

British Frozen Food Federation



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Highlights in this edition:

Changes to the rules on Desinewed Meat; Emergence of the Schmallenberg virus; Publication of the permitted General Function Health Claims, Creation of the NTSB; Launch of the Front of Pack Nutrition Claims Consultation.

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Hazardous Chemical Classification and Labelling Inventory

In February a step towards the safer use of hazardous chemicals was taken with the publication of the first EU Classification and Labelling Inventory. Released by the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), The Classification & Labelling (C&L) Inventory is a database which contains classification and labelling information on substances notified under Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 (the CLP Regulation) and registered under Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 (the REACH Regulation). It will also contain the list of legally binding harmonised classifications (Annex VI to the CLP Regulation). The database has been established and will be maintained by ECHA. It lists and classifies all the chemical substances used in the EU whilst identifying those that are potentially hazardous and may damage health and the environment. The aim is to provide industry, and in particular small companies, with easy access to information on the hazardousness of a given substance, facilitating the task to correctly classify and label substances and mixtures, as well as substitution of hazardous substances with less damaging alternatives where feasible.

The Inventory compiles information from over 3 million notifications for more than 100.000 substances submitted by manufacturers and importers in the framework of the Classification and Labelling Regulation (CLP) or registered under the REACH Regulation. Classification is essential to the safe use of chemicals because it indicates whether a chemical is hazardous and can damage health or the environment, and it determines the content of the labels of products used by workers and consumers.

The Inventory should help to promote a uniform classification of hazardous substances in Europe and in the world. Based on the experience of ECHA it is expected that the inventory will contain divergent information for identical substances, as different classifications, may have been notified by different companies, for the same hazardous substance. This stems mainly from impurities contained in substances or different information used by companies to classify the same substance.

The Inventory will be a basis for companies to undertake efforts to agree on a uniform classification for a given substances as required by the CLP Regulation. In order to assist companies in this process, ECHA are planning to develop a specific communication tool that will facilitate contacts among manufacturers and importers of chemicals, who wish to discuss reasons for differences and, where feasible, agree on a uniform classification. Manufacturers and importers of chemicals are encouraged to check the classifications for their substances in the Inventory and update their notifications if necessary. ECHA will regularly update the content of the Inventory. For more information and for access to the database go to the European Chemicals Agency Website at:

<http://tinyurl.com/7dd3amo>

The Regulation is in line with the United Nations Globally Harmonised System for Classification and Labelling (GHS) The aim of GHS is to achieve global convergence of classification systems for chemicals, which will facilitate trade and improve the level of protection, in particular in countries that so far have not yet used such systems. For more information on GHS: <http://tinyurl.com/yv8zxt>

The Emergence of the “Schmallenberg Virus”

At the February meeting of the Standing Committee of the Food Chain and Animal Health, both the European Commission and Member States experts discussed the evolution of the Schmallenberg virus (SBV) situation in the EU. The Schmallenberg virus is a new virus named after the place where it was first identified. Information on its genome suggests it is part of the Simbu serogroup of the *Bunyaviridae* family, genus *Orthobunyavirus*. Viruses of that group are mostly found in ruminants in Asia, Australia, Africa and the Middle East (Israel). Principly they are transmitted by mosquitoes (*Culicidae*) or midges (*Culicoides*). Direct transmission from animal to animal has not been demonstrated except trans-placental from an infected dam to the foetus.

The virus was first detected last November in ruminants (cattle, sheep and goats), and at the time of writing 25 of the positive cases in the UK have been diagnosed in cattle, 213 in sheep, and none to date in other species such as goats, camelids or deer.

The virus was mainly found in newborn lambs, calves or baby goats showing congenital malformations that appear to stem from infection picked up during pregnancy some months before (in summer or early autumn 2011) by means of insect vectors (mosquitoes and midges). Currently, SBV infection has only been identified in areas predicted to be at risk of midge incursion from Northern Europe during summer / autumn 2011, but the possibility that domestic (local) midges may have transmitted SBV within the affected areas has not been ruled out. Domestic midges may have been infected after biting a local animal infected last summer after incursion of

continental midges. In Europe, more than 2,400 sites have returned positive tests across the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France, Italy and Luxembourg.

Following a request of the European Commission, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) presented a preliminary analysis of the likely future scenarios related to SBV. In the coming months, EFSA will work in close cooperation with Member States' scientists to gather data, in order to carry out a full assessment of the risk posed by this virus. The risk assessment will be used as a basis for possible disease control measures. EFSA will also liaise with the European Centre for Disease *Prevention and Control* (ECDC) to address the potential risk that this virus might pose for public health. However, based on the information available, the ECDC has already stated that, "**It is unlikely that this new orthobunyavirus can cause disease in humans but it cannot be excluded at this stage**". The Committee also endorsed a Document drafted by the Commission setting the priority actions to be carried out in the EU to address SBV. The Committee has also maintained the position of not applying any trade restrictions in relation to the SBV, as is done with other similar viruses of the same family (Orthobunyaviridae), on live animals, their products, meat, milk or animal by-products. In accordance with available information such measures would be disproportionate to the risks that they pose. This approach is also in line with international standards of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). **Further information on the Schmallenberg virus can be found at:** <http://tinyurl.com/7w4cshx> . Further information on the preliminary analysis carried out by EFSA can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/7bwzpk>. FSA are monitoring the situation: <http://tinyurl.com/7waj7my> as are Defra: <http://tinyurl.com/7tde2an>

EFSA Publish Population Reference Intakes for Protein

EFSA has published population reference intakes (PRIs) for protein, completing the latest stage of its work on dietary reference values (DRVs). A PRI indicates the amount of an individual nutrient that the majority of people in a population need for good health depending on their age and sex. EFSA's Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies set PRIs for protein for adults, infants and children, and pregnant and breast-feeding women, as follows:

- Adults (including older adults) – 0.83 g per kg of body weight per day.
- Infants, children and adolescents – between 0.83 g and 1.31 g per kg of body weight per day depending on age.
- Pregnant women – additional intake of 1 g, 9 g and 28 g per day for the first, second and third trimesters respectively.
- Breast-feeding women – additional intake of 19 g per day during the first 6 months of lactation and 13 g per day thereafter.

The Panel also looked at several health outcomes that may be associated with protein intake – such as bone health, body weight, muscle mass and kidney function – but concluded that the available data was insufficient to derive PRIs based on these health outcomes. The Panel considers protein intake in the European population to be adequate for all population groups. According to collated national food consumption surveys, the average protein intake of adults in Europe is often at or above the PRI of 0.83 g per kg of body weight per day (between 67 g and 114 g per day for men and between 59 g and 102 g per day for women).

The PRIs apply to mixed dietary protein from both animal and plant sources. The Panel notes that EFSA's Comprehensive Food Consumption Database shows that the main sources of protein in European adult diets are meat and meat products, followed by grains/grain-based products and milk/dairy products.

The Scientific Opinion on protein follows a request from the European Commission for EFSA to update previous European advice on DRVs, taking into account new scientific evidence and recent recommendations issued at national and international level. Previously the Panel has published opinions establishing DRVs for carbohydrates, dietary fibre, fats and water. DRVs comprise a complete set of quantitative values, including average requirements, population reference intakes, adequate intakes, reference intake ranges, lower thresholds and tolerable upper intake levels. They can be used as a basis for food labelling and for establishing food-based dietary guidelines For the EFSA Scientific opinion on Dietary Reference Values for Protein go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/7uj4qrb> see also the EFSA Technical Report at <http://tinyurl.com/7ctkfjm>. More information also can be found on the EFSA Website: <http://tinyurl.com/73nqh3d>

FSA Chemical Safety Bulletin

The Chemical Safety division of the Food Standards Agency comprises a mixture of policy and scientific staff supported by a small number of staff providing regulatory, financial and administrative support.

The division is responsible for policy, risk assessment and risk management of chemical safety issues in relation to food, including natural, environmental and process contaminants, radiological safety, food additives, GM and novel foods and food allergens. The division also manages a programme of scientific research projects in these areas and provides the secretariats for two independent scientific advisory committees; the Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) and the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP).

The division's work is broken down into the following areas:

- Chemical Risk Assessment and Exposure Assessment (including COT Secretariat)
- Emerging Risks
- Radiological Safety
- Novel Foods (including Genetically Modified Foods, Nanotechnology and ACNFP Secretariat)
- Food Allergens
- Environmental and Process Contaminants
- Food Additives
- Regulation and Business Support

The division has published a bulletin update of its work. It provides information on key developments in the work areas detailed above. There is also an organogram, that provides a top level overview of the division's structure. Directly after the organogram, there is a table that summarises the items covered in the update by subject area. Clicking on the associated links will take you directly to the relevant material.

Follow the link to take you directly to the bulletin: <http://tinyurl.com/6p7sehr>

Online Training Launched to Support the Get Mentoring Scheme

BIS have launched a new training tool to support its Get Mentoring Scheme, making it even easier for people to get mentoring and join the growing network of volunteer business mentors.

Get Mentoring was launched in November 2011 and aims to recruit 15,000 new mentors to help entrepreneurs fulfil their potential. Get Mentoring is an initiative to unlock, train and support a community of enterprise mentors across the UK. Get Mentoring is about training businesses to help each other to succeed. There is a recognition of the importance for those who have 'been there and done it' to pass on their valuable experience. Government believes that unlocking enterprise talent in people from all sections of society and in micro, small and medium-sized businesses is where the UK's long-term prosperity lies and mentoring will play a key role in this process. There is also a 'Mentoring Monthly' e-newsletter containing articles and case studies around mentoring, provides mentoring tips and information on how others 'Get Mentoring'. For information on the Get Mentoring Scheme go to: <http://tinyurl.com/ckdwvt7>

Over 3,000 people have already signed up with almost 2,000 people having completed the training at workshops across the country. There are now thousands of mentors already available, that are deployed on a dedicated website at mentorsme.co.uk the UK's national gateway for businesses looking for mentoring services.

The project is backed by a range of partners including the Institute of Directors, the Federation of Small Businesses, the Forum of Private Business and the National Enterprise Network. It is led by SFEDI, (The Small Firms Development Initiative Limited) which is the UK's sector skills body for enterprise.

The Introduction to Enterprise Mentoring course is designed to enable business people interested in volunteer business mentoring to gain an understanding of the skills required. Get Mentoring is a public/private-sector partnership, grant assisted by BIS and GEO, it helps individuals reflect on their current skills, experience and knowledge and apply this to the help and support they give others as they start and grow their businesses. The course does not provide a qualification in mentoring or coaching but the content has been mapped against the Level 3 Award in Enterprise Mentoring and provides a pathway for more formal qualifications in mentoring.

Government Response to the Food and Farming Regulation Task Force

The Government's full response to Farming Regulation Task Force was published on 21 February by Defra. The independent Farming Regulation Task Force, chaired by Richard Macdonald, published its report on 17 May 2011. The task force's remit was to identify ways to reduce the regulatory burden on farmers and food processors while maintaining high environmental, welfare and safety standards. For devolved matters, including food and feed, the task force covered England only.

Farming Minister Jim Paice announced that "the farming industry is the first to benefit from the Government's pledge to slash red tape which hinders business efficiency" Mr Paice has committed to take action on 86 per cent of the independent panel's original recommendations. Key commitments include:

- A pilot to increase data sharing between government agencies that if successful will be extended, leading to less form filling;
- Closer industry involvement in the policy making process to look for non-regulatory approaches wherever possible, and a Defra-NFU staff exchange programme starting in April;
- Simplifying messages to farmers about environmental protection rules so they know exactly what they have to do to comply;
- Offering a potential way forward for removing the six-day livestock standstill rule, as long the livestock industry can develop a workable approach to the use of livestock separation units which will maintain protection against animal disease and that the changes are affordable and enforceable; and
- Fewer inspections for farmers who already meet high environmental and animal welfare standards, as a result of NFU-led regional networks co-ordinating Government agencies, local councils and assurance scheme providers.

The report addresses every one of the recommendations made. Out of the 238 recommendations, 220 were directed to Defra and 18 were directed to the Food Standards Agency. In total Defra has said yes to 159, is actively considering 31, and has not accepted 30. Defra has not accepted 30 because either they would be unachievable or would reduce standards, or because a better solution has been found. Other key commitments include:

- More effective UK lobbying on key EU farming laws, by working closely with industry experts through strategy groups;
- Scheduled meetings between the Department of Transport and the NFU on changing rules restricting tractor and trailer weights;
- Making it easier for farmers to access Government services on-line;
- A fly-tipping summit to bring together organisations across all sectors to galvanise support for regional action; and
- Defra workshops with farmers next month to look at how paperwork can be reduced.

FSA responded positively on all recommendations except for one that was rejected. FSA have not changed their position since their previously published response in November but have updated it. The update FSA response can be found at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/84d6bzx>

Chair of the Farming Regulation Taskforce, Richard Macdonald, said:

"The task force made over 200 recommendations and the fact that almost 90 per cent have been accepted marks real progress. I am very pleased. While some of the specific recommendations haven't been accepted, which will disappoint some; overall it vindicates everything we've been doing to drive forward change. "Now we need to turn words into actions. I am pleased to be chairing the implementation group to see it through so that Government and industry meet their commitments and step up to the responsibilities."

Two groups will now meet regularly to make sure the commitments are acted on. An independent Regulatory Scrutiny Panel will take a strategic overview on the way that Defra is shaping and implementing regulation. And a Task Force Implementation Group will focus on what is being done on the ground. It will be chaired by Richard Macdonald and made up of Defra officials, farmers, and farming and environmental organisations.

The government's response to the Farming Regulation Task Force report (MacDonald report) can be seen at <http://tinyurl.com/7eg26xf>. The origin MacDonald report can be accessed through: <http://tinyurl.com/4487m9w>

Commission Update on Materials in Contact with Food

The Directorate General for Health and Consumer (DG SANCO) has updated their webpage regarding information on Food contact materials. These are materials and articles intended to come into contact with foods such as:

- Packaging materials;
- Cutlery and dishes;
- Processing machines;
- Containers;
- Materials and articles in contact with water for human consumption.

The information includes updated national contacts and European professional bodies as well as a useful summary of the legislation both European and National in this area.

Food contact materials and articles are regulated by:

- **Framework Regulation EC 1935/2004** - general requirements for all food contact materials
- **Legislation on specific materials** - groups of materials and articles listed in the Framework Regulation
- **Directives on Individual Substances** or groups of substances used in the manufacture of materials and articles intended for food contact
- **National legislation** covering groups of materials and articles for which EU legislation is not yet in place

Harmonising legislation on food contact materials at EU level aims to protect consumers' health and remove technical barriers to trade. Food contact materials must not transfer their components into the foods in unacceptable quantities (migration) and the legislation sets Overall Migration Limits at - 10mg of substance/dm² of the food contact surface for all substances that can migrate from food contact materials to foods. The specific Migration Limit (SML) for individual authorised substances is fixed on the basis of a toxicological evaluation. The SML is set according to the Acceptable Daily Intake or the Tolerable Daily Intake established by the Scientific Committee on Food. The limit is set on the assumption that every day throughout lifetime, a person weighing 60kg eats 1kg of food packed in plastics containing the substance in the maximum permitted quantity.

The Commission Webpage can be accessed through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/7updbnf>

FSA Publishes Cost Information on Meat Hygiene controls

The FSA has published information on the costs of delivering meat hygiene official controls in meat premises in Great Britain for the financial year 2012/13. The information is to enable anyone to see the breakdown of costs and understand how charges to industry are calculated.

At present, part of the cost is charged to the industry, with the remainder being paid by the Food Standards Agency and other parts of government.

The figures are shown in two categories covering the costs of meat hygiene inspectors (MHIs) and official veterinarians (OVs). The total costs are divided by the number of hours worked to calculate an hourly charge-out rate for MHIs and OVs.

These charge-out rates are used to determine the monthly bill for each meat plant, although the vast majority of plants currently have their bills discounted so they do not pay the full rate.

The Agency presented the cost data to a group of stakeholders on 24 February 2012. The presentation and supporting information can be found at the link. <http://tinyurl.com/729o5tm>

The presentation contains a breakdown of direct and indirect costs. The FSA have committed to reducing operating costs by £5M by 2014/15 from the 2010/11 baseline. The presentation reports the progress that has been made with the OV rate reduced by 80p/hr and the MHI reduced by 40p/hr.

The FSA are working towards full cost recovery for official controls, starting with official controls in meat plants.

EC Tenders for Study on Origin Labelling for Pig, Sheep, Poultry and Goat Meat

The European Commission has launched a call for tenders for a study on mandatory origin labelling for pig, poultry and sheep and goat meat. Under the new EU rules on the provision of food information to consumers, the indication of country of origin or place of provenance for unprocessed meat of pigs, poultry, sheep and goats will become mandatory from December 2014. DG AGRI is therefore commissioning a study to examine and compare different options for implementing the provisions on origin labelling for unprocessed meat products in these sectors. The study will analyse the feasibility of the different options, and the potential impact on meat producers, the supply chain and trade. The study will also examine consumer perception and attitudes concerning origin labelling of meat products. The deadline for submitting offers is 16 April 2012. The duration of the study is 9 months from the signing of tender contract.

The main objective of the study is to examine and compare different options of implementing origin labelling for fresh and frozen meat (incl. minced meat and cuts) of pigs, poultry and sheep and goats, with the aim of giving appropriate origin information to consumers, whilst not causing disproportionate burdens on the meat supply chain, trade and consumers.

The study will assess the feasibility and costs of different geographical levels for expressing the provenance of the meat: EU, country, a smaller administrative area, or a combination of these.

Different modalities for the definition of the provenance will be considered: at each of the three stages in the life of the animal, birth, rearing and slaughtering; and, considering the customs origin definition for slaughter and minimum period of rearing prior to slaughter to establish origin.

The impact of implementing such origin labelling will be assessed considering:

- The economic impact on the food supply chain in the context of costs and feasibility of applying origin labelling, taking into account the existing rules for identification of animals and traceability from farm to fork.
- The impact on intra-EU trade of the meats and on trade with third countries from the perspective of possible distortion of the global trade flows due to additional labelling requirements and bearing in mind the obligations in the context of the WTO.
- Consumer behavior: the study will also analyse consumer behavior as regards different types of indication as well as the level of willingness to pay for more or less extensive additional information related to origin of meat.
- The impact on the administrative burden on producers, traders and the Member States, as well as on the strengthening of the controls to ensure a proper system of origin labeling.

The Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development has commissioned the study, which will be used as an input for the impact assessment on meat origin labelling and as a basis for legislative proposals. Details are available at: <http://tinyurl.com/86g7kbu>

Government Deregulation, Third Statement of New Regulation

The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) has published its Third Statement of New Regulation. This measures the success of its One-in, One-out policy aimed at limiting the burden of new Regulation on businesses and other organizations. The third report shows that there is a cumulative net reduction in the amount of regulation and the cost burden since January 2011.

One-in, One-Out means that any new Whitehall regulation that imposes a net cost to business must be offset by a reduction in regulatory costs elsewhere. It is about making government departments 'hesitate to regulate' – thinking twice about bringing in red tape that could hold business back from creating jobs and growth. The new statement also shows that Departments have started to remove legislation as a result of the Red Tape.

The Third Statement of New Regulation shows that the cumulative net reduction of regulation since January 2011 is around £3.3 billion. The bulk of the savings (just over £3bn) delivered thus far continue to be attributable to the change to private pensions indexation, introduced by the Department for Work and Pensions in January 2011. It was expected to be mostly offset by pensions auto-enrolment. Although the Government intends to

introduce this measure in the autumn, auto enrolment for small businesses has been delayed until 2017 to give smaller firms longer to prepare.

If the change to private pensions indexation is removed the overall net cost burden reduction over the full 18 months is £18.48M with an estimated £4.17M due to be delivered between January and June 2012.

Summary Position January 2011 – June 2012

	SNR1	SNR2	SNR3 ⁴	Total position at end June 2012 ⁵
<i>Volume</i>				
INs	10	9	5	24
OUTs	8	25	19	52
Zero Net Costs	19	18	18	55
<i>Annual regulatory cost to business (millions)</i>				
INs	£65.27	£197.03	£12.27	£274.57
OUTs	-£3,353.75	-£227.89	-£16.44	-£3,598.08
NET	-£3,288.48	-£30.87⁶	-£4.17	-£3,323.52

⁵ If the change to private pensions indexation introduced during SNR1 is removed, the total net value would be a net increase in business burdens for SNR1 of £53.52 million and an overall net position (for SNR1, 2 and 3) of £18.48 million.

Individual Government Departments are each publishing a summary of the Regulations they intend to introduce between January and June 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.

Wider Government Initiatives to Reduce Regulation include:

- Lobbying to reduce the burden of regulation originating from Brussels
- The Red Tape Challenge.
- A review of Regulators, examining the performance of the regulators, more detail on which will be announced in Spring of this year
- Extending the remit of the Local Better Regulation Office (becoming the Better Regulation Delivery Office) and extension the Primary Authority scheme
- Establishing sunset review clauses on new statutory regulators and reducing the number of public bodies,
- Micro-business Moratorium, micro-businesses and start-ups are exempted from new domestic regulation for three years.
- Introducing a statutory review clause or a sunset clause into new Regulations.

The latest statement of new regulation was published just four weeks ahead of the April Common Commencement Date (6 April) to give businesses more certainty about regulations that are coming in on that date. The Fourth Statement is planned to be published up to eight weeks ahead of the October Common Commencement Date and the Fifth Statement up to twelve weeks ahead, to provide clarity for businesses and help them plan for the future.

For all three Statements of New Regulation as well as statements for individual Government Departments visit the BIS website at: <http://tinyurl.com/cvc8cq9>

FSA Updates the Food Law Practise Guide

The FSA have revised and reissued their Food Law Practice Guidance. The guidance has been revised following consultation with the Food Hygiene Focus group and of specialist liaison groups, which took place late last year. One of the main additions to the Practice Guidance is the introduction of stand-alone guidance on the approval of establishments. The guidance for Local authorities on approval of businesses can be accessed by following this link: <http://tinyurl.com/crdkaaz>

The Practice Guidance is issued by the Food Standards Agency to assist Enforcing Food Authorities to enforce relevant food law. It is non-statutory, and provides general advice on approach to enforcement of the law where its intention might be unclear. The new guidance updates all previous guidance issued with the Code of Practice. The intention by the FSA is to continue to develop it as and when new policies are developed and existing ones revised or replaced.

Material in the previous guidance has been reviewed and updated to take account of the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006, the Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009 and relevant EU Regulations. It also takes account of recommendations made by the EU Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) following their inspections of the UK's food control services.

The amended guidance can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/cr3b3rr>

£15 million to Improve Efficiency, Sustainability and Competitiveness in Food Processing

The Government is investing £15 million in the Food Processing and Manufacturing sector in the form of grants to larger businesses for projects carrying out research and developing innovations that increase efficiency and reduce waste in farming, food and drink production and manufacturing.

Two "competitions" for the funding were launched at the Farming, Food and Drink Innovation Summit. Funded in combination by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Technology Strategy Board (TSB), Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) and the Scottish Government, the aim is to help industry develop new ideas and products that improve food production and manufacturing while having less impact on the environment. Previous recipients of this type of award include a team at Heriot-Watt University in Scotland, which used ultrasound to improve the quality and nutritional value of bread and cakes while making production more energy efficient. Up to £15 million in grants is on offer to bigger businesses to invest in projects that will increase the efficiency, sustainability and competitiveness of food processing and manufacturing. A further £500,000 will also be available to small and medium sized businesses, through grants of up to £25,000.

The first "competition" is the *Food Processing and Manufacturing Efficiency* competition. The primary focus is downstream of the 'farm gate'. It is for proposals for projects, which must be business led, and need to secure industrial leadership from the food processing, manufacturing, distribution, retail or food service sectors. It opens on 11 June 2012 and expressions of interest must be submitted by 18 July 2012.

The second competition is the *Innovation for Growth in Agriculture, Food and Drink* competition, with grants of up to £25,000 available for feasibility studies that will support the rapid development of an innovative idea and demonstrate its practical feasibility. Open only to micro companies and SMEs, applications was through a two-minute video submission and a written submission. The competition opened on 16 April 2012, with a registration deadline of 16 May 2012 and a deadline for applications of 30 May 2012.

Find out more about both competitions: <http://tinyurl.com/7xjpxc>.

EFSA Call for Additive Information

The Commission has set up a programme for the re-evaluation of EU permitted food additives; Regulation (EU) No 257/2010. This is in accordance with Article 32 of Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 on food additives, which states that all food additives permitted in the EU before 20 January 2009 will be subject to a new risk assessment by EFSA. EFSA has issued a call to all interested parties for all relevant data (published or unpublished) for the re-

evaluation of selected miscellaneous food additives to ensure that the re-evaluation is effective. The data will be considered for the EFSA Opinions/Statements on the food additives, which will be issued in the coming years.

The miscellaneous food additives included in this call for scientific data (see **Annex 1**) have been selected in line with priorities defined in Commission Regulation (EU) 257/2010. Based on their main technological function, they can be grouped as follows:

- Acidity regulators
- Anti-caking agents
- Firming agents
- Encapsulating agent
- Foaming agent

In preparation for the re-evaluation of the food additives listed in Annex 1, and in the absence of new application dossiers, existing information on these food additives needs to be collected.

National food authorities, research institutions, academia, food business operators, and other stakeholders are invited to submit information on the selected food additives relevant to the specific areas indicated below.

- Specifications for the finished food additive (e.g. purity and particle size and particle size distribution where appropriate);
- Information on the manufacturing process, including purification and preparation of the product to be commercialised and analytical/production controls, relevant to their use as food additives;
- Analytical methods available for determination of the food additive in food and beverages;
- Toxicokinetic and toxicity data (acute, subchronic and chronic toxicity; carcinogenicity; genotoxicity; reproduction and developmental toxicity; allergenicity, etc.) and any other information relevant to their safety assessment.

EFSA is interested to receive all the original study reports previously evaluated by the Scientific Committee on Food (SCF) and the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) as well as scientific papers and original study reports not previously considered in SCF and JECFA evaluations.

N.B.: This call does not cover the following areas for which another call for data will be made separately: information on human exposure to the food additives from food, i.e. intake levels, occurrence data (i.e. actual typical and maximum use levels per food category), other factors influencing exposure and, if available, corresponding exposure assessments.

For more information visit the EFSA Website at: <http://tinyurl.com/7nxh2yw>

BIS Launches: Focus on Enforcement

The Red Tape Challenge aims to amend or remove ill thought out or outdated Regulations, but sometimes the regulation itself is fine – it is inconsistent or inappropriate enforcement that is causing problems or could be better. BIS have launched a website “Focus on Enforcement” to help them identify where enforcement can be improved, reduced or done differently. Organisations are invited to input ideas on areas that would benefit from a review and the best suggestions proposed will be investigated, reported and acted upon.

- When a topic is being reviewed or in “In Focus” organizations will be further invited to comment on their experiences of how regulatory enforcement operates in the focus area and how it could be improved or best practice shared. BIS is looking for constructive comments about experiences of regulatory enforcement and compliance. BIS are particularly interested in;
- Where a regulator has worked well and has been helpful to you or your business. Are there things other regulators could learn from this one?
- Whether in your view the process a regulator has required you to follow has placed an unnecessary or excessive burden on you or your business. If so, please explain why you feel it was unnecessary or excessive.
- Whether you have experienced overlap between different regulators? If so, please give details of which regulators and how their work overlaps.
- Your experiences of what you consider to be overzealous enforcement that is beyond the remit of the regulation/regulator and why you think this.
- Where you feel that you or your sector could manage compliance without intervention by the regulator or where you believe there may be viable alternatives to regulation that could achieve the same outcome. If possible, please provide examples.

- The website lists the first three areas in focus, these will be formally launched in April and are:
- Chemicals
- **Small Businesses in Food Manufacturing**
- Volunteer Events (covering the sort of compliance and enforcement issues that you might come into contact with when planning and running an event to raise money for good causes).

The website also provides some useful information on all of the National Regulators and details of their remit as well as information on Local Authority Regulatory functions: <http://tinyurl.com/7c7u2xg>

New Responsibility Deal Pledges Launched on Alcohol and Calories

In response to the Department Health's publication last year of "The Call for Action on Obesity in England". The Department of Health has launched a further public health responsibility deal pledge as part of its food network:

Recognising that the Call to Action on Obesity in England set out the importance of action on obesity, and issued a challenge to the population to reduce its total calorie consumption by 5 billion calories (kcal) a day.

We will support and enable our customers to eat and drink fewer calories through actions such as product / menu reformulation, reviewing portion sizes, education and information, and actions to shift the marketing mix towards lower calorie options. We will monitor and report on our actions on an annual basis.

So far there have been 17 early signatories though the Department is inviting as many Food Businesses as possible to sign up. Those that have signed up now have six weeks to formally submit their delivery plans and these will be published along side all of those made against public health responsibility deal (PHRD) pledges on the Responsibility Deal website. The new pledge includes a menu of options that businesses can consider for action when they sign up:

- Reformulation: Recipe/ menu changes to decrease energy density; fat and sugar reduced in products, or substituted with other lower calorie ingredients
- Portion size: Reductions to portion sizes of existing products/ menu items
- Development of lower calorie options; Baked products replacing fried e.g. savoury snacks; Calorie restricted products e.g. 99 kcal chocolate bars
- Encouraging consumers to choose healthier options: Promotion of smaller portion sizes to encourage down-sizing; other 'substitution' promotions to favour lower calorie options
- Satiety enhancers: Potential to increase the content of satiating ingredients to decrease overall energy intake e.g. fibre
- Balance of portfolio/ menu/ etc: Companies may expand or change their offering to include a greater proportion of 'healthier' products/ menu items; Procurement and default options offered to customers are the healthy options e.g. coffee shops use of lower fat milks, caterers and retailers use of reduced fat cheeses, spreads and lower fat meats etc.
- Activity intended to inform and educate consumers towards making healthier choices: This could, for example, extend into meal composition and food preparation, such as funding healthier eating sessions in local schools - such action should ideally accompany other actions.
- Other: By harnessing their creative powers, companies may be able to develop further options to facilitate behaviour change – for example, this might include innovative use of loyalty cards.

Initiatives that businesses have committed to include:

- Beefeater Grill (Whitbread) will promote 20 per cent of their menu with calorie capped meals, and continue to reduce calories year on year in their top selling lines;
- Compass Group UK will over the next 18 months reformulate their standard recipes to decrease energy density and subsequently remove up to 10 per cent of calories from these recipes;
- Kerry Foods will deliver activity in a number of different ways, including reducing energy density;
- Kraft will introduce resealable packaging on many of our chocolate brands, including Cadbury's Dairy Milk;
- M&S will continue to grow its range of calorie controlled options across prepared meals, desserts, sandwiches and snacks, which are designed to help customers reduce their intake of calories;

- Nestlé will continue its programme of product reformulation and increase its support for education and training programmes in schools, colleges and at the workplace, to teach the basic principles of health and nutrition, including calorie management;
- Pepsi Co UK will introduce a calorie cap of 160 Calories across single serve savoury snacks without significant positive nutrition, by 2015;
- Sainsbury's have publicly committed to reduce sugar, fat, saturated fat and salt in own brand products;
- Unilever UK is already reducing calories; recently it conducted reformulation within its spreads portfolio, significantly reducing the number of calories and the amount of saturated fat. It will complement this with further reformulation and consumer information; and
- Waitrose will build on the work it has already done to reduce calories with no compromise on taste or quality. It will continue to make calorie reductions in a variety of ways, including reviewing energy density, and will continue to encourage a balanced diet and exercise.

Alcohol Unit Reduction

34 businesses have signed up to the second new PHRD pledge, including those behind brands like Echo Falls, First Cape and Heineken, which aims to see a greater choice of lower strength alcohol products and smaller measures by 2015. The new pledge reads:

As part of action to reduce the number of people drinking above the guidelines, we have already signed up to a core commitment to “foster a culture of responsible drinking which will help people drink within guidelines”.

To support this we will remove 1bn units of alcohol sold annually from the market by Dec 2015 principally through improving consumer choice of lower alcohol products.

Key commitments include new and lighter products, innovating through existing brands and removing products from sale. They include:

- Sainsbury's have pledged to double the sales of lighter alcohol wine and reduce the average alcohol content of own brand wine and beer by 2020.
- 25 million units will be gradually removed from Accolade Wines including Echo Falls Rosé and Echo Falls White Zinfandel;
- Brand Phoenix – have committed to taking 50 million units of alcohol out of their wines – by reducing 0.8 per cent ABV on all FirstCape full strength red wines;
- Molson Coors, the UK's largest brewer, has committed to remove 50 million units by December 2015;
- 100 million units will be removed by Heineken;
- own brand super-strength lager will be removed from sale by wholesaler Makro;
- Tesco, the leading retailer for low alcohol drinks, will reduce the alcohol content of its own-label beer and cider and expand its range of lower alcohol wines and beers, already the biggest selling range in the UK.

For more details on both the new and existing pledges: <http://tinyurl.com/84g246a>

FSA Guidance on Catering for the Olympics

The organisers of next year's Olympic and Paralympic Games estimate that 14 million meals will be served at more than 40 Olympic venues across the UK. The total number of people to feed, and the amount of food required to feed them, make the Games the largest peace-time catering operation in the world.

The Food Standards Agency is reminding anyone who is considering setting up a stall selling refreshments during the Olympics to plan ahead and has produced guidance answering the most frequently asked questions.

A stall will need to be registered as a food business and, if it is to be situated on a public road or path, a street trading licence will also need to be obtained from the local authority. Anyone not following these procedures may face tough enforcement action. Application forms can be obtained from local authority websites

Sarah Appleby, Head of Enforcement and Local Authority Delivery at the Food Standards Agency, said: 'The Games are likely to bring communities together and create a wonderfully festive atmosphere. They also offer opportunities for the more enterprising among us. But this summer the UK will welcome the world to the Olympics and it is more important than ever that the food being sold is safe.

'I urge anybody who is tempted to sell food or drink to visitors at the Games, to check what the regulations are and to talk to your local authority about licences and registration well in advance.'

Regulation (EC) 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs, and the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006, set out the basic hygiene requirements for all aspects of the business, from premises and facilities to the personal hygiene of staff. One of the key requirements is that a food business owner must be able to show what they do to make or sell food that is safe to eat, and have this documented.

The Agency has previously published a handy guide on starting up a food business. The guide, which can be found at the link below, provides details of what a food business operator must do and how they can register their food business.

Registration as a food business is free, it serves to ensure that the local authority is aware of the business so that it may offer advice and carry out inspections as necessary. Whether registered or not, your food stall or vehicle will be subject to inspection on a regular basis by food enforcement officers from the local authority environmental health team.

The Food Standards Agency is responsible for food safety and consumer protection. To ensure that food that is sold during the Olympic Games is safe to eat the Agency has been working closely with a number of other organisations and bodies, which have separate responsibilities.

- The Joint Local Authority Regulatory services (JLARS) is the representative organisation for the four London boroughs that form the Olympic Park.
- The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) is responsible for the planning, funding, preparation and staging of the Games.
- The Health Protection Agency (HPA) is responsible for protecting the public from threats to their health from infectious diseases and environmental hazards.
- Local authorities are responsible for enforcement.

For the Guide to starting your own catering business: <http://tinyurl.com/cnq3dch>

For the FSA Q&A on catering for the Olympics go to: <http://tinyurl.com/cnnx99u>

EFSA Guidance for Certain Health Claims

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) have published guidance on the scientific requirements for health claims related to appetite ratings, weight management, and blood glucose concentrations. EFSA asked the Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies (NDA) to draft the guidance on scientific requirements for health claims related to appetite ratings, weight management, and blood glucose concentrations. This guidance has been drawn from scientific opinions of the NDA Panel on such health claims. The full report can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/bndyseg>

FSA Staff Take over Dairy Hygiene Inspections

From April 2012, FSA staff will be taking over the role of dairy hygiene inspectors on farms in England and Wales, from the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA), which had previously undertaken this task on the FSA's behalf.

Dairy hygiene inspections are carried out on dairy farms to help protect the milk supply from the risk of contamination by bacteria and other substances, some of which are potentially harmful. Inspectors check milking premises, equipment and milk-producing animals. Official controls within dairy establishments in Scotland and Northern Ireland will continue to be delivered by local authorities and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, respectively. As part of the implementation plan agreed between the two organisations, FSA inspectors will be undertaking classroom training and shadowing current dairy hygiene inspectors from AHVLA. The intensive training will be implemented over a four week period to be ready for the change from 1 April. AHVLA has agreed to continue some inspection visits throughout April and May to ensure a smooth transition over to the FSA.

This change to dairy hygiene inspections follows the FSA's announcement in July 2011 that it was reducing the frequency of official hygiene inspections on dairy farms in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, to make the system more proportionate to the food safety risks.

Andrew Rhodes, Director of Operations at the FSA, said: 'Following an external procurement tender exercise, the FSA decided to transfer delivery of dairy hygiene official controls to FSA Operations staff. This was deemed the most cost effective option for delivering consistent, risk based controls and the best level of consumer protection.'

EFSA Publish Annual Zoonoses Report

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) have published their annual report on zoonoses and food-borne outbreaks in the EU for 2010. The report shows that Salmonella cases in humans fell by almost 9%, marking a decrease for the sixth consecutive year. According to the report, the likely main reason for the decrease in human salmonellosis cases is the successful EU *Salmonella* control programmes for reducing the prevalence of the bacteria in poultry populations, particularly in laying hens. Campylobacteriosis remains the most reported zoonotic infection in humans since 2005 and the number of cases has been increasing over the last five years. In 2010, a total of 212,064 Campylobacter cases in humans were reported, 7% more than in 2009. In foodstuffs, Campylobacter was mostly found in raw poultry meat. In order to combat Campylobacter, the European Commission is currently carrying out a cost-benefit analysis of the control measures for the bacteria at different stages of the food chain. EFSA has supported this work by analysing an EU-wide baseline survey on the prevalence of Campylobacter in chicken and providing scientific advice on possible reduction measures. The report and supporting tables can be found on the EFSA website at:

<http://tinyurl.com/ckhvdol>

Decision on the Commercial Designation for Stone Bass

Defra have written to trade stakeholders to inform them of a recent decision. Defra had received a request to use the name '*Stone Bass*' for species '*Agyrosomus Regius*'. After consulting with their internal fish experts group, the request has been declined and confirms that *Agyrosomus Regius* should not be marketed in the UK under the name Stone Bass, the assigned name on the list is Meagre.

The Fish labelling (England) Regulations 2010 give the permitted commercial designations and can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/cp4ptnk>

Recall on Mistral Laboratory Chemicals

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is advising companies and individuals who have bought chemicals used for food production from a company called Mistral Laboratory Chemicals not to use them.

The company, based in Antrim, Northern Ireland, sells products from its website and also through other sites such as eBay. An example of the type of label used by Mistral on its products designed for food use can be viewed via the link below. The company has voluntarily ceased distribution of its food grade products.

Italian authorities are investigating the circumstances of the recent death of a woman at a private medical clinic in Italy. Products for food use supplied by Mistral have been implicated in that investigation. However, enquiries are still ongoing. There have been no reported food related incidents in the UK linked to products supplied by Mistral, and the FSA issued the warning as a precaution.

The FSA is advising people to inform their local environmental health officer immediately if they have any of these food grade chemicals; and they are working with Local Authorities to arrange disposal of the products. The FSA will provide more information as it becomes available. More details can be found on the FSA website.:

<http://tinyurl.com/d8r2vpw>

Changes to Rules on Japanese Food Imports

The European Commission has published a new Regulation on the import of food from Japan. Commission Implementing Regulation 284/2012 lowers the maximum limit for caesium-134 and caesium-137 in seafood from 500 Bq/kg to 100 Bq/kg. There is no longer a maximum level for iodine-131 or for strontium, plutonium and americium. The declaration that has to be provided by the Japanese authorities has been amended to attest that the products comply with the legislation in force in Japan.

In addition, the frequency of the controls at the European border has been reduced because the risk is perceived as significantly reduced, and also because the Japanese authorities have been applying their controls efficiently. Physical checks on seafood originating in the 11 affected prefectures (Fukushima, Gunma, Ibaraki, Tochigi, Miyagi, Nagano, Yamanashi, Saitama, Tokyo, Chiba, Kanagawa and Shizuoka) or their coastal waters are reduced from 10% to 5%. The current rate of 20% physical checks will be reduced to 10% for other seafood consigned from or originating in Japan.

The latest Regulation is Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 284/2012 (which replaces 961/2011), it came into effect from 2 April. The full text can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/bspvp2g>

Commission Lifts Ban on Thai Imports of Fresh Chicken

The European Union has announced that the restrictions on the import of fresh poultry meat from Thailand will be lifted. The restrictions had been in place since 2004 following an avian flu outbreak.

The restrictions will officially end on July 1 after health experts endorsed a recommendation from the European Commission, the EU's executive arm.

The commission suspended imports of Thai fresh poultry meat and other poultry products following outbreaks of the highly pathogenic HPAI H5N1 strain of avian influenza that caused worldwide panic.

The commission said Thailand has implemented a "rigorous policy to stamp-out the pathogen, including intensive surveillance and quick elimination of infected animals, and as a result successfully eradicated HPAI H5N1 from its territory."

The last mission carried out by commission experts in Thailand in March 2011 concluded that the country "can provide sufficient guarantees to comply with the EU import requirements for poultry meat," the EU executive said in a statement.

The EU maintains restrictions on imports of poultry meat from China as well as eggs from Malaysia and South Korea.

For more information go to: <http://tinyurl.com/d6qwlh7>

The F-Gas Review

Fluorinated gases power the world's refrigerants and air conditioning systems, and make up around 2% of global greenhouse gas emissions. But if business continues as usual, by 2050 they could be responsible for between 9%-19% of global emissions, prompting EU policymakers to take action to contain leakage or even ban their use.

F-gases are covered by the Kyoto Protocol, which commits the EU to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 8% between 2008 and 2012.

In 2006, the EU adopted two pieces of legislation to constrain the use of HFCs:

A regulation 842/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on certain fluorinated greenhouse gases – enforceable directly at national level – was passed to cover air conditioning systems, industrial refrigeration and other 'stationary' industrial applications. Domestic refrigerators were excluded. Obligations covered the containment of leakages, recovery of used equipment, labelling of products, reporting of emissions data to the EU, and a ban on the use of some F-gases, such as SF6 (magnesium dye-casting). The 'Mac Directive' was also passed, phasing out F-gases for use in 'mobile' car air conditioning. The directive bans gases with a global warming potential (gwp) of more than 150 for all cars as of 2017 (as of 2011 for new cars coming out of factories). The gwp scale measures greenhouse gas trapped in the atmosphere relative to a unit of carbon dioxide (standardised to 1). The directive banned HFC-134a, which had a gwp of 1430 and led to an industry-wide shift to a less damaging HFC called 1234yf, with a gwp of 4.

The European Commission was mandated to publish a report on the application of the F-gas measures by 4 July 2011, following a public consultation which closed earlier in January. Öko-Recherche, the consultants responsible, submitted a preliminary report to the European Commission in July.

The report recommends that on top of the 2006 legislation, "further reductions of F-gas emission may be appropriate and these will need to be based on additional policy measures". Among other things, these would cover HFC emissions from mobile air conditioning systems in ships, rail vehicles, transport refrigeration and refrigerated ships.

It also recommends a review of the Mobile Air-conditioning Systems (MAC) Directive to address the air conditioning systems contained in all types of motor vehicles. "Bans have been the most effective type of measure so far and resulted in significant and measurable reductions of F-gas consumption and hence emissions," the report says.

Nonetheless, it continues, "the option to establish step-wise gwp-weighted limits for the placing on the market of HFCs has been identified to show the highest emission reduction potential of up to 64 Mt CO₂ eq. at abatement costs of ca. 18 €/t CO₂ eq. on average while including all sectors relying on HFCs".

Following an October 2011 impact assessment, the Commission will decide whether or not to propose changes to the F-gas regulation later in the year. Many issues will need to be resolved first.

Catch Quota Trials to Reduce Discards a Success

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) conducted trials of catch quota management during 2011 in collaboration with fishermen and vessel owners in the North East and South West of England. The project was sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to assist the development of UK policy objectives on fish discard reduction and Common Fisheries Policy reform. The project was run in tandem with other fully documented catch quota fisheries projects across Europe and builds upon the UK and European pilots in 2010.

The principal objective of catch quota management is to ensure total catch mortality of designated species is accounted for and create incentives to fish selectively and avoid juvenile fish catches. Under the terms of the trial, discarding of key species, including undersized specimens, was prohibited. Some additional quota was provided, as prescribed by Council Regulation (EU) 57/2011, to participants in place of the requirement to land all catches but set at a level considered to reduce overall fishing mortality. North Sea participants were also provided with additional effort allocations, in terms of days at sea, to allow for more flexible fishing operations.

An interim report based on data collected between April and September 2011 was published in October 2011. This final report sets out results to the end of December 2011 and takes account of data collected over a wider range of seasonal variation in the fisheries tested during the trial.

The main aim of the 2011 project was to test the effectiveness of catch quota management in reducing the level of discards across a range of species and fisheries and to test the operational management and enforceability of remote electronic monitoring with CCTV (REM) as a means of verifying catch documentation and discard levels. REM equipment was sourced from Archipelago Marine Research Limited, Canada.

The trial started in March 2011, with 12 vessels participating for North Sea (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) Area IV) cod and 3 vessels for Western Channel (ICES Area VIIe) common sole. One vessel voluntarily trialled catch quota conditions for more than one stock (common sole, plaice and anglerfish) throughout various Western Waters areas (ICES Area VII). Additional quota for plaice and anglerfish was made available for scientific purposes (Council Regulation (EC) 1224/2009).

Minimal quantities of discards, 0.2 per cent of total catches across all species under trial, were observed during analysis of CCTV footage. This figure reduced from 0.25 per cent found at the interim report stage. These quantities were considered so minimal and were not indicative of deliberate discarding. The trial demonstrated the efficacy of the system as a means of monitoring for discarding activity and accounting for total catch mortality for trial species.

Catches of undersized fish were documented on board fishing vessels and verified through REM analysis. Quantities ranged between 0 and 3 per cent depending on the species and fishery. These levels are comparable with results at the interim report stage. The overall low levels of undersized fish caught during the trial are indicative of effective gear selectivity and/or avoidance behaviour. The live weight of undersized fish was accounted for and deducted from vessel quota allocations.

The REM (CCTV) system has proven largely reliable, although it is evident that operating the system on a larger scale will require a formalised maintenance and service infrastructure. Fishing vessel masters were responsible for maintaining equipment to ensure sufficient quality of sensor and image data, there were no indications of deliberate obscuration of cameras or tampering with monitoring equipment during the trial. However, crews needed to be reminded on occasion on matters such as ensuring that camera lens covers were kept sufficiently clean. For the full report go to: <http://tinyurl.com/cgtnvvc>

First EFSA Opinion on Meat Inspection Covers Swine

EFSA has completed the first stage of a major piece of work that will provide the scientific basis for the modernisation of meat inspection across the EU. In May 2010 the European Commission asked EFSA to deliver a series of Scientific Opinions on public health hazards – biological and chemical – to be addressed by meat inspection. The Authority was also requested to provide a summary of comparable data on specific food-borne hazards in the Member States that would enable risk managers to adapt meat inspection procedures to national requirements. EFSA's experts were asked to consider the implications for animal health and welfare of any proposed changes to current inspection practices. To fulfil this complex mandate, EFSA has drawn on its expertise in a wide range of fields within its scientific remit and has broken up the work into six sets of Scientific Opinions and Scientific Reports. The first set covers the inspection of swine.

As well as identifying and ranking the main risks for public health, the scientific experts on EFSA's panels were asked to: assess the strengths and weaknesses of the current inspection methodology; recommend methods that take into account the hazards not addressed by current meat inspection; and recommend adaptations of methods and/or frequency of inspections based on the hazard rankings and harmonised epidemiological indicators.

In the area of biological hazards, the foodborne hazards Salmonella, Yersinia enterocolitica, Toxoplasma gondii and Trichinella were identified as priority targets in the inspection of swine meat at abattoir level, due to their prevalence and impact on human health. It was concluded that current inspection methods do not enable the early detection of the first three of these hazards and, more broadly, do not differentiate food safety aspects from meat quality aspects, prevention of animal diseases or occupational hazards.

In the area of animal health and welfare, it was noted that the abolition of palpation and/or incision would lead to a reduction in detection of some diseases but that in cases where several organs are affected, this effect was likely to be minimal. To mitigate the reduced detection probability of the proposed modified system, experts recommended that palpation and/or incision should be conducted as a follow-up to a visual inspection showing abnormalities. In the area of contaminants, dioxins, dioxin-like polychlorinated biphenyls and the antibiotic chloramphenicol were identified as chemical substances of high potential concern in pork, based on pre-defined criteria. However, it was concluded that chemical substances at the concentrations found in swine meat are unlikely to pose an immediate or short-term health risk for consumers. EFSA also proposed harmonised epidemiological indicators for food-borne hazards that are covered by existing meat inspection procedures as well as the highlighted biological hazards.

For more information and the full report go to: <http://tinyurl.com/cbhfe4h>

FSA Guidance on Edible Glitter and Dusts

The Food Standards Agency has developed guidance on edible and non-toxic glitters and dusts. This will help food businesses and consumers to safely use glitters and dusts with food.

The Agency is aware that non-edible cake decorating materials, described as dusts or glitters, are being marketed in ways that could be misleading. These include products only labelled as 'non-toxic', without stating they are not to be consumed.

As a general rule:

- Only glitter or dust clearly labelled as 'edible' should be applied to food for consumption. Dusts or glitters that are edible will be made of permitted additives (such as mica and titanium dioxide) and must comply with the requirements of EU food additives legislation.
- Edible glitter or dust must be labelled with the name or E-number of any additives used and should carry either the statement 'For food', 'Restricted use in food' or a more specific reference to their intended food use (for example 'Edible lustre').
- 'Non-toxic' and inedible glitters that have been tested and meet the requirements of the legislation on food contact materials and articles can be applied to food for decoration, but they cannot be applied to food for consumption. They should be labelled 'For food contact' (or alternative wording to show they are not to be eaten) and include instructions for use.
- Other 'non-toxic' glitters and dusts that have not been tested to see if their constituent chemicals migrate into food at levels above legal limits, do not meet the requirements of the legislation on food contact materials and articles. They are not labelled 'For Food Contact' (or similar wording to indicate their use) and should not come into contact with food.

Consumers who are unsure if a 'non-toxic' glitter or dust is safe for use in contact with food should contact the glitter or dust supplier. Glitter manufacturers have to provide suppliers with a 'declaration of compliance' to show the product(s) meet the requirements of legislation for food contact materials and articles.

The FSA is contacting local authorities to help them clarify how glitters and dusts, intended for consumption or decoration, can be used.

The FSA have produced answers to a series of frequently asked questions that can be accessed through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/bn4uvz5>

Commissions Reclassifies UK Desinewed Meat as MSM

Between 6 and 14 March a Commission FVO mission to the UK took place to audit official controls on the production of MSM. The audit did not go well with reports of breaches of food hygiene, labelling and microbiological testing requirements identified.

Furthermore the FVO mission did not agree with the UK's interpretation of the definition of Mechanically Separated Meat (MSM). The FVO believe that **any** residual meat removed from bones through mechanical means is MSM, with no regard taken of the level of structural breakdown of the material. In the UK the long held interpretation is that **"meat obtained from bones by mechanical separation, where the muscle fibre structure of the meat has not been lost or modified significantly, does not fall within the definition of MSM"**. In the UK such meat would be considered a meat preparation and termed de-sinewed meat (DSM).

The FVO concerns, particularly about the use of Ruminant bones (from cattle, sheep and goats) for the production of DSM, have been taken very seriously by the Commission as such bones may not be used for the production of MSM under EU Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) legislation, unless it can be demonstrated that they are sourced from a 'negligible risk country'

As a result of the audit findings the Commission wrote to the Food Standards Agency (FSA), as the UK's competent authority, demanding immediate action, and threatening to impose restrictions on intracommunity trade of UK meat products if such action were not taken. The FSA have consistently maintained their position that the

production and use of DSM is not a food safety issue. In the face of the Commission's disproportionate reaction the FSA have been left with little option but to impose the moratorium requested.

On 4 April, Tim Smith, Chief Executive of the FSA issued a briefing statement on the UK Government's response to the Commission's demands. The FSA position can be found on the FSA website at this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/cyu6gh8>. The Moratorium requires that production of 'desinewed meat' (DSM) from cows and sheep ceases and that DSM from poultry and pigs be reclassified as mechanically separated meat (MSM)

The moratorium has caused deep concern in the meat processing industry who believe that the total cost could be around £200 million to the industry. Desinewed meat is produced using a low-pressure technique to remove meat from animal bones. The product closely resembles minced meat and the process has been used in the UK since the mid-1990s. However, the European Commission has decided that DSM does not comply with European Union single market legislation and has, therefore, required the UK to impose a moratorium on producing meat products from the bones of cows and sheep using DSM by the 28 April. If the UK does not comply with the Commission's ruling it risks a ban on the export of UK meat products, which would have a devastating impact on the UK meat industry.

The DSM process may still be used to remove meat from poultry and pigs, but much of it must now be classed and specifically labelled as 'Mechanically Separated Meat' (MSM), This means that it is no longer classed as meat and cannot be included as part of the meat content of a meat product or preparation and must be labelled separately as an ingredient.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) said that it is clear that there is no evidence of any risk to human health from eating meat produced from the low-pressure DSM technique saying " There is no greater risk from eating this sort of produce than any other piece of meat or meat product," a spokesman from the FSA has also said that "UK producers have told us that DSM is also exported by other EU countries such as Germany, the Netherlands and Spain,"

The agreed timelines for the imposition of the moratorium were unbelievably short:

From 00.01 hrs on 28 April 2012 the Moratorium for Desinewed meat from Ruminants – cows, sheep and goats, came into effect, meaning that:

- The production of DSM from ruminant bones by mechanical means ceased immediately.
- The incorporation of DSM produced from ruminant bones into meat preparations, meat products and minced meat ceased immediately.
- DSM produced from ruminant bones currently in storage must be disposed of in accordance with animal by-products legislation as risk Category 3 waste material.
- Product containing DSM produced from ruminant bones that is not yet incorporated into final product but that has been subjected to further processing such that it can be considered a meat preparation or a meat product or has been incorporated into an intermediate product may be sold through after this date.
- Finished products for the final consumer containing DSM produced from ruminant bones do not have to be re-labelled, are not subject to a product recall and may be sold through until stocks are exhausted. Records to demonstrate dates of production must be available.

At the time of writing the Moratorium agreed for Non-Ruminants is that:

From 00.01 hrs on 26 May 2012 the Moratorium For Desinewed meat from poultry and pigs, comes into effect, meaning that:

- Production of DSM (there are some exceptions) can continue but will be considered as, and must be labelled as MSM after this date
- DSM dispatched before 26 May can continue to be labeled as such but after this date, (including export to third countries) it must be labeled and described as MSM
- Poultry and pig MSM can continue to be incorporated into meat preparations and meat products but it must be labelled separately as MSM and cannot be used to count towards the meat content.
- Any DSM produced before this date can continue to be used up but production after 26th must be considered as MSM
- DSM that has been subject to further processing into an intermediate meat product or meat preparation

- (but is not in its final form and ready for marketing) can continue to be processed and sold through.
- Stocks of finished product made before 26 May and remaining in stock holdings, containing DSM but not labelled as MSM can continue to be sold through until stocks are exhausted, this includes frozen products.

It is important to note that not all desinewed meat will be affected by the moratorium. Only meat removed from bone is implicated, desinewed material from trim can continue to be produced and used as before and is not affected. Likewise meat removed from cooked bones are also unaffected and fish is not included or affected by the changes as all. Imports of DSM from other EU member states must be treated as MSM.

Technical discussion with the Commission has clarified what they mean by MSM – it is residual meat removed from the bone after deboning has taken place. So portions that have not yet been deboned, that are put through the low pressure separation process (baardering) will not be considered MSM. This process for them will be deboning and the product of the process will be DSM and it can be used as such. This approach can be applied to poultry wishbone, thighs and drumsticks, turkey neck and some pork cuts and will alleviate some of the impact.

The FSA have continued with Commissions discussions; making the case that more time should be given to allow the transition to take place. The UK have argued that as there is no food safety issue that the Commission should allow a delay in the implementation of the moratorium until, planned FVO visits to France, Italy, Germany and Holland later this year have taken place. The UK is very confident that the UK interpretation of MSM / DSM rules is consistent with the practises the missions will find in other Member States; they have built and passed a dossier of evidence to the Commission to support this. That other EU Member States have active industries producing MSM is not disputed, that we, in the UK are interpreting the rules differently is. The fear is that other EU member states are producing MSM and labelling it ambiguously for marketing in the UK as DSM (where the rules are seen as more relaxed) whilst marketing it as MSM elsewhere. The Moratorium applies to the UK only and for the time being places a unilateral disadvantage on the UK meat sector.

In discussion the Commission have proven intractable on ruminant DSM and remain absolutely adamant that this material is MSM and not permitted under TSE rules, so the moratorium on this material stands and came into place on 28 April.

On non-ruminant DSM from poultry and pigs, although the Commission are sympathetic, they have not been prepared to change the moratorium date, they have asked that implementation should be achieved 'as soon as possible'. The FSA interpretation of this is that full compliance is not expected from 26 May and have given Enforcement guidance to take a proportionate approach with food business operators. The initial approach to enforcing the moratorium will be supportive and educative. Although full compliance is not expected immediately, businesses must have a plan in place that demonstrates that they are working towards compliance and should in any case be compliant as soon as possible and definitely within 4- 6 months. The exception is exports (to other member states and third countries), which must be compliant from the 26 May, FSA are not prepared to export our issue and do not want to advertise and highlight our continuing non-compliance abroad.

An FVO mission will return to check on the UK efforts to comply and this is expected to take place in November 2012. Details of the Moratoria on both Ruminant and Non Ruminant DSM can be found on the FSA website through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/ctwrygp>

Consumer Review Creates the National Trading Standards Board (NTSB)

The Trading Standards Institute (TSI) has welcomed a "Consumer Landscape Review" announced by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills. More details of this can be found on the BIS website using this link: <http://tinyurl.com/3bmajf7>

A review aims to strengthen the effectiveness of the enforcement of consumer rights with a new centre stage role for trading standards in the coordination of action on issues of national significance.

The review strengthens Trading Standards with an increased funding of £10.5million for England, Wales and Scotland to make it easier to catch rogue traders operating across local authority boundaries.

One of the major aspects of the Review is the creation of the National Trading Standards Board (NTSB). BIS will provide grant funding to TSI, who will administer it on behalf of the Board and remain responsible for that funding.

The NTSB will bring together trading standards representatives from Wales and England, who will use their frontline experience and expertise to provide leadership and coordination for national and cross-boundary enforcement cases. There will also be representation from Scotland and Northern Ireland in order to facilitate intelligence sharing and collaboration.

To help gather intelligence, identify any enforcement gaps and to consistently act on key issues a Strategic Intelligence, Prevention and Enforcement Partnership will also be created with a membership of representatives from the NTSB, the new Competition and Markets Authority, the Regulated Industries Unit and Citizens Advice.

TSI has also been entrusted with establishing a successor to the Consumer Code Approval (CCA) scheme, which administers schemes designed to help consumers find a trusted trader. TSI has the backing of the trading standards community to deliver an improved and nationally consistent scheme, and is working with existing code sponsors to develop a self-funding model, which will be in place from April 2013.

TSI will also take the lead to ensure businesses can be the best they can be by ensuring the availability of clear information on their rights and responsibilities.

TSI's chief executive Ron Gainsford said: "We are encouraged by the recognition given in the Government announcement to the excellent work done by local trading standards officers, who keep our country safe and prosperous in ways that many of us don't even realise.

"The Trading Standards Institute has for 130 years championed trading standards for the benefit of our communities and country as a whole, and we are delighted to see the important role TSI has been given in this new regime.

"We are confident that the set up of the new National Trading Standards Board and Strategic Intelligence, Prevention and Enforcement Partnership will help not only achieve more consistency and accountability across the country but also support local trading standards services in these times of austerity, and tackle consumer detriment in a more holistic way.

"We look forward to building a closer relationship with Citizens Advice in their new capacity as the expert one-stop shop for consumer education and advocacy.

"Overall this Consumer Landscape Review is a good and promising package that will deliver more safety and certainty for consumers and honest business alike, but it should only be seen as the beginning.

"The current Government consultation on simplifying trading standards investigatory powers is an important part of this puzzle – while this is a welcome exercise we will not want to see trading standards officers' ability to do their jobs effectively affected.

"We hope that in the near future the review will be extended beyond the fair trading aspect of the consumer landscape; UK's resilience to issues relating to animal health, food standards, tobacco control and nutrition would benefit from these same efficiency and coordination measures to keep the country's trading standards provision the world class service that it is.

More information on the Trading Standards Institute can be found on their website: <http://tinyurl.com/c6ga2sg>

"Which?" Report on Campylobacter Levels in Poultry

A report from Which? has shown that 18% of samples of whole chickens and chicken portions taken from across 9 supermarkets to be contaminated with Campylobacter. It also reported that 17% were found to carry Listeria and 1.5% Salmonella.

Peter Bradnock, Chief Executive of the British Poultry Council welcomed the report as it demonstrates a significant reduction in levels since a study by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in 2009 found levels at 65%.

Which? executive director Richard Lloyd said: 'While the situation is improving, it is unacceptable that one in five chickens we tested were found to be contaminated with campylobacter. 'We want to see the risk of contamination minimised at every stage of production, because for far too long consumers have been expected to clean up mistakes made earlier in the food chain.'

There were 84,560 recorded cases of food poisoning in England and Wales in 2010, though the figure is thought to be much higher as not everyone seeks medical help and not all who do are tested. In fact, the FSA estimates that campylobacter – the most common cause of food-borne illness in Britain – was alone responsible for 371,000 cases of food poisoning across England and Wales in 2009. Resulting in 17,500 hospitalisations and 88 deaths. Campylobacter accounts for a third of the cost of the burden of foodborne illness in England and Wales, estimated at £583m in 2008.

It is found mainly in poultry but also in red meat, unpasteurised milk and untreated water. Although it does not normally grow in food, it spreads easily and has a low infective dose so only a few bacteria in a piece of undercooked chicken, or bacteria transferred from raw chicken onto other ready-to-eat foods, can cause illness. Campylobacter, listeria and salmonella are all easily transferrable through cross contamination and, although they are killed by cooking, most illness occurs from incorrect handling and cross contamination. The 2009 report carried out by the Food Standards Agency of campylobacter in chicken on retail sale in the UK took place between May 2007 and September 2008 and reported that campylobacter was present in 65% of the fresh chicken samples tested.

A European Union baseline survey carried out in 2008, and published by European Food Safety Authority in March 2010, showed the UK estimated prevalence for campylobacter in broiler batches (caecal contents) was 75.3% and 86.3% in broiler carcasses (skin samples). These results were above the weighted EU mean prevalences of 71.2% and 77% respectively. There was a wide range of campylobacter prevalence across members states varying from 4.9% to 100% in broiler carcasses and from 2% to 100% in broiler batches.

Both the FSA report and the European Baseline survey can be accessed through: <http://tinyurl.com/c86knd8>

Although not currently allowed under European Legislation, studies have shown that manufacturers could reduce bacterial contamination by surface treating the whole chicken, eg using lactic acid – Which? research claims that most consumers wouldn't be willing to buy chickens treated in this way.

A Which? survey of 1,406 UK adults showed that 82% of the public want controls in place throughout the food chain so that chickens aren't infected – rather than dealing with contamination at the end of the process. But when asked about specific treatments, 59% said they were unlikely to buy chicken treated with safe levels of irradiation.

60% were unlikely to buy chicken that had been sprayed or washed with a mild acid such as lactic acid, and 67% were unlikely to buy chicken that had been treated with chlorine.

People were more accepting of steam treatment, with 59% saying they were likely to buy a steam treated chicken.

To read more visit the Which? website at : <http://tinyurl.com/cjcutjy>

New Halal Certification Standard Launched

Cert ID Europe a prominent certification business has joined forces with the Hijaz Group to form the Halal Authority Board (HAB) www.haboard.com, to offer a new standard for Halal certification for the food industry. The Halal Authority Board (HAB) is a Halal Standards organisation to regulate the production of Halal products in accordance with Islamic law, from the rearing of livestock and the production of drinks, right through to serving the customer in the retail sector.

The Halal Authority Board's Worldwide Standard is a set of guidelines for the production of Halal meat, food and drink. The Standard sets out guidelines on all aspects of production to ensure the Halal integrity of products, including food health and safety regulations, storage, delivery and cleaning and cleansing which takes into account scientific developments to prevent contamination from pork and other unacceptable derivatives.

Currently, there are five modules, which cover:

- Primary Production of Livestock;
- Primary Processing of Livestock, which includes guidelines on cleaning and cleansing; slaughter of livestock and packaging and labelling.
- Further Processing;
- Logistics;
- Food Service, which covers preparation of Halal food for the consumer.

The Standard has been developed in conjunction with other Halal Standards and is therefore applicable to meat production all around the world. Overtime, the Standard will develop and evolve in order to take into account any changes and new advances in technology.

The new HAB certification scheme is a realistic and practical programme designed to combine the requirements of the 1500 year-old Halal belief with modern food processing requirements. To date there have been a number of different standards available causing confusion among Muslim consumers about the food they purchase. It is hoped that a worldwide uniform standard will make the process more streamlined for food businesses and clearer for consumers.

"Finding a Halal certification scheme that is a realistic and practical benchmark has proved challenging to auditors, standard owners and food manufacturers alike. We believe that the new HAB Worldwide Halal Standard is a

workable Shariah compliant standard which will make it significantly easier for the global food industry to reach Halal certification. Halal Authority Board's connection with Muslim consumers adds value to the certification scheme too and provides the element that has been missing from other certification programmes". HAB's product certification has the backing of 950 of the UK's 1400 Mosques which they claim makes it the most representative and influential Halal Certification Body with Muslim consumers in the UK and overseas. Halal Authority Board has a Shariah Board comprising 13 of the UK's best known and respected Islamic Scholars who represent a wide cross section of the Muslim Community.

FSA Acrylamide and Furan Survey Results

The Food Standards Agency has published results from its latest study looking at levels of process contaminants acrylamide and furan in a range of UK foods.

The report shows an upward trend in acrylamide levels in processed cereal-based baby foods (excluding rusks), and a reduction in other products, such as pre-cooked French fries, potato products for home cooking and bread during 2007-2011. The levels of acrylamide and furan reported do not increase concern about the risk to human health and the Agency has not changed its advice to consumers.

Based on samples taken from 248 products, the survey gives a snapshot of the range of acrylamide and furan levels in UK retail foods.

The Agency advises that chips should be cooked to a light golden colour. Bread and bread products should also be toasted to the lightest colour possible. Further information on eating a balanced diet can be found at the NHS Choices link below and advice on how to minimise acrylamide levels is in our section on acrylamide.

As with previous years, the survey results for acrylamide and furan will be sent to the European Food Safety Authority for collation, trend analysis and, in the case of furan, a risk assessment.

This is the fourth Food Surveillance Information Sheet (FSIS) published by the FSA and is part of a rolling programme, in response to European Commission recommendations, to investigate the levels of acrylamide and furan in retail food. A total of 340 analyses (248 for acrylamide; 92 for furan) were completed from November 2010 – April 2011 on 248 products representing 10 food groups, as specified by the European Commission. Further surveys to establish clearer trends will be carried out for the period 2011-2013. The FSA's rolling survey to measure acrylamide and furan in UK retail products will continue during 2012-2014. This will help the Agency refine its risk assessment, on which its consumer advice is based.

Acrylamide is a chemical produced naturally in food as a result of cooking and processing at temperatures above 120°C. It is formed from a reaction between natural components in food: the amino acid asparagine, and simple sugars. It is less likely to occur in foods cooked at lower temperatures for short periods, such as boiled potatoes.

Furan can be produced in food and drink when naturally occurring sugars, polyunsaturated fats and ascorbic acid (vitamin c) degrade when they are heat treated. The full report can be accessed through the FSA website:

<http://tinyurl.com/bn5h27p>

Survey to Develop Tools for Exporting SME's

Recent research has shown that food, drink and agriculture businesses would value better access to information and support to help them export their products. Defra and the Food & Drink Federation have commissioned SERIO, a research group at Plymouth University, to investigate the best way to achieve this.

SERIO will carry out a survey of 500 small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that export, or are thinking of doing so, to find out what information and support they need, what they've accessed and where from, how effective it was, what barriers there are to accessing it, whether there are any gaps in what is provided and how it can be improved. This telephone survey will be backed up with workshops amongst businesses and trade

representatives to explore ideas about how information and support can be most effectively provided to food, drink and agriculture businesses.

The findings from this research will help inform policy makers and industry about the most appropriate tools for disseminating export information to food, drink and agriculture businesses and will be published on the Defra website.

BFFF members may be invited to take part in the telephone survey, which will take around 20 minutes to complete, and a workshop, which will take a couple of hours at a convenient location. So that SERIO can get the views of as many businesses as possible, we have been asked to let you know about the survey, which will be taking place during April and May. We think that it is a good thing that could result in some tools being developed that are of benefit to the whole sector. If you do have any questions or require further information contact either Melanie Brooks at SERIO (melanie.brooks@plymouth.ac.uk) or Theresa Ekong at Defra (theresa.ekong@defra.gsi.gov.uk).

EU Harmonisation of Flavourings a Step Closer

At a meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCoFCAH), Member States endorsed a Commission proposal on the establishment of a European Union list of permitted flavouring substances and a transitional measure on other flavourings. While flavourings have a long history of safe use in a wide variety of food, consumers and companies currently face divergent national provisions. These two new pieces of legislation, which will enter into force once the European procedures have been concluded, will harmonise and create clear rules for the use of these substances within the single market. This first Regulation establishes a new EU wide list of flavouring substances, which can be used in food. It will apply 6 months after its adoption providing sufficient time for the EU food industry to adapt to the new rules. The EU food industry will only be able to use flavouring substances that are published on the EU list. All flavouring substances not in the list will be prohibited after a phasing out period. Transparency will be improved, as the list will also be available in an on-line database allowing consumers, food businesses and national food control authorities to easily identify which flavouring substances are authorised in food. The second Regulation concerns transitional measures for other flavourings such as flavourings made from non-food sources, which will be evaluated and authorised at later stage. This Regulation will apply immediately after its adoption. The establishment of the European Union list marks a major step in the implementation of framework Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008 on flavourings adopted in December 2008 and is the result of important work carried out by the European Food Safety Authority and other scientific bodies in assessing the safety of around 2800 flavouring substances. For more information on flavourings go to: <http://tinyurl.com/cg9mx47>

Use of Lactic Acid as Beef Carcass Decontaminant

In March the Food Standards Agency carried out a consultation asking businesses to provide their views on the use of lactic acid to reduce microbiological surface contamination on beef carcasses, proposed in a draft EU regulation. The FSA board considered a paper on the subject at its February open meeting and supported the proposal, concluding that where lactic acid is used for this purpose it should not need to be labelled. The Paper can be accessed on the FSA website through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/6s2vo7a> in the same document (embedded as an annex) is the European Commission proposal for legislation.

Currently Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 does not permit the use of any substances other than potable water to remove surface contamination from foods of animal origin unless the use of the substance has been approved. At present no approvals have been granted. In the USA, on the other hand, a range of substances are permitted to be used, including lactic acid. Meat produced using these substances cannot be imported into the EU. In December 2010 the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) submitted a dossier for the evaluation and approval of the use of lactic acid for the decontamination of beef carcasses, cuts and trimmings. The USDA dossier was assessed by an EFSA panel of independent scientists whose Scientific Opinion was favourable. (The Efsa Scientific Opinion is attached for your information) The Commission subsequently presented a proposal which is currently being discussed at EU level. Discussions are ongoing and the draft proposal is subject to change.

The FSA previously consulted to inform the UK voting position on the EU draft regulation, and is now consulting further in order to assess the likely impact on UK businesses. If authorised, the use of lactic acid on beef carcasses would be permissive rather than mandatory. A vote on the Commission regulation is expected in spring 2012.

The consultation was run across all four Administrations and businesses in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland were asked to submit their views, for instance on whether they would use lactic acid if approved, what the cost might be, and whether staff would require additional training in the process.

The consultation closed Friday 30 March 2012. For more information and parallel letters to interested parties from the devolved administrations go to: <http://tinyurl.com/cprp6kr>

BIS Launch “Enforcement in Focus” Website

The Red Tape Challenge aims to amend or remove ill thought out or outdated Regulations, but sometimes the regulation itself is fine – it is inconsistent or inappropriate enforcement that is causing problems or could be better. BIS have launched a website “Focus on Enforcement” to help them identify where enforcement can be improved, reduced or done differently. On the website Organisations are invited to input ideas on areas that would benefit from a review and the best suggestions proposed will be investigated, reported and acted upon, these are deemed to be “in Focus”.

When a topic is being reviewed or is “In Focus” organizations will be further invited to comment on their experiences of how regulatory enforcement operates in the focus area and how it could be improved or best practice shared. BIS is looking for constructive comments about experiences of regulatory enforcement and compliance. BIS are particularly interested in;

- Where a regulator has worked well and has been helpful to you or your business. Are there things other regulators could learn?
- Whether in your view the process a regulator has required you to follow has placed an unnecessary or excessive burden on you or your business. If so, provide an explanation of why you feel it was unnecessary or excessive.
- Whether you have experienced overlap between different regulators? If so, details are requested of which regulators and how their work overlaps.
- Your experiences of what you consider to be overzealous enforcement that is beyond the remit of the regulation/regulator and why you think this.
- Where you feel that you or your sector could manage compliance without intervention by the regulator or where you believe there may be viable alternatives to regulation that could achieve the same outcome. If possible, please provide examples.

The website lists the first three areas in focus, during May and June: Chemicals; **Small Businesses in Food Manufacturing**; and, Volunteer Events (covering the sort of compliance and enforcement issues that you might come into contact with when planning and running an event to raise money for good causes).

The website also provides some useful information on all of the National Regulators and details of their remit, their budget for regulatory activity and the number of full time equivalents devoted to regulatory activity for the main national regulators. There is also information on Local Authority Regulatory functions. You can access the site through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/7c7u2xg>

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the lead official, Sarah Tyrrell (sarah.tyrrell@bis.gsi.gov.uk) directly.

EFSA Opinion on Cecure for Poultry Decontamination

Following a request from the European Commission, the Panel on Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ Panel) and the Panel on Food Contact Materials, Enzymes, Flavourings and Processing Aids (CEF Panel) of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) were asked to deliver a Scientific Opinion on an application dossier submitted by the company Safe Foods Corporation for approval of the use of the preparation Cecure® for removal of microbial surface contamination on raw poultry products. More specifically, the approval was sought for treatments using an aqueous solution of Cecure® consisting of cetylpyridinium chloride (CPC) as the active ingredient and food-grade propylene glycol (PG). Cecure® should be applied by drenching at a concentration of less than 1.0% CPC, at

room temperature, and the solution should be recycled for reuse.

The Commission asked EFSA to issue a Scientific Opinion on the assessment of the safety and efficacy of Cecure® when used to reduce microbial surface contamination on raw poultry products (defined as skin-on whole chicken carcasses or parts). Specifically, the task was to consider the toxicological safety of the substance, its antimicrobial efficacy, the potential emergence of reduced microbial susceptibility to biocides and/or resistance to therapeutic antimicrobials linked to the use of the substance, and any risk related to the release of effluents containing the substance from the slaughterhouse and/or processing plant into the environment. The assessment was based on the guidance document on the submission of data for the evaluation of the safety and efficacy of substances for the removal of microbial surface contamination of foods of animal origin intended for human consumption published by EFSA.

The available data indicate that CPC, formulated as a diluted solution in Cecure®, is not mutagenic in bacteria and not clastogenic in cultured mammalian cells. Negative results were also obtained in a gene mutation assay with CPC in mouse lymphoma cells and in limited tests in *Aspergillus*, *Tradescantia* and *Drosophila*. The CEF Panel also noted that, in addition to these consistently negative results, the substance does not contain structural alerts for genotoxicity. Thus, based on the available evidence, the CEF Panel considered in their opinion, published in April, that there is no concern for genotoxicity.

A total of 15 peer reviewed published papers and 13 in-house studies dealing with testing of CPC or Cecure® for decontamination efficacy were submitted. Based on selection criteria, five peer-reviewed published papers and eleven in-house studies were selected and used in the assessment of the efficacy of Cecure® by the BIOHAZ Panel. Based on the published, peer-reviewed results and in-house conducted studies, mostly performed at industrial scale and on naturally contaminated samples, both Cecure® and its active ingredient CPC were found to be efficacious in reducing contamination with pathogenic microorganisms on fresh broiler carcasses or chicken skin. The microbial reductions achieved on pre- and post-chill treated samples were in the range of <1.0 to 5.0 log units over untreated and water-treated controls. The lower reductions were generally associated with lower concentrations of CPC (e.g., 0.1% or 1 mg/ml CPC) applied to samples of low initial contamination, while the higher reductions were achieved with inoculated samples.

The BIOHAZ Panel further concluded that the efficacy appeared to be influenced more by the concentration of the active ingredient than by the volume of solution applied, flow rate, spraying pressure, rate of carcass processing, and time of exposure within the ranges examined. Since the Cecure® solution is to be recycled after use, the BIOHAZ Panel assessed the level of efficacy of the recycled solution, and concluded that there is inadequate evidence to support that the recycled Cecure® solution is as efficacious as the fresh solution and that it does not accumulate resistant bacterial cells and/or spores.

For the full assessment follow the link to the EFSA website: <http://tinyurl.com/bn9l74r>

CIWF Campaign on EU Readiness for Sow Stall Ban

The EU plans for a partial ban on sow stalls from 1 January 2013, which largely bans the confinement of sows in stalls for the duration of pregnancy, are in disarray with only 10 countries likely to be ready for the new rules and some not even able to provide statistics.

The new law will ban the use of sow stalls for all except the first 4 weeks of a sow's pregnancy. At the moment female pigs across the EU can spend much of their adult lives in the stalls, where they do not have enough room to turn around. From 1 January 2013, sows will have to be kept in groups rather than in individual stalls during most of their pregnancy

The partial ban will create more of a level playing field for British and Swedish farmers – where sow stalls have been banned completely since 1999 – but new figures obtained by Compassion in World Farming from the EU Commission suggest they will have to wait even longer than the 13 years since 1999, they have waited so far. According to the commission only three countries are currently 100% compliant – these being the UK, Sweden and Luxembourg, they are expected to be joined only by Lithuania, Ireland, Germany, Estonia, Denmark, The Czech Republic and Bulgaria in time for the Regulation to take full effect. All of the other 17 member states are in varying stages of readiness, with Poland among the worst in terms of the number of farms (2,029) expected to be non-compliant with the law on 1 January.

Compassion's Chief Policy Advisor Peter, Stevenson, said: "This should set alarm bells ringing at the Commission and the 17 member states that are not going to comply with the ban. They need to get hold of the situation very quickly to stop this important step for animal welfare becoming a farce.

"It's unacceptable for so many countries to be behind schedule when they have known for a long time that these rules would be coming into force on 1 January. They need to take action now, both for the welfare of millions of pigs and to create a fairer market for UK farmers.

"The Commission needs to make it very clear that there will be significant consequences if they are still not in line come 2013."

With some countries unable to provide detailed statistics, among them Belgium, France and Portugal, Compassion fears implementation will prove difficult.

The barren battery cage ban for laying hens came into force in January this year. Twelve member states are still to comply with the new rules, which outlaw the most cramped cages.

Go to the CIWF website for information on the campaign through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/c8xjqpz>

There are also fears that the impact of the Regulation could also see Pig numbers in the European Union fall by as much as 10% and the price of pork rise substantially. Some farmers are likely to leave the industry, especially in Spain, a major producer where a credit squeeze will make it harder to comply with the new rules. A 10% drop in pig numbers would threaten the EU's position as a pork exporter. The EU exports pork to countries such as Russia, Hong Kong and China. Exports in 2011 were worth about €4.6 billion, according to European Commission figures. Germany and Spain are the EU's top two pork producers.

Stewart Houston, chairman of English pig farming group BPEX, said the new welfare regulations would lead to a fall of between 5% and 10% in the EU's pork production. A recent report issued by BPEX estimated that a drop of the EU pig herd of 5% would lead to a price increase for finished pigs of 10%. However, a 10% decline in the herd would lead to serious shortages of pork across the EU and "substantial price increases," the report said. Nevertheless, Houston believes the EU Commission should be rigorous in implementing the welfare standards.

"UK producers had the pain back in '99. So it's difficult to feel sympathetic for our colleagues in Europe who had over 12 years to comply," Houston said. "And indeed it wouldn't be fair on those in Europe who have made the change to allow those who haven't to continue in production."

Gangmasters Licensing Authority Standards Updated

A new version of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA)'s Licensing Standards has been published and is in force from 1 May 2012. The Licensing Standards set out the conditions to be complied with in order to be granted and keep a GLA licence. The new Licensing Standards are very similar to the current version. The key changes are:

- The GLA's policy of automatically refusing applications where someone has previously been found not fit and proper now includes failures against Standard 3.1 (mistreatment) and where forced labour issues have been identified,
- Licensing Standard 5.7, which concerns discrimination, has been updated to reflect the Equality Act 2010 better,
- Any vehicle used to transport workers must have appropriate insurance, and
- Licensing Standard 1.4 is clearer on what changes in details must be notified to the GLA.

Persons who supply workers or use supplied workers in certain food and agriculture sectors, and those who use workers to gather shellfish, need to be licensed with the GLA.

The Licensing Standards 2012 are available here: <http://bit.ly/Ja9Jhv>

EFSA Annual Report on Crisis Preparedness

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published a third annual report for 2011 on its preparedness for a food or feed crisis within Europe.

EFSA has established procedures for responding to urgent requests for scientific advice, and carries out crisis preparedness training on a regular basis. During 2011 EFSA carried out one training exercise and issued, upon its own remit and at the request of the European Commission, several consumer advice statements and reports on the *E. coli* (STEC) O104:H4 epidemic in Germany and France.

In order to prepare for food and feed safety crises, EFSA has developed and implemented a “multiannual crisis preparedness training programme” to improve EFSA crisis preparedness and to develop an effective coordination framework for internal and external cooperation with EFSA units and stakeholders.

A training event involved EFSA staff with the collaboration of participants from the European Commission, Member States and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. The format consisted of an exercise involving a developing situation that occurred as a result of a fictitious pathogenic bacterial strain that resulted from the acquisition of new virulence determinants from other unrelated bacteria, and that contaminated feed and food in the European Union. The general aim of the training event was to raise awareness amongst EFSA response personnel of the principles of crisis response in cases of urgent risk assessment, and the activities required to support EFSA’s response to a request for urgent advice. The specific aims of the exercise were to enable the EFSA to rehearse its information management, exchange procedures with MSs and log keeping.

EFSA’s scientific output during the 2011 STEC outbreak included in total, six scientific reports and statements, with further follow-up activities instigated on the request of the Commission, following the end of the outbreak. This important pan-European outbreak also highlighted the importance of EFSA’s risk communications mandate, and the need to coordinate communication between risk managers and risk assessors. This is reflected in the increased number of media enquiries and visitors to the Authority’s website for the period end May to early July 2011.

In the light of the experience gained in 2011, the procedures for responding to urgent requests for advice are being further developed based on the on the internal evaluation of the crisis response to *E. coli*, captured in the annex of this report on lessons learnt. During the same period, the Emerging Risks Unit carried out monitoring of a number of high profile chemical and biological issues considered of interest by EFSA to ensure timely preparation in the eventuality of EFSA being request to provide an urgent request.

For access to the full report go to the EFSA Website at: <http://tinyurl.com/br62vl4>

Queens’ Speech Commits to Bills for Business

The Queens Speech on 9 May 2012 outlined the Government’s priorities for the coming Parliamentary year in the official state opening of Parliament. The speech made commitments on two Bills aimed at supporting businesses: the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill, and the Groceries Code Adjudicator Bill.

The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill

The purpose of the Bill is to create the right conditions for economic recovery by strengthening the business environment, reducing regulatory burdens and improving business and consumer confidence.

To do this the Bill will:

- Overhaul the employment tribunal system, and transform the dispute resolution landscape.
- Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of competition enforcement and the competitiveness of markets, by strengthening the regime and improving the speed and predictability for business.
- Set the purpose of the UK Green Investment Bank and ensure its independence.
- Strengthen the framework for setting directors’ pay by introducing binding votes.

- Extend the Primary Authority scheme, reduce inspection burdens on business and strengthen the legal framework for sunset clauses on regulation.

Repeal unnecessary legislation, cutting the burden on business and citizens.

The Groceries Code Adjudicator Bill

This Bill will create a Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) to uphold the Groceries Code. It will address the market dominance of the large retailers and ensure suppliers are treated fairly and lawfully. The GCA would address these competition issues by arbitrating disputes between retailers and suppliers, investigating anonymous complaints, and taking sanctions against retailers who break the rules.

The Groceries Code, which the Adjudicator would be responsible for upholding was put in place by the Competition Commission. It obliges large retailers (those with a groceries turnover in the UK of more than £1 billion) to:

- Deal fairly and lawfully with their suppliers;
- not vary supply agreements retrospectively, except in circumstances beyond the retailer's control which are clearly set out in the supply agreement; and
- pay suppliers within a reasonable time.

More details on both of these can be accessed through the BIS Website: <http://tinyurl.com/7gy2cxx>

FSA Research into Display of FHRS Results

The Food Standards Agency has published two pieces of research that assessed the level of voluntary display of its food hygiene schemes in the UK. Independent research was commissioned to assess the level of voluntary display of Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) ratings in England and Northern Ireland, and Food Hygiene Information Scheme (FHIS) 'Pass' results in Scotland. Separate ongoing research, part of the wider independent evaluation of the FHRS and FHIS, considered the views of consumers, local authorities and food businesses on the issue of voluntary versus mandatory display.

The research has shown that:

- 43% of businesses in England and 50% in Northern Ireland that had been given an FHRS rating were displaying it
- The higher the rating the more likely a business was to display: 56% of businesses in England and 57% in Northern Ireland rated '4' or '5' displayed, compared with 12% and 22% of those rated '0' to '2'
- 47% of businesses in Scotland were displaying their FHIS 'Pass' result
- Consumers and local authorities in FHRS/FHIS areas were generally supportive of mandatory display
- Businesses tended to be divided, with support for mandatory display expressed by some higher rated businesses
- Concerns were raised about mandatory display, such as impact on trade and resources

In 2011, similar research to assess the level of voluntary display of FHRS ratings was carried out on the FSA's behalf in Wales. This contributed to the Welsh Government's proposals to introduce legislation for mandatory display of FHRS ratings at food businesses in Wales.

In 2008, the FSA Board decided that display of ratings at premises should initially be voluntary, but that this should be kept under review. A mandatory approach, which would require new legislation, should be considered in future if necessary. Progress on the food Hygiene Rating Scheme across the UK was the subject of a paper presented at the FSA Open Board meeting on 22 May it can be accessed through this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/c7xz8dk>

The two pieces of research can be found through:

Evaluation of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme: <http://tinyurl.com/bqtqnqp>

Evaluation of the Display of of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme in Wales: <http://tinyurl.com/ccok8vr>

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (Wales) Bill Presented

The Welsh Government has introduced the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Bill following the consultation it carried out earlier this year.

The Welsh Bill is the first in the UK to introduce a mandatory food hygiene rating scheme and is a commitment in the Welsh Government's 'Programme for Government'. As with the current voluntary scheme, businesses will be rated with a score between 0 and 5 – with 0 meaning urgent improvement is necessary and a 5 rating meaning hygiene standards are very good. The frequency of inspections will be based on a risk assessment, such as the type of food business, the nature of the food and the size of the business. Businesses will be required to display their rating in a prominent position, such as at the entrance to their premises, or face a fine.

Businesses will be able to appeal against their score if they consider it unjust or unfair. They will also be able to request a re-rating inspection if they have carried out improvements required, but the business will have to pay for this.

The legislation proposes the introduction of fixed penalty notices of £200 for offences such as non-display of a rating with discounts for early payment. There are also powers to prosecute with a proposed maximum fine of £1000.

For more information visit: <http://tinyurl.com/d8ojnvo>

The Bill will now pass through a number of stages before it receives royal Assent and becomes an Act of Assembly.

- Committee consideration of General Principles
- Debate in Plenary of the General Principles
- Committee consideration of amendments
- Plenary debate on the amendments
- Approval of the Bill in Plenary

If the Bill becomes law, it is expected that the earliest a mandatory scheme will come into operation will be late in 2013. As part of the first stage consideration of general principles, the Health and Social Care Committee is carrying out a consultation to call for views to assist with its consideration, that includes the following:

- The need for a Bill to introduce a statutory food hygiene rating scheme in Wales;
- Whether the Bill achieves its stated purposes
- The key provisions set out in the Bill and whether they are appropriate to deliver its stated purposes
- Potential barriers to the implementation of the key provisions and whether the Bill takes account of them
- Whether there are any unintended consequences arising from the Bill
- The views of stakeholders who will have to work with the new arrangements
- Whether the Bill contains a reasonable balance between the powers on the face of the Bill and the powers conferred by Regulations.

The deadline for submitting views to the Committee is 29 June 2012.

If you wish to respond to the consultation you should send it to: HSCCommittee@wales.gov.uk and entitle the e-mail Consultation – Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Bill.

Alternatively, you can write to:

Claire Griffiths, Deputy Clerk

Legislation Office

National Assembly for Wales

Cardiff Bay, CF99 1NA.

Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill Presented to Parliament

Business Secretary, Vince Cable has presented the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill to Parliament saying:

“Growing our economy out of a period of acute crisis is the most pressing issue for this Government. We want to make sure the right conditions are in place to encourage investment and exports, boost enterprise, support green growth and build a responsible business culture. The measures in the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill will help make Britain one of the most enterprise-friendly countries in the world. It will improve our employment tribunals, reform and strengthen competition enforcement, scrap unnecessary red tape and help ensure that people who work hard and do the right thing are rewarded.”

Subject to its passage through both the houses of Parliament, the Bill aims to encourage long term growth by:

- Improving the employment tribunal system by encouraging parties to come together through Aces early conciliation and greater use of Settlement Agreements. Less complex disputes can be resolved more quickly and cheaply for employers and employees alike, through a new ‘Rapid Resolution’ scheme.
- Establishing a new Competition and Markets Authority, bringing together the competition functions of the Office of Fair Trading and the Competition Commission.
- Setting the purpose of the UK Green Investment Bank in legislation, embedding its operational independence and providing Government with a specific power to finance it, with initial funding of £3 billion to March 2015.
- Addressing the disconnect between directors’ pay and long-term company performance by giving shareholders of UK quoted companies binding votes on directors’ remuneration.
- Deterring the importation and sale of unauthorised replicas of classic designs, which qualify for copyright protection and extending copyright protection for mass-produced artistic works to life of the creator plus 70 years.

The Bill will simplify regulation by:

- Reducing inspection burdens on businesses of all sizes and increasing SME access to reliable, consistent advice on complying with regulations in areas such as trading standards, health and safety and environmental health.
- Ensuring powers to put a time-limit on new regulations via ‘sunset clauses’. Departments will have to make a case to keep regulation - otherwise it will be scrapped.
- Repealing some unnecessary regulations, e.g. improving the operation of heritage consent regimes without reducing necessary protections. The Bill includes some of the first repeals to be implemented from the Red Tape Challenge. Overall, of the 1,500 regulations where Ministers have already made decisions, the Government has committed to scrap or improve well over 50%.
- Reducing inspection burdens and increasing access to regulatory advice will be achieved through extending eligibility to the ‘Primary Authority’ scheme and strengthening inspection plans formed under the scheme. For more information, please visit the Better Regulation Delivery Office website.

The Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill can be accessed at <http://tinyurl.com/d6y4kvb> You follow its progress or ask questions, by visiting - <http://tinyurl.com/cuon9d7>

Commission Proposes Nutrition Tolerances

The Food Information for Consumers Regulation 1169/2011 will introduce mandatory nutrition labelling from the end of 2016 for most foods. To support this, the European Commission are working on Guidelines for Nutrient Tolerances and the latest draft has recently been circulated.

Currently nutrition labelling is voluntary except if a nutritional claim for a product is made or when a product is fortified. The new Regulation on Food Information to Consumers (FIR) will make the provision of nutrition information mandatory on pre-packaged foods from December 2016. Nutrition tolerances, which are the acceptable variance of nutrition labelling of food in comparison with the actual nutrition content of the food are an important element in its enforcement. Article 31 makes provision for the Commission to adopt implementing Acts with "regard to the precision of the declared values". At EU level such nutrition tolerances have never been set, except in the case of the declaration of fat content in spreadable fats.

The draft European Commission document has been prepared to provide guidance to Member States' control authorities and food business operators on the tolerances for nutrition labelling purposes. The Regulatory scope includes:

- Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers;
- Council Directive 90/496/EEC on nutrition labelling for foodstuffs (to be repealed);
- Directive 2002/46/EC relating to food supplements;
- Regulation (EC) No 1925/2006/EC on the addition of vitamins and minerals and of certain other substances;
- Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods
- Directive 2009/39/EC on foodstuffs intended for particular nutritional uses

The proposed guidance includes both macro and micro nutrients as well as guidance on the variables that need to be considered when results are found that are outside of expected parameters. There is also guidance on labelling for negligible amounts, rounding and where "0" may be appropriate.

The UK published guidance in 2003 and had embarked on a process of revision in conjunction with Lacors. However these were withdrawn pending expected guidance from the European Commission that never appeared. Responsibility for nutrition aspects of labelling has since transferred from FSA to the Department of Health. The 2003 guidance and the statement on the LGR website can be found at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/cbjdpp5>

The 2003 withdrawn LACORS Tolerances are:

For Major Parameters: Protein, Fat, Carbohydrates (including sugars) and Dietary Fibre

More than 5%	+/- 20% of the declared value
More than 2% and less than 5%	+/- 30% of the declared value
Less than 2%	Use discretion based on the specific individual circumstances

B. For Vitamins and Minerals (note these tolerances apply only to non-liquid foods)

Water Soluble Vitamins i.e. B Vitamins, and Vitamin C and minerals	+100% or -50% of the declared value
Oil Soluble Vitamins i.e. A, D, E	+/- 30% of the declared value

Recent communication with Local Authorities via their information hub indicates that in the absence of any other guidance local authorities would still refer and use these old Lacors guide values.

Consultation on Front of Pack Nutrition Labelling

The FSA have launched a consultation to formally gather views on Front of Pack Nutrition Labelling.

The new food labelling Regulation No 1169/2011 (FIR) Food Information to Consumers Regulation will make it mandatory for most pre-packaged foods to carry nutrition labelling from December 2016. The changes will require those already providing such information to revise their labelling, and others to begin nutrient labelling for the first time. The UK consider that now is an ideal time to review the provision of additional nutrition labelling that is provided voluntarily on the front of packs.

Many food businesses are already voluntarily providing front of pack (FoP) nutritional information. However a number of different, forms of presentation, different nutrient emphasis and different approaches to colour coding have developed and are in use. Some businesses use Guideline Daily Amount (%GDA); some use traffic light colour coding that highlights high fat sugar and salt content, and others use a combination of both.

Through the consultation the UK Government are looking to provide FoP nutrition labeling:

- That is consistent with the requirements of the FIR
- That can be used across the widest range of food and drink products;
- That is consistent, as evidence suggests that this is important in driving consumer recognition and use;
- That consumers find most useful in making healthier choices.

Around 80% of food products sold in the UK already have some form of front-of-pack-labelling. If the biggest 7 supermarkets use the same labelling for their own brand foods, the Department of Health estimate that this would equate to around 50% of the food sold in the UK and would encourage others to adopt the same scheme.

The consultation details current use of FoP in the UK, highlights the new legal framework for FoP in Regulation 1169/2011 FIR and reviews recent research into consumer understanding and use of FoP information.

The consultation is UK wide, but as nutrition labeling is a devolved responsibility there are different response arrangements depending on where you are, officials in all UK countries are intending to share responses. Response arrangement in each of the devolved administration can be found through the following websites:

England: <http://tinyurl.com/bno9skr>

Scotland: <http://tinyurl.com/btr5psh>

Northern Ireland: <http://tinyurl.com/c4aa2og>

Wales: <http://tinyurl.com/cp6op6c>

All Responses are requested by: 6 August 2012 BFFF will be seeking to respond to this consultation, if you would like your views to be represented please forward any information to Su Dakin information by 1 August at the latest.

Permitted General Function Health Claims Published

COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 432/2012 of 16 May 2012 establishing a list of permitted health claims made on foods, other than those referring to the reduction of disease risk and to children's development and health has now been published in the Official journal of the European Union.

The Regulation authorising 222 Article 13.1 general function health claims was presented and adopted at the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health on 5 December and since that time has been passing through the scrutiny process within the European Parliament and Council. The Regulation can be accessed through this link <http://tinyurl.com/coubojm>

The Regulation authorising Article 13.1 claims will apply in six months time from 14 December 2012; rejected claims will not be permitted from that date. Only 222 of the 4000 considered in detail were approved. The Union Register containing the complete list of authorised health claims has been updated and is available on the website of DG Health and Consumers at <http://tinyurl.com/cczvtpf>

FSA Annual Report on Incidents 2011

The Food Standards Agency saw an increase in the number of food incidents it investigated last year according to the Annual Report of Incidents 2011 published recently, 1,714 food incidents were investigated by the FSA last year (2011), compared to 1,505 in 2010. This is a further increase on the 1,208 incidents reported in 2009.

No single reason has been identified for the increasing number. The FSA believes a combination of factors is behind the rise, but the most likely is improved monitoring and reporting.

The Annual Report shows increases across a number of categories of food incident. For example, the increase in reports of microbiological contamination, which has been seen since 2006, has continued. There were 281 such incidents in 2011, compared to 271 in 2010, and 147 going back to 2006.

Extra testing of paan leaves last year, following concerns about salmonella contamination, has undoubtedly contributed to this year's increase, with 79 incidents of contaminated paan leaves reported to the FSA in 2011. The November 2011 news story about paan leaves can be found at the link below.

Pesticide incidents have also increased. More testing of okra at border inspection posts, following a number of alerts was behind a rise in incidents involving the use of pesticides illegal in the UK and European Union, with 102 in 2011 compared to 55 in 2010.

The Annual Report of Incidents 2011 contains background on how incidents are classified and investigated. There are also case studies of some of the high profile incidents investigated by the FSA last year, including details of what actions were taken and some of the lessons learned.

For more information and access to the full report go to <http://tinyurl.com/d8upfwr>

Links to Other Information

Lots of other information not covered in full by the T&L Update is available through the links below:

1. FDF Report, Every Last Drop, guidance on saving water through the supply chain.
http://www.fdf.org.uk/corporate_pubs/Water%20Efficiency%20Booklet_WEB.pdf
2. COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) No 809/2011 of 11 August 2011 amending Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005 as regards documentation accompanying imports of frozen fishery products directly from a freezer vessel <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:207:0001:0006:EN:PDF>
3. FSA consultation on Review of the Food Safety (Sampling & Qualifications) Regulations 1990 plus Summary and Annexes: <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/consultation/reviewfoodsafetysampqualregs.pdf>
4. WHICH article stating that not enough is being done to tackle obesity
<http://www.which.co.uk/news/2012/03/government-must-do-more-to-tackle-the-obesity-crisis-says-which-281403/>
5. EFSA / ECDC joint report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic bacteria affecting humans, animals and food
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/120314.htm>
6. Biennial report on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws (the Regulation on consumer protection cooperation)
http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/enforcement/docs/comm_biennial_report_2011_en.pdf
7. Biennial report of the UK Member State on the application of the Regulation on Consumer Protection Cooperation (EC) 2006/2004
http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/enforcement/docs/uk_national_report_2011_en.pdf
8. Report for the European Commission on the "exceptional" measures taken to support to poultry and egg sector during the AI crisis http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/eval/reports/poultry-eggs/fulltext_en.pdf
9. Application for a geographical indication of Newmarket sausage <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:069:0015:0018:EN:PDF>

10. Armagh Bramley Apple get PGI status <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:069:0001:0002:EN:PDF>
11. COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 200/2012 of 8 March 2012 concerning a Union target for the reduction of *Salmonella enteritidis* and *Salmonella typhimurium* in flocks of broilers, as provided for in Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:071:0031:0036:EN:PDF>
12. Food and Veterinary Office Audit report on UK bovine tuberculosis eradication programme http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_inspection_ref=2011-6057
13. Commission recommendation in the sampling and monitoring of Ergot Alkaloids in feed and food <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:077:0020:0021:EN:PDF>
14. EU Animal Welfare Strategy 2012-2015 http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/docs/brochure_aw_strategy.pdf
15. COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 232/2012 of 16 March 2012 amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the conditions of use and the use levels for Quinoline Yellow (E 104), Sunset Yellow FCF/Orange Yellow S (E 110) and Ponceau 4R, Cochineal Red A (E 124) <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:078:0001:0012:EN:PDF>
16. National Measurement Office: Measurement Newsletter, March: <http://www.bis.gov.uk/nmo/about/key-documents/Newsletter-National-Measurement-News>
17. 20 years of physicians reports to 2010 on poisoning incidents as a requirement of the Chemicals Act 1990 <http://www.bfr.bund.de/cm/364/cases-of-poisoning-reported-by-physicians-2010.pdf>
18. Council conclusions on a Communication from the Commission on the External dimension of the Common Fisheries Policy 3155th AGRICULTURE and FISHERIES Council meeting Brussels, 19 and 20 March 2012 http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/agricult/129052.pdf
19. EFSA public consultation Draft Guidance on the assessment of bacterial susceptibility to antimicrobials of human and veterinary importance EFSA Panel on Additives and Products or Substances used in Animal Feed <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/consultations/call/120323.pdf>
20. COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) No 250/2012 of 21 March 2012 amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 961/2011 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 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:082:0003:0004:EN:PDF>
21. EU List of recognised natural mineral waters <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:083:0001:0064:EN:PDF>
22. Commission Regulation (EU) No 252/2012 of 21 March 2012 laying down methods of sampling and analysis for the official control of levels of dioxins, dioxin-like PCBs and non-dioxin-like PCBs in certain foodstuffs and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1883/2006 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:084:0001:0022:EN:PDF>
23. Commission Regulation (EU) No 270/2012 of 26 March 2012 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 amidosulfuron, azoxystrobin, bentazone, bixafen, cyproconazole, fluopyram, imazapic, malathion, propiconazole and spinosad in or on certain products <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:089:0005:0063:EN:PDF>
24. Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 274/2012 of 27 March 2012 amending Regulation (EC) No 1152/2009 imposing special conditions governing the import of certain foodstuffs from certain third countries due to contamination risk by aflatoxins <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:090:0014:0016:EN:PDF>
25. Useful links to sites for the import of Animals and Foods of animal origin, including lists of designated EU border inspection posts http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/bips/links_en.htm
26. FSA Bite Magazine, focusing on food safety at the Olympics <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/publication/bitespring12.pdf>

27. FSA Publishes E-news March issue <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/publication/fsaenews-mar12.pdf>
28. Latest FSA Scientific research <http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2012/mar/march-research> inc GMO screening methodology and Scottish food and nutrient intakes
29. Did you know there are plans to bring all government information and services together on one website? GOV.UK is the test version of this site. You may be particularly interested in INSIDE GOVERNMENT, which is the section of GOV.UK dedicated to departmental information: policies, consultations, news <https://www.gov.uk/> and <https://www.gov.uk/government>
30. Global Gap Aquaculture brochure http://www.globalgap.org/cms/upload/Resources/Publications/Facts_and_Figures/120228-InfoKIT_Aqua_web.pdf
31. 9th Annual EC/WHO Senior Official Meeting, report of discussions, roadmaps and agreements http://ec.europa.eu/health/eu_world/docs/som2012_report.pdf and http://ec.europa.eu/health/eu_world/events/ev_20120307_en.htm
32. Euractiv report that EU countries are failing to meet 2020 waste targets http://www.euractiv.com/sustainability/eu-countries-failing-2020-waste-target-news-511887?utm_source=EurActiv%20Newsletter&utm_campaign=ed529de73c-newsletter_sustainable_development&utm_medium=email
33. COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 277/2012 of 28 March 2012 amending Annexes I and II to Directive 2002/32/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards maximum levels and action thresholds for dioxins and polychlorinated biphenyls <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:091:0001:0007:EN:PDF>
34. Commission Regulation (EU) No 278/2012 of 28 March 2012 amending Regulation (EC) No 152/2009 as regards the determination of the levels of dioxins and polychlorinated biphenyls <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:091:0008:0022:EN:PDF>
35. Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 284/2012 of 29 March 2012 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 Implementing Regulation (EU) No 961/2011 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:092:0016:0023:EN:PDF>
36. Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 294/2012 of 3 April 2012 amending Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 669/2009 implementing Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the increased level of official controls on imports of certain feed and food of non-animal origin <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:098:0007:0012:EN:PDF>
37. Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 302/2012 of 4 April 2012 amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 543/2011 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 in respect of the fruit and vegetables and processed fruit and vegetables sectors <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:099:0021:0029:EN:PDF>
38. Publication of an application pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 510/2006 on the protection of geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs – Wild Scottish Salmon <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:101:0013:0016:EN:PDF>
39. Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 307/2012 of 11 April 2012 establishing implementing rules for the application of Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the addition of vitamins and minerals and of certain other substances to foods <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:102:0002:0004:EN:PDF>
40. EFSA Scientific opinion on the French ANSES report on Bisphenol A used in plastic packaging <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/2475.pdf>
41. Meeting Food Safety Requirements for Packaging Manufacture http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/smartlead/view/618999/11?src=mailing&utm_source=Newsletter_Product&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Newsletter%2BProduct&c=oLbLqJ5u%2Bu04%2B49PC8RY5Aypvu7OQw0d

42. European Community Register of approved animal feed additives – issue 141 of 16 April 2012
http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/animalnutrition/feedadditives/comm_register_feed_additives_1831-03.pdf
43. COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 322/2012 of 16 April 2012 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 clopyralid, dimethomorph, fenpyrazamine, folpet and pendimethalin in or on certain products <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:105:0001:0040:EN:PDF>
44. The Scudamore Report on Future Arrangement to secure food standards and safety in Scotland. Devolving mhs and other services from the FSA <http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2012/apr/scudamore>
45. RASSF, preliminary annual report 2011 http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/rapidalert/docs/rasff_pre-annual_report_2011_en.pdf
46. The transatlantic trade dispute on "hormones" in beef comes to an end. The Council adopted a modification to regulation 617/2009 opening an autonomous tariff quota for imports of high-quality beef.
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/agricult/129788.pdf
47. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published guidance on Accurate Reporting Through LAEMS. FSA audits of local authorities' food and feed law enforcement arrangements have identified core service areas critical to maintaining effective service provision and providing accurate data returns through the Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS).
<http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2012/apr/reportlaems>
48. Commission Implementing Decision of 19 April 2012 amending Annex I to Decision 2006/766/EC as regards the entry for Chile in the list of third countries from which imports of live, chilled, frozen or processed bivalve molluscs, echinoderms, tunicates and marine gastropods for human consumption are permitted (notified under document C(2012) 2446) <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:109:0024:0025:EN:PDF>
49. Final Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) audit report of an audit carried out in Brazil in Dec 2011 to evaluation food safety and public health control systems in place as well as certification procedures in relation to the export of equine and pig meat to the EU.
http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_inspection_ref=2011-6139
50. Food Navigator link to new SGS white paper comparing GFSI certification schemes
<http://www.foodnavigator.com/smartlead/view/631804/11?do=submit>
51. Meat Science article *Meat Science, Volume 91, Issue 2, June 2012*, – available to view or purchase on the impact of freezing and thawing on the quality of meat.
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0309174012000149>
52. EU Trade summary of Free Trade Agreements currently being discussed and in place
http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/december/tradoc_118238.pdf and
http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/december/tradoc_111588.pdf
53. Final report of an audit 12 to 14 March carried out in Ireland to evaluate the implementation of controls for animal welfare of laying hens on farms.
http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_inspection_ref=2012-6379
54. Defra/MMO ¼ magazine Fish Focus No. 25, including: Quota management groups; Catch quota trials; What the Marine Strategy Framework Directive means for the fishing industry; The future of Seafish; and, News from the Marine Management Organisation on marine planning, electronic notification of licence variations and Fisheries Local Action Groups.
<http://archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/fisheries/documents/fisheries/fishfocus25.pdf>
55. Commission Regulation (EU) No 380/2012 of 3 May 2012 amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the conditions of use and the use levels for aluminium-containing food additives <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:119:0014:0038:EN:PDF>
56. FVO audit on controls for fishery and aquiculture product, inspection no 2011-8898, November 2011
http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_id=2846

57. Front of Pack salt labelling of foods as being low in salt may not reduce salt intake, new EUFIC report shows <http://www.eufic.org/page/en/show/latest-science-news/page/LS/fftid/Labelling-foods-as-low-salt-may-not-reduce-actual-salt-intakes/>
58. European Report on Development 2011 / 2012 ERD report: Managing Scarcity, on the management of Water, Energy and Land for inclusive and sustainable development http://www.erd-report.eu/erd/report_2011/report.html
59. Complimentary SGS white paper providing an overview of the Food Safety Management Systems and Food Packaging Design and Manufacture Standards: ISO 22000, PAS 223 AND FSSC – available to download http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/smartlead/view/618999/11?src=mailing&utm_source=Newsletter_Product&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Newsletter%2BProduct&c=oLbLqJ5u%2BuPWKGP4tHQsVUo1dFdN95uj

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