

T & L UPDATE

BFFF TECHNICAL AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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British Frozen Food Federation

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FOREWORD

Welcome to the latest Technical and Legislative Update from the British Frozen Food Federation!

This newsletter is designed to keep you up to date on current regulatory developments, the activities of the National and European Regulators as well as the latest available scientific research, technological developments, guidance and codes of practice.

As a service here for the benefit of the Technical Professionals working in the Frozen Food Sector we want to hear if there is anything you would like to see included in future editions - drop me a line: sudakin@bff.co.uk, we want to hear your views.

This edition of the T&L contains updates on Biocides, the SACN Report on Carbohydrates and Health, the Department of Health bulletins and latest developments from the European Commission on Health Claims, as well as the outcome of the GCA 'super-complaint', the impact of the GCA on reporting issues and new unit pricing guidance for retailers.

The Health and Safety Executive and the Food Standards Agency recently held a stakeholder meeting to discuss Industry concerns about recent regulatory developments regarding some of the biocides in most common use in the food industry for disinfection and hygiene purposes. The developments mean that some businesses will have to change the detergents they use and how they use them. There is concern that the Commission is putting limits on residues at the expense of food safety.

The Department of Health has recently published update bulletins to interested parties on Nutrition and Health Claims. The bulletins update on the discussions taking place at the Commission Working Groups and include updates on the use of the word 'probiotic' and 'tonic water' and the topics concerning glycaemic carbohydrates and cholesterol.

A YouGov survey has been carried out on behalf of the Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) and shows a drop in the number of suppliers reporting Groceries Code-related issues in their dealings with the ten large retailers in the last 12 months from 70% in 2015 compared to 79% in 2014. The Adjudicator has now declared the issue of consumer complaints closed along with forensic auditing and discrepancies in charging for drop and drive performance.

Enjoy T&L 79 and if you have any queries please do contact sudakin@bff.co.uk



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

We do hope that you find *T&L 79* a valuable read.



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ACTIVITY OF EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

DG SANTE ORGANISATIONAL CHART

DG SANTE, which is the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety, has published their organisational chart.

What do DG Sante do?

- Monitoring - once the EU has passed laws on food and product safety, consumer rights or public health, it is up to national, regional and local governments to apply those laws - to ensure traders, manufacturers and food producers stick to the rules. Part of the role of DG Sante is to ensure that this is really happening.
- Listening - to be effective, DG Sante's policies must take account of related EU policies on trade, competitiveness and the environment for example, and the concerns of their stakeholders. Through broad consultation, they request information from all interested parties.
- Acting - where EU action is needed, DG Sante make proposals using a mixture of laws, support for projects and other measures. They also support national or regional authorities where they are better placed to act.

The organisational chart can be found under 'Activity of European Institutions' through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/q7jk2uc>

NEW EUROFOOD MONITOR

EU Food Law recently launched a new part of its service – Eurofood Monitor.

This new service is the complete guide to European Union legislation on foodstuffs, offering a structured thematic overview of legislation in all relevant areas, and direct online access to the full and consolidated texts of this legislation.

Eurofood Monitor is a reference resource, which will assist in day-to-day research work, and is intended to save time and money.

EU Food Law subscribers can access this new service by either visiting www.eurofoodlaw.com and clicking on Eurofood Monitor on the main tab menu.

For any questions regarding these changes or this new service, please contact: agrahelp@informa.com.

FOOD SAFETY INCIDENTS INCREASED IN 2014

The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) released its report for 2014 in which it is stated that a historical number of food safety alerts was reached. It comes to 3.157 alerts which corresponds to a 25% increase compared with 2013.

These alerts mainly highlighted the presence of mercury in fish, of aflatoxins in nuts and salmonella in poultry. 750 alerts represented a high risk for health and 413 targeted China's imports.

The RASFF allows Member States to indicate to others food safety issues since 1979. It is about to be revised in the REFIT framework in order to improve food crises management, especially regarding the e-commerce of food.

The report for 2014 is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/owx737o>

EU COMMISSION COMMUNICATION ON BETTER REGULATION

The EU Commission has published its Better Regulation package. The main document, the communication on “Better regulation for better results – an EU agenda”, stresses its commitment to focus on the things that really need to be done by the EU and making sure they are done well. The communication can also be accessed through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/k85zc3c>

At first sight it seems that, far from simplifying the process, the Commission is actually further complicating it by adding in additional Impact Assessments, advisory bodies, and a new and potentially cumbersome “Regulatory Scrutiny Board” to replace the former Impact Assessment Board, but the structure seems to echo the UK approach on this with its Better Regulation Executive and the activities of the Better Regulation Delivery Office BRDO.

At first glance:

- The whole process around Delegated Acts will be made more transparent – this is undeniably a good thing
- Impact assessments on amendments put forward by the Council and Parliament could provide additional opportunities for lobbyists to lobby and influence the policy-making process ...
- ... But at the same time it will lengthen the process – meaning more delays, possibly more bureaucracy, and ultimately greater uncertainty for business
- It is potentially good news that Member States will need to justify “gold plating” i.e. taking a stronger stance than other EU Member States on a given issue. This can often create uncertainties for business, with individual countries “going it alone”, which will from now on be harder to do (though they will no doubt continue to try and do this)
- On food issues specifically, a database will be put in place to provide a comprehensive and reliable overview of EU and Member State requirements for food labelling to assist SMEs in particular

Some of the key principles outlined in the Communication:

- The implementation of the principle of Better Regulation should ensure that measures are evidence-based, well-designed and deliver tangible benefits for citizens, business and society as a whole.
- Going against the idea that better regulation means deregulation, the Commission underlines that “Better regulation is not about “more” or “less” EU regulation; nor about deregulating or deprioritising certain policy areas or compromising the values that we hold dear”.
- The Commission intends to listen more closely to citizens and stakeholders at every stage of the decision-making process.
- The document puts emphasis on cutting red tape for SMEs and opening up EU policy-making with more and better consultations.

In addition to the Communication outlining the key general principles of Better regulation, the Commission has published a set of other documents, including guidelines and a toolbox, that explain the detail of how Better Regulation should be applied in the day to day practices when preparing new initiatives and proposals or managing existing policies and legislation. Access these through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/obcqju4>

The Guidelines on Better regulation apply immediately to all new regulatory proposals and a transitional period will apply until the end of 2015 for a number of initiatives which are already well advanced (the initiatives to which this applies have not been identified).

ANALYTICAL AND METROLOGY

BIS PUBLISH INFORMATION ON WEIGHTS AND MEASURES CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The National Measurement and Regulation Office (NMRO) Certification Services operates as a notified body providing a range of conformity assessment procedures activities under European Directive 2009/23/EC for non-automatic weighing instruments (NAWI) and European Directive 2004/22/EC for measuring instruments (MID), and are also able to provide a range of training courses and international consultancy services in support of national and international competency and capability requirements.



National
Measurement &
Regulation Office

Under a New Legislative Framework (NLF) new versions of the European Directives have been published; 2014/31/EU for NAWI and 2014/32/EU for MID which will come into force on the 20 April 2016.

The NMRO Certification Body is responsible for the national type approval of certain instruments regulated by UK weights and measures legislation, is also an Issuing Authority (IA) for certification of instruments conforming to certain International Organisation of Legal Metrology (OIML) International Recommendations and is an Issuing Participant (IP) under the OIML Mutual Acceptance Arrangement (MAA).

In addition to the conformity assessment activities under NAWI and MID, the NMRO Certification Body is also an accredited certification body for certifying International Standards Organisation (ISO) 9001:2008 Quality Management Systems and assessing the quality management systems under the Deregulation (Weights and Measures) Order 1999 (SI 1999 No 503).

The [Gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website now has a page dedicated to certification of weight and measuring instruments and quality management systems which includes application forms, services available and guidance information. It can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/n8douxq>

ANIMAL WELFARE

ANIMAL WELFARE IN SEVERE WEATHER

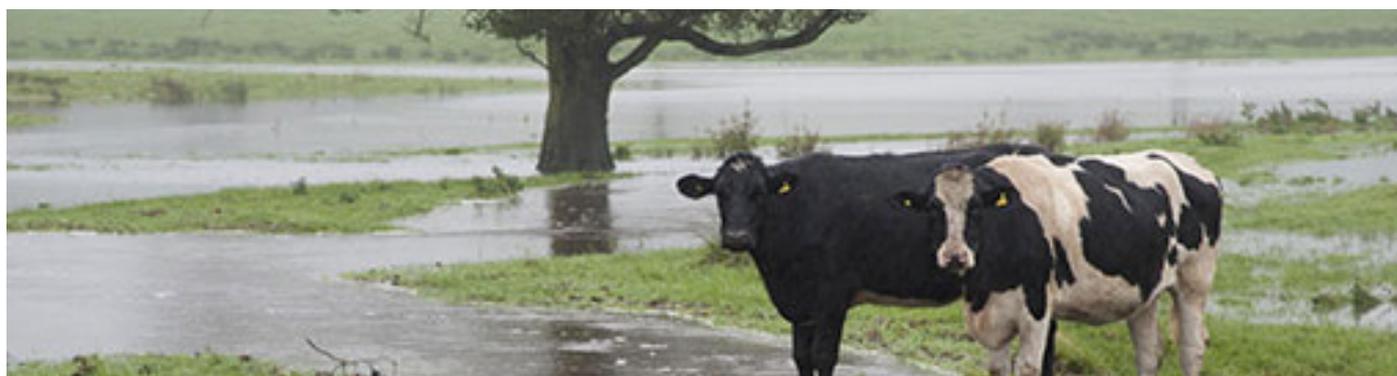
Defra have issued advice to animal keepers on welfare issues in severe weather conditions (hot, cold, floods or drought).

This includes advice to livestock holders and slaughterhouses and covers transportation, supply of water, disposal and collection of dead animals, market operations and cold weather care.



Officials from local councils and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) monitor severe weather situations closely in liaison with the RSPCA, National Farmers' Union (NFU), and other organisations who play a role in helping farmers and pet owners to protect their animals.

The Defra advice is available on the [Gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website here: <http://tinyurl.com/dydpdth>



AVIAN FLU H7N7 CONFIRMED IN LANCASHIRE

A case of H7N7 avian flu has been confirmed in Lancashire.

A temporary control zone imposed on Friday 10th July at the affected farm has been replaced by a 10 kilometre surveillance zone and an inner 3 kilometre protection zone. Restrictions remain in place and the humane culling of all birds at the farm has been completed.

Public Health England has confirmed that the risk to public health from this strain is very low. The Food Standards Agency has said there is no food safety risk for consumers.

The restrictions mean that all poultry farms within the 10 kilometre control zone around the infected premises are not allowed to move poultry, captive birds or other mammals except under licence.

Chief Veterinary Officer, Nigel Gibbens said:

“Final tests results have confirmed a case of avian flu at a farm in Lancashire. Restrictions put in place will continue and the humane culling of all birds is now complete. These actions are part of our tried and tested approach to dealing with previous outbreaks.

“Public Health England has confirmed that the risk to public health from this strain is very low. The Food Standards Agency has said there is no food safety risk for consumers.

“Bird keepers should remain alert for any signs of disease, report suspect disease to their nearest Animal and Plant and Health Agency (APHA) office immediately and ensure they are maintaining good biosecurity on their premises.”

We have a strong track record of controlling and eliminating previous outbreaks of avian flu in the UK. The outbreaks in Yorkshire last year and Hampshire in February were both successfully contained, allowing restrictions to be lifted at the earliest opportunity.

An investigation into this case is ongoing.

Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) Guidance is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/mmu8g3>



STUNNING INTERVENTIONS REGARDING ANIMAL PROTECTION AT THE TIME OF KILLING

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published a record of an information session with stakeholders on the Animal Health and Welfare (AHAW) Panel. The session concerned the assessment criteria for studies evaluating the effectiveness of stunning interventions regarding animal protection at the time of killing, and took place on 9 June.

The overall objective of the interactive meeting was to promote the understanding of the reporting criteria of the AHAW guidance, share expertise and exchange information.

The full report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/q6a55rz>



EFSA OPINION ON OYSTER MORTALITY

The European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA's) Animal Health and Welfare (AHAW) Panel have published a Scientific Opinion on oyster mortality. Following a request from the European Commission, the AHAW Panel was asked to deliver an updated scientific opinion on the increased mortality events in Pacific oysters.

This updated scientific opinion on oyster mortality addresses:

1. the role of ostreid herpesvirus (OsHV-1) in mortality;
2. evidence for a role of *Vibrio aestuarianus* in mortality;
3. effectiveness of water treatment in inactivating OsHV-1 and *V. aestuarianus*; and
4. feasibility, availability and effectiveness of the disease prevention and control measures.

Discharge of untreated seawater from depuration plants and other bivalve holding facilities remains a potential route of transmission of infectious agents affecting bivalves and other marine life. Effective disinfection of seawater effluent from depuration and holding facilities will minimise the risk of transmission of infectious agents. UV irradiation at 254 nm is effective at inactivating OsHV-1 and *V. aestuarianus*. Data for related microorganisms indicates that chlorine, ozone, iodophors and heat should be effective against both OsHV-1 and *V. aestuarianus*.

The EFSA Scientific Opinion is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/nemyrkm>



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

NEW GUIDE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS INNOVATION & SKILLS



The National Audit Office (NAO) is publishing a suite of short guides, one for each government department, to assist House of Commons Select Committees.

This first guide to the operation of BIS is one of many and is designed to provide a quick and accessible overview of the Department, focusing on what the Department does, how much it costs and recent and planned changes.

The interactive pdf is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/phpcjq5>

CMA UPDATES GUIDANCE ON UNFAIR CONTRACT TERMS

Consumer-facing businesses are being offered help complying with consumer law as the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) publishes new guidance on unfair contract terms.

The update has been created because of changes to the law in the Consumer Rights Act 2015, which will come into force in October this year. The Act brings together and strengthens 2 pieces of legislation that target contract terms and notices which could be used to give businesses an unfair advantage in their dealings with consumers. The CMA has updated its existing guidance, taking account of recent case law on unfair terms.



The new guidance assists businesses with understanding what makes terms and notices unfair, what risks they can face from using unfair wording and top tips on how to ensure terms and notices are fair and clear. There are 3 levels of guidance – short (2 pages), expanded (28 pages) and full (144 pages), so that different users can access what is most appropriate to their needs. It includes an at-a-glance flowchart explaining how to apply the law on unfair contract terms.

The guidance identifies key things that businesses should do to ensure that they communicate clearly with consumers and avoid disputes arising from unfair terms. Alongside specific advice such as avoiding using legal jargon in contracts, the guide urges businesses to deal 'openly and fairly' with consumers and not to use terms you 'would not like to sign up to yourself'.

The 3 levels of guidance can be accessed on this page: <http://tinyurl.com/osunzlh>

CHEMICALS, CONTAMINANTS & FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

EFSA REPORT ON ACRYLAMIDE IN FOOD

An infographic with a red border. At the top, the word 'Acrylamide' is written in a large, bold, black font. Below it, the text 'Probable Side Effects:' is in red, followed by 'Cancer Causing' and 'Nerve Damage' in black. To the right of this text is a diamond-shaped warning symbol containing a silhouette of a person with a lightning bolt striking their chest. Below the side effects, the text 'Found In:' is in red, followed by 'Cooked starches -' in black, and 'Potato chips, grilled, baked and fried foods' in black. To the right of this text is a photograph of a pile of golden-brown potato chips. At the bottom left, the logo 'Wals Nutrition' is visible, and at the bottom right, the website 'www.walsnutrition.com' is listed.

Following a comprehensive review, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published its scientific opinion on acrylamide in food. Experts from EFSA's Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain (CONTAM) have reconfirmed previous evaluations that acrylamide in food potentially increases the risk of developing cancer for consumers in all age groups. This conclusion has not changed since the draft opinion was made available for an open public consultation in July 2014.

Evidence from animal studies shows that acrylamide and its metabolite glycidamide are genotoxic and carcinogenic: they damage DNA and cause cancer. Evidence from human studies that dietary exposure to acrylamide causes cancer is currently limited and inconclusive.

Since acrylamide is present in a wide range of everyday foods, this health concern applies to all consumers but children are the most exposed age group on a body weight basis. The most important food groups contributing to acrylamide exposure are fried potato products, coffee, biscuits, crackers, crisp bread and soft bread.

Although not the focus of EFSA's risk assessment, the scientific opinion includes an overview of data and literature summarising how the choice of ingredients, the storage method and the temperature at which food is cooked can influence the amount of acrylamide in different food types and therefore the level of dietary exposure.

The EFSA Scientific Opinion is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/nmyzaaa>

AMENDMENTS TO MAXIMUM LEVELS OF LEAD AND INORGANIC ARSENIC IN FOODSTUFFS

New Regulations have been published in the EU Official Journal concerning the maximum levels of lead and inorganic arsenic in foodstuffs, which amend previous legislation.

EU Regulation 2015/1005 of 25th June amends Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 as regards maximum levels of lead in certain foodstuffs.

Regulation 2015/1005 is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/oeulna7>

EU Regulation 2015/1006 of 25th June amends Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 as regards maximum levels of inorganic arsenic in foodstuffs.

Regulation 2015/1006 is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pvtlwvo>

HSE PUBLISH LIST OF PESTICIDE MRL REGULATIONS

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) published, on 3 July 2015, a list of the latest published Commission Regulations under Regulation 396/2005, which gives the maximum residue limits for plant protection products - or pesticides, in food.

At present the time between agreement at the Standing Committee and publication of Commission Regulations in the Official Journal is around 5 months. From experience to date, these Regulations come into force on publication (for raised levels) or around 6 months later (if they include any lowered levels).

When new Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) are agreed, HSE will look at all product authorisations containing these active substances. Any authorisations that would result in residues in excess of the new MRLs may be revoked or amended. This will ensure growers and suppliers do not put produce containing residues in excess of the MRL into circulation.

The proposals that have been agreed can be found listed here: <http://tinyurl.com/88avuxd>

QUATS, CHLORATES AND BIOCIDES

The Health and Safety Executive and the Food Standards Agency recently held a stakeholder meeting to discuss industry concerns about recent regulatory developments regarding some of the biocides in most common use in the food industry for disinfection and hygiene purposes.

The meeting was prompted by the recent publication by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) of a scientific opinion on the 'Risks for public health related to the presence of chlorate in food' : <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/4135.htm>

And also by the application of a new maximum residue limit (MRL) for Quaternary Ammonium Compounds (Quats) affecting important active ingredients Benzalkonium chloride (BAC) and didecylidimethylammonium chloride (DDAC) in disinfectants, from 12 August 2015.

Chlorates have an undesirable effect on the function of the thyroid gland and can impact on the availability of iodine. In 2014 monitoring data from German sampling indicated residue levels in food above the 0.01 mg/kg current limit.

Chlorates are formed as breakdown products when chlorine based disinfectants are exposed to, amongst other things, organic compounds. Chlorine based biocides are in common use as a very cost effective disinfectant for water used in washing eg for produce. However such systems routinely monitor the free chlorine in the water and constantly top up, resulting in a build-up of Chlorates that can remain as residues on the produce. Drinking water is the biggest contributor to chlorates in the diet, but washed salads, frozen vegetables and dairy products have all been identified as exceeding current limits;

The 0.01 mg/kg limit is seen by EU Member States (MS) as unrealistic, so currently MS are advised by the Commission to monitor and consider non compliance on a case by case basis according to risk. The UK has set a nominal limit and bases their risk assessments at 0.7 mg/l. in line with the WHO limit for chlorate in drinking water.

The EFSA report identifies that if this limit (0.7mg/l) were adopted the resultant exposure of some population groups (particularly children) would be a health risk; although population exposure doesn't reach close to this limit currently and the EFSA report concluded that there was no appreciable risk to consumers.

The Commission however, has indicated a desire to set an MRL for chlorates and their proposal could be presented as early as September for approval.

FSA and HSE are keen not to repeat the outcome experienced with Quaternary Ammonium compounds Quac's, specifically BACs and DDAC; where the Standing Committee approved an MRL of 0.1 mg/kg a limit based on what is 'as low as reasonably achievable'. Although the UK position did not agree with the proposal, it was carried and applied for food from 12 August 2015. Many companies are concerned about compliance.

Cleaning chemical suppliers have taken action to reformulate where this is possible and to advise business users of changes in protocols that they should consider, including assessing whether current procedures actually pose a risk of non-compliance.

Advice to BFFF members is to work in close conjunction with your cleaning chemical supplier and:

- Firstly to assess whether the cleaning and washing procedures that they currently employ mean that they are at risk of exceeding [0.1mg/kg](#) in product; they should do this before they consider a change to the chemicals they use or a change to procedures.
- If there is a risk of non-compliance they should take steps to identify where in the process the contamination occurs.
- Rather than changing from an efficacious and cost effective cleaning agent throughout, it may be possible to change the practise for only one piece of equipment or part of a process.
- No rinse terminal sanitisers are widely used, and a suggestion has been made that they should now be rinsed; whilst this may be an option for some; for listeria sensitive RTE products, throwing water over the process as a last act of cleaning may not be the sensible option.
- Changing to alternative cleaning materials should be considered carefully as all active chemicals approved under the Biocidal Products Regulations (Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal products) are currently undergoing a systematic review by the European Chemical Agency (ECHA. The review leaves a great deal of uncertainty around which biocides currently approved will remain so in the future and what the allowable levels of active ingredient may be.

FOOD SAFETY AND ZONOSSES

FSA UPDATE ON ISOPROPYL ALCOHOL IN COLOURING INKS

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) wrote to enforcement officers on 9 June 2015 regarding an update on isopropyl alcohol (IPA) in colouring inks. The FSA previously wrote to local authorities on 18 May regarding action for the withdrawal from sale of colouring inks for cake decorating containing unauthorised isopropyl alcohol.

A number of queries have since been received concerning the legality of solutions that largely or wholly consist of IPA and which are sold direct to consumers or businesses. They are used as a quick drying liquid to be mixed with dry or paste food colourings, or to dilute colour into it and dip cake decorative items into it to collect colour.

IPA containing solutions may be found on internet sales sites or at retail premises such as independent outlets supplying cake decorating materials. As IPA is not an approved EU additive, and never has been, the FSA advise that IPA containing solutions should be withdrawn from sale. However, IPA used for cake decoration is not considered a health risk and enforcement action taken should be proportionate.

The letter from FSA to enforcement officers can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pqha7dv>



**Food
Standards
Agency**
food.gov.uk

BARTS GROUND CUMIN PRODUCT RECALL RESCINDED

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published a notification of a rescinded product recall concerning a brand of ground cumin.

The branded cumin was originally recalled earlier this year as it had tested positive for the presence of almond protein which was not declared on the label. Additional testing by the Laboratory of the Government Chemist (LGC) has shown a spice called mahaleb was present and not almond protein.

Mahaleb and almond are from the same 'Prunus' family of trees and shrubs. However, mahaleb is not one of the 14 allergens identified in food allergen legislation. LGC used 'liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry' analysis which, in combination with DNA testing, found that mahaleb could produce a false positive result for almond protein in cumin. This is the first time researchers have identified this type of reaction.

More information is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/nn2ed4f>

FSA GUIDANCE ON LISTERIA IN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS



The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published their latest draft guidance on Listeria: Reducing the Risk of Vulnerable Groups Contracting Listeriosis: Guidance for Healthcare Organisations.

This is currently being considered by the FSA's immediate stakeholder group. Once the text has been agreed it will go out to wider consultation and comment. If you have any comments on the draft (link below) at this stage please contact sudakin@bff.co.uk

There will be further opportunities to review the guidance as Tracey Smith at FSA has agreed to inform BFFF when it goes out for formal consultation, The draft guidance can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/plo6baw>

DEFRA ZONOSSES REPORT UK 2013

Defra have published the annual report on zoonoses for the UK during 2013. The report on zoonoses in the United Kingdom (UK) includes a summary of reported cases of zoonotic infection in humans and animals.

The data has been compiled from statutory notifiable or reportable disease reports, national scanning surveillance systems, control programmes, research programmes and from data submitted to the European Community via the Trends and Sources Report, under the Zoonoses Directive 2003/99 by agencies contributing to the Report.

The Defra Zoonoses report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/otmh6wv>

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have produced a poster for caterers to inform them on the risks of campylobacter and how to prevent food poisoning, please see below and also available: <http://tinyurl.com/osavusq>

KEEP YOUR CUSTOMERS SAFE FROM CAMPYLOBACTER FOOD POISONING



This advice should be used in conjunction with our **Safer food better business** and **Cross-contamination guidance** found at www.food.gov.uk

TO REDUCE THE RISKS

Defrost in the fridge

Place poultry in a covered container on the bottom shelf of the fridge to defrost away from cooked/ready-to-eat foods. Check poultry is fully defrosted before cooking.



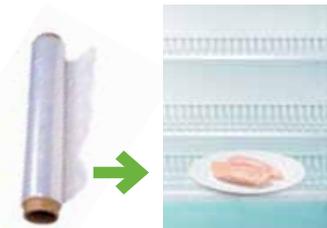
Never mix raw poultry and cooked food

Keep raw poultry separate from cooked and ready-to-eat food.



Cover and chill

Cover raw poultry and store at the bottom of the fridge so juices cannot drip on other foods.



Check it's cooked

Poultry should be cooked thoroughly until steaming hot with no pink meat and juices must run clear. Check this at the thickest part. If barbecuing, consider pre-cooking in the oven first, then finish on the barbecue for flavour.



Don't wash raw poultry

Splashing water spreads germs to hands, equipment, surfaces and other foods.



Cook marinades

Don't put sauce or marinade on cooked food if it has already been used with raw poultry.

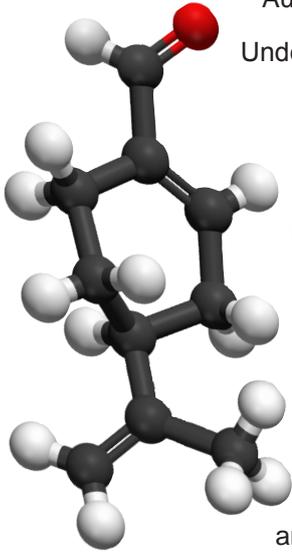


Get involved now:
www.food.gov.uk/actnow

ACT | Acting on Campylobacter Together

FLAVOURING SUBSTANCE PERILLA ALDEHYDE FOUND TO BE A CARCINOGEN

The flavouring substance p-Mentha-1,8-dien-7-al (also called “Perilla aldehyde”) has been shown to be genotoxic (damaging to DNA) in a new study on animals, evaluated by European Food Safety Authority’s (EFSA’s) experts.



Under EFSA’s process for the safety assessment of food flavourings, once a substance is characterised as a genotoxin, EFSA concludes on this aspect only, without taking into account consumer exposure.

In 2002, an international evaluation of Perilla aldehyde as a food flavouring found it to be “no safety concern at current levels of intake”. In 2008, the European Commission asked EFSA to re-evaluate this substance as part of the evaluation of all food flavourings authorised for use in the EU.

Under the EU system devised to evaluate flavourings, Perilla aldehyde is also a proxy for evaluating nine other structurally similar chemicals known collectively as “alicyclic aldehydes”. EFSA’s experts, therefore, indicate there is also a potential safety concern for these other substances unless further evidence proves otherwise.

Perilla aldehyde occurs naturally in the peel of citrus fruits. It is produced in limited quantities and added to some baked foods, puddings, meat products and both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks to produce a pungent citrus smell and a woody, spicy, citrus taste.

EU risk managers will consider how to best use EFSA’s scientific opinion in weighing up possible follow-up measures.

The EFSA Scientific Opinion on the Flavouring Group Evaluation can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pcx4b76>

HEPATITIS A VACCINATION RECOMMENDATIONS ‘MAY NEED TO BE RECONSIDERED’

In May 2013, Italy declared a national outbreak of hepatitis A, which also affected several foreign tourists who had recently visited the country. The outbreak has been associated with frozen berries and affected a number of European Member States, though not the UK.

Molecular investigations identified some cases as infected with an identical strain of hepatitis A virus subgenotype IA. After additional European Union/European Economic Area (EU/EEA) countries reported locally acquired and travel-related cases associated with the same outbreak, an international outbreak investigation team was convened, a European outbreak case definition was issued and harmonisation of the national epidemiological and microbiological investigations was encouraged.

A Eurosurveillance paper has been produced regarding the HAV outbreak associated with frozen berries. The aim of the paper is to describe results, challenges and lessons learnt from the public health side of the epidemiological and microbiological multinational outbreak investigation. The paper presents new insights into this large and prolonged outbreak and gathers together information from different investigations and from an extensive food trace-back carried out at national levels and by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). It also offers a number of recommendations to improve harmonisation of procedures in HA outbreak investigations across Europe.

The Eurosurveillance paper can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/qzq2qww>



EFSA ACTIVITY ON EMERGING RISKS IN 2014

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published a report on its activities in the area of emerging risks in 2014.

In 2014, the procedure for emerging risk identification was further developed and follow-up activities on the specific issues identified were carried out. Eighteen issues were evaluated and five issues have been so far selected for further investigation. On-going activities include a systematic review on the combined toxicity of multiple chemicals, a toxicological modelling study on exposure to multiple chemicals in bees, one study on the use of human biomonitoring data for risk assessment, one on non-monotonic-dose-response effects of chemical substances for human risk assessment, and one on the occurrence of cyanotoxins in food. EFSA will continue its activities on emerging risks through the continuation of the engagement with Member States and stakeholders and the completion of the on-going activities to collect additional information on the issues identified.

In addition, EFSA has also published an annual report of the Emerging Risks Exchange Network (EREN) for 2014.

EFSA established the EREN to exchange information between EFSA and the Member States on possible emerging risks for food and feed safety in 2010. The network met twice in 2014 and discussed a total of 10 emerging issues from the areas of chemical hazards, illegal activities, microbiological hazards, biotoxins, animal health, new consumption trends and new technologies and processes. EREN concluded that 4 issues were to be considered as emerging issues.

The report on EFSA activities on emerging risks is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/optonr9> and the report of the EREN is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/qaf6urf>

SPROUTS AND SEEDS Q&A GUIDANCE

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) are seeking views on guidance for local authorities and for food business operators that produce sprouts and seeds intended for sprouting.

The FSA have developed the guidance, which is in question and answer format, following the introduction of measures to enhance controls following the 2011 outbreak of [E.coli](#) O104:H4 in Germany and France.

Imported fenugreek seeds used for sprouting were identified as the most likely source of contamination that caused the outbreak. The measures were introduced in 2013 in the form of four Commission regulations.

The question and answer guidance is grouped by the four areas of legislation:

- approval of establishments;
- microbiological criteria;
- traceability; and
- imports.

The FSA would welcome your views on the content and the format of guidance, which can be found at the following link: <http://tinyurl.com/nkudz2n>. The guidance will be amended and updated online.



FOOD SECURITY, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

FSA IN N.I. WELCOMES FREEZA MEATS LTD GUILTY PLEA TO FRAUD OFFENCES

A meat processing company has been prosecuted at Newry Magistrate's Court for a number of offences relating to serious food fraud. Freeza Meats Ltd, based in Newry, pleaded guilty to a total of twelve offences against the Food Safety Order (NI) 1991 and the General Food Regulations (NI) 2004.

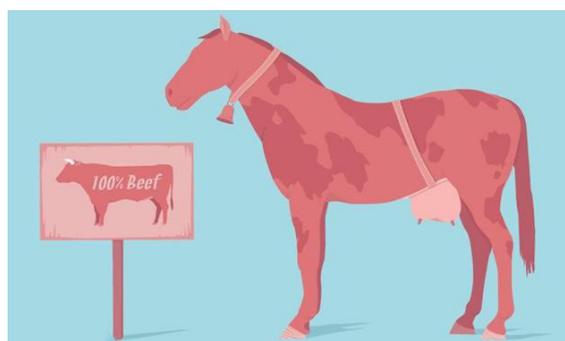
They were fined a total of £42,500, as well as awarding £71,902.73 court costs and a £180 offender's levy.

Newry Mourne and Down District Council brought about this court action against the company following a complex and lengthy investigation, supported by the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland.

Meat processor Freeza Meats Ltd was charged with twelve offences relating to:

- Substitution of meat ingredients with cheaper product, i.e. hearts, and subsequently not declaring hearts as an ingredient on the label, therefore not only misleading a major supermarket retailer, but also deceiving customers.
- Failure to provide on request by Newry & Mourne District Council information relating to whom they supplied meat products (traceability) on nine occasions.
- Misdescription of product as Halal when non-Halal ingredients were used.
- Obstruction of authorised officers by 'knowingly providing false and misleading documentation'.

Maria Jennings, Director of the FSA in NI, said: "The result is a real victory for consumers, it shows that enforcement procedures work and sends out a strong message to any food business that is tempted to commit fraud. Any food business found to be undertaking fraudulent practices will be subject to rigorous investigation, including the seizing and interrogation of all evidence."



GOVERNMENT CHEMIST LAUNCHES VIRTUAL FOOD AUTHENTICITY NETWORK



A new UK Virtual Food Authenticity Network has been launched for those involved in food authenticity testing.

Members can register for news alerts and will be provided with a forum for discussion, or to ask questions about food testing, and to share information on methods and new techniques.

The network is a Defra initiative set up in response to the recommendations made by the Elliott Review into the Integrity and Assurance of Food Supply Networks.

It will be coordinated by LGC, an international life sciences measurement and testing company which has been home to the Government Chemist for more than 100 years. To ensure independence, it will be overseen by a management committee chaired by Michael Walker, Consultant Referee Analyst for the Government Chemist. Selvarani Elahi, Deputy Government Chemist, also sits on the committee and has the role of Project Manager overseeing the network.

The Virtual Food Authenticity Network will raise awareness of the tools available to check for mislabelling and food fraud and ensure that the UK has a resilient network of laboratories with fit-for-purpose testing to check for food authenticity.

It will bring all relevant materials together in one place, including research material relating to food authenticity, standard operating procedures, and authenticity surveys.

Visit the Virtual Food Authenticity Network website at www.foodauthenticity.uk where you can sign up to become a member.

COMMISSION FOOD FRAUD GROUP MINUTES OF MAY MEETING

The European Commission has published the minutes from the meeting of the Food Fraud Working Group held on 26 May 2015. Amongst other items the group discussed:

- Update on the Food Fraud study;
- Suspicions of fraudulent practices concerning trade in animal by-products in the EU and exports to 3rd countries;
- Member State presentations by the Netherlands and Czech Republic;
- Deceptive practices in the declaration of the net weight of glazed fishery products; and
- Sale of counterfeit food through social media sites.

A copy of the agenda from the meeting can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/p2zwwgn> and the minutes are available here: <http://tinyurl.com/qy8hmmmy>

FINES ISSUED AGAINST FOOD PACKAGING CARTELS

The European Commission issued, on 24 June 2015, a press release concerning the issuing of fines to several producers and distributors of food packaging.

The European Commission has fined eight manufacturers and two distributors of retail food packaging trays a total of €115,865,000 for having participated in at least one of five separate cartels. The companies were found to have fixed prices and allocated customers of polystyrene foam or polypropylene rigid trays, which is in breach of EU antitrust rules. Polystyrene foam and polypropylene rigid trays are used for packaging food sold in shops or supermarkets, for products such as cheese, meat, fish or cake.

The Commission's investigation revealed the existence of five separate cartels for retail food packaging in a large part of the European Economic Area (EEA), namely:

- In the markets for polystyrene foam trays and polypropylene rigid trays in North-West Europe ("NWE"). This refers to Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The conduct occurred between June 2002 and October 2007.
- In the market for polystyrene foam trays in Central and Eastern Europe ("CEE"). This refers to the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. The conduct occurred between November 2004 and September 2007.
- In the market for polystyrene foam trays in South-West Europe ("SWE"). This refers to Portugal and Spain. The conduct occurred between March 2000 and February 2008.
- In the market for polystyrene foam trays in France. The conduct occurred between September 2004 and November 2005.
- In the market for polystyrene foam trays in Italy. The conduct occurred between June 2002 and December 2007.

More information can be found in the Commission press release here: <http://tinyurl.com/qff39qw>



FOOD FRAUD TEST REVEAL ADULTERATED OREGANO

Professor Chris Elliott, author of the Elliott Report, has conducted authenticity tests on samples of Oregano on behalf of the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The FSA has confirmed that the contamination levels in the 19 of 25 samples that were positive for adulteration varied between 21 and 69%.

Two tests were used by Professor Chris Elliott for this study, they were developed and validated specifically for the study and are based on trans-infrared and high resolution mass spectroscopy.

The routinely used methodology for the determination of authenticity in herbs is based on microscopy. It is not known if Professor Elliott also used this methodology and how comparable the results are to the analytical methods he used. Another method used is comparative analyses of the essential oils present.

The FSA have a list of products which Professor Elliott's sampling has identified as adulterated and are following these up by contacting the individual suppliers to gather supply chain information; the FSA do not have a full list of all the products that have been tested and are seeking this from the research team.

The test results are currently unverified by the FSA, they will be assessing the analytical methods but are not currently planning to carry out any additional monitoring of this type of product.

The preliminary risk assessment that has been carried out indicates that there is no food safety risk associated with the fraud. There is a minor pesticide residue concern but given the very small amounts consumed, particularly given the dilution effect of the use of the herb in foods, this is not expected to escalate the risk.

The FSA response to the issues highlighted in the report will not be to initiate testing and monitoring but to undertake a full vulnerability assessment of the supply chain.

The FSA are gathering information and are not ready to make recommendations to business. The FSA are seeking information from industry about the surveillance that industry is carrying out; what methodologies are being employed and what results are being seen. If you can contribute any information please contact sudakin@bff.co.uk



IMPORTS AND THE SUPPLY CHAIN

OPEN TO EXPORT WEBSITE UPDATED

Open to Export has launched a major update to their website making it easier to find relevant information.

The site is aimed at getting UK businesses ready to sell overseas and features information on:

- Getting Started;
- Selecting a Market;
- Reaching Customers;
- Pricing and Getting Paid;
- Delivery and Documentation;
- Ask the Experts; and
- Useful Contacts.

open to
export

The Open to Export website can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/pr986yl>

OPEN-BOOK ACCOUNTING AND SUPPLY CHAIN ASSURANCE

The National Audit Office (NAO) has called for government to negotiate greater access to information about how much outsourced public services are actually costing suppliers, and therefore how much profit they are making.

An NAO survey found that such information, known as open-book accounting data, is currently available in only 31% of contracts and that, even then, it is not always received.

Based on public and private sector case studies, the NAO has identified five approaches to collecting and using information on suppliers:

- Ensuring price complies with the contract;
- Making better informed commercial decisions;
- Assuring processes;
- Maintaining control of risk; and
- Achieving step-change innovation.

The NAO goes on to recommend that every major contract have a strategy for the collection and use of information and that every government department have a policy on when it will use open-book accounting. According to the NAO's survey, currently only 23% of government organizations have a policy on when to use open-book accounting.

The NAO report recommends that the Cabinet Office set up a task force to establish a common standard for open-book data, since suppliers complain that government currently asks for data in a variety of different formats. It also recommends that the Cabinet Office develop better guidance for interpreting suppliers' costs and profits.

Overall, the NAO wants government staff to be encouraged to understand in detail what is going on in those organizations that deliver public services.

The full NAO report can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/p387z8s>

REPORT ON CONTROLS OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLE IMPORTS

The European Commission has published the results of border checks carried out by EU countries in 2014 on imports of fruits and vegetables that are subject to an increased level of official controls. The report presents the results of controls on almost 100 000 consignments carried out at EU borders.

Over 11 000 of these controls led to laboratory analyses, which resulted in 496 consignments (4.4% of those that underwent controls) being found to be in breach of EU legislation and being prevented from entering the EU market. This is a slight increase as compared with 2013, when 4.1% of consignments were stopped at EU borders.

The report demonstrates that the increased level of controls on fruit and vegetables, introduced by the Commission Regulation (EC/669/2009) plays an important role in protecting consumers from potential food safety risks.

The report is published in the framework of Regulation (EC) No 669/2009 on an increased level of official controls on certain imports of food and feed of non-animal origin, which contains the list (reviewed on a quarterly basis) of imports subject to increased border controls.

The full report can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/ppgyhlo>



TTIP: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

A compilation of 8 at-a-glance notes on "TTIP: Opportunities and challenges" (prepared by the Policy Department A for the IMCO Committee) has been published. The notes cover 8 sectors:

- Services;
- Public procurement;
- Technical barriers to trade;
- Including standards;
- Customs and trade facilitation;
- Consumer protection;
- Textiles and labelling; and
- Motor vehicles and engineering, including machinery.



The analyses done on the opportunities and challenges faced by Europe with regard to the negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). They examine options of the TTIP from the point of view of EU offensive and defensive interests.

The notes compilation is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/owlsy9b>

LABELLING AND GENERAL FOOD LAW

FDF LAUNCHES GLUTEN-FREE GUIDE FOR BEST PRACTICE

**Food and Drink
Federation**



Delivering Sustainable Growth

The Food and Drink Federation (FDF) has published a free guide to help manufacturers adhere to EU labelling laws for gluten-free packaged products.

The guide was produced with the support from Coeliac UK, the Anaphylaxis Campaign and the British Retail Consortium.

It is no longer permitted to state 'gluten' without a reference to a specific cereal in the ingredients list, according to the guide. And while it is optional to add the word 'gluten' in brackets after the name of the cereal, FDF suggests that best practice is merely to highlight the name of the cereal in bold.

The guide also included simple diagrams to help manufacturers decide which claim is most suitable for their products: gluten-free; very low gluten; no gluten-containing ingredients; or no authorised claim.

The full gluten-free guide can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/q26ay9b>



EC PUBLISHES ORIGIN LABELLING REPORTS

The European Commission has published two long-awaited reports on origin labelling as requested by the Council and the European Parliament in FIC. Both reports, that were initially due to be released by the end of last year, conclude that the benefits from new mandatory labelling requirements do not outweigh the costs and that voluntary labelling rules seem to be the most suitable solution.

- The first reports (full and executive summaries are attached) looks at the feasibility of different options for mandatory origin labelling for dairy products and minor meats (notably horsemeat, rabbit meat and meat from game and birds):
 - Considering consumer attitudes towards additional information and potential extra costs, as well as any technical and administrative requirements arising for businesses and public authorities, the report concludes that for dairy products there would be an uneven impact on producers, making it more burdensome for some than for others. For the minor meats, the report similarly concludes that compulsory origin labelling would imply operational costs which would not outweigh the benefits.
 - It also states that consumers are not willing to pay more for the additional information.
 - The report therefore suggests that the existing options for voluntary labelling could address some consumer demands while retaining flexibility for Member States and food operators.
- The second report explores the need for consumers to be informed on the origin of unprocessed foods, single ingredient products and ingredients that represent more than 50 % of a food.
 - It concludes that consumers are interested in origin labelling for all these food categories, but less so for food categories such as meat, meat products and dairy products.
 - The report also looks at the costs and benefits of labelling rules, including the impact on the internal market and on international trade, and concludes that voluntary origin labelling, combined with existing mandatory origin labelling regimes for specific foods or categories of food, is the most suitable way forward.

These reports are likely to provoke strong reaction from MEPs who voted in February a non-binding resolution calling for mandatory origin labelling for meat in processed food. Access the resolution through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/pd5skas>

THRESHOLDS MAY REPLACE “MAY CONTAIN” LABELS ON FOOD ALLERGENS



According to Clare Mills, professor of allergy at the Institute of Inflammation and Repair in Manchester, the scientific data enabling thresholds to be set for key food allergens such as peanuts could be available within four to five years, paving the way for the abolition of "may contain" labels.

Talking at the DG SANTE "Know what you eat" conference, which took place on 3 July at EXPO Milan 2015, Dr. Mills said that if a threshold could be set for peanuts at which 99% of allergy sufferers did not have a reaction, society would still have to be prepared to take the risk for the 1% that would not be covered.

Many have been frustrated that the recent European Food Safety Authority Opinion did not advise on thresholds below which an allergic reaction was extremely unlikely to occur. Dr. Mills warned that it was possible the thresholds would come out so low from the research that in practice the food industry would not be able to keep cross-contamination below these levels.

The new Food Information Regulation introduced for the first time the requirement for caterers and shops selling food loose to provide allergen information. Dr. Mills said there was evidence that some people with allergies did not ask about allergen information, which by law now has to be provided. However, Alexandra Nikolakopoulou, the new head of DG SANTE's nutrition unit, said the legislation was very new and that people's attitude on asking about allergens could develop.

If science evolves enough for thresholds to be set for allergens, this could lead the EFSA and the European Commission to set maximum limits for allergens and get rid of the "may contain" label. However, this remains a long term process and it appears that threshold could not be entirely reliable and it is unlikely that the Commission will take the risk.

The current FSA Best Practice Guidance on Managing Food Allergens can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/n9fcuuu>

NUTRITION, ADDITIVES AND HEALTH

FDA TAKES STEPS TO REMOVE ARTIFICIAL TRANS FATS IN PROCESSED FOODS



Based on a thorough review of the scientific evidence, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has finalised its determination that partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs), the primary dietary source of artificial trans fat in processed foods, are not “generally recognized as safe” or GRAS for use in human food. Food manufacturers will have three years to remove PHOs from products.

“The FDA’s action on this major source of artificial trans fat demonstrates the agency’s commitment to the heart health of all Americans,” said FDA’s Acting Commissioner Stephen Ostroff, M.D. “This action is expected to reduce coronary heart disease and prevent thousands of fatal heart attacks every year.”

This determination will significantly reduce the use of PHOs, the major source of artificial trans fats, in the food supply. In 2013, the FDA made a tentative determination that PHOs could no longer be considered GRAS and is finalizing that determination after considering public comments.

Since 2006, manufacturers have been required to include trans fat content information on the Nutrition Facts label of foods. Between 2003 and 2012, the FDA estimates that consumer trans fat consumption decreased about 78 percent and that the labelling rule and industry reformulation of foods were key factors in informing healthier consumer choices and reducing trans fat in foods. While trans fat intake has significantly decreased, the current intake remains a public health concern. The Institute of Medicine recommends that consumption of trans fat be as low as possible while consuming a nutritionally-adequate diet.

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

BRAMLEY APPLE PIE FILLING GIVEN PROTECTED STATUS

Traditional Bramley apple pie filling has joined the Cornish Pasty in being given protected status by the European Commission.

The apple filling has been named on the traditional specialities guaranteed list (TSG), which seeks to protect the reputation of regional products.

Bramley apples are grown commercially across Kent, East Anglia and the West Midlands. The mixture is defined as ‘a homogeneous blend of Bramley apple pieces, sugar and water, with the option of Bramley apple purée, cornflour and lemon juice or other antioxidant.’



A farm product may be registered as TSG only if it is produced using traditional raw materials and prepared with traditional methods.

The commission outlined that any Bramley apple pie fillings made with a mix of apple varieties would not adhere to its definition of “Traditional Apple Pie Filling”.

Regulation (EU) 2015/1297 which gives the pie filling its protected status can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/qytl3j>

SUPERBUG MRSA FOUND IN BRITISH PORK

The findings of a new study into retail meat, published on 18th June have revealed livestock-associated MRSA in British pork. The testing was run by the Alliance to Save our Antibiotics.

The Alliance to Save our Antibiotics is calling on the major UK supermarkets to take urgent action to reduce antibiotic use in their supply chains.

This is the first time MRSA of livestock origin has been found in British pork. The findings suggest that British consumers are already being exposed to MRSA. In fact, a person eating pork twice a week may be consuming contaminated meat once every three months.

Antibiotic resistance is predicted to cause one million deaths across Europe by 2025. This discovery is the latest warning that overuse of antibiotics on farms is posing a risk to human health.

Other European countries have already witnessed the spread of MRSA through pig herds, and many have now introduced direct testing of pigs. However, the UK Government has not yet carried out similar testing.

For more information, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/p2zu36d>



SURVEY FIND HIGH LEVELS OF SALT AND SUGAR IN POPCORN



According to a new survey by Consensus Action on Salt & Health (CASH), the perceived 'healthy snack' popcorn is stuffing consumers with unnecessary amounts of salt and sugar.

CASH claim that the survey exposes the misconception that popcorn is really a healthy snack and calls for these very high salt and sugar levels to be immediately reduced.

CASH surveyed the salt content of 154 flavoured popcorn products sold in major supermarkets, cafés and cinemas, and found nearly one in four popcorn products (23%) contained dangerously high levels of salt.

Furthermore, out of the 151 products with labelled information on sugars, 71 products (47%) would have a red (high) colour coded warning on front of pack. 13 products have 24g or more of sugars per portion which is more than the daily maximum recommended intake.

More information and the full salt and sugar data is available on the CASH website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/qdxo7rx>

NUTRITIONAL AND HEALTH CLAIMS LEGISLATION BULLETINS 2015

The Department of Health has recently published update bulletins to interested parties on Nutrition and Health Claims. The bulletins update on the discussions taking place at the Commission Working Groups and include updates on the use of the word 'probiotic' and 'tonic water' and the topics concerning glycaemic carbohydrates and cholesterol. These claims must comply with European Regulation (EC) No. 1924/2006.

The update from the European Commission's Working Group meeting on health claims on 19th January 2015 is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/q74om3b>

The update from the European Commission's Working Group meeting on health claims on 8th June 2015 is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/qboradz>



Department
of Health

EFSA OPINION ON THE SAFETY OF CAFFEINE

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published a scientific opinion on the safety of caffeine consumed through the diet. The report, prepared by the EFSA Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies (NDA), concluded that for healthy adults, with the exception of pregnant women, single doses of caffeine up to 200 mg (approximately 2 ½ espressos or 4 cups of tea) and total daily caffeine consumption of up to 400 mg are safe.

Following a request from the European Commission, EFSA asked the NDA Panel to deliver a scientific opinion on the safety of caffeine. The Panel assessed the effects of caffeine intake in adults, the elderly, pregnant and breastfeeding women, children and adolescents, and people performing physical exercise; looking first at the effects of single doses of caffeine and then at habitual daily consumption. EFSA also looked at the effects of consuming caffeine in combination with alcohol or in combination with common ingredients in energy drinks.

Caffeine is a naturally-occurring substance found in some plant-based food and drink ingredients, such as tea leaves and coffee or cocoa beans. It is added to other food and drink products like cola-based soft drinks, energy drinks and sweets. Caffeine is also available in tablet-form, marketed as a product for relieving the symptoms of fatigue. A known effect of caffeine is its ability to act as a mild diuretic (causing the body to lose water). It has also been shown to affect sleep and sleep patterns, at doses of around 100 mg in certain individuals, particularly when consumed close to bedtime.

EFSA's scientific opinion provided information on the concentrations of caffeine that are found in common caffeine-containing food and beverages:

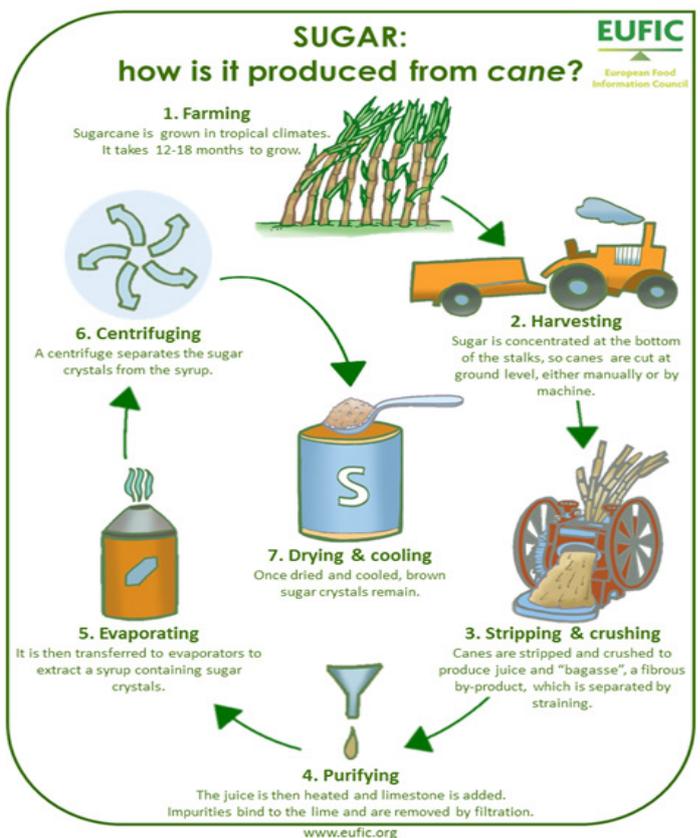
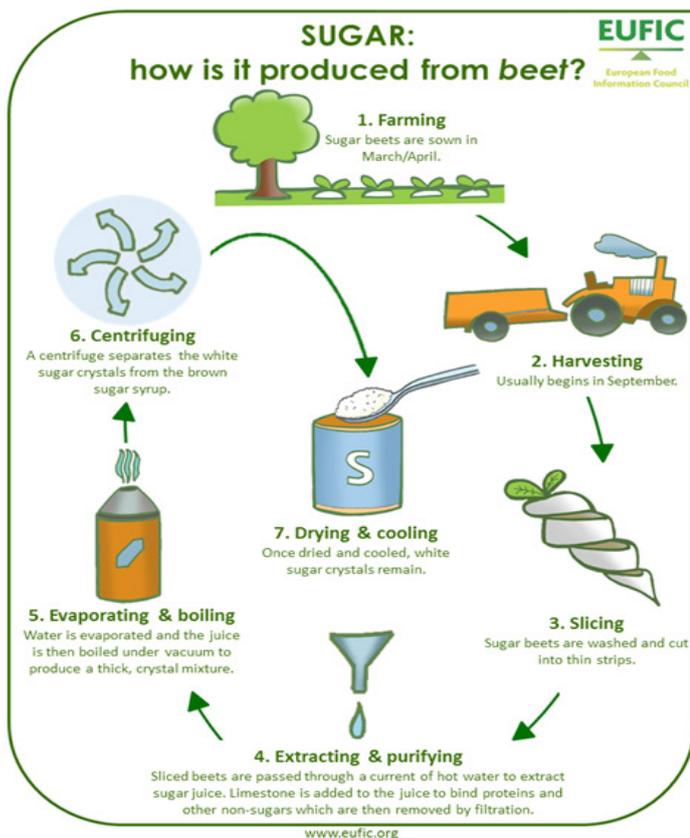
- Tea (220 ml) – 50 mg
- Coffee (filter, one cup, 200 ml) - 90 mg
- Coffee (espresso, 60 ml) – 80 mg
- Standard can of energy drink (250 ml) – 80 mg
- Standard can of cola (355 ml) – 40 mg
- A bar of plain chocolate (50 g) – 25 mg
- A bar of milk chocolate (50 g) – 10 mg



The EFSA Scientific Opinion can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/p2ofu4t>

EUFIC SUGAR INFOGRAPHICS

EUFIC has produced two new infographics showing how sugar is produced from cane and beet.



UPDATED EUFIC REVIEW OF WHOLE GRAINS

EUFIC's revised Whole Grains Review has been published and provides an overview of the effects of whole grains on health and wellbeing. It presents the updated European definition, info on nutritional composition, health effects, recommendations, and innovations.



Grains are the seeds of cereal crops such as wheat, rye, rice, oats or barley. They have been a staple food for humans for thousands of years. In pre-industrial times grains were commonly eaten whole but advances in the milling and processing of grains allowed large-scale separation and removal of the bran and germ, resulting in refined flour that consists mainly of the starchy endosperm. Refined white flour became popular because it produced baked goods with a softer, more open texture and extended freshness. However, the bran and germ contain important nutrients that are lost when the grain is refined.

Nowadays, it is widely recognised that foods made with whole grains can make an important contribution to health and wellbeing. Whole grains provide benefits relating to the many individual nutrients and bioactive compounds (also called phytochemicals) they contain. Extensive research has examined the link between regular consumption of whole grain foods and the risk of heart disease, certain types of cancer, type 2 diabetes, and body-weight management.

This review looks at the definition of “whole grain” and what qualifies as a whole grain food. Current intakes of whole grains, and dietary guidelines in different countries are presented, along with data on current understanding of the health benefits of whole grain.

The review can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/obb7lk3>

SACN PUBLISH REPORT ON CARBOHYDRATES AND HEALTH

The logo for the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) consists of the lowercase letters 'sacn' in a bold, purple, sans-serif font. A thin green horizontal line is positioned directly beneath the letters.

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) was asked by the Department of Health and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to examine the latest evidence on the links between consumption of carbohydrates, sugars, starch and fibre and a range of health outcomes (such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, bowel health and tooth decay) to ensure the government's position on consumption was up-to-date.

In its review of the evidence, SACN found that:

- High levels of sugar consumption are associated with a greater risk of tooth decay.
- The higher the proportion of sugar in the diet, the greater the risk of high energy intake.
- Drinking high-sugar beverages results in weight gain and increases in BMI in teenagers and children.
- Consuming too many high-sugar beverages increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

In light of these findings, SACN recommends that:

- Free sugars should account for no more than 5% daily dietary energy intake.
- The term free sugars is adopted, replacing the terms Non Milk Extrinsic Sugars (NMES) and added sugars. Free sugars are those added to food or those naturally present in honey, syrups and unsweetened fruit juices, but exclude lactose in milk and milk products.
- The consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages (e.g. fizzy drinks, soft drinks and squash) should be minimised by both children and adults.

SACN received a substantial number of responses to the public consultation on its draft Carbohydrates and Health report. The report can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/n9rcufd> You can view the responses in full and in summary, SACN's responses to them, and the original consultation documentation on the page for the public consultation on the draft Carbohydrates and Health report here: <http://tinyurl.com/pp4er2w>

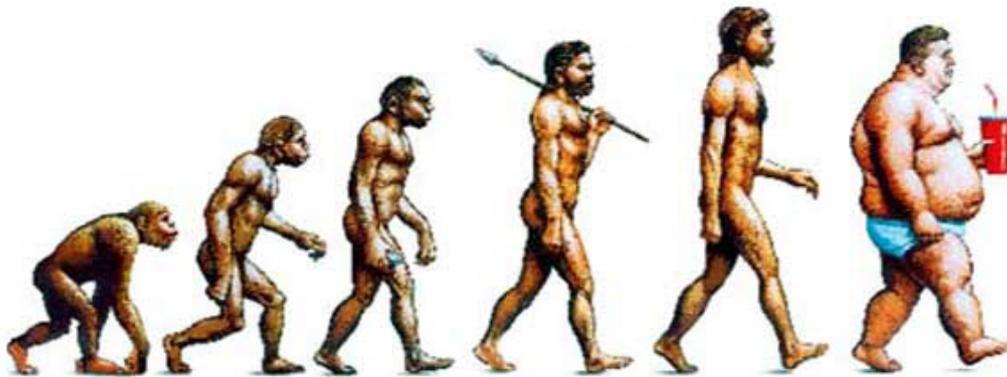
DH PUBLISHES RESPONSE TO REPORT ON IMPACT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND DIET ON HEALTH

The Department of Health has published its response to the House of Commons Health Select Committee report on the Impact of physical activity and diet on health. Sixth Report of Session 2014 to 2015.

The Government agrees with the Committee's emphasis on working together to identify opportunities to tackle obesity, improve people's diets and increase physical activity, creating appropriate and supportive environments and ensuring health and care professionals also play their part. It is important to recognise that physical activity brings health benefits including stronger muscles and bones, improved cardiometabolic health and enhanced psychological wellbeing, and can help prevent weight gain.

However, for those who are overweight and obese, eating and drinking less is key to weight loss. In addition, the Government recognises that more needs to be done to support children and adults to sustain healthier weights over time.

The Government Response is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/omygx2x>



EFSA PUBLISHES HEALTH CLAIMS GUIDANCE

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published a 29-page health claims guidance to clarify its health claims scientific criteria and is calling for stakeholder input until 11th September 2015.

The EU's central food science agency said the guidance was necessary because there were still issues that needed to be further clarified.

The guidance covers topics including:

- Scientific standards versus regulatory requirements
- Claims on essential nutrients and other substances
- How EFSA's Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies (NDA) identifies "pertinent human studies"
- The use of meta-analyses in NDA health claim opinions
- Extrapolation of results between study and target populations
- The use of comparative claims
- Conditions of use
- Claim withdrawal
- Submission logistics

Food and food supplement trade groups have already said that they intend to take the opportunity to comment on the guidance.

The full consultation document is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pepapyt>



REMOVAL OF FIVE FLAVOURINGS FROM THE UNION LIST

A new EU Regulation amendment sees the removal of some flavouring substances from the authorised list.

Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/1102 of 8 July 2015 amending Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards removal from the Union list of certain flavouring substances was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L181/54, 9/7/2015.

Additional scientific data following specific European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Opinions relating to the following five substances was not submitted by 30 June 2014, therefore the flavouring substances have been removed from the Union list: 1-methylnaphthalene (FL No 01.014), furfuryl methyl ether (FL No 13.052), difurfuryl sulphide (FL No 13.056), difurfuryl ether (FL No 13.061) and ethyl furfuryl ether (FL No 13.123).

The Regulation entered into force on 29 July 2015. Foods containing the five flavouring substances which are lawfully placed on the market or labelled prior to 29 April 2016 which do not comply with Part A of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008 may be marketed until their date of minimum durability or use by date.

The Official Journal can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/oncwray>

PHE AND VMD PUBLISH JOINT REPORT ON ANTIBIOTICS IN HUMANS AND ANIMALS

A joint report on human and animal antibiotic use, sales and resistance in the UK in 2013 has been published.

The report, published by Public Health England (PHE) and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), brings together the most recently available UK data from 2013, on antibiotic resistance in key bacteria that are common to animals and humans. It also includes details on the amount of antibiotics sold for animal health and welfare and antibiotics prescribed to humans.

The report aims to:

- Encourage further joint working between the human and animal sectors
- Identify the emerging and current antibiotic resistance threats in 3 key bacteria in humans and animals
- Identify differences in surveillance methodology and data gaps that limit our ability to compare trends between the 2 fields, both within the UK and across Europe
- Evaluate available data from humans and animals side by side and begin to assess the relationship between antibiotic sales, use and resistance across the 2 sectors
- Develop recommendations to improve the surveillance of antibiotic use and resistance in humans and animals

The report is available to access here: <http://tinyurl.com/o62942z>



Public Health England



CONSULTATION ON DRAFT SACN VITAMIN D AND HEALTH REPORT

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) has its draft Vitamin D and Health report open for scientific comment.

The purpose of the current SACN review on vitamin D is to consider whether the DRVs for vitamin D set by COMA in 1991 are still appropriate in the context of current lifestyles (e.g., advice to stay out of the sun and to wear sunscreen).

The key issues considered were:

- Biochemical indicators of vitamin D status and the validity of the values used to assess risk of deficiency and excess;
- Association between vitamin D status and health outcomes at all life stages and the effects of biological modifiers;
- The contribution of cutaneous vitamin D synthesis to vitamin D status in the UK taking account of factors that modify skin exposure to sunlight; risks of skin damage and other adverse health outcomes associated with sunlight exposure;
- Potential adverse effects of high vitamin D intakes; and
- Relative contributions made by dietary vitamin D intake (from natural food sources, fortified foods and supplements) and cutaneous vitamin D synthesis, to the vitamin D status of the UK population.

The Draft Report, Executive Summary and consultation information can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pmle6bu>

It is requested that responses be sent to the SACN secretariat via email at sacn@phe.gov.uk and all responses will be published following the conclusion of the consultation.

PROCESSING AND RETAIL

RETAILERS RAISE CONCERNS OVER WELSH BAG CHARGE PROPOSALS

Local shops in Wales have raised concerns over proposals in the Environment (Wales) Bill that would see new regulations introduced on carrier bags and waste disposal.

The Bill puts forward the following proposals:

- Increase the scope of the carrier bag charging regulations to allow Welsh Ministers to impose a mandatory charge on all types of carrier bags (for example bags for life)
- Remove the voluntary aspect of the carrier bag charging scheme, instead introducing a mandatory requirement for retailers to donate the proceeds of the bag charge to charitable causes
- Give Welsh Ministers further powers to require that different types of waste are separated before collection by retailers



The Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) Chief Executive James Lowman said: "The current carrier bag charging regulations have been a great success, dramatically reducing the usage of single use carrier bags whilst also giving retailers the opportunity to donate to charitable causes on a voluntary basis. Making charitable donations mandatory and extending the charge to bags for life will serve only to increase administrative burdens on retailers."

ACS also opposes a proposal in the Bill to make mandatory the separation and disposal of waste for businesses. Mr Lowman continued: "Retailers already have recycling procedures in place, so introducing regulations in this area is unnecessary. Additionally, almost half of stores in Wales are very small (under 1000 sq ft), so additional requirements on the separation of waste will present a challenge to these retailers for whom store space is at an absolute premium."

The full submission is available for free download from the ACS website here: <http://tinyurl.com/pxkdu54>

ACS AND SGF CRITICISE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT BOTTLE DEPOSIT RETURN SCHEME PROPOSAL

The Association of Convenience Stores (ASC) and Scottish Grocer's Federation (SGF) have submitted a joint response to the call for evidence from Scottish environment agency Zero Waste Scotland (ZWS) on the feasibility of implementing a Deposit and Return Scheme (DRS) in Scotland.

The deposit and return scheme is aimed at increasing recycling rates and reducing litter by encouraging consumers to return empty containers to retail outlets. DRS schemes focus primarily on beverage containers but the proposed Scottish scheme could be the most wide-ranging in Europe and include all types of aluminium cans, cartons, glass bottles, plastic bottles and containers.

The joint SGF-ACS response strongly argues that this is the wrong solution for Scotland and that convenience store retailers would be simply unable to store and process the anticipated high levels of returns envisaged by the feasibility study. Additionally DRS would increase cost for consumers and throw into reverse the considerable progress Scotland has made in implementing kerbside recycling services.

SGF has requested a meeting with Minister for Business Fergus Ewing MSP to highlight serious impact on convenience stores and will invite officials from ZWS to visit convenience stores to assess the challenges and problems a DRS would cause to the sector.

The final report on the Scottish Deposit Refund System for Zero Waste Scotland can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/o2lfqjx>

FUNDING FOR FOOD HYGIENE RATING SCHEME



The Food Standards Agency (FSA) wrote to local authority heads of service on 11 June 2015 regarding a second phase of grant funding for local authorities in England to help increase the visibility of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS).

The FSA will be pressing the case for mandatory display of ratings at food business premises in England and is currently working to strengthen the case for this to present to the Government. The approach with the second round of funding will be the same and will be based on short face to face visits to businesses not displaying their 3, 4 or 5 rating to explain the potential benefits of doing so and to issue them with a new sticker.

The FSA letter to local authority heads of service can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pfbjn22>

DEFRA ISSUE GUIDANCE ON CHARGES FOR SINGLE-USE CARRIER BAGS

Defra have issued information for consumers and retailers about the 5p charge for single-use plastic carrier bags being introduced in England from 5 October 2015.

They have introduced a new law which will require large shops in England to charge 5p for all single-use plastic carrier bags from 5 October 2015. All retailers with 250 or more full-time equivalent employees will have to charge a minimum of 5p for the single-use plastic carrier bags that they provide.

The scheme aims to reduce the use of single-use plastic carrier bags, and the litter associated with them, by encouraging people to re-use bags or to use "bags for life".

The guidance 'Carrier Bag Charges: Retailers' Responsibilities' can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/o5atccq>



EFSA ISSUE ADVICE ON FISH STORAGE IN RETAIL

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) have published guidance on the storage times and temperature for fish in retail.

Storage times and CO₂ content in packaging are the two main factors that influence the effect of temperature on histamine formation, the main temperature-dependent hazard.

Scientists have identified combinations of these two factors that meet the EU food safety criteria for various storage temperatures. These are some of the conclusions of EFSA's report on the temperature to apply to pre-packaged fishery products at retail.



Histamine is a substance that forms when certain fish are not properly refrigerated before being cooked or processed. Its presence in fish is controlled by EU legislation.

Tuna, sardines, mackerel, and anchovies are among the species where histamine can be found.

In the EU histamine poisoning is one of the most common illnesses caused by fish and fishery products. In 2013, there were 42 reported outbreaks of histamine poisoning which involved 231 people. However the actual number of outbreaks and affected people is probably greater than reported.

Fishery products containing high levels of histamine might not look or smell bad, but can cause illness. The symptoms include tingling or burning of the mouth or throat, rash, headache, diarrhoea and usually start within one hour after eating.

To carry out the assessment, EFSA scientists used predictive bacterial growth models that assume favourable conditions for histamine formation. These models estimate the rate of microbial growth or provide an indication of whether growth of a particular microorganism will occur under a specified set of conditions.

The Scientific Report from EFSA is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/getlfz6>

PLASTIC BAG NUMBERS RISE FOR FIFTH YEAR



The number of plastic bags taken from supermarkets has increased for the fifth year running – despite research from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) showing that the average household already has 40 plastic bags stashed away around the home.

New figures released show that British shoppers took 8.5 billion single-use carrier bags from major supermarkets in 2014 – up two hundred million from 2013.

Plastic bags can take years to fully decompose and even though household recycling rates have improved significantly in recent years, 16,000 tonnes of waste still goes to landfill every year. Around 8 million tonnes of plastic also ends up in our oceans each year, polluting our marine environment and harming our precious sea life.

The latest figures on plastic bag usage come ahead of the introduction of the 5p charge for single-use plastic carrier bags, which comes into effect in England in October following the success of similar schemes in Scotland and Wales. In Wales the charge led to an 79% decrease in plastic bags taken in the first three years and in Scotland the number of 'bags for life' used quadrupled last year.

By comparison, in England 'bags for life' only account for one in 20 bags taken from major retailers. This new charge will directly address the number of plastic carrier bags distributed by large supermarkets and small businesses are invited to introduce a charge on a voluntary basis.

Good causes will also benefit from the charge, and as much as £730 million could be donated to charities and not-for-profit organisations over 10 years.

The new research on carrier bag usage can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/oawkgrx>

FOODDRINKEUROPE ANNUAL REPORT

FoodDrinkEurope announced on 18 June 2015 that it has published its Annual Report 2015. The Annual Report outlines a number of FoodDrinkEurope's key achievements, including:

- The adoption of the High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain final report;
- The launch of a new Europe-wide food and drink industry pledge on high-quality apprenticeships;
- The adoption of the High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain final report;
- The launch of a dedicated website (referenceintakes.eu) to explain the concept of Reference Intakes; and
- The publication of a report showcasing the action taken by food and drink manufacturers to tackle food wastage.

The FoodDrinkEurope Annual Report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/ortwtf5>

CMA PUBLISHES FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has published its first annual report, which looks back at the key work undertaken by the organisation throughout 2014/15.

Alongside this, the CMA has also published its impact assessment report which shows that the CMA and its predecessors have delivered direct financial benefits to consumers of £11.20 for every £1 of taxpayer money received over the past 3 years, exceeding the 10:1 target set by the government.



Work this year focused on creating an effective competition and consumer authority with the right policies, processes and people to deliver its 5 strategic goals – deliver effective enforcement; extend competition frontiers, refocus consumer protection, achieve professional excellence and develop integrated performance – and make competition work well for consumers, businesses and the UK economy.

The report details competition and consumer work the CMA has carried out over the last year, including the following:

- Reviewed a total of 83 mergers across all sectors of the economy, 6 of which are currently under detailed scrutiny at phase 2
- Opened 3 regulatory appeals in the energy and water sectors
- Concluded a 3-year case against the promoters of a £20 million pyramid-selling scheme that resulted in 9 criminal convictions.
- Launched 2 of the largest market investigations ever undertaken, into the energy and retail banking markets
- Concluded 2 market investigations into payday loans and private motor insurance and also completed a market study into residential property management services
- Launched 5 Competition Act cases, and concluded 4 more; launched 5 consumer projects, and concluded 5 more
- Published report on regulation of higher education, and published guidance for providers and advice for students. The CMA also took action in the secondary ticketing market to give improved information to buyers about the tickets they are buying
- In response to new concurrency legislation, the CMA set up and chairs the UK Competition Network, bringing the regulators together to discuss key issues and share best practice
- To build relationships across the UK, the CMA set up offices in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, and is embedding 'all nations' thinking when planning and carrying out work
- Building on a completed cartel case, the CMA developed compliance materials outlining key messages for people working in the UK motor vehicle sector, which reached over 80% of the 200,000 people working in that sector

The CMA annual report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/os5xdgb> and its impact assessment report can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/nfa5zag>

CMA RECOMMENDS CHANGES TO HELP SHOPPERS

In response to the Which? super-complaint, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) have announced a series of measures to improve compliance, bring greater clarity to shoppers and simplify the regulations.

Which? submitted the super-complaint on 21 April 2015, raising concerns about confusing and misleading promotions and a lack of easily comparable prices because of the limitations of unit pricing.

In its investigation the CMA found examples of pricing and promotional practices that have the potential to confuse or mislead consumers and which could be in breach of consumer law. Where there is evidence of breaches of consumer law this could lead to enforcement action.

However, it has concluded that these problems are not occurring in large numbers across the whole sector and that generally retailers are taking compliance seriously to avoid such problems occurring. The CMA also found that more could be done to reduce the complexity in unit pricing to make it a more useful comparison tool for consumers.

In its work following up on the investigation the CMA will work with businesses to cut out promotional practices which could mislead consumers. This includes the practice of running 'was/now' promotions where the discount price is advertised as a promotion for longer than the higher price applied.

The CMA response to the Which? complaint can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/p8g3vwe>

The logo for 'Which?' is displayed in white text on a red rectangular background.

CMA PUBLISH GUIDANCE ON UNIT PRICE MARKING FOR CONSUMERS

Unit pricing is a labelling system that helps consumers compare the prices of groceries.

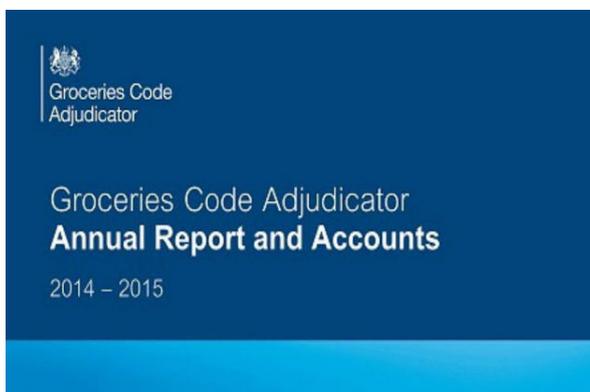
The new summary from the Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA) explains how it works, and shows how comparing unit prices can help people save money when they go shopping.

Unit pricing can help consumers navigate through the thousands of products on supermarket shelves, compare prices accurately and choose the one that's best value for you. If consumers have identified an issue or a problem with pricing in a store, they are advised should contact a member of the store's staff.

The Guidance for consumers can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/qfj2qoh>

GCA ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2014-15

The Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) has published its annual report and accounts for 2014-15. The report sets out the activities of the GCA over the period April 2014 to March 2015.



It provides detailed information on:

- Working practice
- Objectives
- Key actions

The resource accounts provide detailed accounting and expenditure information for the financial year 2014 to 2015.

The report and accounts report document is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pfz39m5>

GROCERY CODE ADJUDICATOR ANNUAL SECTOR SURVEY RESULTS

The Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) launched a survey of the groceries sector to get a clear insight from suppliers into their relationships with retailers. It also wanted to see what impact the Groceries Supply Code of Practice is having on the sector.

The results show that suppliers are now more aware of the GCA and they are more likely to trust the GCA to take action against a retailer who breaches the Code.

But, the survey results also show that the GCA has more work to do. In the last year, 70% of suppliers reported Code related issues in dealings with the ten large grocery retailers; a reduction of only 9% since last year's survey. Of further concern is that less than 50% of suppliers would actually raise an issue with the GCA. Fear of retribution by the retailers remains the biggest reason why suppliers opt to keep quiet. This culture of fear perhaps explains why only one investigation and two arbitrations have been initiated since the GCA was formed.

As well as the GCA needing to do more to address the current imbalance between retailers and suppliers, suppliers also have a responsibility to do more to familiarise themselves with their rights under the Code. Currently only 24% of suppliers say they have a good understanding of the Code, with 71% reporting that they had received no training on the Code.

Suppliers may find that having an increased knowledge of the Code will help them negotiate better terms with retailers at the outset of their relationship.

The sector survey results can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/oe3w74d>

SURVEY SHOWS GCA IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The YouGov survey carried out on behalf of the Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) shows a drop in the number of suppliers reporting Groceries Code-related issues in their dealings with the ten large retailers in the last 12 months from 70% in 2015 compared to 79% in 2014.

At the same time a larger proportion of suppliers would consider raising issues with the GCA – up 9 points to 47% – with concerns about retribution still the dominant reason for holding back.

The survey results were released at the GCA's second annual conference held at Church House in London under the theme 'Working Together, Making a Difference'. Adjudicator Christine Tacon hailed them as signs of making a difference in a challenging year for suppliers and retailers.

The Adjudicator has now declared the issue of consumer complaints closed along with forensic auditing and discrepancies in charging for drop and drive performance.

Ms Tacon also announced that on 29th September 2015 she will be hosting a workshop of suppliers to focus on packaging and design charges. Further details will be issued shortly. Packaging and design charges are one of the Adjudicator's Top 5 issues and their place among suppliers' main concerns was confirmed by respondents to the YouGov survey.

The news release from the conference is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pv4egqd>



REFRIGERATION

ECODESIGN REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL REFRIGERATION CABINETS

The European Commission has published the latest information on Directive 2009/125/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to eco-design requirements for professional refrigerated storage cabinets, blast cabinets, condensing units and process chillers.

The requirements will apply from 1 July 2016.

The most pertinent points related to commercial service cabinets are:

1. No ecodesign requirements for direct greenhouse gas emissions related to the use of refrigerants as the market has already moved to low GWP alternatives. However, the refrigerant must be listed on the energy label.
2. Manufacturers should provide information on disassembly, recycling or disposal of cabinets.
3. The regulation excludes:
 - a. Professional refrigerated storage cabinets that are primarily powered by energy sources other than electricity;
 - b. Professional refrigerated storage cabinets operating with a remote condensing unit;
 - c. Open cabinets, where being open is a fundamental requirement for their primary functionality;
 - d. Cabinets specifically designed for food processing, where the mere presence of one compartment, with a net volume equivalent to less than 20 % of the cabinet's total net volume and specifically designed for food processing is not sufficient for exemption;
 - e. Cabinets specifically designed only for the purpose of thawing frozen foodstuffs in a controlled manner, where the mere presence of one compartment specifically designed for thawing frozen foodstuffs in a controlled manner is not sufficient for exemption;
 - f. Saladettes;
 - g. Serve-over counters and other similar forms of cabinet primarily intended for display and sale of foodstuffs in addition to refrigeration and storage;
 - h. Cabinets that do not use a vapour compression refrigeration cycle;
 - i. Blast cabinets and blast rooms with a capacity superior to 300 kg of foodstuffs;
 - j. Continuous-process blast equipment;
 - k. Custom-made professional refrigerated storage cabinets and blast cabinets, made on a one-off basis according to individual customer specifications and not equivalent functionally or materially to other professional refrigerated storage cabinets as described in definition 10 of Annex I or blast cabinets as described in definition 11 of Annex I.
 - l. Built-in cabinets
 - m. Roll-in and pass-through cabinets
 - n. Static air cabinets
 - o. Chest freezers
4. Definitions of net volume and cabinet types are included. Net volume is defined as 'the volume containing foodstuffs within the load limit' which is still unclear and vague.
5. Chilled cabinets need to comply with the M1 temperature classification (-1 to 5°C), frozen cabinet temperature requirements are that the temperature of foodstuffs stored in the cabinet must be maintained lower than -15°C (i.e. no longer exactly the L1 temperature classification).
6. Light duty cabinets will be tested at climate class 3 (25°C and 60% RH). Testing of heavy duty cabinets is not mentioned and so it is assumed they will be tested at climate class 4 (30°C and 55% RH) in the same way as standard professional cabinets.
7. Representative cabinets are defined as: equivalent professional refrigerated storage cabinet means a professional refrigerated storage cabinet placed on the market with the same net volume, same technical, efficiency and performance characteristics, and same compartment types and volumes as another professional refrigerated storage cabinet model placed on the market under a different commercial code number by the same manufacturer.
8. Combined temperature cabinets to be tested as chillers (provided they have at least one chilled compartment).

The regulation can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/oq7v2mh>

REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT AND OFFICIAL CONTROLS

PRIMARY AUTHORITY AWARDS: BUSINESS AND REGULATORS IN PARTNERSHIP

The winners have been announced of the Primary Authority Awards 2015, recognising the partnership work of businesses and local authorities.

An audience of over 150 regulators and business people at the Primary Authority Seminar in Birmingham, hosted by BBC presenter Michael Collie, have heard about the outstanding work done by local authority officers and businesses involved in Primary Authority, a scheme which reduces burdens on business and encourages economic growth.

The Primary Authority of the Year Award winner is Horsham District Council who work with the National Federation of Meat & Food Traders to ensure members of the trade association benefit from consistent regulation wherever they operate in the country.

**PRIMARY
AUTHORITY**

BRDO

Judges described the entry as an “excellent example of a co-ordinated partnership supporting small businesses to compliance: the officer and co-ordinator actively promote the partnership to members, seeking to develop the scheme further and future evaluation of outcomes e.g. via improved Food Hygiene Rating Scores”.

Highly Commended were Cherwell District Council (with Sainsbury’s Supermarkets Limited) and London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (with Avis Rent A Car Limited).

The Primary Authority Officer of the Year Award went to Alison Hunt of Milton Keynes Council. Alison is responsible for a very wide range of business partnerships in terms of size of business and scope of legislation.

Highly Commended were Helen Atkinson of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council; and Ian Bell of Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Service.

For more information on Primary Authority, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/pzrnccc>

PRIMARY AUTHORITY NEWS – JULY PUBLISHED

The latest version of the Primary Authority News has been published. This update covers:

- Simplifying and Extending PA: Call for Evidence
- Primary Authority Award: The Winners
- Updates to the PA Register (Dec 2014 until present)
- Latest figures
- Latest inspection plans
- Direct partnerships created since June 2015

The Primary Authority Newsletter can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/qx57rn9>

BFFF Primary Authority Scheme offers members the opportunity to join partnerships with; Cambridgeshire County Council for Food Standards, Metrology and Fair Trading; Wakefield Metropolitan District Council for Food Safety and Health & Safety; or Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue for Fire Safety.

If you are interested in getting involved in the scheme, or would like more information, please contact crystalholmes@bff.co.uk

BRDO PUBLISH POLICY PAPER ON EXTENSION AND SIMPLIFICATION OF PRIMARY AUTHORITY

The government wants to ensure that as many businesses as possible can access the benefits of Primary Authority as simply as possible.



BRDO have spent six months engaging with stakeholders to review the implementation of the scheme - surveying 350 businesses and 100 local authority officers - and have identified improvements that would make it work more effectively.

Through Primary Authority, local authorities and fire and rescue authorities are providing businesses with robust and reliable regulatory advice. This supports growth by enabling them to invest with confidence in products, practices and procedures, knowing that there is endorsement of the resources they devote to compliance. Across the UK, it is saving millions of pounds.

More information on Primary Authority and Growth can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/oc4fr78>

DEFRA HOST MEETING FOR 17 NEW FOOD ENTERPRISE ZONES

The Government claims that more than 10,000 new jobs are set to be added to the UK's growing food and farming industry as a network of new food hubs takes shape across England with building work expected to begin early next year, Environment Secretary Elizabeth Truss has announced.

The 17 government-backed Food Enterprise Zones (FEZs), stretching from Cumbria to Cornwall, is intended to help drive up tourism, attract investment and add millions to the rural economy.

Championing celebrated British foods, including the Melton Mowbray pork pie, stilton cheese and Norfolk pork, the hubs have been awarded a share of £830,000 funding to help fast-track the expansion of food and farming businesses in the regions.

Plans for FEZs are well underway, including a new Artisanal Food Village in Cornwall, an agri-food park near Malton in North Yorkshire, and a cluster of local artisan food producers around the River Orwell in Suffolk.

In East Anglia three FEZs alone are set to create thousands of new jobs through expanding existing food businesses and developing new ones. These include Jimmy's Farm, which will be part of the new Orwell Food Cluster in Babergh, along with the Suffolk Food Hall and the East of England Co-operative Society.

The Government believe that by making it easier for businesses to grow and bringing different parts of the food supply chain together, FEZs will ensure greater collaboration between rural businesses, kick-start local food economies and help people develop new skills.

More information on this is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pxxcvef>

CTSI PUBLISH PAPER 'IMPACT ON SERVICES' OF FINANCIAL CUTS



The Chartered Trading Standards Institute has published an insight into the summer budget 2015 highlighting the public sector spending regulations and the cuts local authority services will face.

Derek Allen, Managing Partner at Derek Allen Consultancy Services and former executive director at LACORS produced the document. He said:

"Cuts to the local authority revenue support grant (RSG), a monetary grant from central government, given to councils for running many of their services is nothing new. However, the pace and scale of the reduction in this grant over the past 5 years and what is likely to follow in the next 5 years of the new government, following George Osborne's recent announcement, is unprecedented."

"Few if any local authority services have been shielded from the cuts, including the big spending departments such as children's services and social care, but it is clear that many council regulatory services and in particular trading standards services have taken a far greater cut in percentages terms of their budgets, than the majority of other council services."

The 'impact on trading standards services document' can be downloaded for free from the foot of this page: <http://tinyurl.com/oywnxc5>

MMO PUBLISHES EVIDENCE STRATEGY FOR 2015-2018

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) has published Part 1 of its evidence strategy for the next 5 years. The strategy details what the MMO does, how it does it and how evidence will be used to deliver objectives.

The MMO has a broad remit and it is critical that the decisions it takes can be objectively justified based on the best available evidence. The evidence strategy is a key element for this. As part of its commitment to openness and transparency the MMO publishing the document for all stakeholders.

The strategy has been developed in conjunction with partners in the scientific, academic and general marine community. It lays the pathway for further collaboration between the MMO and its stakeholders in the gathering of marine evidence.

The MMO Strategy is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pmccgqdf>



Marine
Management
Organisation

FARMING SECTOR BODIES TO START WORK ON FOOD AND FARMING PLAN



Eighty leading representatives – including the BFFF, from the UK food and farming industry contributed to discussions on the development of a long-term plan for the future of food and farming at a meeting with Environment Secretary Elizabeth Truss in July.

Defra are looking for the 25-year plan to be industry led and for it to up the country's ambitions for food and farming, setting out how the UK can grow more, buy more and sell more British food. The event kick-started the plan's development; discussion covered ways to promote a British brand, grow exports, improve skills, attract high-flyers and harness data and technology so the industry can innovate, grow and create jobs.

The event, the first of several convened by Defra and led by industry, brought together a range of organisations in food and farming—including major trade associations, farming businesses, retailers, food manufacturers and the research community—to share ideas on how to encourage enterprise and boost productivity.

Defra will be working with industry around seven key themes to help shape the direction, actions and ideas that will create a strong future for British food and farming:

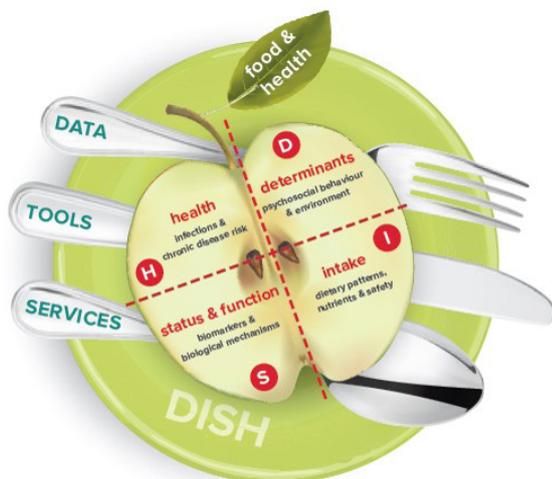
- Strengthening the British brand to ensure our quality produce is celebrated both at home and abroad.
- Increasing exports to ensure British products are enjoyed by even more countries across the world.
- Breaking down barriers to trade that will enable budding food entrepreneurs to unleash their full potential and access new markets.
- Increasing procurement of British produce including in schools and hospitals.
- Attracting investment into the industry.
- Boosting skills and apprenticeships to ensure the industry has the confidence and capacity to meet the growing demand for British produce.
- Increasing productivity through innovation, research and development and sharing data.

The UK's food and farming industry contributes more than £100 billion a year to our growing economy and employs one in eight people. Over 16,000 new food and drink products are introduced every year—second in the world only to the United States of America. Food and drink remains the UK's biggest manufacturing sector, bigger than cars and aerospace combined.

If you would like more information on Defra's food and farming strategy or would like to participate in future industry events, please email foodpolicyunit@defra.gsi.gov.uk

RESEARCH

EUROPE NEEDS BETTER INFRASTRUCTURE FOR FOOD AND HEALTH RESEARCH



DISH-RI: Data, tools and services connecting the DISH domains in the food and health area

EuroDISH, a three-year EU-funded project (Sep 2012-Aug 2015), has mapped and defined the infrastructures in four areas of research related to food, nutrition and health.

The project identified the gaps and needs of infrastructures required to advance food and health research. EuroDISH has produced a roadmap to develop a research infrastructure by 2025 that will connect and overarch existing infrastructures across the related fields.

Cutting-edge and high quality research is vital to better understand the relationship between food, nutrition and health, and progress the development of effective strategies to decrease diet-related health issues. Research infrastructures (or RIs for short) are the facilities, resources or services that support the scientific community to conduct top-level research. They include unique data management, training of staff, professional networks, knowledge transfer, major buildings, equipment

and instruments and knowledge-containing resources such as e-platforms and data banks. RIs facilitate the research community in sharing and harmonising data, instruments, methodologies, avoid duplication, and increase impact.

The needs of a RI for the study of food and health were further discussed with stakeholders in interviews and workshops. While the agricultural and healthcare sectors have advanced RIs to perform cutting-edge science, the relationship between food, nutrition and health requires more synchronisation. Therefore, the project identified the need for a European RI that connects existing RIs, and that overarches the different domains ('Determinants, Intake, Status and Health') — also known as the DISH-RI.

More information on the RI's and planned progression can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pq22d6n>

PUBLIC ATTITUDES TRACKER SURVEY RESULTS PUBLISHED

The results from the Food Standards Agency's (FSA's) Biannual Public Attitudes Tracker for May 2015 have been published. The FSA conduct this tracking survey with consumers, in order to monitor changes in consumer attitudes towards the FSA and food-related issues.

The top two food safety issues of total (i.e. spontaneous plus prompted) concern for respondents were food hygiene when eating out (37%), and the use of additives in food products (29%).

The top wider food issues of total concern were the amount of sugar in food (51%), food waste (49%) and the amount of salt in food (47%).

In total, 48% of respondents reported concern about food safety in UK restaurants, pubs, cafes and takeaways; there is no obvious trend across waves. Also, 42% of respondents reported concern about food safety in shops and supermarkets; this is similar to Wave 9 but lower than Waves 6, 7 and 8.

The results from the Public Attitudes Tracker results can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pm7e9nt>

Biannual Public Attitudes Tracker

Wave 10, May 2015

Food Standards Agency

Social Science Research Unit
July 2015

VISION FOR OPEN DATA TO TRANSFORM FOOD AND FARMING

The Environment Secretary has announced that Defra's data reserves will be released to create opportunities for people in the UK making their living from food, farming and the environment.

Vast data reserves from Defra—at least 8,000 sets— will be made freely available.

The Government claims that harnessing this open data will help food and farming achieve its full potential and enable the UK to become a one-nation economy, where the productivity of the countryside will be brought up to the level of our towns and cities.

New data releases will be announced in the coming months and will build upon wider environmental data releases such as:

- Imagery from the Copernicus satellite system that can pinpoint which places have the best soil and microclimates to grow grapes for sparkling wine, detect live if a ship is acting suspiciously in a marine conservation zone, or assess the health of crops and chart their performance under different conditions from space.
- Real-time air quality and river level readings, beach cleanliness measurements and the records of the National Biodiversity Network which charts plant, animal, bird, insect and invertebrate numbers across Britain and has just logged its hundred-millionth record.

The huge data release will also enable the government to do more for less—for example, using satellite data to see what crops are growing in fields rather than requiring farmers to report on every piece of land. This will cut red tape and save money for businesses and the taxpayer—an area where Defra has an excellent track record, with a quarter of all the regulations tackled in the last government's Red Tape challenge coming from Defra.

The Environment Secretary's speech transcript is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/okpz3hm>

SURVEY FINDS FOODS PERCEIVED AS UNSAFE LOSE OUT.

Almost 40% of people said there was no returning to foods they perceive as unsafe, according to a survey by Hahn Public's Food and Farm communications team.

Out of remaining respondents, it found some will return over time (24%) but most said it will require some form of trusted evidence it is safe (39%).

Respondents who said they'll never eat a food again had more concern about canned foods and major brands.

Third-party health experts were found to be the most able to influence consumers. Other information that helps decide a food was safe again was proactive response by the company (37%), feedback from people they know (29.2%) and new government regulation (22.9%).

The full survey report can be downloaded through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/pz7kfvd>

WHAT DO PROTECTED ORIGIN LABELS MEAN TO CONSUMERS?

EU quality labelling schemes showing product origin do not always connect with shopper, says research.

The paper, published in the journal Food Control, sought to find what influence European Union labelling scheme: Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG) has on consumer food choice.

The researchers said from a consumer perspective food quality was made up of 'experience qualities' like taste and convenience as well as 'credence qualities' like origin, production method and healthiness. Since such qualities could remain unknown until they got the products home, consumers often looked out for 'quality cues' in store.

As of January this year, a total of 1310 products had the registered right to bear one of the labels. Of these, 608 were PDO, 651 PGI and 53 TSG. These products were skewed towards southern Europe, with the most registrations found in Italy (279), France (226) and Spain (185). Meanwhile only a few registered products were in Denmark (6) and Sweden (7).

The researchers said a renewed consumer interest in traditional foods meant many food producers were looking to the schemes as a marketing tool, while authorities were interested in the function of these schemes in consumer decision-making. They were also a means of food control and gave assurances to consumers about a food's origin.

More information on this can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/q8v2gvf> or the journal can be bought here: <http://tinyurl.com/pqs96md>

SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENT & CSR

NEW REPORT FROM FOOD ETHICS COUNCIL ON GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEMS

Food: All things considered is a new report by the Food Ethics Council that assesses the transformational changes needed to build global food systems that are fair and healthy.



The report was launched at the Food Ethics Council 50th Business Forum, where senior business executives heard insights from Justin King, former CEO of Sainsbury's about the changing face of food retail. Around the world the increasing pressures on food systems are becoming ever more visible. Droughts, flooding, competition for land and soil erosion are all taking their toll.

Food: All things considered analyses these trends and tensions and draws out the key levers that will drive transformational change. The report sets out the case for transformative changes in food and farming systems, led by national, regional and international governments. The report claims that the changes must be fully supported by the food and drink sector, who should be held to account by citizens at the ballot box, in restaurants, and in the supermarket aisles.

The full report can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/pqof8o7>

FARMED FISH – A HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE CHOICE?



Fish and seafood are an important part of a healthy diet, yet increasing demands and overfishing in many parts of the world have led to diminishing marine fish stocks worldwide. Farmed fish is a means of meeting demand, while reducing pressure on wild fish stocks.

Although fish consumption has increased over recent decades, many Europeans do not meet recommended guidelines and should increase their intake. Fish and seafood provide essential nutrients associated with good health, including protein, long-chain omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (LC n-3 PUFA), vitamins and minerals.

However, worldwide, around 29% of marine fish stocks are overfished and 61% are fished at full capacity. Throughout Europe, and the world, efforts have been put in place to make fish supplies more sustainable. The benefits of fish farming, also called aquaculture, have been widely championed by the European Commission. With good agricultural practices, farmed fish is a safe, sustainable and nutritious source of seafood that can relieve the burden on over-fished seafood stocks. Farmed fish is also often fresher at the time of purchase and processing.

For more information on nutrient composition of farmed and wild fish and safer fish in aquaculture, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/ohpopom>

WRAP 5 YEAR PLAN PUBLISHED

The new WRAP five year plan, 'Resource Revolution, Creating the Future' has been published.

The plan sets out how businesses, organisations and consumers can be part of a resource revolution that will re-invent, re-think and re-define how we use materials.

It focuses on the three priority areas that will help best meet their goals - Food and Drink; Clothing and Textiles; and Electricals and Electronics, all of which are underpinned by resource management.

The plan is the first as WRAP embarks on its new journey as a charity and seeks to address the key issues in delivering a sustainable future.

The plan 'Resource Revolution, Creating the Future' is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/nf8ufoe>



GREENPEACE ANNUAL REPORT ANGERS NATIONAL FISHERIES INSTITUTE

GREENPEACE

Environmental activist group Greenpeace has released its annual "Carting Away the Oceans" report, once again angering an American industry group that panned the report's assessment of retail seafood.

Greenpeace describes the report as its annual ranking of the world's major retail chains based on the sustainability of their seafood offerings, but the National Fisheries Institute (NFI), based in Washington, decried the report as an "annual nuisance" to the industry.

"This report has been marginalized as a fundraising tool with little or no impact on seafood sustainability work or even the dialogue surrounding it," said NFI Communications Manager Lynsee Fowler.

The report lists 25 retailers according to how sustainable the group believes the retailers' seafood is. Among other criteria, the group lists how many species a retailer sells that are on Greenpeace's "Red List," or a list of species Greenpeace feels should not be commercially sold. At the top is Whole Foods, for the third year in a row.

The report offers advice to consumers, including demanding more information about where their grocery store's seafood comes from. It also advises consumers to "Eat less fish," saying, "Today's demand for seafood far outstrips what can be delivered from sustainable sources. Reducing seafood consumption now can help lessen the pressure on our oceans, ensuring fish for the future."

The Greenpeace report 'Carting Away the Oceans' is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/nhv5p9j>

UPDATED WOW TOOLKIT NOW AVAILABLE

With less than three months to go until Working on Waste 2015 gets underway, a refreshed toolkit is now available.

In 2014, The Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD) reached 650,000 employees across the food and grocery industry with top tips and ideas to help reduce food waste in their homes. This year they hope to improve on that.



Produced in collaboration with WRAP, the comprehensive toolkit contains all the materials and resources needed to engage employees, including:

- A simple 'How to WoW' guide
- A range of activities, from top tips and leftover recipe challenges to food waste diaries
- Advice on how and when to communicate WoW to your employees
- Resources to bring your campaign to life, including factsheets, quizzes, meal planners and posters

New resources will be added to the toolkit over the next few weeks, and you can find out more at: <http://tinyurl.com/p3endtm>

RSPO GUIDE ON NATIONAL INITIATIVES

RSPO

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) has published a Guide to national initiatives on sustainable palm oil in Europe.

The RSPO guide notes its support for plans to ensure 100% certified sustainable palm oil in Europe by 2020 and provides an overview of the growing number of European national initiatives on palm oil sustainability and their varying memberships and targets.

The RSPO Guide 'A Shared Vision' can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/na2jxpz>

FARESHARE LAUNCH FOOD EFFICIENCY FRAMEWORK

The UK's first ever Surplus Food Summit has been held on 17 June. At the summit FareShare launched its new FareShare Food Efficiency Framework. This framework contains an easy to use eight-step approach guiding food businesses on the journey to establish processes that will ensure their surplus food is identified as early as possible so that it can be made available for charity redistribution.

The framework is designed to enable businesses to increase resource efficiency, reduce food waste and demonstrate commitment to tackling food poverty. The steps are as follows:

1. Commit to the food use hierarchy
2. Define the scope of 'surplus' food
3. Identify and anticipate where surplus food could occur
4. Segregate the surplus
5. Align, allocate and offer
6. Distribute the food
7. Monitor and report
8. Get the story out



The FareShare Food Efficiency Framework is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/qhaq558>

FISHING FOCUS ISSUE 37: SUMMER 2015

Fishing Focus is a marine newsletter published by Defra to keep stakeholders informed about the work they are doing.

The latest issue 37 has been published and covers:

- Protecting bass stocks
- Steps towards sustainable fishing
- Non-native crabs and lobsters
- Fisheries in Marine Protected Areas
- The new Seafish corporate plan and other activities
- How MMO works with the fishing industry
- Funding for the fishing industry
- The demersal discard ban
- Reducing latent capacity in the English inshore fleet

Fishing Focus 37 can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/px6fc25>

TECHNOLOGY AND NOVEL FOODS

EFSA PUBLISH GUIDANCE ON INFORMATION TO SUPPORT GM PLANT AND ANIMAL APPLICATIONS

New European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) guidance identifies data that companies need to supply when applying for renewed authorisation to import genetically modified (GM) plants for food and feed into the European Union (EU).

The European Commission grants authorisations to place GM food and feed on the European market for a period of ten years. Companies that want to continue importing GM food and feed into the EU need to renew the initial authorisation.

The new guidance ensures a sound scientific basis for the risk assessment of GM food and feed in the interest of the European consumer. EFSA's task is to evaluate the validity of previous risk assessments of these GM products. It needs to verify if any changes, new hazards, modified exposure scenarios or new scientific uncertainties have surfaced. On that basis, EFSA advises the European Commission and Member States who decide whether or not to renew the authorisation.

The EFSA guidance document can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/p6u6snb>

NOVEL FOODS: FOOD SAFETY MEPS BACK DEAL WITH COUNCIL

Draft plans to encourage food innovation through a new, simplified authorisation procedure for novel foods, already informally agreed with the Council of Ministers, have been endorsed by the Environment Committee.

In talks, MEPs insisted that foods from cloned animals must be clearly included in the scope of the regulation, as must the precautionary principle, measures to keep nanomaterials under scrutiny and animal testing restrictions.

As requested by MEPs in negotiations, the agreed text explicitly covers foods from cloned animals. The scope also includes food consisting of, isolated from or produced from cell or tissue cultures derived from animals, plants, micro-organisms, fungi or algae.

When deciding whether to authorise a novel food, the European Commission will have to apply the precautionary principle if its safety cannot be assessed or in the event of scientific uncertainty. The text stipulates that the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), should carry out an assessment in every case where a food is liable to have an effect on human health.

The regulation would also reduce the time limit for the Commission to decide on whether a novel food could be placed on the market from 9 to 7 months, and allow it one month to refer the application to the EFSA. It would also make it easier to place traditional foods from third countries on the market.

The text includes a definition of nanomaterials, which may be updated, via a delegated act, to keep pace with scientific progress. Using a delegated act would ensure that the European Parliament has a say in how the definition is updated. The text also calls for a better assessment of nanotoxicokinetics and the toxicology of these materials. Micelles and liposomes are now also explicitly mentioned in the text.

Tests on animals should be replaced, reduced or refined, says the text, and duplication of animal testing should be avoided where possible. The Commission would be required to publish a summary of every application, and the list of rejected applications.

The text will be put to a vote by Parliament as a whole at a Strasbourg plenary session in September or October.

The press release of the Environment Committee's endorsement is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/nuv73bl>

DRAFT REGULATION ON THE USE OF GM FOOD AND FEED

EU legislation provides for the cultivation and use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and of food and feed products containing them, to be authorised by the Commission. However, any proposals are subject to a vote by Member States, and, because of deep divisions among them, have invariably resulted in "no opinion" being issued.

This led to suggestions that Member States should have greater freedom in this area, and the Commission brought forward in 2010 a proposal enabling them to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of authorised GMOs. Insofar as the measure sought to return to Member States certain powers exercised by the EU, it was welcomed in principle by the UK, although it also had concerns that the emphasis on decisions of this kind being based on scientific assessment could be undermined and an unfortunate precedent set for other areas. Despite this, the UK supported its subsequent adoption as Directive (EU) No. 2015/42.

As that measure applies only to the cultivation of GMOs, the Commission has now proposed a draft Regulation giving Member States the ability to restrict or prohibit the use of authorised genetically modified food and feed.



The Government reiterates that, as a general rule, it would in principle welcome Member States being given more discretion, but has again identified a number of issues, including the consistency of the proposal with the principle of science-based decision-making, and its potential impact on trade in GM products, on which it will provide a supplementary explanatory memorandum in due course.

The UK have observed that, although the issues identified by the Government are similar to those which arose on the earlier proposal, these did not prevent the UK from supporting the adoption of Directive (EU) No. 2015/42, and the UK have said that we will therefore await with interest the outcome of its consideration of this latest proposal. We draw these documents to the attention of the Environmental Audit, Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and Science and Technology Committees.

EFSA OPINION ON UV-TREATED BREAD

The European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA's) Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies (NDA) has issued a Scientific Opinion on the safety of UV-treated bread as a novel food.

The novel food is bread to which a treatment with UV radiation is applied after baking in order to convert ergosterol, which is present in bread as a result of yeast fermentation, to vitamin D2. The Panel considers that even if it is conservatively assumed that all consumed breads are UV-treated and contain the maximum proposed amount of 3 µg vitamin D2/100 g, it is highly unlikely that tolerable upper intake levels for vitamin D, established by EFSA for various age groups, will be exceeded.

The Panel considers that bread enriched with vitamin D2 through UV treatment is safe under the conditions of use as specified by the applicant.

The NDA Panel's Scientific Opinion is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/oxm3w5b>



AUTHORISING OF REFINED OIL FROM BUGLOSSOIDES ARVENSIS SEEDS AS A NOVEL FOOD

Following a request from the European Commission, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies (NDA) was asked to deliver a scientific opinion on refined Buglossoidesoil as a novel food ingredient (NFI) in the context of Regulation (EC) No 258/97. Following this opinion in February, the European Commission has now authorised refined oil from Buglossoides arvensis seeds as a novel food.

The NFI is produced from the seeds of Buglossoides arvensis (L.) I. M. Johnst, using processes conventionally used for edible oil production. The main fatty acids (FAs) contained in the NFI are alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), stearidonic acid (SDA) and linoleic acid, with smaller amounts of oleic acid, gamma-linolenic acid (GLA) and saturated FAs. With the exceptions of SDA and GLA, these FAs are widely present in common foods. The NFI is intended to be used in a range of foods and food supplements to provide approximately 200 mg of SDA per day.

The available information does not give concerns as regards other undesirable substances in the NFI. Available animal studies provide only limited information on the safety of the NFI. Human studies that investigated different plant oils or fatty acid ethyl esters as sources of SDA, GLA and ALA found no adverse effects with up to 4 200 mg SDA/day for 12 weeks, up to 1 700 mg GLA/day for 28 days and 9 100 mg ALA/day for four weeks. The Panel concludes that the NFI is safe for the proposed uses and use levels.

The Regulation is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/naqq8hj>

INFORMATION WANTED ON EDIBLE INSECTS



The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is asking UK food businesses that sell edible insects to begin preparing for new amendments to EU regulations that may mean some insects will need approval for sale as food.

The European Commission is seeking harmonisation of the novel foods regulations in relation to the sale of edible insects across all member states. Novel foods are food products or ingredients that do not have a significant history of consumption before 1997 and are therefore subject to additional safety checks.

Across the EU, parts or extracts of insects are already subject to novel foods approval however individual member states have had different interpretations as to whether this applies to whole insects. In the UK, whole edible insects are not considered novel. If the novel foods legislation is amended as proposed this is set to change by 2016.

The FSA has written to businesses that sell edible insects to ask them to send relevant information by Monday 21 September 2015.

The letter and supporting documents can be viewed at the links at the foot of this page: <http://tinyurl.com/nbrynrh>. Information can be emailed to novelfoods@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

For further information or to download a copy of this newsletter, please visit www.bfff.co.uk.



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