggs eaten on their own or as ingredients in foods. The panel concluded that extending the life did increase Salmonella food poisoning risks. If the sell-by date for household consumption is extended from 21 to 28 days for eggs, the risk of infections increases by 40% for uncooked and 50% for slightly cooked eggs respectively. In the worst case scenario, where the sell-by date is 42 days and the best-before date is 70 days, the risk is around three times higher than currently for both uncooked and slightly cooked eggs.

The report notes that the absolute risk is greater for uncooked meals compared to lightly cooked meals and an effective way to minimise any increase in risk during extended storage is to keep the eggs refrigerated both at retail and in the household. Regarding egg spoilage, such events strongly depend on the hygienic conditions of egg production and practices of egg handling, including storage times and temperatures. Finally, the impact of the prolongation of storage time on the quality criteria for eggs (3-hydroxybutyric acid and lactic acid) destined for manufacturing of egg products is considered negligible.

The results are similar for eggs used in catering establishments, access the full opinion here: <http://tinyurl.com/pjzme8x>

### COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 834/2014 of 22 July 2014 laying down rules for the application of the common monitoring and evaluation framework of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L230/1, 01/08/2014.

In order to allow Member States and the Commission to put in place a consistent monitoring and evaluation framework, the Regulation provides a set of common indicators linked to the structure and objectives of the CAP and based on measurable elements.

The specific objectives include farm income and farm income variability, improvement of the competitiveness of the agricultural sector, climate change mitigation, consumer expectations, provision of public goods and environmental preservation as well as adaptation and maintenance of a diverse agriculture.

The Regulation came into force on 8 August 2014, and is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pcayqoo>

## PROPOSAL ON VETERINARY MEDICINAL PRODUCTS

The European Commission has published a proposal for a Regulation on veterinary medicinal products (VMP) (COM 2014/558 final).

In 2001, all the rules on production, marketing, distribution and use of VMP were consolidated in a veterinary medicines code (Directive 2001/82/EC); this was followed by Regulation (EC) No 726/2004.[3] These two acts regulate the authorisation, manufacturing, marketing, distribution, pharmacovigilance and use of veterinary medicinal products over their lifetime.

However stakeholders and Member States had expressed concern that the current legislation does not fully deliver a single market in veterinary medicinal products and fails to meet the Union's need as regards the regulation of medicines. The revision of Directive 2001/82/EC and other legislation on veterinary medicinal products seeks to put in place, while safeguarding public health, animal health, food safety and the environment, an up-to-date, proportionate body of legislation tailored to the specificities of the veterinary sector.

The final proposal is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/nxkgxgf>

The dossier will now follow the co-decision making procedure of the European Union the next steps of which is discussion by the European Parliament.

## ANALYTICAL, METROLOGY, FOOD SAFETY & ZOOSES

### REVIEW OF E COLI COUNTS ON POULTRY CARCASSES

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published an external scientific review concerning Escherichia coli and Enterobacteriaceae counts on poultry carcasses along the slaughter processing line. This review also addresses factors influencing the counts and the relationship between visual faecal contamination of carcasses and counts. A worldwide literature search covering the period 2000-2012 was used to form the review.

The scientific review is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/mw39fw9>

In addition, EFSA have also published an experimental study report, titled 'Usefulness of Escherichia coli and Enterobacteriaceae as Process Hygiene Criteria on Poultry'.

The experimental study is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/p3sey9a>

### HEPATITIS A OUTBREAK ASSOCIATED WITH FROZEN BERRIES

Since May 2013 a total of 331 cases of Hepatitis A (outbreak strain KF182323) have been reported across 10 EEA Countries; Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Norway, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

As part of the investigations HAV contamination has been detected in frozen mixed berries (14 lots) and mixed berry cakes/pastries (2 lots) in Italy, France and Norway; with Bulgarian blackberries and Polish redcurrants identified as the most common high risk ingredients in the traced lots/cases.

However, no single point source of contamination could be found to link all 43 outbreak 'lots'.

In the course of the investigation lots in five countries could be linked to seven Polish freezing processors and/or to five frozen berry suppliers in Bulgaria; indicating the contamination could be occurring at the freezing processor or in primary production of berries prior to the processor.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) recommend compliance with Good Hygiene Practice, Good Manufacturing Practice and Good Agricultural Practice for countries producing berries for freezing.

It is possible that contaminated product related to this outbreak could still be circulating in the food chain. Hence, for the public health domain, enhanced surveillance, risk communication, vaccination and further research are recommended.

The full EFSA report can be accessed, along with a summary, through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/pgdh7eu>

## LEATHERHEAD REVIEW ON THE SURVIVAL OF NOROVIRUS IN FOODS

A systematic review of the persistence and survival of human noroviruses (hNoVs) in foods and the environment was carried out by Leatherhead Food Research in July of this year to answer two questions:

- What are the hNoV persistence characteristics in food and the environment?
- How can these properties be altered by applying physical and/or chemical treatments to foods or food contact surfaces?

The systematic review together with the results of clinical trials, and other supporting data, provides a large body of evidence showing that hNoVs are both more persistent and more resistant than surrogate viruses. Therefore the evidence suggests that infectious hNoVs are more likely to persist in foods and on food contact surfaces than currently predicted by most studies.

There remain many unanswered questions, for example:

- the best means by which to use RT qPCR to measure virus infectivity (e.g. enzymatic pre-treatments, ligand- based capsid capture)
- the impact of the sample matrix on virus inactivation
- strain differences

Further studies are necessary to determine the nature of hNoV persistence and to define optimal methods to evaluate hNoV inactivation in the absence of cultivable strains. The final report can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/nbejj22>

## EFSA ASSESS RISKS FROM SALMONELLA IN MELONS AND TOMATOES

Environmental factors (such as heavy rainfall), the use of contaminated water for irrigation or contaminated equipment are among the factors that cause contamination of melons with Salmonella and contamination of tomatoes with Norovirus and Salmonella.

These are some of the findings of a scientific opinion by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on risk factors that contribute to the contamination of melons and tomatoes at different stages of the food chain.

EFSA's experts recommend that producers use good agricultural, hygiene and manufacturing practices to reduce contamination.

Because of a lack of relevant information, EFSA could not assess the suitability of microbiological criteria at primary production or during processing of tomatoes and melons.

The Scientific Opinion, Salmonella in Melons is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/ndwrlsa> and the Salmonella in Tomatoes Opinion is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/o4xbnhb>

## FSA REVIEW OF EFFECTS OF HEAT AND pH ON HEPATITIS A AND E

There is currently a degree of uncertainty regarding how hepatitis A and E viruses survive in different foods, fomites and environments. To address this, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) commissioned a critical review on the effects of heat, pH and water activity on the survival of hepatitis A and E viruses.

It concluded that hepatitis A virus appears to be a highly robust virus which is able to survive on surfaces and foods, and is resistant to mild heat. There is, however, only limited information on the effects of heating regimes used in the food industry on hepatitis A virus on at-risk foods such as berry fruits and their products, and it is recommended that further studies be performed, modelling industrial procedures as closely as possible, to acquire the necessary information.

There is very little information available on the survival of hepatitis E virus; it may be capable of robust survival (similar to hepatitis A virus), although inactivation by heating at 71°C for 20 minutes has been demonstrated. However, the lack of a reliable infectivity assay has hampered extensive study of this virus. It is recommended that studies be undertaken to develop an efficient propagation system (based on in vitro cell culture), to facilitate the acquisition of extensive information on survival of hepatitis E virus, and its response to disinfection and elimination procedures.

The full report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/oa667w5>

## EFSA REPORT ON THE PREVALENCE OF LISTERIA MONOCYTOGENES IN READY-TO-EAT FOODS

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published a Scientific Report on the analysis of the baseline survey on the prevalence of *Listeria monocytogenes* in certain ready-to-eat (RTE) foods in the EU, 2010-2011. The recently published report represents part B of the review into: analysis of factors related to prevalence and exploring compliance.

The scientific report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/kejrb07>

The survey included packaged (not frozen) hot or cold smoked or gravad fish, soft or semi-soft cheeses (excluding fresh cheeses) and packaged heat-treated meat products sampled from 26 European Union Member States and in one country not belonging to the European Union.

EFSA have also published an external Scientific Report on the Statistical analysis of the *Listeria monocytogenes* EU-wide baseline survey in certain ready-to-eat foods Part B: analysis of factors related to the prevalence of *Listeria monocytogenes*, predictive models for the microbial growth and for compliance with food safety criteria.

You can access this report here: <http://tinyurl.com/pu4ft6d>

UK Advice from FSA has not been updated beyond the recommendation to exercise robust sourcing policies. The Irish FSAI have reiterated their previous advice that berries should be boiled prior to consumption. Access the FSAI advice here: <http://tinyurl.com/kxse3z7>

## SALMONELLA ENTERITIDIS OUTBREAK ASSOCIATED WITH SHELL EGGS

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has issued a report on the multi-country outbreak of *Salmonella enteritidis* infections associated with consumption of eggs from Germany.

EFSA has stated that additional microbiological and environmental investigations could further strengthen evidence to support or discard the hypothesis of all cases being part of the same outbreak, and being infected after consumption of the same food (i.e. contaminated eggs produced in southern Germany). This is particularly unclear with regard to the outbreak cases in the United Kingdom.

Investigations and actions taken by the food sector have supposedly stopped the distribution of the suspected contaminated food to the market. However, due to the delay in case reporting, it is still possible that more cases will be notified.

The EFSA update on the outbreak of *Salmonella enteritidis* associated with shell eggs is available through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/mlzv2t>

Further to this, the FSA has issued advice to caterers on the safe handling of eggs following strong circumstantial evidence suggesting that eggs used in catering establishments may be linked to the recent outbreak of *Salmonella* in England. The advice can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/mrb287d>

## VIRAL FOOD BOURNE ILLNESSES

The European Food Information Council (EUFIC) has produced information on viral foodborne illnesses. Viral foodborne illnesses are caused by a number of different viruses, which can contaminate foods during all stages of the food supply chain.

EUFIC maintain that Foodborne illnesses are a growing public health burden worldwide and that viral foodborne illnesses have emerged as a significant cause of all reported foodborne illnesses. In 2007, viruses were estimated as being responsible for almost 12% of all reported foodborne outbreaks in the European Union. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) reported that this value had increased to 14% by 2012.

While a number of viruses are associated with foodborne illness and its transmission, norovirus and hepatitis viruses (Hepatitis A and E) are of primary concern. Increased awareness of the importance of good food hygiene practice and training in the production and handling of foods is necessary to minimise the transmission of foodborne viral illnesses. Improving the methods of detection of viruses will allow for better monitoring of viruses in food and help improve the safety of those foods commonly associated with foodborne viral illnesses.

More information is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/kl6h7g3>

# ANIMAL WELFARE

## PREVENTION OF FISH OR SHELLFISH DISEASES

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), together with the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science and the Environment Agency have published updated guidance entitled 'Prevent fish or shellfish disease'.

The document includes guidance to reduce the risk of disease, find out where notifiable diseases have been found and what to do if fish or shellfish have a disease.

More information on fish and shellfish diseases is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/mblyfpr>

## GUIDANCE ON ANIMAL BY-PRODUCTS

In early September, Defra published a collection of guidance documents for the animal by-product (ABP) industry.

This guidance identifies what methods can be used to process ABPs, how to test products for bacteria and how to permanently mark high risk material.

This was published alongside guidance for animal by-product categories, site approval, hygiene and disposal, covering what ABPs are, how to set up a site that uses them safely, the paperwork needed, and how to dispose of them.

The guidance information can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/q7we8gj>

## BRITISH VETS 'APPALLED' BY HALAL BOARD LETTER

The non-stun slaughter debate between the British Veterinary Association (BVA) and the Halal Authority Board (HAB) has intensified, with the BVA saying it was appalled by suggestions made in an HAB open letter.

The HAB letter, addressed to BVA president, was in response to the vet's campaign to stop non-stun slaughter. It said the group is "racially or politically motivated", and criticised the BVA for focussing only on the last few seconds of an animals' life, ignoring the many other welfare issues.

More information is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/knc57z5>

## COMBINED AGENCY TO SAFEGUARD ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH

A combined agency will start work this autumn to ensure the government is better equipped to prevent the spread of animal and plant diseases.

The Animal and Plant Health Agency began on 1 October 2014 and aims to better equip the government to prevent the spread of animal and plant diseases, and to respond to emergencies.

Chris Hadkiss has been appointed as the Chief Executive of the combined agency. Mr Hadkiss is currently Chief Executive of Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) where he took up post in January 2013.



**Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency**

Earlier this year it was announced that a combined agency would be created, with four functions of Fera (Bee inspectorate, the Plants Health and Seeds Inspectorate, the Plant Variety and Seeds Group and the GM Inspectorate) joining with AHVLA.

Animal and plant health inspectors have a history of working together in times of disease emergency, and the intent is that this will be made easier when they are part of the same organisation. The Animal and Plant Health Agency will also have responsibilities for stopping pests, diseases, and invasive non-native species entering the UK.

## SHEEP & GOATS - IDENTIFICATION, REGISTRATION AND MOVEMENT GUIDANCE

Defra, together with Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency, published on 26 September 2014, guidance on how to register, tag and move animals safely between farm and market to bring down the risk of disease in transport.

Defra has produced a detailed guide explaining the rules for identifying sheep and goats, and recording and reporting their movements, which will help to minimise the risk of disease transmission and maximise the possibility of controlling the spread during an outbreak.

The guidance, along with many other useful links, including health regulations and welfare regulations for sheep and goats, can be found through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/bwn9723>

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATION & TRAINING

### MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL PUBLISHES UPDATED FISHERIES STANDARD

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) has launched its updated standard for sustainable fishing.

Version 2.0 of the MSC's Fisheries Certification Requirements reflects the most up-to-date understanding of fishery science and management. The standard was developed over the past two years and involved a year-long consultation with fishing industry experts, scientists, NGOs and MSC's wide network of partners. It encompasses the expert knowledge of MSC stakeholders from around the world.

The updated standard raises the bar for a number of important issues including bycatch mitigation, vulnerable marine ecosystems and forced labour. It ensures that fisheries certified against the MSC standard continue to adopt the most up-to-date practices in order to ensure the security of fish stocks and livelihoods for generations to come.

The summary of Changes: Fisheries Certification Requirements version 2.0 is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/o2xc9kn>

### GOVERNMENT'S BUSINESS SUPPORT AT A GLANCE

The GREATbusiness.gov.uk website has been redesigned as a single portal for business seeking support from government. It is designed to enable business to find the support they need in one place.

At the core of the website is a new online tool 'My Business Support', to help businesses identify their needs and then direct them to the most appropriate public and private sector resources. This tool will sit alongside the 'Business Finance and Support Finder' tool, so that business can search for the support they need.

The directory of government support covers:

- Business Advice;
- Local Advice & Support;
- Support for start-ups;
- Running a Business;
- Growing a Business;
- Staff;
- Accessing Finance;
- Developing new ideas and products;
- Exporting; and
- Digital.



'My Business Support' is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/ph97e4s>

'Business Finance Support Finder' is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/cpwy8y8>

## 100 COMPANIES CALL FOR OVERHAUL OF BUSINESS RATES

The British Beer and Pub Association have been featured in an advert in The Telegraph as part of an ongoing campaign on business rates.

The open letter warns that business rates are a “critical problem” for the UK and marks the most vocal intervention in the debate so far. The feature argues that the controversial tax is “no longer fit for purpose for the 21st century” and claims that “business rates are higher than property taxes anywhere else in Europe and are the second highest in the OECD.”

It argues that fundamental reforms would “bring skilled and entry level jobs and new and expanded businesses into our local communities” as currently the £25bn brought in by business rates for the Treasury each year is hindering investment.

The letter calls for a commitment from all political parties to commit to changes such as “a reduction in the overall tax burden alongside more frequent revaluations, allowing the tax to fluctuate in line with prevailing economic conditions and ensure the load is spread as fairly as possible.”

The original letter and advert from The Telegraph can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/nn7benl>

## CHEMICALS, CONTAMINANTS & FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

### FSA CHECKS FOR PRESENCE OF SOYA IN WHEAT FLOUR

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has started a sampling and testing programme at milling plants in the UK to test for the presence of soya in wheat flour. This follows reports that wheat flour may contain traces of soya.

Previous studies have shown that soya may be present at low levels in wheat flour. A 2013 survey carried out by the National Association of British and Irish Millers showed that low levels of soya were present in 15 out of 45 samples.

On the basis of the evidence received to date, the FSA believes soya in flour is unlikely to pose a risk to people with a soya allergy and does not need precautionary labelling.

The testing programme is intended to gather further data on the presence and level of soya in wheat and other flours in order to verify the FSA assessment of the risk to people with allergies and to ensure that consumers are being given accurate information about flour, and flour based products.

Samples are being taken from 13 milling plants across the UK. More information is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/n7owpvc>

### CONCERN ABOUT CHLORATE RESIDUES IN FOOD

Historically chlorates were used as herbicides, but they were banned by the EU after it was demonstrated that they can have an adverse effect on red blood cells and inhibit iodide uptake by the thyroid gland.

Testing in Germany found Chlorate residues in Fruit and Veg that have resulted in product recalls and they have now imposed an interim average daily intake (ADI) limit of 0.01mg chlorate/Kg body weight. The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) published the assessment that led to the restriction. Access the BfR paper through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/ojgzv86>

Chlorate can form as a by-product when Chlorine interacts with organic compounds so there is concern around the ongoing use of them for hygiene and particularly for the washing of produce.

Alongside the BfR opinion there has also been discussion and ongoing assessment work by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on perchlorate a related compound that has similar detrimental effects on human health. The scientific opinion from EFSA is awaited.

In the meantime other member states are considering what practical levels of Chlorate residues should be permitted.

## NEW EFSA ACRYLAMIDE INFOGRAPHIC

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) have published a new infographic on acrylamide to help increase awareness. The infographic provides information on how acrylamide forms in food, what food it is mostly found in, potential health effects and tips on how to cut down on acrylamide.

Download a printable version from the EFSA website: <http://tinyurl.com/qa33b6v>

### FSA ACRYLAMIDE SURVEY RESULTS

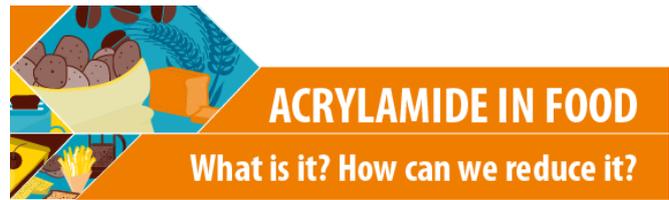
The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published the results of a study that looked at acrylamide and furan levels in a range of UK retail foodstuffs between November 2011 and December 2013.

The results are published in Food Survey Information Sheet 02/14 and are part of an on-going programme, in response to European Commission recommendations to investigate the levels of acrylamide and furan in foods. 556 retail products were collected (544 measurements were made for acrylamide and 266 for furan). The number of products found to contain acrylamide levels that exceeded the 'Indicative Values' for their food category as specified Commission Recommendation (2013/647/EU) was 37.

The highest mean concentrations of acrylamide, i.e. >500 µg/kg, were found in popped chips, vegetable and potato crisps, baked potato and prefabricated snacks and the highest amounts of furan, i.e. >50 µg/kg as consumed, were found in sweet popcorn.

Comparison of acrylamide data with that from previous surveys showed no significant annual trends, however, infant cereals showed an overall potential increase in annual means and crisps, soft bread, biscuits and crackers showed an overall potential decrease in annual means.

The Food Survey Information Sheet is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/lgma3xz>



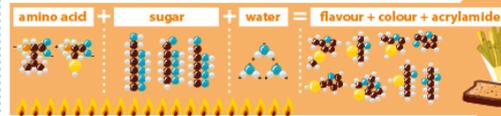
#### HOW ACRYLAMIDE FORMS IN FOOD

Acrylamide is a chemical compound that typically forms in **starchy foods** when they are baked, fried or roasted at high-temperatures (120-150°C).

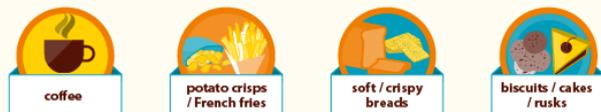
The main chemical reaction is known as the **Maillard reaction**

When the sugar and amino acid naturally present in starchy food are heated, they combine to form substances giving new flavours and aromas. This also causes the browning of the food and produces acrylamide.

#### Maillard reaction (or browning)



#### ACRYLAMIDE IN FOOD IS MOSTLY FOUND IN



#### POTENTIAL HEALTH EFFECTS

Laboratory tests show that acrylamide in the diet causes **cancer** in animals. Scientists conclude that acrylamide in food potentially increases the cancer risk for consumers of all ages.

However, it is virtually impossible to eliminate acrylamide from cooked starchy foods. We can only try to **reduce** the amounts in food through more careful and varied cooking.

#### HOW TO CUT DOWN ON ACRYLAMIDE (TIPS)

National authorities in the EU offer advice to consumers tailored to national eating habits and culinary traditions. Also, a careful selection of raw materials and cooking practices can help limit acrylamide formation. A rule of thumb is: **"Don't burn it, lightly brown it"**. Further examples of tips from national authorities:

- During **frying**, follow recommended frying times and temperatures to avoid overcooking, excessive crisping and burning.
- Toast bread to a golden yellow rather than brown colour.
- Cook **potato products** like French fries and croquettes golden yellow rather than brown.
- Do not store **potatoes in the refrigerator** as this increases sugar levels (potentially increasing acrylamide production during cooking). Keep them in a dark, cool place.

Consumers like you can help too by following a **balanced diet** and varying how your food is cooked. For more detailed information you can contact your national food safety agency.

For more detailed information you can contact your national food safety agency.

## INFOGRAPHIC: DATA COLLECTION ON CONTAMINANTS

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published a news item on 9 September 2014 regarding answers to Member States data on levels of contaminants in food and feed in the form of an 'Infographic' poster.

The Infograph covers the following subjects:-

- How do EFSA and Member States cooperate to make data available for assessing the potential risks of chemical contaminants?
- Which contaminants are found in food and feed?
- What food types can contain contaminants?

Download a printable version from the EFSA website:

<http://tinyurl.com/p5x7znc>

### COMMISSION CONSULTS ON CRITERIA TO IDENTIFY ENDOCRINE DISRUPTORS

The European Commission has launched an on-line consultation to help define criteria for endocrine disruptors as required by the regulations on biocidal and plant protection products.

Endocrine disruptors are chemicals that interfere with hormone systems, which may lead to harmful effects on health and the environment. Input is sought from stakeholders and the public on various options for the criteria and for their implementation.

Launching the consultation, European Commissioner for the Environment Janez Potočnik said: "Endocrine disrupting chemicals have triggered a substantial debate: there are strong signals from science, there is increasing public and political concern and awareness, while some stakeholders still have doubts. Europe is watching – we need these criteria to improve protection and give industry the certainty it requires. Citizens and stakeholders can help us make an informed decision."

The consultation can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/kgjnoj2>

## EUROPE-WIDE MONITORING OF CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN

### CHEMICAL CONTAMINANTS ARE...

... substances unintentionally present in food or feed due to food production, processing, handling or transport, or as a result of environmental contamination of air, soil and water.

#### Main types

- Natural toxins**  
Produced by fungi, algae or plants including some weeds and sea plankton
- Environmental contaminants**  
Industrial and consumer chemicals present in air, soil and water
- Process contaminants**  
Formed during food processing like high-temperature cooking
- Metals & "Inorganic" substances**  
Includes lead, mercury and substances like nitrates or fluorine
- Others**  
Includes unauthorised veterinary medicines

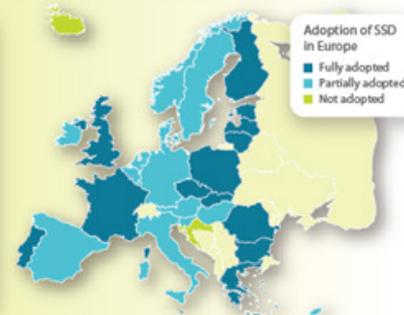
#### Consumer safety

Contaminant levels in food are often very low and harmless for consumers. However, some contaminants can cause effects such as food poisoning, or, their accumulation over time might harm animal and human health.



### COMPARABLE DATA FROM ACROSS EUROPE

- European countries monitor levels of contaminants found in food and feed
- Data are used to assess exposure of people and animals to contaminants
- Since 2010, most countries submit data to EFSA using Standard Sample Description (SSD)
- SSD is a standardised reporting format for transmission of analytical data to EFSA

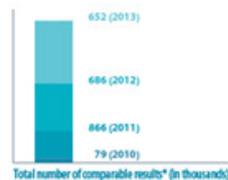
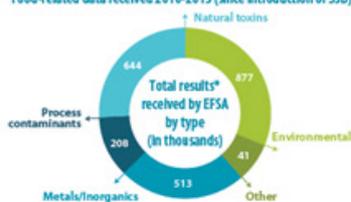


### THIS SYSTEM IMPROVES THE QUALITY OF DATA USED TO:

- Understand how often foods are contaminated and by how much
- Estimate consumer exposure and identify the most exposed populations
- Protect public health by limiting contaminants in food
- Evaluate prevention, reduction, monitoring programmes

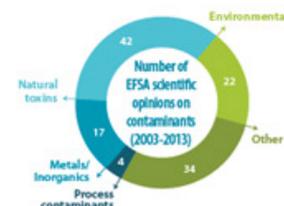


#### Food-related data received 2010-2013 (since introduction of SSD)



#### Total results\* received in top 10 food categories 2010 - 2013 (in thousands)

Food Category	Results (in thousands)
Fish/seafood	343
Meat/meat products	331
Sugar/confectionary	285
Grains/grain-based products	176
Vegetables/fungi	152
Animal and vegetable fats/oils	142
Legumes/nuts/oilseeds	122
Milk/dairy products	116
Drinking water	91
Eggs/egg products	87



\*Results\* are the number of reported analytical results. Unvalidated data omitted.



EFSA is the keystone of EU risk assessment regarding food and feed safety. In close collaboration with national authorities and in open consultation with its stakeholders, EFSA provides independent scientific advice and clear communication on existing and emerging risks.

[www.efsa.europa.eu](http://www.efsa.europa.eu)



## EFSA OPINION ON QUARTERNARY AMMONIUM COMPOUNDS IN FOOD

Earlier in the summer, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published an opinion on the European Commission's proposal to set temporary maximum residue levels (MRLs) for didecyldimethylammonium chloride (DDAC) and benzalkonium chloride (BAC) of 0.1 mg/kg.

The default permitted legal limit was 0.01mg/kg (established in Article 18(1)(b) of Regulation (E)C No 396/2005). However in 2012 the European Commission and Member States agreed on an enforcement level of 0.5 mg/kg as a proportionate risk management measure on a temporary basis whilst monitoring was carried out.

The EFSA opinion agrees that the proposed MRL's do not represent potential consumer health risks, and is available through this link: which can be accessed through this link <http://tinyurl.com/q47p6h5>

Discussions at Commission level will continue, whilst suppliers of such hygiene chemicals have been working to ensure that the proposed MRL's are not exceeded as a result of recommended hygiene practices. Consult your hygiene chemicals supplier for more information.

## IMPORTS AND THE SUPPLY CHAIN

### RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Defra have published a Customer Information Note to inform industry that the Russian Federation have announced a ban, with immediate effect, on a number of agricultural commodities from the whole of the EU including the UK and a number of other countries. This ban will apply for a year and covers the following animal commodities:

Commodity Code	Commodity description
0201	Meat of bovine animals, fresh or chilled
0202	Meat of bovine animals, frozen
0203	meat of swine, fresh, chilled or frozen
0207	Meat and edible offal, of the poultry, specified in commodity position 0105, fresh, chilled or frozen
from 0210	The meat is salted, in brine, dried or smoked
0301, 0302, 0303, 0304, 0305, 0306, 0307, 0308	Fish and crustaceans, molluscs and other aquatic invertebrates
0401, 0402, 0403, 0404, 0405, 0406	Milk and dairy products
1601 00	Sausages and similar products, of meat, meat offal or blood; food preparations manufactured on their basis
1901 90 110 0, 1901 90 910 0	Ready products, including cheese and curd-based vegetable fat
2106 90 920 0, 2106 90 980 4, 2106 90 980 5, 2106 90 980 9	Food products (dairy products, the basis of vegetative fats)

For more information, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/kn2kdwc>

The Agriculture and Fisheries Council meeting for September took place on 5 September with the only issue on the agenda being the potential impact of the Russian import ban on certain EU agricultural products and on the policy response.

The Commission suspended, on 10 September, emergency measures that they put in place to help struggling food producers for perishable fruit and vegetables and will come forward with a more targeted scheme. Whilst there has been strong interest from the sectors concerned, the scheme has been closed due to a disproportionate surge in claims – for example where the figures submitted for some products are several times higher than the total EU average annual exports to Russia.

More information on the suspension is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/nehp8q9>

The long awaited Elliott Report: A National Food Crime Prevention Network, was finally published in early September. The report, commissioned by the Government in the wake of the horsemeat scandal of 2013, followed the publication of an interim report in December 2013. Many of the key elements of that interim report remain and the final report is based on 8 recommendations for Government. The report asks Government to:

- Give top priority to the needs of consumers including through targeted testing, intelligence gathering and surveys.
- Have a zero tolerance approach to food fraud by the development of mechanisms for whistleblowing and reporting of food crime.
- Have a shared focus by government and industry on intelligence gathering and sharing.
- Improve laboratory testing capacity and capability to ensure a standardised approach for testing for food authenticity.
- Encourage the food industry to adopt unannounced audits.
- Facilitate creation of a National Food Safety and Food Crime Committee.
- Create a new Food Crime Unit within FSA.
- Ensure mechanisms are in place for serious food safety and/or food crime incident management by implementing the recommendations of the Troop report.

Although BFFF were not involved in the initial stakeholder engagement, Brian and Su met with Professor Elliott after the Interim report was published and we are pleased to see that our views appear to have had a positive impact. They asked for the report to have greater ambition towards fewer better quality audits and introduce a modular approach so that greater depth might be possible in some areas; as well as pointing out that cold stores are not the only risk in the supply chain, and; that food crime intelligence was needed by all businesses not just those with the ability to pay.

There has been much in the trade news about the Elliott report but some less well publicised points to note:

- Food crime opportunities should be identified, with mitigating strategies in company risk registers
- All organisations, including businesses, would be expected to have mechanisms in place to enable 'whistleblowing'.
- A central register of food law convictions should be set up so that information on non compliant businesses can be shared and is publically available.
- There are current and ongoing concerns regarding aggressive procurement practices, encouraged by retail price competition.
- A 'safe haven' should be set up for food crime intelligence from the business community and a separate 'Intelligence Hub' managed and operated by FSA
- The giving of information to the safe haven should be free but receiving intelligence from it will be by subscription paid by the business.
- The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) is proposed as the organisation best placed to develop the industry 'safe haven' without the concerns associated with confidentiality.
- All accreditation standard owners should offer unannounced audits and include sampling as part of their audit protocol. I also note that a first module to add to the BRC standard has already been launched by Asda. Retailers are also encouraged to make certification a condition of contract.



- The report encourages the development of a food crime audit module as part of these certification schemes.
- A further point that we raised was the urgent need by businesses for tools to assess business risks and develop mitigating strategies – the report echo's this need and notes that this type of guidance is starting to emerge. PAS Standard 96 – Defending food and Drink is noted as a good base and is currently being updated.
- There are specific risks on food crime for business to take into account, including storage (not just cold stores), transport, traders and brokers, frozen blocks of meat trim and animal by-products.
- To improve Ministerial support for the activities of FSA in supporting customer protection, a National Food Safety and Food Crime Committee including senior representation from a range of Government Departments (BIS, Home Office, Defra and DoH) is recommended
- Professors Elliott calls for more effective and punitive penalties for offenders of food crime and notes that new guidelines to Magistrates on Fraud have been published and took effect on 1 October. Find them here: <http://tinyurl.com/6lr82v3>

The government has responded to the review accepting all of the recommendations: access their press release: <http://tinyurl.com/ljlvx7n> and formal response: <http://tinyurl.com/mbwnm93>

## LIST OF APPROVED ESTABLISHMENTS FOR EGGS AND EGG PRODUCTS

Defra have published a customer information note on lists of approved establishments for eggs and egg products from third countries. CIN14/69 and other recent Defra notifications can be found on the Defra website at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/78x7ngf>

The CIN concerns recently published lists of approved establishments by the European Commission able to import eggs and egg products into the EU. According to Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No 854/2004. Eggs and egg products imported from the third countries must be dispatched from, and obtained or prepared in, establishments that appear on those lists.

The lists have been introduced on to the TRACES system and can be found in 'Section X: Eggs and Eggs Products' which can be accessed via this link: <http://tinyurl.com/pux7r2v>



## ONLINE EXPORTING PACKAGE LAUNCHED

UK Businesses now have access to a new suite of services to help boost their international trade through UKTI's new e-Exporting Programme.

The e-Exporting Programme includes:

- new suite of services and support to help UK companies take advantage of online selling, forecast to reach £60 billion by 2018
- UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) is working with the world's leading e-marketplaces to help UK companies fast-track international sales
- UKTI has detailed information for more than 400 of the world's e-marketplaces, to help companies plan their sales strategies

UKTI's new e-Exporting Programme has been created to ensure UK companies are best placed to tap into the huge opportunities that exist online. The growth of technology has dramatically changed consumers' purchasing habits with Britons now spending approximately £91 billion a year online making the UK one of the world's leading e-commerce countries.

More information, and tools are available here: <http://tinyurl.com/qhkrnoh>

# INTEGRITY, FOOD SECURITY & AUTHENTICITY

## EU TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS TOP IN FOOD SAFETY REGULATIONS

European Union countries rank highest when it comes to global food traceability regulations and requirements, according to a new report from The Global Food Traceability Centre (GFTC).

Published in Comprehensive Reviews in Food Science and Food Safety, the report evaluates and compares the traceability regulations of 21 Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) countries – finding that EU countries ranked highest when it comes to global food traceability regulations and requirements.

According to the report, which ranked each country based on aggregated responses to a series of questions developed to assess their traceability policies and programs, EU member states and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries of Norway and Switzerland, all scored as 'Superior'.

To develop an overall world ranking, country rankings for each category were aggregated, and each country was given a total, overall world ranking score. The scores can be found in the table below:

Country/Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Aggregate Score
Australia	Moderate	Moderate	Progressive	Progressive	Moderate	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Average
Austria	Progressive	Superior									
Belgium	Progressive	Superior									
Brazil	Moderate	Moderate	Progressive	Progressive	Moderate	No Data	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Average
Canada	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Progressive	Moderate	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Regressive	Progressive	Average
China	Regressive	Regressive	Moderate	Moderate	Regressive	Progressive	Progressive	Moderate	Regressive	Moderate	Poor
Denmark	Progressive	Superior									
Finland	Progressive	Superior									
France	Progressive	Superior									
Germany	Progressive	Superior									
Ireland	Progressive	Superior									
Italy	Progressive	Superior									
Japan	Moderate	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Moderate	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Average
Netherlands	Progressive	Superior									
New Zealand	Moderate	Moderate	Progressive	Progressive	Moderate	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Progressive	Average
Norway	Progressive	Superior									
Russian Federation	No Data	Regressive	No Data	Regressive	Insufficient Data						
Sweden	Progressive	Superior									
Switzerland	Progressive	Superior									
United Kingdom	Progressive	Superior									
United States	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Progressive	Regressive	Moderate	Progressive	Progressive	Regressive	Progressive	Average

■ Progressive  
 ■ Moderate  
 ■ Regressive  
 ■ No Data

The full report can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/ozcpx56>

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee reported to the House of Commons on Food security in the UK in its Second Report of Session 2014-15, the report was published on 1 July 2014: access it here: <http://tinyurl.com/mjg725b>

The Government has responded by welcoming the report which they believe is supportive of key elements of Government policy, including:

- UK food security built on access to a wide variety of markets including domestic, the EU and an open, rules-based world trading system;
- The importance of sustainable intensification;
- Making the most of UK productivity potential through the Agri-Tech Strategy.

The Committee asked to ensure policy coherence on food security across Government, which ought to be led by Defra. The Government can assure the Committee that Defra is the lead Department for food security and takes responsibility for ensuring that it is a priority across all relevant policy areas throughout Government.

The Committee has also asked for a better understanding of the focus of the Government's research initiatives into food security. Recommendation 30 explains the work currently underway to map the research landscape in the UK and internationally. It also describes the Global Food Security Programme's recently refreshed mapping of research priorities across the major public sector funders, which brings coherence by aligning individual activities with shared goals.

The Government acknowledges the importance of the Food and drink sector as the UK's biggest manufacturing industry, with gross value-added of £24.3 billion.

Access the Government response here: <http://tinyurl.com/o4yrtbq>

## LABELLING & GENERAL FOOD LAW

### SEAFISH GUIDANCE ON CONSUMER LABELLING ASPECTS OF FISH CMO

The Seafish Authority have circulated draft guidance on the new consumer information requirements that come into force on December 13 this year under the CMO regulation (EU) No 1379/2013; coinciding with the introduction of the new labelling requirements in the FIC Information to Consumers Regulation 1169/2011. The guide explains what the requirements are and the difference between them and the current rules.

The guidance also tries to address concerns on apparent interactions between the CMO and the Food Information to Consumers Regulation.

Specific technical queries that have been received by Seafish that relate to interpretation of the Regulation; and on which guidance from the Commission are awaited, have not been included.

The guidance is a draft, to allow it to be amended and added to over time.

One outstanding item which was discussed at a recent Seafish meeting attended by Defra was interpretation over the use of QR codes as being either 'instead of' or 'as well as' other mandatory information. At the meeting it was agreed that although not appropriate to use QR for all information, some of which must be available at point of sale it could be used to provide information on items such as fishing gear and catch area. Seafish are awaiting confirmation of this from Defra before finalising the advice and making it available on the Seafish website.

If you would like more information or a copy of the draft guidance contact [Sudakin@bff.co.uk](mailto:Sudakin@bff.co.uk)

## GLUTEN LABELLING RULES AND ALLERGEN THRESHOLDS

On 31 July Commission Implementing (EU) No 828/2014 on the requirements for the provision of information to consumers on the absence or reduced presence of gluten in food was published in the Official Journal of the European Union. The Regulation can be accessed through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/lja9epo>

Standards for the labelling of 'Gluten Free' and 'Very Low Gluten' were first published in Commission Regulation 41/2009 Regulation but will be repealed by the updated Parnuts Regulation (No 609/2013) from 16 July 2016.

Article 36.2 (d) of FIC on voluntary information also requires that if information is given that it must comply with the requirements on the absence or reduced presence of gluten in food.

The new regulation has been published to ensure that labelling standards for 'Gluten Free' and 'Very Low Gluten' are retained and will apply from 20 July 2016.

The regulation maintains the previous standards:

- The statement 'gluten-free' may only be made where the food as sold to the final consumer contains no more than 20 mg/kg of gluten.
- The statement 'very low gluten' may only be made where the food, consisting of or containing one or more ingredients made from wheat, rye, barley, oats or their crossbred varieties which have been specially processed to reduce the gluten content, contains no more than 100 mg/kg of gluten in the food as sold to the final consumer including the additional requirements for food containing oats; Oats contained in a food presented as gluten-free or very low gluten must have been specially produced, prepared and/or processed in a way to avoid contamination by wheat, rye, barley, or their crossbred varieties and the gluten content of such oats cannot exceed 20 mg/kg.

Some members have struggled with the highlighting of the gluten allergen in the ingredients declaration if the cereals containing gluten listed in Annex II of FIC are present at any level whilst this Regulation allows for such products to also make the claim of 'Gluten Free' or 'Very Low Gluten' or that the requirements are conflicting and could cause confusion to consumers.

This is particularly so for Caterers providing allergen information for the first time. Whilst Gluten Free meals might be on the menu, the Caterer has a responsibility to advise the consumer of the presence of Gluten!

The publication has re-opened the debate on the need for allergen thresholds. EFSA recently consulted on a draft opinion where they concluded that there was insufficient scientific data for setting threshold. The consultation closed in Early August and we await the final report. The draft report and more about the consultation can be access via this link: <http://tinyurl.com/njx6ynz>

Also the FSA is currently conducting a survey so that they can understand better the type of allergen advisory labelling present on pre-packed processed foods sold in the UK. It also aims to quantify the level of allergens present in the food as a result of cross-contamination and establish whether the type of advisory labelling used relates to the level of allergen present.

The FSA expect that the results of this survey will help to inform the development allergen management thresholds (Actions levels). It is anticipated that action levels will help food businesses make decisions on the use of factual statements about whether or not a food is suitable for consumption by someone with a food allergy.

The study runs until October 2014; more information is available on the FSA website through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/n8wgdn7>



## COMMISSION CHALLENGES TRAFFIC LIGHT LABELLING

The European Commission is investigating the UK's voluntary traffic light food labelling system following complaints from various European countries that it may negatively affect the market for certain foods across the EU.

The UK traffic light labelling system is voluntary scheme that was introduced in June 2013 as a means to combat rising obesity levels. The scheme is designed to allow customers to be able to easily tell if pre-packaged foods have high, medium or low amounts of fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt indicated by red, amber and green labels. Whilst only voluntary, an increasing number of companies have adopted the system into their packaging.



A number of European Member States have challenged the UK system on the basis that it is potentially misleading to consumers and may have a negative impact on the marketing of certain foods such as traditional hams and cheeses. The concern is that the traffic light system, which is the only one of its type in the EU, may affect and discourage consumers from certain products and therefore affect the ability of manufacturers to freely trade their products throughout the EU.

The most publicised opposition has been from the Italian government, on behalf of Italian manufacturers and producers, who have argued that the simplicity of the system will mean export goods, such as Parmesan cheese, salami or prosciutto ham, will be adversely affected despite being relatively healthy items when consumed as part of a balanced diet.

The European Commission is now investigating these concerns and has asked the UK to provide information in respect of the scheme. The main concern appears to be that the scheme may have oversimplified the content of pre-packed goods so that it is ultimately misleading to consumers and may negatively affect the market for certain products within the EU. A good example of this is the affect the system will have on fizzy drinks which, whilst most people would argue are not a particularly healthy product, will generally be labelled with green 'lights' apart from a red light for sugar.

More information is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/nl52l8a>

## ORGANIC PRODUCTION AND LABELLING OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 836/2014 of 31 July 2014, amending Regulation (EC) No 889/2008, laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products with regard to organic production, labelling and control was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L230/10, 01/08/2014.

The Regulation extends the use of the provision for using non-organic pullets for organic production and extends the use, for a limited period, of a proportion of non-organic protein feed used to feed pigs and poultry raised on organic farms.

The Regulation applies from 1 January 2015. It can be found in the Official Journal, here: <http://tinyurl.com/pcayqoo>



## GUIDANCE FOR PRODUCERS ON PROTECTED FOOD NAMES

Defra published guidance on 31 July 2014 on 'How to register a food or drink product under the EU Protected Food Name scheme; current applications and scheme contacts'. The guide provides an explanation of the scheme, advice on how to register, including the stages of the application process and a list of products and current applications.

More information, along with maps and guides, is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/cgxgvdn>

## ALL PARLIAMENTARY GROUP - HALAL

An all party parliamentary group (APPG) for beef and lamb has published a report which calls for more research into the labelling on the religious slaughter of animals.

The report, Meat Slaughtered in Accordance with Religious Rites, is based on evidence from industry experts; Shechita UK; the Halal Food Authority; veterinary professionals; as well as the farming minister George Eustice and the European Commission.

The report concludes with nine recommendations:

- The demonstration of recoverability in abattoirs as a means to reassure customers the animal is not killed by stunning and therefore is halal-compliant.
- Research to be reviewed and new research to be undertaken, where necessary, to determine the effect of stunning on the residual blood content left in meat in comparison to that produced from slaughter without stunning.
- That the use of electro-immobilisation, a practice not currently permitted in the UK, be re-examined to determine scientifically if it is required, in order to take into account the associated dangers to operator safety in relation to carcass kicking.
- More research into the shechita method of slaughter and the likelihood and duration of pain felt when the cut is made.
- To help inform the debate on mis-stunning and mis-slaughtering, the group believes that statistics on the incidence of mis-slaughtering should be made available.
- That labelling should be carried out on a stun versus non-stun basis, and that an impact assessment on the burden to the industry should be undertaken in relation to mandatory labelling.
- Greater research is needed into the measurement of pain in animals at the time of slaughter and in demonstrating the recoverability of certain stunning methods to reassure religious communities that they are compatible with their religion.
- Labelling should help consumers make informed decisions when buying meat, should be carried out on a stun versus non-stun basis, and that an impact assessment on the burden to the industry should be undertaken in relation to mandatory labelling.
- That a consumer attitudes survey towards meat labelling should be conducted, to see if the public would like to see meat labelled in accordance with stunning or non-stunning, and additional information such as the type of stun that was used and if any religious requirements are needed to be met in producing the meat.

More information is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/py5kfbd>

## NUTRITION, ADDITIVES & HEALTH

### EFFORTS TO PROMOTE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION

Are worldwide efforts to promote fruit and vegetable consumption effective enough?

Despite numerous policy interventions to promote fruit and vegetable consumption, daily intake of fruits and vegetables is still below recommended levels worldwide. In a recent review published in the peer-reviewed journal *Appetite*, researchers from the University of Sydney, Australia, present an overview of the major campaigns of the last two decades, that have aimed to promote a long-term and sustainable increase in fruit and vegetable intake. The impact of these initiatives was low to modest and the authors identify recommendations to help promote future approaches in achieving a more significant behavioural change in the broader population.



More information is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/l4xj3pz>

## HOSPITAL FOOD STANDARDS

The Department of Health (DoH) announced on 29 August 2014 that a report has been published by the Hospital Food Standards Panel, which recommends 5 legally-binding food standards for the National Health Service (NHS), including the sourcing of food.

The mandatory requirements were selected from over 50 food quality standards. These will now be included in the NHS Standard Contract – making them legally binding for hospitals. They include:-

- hospitals should screen patients for malnutrition and patients should have a food plan;
- hospitals must take steps to ensure that patients get the help they need to eat and drink, including initiatives such as protected meal times where appropriate;
- hospital canteens must promote healthy diets for staff and visitors – the food offered will need to comply with government recommendations on salt, saturated fats and sugar;
- food must be sourced in a sustainable way so that it is healthy, good for individuals and for our food industry.

More information is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/m5764ux>

## PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND PUBLISHES GLOBAL HEALTH STRATEGY

Public Health England (PHE) has launched its global health strategy (2014 to 2019) outlining its health priorities for the next 5 years, and providing a framework for international engagement.

The PHE global health strategic priorities for the next 5 years are:

- improving global health security and meeting responsibilities under the International Health Regulations, focusing on: antimicrobial resistance, mass gatherings, extreme events, climate change, bioterrorism, emergency response, new and emerging infections, cross-border threats, and migrant and travel health
- responding to outbreaks and incidents of international concern, and supporting the public health response to humanitarian disasters
- building public health capacity, particularly in low and middle income countries, through, for example, a programme of staff secondments and global health initiatives
- developing our focus on, and capacity for, engagement on international aspects of health and wellbeing, and non-communicable diseases (NCD)
- strengthening UK partnerships for global health activity

More information is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/o88e7aj>

## BREAD - A NUTRITIOUS STAPLE

The European Food Information Council (EUFIC) has published advice to address commonly held misconceptions about bread, and the contribution it can make to nutrition.

Bread has been part of the human diet for thirty thousand years. It provides energy in the form of carbohydrates and essential nutrients, dietary fibre and phytochemicals. Yet there are many misconceptions around bread.

Bread is made from cereal grains such as wheat, rye, oats, so its nutrient content is largely determined by the content of the grains. The nutritional composition of bread depends on whether the flour used to produce the bread is white or wholemeal flour, as well as the addition of ingredients like seeds or fat.

About half of our daily energy should come from carbohydrates, mainly from starch. Therefore, together with potatoes, pasta and rice, bread is a major component of a healthy and balanced diet. Bread also contains proteins, and only small amounts of fat (unless added during production).

More information is available on the EUFIC website: <http://tinyurl.com/mzmfbgz>

## FSA FOOD AND YOU SURVEY

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) survey data about people's attitudes and behaviour suggests that there are links between food safety and nutrition practices. This is known after further analysis of Food and You biennial survey data.

The results suggest there are links between food safety and nutrition practices. For example, relationships were observed between:

- Knowledge of healthy eating recommendations (specifically the '5 a day' message about the recommended five portions of fruit and veg the each person should eat every day) and the extent to which reported food safety behaviours are in line with recommended practice (this refers to the safe storage and hygienic handling of food).
- Knowledge of the eatwell plate (this highlights the different types of food that make up our diet, and shows the proportions we should eat them in to have a well-balanced and healthy diet) and the extent to which reported food safety behaviours are in line with recommended practice.

The results also suggest that those who perceived their diet as healthy were more likely to report behaviours in line with recommended practice, as were those with less complacent views on healthy eating.

The implications of the findings are discussed in the report, which is available on the FSA website: <http://tinyurl.com/nss2z9e>

## COMBATING OBESITY THROUGH NATIONAL SCHOOL FOOD POLICIES

Schools are regarded as a promising intervention target to counteract the increase of childhood obesity levels. In this context, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) published a report this summer on the assessment of nutrition-related content of national school food policies in the 28 EU Member States, as well as Norway and Switzerland. The main finding was that all of these countries have a school food policy of some sort in place, either mandatory or voluntary. The report aims to inform public health policy makers, educators and researchers about the current European landscape of school food policies, highlighting various options intended to promote healthier school food environments.

According to the JRC survey, all 30 countries have school food policies in place, with 15 countries having mandatory regulations and 15 countries providing voluntary guidance on the food provided in schools. The policies vary from defined lists of foods that are allowed or prohibited for sale on school premises, to extensive guidelines or standards such as school menu planning, procurement of catering services or marketing restrictions.

Around two thirds of school food policies across Europe are established as separate, whereas some are embedded in other policies, mainly on obesity and education. Lunch and snacks are the most commonly addressed mealtimes, followed by breakfast and dinner; some school food policies apply to all food and drink available on school premises.

The JRC National School Food Policies report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/o9nog2o>

## PROCESSING & RETAIL

### GROCERY CODE ADJUDICATOR ISSUES GUIDANCE ON APPEALS

The Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) was set up in June 2013 to ensure that large retailers with a turnover of over £1bn comply with the Groceries Supply Code of Practice (GSCOP). This statutory body has significant powers and responsibilities, including the power to conduct investigations into the retailers' compliance with the Code, and to follow up those investigations with recommendations or financial penalties. The GCA can also arbitrate between retailers and their suppliers in disputes relating to the Code.

The GCA has already published statutory guidance in relation to how it will exercise its investigatory and enforcement powers, and it has now issued some additional guidance to address questions about appealing against its decisions. Although the GCA has not yet opened any investigations, it is worth being aware of the options available, should an investigation arise and the retailer or the supplier is not satisfied with its outcome.

The GCA guidance document is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/kyn2cjd>

## MEETING NUTRITIONAL NEEDS THROUGH PROCESSING AND LABELLING

European consumers expect nutritious, safe, environmentally sustainable, and affordable food products. The European Food Information Council (EUFIC) have recently published an article which gives an overview of food processing, its evolution, consumer trends, and how the food industry works to meet EU consumer needs and desires, focusing on nutrition.

**From raw ingredients to foods:** While some foods can be eaten raw (like most fruits and some vegetables), most foods need to be processed in some way to ensure safety and digestibility, and to improve colour, flavour or texture, to meet consumer expectations. The most basic definition of food processing is “a variety of operations by which raw foodstuffs are made suitable for consumption, cooking, or storage”. Hence, you could consider washing, peeling, slicing, juicing, and removing inedible parts, to be forms of processing. Legislation defines “food processing” as actions that substantially change the initial product, including heating, smoking, curing, maturing, drying, marinating, extraction, extrusion.

**How does food processing affect nutritional value?** Simple procedures like washing, cutting and packaging of fresh vegetables have little effect on their nutritional quality. Heating and boiling can reduce vitamin content (particularly water-soluble vitamins such as vitamin C, for example up to 40% of vitamin C can be lost from boiling peeled potatoes<sup>2</sup>), which varies with heating time and temperature. The process of blanching or boiling vegetables for a few minutes, followed by freezing, drying or canning, retains vitamins and minerals. Refined grains like white pasta, rice and bread, contain a lower amount of fibre and of vitamins and minerals than their whole grain counterparts; unless these are added back after milling (by the process of enrichment). In other cases, processing can release nutrients and make them more readily available for our bodies to use. For example, the Niacin (Vitamin B3) in maize is not nutritionally available unless the maize has been soaked and cooked in limewater (an alkaline solution of calcium hydroxide in water).

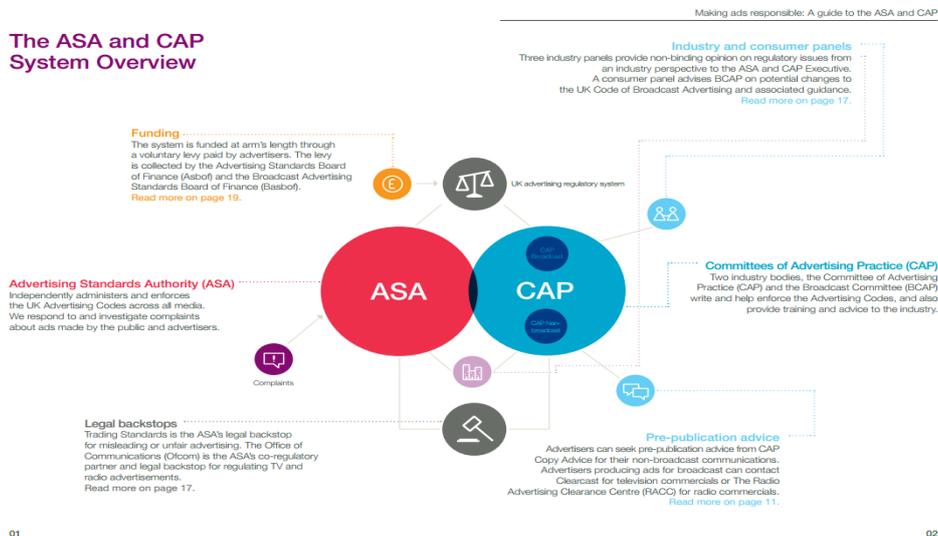
Access the full article on the EUFIC website: <http://tinyurl.com/m5r93vp>

## GUIDE TO THE ASA AND CAP

The Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) and Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) have produced a guide, ‘Making ads responsible: A guide to the ASA and CAP’.

The ASA is the UK’s independent regulator of advertising across all media. Together with CAP, who write the UK Advertising Codes, they work to make advertisements responsible.

This image gives an overview of ASA and CAP:



The full guide is available to download here: <http://tinyurl.com/mjexbjj>

## ECJ JUDGEMENT ON 'NEWBY' vs FSA re MSM

You will recall following an FVO audit in early 2013 the imposition on 4 April 2013 of a moratorium by the FSA on mechanically separated meat (MSM) production from the bones of ruminants and the reclassification of poultry and porcine de-sinewed meat (DSM) as mechanically separated meat in the UK.

Newby Foods Ltd took legal action against the Food Standards Agency (FSA) as a result. Certain aspects of the proceedings were referred by the UK High Court to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) for Judgement.

The referral centred around the degree of loss or modification of the muscle structure that is required to characterise MSM and distinguish it from mince and other meat that is removed from the bone.

The ruling concludes as follows:

Points 1.14 and 1.15 of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin must be interpreted as meaning that the product obtained by the mechanical removal of meat from flesh-bearing bones after boning or from poultry carcasses must be classified as 'mechanically separated meat' within the meaning of that point 1.14, since the process used results in a loss or modification of the muscle fibre structure which is greater than that which is strictly confined to the cutting point, irrespective of the fact that the technique used does not alter the structure of the bones used. Such a product cannot be classified as a 'meat preparation' within the meaning of that point 1.15.

ECJ appears to focus on the process from which MSM / DSM is derived and much less on the degree or modification arguing that any material that satisfies the three MSM criteria must be classified as MSM ie:

1. the use of bones from which the intact muscles have already been detached, or of poultry carcasses, to which meat remains attached,
2. the use of methods of mechanical separation to recover that meat,
3. the loss or modification of the muscle fibre structure of the meat thus recovered by reason of the use of those processes.

The ruling therefore is against Newby. Access it through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/knxylvz>



## BIS HIGHLIGHT NEW COMMERCIAL RIGHTS

Consumers will have greater powers to challenge unscrupulous rogue traders and get their money back under new rights, which came into force on 1st October 2014. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has produced guidance to support this recent government initiative.

Consumers who are bullied or misled into buying services or goods they neither need nor want, will now have a period of up to 90 days to take legal action.

Examples could include those who are harassed into home improvements by a door-to-door salesman when they really don't need it or somebody who is misled into purchasing a mobile phone by false promises on download speeds and network coverage.

The reforms are intended to especially benefit the elderly and vulnerable with National Audit Office figures showing that those over the age of 55 lose an average of nearly £1,100 when they are victims of rogue traders. Crime reporting agency Action Fraud estimates that consumers suffer detriment of at least £6.6 billion every year due to unfair trading.

A copy of the guidance Misleading and Aggressive Commercial Practices- New Private Rights for Consumers is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pagzjv3>

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT INTRODUCE CARRIER BAG CHARGE

Shoppers across Scotland are being encouraged to remember reusable bags to avoid a 5p minimum charge for single-use carrier bags, when landmark legislation comes into force in October.

A public awareness campaign has been launched ahead of the introduction of the charge on October 20, 2014. From that date it will cost at least 5p for each single-use carrier bag given out to shoppers regardless of where they shop, from supermarkets to corner shops and takeaways to high street retailers.

A dedicated website has been set up to provide information to Retailers affected: <http://tinyurl.com/n6rkvb4>, and more information on the charge and the types of bags included visit <http://tinyurl.com/oc9eknk>



## REFRIGERATION

### F GAS TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION FOR INDIVIDUALS



Following the publication of the F Gas Regulation earlier this year, the Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Industries Board (ACRIB) have started to publish guidance to help businesses impacted by the changes; including the impact of the F Gas Certified for qualified refrigeration engineers.

Existing individual F Gas Certificates issued in accordance with the 2006 F Gas Regulations remain valid under the new 2014 Regulation EC517/2014 (article 10 paragraph 7). This is a great relief for the 30,000 or so UK operatives who are already F Gas Qualified in the UK.

There are still a number of uncertainties in the 2014 F Gas Regulation on which UK Government and industry is awaiting clarification. For example the requirement for already F gas certified individuals to have access to information regarding technologies to replace HCFCs, and existing regulatory requirements for alternative refrigerants. There is also a clause in the new Regulations that says Member States have to make available training for anyone who wants to update their knowledge. The Commission is planning to carry out a review of existing legislation covering training for the safe-handling of alternative refrigerants and, if appropriate, submit a legislative proposal. The results of this review are expected in 2017.

The 2014 European F Gas Regulation 517/2014 is directly applicable in UK law. However UK legislation is needed to cover the compliance and enforcement measures. A draft of that legislation, which will repeal the previous UK F Gas Regulation, is due for consultation this autumn. The full text of the 2014 European F Gas Regulation is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ggxzv9m>

Further guidance on how the new F Gas changes will impact end users and contractors is being prepared by ACRIB and by European Contractors' association AREA and will be available shortly. Check <http://tinyurl.com/n4fdqkl> for updates and attend the ACRIB F Gas update conference on 11th November in London, for details contact [Sudakin@bfff.co.uk](mailto:Sudakin@bfff.co.uk)



# REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT & OFFICIAL CONTROLS

## DEFRA CUSTOMER INFORMATION NOTICE

Defra and the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) web pages have started to move over to the Gov.uk site. as part of a move to centralise web guidance. A review has been undertaken to ensure the necessary information is communicated clearly and consistently across government.

As part of this, more customer information notices will now be available on the Gov.uk website. For more information and links to the relevant web pages, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/pcmkmv>

## ENFORCEMENT OF THE WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT 1985

The National Measurements Office (NMO) has produced new guidance for Local Weights and Measures Authorities (LWMA).

The new guidance includes:

- Statutory obligations
- Section 70 return and reports
- National projects
- Market surveillance projects
- Local standards
- Weights and measures bulletins
- Competency
- Exams
- Guidance documents



Local Authorities' trading standards departments deliver the local enforcement of most of the UK's weights and measures legislation. The NMO works closely with the national co-ordinating body, the local government regulation and the professional institute for inspectors of weights and measures, the Trading Standards Institute (TSI) as well as regional groups of authorities and individual inspectors to promote consistency and best practice.

This information can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/nubhkym>

## FSA STRATEGY 2015-2020

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is developing the updated FSA Strategy for 2015-20, and are asking businesses if they think they are heading in the right direction.

FSA have been holding workshops in various parts of the country to discuss the latest draft and are organising an independent survey to gather consumer views on specific issues. The FSA have also launched a blog to ensure that businesses and individuals can have a say: <http://tinyurl.com/nnm7e3u>

The blog outlines some of the issues that the strategy aims to address and enables you to link through to the latest draft strategy that was discussed by the FSA Board on 10th September.

The papers from the FSA Board Meeting on 10th September are available here: <http://tinyurl.com/q2mecpl>



### Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Defra have updated their progress with the Red Tape Challenge.

The government's Red Tape Challenge is reviewing more than 21,000 regulations and rules to see which ones can be scrapped or improved. Defra leads on the environment and water and marine themes and is contributing to other themes such as those on retail and hospitality, food and drink.

Better Regulation can encourage economic growth by freeing business and civil society from unnecessary regulatory burdens and contribute to improving the environment and protecting human health. Reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens is a key theme of Defra's 10 Point Growth Plan.

Examples of reforms that have been or will be implemented include the following:

- in April 2012 new guidance on contaminated land was published which is expected to save business around £140 million per year
- Defra has published simplified and reduced guidance for recording hazardous waste disposal
- a new system for Waste Transfer Notes, launched in January 2014, will potentially save 23 million Waste Transfer Notes and save business £8.7 million a year
- from spring 2015 Defra will reduce the burden of producer responsibility obligations on small businesses

Defra's Smarter Environmental Regulation Review is reducing unnecessary complexity, inconsistency and duplication of environmental regulation and making compliance with legal obligations more transparent and easier. The first stage is rationalising environmental guidance and data reporting.

Defra has carried out a comprehensive assessment of the costs and benefits of all the regulations for which it is responsible.

More information, along with a list of documents, is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/kj2daz2>

## CONSOLIDATION OF ANIMAL FEED LEGISLATION IN ENGLAND

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has launched a consultation on the Consolidation of animal feed legislation in England for Composition, Marketing and Use and for Hygiene, Sampling, etc and Enforcement.

The consultation seeks comments from stakeholders on the draft legislation and associated impact assessment in order to raise awareness among animal feed business, dairy farming and enforcement stakeholders of the consolidation of the England animal feed legislation.

In England, the legal requirements on animal feed are currently provided in five domestic Statutory Instruments (SIs) which were introduced to meet the obligations of European Union (EU) legislation.

The consolidation of these provisions into two statutory instruments is intended to make it easier for stakeholders to access relevant information about the legal requirements for animal feed.

Comments are invited by 10 December 2014. You can submit feedback, or find out more information here: <http://tinyurl.com/n4tIs89>



The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has provided an update on the Official Controls Regulations. Negotiations in Brussels on the official controls proposal which is reviewing Regulation 882/2004 are moving quickly with the current Presidency keen to reach a compromise deal. The official controls review will potentially introduce mandatory charging for official controls carried out across the EU.

The current draft shows little change from the original proposal with mandatory charging across most sectors, however, there is some scope for reducing or exempting those charges based on sector or low throughput. The UK position continues to be that individual member states should decide how, when and where to charge including how to reduce the burden on businesses. As such, we do not agree with the scope of the controls included within Article 77 and the restrictive use of exemptions in Article 80. The FSA are supportive of the requirement to consult stakeholders and the obligation for transparency. Please find below the summary of the Official Controls proposal as provided by FSA:

### - Article 76

This sets out the principle that member states should make sure that sufficient resources are available by central budgets or charges to industry (or a combination) Member states may charge for other official activities as well as those controls subject to mandatory charging. Member states must also consult stakeholders on the general methods used to calculate fees.

### - Article 77

This sets out those fees that will be mandatory;

77(2) – minimum fees at border control posts for imports from outside the EU with the option to charge above the minimum fees (up to and not over the actual cost of the check). The minimum fees are set out in the annex.

77(3) – Mandatory full cost recovery for the following;

Approvals and authorisations for food, feed, plant and seed businesses

Additional inspections or investigations as a result of non-compliance

Certificates and attestations (plus the controls necessary to issue the certificates/attestations) Please note that this would include export certification

77(4) – Mandatory charges between 60% and 100% on all official controls at registered or approved food, feed, plant or seed businesses

There are exemptions for emergency control measures, disease controls measures and temporary restrictions, organics (because charging is covered by separate legislation) and the sustainable use directive (for pesticide application equipment)

### - Article 78

This sets out what the competent authorities can collect as part of any fee. As currently drafted, the list is non-exhaustive

### - Article 79

This sets out how fees are calculated;

For imports, any additional charge above the minimum fee can be calculated as either a flat rate or on an actual cost basis (the total import charge cannot exceed the actual cost)

Travel costs are not permitted to discriminate those businesses in remote areas or at distance from the competent authorities

- Article 80

A reduction in fees (for those fees detailed in 77(4) above) is permitted for businesses with low throughput, using traditional methods or in remote areas

An exemption (for those fees detailed in 77(4) above) is permitted for primary production and retail

- Article 81

This sets out that proof of payment will be given by those collecting the fee

- Article 83 (Article 82 deleted)

This sets out the transparency provisions that will apply including what information has to be made available to businesses and the public.

For more information on this, please contact [sudakin@bfff.co.uk](mailto:sudakin@bfff.co.uk)

## **DEFRA - COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY (CAP) REFORM**

Defra, in collaboration with several other government departments, published on 26 September 2014 information about the implementation of the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Regulations in England, including advice on 'greening' measures.

This collection of information brings together information on how the reform of the EU's CAP will affect farmers and includes information about the new schemes for farmers from 2015.

More information can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/m5qe69q>

## **ENFORCEMENT OF THE FOOD INFORMATION REGULATIONS**

The National Regulations putting in place the enforcement powers for the implementation of the new EU labelling Regulation 1169/2011 on the provision of Food Information to Consumers (FIC) was laid before Parliament on 15 July and entered into force on 15 August. The Food Information Regulation No 1855 – or FIR, is the English Statutory Instrument (SI); parallel legislation will apply in the devolved administrations, though unhelpfully they all take a slightly different approach to enforcement.

Main features of the England SI:

- Decriminalises most offences through the introduction of improvement notices – though food safety offences remain criminal breaches; depending on the nature of the contravention this can be enforced by prosecution or an improvement notice
- The responsibility for food information is extended across the whole food chain for the first time, including elements for business to business transactions.
- The scope of the regulations are now much broader than previous – extending beyond prepacked foods to include distance selling and provision of information by caterers

The main element of FIR is that it decriminalises non-food safety offences through the introduction of improvement notices. Currently contraventions on food legislation are criminal offences, prosecuted through the Magistrates court and punishable through fines. Improvement notices are a mechanism whereby regulatory non-compliance can be formally notified to a business, which then has the opportunity to correct it.

Failure to comply with an improvement notice however, is a criminal offence and can lead to prosecution; food safety contraventions – for example mislabelling of allergens, also remain as criminal offences.

## CHANGES TO ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION

Enforcement legislation is changing in other ways too. Proposed amendments to the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO) will introduce stronger powers for Magistrates in criminal cases to impose bigger fines, including for food offences. Within food law fines are almost all level 5 fines, for which the current maximum is £5000. The proposals will remove the cap and level 5 fines will become unlimited.

Other levels also change:

Fine Level	Current Maximum	Proposed new Maximum
1	200	800
2	500	2000
3	1000	4000
4	2500	10,000
5	5000	Unlimited



There is concern, that once FIR applies that improvement notices will be unnecessarily numerous; but we are assured by regulators that this will not be the case, as enforcement requires a hierarchy to be followed that means enforcement action is the last resort.

There is also a legal requirement for Local Authorities to have a Prosecution Criteria Checklist and policies in place to ensure that formal action is taken only when it is in the consumer interest and business interests are considered. In the event of enforcement action by a Local Authority we would strongly recommend that member business's check that these policies are in place and the Local Authority is compliant with it.

In issuing an improvement notice there are four elements that must be in place:

- Adequate grounds for the notice
- A statement describing the failure or breach in FIC compliance
- The measures expected of the business to address the breach
- The expected date for the remedial action

## CLASSIFICATION OF SHELLFISH PRODUCTION AREAS

The hygiene classification for shellfish harvesting areas in England and Wales, for the period 1 September 2014 to 31 August 2015 have been published. These have been made by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) under Part III of Schedule 3 to the Food Standards Act 1999 (Transitional and Consequential Provisions and Savings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000.

Further information on the 2014/15 classifications exercise and the classification list is available on the FSA's website via this link: <http://tinyurl.com/od8dd5e>



# RESEARCH

## GUT BACTERIA THAT PROTECT AGAINST FOOD ALLERGIES

Common gut bacteria from the class Clostridia could prevent sensitisation to allergies in food, according to new research that may pave the way for probiotic products aimed at battling food allergies and intolerances.

Writing in the Proceedings of the National Sciences (PNAS), the team of US researchers revealed that the presence of Clostridia, a common class of gut bacteria, may protect against food allergies by encouraging immune responses that prevent food allergens from entering the bloodstream.

The research, which was performed in mice, demonstrated that Clostridia can minimise allergen exposure and prevent sensitisation – a key step in the development of food allergies. The discovery points towards probiotic therapies for this so-far untreatable condition, said the University of Chicago team behind the research.

An abstract of the research is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pbaxruj> - or a full copy can be purchased from the Proceeding of the National Academy of Sciences of the US website, also through this link.

## SURVEY OF RADIOLOGICAL SUBSTANCES IN DRINKING WATER

The FSA has published a survey of the levels of radioactive substances currently found in bottled water.

No risk to health was identified. Some naturally-occurring radioactivity was detected in the 28 samples of UK bottled drinking water, but not at levels that would cause harm to health. There is nothing to suggest that consumers should change their dietary habits as a result of this survey.



The survey was prompted by a new European Commission directive setting out limits of radioactive substances in different sources of drinking water. These limits will be added to UK law by November 2015. None of the samples analysed breached any of the proposed legal limits.

The findings of the survey will be used as a comparison with results that will be collected from next year onwards by the bottled water industry. The survey results are presented in the Food Survey Information Sheet which can be found at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/krmnl36>

## FSA ANNUAL SCIENCE REPORT PUBLISHED

The Food Standards Agency's (FSA's) Annual Science Report has been published. The report provides information about the FSA's investment in science, evidence and analysis during 2013/14.

The report covers a range of topics including:

- efforts to reduce foodborne disease
- work on food allergy and intolerance
- activities following the horse meat incident
- the outcome of the review of radioactivity in food monitoring programme

Professor Guy Poppy, FSA Chief Scientific Adviser, said: 'Science really is at the heart of the FSA. This report highlights the work of the Agency over the past 12 months and really shows the breadth of the important work carried out to protect consumers' interests in relation to food.'

The report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/n72mcdb>

# SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENT & CSR

## GUIDANCE: REPORTING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Defra has produced guidance for businesses on measuring and reporting their greenhouse gas emissions.

The guidance includes:

- Reporting greenhouse gas emissions
- Reporting transport emissions
- Reporting on other environmental impacts

The guide is designed to help businesses measure and report their environmental impacts, including greenhouse gas emissions. Understanding and reporting these impacts can help identify ways of improving environmental performance and cutting costs.

- Environmental Reporting Guidelines: Including mandatory greenhouse gas emissions reporting guidance

This replaces the 2009 guidance on how to measure and report greenhouse gas emissions, the 2006 guidance on environmental key performance indicators, and Guidance on reporting greenhouse gas removals and emissions from domestic woodland creation, which have been combined into a single document.

The guidance is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/mqbn5z>



## GREENHOUSE GAS FEARS OVER INCREASED MEAT CONSUMPTION

Global consumption of meat needs to fall to ensure future demand for food can be met and to help protect the environment, according to Research from Cambridge and Aberdeen universities. The research estimates greenhouse gases from food production will go up 80% if meat and dairy consumption continues to rise at its current rate.

That will make it harder to meet global targets on limiting emissions. The study urges eating two portions of red meat and seven of poultry per week. However that call comes as the world's cities are seeing significant growth in burger restaurants.

The research highlights that more and more people from around the world are adopting American-style diets, leading to a sizeable increase in meat and dairy consumption. It says if this continues, more and more forest land or fields currently used for arable crops will be converted for use by livestock as the world's farmers battle to keep up with demand.

Deforestation will increase carbon emissions, and increased livestock production will raise methane levels and wider fertiliser use will further accelerate climate change.

For more on this, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/lrttdsn>



## CPET SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL NEWSLETTER

The 3rd edition of CPET newsletter on sustainable palm oil has been published by Defra and is now available on the Gov.uk website.

In this issue, the CPET look at:

- Progress of UK towards 100% sustainable palm oil target
- New EU labelling in December 2014
- RSPO National Initiatives meeting – overview of different country initiatives
- Other EU commitments
- New CPET website which has moved to Gov.uk



The newsletter is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/kraza8t>

## FAO PUBLISH REPORT ON THE WORLD'S FISHERIES



The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) has published 'The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture'.

The new edition highlights the significant role that fisheries and aquaculture plays in eliminating hunger, promoting health and reducing poverty. Never before have people consumed so much fish or depended so greatly on the sector for their well-being. Fish is extremely nutritious – a vital source of protein and essential nutrients, especially for many poorer members of our global community.

The full FAO report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/n743rke>

## GMA PUBLISHES SUCCESS STORIES REPORT

The Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA) has published Environmental Success Stories in the Consumer Packaged Goods Industry report.

The report is an update to the inaugural report released in 2012. The 2012 report highlighted many accomplishments; among them that the Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) industry is outpacing the Standard & Poor's 500 on both carbon and water performance.

The 2014 report includes even more examples of sustainability innovation and creativity from food, beverage and consumer products sector.

The GMA report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pm476fb>



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