

British Frozen Food Federation



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Highlights in this edition:

The Food Information Regulation, Changes to Nutrition and Health Claims made on Foods
FSA Changes to Meat Plant Inspections: Publication of Audits and Charges

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Food Information Proposal

The Food Information Regulation was presented at a European Council Meeting on 29 September 2011 and adopted without discussion. According to Defra publication in the Official Journal is imminent and it will come into force 20 days after that.

We are now starting to see what the full impact is going to be. Not only will it ultimately change each and every food label in the UK – and possibly Europe; in some sectors it is going to fundamentally change the flow of information throughout the whole supply chain along with the technology that has to support it. Defra, alongside the devolved administrations; have held a number of stakeholder events that have provided useful insights into the general provisions and what they mean.

Most provisions of the FIR will apply 3 years from its entry into force, at which point the Food Labelling Regulations (FLR) will be repealed. For the duration of those three years the two will run in parallel and within reason there will be the ability to cherry pick from either. However there are some notable provisions where the date of application isn't clear. One of these is where responsibilities have changed. As before the brand owner is responsible for food information, but the FIR now allows food information to be changed without the need for authorisation from a supplier. Be aware though if information is changed, a new name and address must be put on pack – that of the business making the change, they then take responsibility for the information. This would apply if a business were freezing down a chilled food and applying a new durability date. It's not clear currently, whether this change applies immediately or after three years.

The new Regulation applies directly, without national legislation having to be made except for enforcement and penalties. Defra plan a 12 week consultation on these starting May / June next year with the Statutory Instrument likely to come into force at the end of 2012. They have confirmed that the due diligence defence will be maintained, and also that penalties will include civil as well as criminal sanctions. You should also note, that the FIR are horizontal regulations, Defra have made it clear that where there are vertical regulations for specific food sectors that the requirements in these would take precedence where there are differences in detail. Guidance for enforcement officers' is

expected, alongside the enforcement SI but specific technical guidance may take longer and follow a more evolutionary process. Defra seek to be proactive with their guidance, and appreciate the urgency needed to get it out, but consistency is needed across all Member States and subjects where interpretation might vary will have to be referred to the Commission. Internally where differences in interpretation give rise to inconsistency in enforcement, there will be mechanisms through the Local Government Regulation, Communities of Practise Forum for mediation.

Country of Origin (COO)

A mandatory statement of Country of Origin is extended beyond foods such as beef and honey to the fresh, chilled or frozen meat from swine, sheep, goats and poultry. Though we need to wait up to two years to get clarity on the detail for implementation. Further to this it will also be mandatory for primary ingredients. Where COO is given for the food on a voluntary basis and it is different from its primary ingredient, the COO for the primary ingredient must also be given – appreciating that primary ingredients include those for which a quid would normally have to be provided, for complex composite products such as recipe dishes it could be multiple origins.

Foodservice and Wholesale

Foodservice and catering businesses face changes too. All food business operators supplying non-prepacked goods must now provide allergen information (and any other mandatory food information that is relevant to that food) to their customers so as to enable it to be passed onto consumers, including foodservice and catering outlets. But clarity is still needed on the most appropriate way of providing allergy information to consumers in these outlets.

Nutrition information becomes mandatory for prepacked foods in 5 years, but if it is provided on a voluntary basis it must be compliant with the requirements of the FIR in 3 years. For caterers who are being encouraged through responsibility deals to provide energy information voluntarily as part of the action plan to tackle obesity this has implications. Where an energy indication is provided voluntarily on catering menus clarity is being sought on whether this would require KJ as well as Kcal. Further up the chain supplying this sector are Wholesalers. With respect to the new distance selling provisions it is unclear for wholesale businesses the most

appropriate way to make mandatory information available to their customers, who are often buying from brochures, via the internet or through telesales.

Date of first Freezing

The need for meat, meat preparations and unprocessed fishery products to bear a date of first freezing will present challenges to suppliers, processors and consumers alike. Established global supply chains, are being asked to provide information that some of them are just not set up to do. Routine co-mingling of lots within supply chains will present a particular challenge for fish in the provision of a date that is in any way meaningful. And this for information, that on current form is likely to result, at best in lack of understanding by the consumer, and at worst drive increased waste and reduced consumption. Whether it is upgrading printing equipment or the supply chain and traceability systems to get the information to the packing line, starting looking at what this is going to cost you!

Water

It's worth taking the time to understand if there is any impact on the amount and nature of the water in, or on your products. If you make meat products or preparations, which have the appearance of a cut, joint, slice, portion or carcass of meat, and water is added as an ingredient over 5% it'll need to go in the name, the equivalent fishery products and prepared fishery products are subject to same requirement. If you produce meat, meat preparations or

unprocessed fishery products, water at any level of inclusion must be listed in the ingredients list. Vegetable processors are not unaffected. If a protective glaze is applied, weight will have to be net of glaze, and where processors are affected they need clarity from the National Metrological Office on how they will be able to apply an average weight.

Product names

With the aim of being more informative, Annex VI is definitely worth a look to see if your products are affected. This particular annex covers the name of the food and specific accompanying particulars. The annex includes a number of requirements including:

- For previously frozen foods to bear the designation "defrosted", though subject to several derogations, it needs to be clear specifically where the designation "defrosted" may or may not be needed and what flexibility there might be on where and how the information is provided on pack
- The designation "formed" is another one to watch. The intent here was to indicate where ingredients are used to "glue" large pieces together to form what might be mistaken for a joint. Its important here that guidance doesn't extend beyond what was originally intended by the Commission, and we hope it will build on currently existing and well established codes of practise

The most recent approved text is available at <http://tinyurl.com/dy96mhs>

New Salmonella Criteria for Poultry

COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 1086/2011 of 27 October 2011 amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Annex I to Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 as regards salmonella in fresh poultry meat has been published in the Official Journal of the European Union

The regulation amends Regulation 2073/2005 on the microbiological criteria for foods by introducing detailed rules for Salmonella food safety criterion in fresh poultry meat and amending hygiene criteria on poultry. The Regulation remains unchanged from the draft referred to in paper 2011/05/G of 25 July, as the draft notified to WTO.

The food safety criterion is set for Salmonella enteritidis and Salmonella typhimurium only. This is aimed to provide balance between reducing human salmonellosis and a proportionate burden to

The key changes are:

business as 80% of the food-borne illness in humans is caused by these two serotypes. None out of five 25 g samples would be allowed to contain these serotypes of Salmonella when products are placed on the market during their shelf life; a requirement that will have a much greater impact on frozen poultry products than their chilled counterparts. The horizontal analytical method ISO 6579 is the reference method for identification and the White-Kaufmann-Le Mann scheme for serotyping.

The Regulation also amends the process hygiene criterion with the number of units allowed to exceed the criteria limits before action must be taken reduced. Where Salmonella spp. is identified isolates must also be serotyped for S. Typhimurium and S. Enteritidis to ensure compliance with the food safety criteria in chapter 1 of Annex I.

1. Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 2072/2008 on the Microbiological Criteria for Foodstuffs, Chapter 1 has the following addition:

Food category	Micro-organisms	n	c	Limits	Analytical Reference method	Stage where criterion applies
1.28 Fresh poultry meat (20)	Salmonella typhimurium (21) Salmonella enteritidis	5	0	Absence in 25g	EN/ISO 6570 (for detection) White-Kaufmann-Le Minor scheme (for serotyping)	Products placed on the market during their shelf life

(20) This criterion shall apply to fresh meat from breeding flocks of Gallus gallus, laying hens, broilers and breeding and fattening flocks of turkeys

(21) As regards monophasic Salmonella typhimurium only 1, 4 [5], 12:l:- is included.

2. In Chapter 2, Row 2.1.5 and the corresponding footnote 10 are replaced with:

Food category	Microorganisms	n	c	Limits	Analytical reference method	Stage where the criterion applies	Action in case of unsatisfactory results
2.1.5	Salmonella spp (10)	50	7 From 1.1.2012 c=5 for broilers From 1.1.2013 c=5 for turkeys	Absence in 25g of a pooled sample of neck skin	EN/ISO 6579 (for detection)	Carcasses after chilling	Improvement in slaughter hygiene and review of process controls, origin of animals and biosecurity measures in the farms of origin

(10) Where Salmonella spp. is found, the isolates shall be further serotyped for Salmonella typhimurium and Salmonella enteritidis in order to verify compliance with the microbiological criterion set out in row 1.28 of chapter 1.

3. Chapter 3. covers rules for sampling and the preparation of test samples, section 3.2 is replaced.

It lays down detailed rules for bacteriological sampling which will now be extended to include premises producing mechanically separated meat and fresh meat in addition to slaughter houses and premises producing minced meat and meat preparations.

Slaughterhouses will have to include poultry carcasses with unknown Salmonella spp. status and those that are known to be positive for S. enteritidis or typhimurium and sample whole poultry carcasses with neckskin. Other premises should prioritise

whole carcasses with neckskins but the regulation allows that portions with and without skin may also be tested on the basis of risk.

The amending Regulation enters into force on 17 November and applies from 1 December 2011.

For the full text go to <http://tinyurl.com/d2558s3>

New Traceability Requirements for Food of Animal Origin

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) No 931/2011 of 19 September 2011 on the traceability requirements set by Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council for food of animal origin was published in the Official Journal on 20 September.

We have followed its protracted progress as 1490/2007, the Regulation concerns traceability requirements for food business operators in respect of food of animal origin, it requires certain information to be made available to the food business operator to whom the food is supplied (and, upon request, to the competent authority):

- (a) an accurate description of the food;
- (b) the volume or quantity of the food;
- (c) the name and address of the food business operator from which the food has been dispatched;
- (d) the name and address of the consignor (owner) if different from the food business operator from which the food has been dispatched;
- (e) the name and address of the food business operator to whom the food is dispatched;
- (f) the name and address of the consignee (owner), if different from the food business operator to whom the food is dispatched;
- (g) a reference identifying the lot, batch or consignment, as appropriate; and

(h) the date of dispatch.

The new Regulation entered into force on 10 October and applies from 1 July 2012. The text can be accessed through: <http://tinyurl.com/cldf76m>

We have also been waiting for the publication of proposal SANCO 1489/2007 Draft COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No .../. of [...] amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the requirements concerning frozen food of animal origin intended for human consumption that has progressed through the regulatory mechanism alongside 1490/2007. We now don't expect this to be published imminently though the indicated application date remains 1 July 2012 in the most recent draft.

1489/2007 concerns frozen products up to the stage at which a food is labelled or is used for further processing. It would require certain information to be made available to the food business operator to whom the food is supplied (and, upon request, to the competent authority). This information includes the date of production. This is taken to mean the date of harvesting/catching in the case of fishery products or the date of processing for any other food of animal origin. The date of freezing must also be provided if this is different from the date of production.

Revision of Codex Standards for Quick Frozen Vegetables

At the 24th Session of the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV) in October 2008, an electronic working group led by the U.S. was established to consider whether, amongst other things, Codex standards for quick frozen fruits and vegetables were still relevant; whether they needed revision and if so how they should be revised - partial or totally, and if being revised, whether they should remain as individual standards or could be grouped in more general standards (horizontal approach)

The 25th CCPFV Session in October 2010 decided to initiate the revision of the existing ten specific Codex standards for Quick frozen Vegetables using the horizontal approach with common general provisions and specific annexes by an e working group, working in English and led by the United States.

A draft text of the of the standard has been circulated to the working group and other members of the CCPFV for comment, they are asked to note the following:

- Name of the standard: - The word "Certain" was inserted in the title to indicate that the standard covers only a limited number of vegetables types. The name is changed from Codex Standard for Quick Frozen Vegetables to the Codex Standard for Certain Quick Frozen vegetables.
- The necessity of maintaining or deleting the word "Quick" in the standard. Members are invited to indicate if there are fresh vegetables that do not undergo the quick frozen process. For, if there were none, it would be prudent to delete the word "quick" wherever it appears in the standard and

rename the standard "Certain Frozen Vegetables".

- The Food Additive section: - Because this section is not complex it was revised and retained within each annex. The revision is based on established trade practices, the GSFA and other relevant Codex documents. Hence members are asked to update the list.
- Included in the draft is an additional annex, as although the codex standard for French Fried Potatoes (CODEX STAN 114 – 1981), was not included in the original ten standards to be revised, could be included; as its' characteristics and freezing procedure are similar to that of the ten vegetables.

Attached is the draft standard that comprises:

General Provisions

Annex 1: - Broccoli

Annex II: - Brussels sprouts

Annex III: - Carrots

Annex IV: - Cauliflower

Annex V: - Corn-on-the-cob

Annex VI: - French Fried Potatoes

Annex VII: - Green beans & wax Beans

Annex VIII: - Leek

Annex IX: - Peas

Annex X: - Spinach

Annex XI: - Whole Kernel Corn

Comments must be submitted by working group and CCPFV members by January 31, 2012. This will allow another round of comments, if necessary, prior to the 26th CCPFV session scheduled for October 15 – 19, 2012. The UK is a member of the e working group represented by Defra, who are asking for comments to them by 21 Jan. For more information the contact at Defra is Michelle McQuillan at Michelle.McQuillan@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Proposals for Common Market Organisation (CMO) in Fishery and Aquaculture products

On 13th July the European Commission published a package of proposals to reform both the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the supporting Common Market Organisation (CMO) in fishery and aquaculture products.

Defra have consulted on the proposals to inform and prioritise their discussions in Europe over the next 18 months. In their letter Defra broadly welcome the changes as necessary to fixing this broken policy. But it will bring some real challenges and issues to the fish processing sector

The full list of proposals can be found by following the hyperlink below, but the areas likely to be of most interest are those on the Common Organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products (CMO) - COM(2011)416 especially Chapter IV which proposes change to some of the labelling requirements for fishery products.

- retail rules for labelling of commercial designation, production method and catch area would be extended to CN Chapter 1604 and 1605 products: Prepared or preserved fish; caviar and caviar substitutes prepared from fish eggs; crustaceans, molluscs and other aquatic invertebrates, prepared or preserved.
- CN Chapter 3 fish products in addition to current labelling rules would need to include the "date of capture" and whether fresh or defrosted
- That "mandatory information **shall be displayed** in a clear and distinct manner"

is written clearly into the proposal

- It is intended to come into force on 1st January 2013.

BFFF believe that there are some elements of Chapter IV on Consumer Information that are a duplication of other regulatory requirements and that will place additional burdens on the fish sector.

The new requirement in Art 42 for the date of catch of fishery products or harvest of aquaculture products to be labelled on CN Chapter 3 fish products is one such example when applied to Frozen Fish for retail sale. When taken in the context of the recently adopted Food Information Regulation (FIR) and the new requirement for a date of first freezing that appears in Annex III of that Regulation some products are now faced with the prospect of having to print 3 dates on pack. BFFF have proposed a derogation for frozen fish on the application of the date of catch or harvest to restrict the number of dates to two.

On a separate point, the requirement to label whether a product is fresh or has been defrosted (Art 42 Paragraph 1e), appears to be adding further to duplication and inconsistency that already exists within the Control Regulations (Council Regulation No 1224/2009, Art 58 on Traceability paragraph 5. h and paragraph 6. and Commission Implementing Regulation no. 404/2011, Art 68 paragraph 3 on Information to the consumer) as well as the recently agreed Food Information Regulation: The Food Information Regulation requires "in the case of foods that have been frozen before sale and which are sold defrosted, the name of the food shall

be accompanied by the designation “defrosted” “. The additional introduction of a separate provision as part of the proposed CMO we feel adds to the duplication and ambiguity. BFFF have suggested that it would provide fairness and proportionality, to link

the CMO directly to the detailed provisions in Annex VI of the Food Information Regulation. For the full Fish CMO proposal go to: <http://tinyurl.com/cyesqon> Details and further links to the CFP proposal papers: <http://tinyurl.com/cg2rxlz>

Proposed Amendments to Health and Nutrition Claims on Foods

The Regulation on nutrition and health claims made on foods was adopted In December 2006, and came into effect in July 2007, since which time we have been waiting for the Annexes to be agreed and published.

The Regulation established harmonised rules across the European Union for the use of nutrition claims such as “low fat”, “high fibre” or health claims such as “reducing blood cholesterol”. In order to bear a claim, foods would have to have an appropriate nutrient profile, the detailed rules for which are substantially delayed and we are also still waiting for them. Discussion on nutrient profiles is expected to recommence at the end of this year. The Commission also established a register of nutrition claims, The register can be accessed through the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/338kgjb>

The so-called ' Function' or Article 13 health claims cover claims: that relate to the growth, development and functions of the body; refer to psychological and behavioural functions, and ; on slimming or weight-control.

Amendments are also proposed to permitted Nutrition claims, which were agreed by the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health on 13 October The draft Regulation would add two new nutrition claims and modify the conditions of use of the claim 'reduced in [name of the nutrient]' as follows:

The new claim 'now contains X% less of [energy, fat, saturated fat, sodium/salt and/or sugars]' would allow for the commercial communication

of reformulation initiatives from 15% reduction and would be valid for one year.

The criteria added to the conditions of use of the claim 'reduced in [name of the nutrient]' would also apply when saturated fat and/or sugars reduction is claimed.

The new claim 'no added salt' would only be permitted if the natural content of sodium is low, i.e. below 0,12g sodium per 100g.

Additional criteria to use the claim 'reduced in [name of the nutrient]' would be added to ensure such claims are not misleading: - when saturated fat reduction is claimed, the criteria ensure that saturated fat is not replaced by trans fatty acids. - for sugars reduction, the criteria ensure that the content in energy of the reformulated product is equal to or less than the content in energy in the original product, in order to avoid sugars substitution by fat.

Now it has been agreed by SCFAH (composed of representatives of EU-countries' competent authorities). The draft will be submitted to the European Parliament and the Council for scrutiny. If there are no objections the Commission will adopt and publish the decision. For general information visit the Commission website at: <http://tinyurl.com/bp5zers>

For the REGULATION (EC) No 1924/2006 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 20 December 2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods go to: <http://tinyurl.com/c9llmcv>

Defra Publishes Updated Analysis Guidelines for Water Quality

The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has issued new guidance on the analysis of water quality.

The Chemical Analysis of Water Status (Technical Specifications) Directions 2011 set out the technical specification for chemical analysis and monitoring of water quality status. The analysis supports the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and follows the

requirements set out in the Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) Directive. The Directions, which are also being separately introduced in the Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland Assemblies, came into force on 20th August.

<http://tinyurl.com/4yok929>

Lancet Reports on the Obesity Pandemic

This is a four-part Series critically examining what we know about global obesity: its drivers, its economic and health burden, the physiology behind weight control and maintenance, and what science tells us about the kind of actions that are needed to change our obesogenic environment and reverse the current tsunami of risk factors for chronic diseases in future generations.

The Lancet could not be clearer on the obesity problem: Action is needed - and needed now. In effect, it is a call to arms for governments across the world and society as a whole.

In fact, it is getting so bad that experts are beginning to question the ability of the individual to take responsibility for their own actions because of factors such as the increasing availability of cheap, fast food.

Harry Rutter, of the National Obesity Observatory, says: "In practice it is easier for people to gain weight than to lose it. Increasing fatness is the result of a normal response, by normal people, to an abnormal situation."

'No country has escaped'

An estimated 500m people across the world are now classed as obese. In the UK, one in four are. Across the Atlantic it is even worse - a third of adults are obese.

Tonga has a particular problem among its female population with seven in 10 women obese.

In the UK, experts predict obesity levels will nearly double in the next 20 years. That could mean an extra £2bn a year has to be spent by the NHS to cope.

The Department of Health - is responding by working with industry to encourage healthier lifestyles, through the Responsibility Deal Pledges to reduce the salt, sugar and fat content of food.

But for many experts this is not enough. The Lancet researchers have argued tougher action - such as legislation - is needed. One of the papers said steps such as a tax on unhealthy food and drinks and traffic light labelling on food would be so beneficial for health that they would save money in the long run.

Some countries - albeit a minority - have started to look at some of these measures. In September, Hungary will introduce a tax on pre-packaged foods containing high salt and sugar content, such as crisps and chocolates.

Finland and Norway have already taken the step.

The first paper looks at the global drivers of the epidemic; the second paper analyses obesity trends in the USA and UK, and their impact on prevalence of diseases and healthcare spending. The third paper introduces a new web-based bodyweight simulation model, that incorporates metabolic adaptations that occur with decreasing bodyweight; and the final paper assesses the interventions needed to halt and reverse the epidemic. Its authors conclude that the changes needed are likely to require many sustained interventions at several levels, but that national governments should take the lead. For the full reports following this:

<http://tinyurl.com/3kwvpd7>

The latest Health Survey for England (HSE) data shows us that nearly 1 in 4 adults, and over 1 in 10 children aged 2-10, are obese. There is also a significant burden on the NHS – direct costs caused by obesity are estimated to be £4.2 billion per year and forecast to more than double by 2050 if we carry on as we are. For more information on UK position on obesity visit the Department of Health website : <http://tinyurl.com/5seuchl>

Tackling Obesity

The Department of Health has published: Healthy Lives, Healthy People: A call to action on obesity in England'

Following on from the Public Health White Paper, this document sets out how action on obesity will be delivered as the move is made towards a new public health system. It announces the Government's new national ambitions for a downward trend in excess weight in both children and adults by 2020 and sets out how, by working together, a wide range of partners will be able to make these ambitions a reality.

As part of the vision for achieving these ambitions, the Call to action issues a new 'calorie reduction challenge', calling on the food and drink industry to play a key role – alongside Government and others – in reducing the population's calorie intake by 5 billion calories a day to help close the crucial imbalance between energy in and energy out.

England has one of the highest rates of obesity in Europe, with more than 60% of adults and a third of 10 and 11 year olds overweight or obese.

Obesity, which is a major risk factor for diseases such as type 2 diabetes, cancer and heart disease, costs

the NHS £5bn each year, and costs the wider economy billions more.

For the White paper, Healthy Lives Healthy People published in November 2010, follow the link <http://tinyurl.com/32nt3sr>

The call to action document can be found by following this link <http://tinyurl.com/6ja4q3b>

Alongside the DoH report the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) has published a report on Dietary Recommendations for Energy.

In 1991, the Committee on the Medical Aspects of Food Policy (COMA) provided dietary reference values for energy (DRVs). The DRVs provide the best estimate of food energy needs for the UK population and its subgroups and criteria against which to judge

the adequacy of their energy intakes. Any sustained imbalance between energy intake and expenditure leading to progressive gain or loss in weight.

Since 1991, the measurement of energy expenditure has advanced. As a result, the evidence base on energy expenditure in a variety of population groups has expanded. Also since the DRVs were set, the levels of overweight and obesity in the UK have risen sharply. The recommendations on energy intake will remain the same, but detailed advice to health professionals and those planning menus for specific groups will change in line with SACN's recommendations.

A copy of the full report is available for download via the above link. <http://tinyurl.com/6g6g43c>

IGD Publishes Research Report on Energy Density of Food

The IGD have published a free guide for food businesses on the role of energy density in helping consumers make healthy choices. It can be used to provide businesses with:

- Information on energy density and its role in achieving energy balance
- Methods to incorporate energy density into reformulation and NPD
- Guidance on using the concept of energy density in consumer communications to help achieve energy balance

The IGD say that the report will be of interest to anyone working in nutrition, regulatory and scientific affairs, product development, product design, consumer insights, and related roles.

The report contains the results of qualitative consumer research on understanding of energy density and messages relating to the concept. In addition the report contains information on:

- How food businesses currently consider energy density in the context of product development and reformulation
- Techniques to reduce energy density
- Messages and consumer communications about energy density
- Case studies

Copies can be downloaded free from the IGD website on the following link <http://tinyurl.com/6x74mq>

Changes to Food Business Approval Process

The Food Standards Agency is contacting relevant groups about changes to the approvals process for establishments that require approval under European Union food or feed hygiene legislation. A High Court judgement and Judicial Review established that premises that change ownership require a new approval in order to operate. The judgment also established that this has been a requirement since the hygiene legislation was introduced on 1 January 2006. Consequently businesses which have changed ownership since January 2006 will be required to be reapproved and all those that do so in future.

The ruling applies to all approved establishments, such as slaughterhouses, fish processing establishments and game handling establishments, and whether or not the nature of their business has changed.

To allow time for interested parties to adjust to the ruling, the FSA will implement changes to its approval process from 31 January 2012. In the meantime, FSA will be contacting establishments, for which it has responsibility and that have changed FBO since 2006, to make arrangements for new approval applications and, after January 2012, reassessment.

The FSA is advising those affected that have changed food business operator since 2006 without being reapproved, that they may continue to operate until the required approval visit and use their existing approval number after a successful reassessment. Changes to ownership after 31 January 2012 may, however, require a new approval number, unless business activities remain substantially the same.

Businesses that have changed FBO since being approved, and those that do so in the future, should inform their enforcement authority at the earliest opportunity.

Letters to relevant groups, and explanatory annexes, are available at the links below.

<http://tinyurl.com/6eoh33s>

The action originates from a High Court Judgement from 14 October 2008, after Lincoln District Magistrates' Court made a food condemnation order on an application by West Lindsey District Council. The application related to approximately 200 tonnes of fish, fish products and ready to eat fish products in two cold stores. The basis on which the order was

made was that the appellant (Roland International Seafoods aka Allan Rich Seafoods or Allrich Seafoods – all owned by Mr Roland Saldanha) was not approved as required by food law. The case stated from the Magistrates to the High Court asked a number of questions, but central to answering them was a consideration of the issue of approval.

For a copy of the High Court ruling follow:

<http://tinyurl.com/64kvkom>

For the Judicial Review application follow:

<http://tinyurl.com/6gy9jdv>

FSA Launches Plan to Unify the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

The FSA has set out its plans to encourage all remaining local authorities in England and Northern Ireland to adopt the Agency's Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS).

The plans are for:

- A new 'priorities fund' to cover the costs that local authorities may face after adopting the scheme from unexpectedly high levels of re-visit requests from food businesses. This is in addition to the existing grant funding programme for pre-launch work.
- A partnership between the FSA and Transparency Data – the company currently running the scoresonthedoors.org.uk website – (an alternative scheme) to enhance the FHRS IT platform and facilitate the integration of data from the two schemes.
- An 'FHRS pledge' for food businesses that have outlets across the country to give their support to the FHRS.

The FHRS is designed to help people choose where to eat out or shop for food, by giving them information about the hygiene standards in restaurants, pubs, cafés, takeaways, hotels, supermarkets and other food shops. The scheme is run by local authorities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in partnership with the Food Standards Agency.

There are 163 local authorities already up and running with the FHRS. Discussions with local authorities over the past 18 months have revealed

the reasons why some are not yet committed to the Agency's scheme. These include concerns about potential costs, particularly for re-visits, the IT system used for displaying the ratings, or simply a desire to remain with well-established local schemes.

The FSA wants to encourage them to adopt the scheme voluntarily and ahead of the Olympics next year.

In addition to the FHRS, there is another similar scheme currently in operation, known as 'scores on the doors'. Transparency Data publishes hygiene scores for the 125 local authorities who use the Scores on the Doors scheme. The FSA has reached agreement with Transparency Data to acquire the existing Scores on the Doors contracts and software, and to work with the firm to encourage remaining local authorities to transfer to the FHRS. The agreement will enable the Agency to move towards publishing ratings in a single format for thousands more businesses across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. A different scheme, with similar aims, is being rolled out by local authorities in Scotland.

For more about the FHRS visit

<http://tinyurl.com/6efzee>

New Recommended Action Levels for Dioxins, Furans and PCB's

2011/516/EU: Commission Recommendation of 23 August 2011 on the reduction of the presence of dioxins, furans and PCBs in feed has been published in the Official Journal of the European Union. And can be found at . <http://tinyurl.com/3jdn6cb>

The text is a recommendation to member states, who are not obliged to implement them. Though it is likely that in the UK we will. FSA is the responsible authority UK wide for contaminants.

If they are implemented they constitute action levels as opposed to Maximum levels. Maximum levels for dioxins, the sum of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs are set for feed by Directive 2002/32/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 May 2002 and on undesirable substances in animal feed and food by

Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 of 19 December 2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs.

Exceedence of action levels will trigger investigation and measures to reduce them only.

The new recommendation replaces the previous recommendation 2006/88/EC from 1/01/12 and it's interesting to note that not all levels have gone down. Poultry, mixed fats, farmed fish and farmed fishery products, milk, hen's eggs and products thereof, fruits vegetables and cereals have reduced but the action levels for bovine animals, sheep and pigs is higher.

Revocation of the Authorised Officers (Meat Inspection) Regulations 1987 (England)

The FSA has consulted on whether to revoke the above regulations. The Scottish, Northern Ireland and Welsh devolved governments have conducted parallel consultations.

Currently paragraph 1.2.9.3.1 of the Food Law Code of Practice states that in respect of fresh meat, only officers qualified in accordance with the above Regulations can inspect, seize and detain the meat. This now causes an anomaly due to the different qualification routes available, as some Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) with equivalent qualifications cannot currently be authorised to seize meat. A new qualification – the Higher Certificate in Food Control – has also recently been introduced which gives officers the knowledge and skills to inspect, seize and detain all food, including fresh meat. This will allow a greater number of suitably qualified officers to carry out this duty

Suitability requirements are laid down within the Food Law Code of Practice. These require that to inspect, seize and detain food officers should be, in relation to the Food Law Code of Practice:

- an authorised Environmental Health Officer (EHO)
- an authorised Official Veterinarian
- an appropriately authorised Trading Standards Officer

The revocation of the Authorised Officers (Meat Inspection) Regulations 1987 would allow all local authority officers who meet the requirements of the Code of Practice to be authorised to seize fresh

meat, including those holding equivalent qualifications. This will enable local authorities to make more effective use of their available qualified and competent resource.

Revocation of the Authorised Officers (Meat Inspection) Regulations 1987 will not retrospectively impact upon holders of the qualifications they refer to or the authorisations issued under them to date. The Trade in Animal Related Products Regulations (TARP) 2011 provides for 'authorised officers' of an enforcement authority to act and makes no mention of qualifications or reliance upon the 1987 regulations, as such removal of the regulation should not impact activities undertaken under the TARP regulations.

Key proposal(s):

- Revoke the Authorised Officers (Meat Inspection) Regulations 1987
- Notify local authorities that the equivalency flexibilities within the Code are extended to include fresh meat for holders of the Higher Certificate in Food Control
- Update the Food Law Code of Practice to include the Higher Certificate in Food Control as an appropriate qualification for the inspection, seizure and detention of all foodstuffs

For more information: <http://tinyurl.com/5vja7wn>

Gangmaster Licensing Authority Consultation on Standards

This consultation reviews the Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA) Licensing Standards. They are interested to hear how the standards could be improved and in conducting this review, the GLA's objective is to ensure the standards safeguard the welfare and interests of workers, levels the playing field for legitimate license holders as well as reducing the burden on business. The consultation document is split into two main parts: chapter two details changes the GLA are intending to make and chapter three highlights additional issues where they have not determined their preferred approach.

The Licensing Standards set out the conditions that must be complied with to qualify for and retain a licence to operate in the sectors covered by the Authority's licensing scheme. The current licensing standards were issued in April 2009, the standards comprise the Gangmasters (Licensing Conditions) Rules 2009 and other relevant legislation. As of 27 July 2011, there are 1,154 licence holders. 24 have ALCs. For more information and a list of consultees visit the GLA website at: <http://tinyurl.com/6754k4h>

FSA Consultation on the Use of Nitrates in Meat Products

The FSA has been seeking the views of meat manufacturers on the use of nitrites in meat products and is asking for interested parties to respond to a European Union (EU) questionnaire. This monitoring exercise was envisaged in Commission Decision 2010/561/EU which approved the retention of national provisions on the use of nitrites in meat products in Danish legislation for a period of five years. On the basis of the collective responses, the Commission will decide whether it is appropriate to amend the levels of nitrites that may be added to meat products in Directive 2006/52/EC

The Commission is asking a number of questions relating to the typical and maximum amounts of nitrites added to various types of meat products. From the phrasing of the questions, it seems that the Commission is asking about non-traditional meat products, controls on the levels of nitrites and nitrates in which are based on added rather than residual amounts.

For more information go to the FSA website at : <http://tinyurl.com/6299x6v>

FSA Study into Prevalence of Infectious Intestinal Disease

Nearly 17 million people suffer from stomach upsets in the UK every year, leading to about 11 million lost working days, new research published by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has found.

'The study, which is the biggest of its kind for more than 10 years, looked at the impact of all cases of infectious intestinal disease (IID), not just those linked to food, on the UK population. IID is typically vomiting or diarrhoea, or a combination of the two. The research found:

- There are up to 17 million cases of IID annually
- Approximately 50% of people with IID took time off from work or school because of their symptoms. This represents nearly 19 million days lost
- For every case of IID recorded in national surveillance there are 147 that are unreported.
- Viruses, and the bacteria campylobacter are the most common causes of IID.

Norovirus was identified as the largest cause of IID in the UK. Although many norovirus infections are spread by person-to-person transmission, it does have the potential to cause foodborne disease and is included in the Agency's Foodborne Disease Strategy 2010–2015.

The study also shows that campylobacter was the main cause of bacterial IID in the UK. Campylobacter is estimated to cause about 500,000 cases of illness in the UK every year. It is mainly found on raw poultry, and a recent survey by the FSA found that two thirds of chicken samples on sale within the UK were contaminated with the bacteria.

The findings will be used by the FSA to reduce levels of IID in the UK. They will also be used to monitor the patterns of IID in the population, identify the microorganisms of greatest significance to public health, and target interventions for reducing these germs in the food chain. Follow the link for a copy of the full report and other related FSA reports :

<http://tinyurl.com/5rue8qh>

FSA Report on Food Safety Behaviours in the Home

One of the Food Standards Agency's (FSA or the Agency) priorities within its Strategic Plan for 2010-2015 is to reduce foodborne disease, using a targeted approach on those pathogens that cause the severest and largest number of cases, such as *Campylobacter* and *Listeria Monocytogenes* (*L. Monocytogenes*). The domestic sector is a key element of this strategy. One area identified is for the FSA to better understand the role of public behaviours in minimising the risks of foodborne disease, particularly in the home.

Whilst foodborne disease can affect anyone, particular groups within the population are more susceptible to food poisoning. This can include older people (usually defined as those aged over 60), those who have an immune suppressive disease, those who are pregnant and children aged under-5. How best to reach these people is a key issue. Moreover, there has been an unexplained increase in listeriosis amongst people over 60. Understanding why this is occurring and developing better methods for disseminating food safety advice to people over 60, are key issues.

The overall aim of the review was to determine what is known about the public's food storage and handling behaviours in the home relating to food safety, identify any relevant work which is in progress and help develop future analysis and/or primary research in this area.

Key findings

Food safety behaviours of the general population
For the general population, there was a strong indication of frequent failure to follow recommended food hygiene practices. Broadly the

evidence suggests:

People have a low level of awareness of recommended good practice with respect to cooking (correct final cooked temperature), storing raw meat on the bottom shelf (to avoid cross-contamination), and chilling (correct fridge temperatures);

People may fail to follow recommended personal hygiene (hand washing), cleaning, thawing (in refrigerators) and cross-contamination practices despite being aware of recommended practice in these areas;

There is limited use and comprehension of food safety parts of labels, such as use by' dates and storage instructions.

Association between knowledge and behaviour.
Whilst there was moderate evidence that knowledge of food safety was associated with better' food safety behaviour, this was not linear. The review consistently found that the relationship between knowledge and behaviours was influenced by risk awareness, perceptions of risk and optimism bias' (namely when people wrongly believe that they are not vulnerable to foodborne illness).

The report goes on to discuss more detail on suggested interventions for certain groups. The results of this research will be used to develop targeted advice to help reduce levels of food poisoning in the UK. The report can be found at the link below; <http://tinyurl.com/66aypfw>

FSA Report on Consumer Attitudes to E coli in Fruit and Vegetables

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is reminding consumers to follow good hygiene practices when storing and preparing vegetables, following two recent E.coli outbreaks. 'It's sadly a myth that a little bit of dirt doesn't do you any harm'

In Germany this summer, an outbreak involving more than 3,000 cases of E.coli O104 infection was eventually linked to sprouted fenugreek seeds. Cases were also reported in a number of other countries, including France.

Between December and August 2011, 250 cases of infection with E.coli O157 PT8 were reported in the UK. This outbreak is now over and was not linked to the outbreak in Germany, which involved a different strain of E.coli. The Health Protection

Agency has reported that there was an association between illness and handling some loose raw vegetables in the home, which, although safe to eat if handled correctly, could have had soil on them containing harmful bacteria.

FSA commissioned research to determine current behaviour, perception of risk and what messages are needed to encourage safer handling of vegetables, following these recent outbreaks, which has indicated more work may be needed to educate consumers about food safety when handling vegetables. Key findings:

- Fruit and vegetables were seen as low risk and associated with healthy eating, and food safety

considerations were not top-of-mind when handling vegetables.

- Pre-packaged vegetables looked 'clean' and were therefore seen as low risk. Dirt and soil on food heightened the perceived risk and acted as a visual cue prompting people to wash vegetables properly.
- There was limited awareness that cross-contamination from vegetables to other foods was a food safety risk. Risk was generally associated with raw meat.
- Behaviour was learnt at a young age from parents and was reinforced through education/ training and media coverage of food hygiene issues.
- Consumers practiced a range of good behaviours, such as washing their hands, washing fruit and vegetables and keeping their kitchen clean. However, these were not applied consistently or by all participants

- Media coverage of outbreaks of foodborne illnesses could reinforce good practice. However, in the absence of practical advice, consumers' response was generally to stop buying or eating certain foods rather than adopting better behaviours.

Consumers are likely to dismiss change where this was deemed too onerous or impractical. Specific messages that participants found effective were:

- washing and scrubbing vegetables reduces bacteria as well as dirt and chemicals
- bacteria carried on a range of vegetables could contaminate other foods
- cooking vegetables killed bacteria and was perceived to be a potent defence

For more information go to the FSA website:

<http://tinyurl.com/cyep3bu>

For the full report follow this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/d7l3flg>

FSA Publishes Research Review in Meat Controls

On Tuesday 6 September 2011 The Food Standards Agency published the final reports from a programme of research into the modernisation of meat controls in the UK.

The Agency is currently reviewing the existing system of meat inspection in slaughterhouses. The overall objective is to improve public health protection while delivering a more risk-based and proportionate system for official meat controls.

As part of this work, five projects were commissioned to study the risks to public health, animal health and welfare from changing the current meat hygiene inspection requirements. These projects, which have now been completed and evaluated by independent experts, focused on the following areas:

- post-mortem inspection tasks
- use of inspection data
- analysis of roles (such as official veterinarian presence when plant inspection assistants carry out post-mortem inspection of poultry)
- requirements for outdoor pig processing
- ante-mortem inspection of young/prime animals and poultry

Also published at the same time were results of consumer research into official controls. During 2010, the Agency organised a series of focus groups

with consumers to ask for their views on current and future meat hygiene controls. It was found that:

- consumers expect themselves, retailers and food outlets to monitor safety in the first instance, and have little awareness of the current system of controls
- on being told more about the current system of controls, consumers were reassured by what they learnt
- consumers also welcomed the principle of shifting the responsibility for compliance further onto the industry to improve standards
- there was initial scepticism about potential changes, though there was a range of views on the options tested and some participants were more in favour of reform than others

The FSA will now consider this new evidence as part of its development of future policy on official meat controls. A paper was also presented at the FSA Open Board meeting, follow the link to access the paper: <http://tinyurl.com/d59yn67>

All of the reports can be found via the links below

<http://tinyurl.com/d4rxm7n>

FSA to Publish the Results of all Meat Plant Audits

At its September meeting The Food Standards Agency Board agreed to routinely publish the audit reports of meat plants, as part of the Agency's commitment to openness.

All slaughterhouses, game handling establishments and meat cutting plants are audited regularly by FSA staff to ensure that the businesses are following food hygiene regulations and animal welfare standards.

A paper presented to the Board asked it to agree to an interim arrangement, whereby abbreviated audit reports would be published showing just the factual information about meat plants and the audit score they had achieved. At this stage, the narrative section of the report, which is less readily understandable to those outside of the meat industry, would not be published. However, a general explanation of the published information and of technical terms would be included.

By April 2012, a new system of recording audit reports would be put in place, which would make the

entire report much more accessible to all audiences. This new format would then be published in full, except in circumstances where publication of a report could make the Agency's enforcement work less effective.

The Board agreed that the interim publication arrangement will begin from 1 November 2011.

For the full board paper:

<http://tinyurl.com/d7e5nr7>

In November the FSA announced further transparency measures with an intention to extend the FHRS and to publish available audit information for all food businesses. It will be approached on a sectoral basis with the intention to start with meat plants from October 2012. To see the board paper go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/cr5rsp4>

Update on Charging for Official Meat Controls

The Food Standards Agency has published an updated assessment of the impact of its proposals to increase charges for official controls on meat. The Agency is proposing to increase the charges paid by industry for the work carried out by vets and meat inspectors in slaughterhouses, meat cutting plants and game handling establishments.

The Agency is responsible for the official controls in the UK, and charges businesses for part of the cost of delivery of these controls. For many years there has been a shortfall between the cost of providing the controls and the income from charges. In 2010/11 the shortfall was £31.2m, which was met by the UK taxpayer.

In May 2010, the Board decided that as the regulator it should not be a function of the Agency to subsidise industry. Full cost recovery for meat official controls would relieve taxpayers of costs that should be met by meat establishments. Following consultation and board discussions, final proposals have now been prepared. Under these proposals full cost recovery for meat official controls is expected to cost the UK meat industry an additional £17.93 million in 2014/15 (£16.36 million in Great Britain, and £1.57 million in Northern Ireland). However the cost to industry is much lower than the shortfall of £31.2 million for 2010/11. This is due to: planned efficiencies in the delivery of official controls, which

will save £5 million in Great Britain and £0.54 million in Northern Ireland;

The Agency will discuss the proposals with Ministers in all four countries of the UK before any changes are made. The Agency participates in the UK Government's reducing regulation initiative, and these proposals will also be considered by the Reducing Regulation Committee.

Follow the hyperlink to see the full impact assessment and a summary

<http://tinyurl.com/6a26hwm>

Charging for official meat controls was also discussed at the FSA Open board meeting in May – follow these links for access to the papers and webcast recording of the meeting:

Papers: <http://tinyurl.com/647zbzv>

Webcast: <http://tinyurl.com/5u3j89I>

FSA Guidance on Removing Food colours

The Food Standards Agency has published guidance to help food businesses remove from their products certain food colours associated with possible hyperactivity in young children.

Research commissioned by the Agency has shown that combinations of certain permitted food colours, and the preservative sodium benzoate, could be linked to increased hyperactivity in some children. The food colours are: sunset yellow (E110), quinoline yellow (E104), carmoisine (E122), allura red (E129), tartrazine (E102) and ponceau 4R (E124).

Some manufacturers and retailers have already taken action to remove these colours also known as the Southampton 6. The Agency is encouraging others to work towards finding alternatives, and to voluntarily withdraw these colours as requested by UK Ministers and the Food Standards Agency in 2008.

The guidance includes technical details to provide businesses with more information about alternative colours that may be appropriate for their products.

The guidance was commissioned by the Food Standards Agency in Scotland and produced by Campden BRI.

There are a number of naturally derived colours and colouring foodstuffs available to manufacturers, which produce colours in the same red, orange and yellow range as the Southampton six colours. Unfortunately, colours derived from natural sources tend to be less stable than the synthetic colours they are replacing and therefore an understanding of the properties and the stabilities of these colours is crucial for successful replacement. The guide gives an overview of the different colour options available

and the different factors that should be considered when approaching colour reformulation in a food or beverage product.

Follow the link to the FSA website to download the guidance. <http://tinyurl.com/cg3wr6w>

The Agency has also updated its list of product ranges that do not contain the six food colours associated with possible hyperactivity in young children.

Another company producing product lines free of the colours has been added to the list: Simon Howie Foods.

The list includes companies that have product ranges which have never contained the six colours and companies that have reformulated their product ranges to remove the colours.

The Agency is publicising the product ranges to encourage the food industry to participate in the voluntary ban. The voluntary ban was agreed by Ministers in November 2008.

Consumers who are particularly concerned about the presence of the colours should continue to check labels, especially in the case of products with a long shelf-life, where the availability of reformulated products may vary.

Any food manufacturer, retailer or caterer wishing to notify the Agency that their brands or products are free of these colours should email the details to Benedict Duncan, at:

benedict.duncan@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

The Agency's website will be updated regularly as new information is provided see

<http://tinyurl.com/ct7qhra>

Defra / FSA Publish Guidance on Use by Dates

The Food Standards Agency and Defra have published new guidance to help the food industry decide whether their products require a 'use by' or 'best before' date.

Under the new voluntary guidelines, food packaging should only use either 'use by' or 'best before' date labels to make it easier for shoppers to know when food is at its best and how long it is safe to eat.

'Sell by' and 'display until' labels used for stock rotation should be removed to avoid confusion for shoppers, with different ways of tracking stock control explored by retailers.

Liz Redmond, Head of Hygiene and Microbiology at the FSA, said: 'There is a lot of confusion amongst

customers about date marks. A number of different dates can be found on our food, so we need to make sure that everyone knows the difference between them. We always emphasise that "use by" dates are the most important, as these relate to food safety. This new guidance will give greater clarity to the food industry on which date mark should be used on their products while maintaining consumer protection.'

'Best before' dates relate to food quality, including taste, texture and appearance. Eating food past its 'best before' date is unlikely to be harmful.

While it is an offence to sell food after the 'use by' date, retailers can, with the exception of eggs, sell products after the 'best before' date, providing it is

safe to eat. Eggs have a 'best before' date, but should not be eaten after the date shown on the label.

Retailers often use 'sell by' and 'display until' dates on their shelves, but these are not required by law and are used mainly for stock control purposes.
<http://tinyurl.com/cdyntku>

Seafish Debate and The Cleasby Review

Seafish is a UK-wide levy funded Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) established under the Fisheries Act 1981:

“for the purpose of promoting the efficiency of the sea fish industry and so as to serve the interests of that industry as a whole”

As a UK wide body, Seafish is jointly sponsored by the four UK Fisheries Administrations. Seafish provides support to the seafood industry across the whole supply chain and is funded by a statutory levy. The UK's Fisheries Administrations (Defra, Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (Northern Ireland)), supported by the Sea Fish Industry Authority (Seafish), have undertaken an open discussion with the seafood industry during October.

The topics covered included:

- Seafish's core role and strategic objectives;

- proposed models for Seafish's future structure;
- funding;
- governance arrangements between Seafish, its Government sponsors and the seafood industry.

As part of the process Defra have published the review of Seafish carried out during late 2009/early 2010 by Peter Cleasby.

The 'Cleasby Review' was Seafish's last regular review. It was finalised in March 2010, but was not published at the time because of the legal challenge to Seafish's levy raising powers. It has provided useful background information and stimulated constructive discussion on the future of Seafish throughout the this autumn.

More information on the Cleasby Review, Seafish, and the discussion on their future can be found on their website www.seafish.org or visit defra at <http://tinyurl.com/d2k49rl>

Amendment to Milk and Dairy Import Legislation

In customs information note API/2011/86 Defra have advised of changes to the requirements for the import of milk and dairy products.

Commission Regulation (EU) No 605/2010 laying down animal and public health and veterinary certification conditions for the introduction into the EU of raw milk and dairy products intended for human consumption has been amended by Commission Regulation (EU) No 914/20112.

The new Regulation:

- Clarifies that the model health certificates do not necessarily apply where specific certification requirements have been laid down in other EU legislation or agreements;
- Amend/add certain commodity codes in the health certificates; and
- Clarifies requirements regarding antibiotic residues, contaminants and pesticide residues

The model health certificates for imports of raw milk and dairy products have been replaced by those laid down in Regulation (EU) No 914/2011.

Stakeholders are advised that consignments of raw milk and dairy products for which the relevant health certificates have been issued in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 605/2010 prior to entry into

force of the new Regulation can continue to be introduced into the Union for a transitional period until 30 November 2011. This means that consignments of raw milk and dairy products certified on or after 4 October 2011 (date of entry into force), must be accompanied by the new certificate. Any consignments certified before 4 October under the 'old style' certificate can still be presented at the BIP for veterinary checks until 30 November 2011.

The Regulation 605/2010 can be accessed through : <http://tinyurl.com/c8306hq>

The Amending regulation Commission Regulation (EU) No 914/2011 can be accessed through : <http://tinyurl.com/cenmkcp>

Any enquires can be directed to SSCI Chelmsford
Tel: 01245 454860
Or E-mail: AHITChelmsford@animalhealth.gsi.gov.uk

FSA Annual Report of the Chief Scientist

The Food Standards Agency has published a review of its science and research during the past year. The Annual Report of the Chief Scientist focuses on the following areas of work, which aim to reduce levels of foodborne disease in the UK:

- Highlights of the Agency's science during 2010/11
- A review of efforts to reduce foodborne disease
- Developments in research on emerging risks in food safety

- Efforts to improve science governance to support the open, science- and evidence-based approach to our work

Andrew Wadge, Chief Scientist at the FSA, said: 'Science is integral to the work of the Agency. I hope this report provides an opportunity for scientists and others with an interest in our work to see the practical way in which the Agency uses science to assess and manage food safety.'

<http://tinyurl.com/bprqx7w>

FSA Research Validates Animal Friendly Shellfish Biotoxin Testing Method

A recently developed method for testing shellfish for toxins, which can cause serious illness in humans, is being adopted more widely for use on oysters and scallops

The previous method of testing for the toxins was a bioassay, which involved the use of mice. The new test does not involve the use of any animals and reflects the Agency's commitment to reducing the use of animals in testing where suitable alternative methods are available.

In recent years, research work commissioned by the Agency has led to the introduction of a chemical testing method using high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) into the official monitoring programme for the detection of Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning toxins in mussels, cockles, razors and hard clams.

Work has continued, enabling the recent extension of the new method in Britain, on 30 August, for other commercially important species of shellfish,

including whole king and queen scallops, oysters and four additional clam species. Efforts are being made in Northern Ireland to adopt the method for these other species.

The UK is the first member state in the European Union to use this method as part of its statutory monitoring programme.

Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning is caused when people ingest toxins that accumulate in shellfish. Biotoxins are produced in naturally occurring algal blooms. Symptoms can include a tingling sensation of the mouth and tongue, and respiratory problems. In very rare cases it can be fatal.

EU legislation requires that shellfish intended for human consumption are monitored regularly for biotoxins and sets maximum permitted levels.

For more information and related links on the HPLC Method go to the FSA Website

<http://tinyurl.com/cchlvr8>

FSA Hygiene Training Video

The FSA have produced a "Bacteria Bite Business" video that demonstrates the importance of good food hygiene, focusing on the 4 Cs (Cleaning, Cooking, Chilling and Cross-contamination). The video is available to view online, see the link below.

The film shows kitchen staff, in a surreal café setting, making the mistakes that can lead to food poisoning. It also tells viewers what to do to make sure food will be safe to eat.

The video is seen as a fun way to introduce people to the basics of food hygiene, and also to remind more experienced people of how important it is to practice good food hygiene at all times.

The video designed as a basic training tool for:

- catering businesses
- retail businesses that do some food preparation
- local authorities
- food hygiene trainers, schools and colleges

To see the FSA video and order the DVD follow this link <http://tinyurl.com/c6pxdtb>

Update on Maximum Nitrate Levels for Leafy Vegetables

There have recently been amendments European Legislation on contaminants in foodstuffs that changes permitted levels of nitrates in leafy vegetables. The amendments to Commission Regulation (EC) 1881/2006 include:

- An increase in the maximum levels for nitrate in fresh spinach to 3,500mg/kg (all year, no seasonal differences)
- An increase in the maximum levels for nitrate in fresh lettuce (non-iceberg) to 5,000mg/kg (winter protected); 4,000mg/kg (summer protected); and 3000mg/kg (summer outdoor)
- An introduction of a maximum level for nitrate in rocket (rucola) of 6,000mg/kg (summer harvested) and 7000mg/kg (winter harvested)
- The discontinuation of the derogation from the maximum levels for certain member states including the UK, for produce grown

and intended for consumption in the respective territories

There are no changes to current maximum levels for nitrate in preserved, deep-frozen or frozen spinach, which remains at 2000mg/kg, The Regulation will enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union, which is likely to be this autumn. All the changes to the maximum levels will apply from the date of its entry into force except the maximum levels for rocket, which will apply from 1 April 2012.

For COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 1881/2006 of 19 December 2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs go to <http://tinyurl.com/ccf28c3>

To find out more and download the FSA letter to interested parties which includes the draft proposal go to: <http://tinyurl.com/c2d94ow>

Commission Review and Consultation on the Further Reduction of F Gas Emissions

The European Commission has launched a public consultation on strengthening EU measures to reduce emissions of fluorinated gases, a group of industrial gases that are extremely powerful contributors to global warming. A Commission review, concludes that the EU's existing Regulation on fluorinated gases ('F-gases') is having a significant impact but that, without further measures, F-gas emissions are expected to remain at today's levels in the long term.

The review identifies wide scope for further cost-effective emission reductions, mainly due to the growing feasibility of replacing F-gases in several sectors with alternatives that make less or no contribution to climate change. Potentially the EU could eliminate up to two thirds of today's fluorinated gas emissions by 2030

Connie Hedegaard, European Commissioner for Climate Action, said: "The EU Regulation on

fluorinated gases has successfully broken a growing trend in emissions and driven technological innovation. However, making the transition to a competitive low-carbon EU economy by 2050 requires ambitious action to cut emissions from all sectors. It is clear there is considerable scope for cost-effective reductions in F-gas emissions and following the public consultation I intend to propose new legislative measures next year."

Individuals, organised stakeholders, industries, institutions, NGOs and public authorities of EU countries are welcome to contribute. It seeks to collect opinions on the need and possible actions to be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from fluorinated gases

The consultation runs from 26 September 2011 to 19 December 2011

Follow the link for more information and to take part in the consultation: <http://tinyurl.com/cnpomd9>

Consultation on the simplification of the Climate Change Agreements Scheme

This consultation exercise is part of a consultation process run by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) that began in March 2008. The Climate Change Agreements (CCAs) Scheme was introduced in 2001 in response to the introduction of the Climate Change Levy (CCL) that is charged on non-domestic energy supplies. The Agreements were introduced as it was recognised that the Levy could

impact on the competitiveness of energy intensive industry. CCAs enable energy intensive industry to benefit from a 65% reduction in the CCL in return for meeting demanding energy efficiency targets. The Agreements offset competitive disadvantage and reduce energy use across participating sectors. The first CCAs Scheme expires in March 2013. Government committed in the Annual Energy

Statement in July 2010 to consider the future of CCAs in tandem with a review of the CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme (CRC) to ensure delivery of significant improvements in energy efficiency with minimal complexity and policy overlap. The Budget Statement in March 2014 announced that a replacement Scheme will be implemented and is scheduled to commence in April 2013, subject to State Aid approval. The new Scheme will run until 2023 and will provide certainty for industry and encourage long-term investment in energy-saving strategies.

The proposals claim to simplify and improve the operation of the scheme as well as increase transparency and accountability. In summary the proposals are to:

- Amend legislation to guarantee the rights of the existing 54 sectors to remain within CCAs. This action has been taken in order to reduce administrative burdens on both industrial sectors and Government and to provide certainty for industry.
- Lower the current threshold from 90% to 70% of the minimum eligible energy use of a site based on which the CCL discount can be granted for the whole site. This means that around 450 more participants who currently claim CCAs will be able to get the CCL discount for the whole of their site
- Reduce the burden on industry by retaining the biennial performance assessments, aligning the reporting year for the scheme

into the calendar year already used by the EU Emissions Trading System.

- Remove the overlap with the EU Emissions Trading System by splitting the CCA targets into two elements: (a) emissions within a CCA and covered by the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) (not subject to a CCA target and eligible for the CCL discount), and (b) a negotiated CCA target covering non-EU ETS emissions and electricity. This will reduce the admin burden for the target units, which are also in the EU ETS by not having to apply a complicated rule to adjust their target for the overlap before their performance gets assessed at reconciliation.
- Close the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS) and replace it with a simpler system to enable risk management by participants when meeting targets without jeopardising their levy discount. This will save participants the costs of maintaining trading accounts, verifying allowances and trading.
- Introduce a voluntary financial penalty system which will avoid businesses losing the CCL discount for minor infringements

The consultation ran for an 8 week period, and closed on 28 October 2011. For more information : <http://tinyurl.com/bq2z7hf>

One in, One out, Full Year Statement of Regulation

The statement reports on the first year of operation of the One-in, One-out policy rule. Government Departments are each having to publish a summary of the regulations they intend to introduce between July and December 2012. In the first statement, published in April 2011, government set out their intention to maintain a net zero (or better) cumulative cost for business from domestic regulation. This statement demonstrates that over the period from January to December 2011, the cost vs the saving has been about level.

The Statement of New Regulation, combined with other measures that form part of the governments' deregulatory strategy, is intended to reduce Whitehall's tendency to regulate and encourage them to explore other, non regulatory alternatives to issues. The intent is also to give businesses clarity

about all new regulations being introduced. The report provides an overview of the net costs and benefits to business and civil society organisations and gives a routine update on the Government's One-in, One-out policy in action. With the exception of three regulations relating to migration, carbon emissions, the figures quoted are validated by the independent Regulatory Policy Committee. For more information about the One-in, one-out policy:

<http://tinyurl.com/brbehvh>

For the full report go to

<http://tinyurl.com/d8tsqea>

Commission Proposes 2012 Total Allowable Catches for 62 Fish Species

At the end of September, the European Commission proposed next year's total allowable catches (TACs) for 62 stocks, including increases for nine stocks and reductions for 53 stocks. Certain cod, haddock, herring and anglerfish (monkfish) fisheries in the Atlantic and North Sea may be in for a productive 2012.

The biggest increase would be for cod caught west and south of the British Isles, in the Bay of Biscay, west of Portugal and around the Azores, as the EC proposed raising the TAC by 141 percent to 9,679 metric tons in 2012. The next biggest increase would be anglerfish caught north and northwest of Spain, west of Portugal and around the Azores, as the EC proposed raising the TAC by 110 percent to 3,300 metric tons in 2012.

Herring caught south and southwest of Ireland would see a 60 percent increase in its TAC to 21,100 metric tons in 2012, while haddock caught west of Scotland around the Faeroes would see a 25 percent increase in its TAC to 2,506 metric tons in 2012. The other five increases are for certain hake, common sole, megrims and Norway lobster fisheries.

On the other hand, the biggest reductions would be for common sole harvested in the Irish Sea (44 percent) and in Skagerrak and Kattegat and Baltic Sea (38 percent). The proposed TACs are based on

the scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF). The EC's ultimate aim is that all stocks are fished at sustainable levels, also known as maximum sustainable yield (MSY), by 2015 — a commitment that the EU made to the international community and which is a key pillar of the proposed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) reform.

"Our proposal's cornerstones are long-term management of stocks and reliable scientific data to base our decisions on, in line with our proposed reform of the CFP. This reform will deliver a fisheries policy fit for the future, based on viable fish stocks which will assure fishermen a decent income," said EU Fisheries Commissioner Maria Damanaki.

For more information

<http://tinyurl.com/c9ztybg>

For full list of proposed TAC's go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/czw7j44>

New Agreements in place for UK Exports of Fishery Products to China and Serbia

FSA has notified of changed requirements for Local Authorities issuing export health certificates for fish and fishery products to China and Serbia.

A new agreement is in place with the People's Republic of China and a separate agreement with the Republic of Serbia for the export of fish and fishery products from the UK. For both countries an agreement has been reached on the use of a single prescribed export health certificate for exporting fish and fishery products from the UK. The agreement with the People's Republic of China also establishes additional requirements for those exporters wishing to export fish and fishery products.

The Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) within Defra have published a customer information note (CIN) providing comprehensive guidance, for both exporters and local authorities, on the new arrangements for exporting fish and fishery products to the People's Republic of China. The CIN is available on the AHVLA

website at <http://tinyurl.com/645hqx5>

With respect to the Requirements for the Republic of Serbia, a prescribed health export certificate is required for the export of all fish and fishery products. Prescribed health export certificates can be obtained from the SSC on tel: 01228 403600 or email: liveanimalexports.carlisle@ahvla.gsi.gov.uk. The process for AO's certifying these certificates are the same as for the People's Republic of China. For full information follow the link:

<http://tinyurl.com/5s9cd6m>

Import Measures for Food and Feed Materials from Japan Maintained.

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) No 961/2011 of 27 September 2011 imposing special conditions governing the import of feed and food originating in or consigned from Japan following the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power station and repealing Regulation (EU) No 297/2011 has been published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Following the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power station on 11 March 2011, Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 297/2011 was adopted.

The Regulation has been amended several times to take into account the development of the situation and current measures were initially in place until 30

September 2011. Since mid July 2011, the Commission has been informed by the Japanese authorities of findings of high levels of caesium in beef from cattle grown in Japan and more recently, new food products have been found to contain levels of radioactivity above the maximum levels, in addition new / other agricultural / horticultural crops are grown and harvested in the contaminated zone. The Commission as a result have decided to continue to implement the present Regulation until 31 December 2011. The principle of a monthly review of the implementation of the Regulation will be maintained. For the new Regulation go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/c7cwg6b>

Extension of the Generalised System of Preferences Provisions (GSP)

Regulation (EU) No 512/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council has extended the date of application of the current Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) scheme until 31 December 2013, or until the date of entry into force of a Regulation laying down a revised scheme, if earlier.

The Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) was conceived to help developing countries by giving them preferential rates of duty for their goods when imported into the EU.

The UK Trade Tariff on the Business Link website contains detailed information about the preferential rates of Customs Duty which are available for products originating in, and imported from GSP beneficiary countries. Follow the link for the

Business Link website <http://tinyurl.com/cq44mfd>

The EU Regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No 732/2008) laying down the EC's current GSP Scheme was due to expire on 31 December 2011. However, the EU Commission and the Member States still need time in which to devise and agree a suitable replacement for that regulation. Consequently, it has been decided to extend (rollover) Regulation 732/2008. For full information follow the link to access the Customs Information Paper (11)77:

<http://tinyurl.com/d679guf>

Amended Pesticide MRL's Published

COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 978/2011 of 3 October 2011 amending Annexes II and III to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards maximum residue levels for acetamiprid, biphenyl, captan, chlorantraniliprole, cyflufenamid, cymoxanil, dichlorprop-P, difenoconazole, dimethomorph, dithiocarbamates, epoxiconazole, ethephon, flutriafol, fluxapyroxad, isopyrazam, propamocarb, pyraclostrobin, pyrimethanil and spirotetramat in or on certain products has been published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

The new Maximum Residue Levels (MRL's) affect a wide range of foodstuffs including fruits and vegetables, cereals, pulses, herbs and spices. Fat,

liver, eggs and milk from Canada, the US and Brazil and the meat from ruminants from the US. The changes have been approved by the Standing Committee of the Food Chain and Animal Health and went through the Parliament and European Council unopposed.

The New limits came into force on 5 October 2011.

The new Regulation can be accessed through the following link: <http://tinyurl.com/cudrr7c>

BFR Publishes Updated Almanac on “Who Does What” on Food Safety In Europe

The Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has published a completely revised edition of the EU Food Safety Almanac. The booklet is aimed at all those interested in the legal structures and institutions of food safety in Europe, especially experts in the field such as the staff of food safety authorities, news media, members of parliament, consumer associations, the food industry as well as science

The BfR's EU Food Safety Almanac provides a concise depiction of the governmental structures in 33 European countries and at the European Community level. It provides information on the Europe-wide network of all food safety authorities for the protection of consumers and for smooth cooperation between state players across Europe. Each of

the 33 country profiles contains a diagram that depicts the structure of governmental authorities and a detailed description of tasks and responsibilities of each institution. 10 icons depict the areas of responsibility graphically. BfR's *EU Food Safety Almanac* explains which authorities in the 33 states are responsible for the assessment of plant protection products, health claims or zoonoses, which ministries in the Member States are responsible for the management in which areas, how risks are communicated and to what extent risk assessment and risk management are institutionally separated. For access to the Almanac follow the link: <http://tinyurl.com/6fvo8c7>

I.P.O. Launches New Free Patent File System

UK business could benefit from a free patent system launched by the Intellectual Property Office (IPO). The new online service, called Ipsum, will remove the cost to businesses of requesting patent documents; that now will now be available for free at the click of a button.

The service is open to anyone, benefiting businesses researching patents, patent attorneys working for clients protecting their IP rights and potential inventors looking for the best way to find information on patent applications. This can help them understand why a patent was granted or rejected or know more about particular patents.

Previously each document requested by a business would cost £5 and by the time it had been delivered it might already be out of date. Ipsum is updated in real time so businesses will now have the up to date information on patent applications they need. The service is available on the IPO website – www.ipo.gov.uk/p-ipsum.

The Hargreaves Review of Intellectual Property and Growth highlighted that patent backlogs can

have a negative effect on innovation and growth. The launch of Ipsum is another step towards implementing the commitments Government has made to support growth.

The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) is within the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and is responsible for the national framework of Intellectual Property rights, comprising patents, designs, trade marks and copyright. Its role is to help manage an IP system that encourages innovation and creativity, balances the needs of consumers and users, promotes strong and competitive markets and is the foundation of the knowledge-based economy. It operates in a national and an international environment and its' work is governed by national and international law, including various international treaties relating to Intellectual Property (IP) to which the United Kingdom is a party.

The Hargreaves Review of Intellectual Property and Growth, and the Government's response can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/d5dz735>

New Broccoli Variety has Enhanced Cancer Protecting Nutrients

A new variety of broccoli with higher levels of a key phytonutrient is now available in UK shops thanks to experts working on both the biology of plants and the link between human nutrition and health. The new broccoli, which will be known as Beneforté, was

developed from publicly-funded research at two of the UK's world-leading biological research institutes: the Institute of Food Research and the John Innes Centre, which both receive strategic funding from Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research

Council (BBSRC). The BBSRC is one of seven UK Research Councils funded by BIS. Scientists at the two institutes have been working to develop our understanding of what it is about broccoli that makes it a particularly healthy food the new broccoli contains two to three times the level of the phytonutrient glucoraphanin than standard broccoli. Glucoraphanin is a chemical found naturally in broccoli and is thought to be the link between eating broccoli and lower rates of heart disease and some forms of cancer. Glucoraphanin also leads to a boost in the body's antioxidant enzyme levels Broccoli is the only commonly eaten vegetable that contains meaningful quantities of glucoraphanin. This naturally occurring compound is converted in the gut to the bioactive compound sulforaphane, which then circulates in the bloodstream. A large

body of scientific evidence indicates that sulforaphane is likely to have beneficial effects such as reducing chronic inflammation, stopping uncontrolled cell division associated with early stages of cancer, and inducing antioxidant enzymes. In collaboration with the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, the IFR scientists found that men who ate a broccoli-rich diet experienced changes in the activity of genes associated with tumour survival and growth. These changes were consistent with studies that suggest men who eat broccoli-rich diets have a reduced risk of aggressive prostate cancer. Prostate cancer is the most common non-skin cancer for males in western countries. For more information and links to other sources go to: <http://tinyurl.com/bn44ggm>.

Global G.A.P Launches New Livestock Transport Standard

GLOBALG.A.P. launched its Livestock Transport Standard V.1 at the Anuga Trade Fair 2011. The standard applies to all road vehicle operators transporting animals for a distance over 65 km and all third party transports under 65 km. All critical issues such as fitness of animals for transport, loading ramps, handling of animals at loading and unloading during transport, stocking rates, ventilation and temperature monitoring plus navigation system are addressed. The driver training and competence must be documented and follow Certificate of Professional Competence plus best practice pursuant to Article 17 of EU Directive 1/2005. Specific requirements for poultry transports such as noise levels during loading and unloading, specific containers for transport, protection for

inclement weather and clean condition of the birds at arrival are also addressed. During the development of the standard, pilot audits and self-assessments were performed in Germany, The Netherlands, United Kingdom and Uruguay to provide feedback from commercial transporters on the ground. Starting from January 2012, the transport of all animals in the GLOBALG.A.P. system must only be carried out by operators certified according to GLOBALG.A.P. livestock transport standard or benchmarked schemes. The Critical Controls and Compliance Standards as well as the General Global GAP regulations can be downloaded from <http://tinyurl.com/cwyeoqj>

Toolbox to Reduce Acrylamide Updated

The FoodDrinkEurope Acrylamide Toolbox has been recently relaunched to help food companies identify the best ways to reduce Acrylamide in their products. FoodDrinkEurope has updated the existing Toolbox to include the latest scientific research and feedback from food operators.

Key updates include:

- A restructuring of the Toolbox around the three main ingredient types commonly associated with the risk of higher Acrylamide formation, namely: potatoes, cereals and coffee.
- 'Baby biscuits, infant cereals and baby foods other than cereal based foods' now constitutes a separate category in the Acrylamide Toolbox.
- There is clearer alignment with the Codex Alimentarius Code of Practice for the reduction of Acrylamide in Foods (CAC/RCP 67-2009), ensuring global alignment for food operators.

- The latest in scientific publications and updates on specific projects.
- A revised 'Summary' section that better describes the new structure of the Toolbox by Product Category as opposed to Toolbox Parameter.
- Improvements in the section on 'Methods of Analysis and Sampling' to better describe issues surrounding the measurement of uncertainty and to describe CEN standardisation work on methods of analysis for Acrylamide in certain foodstuffs; and, finally,
- Text on the ALARA ('as low as reasonably achievable') concept.

The Acrylamide Toolbox is updated on a continuous basis as the science progresses and will be promoted to food and drink manufacturers at European and national level. The latest edition is available to download: <http://tinyurl.com/cj7klnq>

European Commission Proposals for Reform to the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP)

The European Commission's proposals for a reform of the CAP after 2013 aim to strengthen the competitiveness and the sustainability of agriculture and maintain its presence in all regions, in order to guarantee European citizens healthy and quality food production, to preserve the environment and to help develop rural areas. On 12 October 2011 the Commission presented a set of legal proposals designed to make the CAP a more effective policy for a more

competitive and sustainable agriculture and vibrant rural areas. The legal proposals are accompanied by an impact assessment that evaluates alternative scenarios for the evolution of the policy on the basis of extensive quantitative and qualitative analysis. For more information and further links to documents and press releases follow: <http://tinyurl.com/ce4bmmb>

50 Research Projects Share £7m Government Funding

Over fifty research projects and studies aimed at developing healthier, safer and more nutritious food are to share over £7M of government investment.

It is expected that the projects and studies will stimulate innovation in the UK's food and drink sector and lead to the development of new technologies and processes, with an emphasis on healthy and safe food. Funding for the research and development will be provided by the Technology Strategy Board, with support from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), the Medical Research Council (MRC), Defra and Scottish Enterprise. Including contributions from the participating companies the total value of the R&D exceeds £14.5M.

Twenty-seven major collaborative R&D projects have been awarded a share of the funding. These projects will aim to develop highly innovative technologies or processes that are novel to the sector and whose application and implementation will be technically challenging.

The projects to be funded include, for example, novel processing methods to retain the nutritional quality of raw fruit and vegetables in processed foods; formulation technologies to enable the reduction of fat and salt in food products; identification and development of functional foods that improve heart health, and strategies to enable the control of *Campylobacter* in poultry.

In addition, twenty-four small and medium-sized businesses are to receive up to £25,000 each to carry out small-scale technical feasibility studies, which may be taken forward later into larger scale projects. These studies will be in areas such as, for example, extending the nutritional life of fruit and vegetables;

development of novel products to increase satiety (feeling of fullness), and novel methods to identify ingredients which safeguard bone health. The government funding will support and stimulate innovation in the UK's food and drink sector, which makes a significant contribution to the nation's economic wealth. UK food exports continue to grow in value but to remain competitive requires flexibility, with innovation at the heart of product and production improvements.

The major collaborative research and development projects will be led by: 2 Sisters Food Group Ltd, Aquapharm Biodiscovery Ltd, AvantiCell Science Ltd, Bakkavor Foods Ltd, Bernard Matthews Ltd, Boots UK (2 projects), Cargill, Cawood Scientific Ltd, DelAgua Water Testing Ltd, eminate Ltd, First Frontera Ltd, Frutarom (UK) Ltd, GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare, Macphie of Glenbervie Ltd, Matrix MicroScience Ltd, Micromass UK Ltd, Monsanto UK Ltd, PepsiCo (2 projects), Provexis plc, Radox Laboratories Ltd, TasteTech Ltd, Unilever plc (2 projects), Wm Wrigley Jnr Company.

More information can be found on the Technology Strategy Board Website:

<http://tinyurl.com/dxt79oe>

Wrap / FSA publishes Freeze Labelling Decision Tree

Freezing refrigerated food is often an area of confusion for consumers. This decision tree published by WRAP is intended to help manufacturers label products clearly and has been produced in conjunction with the Food Standards Agency. The decision tree advises producers to

- Review products to determine their suitability for home freezing.
- For those foods that are suitable for home freezing, include the „snowflake logo on the

label, with text „suitable for home freezing or equivalent where possible.

- For those products that are marked with the snowflake logo, provide clear and consistent, supplementary guidance.
- Guidance could be communicated on-pack, online and in-store.

For a copy of the decision tree go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/d8d7pge>

Business Waste and Recycling Services commitment Launched

A new recycling charter has been launched to help boost recycling rates and tackle the issues smaller businesses face in getting access to waste services, Recycling Minister Lord Taylor announced today. The *Business Waste and Recycling Services Commitment* will bring together smaller businesses that need recycling services with local councils offering services, and agencies offering best practice waste reduction advice.

Recycling Minister Lord Taylor said:

“This deal will bring much needed relief for smaller businesses that want to do the right thing but are struggling to get a decent recycling service. “For the first time we’ve got solid agreement between councils and businesses to make it easier and more cost effective for smaller firms to recycle more and improve their resource efficiency.”

The Commitment emphasises 12 principles of best practice that local authorities can use to tailor services to local businesses such as the need to make recycling easy, provide value for money and continually improve services through feedback.

Small and medium-sized businesses produce 30 million tonnes of waste a year with recycling rates already exceeding 50 per cent. Almost half of councils across the country offer local businesses a recycling services and boosting these rates even further by helping them use waste as a resource will provide a valuable contribution to the green economy while cutting waste to landfill. The voluntary commitment is part of a package of measures outlined in the Waste Review earlier this year, and builds on a responsibility deal with the Environmental Services Association to help businesses prevent waste and recycle more. The Business Waste and Recycling Service Commitment has been developed jointly by Defra, the Federation of Small Businesses, the Local Government Association and WRAP. Recent Defra research shows that businesses across the UK have the potential to save up to £18 billion a year by taking steps to reduce waste. The Business Waste and Recycling Service Commitment can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/cdt24me>

FSA Open Invitation to Novel Foods Event

The Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP) is holding an open event on novel foods in London on Thursday 24 November 2011. Everyone is welcome, including members of the public.

The ACNFP is the independent group of experts who advise the Food Standards Agency on matters relating to novel foods (including genetically modified foods) and novel processes. A novel food is a food or food ingredient that does not have a significant history of consumption within the European Union before 15 May 1997.

The event will include presentations on the work of

the committee and give people an opportunity to discuss novel food issues, including lessons learnt on cloning and novel food ingredients produced using nanotechnologies. There will also be a brief update on the revision of the current European Commission regulation on novel foods and an open discussion arising from audience questions.

Details of the event and how to apply to attend or submit questions can be found through the link below.

<http://tinyurl.com/d7rb2v5>

UK National Control Plan Updated and Extended to 2012

The Food Standards Agency and the agriculture and rural affairs departments for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have produced an updated version of the UK National Control Plan, which extends it to 31 March 2012.

The plan is a requirement of EU Regulation 882/2004 on official controls. It ensures that effective control systems are in place for monitoring and enforcing feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, and plant health law.

Regulation 882/2004 requires that the National Control Plan be kept under review and revised regularly. It has been updated to reflect organisational and legislative changes and developments during 2011/12.

More information and the revised UK National Control Plan can be found at the link below.
<http://tinyurl.com/bwr3j4x>

Export Best Practise Guidance

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) have previously highlighted gaps in compliance with UK export procedures for direct and indirect exports from the European Union and is concerned that the situation is not improving. HMRC have been working with the trade to address this in three ways:

- production of an Export Best Practice Guide and associated trade documents to assist voluntary compliance by addressing key areas
- offering Export Unit of Expertise staff's assistance to traders to comply with requirements
- HMRC contact to work with traders to improve compliance - starting with those traders with non-arrived export declarations and those seeking retrospective arrivals

The scope of the Export Best Practice Guide aims to: to minimise non-arrived goods and unauthorised removals; actions that have to be taken to comply with HMRC export requirements; EXS declarations and the responsibility of manufacturers selling goods ex-works for export.

The Export Best Practice Guide has been produced in collaboration with trade representatives and it is available on the HMRC website (see link below) As a last resort, HMRC will implement civil penalties for those traders remaining non compliant. HMRC also want to make businesses holding AEO status aware that failure to comply with any export requirements may jeopardise their authorisation. The document can be accessed through:
<http://tinyurl.com/6xsrdkh>

Public Health Responsibility Deal Update

The Department of Health has published a second update on progress in the Public Health Responsibility Deal Initiative.

The new edition outlines the start, in September of a new pledge on out of home calorie labelling across the outlets of 40 Responsibility Deal partners.

One partner McDonald's, has introduced calorie information to all of its menus throughout its 1,200 UK restaurants, serving three million meals every day, and this change to their menus highlights changes that are occurring across the high street. Many partners signed up now have calorie labelling in place, others will be phasing it in over the next few months, and partners who have recently signed up will start implementation in 2012.

Technical guidance has been produced which is

aimed at catering companies who want to introduce out of home calorie labelling. This is available from the Responsibility Deal website, go to
<http://tinyurl.com/4476a9l>

The bulletin update also includes information about the Government's call to action on obesity, discussed further below.

Annual update templates for the reporting of actions, progress and plans against all responsibility deal pledges have also now been issued. The Department of Health plans to publish this information online in April 2012.

For the full bulletin

<http://tinyurl.com/cfy3g2f>

EU Commission Evaluations of GMO Food, Feed & Cultivation

In order to ensure that the development of modern biotechnology, and more specifically of GMOs, takes place in complete safety, the European Union has an established legal framework. Regulation (EC) 1829/2003 on genetically modified food and feed provides general framework for regulating genetically modified (GM) food and feed in the EU. This framework pursues the objective of ensuring a high level of protection of human life and health and welfare, environment and consumer interests, whilst ensuring that the EU internal market works effectively. The Regulation is supplemented by Regulation (EC) 1830/2003 which ensures traceability and labelling of GMOs placed on the market.

Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment outlines the principles for, and regulates, experimental releases and the placing on the market of GMOs in the EU see:

<http://tinyurl.com/bnmnfgz>

Two independent reports evaluating the European Union's legislation on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) conclude that there is broad support for the legislation's objectives and show that recent legislative Commission initiatives are heading in the right direction.

The documents note that some adjustments are necessary if we are to meet the objectives of the legislation -the protection of health and the environment and the creation of an internal market- and to ensure that the legislation is properly implemented.

The two reports were carried on the Commission's behalf. The first, evaluates the EU's legislative framework in the field of GM food and feed. The

second focuses on the legislative framework in the area of GMOs cultivation.

For instance, the reports note that the authorisation system could be more efficient, GMO cultivation would benefit from more flexibility and the risk assessment process from further harmonisation. The evaluation reports confirm that many actions the European Commission has launched in recent months are on the right track. The Commission's package on GMO cultivation adopted in July 2010, and responding to the need for more flexibility on GMO cultivation, is identified as one such action. The package includes a recommendation on the co-existence of GM and non-GM plants that allows more flexibility to Member States to take into account their local, regional and national conditions when preparing their relevant legislation. The key proposal, currently under discussion in the Council and Parliament, is allowing Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory. The Commission has also made advances on tackling the technical problem of low level presence (LLP) of unauthorised GMOs in imported feed products. A harmonising regulation addressing LLP in feed imports entered into force in July.

Finally the Commission published in April 2011 a report on socio-economic implications of GM crops, based on contributions from the Member States as requested by the 2008 Environment Council Conclusions. The Commission followed up by launching on 18 October 2011 a process to assist Member States in the collection and sharing of information

For more details go to <http://tinyurl.com/6cr6tpm>

Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) Annual Report

The European Union's system for quick exchange of information on risks linked to food and feed - an invaluable tool especially at times of crisis - has further grown in importance during 2010.

The 2010 annual report of the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), notes that the number of notifications in RASFF rose to 8582 last year. This is a record number and constitutes an increase of 8% compared to 2009, when the number of notifications was slightly under 8000. This growth in notifications, taking place for the third consecutive year, is largely down to *rejections of consignments at EU borders* in the light of the strengthening of border controls as regards food of non-animal origin, through Regulation (EC) No 669/2009. There were also 576

alert notifications reporting on serious risks found in products on the market, a small increase compared to 2009.

The RASFF report breaks down the overall number of notifications in 2010 into *alert (576)*, *information (1168)* and *border rejection (1552)* notifications. Alert notifications are sent when the food or feed presenting a serious risk is already on the market and immediate action is required.

Two-thirds of the *alert notifications* in 2010 related to products originating in the EU, and most of these problems were detected by controls carried out on the market. Among the risks most reported through

these alerts were the presence of pathogenic micro-organisms, heavy metals, allergens and mycotoxins. *Border rejection notifications* concern products that were refused entry into the Community and were given another destination or were destroyed. More than three out of ten (34%) border rejections concerned products refused entry because of high levels of mycotoxins. The second most frequent reason for rejection was the presence of pesticide residues above the limits set in legislation.

The RASFF is a tool enabling quick and effective exchange of information between Member States and the Commission when risks to human health are detected in the food and feed chain. All Members of the RASFF (EU-27, Commission, EFSA, ESA, Norway, Liechtenstein, Iceland and Switzerland) have a round-the-clock service to ensure that urgent notifications are sent, received and responded to in the shortest time possible. For more information: <http://tinyurl.com/62ru8e8>

Ban on Fenugreek Seeds from Egypt Extended

Recently published in the Official Journal of the European Union was COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION of 28 October 2011 amending Implementing Decision 2011/402/EU on emergency measures applicable to fenugreek seeds and certain seeds and beans imported from Egypt Pending the possible introduction of additional control measures based on the EFSA opinion and in order to allow the time necessary for the competent authorities in Egypt to provide further feedback to the Commission and to provide effective guarantees on additional risk management measures, the temporary ban on the release for free circulation in the Union of seeds and beans from Egypt laid down in Implementing Decision 2011/402/EU will be prolonged until 31 March 2012.

The Decision applies as from 1 November 2011 because Implementing Decision 2011/402/EU provided that the release of seeds from Egypt as set out in the Annex was prohibited until 31 October 2011.

The European Union (EU) has extended the ban which was imposed following the deadly E.coli outbreaks in Europe earlier this year due to the inefficiency of the procedures taken by Egyptian authorities to ensure the integrity of grain and plant exports.

The ban will remain on items including rocket sprouts, sprouts of leguminous vegetables (fresh or chilled), soya bean sprouts, dried (shelled)

leguminous vegetables, fenugreek seeds, soya beans and mustard seeds.

Imports of fresh and chilled peas and beans will be allowed, as the EU ban on these items was lifted in October.

Seeds and beans from Egypt that are prohibited from being circulated freely in the EU until 31 March 2012 are:

- rocket sprouts
- beetroot sprouts, radish sprouts
- sprouts of leguminous vegetables, fresh or chilled
- soya bean sprouts
- dried leguminous vegetables, shelled, whether or not skinned or split
- fenugreek seed
- soya beans, whether or not broken
- mustard seeds
- other oil seeds and oleaginous fruits, whether or not broken
- sugar beet seed
- lucerne (alfalfa) seed
- vegetable seeds
- lucerne (alfalfa) sprouts

For more information <http://tinyurl.com/cqg6qgq> And

<http://tinyurl.com/cb2h7pm>

also

<http://tinyurl.com/c2f8eve>

Fish Waste Across Retail and Wholesale Supply Chains

In recent years, there has been significant interest in the issue of food and drink waste, and WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) has highlighted the considerable economic and environmental impact associated with household food waste. WRAP is now extending this work to understand waste generation throughout food supply chains, and to identify approaches to minimising both the quantity of waste and its impact.

The current study is focused on retail and wholesale supply chains for fish, and presents resource maps for 17 individual finfish and shellfish species. The resource maps illustrate the flow of materials through supply chains, and focus on the extent and causes of waste in the UK from primary processing to retailer shelf. Most species of white fish undergo some processing at sea. Wastes both from processing at sea and

discards are disposed of at sea, so they have no impact on UK waste disposal mechanisms. The results of the current study must therefore be considered as representing only a limited portion of the total UK fish supply chain, and must be used in conjunction with work from other supply chain sectors to understand fully the impact of UK seafood consumption.

Table A: Seafood species resource mapped

White Fish	Pelagic	Finfish Aquaculture	Shellfish
Cod	Herring	Salmon	Crab
Haddock	Mackerel	Trout	Mussels
Monkfish		Tuna	Nephrops
Pollock		Warm Water Prawns	
Whiting		Cold Water Prawns	
Plaice		Scallops	

This research highlights the extent to which fish and shellfish products are wasted or lost in the UK's food supply chain. By identifying how, where and why the products are wasted, these resource maps enable the identification of where better management practices, in particular, can be used to develop more resource efficient strategies within the fish processing sector.

Based on the recommendations outlined in this report, the project team considers that there are significant opportunities for the fish and shellfish supply chain to exploit potential markets for fish and shell by-products and to move material up the waste hierarchy.

<http://tinyurl.com/6c3rgzd>

Responses to the MacDonald Report on Food and Farming

The MacDonald report was presented to Agriculture and Food Minister, Jim Paice on 17th May by the Independent Farm Regulation Task Force and made 200 recommendations to reduce the bureaucratic and regulatory burdens on farmers and food producers.

The Task force was set up in June 2010 and included individuals with wide experience in farming and growing, retail, food processing, conservation, private and public sector management, and regulatory implementation and enforcement. The Task Force was asked to review regulations and their implementation and making recommendations on how best to achieve a risk-based system of enforcement whilst maintaining high environmental, welfare and safety standards.

On 3 November the Agriculture Minister Jim Paice unveiled the Government's interim response to the report; Mr Paice highlighted a number of areas where the government hopes to reduce regulatory burdens on farmers, whilst still achieving high standards on the environment, health and animal welfare.

The interim response gives a brief overview of the progress made so far to address the challenges set out by the Task Force report.

The new approaches being explored include:

- Changing the way Defra work with the farming industry to build a closer working partnership that helps the industry and cuts red tape;
- Making inspections more risk-based and targeted where there is a greater risk of breaching regulations;
- Co-coordinating inspections to reduce the number of duplicate visits by different

enforcement bodies and therefore minimizing disruption to businesses;

- Simplifying the complex environmental requirements to give much clearer guidance about what practical measures should be taken.
- An implementation group, chaired by Richard MacDonald to oversee progress and delivery.

Three of the 10 chapters in the initial report were of particular interest,

Chapter 2 – Changing the way we work: from bureaucracy to responsibility and partnership. The primary recommendation was that problems are best approached first from the principle of non-regulatory options and also that Defra should trust business and that this should be matched by industry taking more responsibility. Furthermore that Defra should engage with industry earlier ie before the consultation stage, to develop legislation and jointly draft implementing guidance.

Defra say that: All of the recommendations are being actively considered and they hope that the farming industry are encouraged to work in partnership with them. They are setting up a task force implementation group chaired by Richard MacDonald to hold them to account on this subject. The response on the surface appears very farming orientated.

Defra have developed an action plan on EU Regulation that is designed to improve their ability to influence the direction of EU policies.

Chapter 3 – Improving Inspections, including through earned recognition
The recommendation is to give official recognition of efforts to achieve good practise and rewarding it

with less frequent inspection. The report wanted to see this principle become central to Government regulatory policy making and implementation. It also included asking regulators to review alignment between third party schemes (such as farm assurance schemes) and official inspections with a view to addressing duplication.

Defra say that: the recommendations are welcome and that work to develop the concept of earned recognition and how it can be applied has already started with discussions with NFU and Assured Food Standards in progress. They are reviewing accredited assurance standards to identify which schemes provide appropriate coverage to be considered for potential earned recognition.

Chapter 10 – TSEs, meat hygiene inspections and food processing

The key recommendations here were directed at the FSA included pressing the EU to change the meat hygiene inspection rules to allow compliant food business operators to benefit from “earned recognition”; using the earned recognition approach to reduce the inspection burden for egg and poultry producers; allowing the use of accredited third party inspection organisations with a recommendation that a joint working group be set up to look at this as soon as possible; reducing unnecessary food chain paperwork by recognising information contained in farm assurance schemes and in contractual documents; and that the FSA work with trade bodies, ports and designated laboratories to minimise import delays in products produced to internationally recognised standards.

Of the 200 initial report recommendations, 19 were directed at FSA, who have published their own response, alongside the interim report. The FSA response is also attached. The FSA Board considered the task force report at its meeting in July 2011 when it decided that it would support the majority of the task force recommendations that fall within its remit. However, the Board rejected for now the recommendation to set up a group to consider the criteria for accepting meat inspection services by third parties. This was discussed further at the Board meeting in September, and there was agreement that it was more appropriate for the meat industry to take the lead in demonstrating the feasibility and making the case for any alternatives to the current delivery model.

Richard MacDonald who led the Task Force said:

“I am greatly reassured by the progress that has been made in response to the Task Force. Many of our recommendations were bold and challenging and for some there are no quick fixes. Our recommendations require change in both government and the farming industry and I am encouraged that both are actively engaging to develop solutions now for the future. I am looking forward to helping drive implementation and making all this real.”

The Government’s full and final response to the Task Force report will be published in early 2012.

The full FSA response and the Government initial response can be viewed via the links below.

<http://tinyurl.com/c5gj8nd>

Letter from Jeff Rooker <http://tinyurl.com/bpvp9zn>

Members of the British Frozen Food Federation requiring further information about any item in this newsletter should contact Ian Farley, Technical and Legislative Manager or Su Dakin, Technical Manager

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