

# 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 for November and December from the British Frozen Food Federation.

We try to keep you up to date on current regulatory developments, the activities of both national and European regulators as well as the latest available relevant scientific research, technological developments, guidance and codes of practice.

If you don't have the time to look in detail at all the links then the summary of the most relevant items applicable to most members would include:

The update item on Acrylamide where the EU commission wish to take action but it is not yet clear what action they wish to take and are discussing a number of options. A sensible approach using HACCP techniques is supported by the UK government. However there is a long way to go with the EU decision making process and the outcome is not yet clear. We will keep you informed as to the progress as it occurs.

Members will also want to be kept informed with the debate on taxes or bans for various food types whether it is trans fats /sugar or the increasing focus on food nutritional standards. There is little new scientific information but the debates are certainly starting to intensify in many different sectors.

Frozen is an area of food production where there the potential for misunderstanding regarding the age of ingredients. The survey of members regarding the age of raw materials for meat and fish used in frozen food products was much appreciated. This has led to a practical document that BFFF hope will be useful for both members and the wider food sector to use to explain the high standards of food safety and quality of the products we sell.

We are here to try and keep you, the technical professional working in the frozen food sector, up to date and fully informed. If you feel we have missed anything or there is anything you feel should be included or you have any queries please contact Martin or Crystal. Martin Forsyth will be your main technical contact over the next few months whilst a permanent new Technical Manager is appointed. His contact details can be found at the bottom of the page.

Finally the astute amongst you will by now have realised that Su Dakin is moving on from her role as Technical Manager with the BFFF after nearly 5 years of excellent service to the technical and legislative areas. This very professional service has been achieved by Su and Crystal with the support of many members.

All the staff at the BFFF wish Su the very best for her future career.



**Martin Forsyth**  
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**Please contact BFFF if you would like to receive additional / back copies of this newsletter**  
[crystalholmes@bfff.co.uk](mailto:crystalholmes@bfff.co.uk)

**We do hope that you find *T&L 80* a valuable read.**



**Su Dakin**  
Technical Manager

# ACTIVITY OF EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

## UPDATE ON OFFICIAL CONTROLS DOSSIER



In May 2013 the European Commission published its proposal to review regulation (EC) 882/2004 on official controls across the EU. The proposal was intended to simplify and clarify the legal framework applicable to official controls, extend them to include plant health and animal by-products and ensure that Member States (MS) appropriately resource enforcement authorities through the imposition of mandatory charges on operators. The proposal can be accessed via this link to the Commission website: <http://tinyurl.com/oylfd6p>

The European Parliament then reached its first reading position on the proposal last year the text of which can be accessed through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/k7x22a5>

Article 77 proposes that competent authorities may recover part or all of the costs associated with official controls, but allows flexibility on: how, when and where charges may be levied by individual MS. It also encourages costs to take earned recognition of good practice into account.

The text as it currently stands also requires that official controls on Products of Animal Origin be supervised by an Official Veterinarian. This does not reflect the UK delivery model where many enforcement activities are carried out by Environmental Health Officers and would cause major disruption and additional expense to UK businesses

Since then the Council of Ministers have debated and, to date, have failed to reach a Council Common Position. There are 2 issues remaining:

- A) Charging for official controls
- B) The role of the official veterinarian

On charging, MS are split between increasing the scope of mandatory charges in European rules for inspections, maintaining rules similar to those currently in operation or permitting member states to determine how, when and where charges should apply.

The second issue is the extent to which the role of the official veterinarian should be mandatory for controls on products of animal origin. As with charging, member states are split between those advocating an increased mandatory role, those wanting to maintain the current rules and those promoting increased flexibility so that the controls can be carried out by other suitably qualified and experienced officials.

An agreement in Council is expected before the end of the year, when formal negotiations will begin between the Council, European Parliament and the European Commission under the Ordinary Legislative Procedure.



BFFF have written to MEP's explaining our concerns on the proposals and views on the desired outcomes.

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION NEW TRADE AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Commission is proposing a new trade and investment strategy for the European Union, entitled 'Trade for All: Towards a more responsible trade and investment policy'.

The new approach builds on Europe's excellent trade track record. EU companies export nearly as much as China to the rest of the world and more than firms in the United States or any other country.

More than 30 million jobs already depend on exports outside the EU. 90% of future global growth will happen outside Europe's borders. A new strategy that will make trade agreements more effective and that will create more opportunities means supporting jobs in Europe.

The new strategy is also a direct response to the current intense debate on trade in the EU – including on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) that is being negotiated with the United States. It is also an implementation of the Juncker Commission's pledge to listen and respond to European public's concerns.

The new strategy will make EU trade policy more responsible by basing it on three key principles:

- **Effectiveness:** Making sure trade actually delivers on its promise of new economic opportunities. That means addressing the issues that affect today's economy, which involves services and digital trade. It also means providing the resources and information necessary to ensure European small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), consumers and workers can take full advantage of – and adapt to – more open markets. This means, for instance, including effective provisions for SMEs in future trade agreements.
- **Transparency:** Opening up negotiations to more public scrutiny by publishing key negotiating texts from all negotiations, as has been done in the TTIP negotiations. As of today, the Commission has already published some new texts (i.e. the Economic Partnership Agreements with East and West Africa) on its website.
- **Values:** Safeguarding the European social and regulatory model at home. Using trade agreements and preference programmes as levers to promote, around the world, European values like sustainable development, human rights, fair and ethical trade and the fight against corruption. This means to include anti-corruption rules in the EU's trade agreements, and to see that our trading partners implement provisions on core labour standards, like the rights of workers to organise and the abolition of child labour. It also means broadening efforts to ensure responsible management of supply chains.

The new Strategy is available to view here: <http://tinyurl.com/ncbbnh8>

## ANALYTICAL AND METROLOGY

### GUIDANCE ON CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT SERVICE OF NMRO CERTIFICATION BODY

The National Measurement and Regulation Office (NMRO) has published guidance on the conformity assessment services and quality management system certification, provided by the NMRO Certification Body.

This document provides a guide to the services provided by the NMRO Certification Body, to assist manufacturers of weighing and measuring instruments who may require type examination / approval of weighing and measuring instruments, or manufacturer's declaration of conformity, under the applicable conformity assessment annexes and quality management system certification under ISO 9001.

The requirements of the conformity assessment annexes are detailed in the applicable Directives:

- non-automatic weighing instruments (NAWI) Directive 2009/23/EC (including the new Directive 2014/31/EU)
- the measuring instruments Directive (MID) 2004/22/EC (including the new Directive 2014/32/EU).

The new Directives come into force on 20 April 2016.

The 'Guide to the NMRO Certification Body' can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/qb9g9t5>



National  
Measurement &  
Regulation Office

## ANIMAL WELFARE

### GENETICALLY MODIFIED CHICKENS COULD HELP FIGHT BIRD FLU

The Science Times reports that genetically modified (GMO) chickens could help in the fight against bird flu, according to British scientists at the University of Cambridge and the University of Edinburgh's Roslin Institute, as they investigate preventing infected birds from transmitting the Avian Influenza virus and block initial infections in egg-laying chickens.

To produce these transgenic chickens, the scientists introduced a new gene that manufactures a "decoy" molecule that mimics an important control element of the bird flu virus. The replication machinery of the virus was tricked into recognizing the decoy molecule instead of the viral genome. This prevents the virus from replicating.



Chicken breeders have offered some support for the research, though the researchers said the industry as a whole appears reluctant about being too closely associated with transgenic chickens.

More information about GMO chickens can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/oqld2ut>

### ANTIMICROBIAL GUIDANCE PUBLISHED BY EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Guidance on curbing the overuse and misuse of antibiotics in livestock rearing across the EU, including the injection of eggs by poultry producers, has been released by the European Commission.

The Commission has noted that antimicrobial resistance (AMR), worsened by such practices, cause 25,000 deaths in the EU annually and costs more the €1.5 billion in healthcare expenses and productivity losses.

It said its proposed controls could "contribute to the control of AMR" in animal and human medicine.

Their advice is not binding on governments. However, Brussels advised EU member states to focus their animal antimicrobial resistance strategy on "species commonly treated with mass or group medication – pigs, poultry, veal calves and rabbits – but not to the exclusion of other food-producing and non-food producing species".

The guidance is particularly detailed and includes species-specific advice. It can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/o4suhs6>

### AVIAN INFLUENZA DEFRA DECLARATION



Defra has published a Press Release announcing that the restrictions imposed have now been lifted following an incident of avian flu on a Lancashire farm in July 2015.

The lifting of the restrictions means that all poultry keeping farms within the ten kilometre restriction zone around the infected premises are now allowed to move poultry and other animals without restriction. The high severity case of avian flu was confirmed in chickens at a farm in Preston on 13 July and robust action was taken to prevent any spread of the disease, which poses a very low risk to human health.

The restrictions have been lifted 30 days after the completion of an initial cleaning and disinfection of the premises, which is the earliest point allowed under EU rules to end the controls.

The Defra press release is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/p3lofmr>

## INTERNATIONAL MONITORING OF ANIMAL DISEASES

Defra, together with the Animal and Plant Health Agency, have published a collection of data on international monitoring for major, notifiable or new and emerging animal disease outbreaks worldwide.

The information acts as an early warning to assess the risk the outbreaks may pose to the UK, in particular of those diseases which impact on animal health and welfare, international trade, public health or wider society. The information contains both preliminary outbreak assessments and qualitative risk assessments.

All of the data is available on the [Gov.uk](http://tinyurl.com/oosnp67) website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/oosnp67>

## DISEASE PREVENTION FOR LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY KEEPERS

Defra have produced updated guidance on farmed animals, in particular disease control and prevention for commercial livestock and poultry keepers.

The guide looks at how to prevent the introduction and spread of animal and bird disease by following good hygiene and biosecurity standards, to cover the following areas:

- Biosecurity;
- Staff and visitors;
- Buildings, equipment and vehicles;
- Buying new stock or returning stock to the farm;
- Feed and water; and
- Slurry management.

The updated guidance is available on the [Gov.uk](http://tinyurl.com/okrt6zd) website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/okrt6zd>

## FISH AND SHELLFISH NOTIFIABLE DISEASES

Defra, together with two other government agencies, have published updated guidance on how to find out where notifiable diseases have been found and what businesses should do if fish or shellfish has a disease.

The guidance provides a list of notifiable diseases and controls to prevent the spread of the diseases, including;

- follow rules for imports
- perform regular monitoring to spot disease early
- contain outbreaks as quickly as possible
- use good fish husbandry practice
- follow rules when moving fish
- keep health records using the Finfish biosecurity logbook
- keep medicine records using the Aquatic animal medicine record book
- follow a biosecurity measures plan



### FISH and SHELLFISH

The Defra guidance page is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/q6rhh7b>

## REQUIREMENTS FOR DISEASE SURVEILLANCE AND DIAGNOSTIC METHODS

Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2015/1554 laying down rules for the application of Directive 2006/88/EC as regards requirements for surveillance and diagnostic methods was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L247/1, 23/09/2015.

The eradication of the listed diseases and the achievement of disease-free status for a Member State, zone or compartment should be based on the same principles and follow the same scientific approach throughout the Union.

This Regulation lays down at Union level specific requirements for eradication and surveillance schemes, and the sampling and diagnostic methods to be used by the Member States to obtain disease-free status for the whole of a Member State or a zone or compartment.

The Regulation, which comes into force on 1 April 2016, can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/px9jf5w>

## MPS CALL FOR MANDATORY SLAUGHTERHOUSE CCTV

More than 100 MPs have signed a parliamentary motion calling for mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses with independent monitoring of footage.

The debate over mandatory CCTV has been raging since 2009 when Animal Aid first began undercover filming in slaughterhouses. Since then, the group has released undercover footage showing alleged abuse at facilities, some of which has led to prosecutions.

Defra rejected mandatory CCTV when it first looked into the issue, but is reconsidering after the Bowood abattoir expose earlier this year.

Most major supermarkets already insist that their slaughterhouse suppliers have CCTV cameras fitted, with 53% of red meat, and 71% of white meat slaughterhouses having some form of CCTV in place.

However, there is currently no requirement for the footage to be closely monitored by an independent body, which Animal Aid claims is essential to prevent abuse.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) indicated at a board meeting earlier this year, that it was developing an industry-wide protocol on CCTV that would include a requirement for footage to be shared with their officials.

More information on this is available in a news story on the Grocer website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/q82aqo9>

## THE WELFARE OF ANIMALS AT THE TIME OF KILLING REGULATIONS

The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (WATOK) Regulations were finally laid before Parliament on 15 October, with them coming into force on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

As the 2014 Regulation intended, the new WATOK 2015 Regulations are laid in order to implement the EU Regulation and also to retain national rules which provide greater protection. The 2015 Regulation applies to England only. The Regulations for Wales and Northern Ireland were laid in 2014.

The new legislation revokes the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995 (WASK) previously in place. Under the WASK Regulations, slaughterers needed to hold an appropriate licence for slaughtering and killing.

Regulation (EC) 1099/2009 brought with it additional requirements for these and other operatives and individuals carrying out certain slaughter operations, who must now hold a Certificate of Competence for the operations they perform. These operators have until 8 November 2015 to apply for a Certificate of Competence to enable them to continue to perform these activities. Full details on how to do this, application forms and interim arrangements for those who apply before 8 December can be found on the FSA website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/phggmo>

# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

## FOOD STATISTICS POCKETBOOK 2015 PUBLISHED

Defra have published the Food Statistics Pocketbook 2015. This annual publication provides a round-up of statistics on food covering the economic, social and environmental aspects of the food we eat (excluding agriculture). It contains chapters on:

- the food chain
- prices and expenditure
- global and UK supply
- environment
- waste
- dietary health
- safety and confidence



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



The information in the pocketbook comes from previously published government surveys run by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and a wide range of other sources including government agencies and commercial organisations.

The pocketbook and accompanying data sets can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/ory9deh>

## GOVERNMENT SET TO INVEST IN SMALL BUSINESSES



Matt Hancock, the Minister for the Cabinet Office has announced a new target to get more small businesses working on central government contracts. The target is that £1 in every £3 the government spends will be with small businesses by 2020.

In 2013 to 2014, central government spent £11.4 billion with small and medium-sized businesses – those employing 250 employees or less. This is equivalent to 26% of central government spend.

By 2020, the government wants to increase this to 33%. This would mean an extra £3 billion per year (in 2013 to 2014 terms) going to small and medium-sized firms directly or through the supply chain.

Earlier this year, the government changed the way it buys goods and services to help more small businesses bid for public sector contracts, by:

- requiring the entire public sector supply chain to be paid within 30 days
- abolishing pre-qualification questionnaires for low value public sector contracts, making it simpler and quicker to buy
- requiring the public sector to publish its contracts in one place on Contracts Finder

Each government department and the Crown Commercial Service will now make sure that it meets this target by setting out individual plans and targets for spending with small and medium-sized businesses over the next 5 years.

More information on this can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/p9xnyda>

## FCA NEW HANDBOOK WEBSITE

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) have designed a Handbook Website to make it easier for firms to navigate the Handbook.

The Handbook is at the heart of financial regulation, and following feedback from firms, the new Handbook website has been created.

The Handbook website has:

- a cleaner layout and easier navigation
- a timeline so you can see when rules changed
- an option to add favourites so you can build your own tailored Handbook
- improved search
- glossary definitions displayed in a pop-up window



As this is a new website, some of the links from other FCA systems will work differently - for example, they may not always link directly to a specific section of the Handbook, but be directed via the home page. The FCA will be monitoring the site closely to address any issues.

The Handbook website can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/p96wvke>

## WELSH GOVERNMENT LAUNCH 'BOSS' BUSINESS SUPPORT TOOL



An enhanced new online business support service has been launched by the Welsh Government to ensure access to Business Wales support is available to all entrepreneurs and businesses at any time and any place.

BOSS is based on Moodle, an open-source software learning management system, with bilingual content that is easy to access, understand and suitable for those taking their first steps into business through to those looking to drive business growth.

There are sixteen BOSS courses currently available covering Business Start Up, Business Planning, Finance, Marketing, Business Ideas and Innovation.

The 'Taking the Plunge' course introduces the concept of being your own boss, what it takes, who you need to contact and how to avoid any pitfalls.

Those looking to push their business to the next level can try the 'Driving Business Growth' course to learn about maximising sales opportunities, increasing profitability and collaborating for success. Participants can consider a variety of options for achieving business growth.

The courses available via BOSS use a wide range of features including video tutorials, downloadable exercises and interactive tasks to aid learning. It also offers the opportunity for live chats with virtual tutors to help with any questions while on-line forums offer networking opportunities to connect with like-minded people across Wales.

For more details, the BOSS website can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/qxlumnf>

## ECJ RULING – WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE

A new Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) ruling could have a significant impact on UK companies employing workers who don't have a fixed place of work and who travel to and from appointments.

The CJEU has ruled that time spent travelling to and from appointments by workers without a fixed place of work should be regarded as 'working time' for the purposes of the Working Time Directive. Such arrangements are common in the care and sales sectors, but the case is significant for any business employing people in this way.



Under the UK Working Time Regulations any period during which the worker is working at the employer's disposal, and carrying out his activity or duties, is included in working time. It is common practice for employers to include travel as part of working time if it is an integral part of the job (for example in the case of a travelling sales person), including travel between sites or clients. However, many employers do not pay for the time spent travelling between the worker's home and the premises of the first and last customers or clients.

The CJEU press release of the ruling, outlining the changes, is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/npb5rxm>

## CMA PUBLISH COMPETITION POLICY GUIDELINES FOR POLICY MAKERS



The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has published guidelines to help policymakers assess the potential impact that their proposals could have on competition.

Competitive markets benefit consumers through lower prices and greater choice, by encouraging suppliers to create new products and different ways of bringing products to markets.

Government intervention in markets - including through regulation and legislation - can have the unintended side effect of restricting competition in a number of ways. The CMA guidelines provide policymakers with advice on how to assess whether proposals could affect competition adversely. The guidelines also suggest ways in which proposals could be re-designed in order to support competition.

There are 2 parts to the guidelines. Part 1 provides an overview of when and how policymakers can consider the competition implications of their proposals, including understanding whether a detailed competition assessment is necessary. Part 2 provides practical advice on how to conduct a competition assessment.

The guidelines complement the Green Book and Better Regulation Executive's processes by providing a more detailed guide for how policymakers can take competition considerations into account when developing proposals.

The Competition Policy Guidelines for Policy Makers can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/ndxqcb3>

## BRC PUBLISHES GUIDELINES ON RETAILERS INSIDER THREATS

The British Retail Consortium (BRC) has published new guidelines to help retailers of all sizes protect themselves against malicious activity from inside their organisation. Occasionally a member of staff, contractor or supplier can betray the trust placed in them to exploit their privileged access to the business for their own ends.



The BRC's Insider Threat Guidelines set out some simple steps to help retail businesses assess the threat, identify indicators of high risk behaviour and consider what physical and cyber security measures they should have in place.

Tom Ironside, BRC Director of Business and Regulation, said:

"Security is often approached in terms of protection against external threats. Whilst the vast majority of employees are honest, retailers also need to think about where they may be vulnerable to malicious activity by those with inside access to their business. Whether this is theft of stock, complex fraud or a cyber data breach, businesses must be alert to such potential threats from within. The impact of an insider incident can be significant, resulting in damage to the organisation's reputation and staff morale, as well as financial loss."

The Guidelines are available from the BRC website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/qzoakep>

## NEW FLEXIBILITIES ON SCOTTISH BUSINESS RATES

Scottish Councils will now be able to offer rates reductions to local businesses.

Local authorities will be able to lower rates bills for businesses in their area from October 31, under an order laid in Scottish Parliament by Scottish Ministers.

The order, which uses powers under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 which passed in June of this year, means councils will be able to reduce rates bills based on criteria they choose, such as the type of property, its location, occupation or activity.

The Scottish Government will offer factual guidance for councils on the new statutory power to reduce business rates, and will continue to work in partnership to explore further opportunities with interested councils

More information on the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/pcs7ty3>

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (Commencement No. 1) Order 2015 brings the new power into force on 31 October, and is accessible at: <http://tinyurl.com/nz93yxj>

## CHEMICALS, CONTAMINANTS & FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

### NEW EFSA GUIDANCE ON ASSESSMENT OF EXPOSURE

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published Regulatory Update 12/2015 to explain when the new European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) guidance document 'Guidance on the assessment of exposure of operators, workers, residents and bystanders in risk assessment for plant protection products' must be used by applicants.

From 1 January 2016 all applications received by HSE must reflect the new guidance. Applicants wishing to use the new guidance for applications submitted to HSE before 1 January 2016 may do so. Where applicants choose to do this it must be applied consistently across all relevant exposure groups (i.e. operators, workers, bystanders and residents).

Pending development of a harmonised approach to the setting of an acute non dietary reference dose, applicants are not required to undertake acute non dietary exposure assessments (i.e. those that might be incurred in a single day) using the upper estimates of exposure (i.e. 95th percentile values) as stated in the guidance.

The EFSA Guidance document is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/q2axnqz>



## DEFRA PUBLISH REACH REQUIREMENTS GUIDANCE

Defra have produced guidance on how to comply with the EU's REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of Chemicals) chemical regulations when using, making, selling or importing chemicals into the EU.

REACH applies to substances manufactured or imported into the EU in quantities of 1 tonne or more per year. Generally, it applies to all individual chemical substances on their own, in preparations (mixes or solutions of 2 or more substances).

Some substances are specifically excluded:

- Radioactive substances
- Substances under customs supervision
- The transport of substances
- Non-isolated intermediates
- Waste
- Some naturally occurring low-hazard substances



Some substances, covered by more specific legislation, have tailored provisions, including:

- Human and veterinary medicines
- Food and foodstuff additives
- Plant protection products and biocides

The Defra guidance on REACH can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/nmyr89f> and the EU regulation is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/oe5l4lg>

## REVISED GUIDANCE: PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published a revised guidance document produced by the Chemicals Regulation Directorate (CRD) for the generation of data on the physical, chemical and technical properties of plant protection products under Regulation EC 1107/2009.

These notes are intended to provide guidance on the scientific data requirements for plant protection products as they are set out in Regulation (EC) No. 284/2013 in accordance with Regulation (EC) 1107/2009 concerning the placement of plant protection products (PPPs) on the market.

The document will now be used to consult with other member states within Europe as well as other stakeholders to work towards a harmonised guidance document within the EU.

The guidance document can be accessed via this link: <http://tinyurl.com/pcuglhg>

## UK ENFORCEMENT OF MRLS ON QUATS

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published a letter to stakeholders describing the UK's approach to monitoring and enforcing maximum residue limits of the quaternary ammonium compounds, dodecyl dimethyl ammonium chloride (DDAC) and benzalkonium chloride (BAC) in food arising from the use of DDAC and BAC for disinfectant purposes. New MRLs came into force on 12 August 2015.

The letter was initially sent to stakeholders who attended a meeting with the Chemicals Regulation Directorate (CRD) and Food Standards Agency (FSA) officials on 17 July. However, given the widespread use of DDAC and BAC as biocides in food processing and preparation, this regulatory update has been issued to draw wider attention to the content of the letter.

The letter sets out the background to the setting of MRLs, the UK's approach to monitoring and enforcement, how the MRLs apply with respect to processed foods, and the importance of food businesses reviewing their treatment practices to ensure compliance whilst maintaining food hygiene standards.

If you would like to be kept updated on this topic please contact [martinforsyth@bff.co.uk](mailto:martinforsyth@bff.co.uk)

The letter to stakeholders is available through this link: <http://tinyurl.com/pyrb7w2>

## THE PACKAGING (ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS) REGULATIONS 2015

The Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations 2015, SI 2015 No. 1640 were laid before Parliament on 4 September 2015 and came into force on 1 October 2015.

The Regulations revoke and replace the Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations 2003. The 2003 Regulations were amended to reflect amendments to Directive 94/62/EC and these Regulations consolidate the amendment Regulations and introduce a definition of “plastic” and “plastic carrier bags”. The Regulations apply to all packaging (as defined in regulation 3(2)).

The Department for Business Innovation and Skills issued guidance on 16 September 2015.

The Regulation is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/p9md76n> and the BIS guidance can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/nl46f4x>

## UPDATE ON FSA POLICY ON ACRYLAMIDE



Since the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) delivered its first full opinion on acrylamide in July 2015 there is a strong desire from the EU Commission to take action to reduce population exposure to acrylamide as it is carcinogenic and genotoxic; they are determined that this action must be credible, enforceable and measurable.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) hosted a stakeholder forum on 9 October to share the outcome of a Commission Expert Group on the Environment and Contaminants that took place on 21/22 September and to request information from stakeholders to inform an impact assessment they are preparing on a number of options proposed by the Commission.

The two options of note are:

- Option 2 – Use the basis already provided in hygiene regulation 852/2004 to take a HACCP risk assessment approach – UK and other MS are most interested in this approach. This accepts that there is already a regulatory basis for obliging food businesses to take acrylamide into account within food safety management systems including HACCP. Focus would be on how to ensure that businesses were aware of the requirement. The Commission already believe that current legislation obligates food businesses to consider acrylamide as part of the HACCP, as it is a chemical contaminant that should be controlled according to 852/2004.
- Option 4 – introduction of strict maximum levels that would be set down in the annex of Regulation 1881/2006 setting MRL's in foods. This option has strong support from some MS – but not a majority, it is still a strong likely option. FSA recognise that this would very complicated to put in place and burdensome and difficult for both enforcement and businesses.

The FSA's favoured approach is option 2, preferring businesses to be obliged to cover the risks through a HACCP based system, as it builds on mechanisms businesses already have – calling it an evolution of how HACCP is considered. FSA do not support further regulation or MRL's.

## FOOD SAFETY AND ZOOSES

### CAMPYLOBACTER SURVEY ANALYSIS REPORT PUBLISHED



The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has today published the final report of its year-long survey of Campylobacter levels on UK fresh retail chickens.

The report is an analysis of the data from the survey carried out by the FSA between February 2014 and March 2015, which showed the levels of Campylobacter found on fresh, whole chickens sold in the UK.

The results for the full year, as previously published, showed:

- 19% of chickens tested positive for Campylobacter within the highest band of contamination\*
- 73% of chickens tested positive for the presence of Campylobacter
- 0.1% (five samples) of packaging tested positive at the highest band of contamination.
- 7% of packaging tested positive for the presence of Campylobacter.

\* more than 1000 colony forming units per gram (>1000 cfu/g). These units indicate the degree of contamination on each sample.

The survey results, which were published on a quarterly basis throughout the year, allowed consumers for the first time to compare the Campylobacter levels found on chickens from all of the major retailers. The final report contains data sets of the results from all of the retailers and includes comparisons between different sized birds.

The first set of results from the new FSA survey that commenced in July 2015, is expected to be published in November 2015.

The final survey report is available to view here: <http://tinyurl.com/pe7hrsj>

### FSA BOARD MEETING AVAILABLE ONLINE

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) held a Board meeting on meeting on 9 September 2015.

The agenda included discussions on:

- Development of the framework for controls relating to foods where risks per serving are significant, and its further application to burgers served rare in catering outlets;
- Progress update on development of the National Food Crime Unit and other key recommendations of the post horsemeat reviews;
- European Commission's amendments to the TSE Regulations: implications for the UK Audit and Risk Assurance Committee - oral report.

The FSA board meeting agenda, papers and complete audio podcast can be accessed on the FSA website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/pn2v8vp>

## BACILLUS ANTHRACIS IN BULGARIA

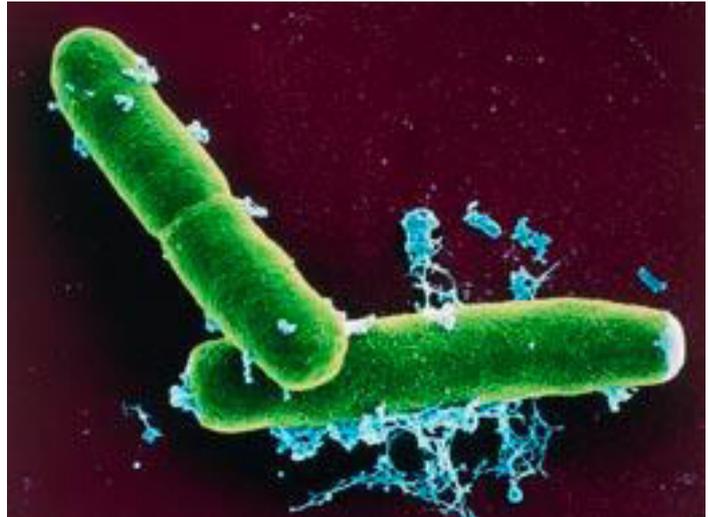
The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has announced that a fatal human case of Anthrax infection and bovine meat contamination has been reported in Bulgaria.

Although distribution of contaminated and possibly contaminated meat to food outlets and food processing plants occurred, the official recall of implicated food has significantly reduced the risk of additional cases of cutaneous or gastro-intestinal anthrax.

Currently, no cases other than the initial one have been reported and considering that most cases have onset of illness within seven days of exposure, it seems unlikely that new cases associated with this event will arise, taking into account the recall of contaminated products. Exposure to the infected animal or its meat occurred only at a local level, and international distribution of possibly contaminated meat has not been reported.

The EFSA report on this issue is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/p7vyysc>

More recently the first case of anthrax in the UK since 2006 has been reported on a farm in westbury, Wiltshire. The affected cow that died has been incinerated and movement restrictions are in place.



## EU APPROVES RECYCLED HOT WATER FOR CARCASS CLEANING



The European Union has approved the use of recycled hot water to remove microbiological surface contamination from carcasses in a directly-binding regulation that the European Commission has adopted.

Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 lays down specific rules on the hygiene of food of animal origin for food business operators. Currently food business operators are not allowed to use any substance other than potable water to remove surface contamination from products of animal origin, unless the use of the substance has been approved in accordance with that Regulation.

In September 2010, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Panel on Biological Hazards adopted a Scientific Opinion on the safety and efficacy of using recycled hot water as a decontamination technique for meat carcasses. EFSA concluded that recycled hot water is of the same efficacy as hot potable water for the reduction of microbiological surface contamination and, for its use, the microbiological risks associated with certain heat-resistant bacterial spores are considered as the main relevant risks.

In view of the EFSA Opinion, taking into account that recycled hot water can be an additional tool to achieve the objectives of Regulations (EC) No 852/2004, (EC) No 853/2004, (EC) No 854/2004 and (EC) No 2073/2005 and its use has an added value for environmental and energy-preserving reasons, it is appropriate to approve the use of recycled hot water by food business operators to remove microbiological surface contamination from carcasses. The Regulation therefore allows food business operators to use recycled hot water to remove microbiological surface contamination from carcasses in compliance with the conditions for use set out in the Annex to the Regulation.

The Regulation, which entered into force on 17 September 2015, is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/osa2hz6>

## FOOD SECURITY, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

### ANNUAL REPORT OF SCIENCE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Defra has published the Annual Report of the Science Advisory Council (SAC) which summarises its activities from April 2014 to March 2015.

Within the report the SAC identified a need to understand Defra food policy and evidence activity in relation to food chain competitiveness, growth, resilience, sustainability, standards, and food information to the consumer. The SAC recognises food supply as an important issue with scope for significant impacts and supported Defra's proposal to the Cabinet Office that it be included in the National Security Risk Assessment.

The SAC Annual Report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/o9xjpee>

## IMPORTS AND THE SUPPLY CHAIN

### UNFAIR TRADING PRACTICES IN THE BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN

The EU's Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection have produced a briefing paper which reviews unfair trade practices that can appear in business-to-business (B2B) transactions. Recently unfair trading practices have been of particular interest to the EU in relation to food supply chains.

Unfair trade practices are practices that grossly deviate from good commercial conduct and are contrary to good faith and fair dealing. Unfair trading practices are typically imposed in a situation of imbalance by a stronger party on a weaker one, and can exist from any side of the B2B relationship.

The briefing concludes that any consideration concerning possible future action in the area of unfair trading practices must consider a number of issues such as: whether or not legislative action is needed, and if so, what scope and form should it take. However, the key element of any action is to ensure its subsequent effective enforcement.

The Internal Market and Consumer Protection briefing on unfair trading practices can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/oq8axve>

### VIETNAM AND THE EU AGREE TO FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The European Commission has announced the agreement in principle of a deal with Vietnam on free trade. The final legal texts are still being ironed out. Once the agreement comes into force, 65% of import duties will be eliminated immediately, with the remaining duties eliminated over a 7-year period. Tariff Rate Quotas will be introduced for about 1% of 'sensitive' goods, including surimi and canned tuna.

More information is available in this European Commission Fact Sheet: <http://tinyurl.com/oeo5vjs>

## CUSTOMS INFORMATION PAPER: CHECKING GOODS MEET ORIGIN RULES

[Gov.uk](#) have published Customs Information Paper 35. The Customs Information Paper (CIP) covers the documentation that a trader needs, proving their eligibility for preference, the legal basis for tariff preference and lists public notices and CIPs covering associated topics.

The paper covers:

- Conditions for claiming preference;
- Meeting the origin rule;
- Ensuring that you hold a valid proof of origin; and
- Demonstrating that your goods comply with direct transport/non-manipulation requirement.

The paper can be viewed here: <http://tinyurl.com/qa7gw4a>

## FDA PUBLISH GOOD MANUFACTURING PRACTICE & HAZARD ANALYSIS RULES

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has taken steps to prevent foodborne illness by finalizing the first two of seven major rules under the bipartisan FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

This action is the first step in putting greater emphasis on the prevention of foodborne illness, holding imported food to the same food safety standard as domestically produced food, and developing a nationally integrated food safety system in partnership with state and local authorities.

An estimated 48 million people (1 in 6 Americans) get sick each year from foodborne diseases, according to recent data from the U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. Approximately 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die each year. Over the past few years, high-profile outbreaks related to various foods, from spinach to peanut products, have underscored the need to make continuous improvements in food safety.

The preventive control rules focus on implementing modern food manufacturing processes for both human and animal foods. This will ensure that food companies are taking action and working with the FDA to prevent hazards to customers on the front end, rather than waiting to act until an outbreak has occurred.

The preventive control rules require human and animal food facilities to develop and implement written food safety plans that indicate the possible problems that could affect the safety of their products and outline steps the facility would take to prevent or significantly minimize the likelihood of those problems occurring. This means that food companies will be accountable for monitoring their facilities and identifying any potential hazards in their products and prevent those hazards. Under these rules, the FDA will be able to assess these systems and their outcomes to prevent problems, will better be able to respond when food safety problems occur, and better protect the safety of manufactured food.

The Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis, and Risk Bases Preventative Controls for Human Food is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/nf96v5g>

## PLAN TO TACKLE BARRIERS TO TRADING IN EU SINGLE MARKET

EuroCommerce ( a retail and wholesale umbrella trade organisation) has called for an urgent plan to help tackle barriers to trading in the EU single market.

The European Commission has had a discussion on the elements to be included in its forthcoming internal market strategy. EuroCommerce is pleased to see the priority given by all Commissioners to boosting a single market, where consumers are free to shop around for the best quality, price and service, and where retailers can set up shop anywhere and deal with simple and objective rules and harmonised product requirements.

EuroCommerce will be looking for these positive messages to be translated into concrete action to break down barriers in the single market caused by diverging and insufficient implementation and enforcement and discriminatory laws.

EuroCommerce is looking for an ambitious internal market strategy, as set out in their Contribution Paper to the Commission Single Market strategy and their earlier, more comprehensive policy guidance paper, Commerce and the Single Market.

More information can be found on the EuroCommerce website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/pldzmw6>

## OUTBREAKS OF HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA IN THE USA

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1363 of 6 August 2015 amending Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 798/2008 as regards the entry for the United States in the list of third countries from which certain poultry commodities may be imported into or transit through the European Union in relation to highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreaks in that country was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L210/24, 7/8/2015.

The United States has submitted further updated information on the epidemiological situation on its territory and the measures it has taken to prevent the further spread of HPAI, which has now been evaluated by the Commission. On the basis of that evaluation, as well as the guarantees provided by the United States, the prohibition on the introduction into the Union of certain poultry commodities to cover only certain parts of the States of Indiana, Nebraska and South Dakota, which the veterinary authorities of the United States have placed under restrictions due to previous outbreaks, has been modified.



This Regulation entered into force on 10 August 2015.

The Official Journal L210/24 is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/p3jor7x>

## EU SUPPORT TO PRODUCERS AFTER RUSSIAN IMPORT BAN EXTENDED

The European Commission have published on a Press Release regarding EU support for fruit and vegetable producers in light of the Russian import ban.

The European Commission has formally extended until the end of June 2016 the safety net measures for the European fruit and vegetables sector.

First introduced last year, in response to the Russian ban on the import of EU agri-food products, this decision follows Russia's decision to extend its restrictive measures for a further 12 months. The measure covers a wide range of products and reference volumes have been allocated to Member States on the basis of exports to Russia in the 3 years prior to the ban, with an additional quantity of up to 3 000 tonnes for all Member States.

More information is available on the Commission website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/opds968>



## FSA LETTER ON IMPORTS OF POAO

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published a letter to Heads of Environmental Health Service (England) and the Directors of Trading Standards Services (England), to advise business that Products of Animal Origin (POAO), including those used as an ingredient, must come from a country that has an approved residue plan for that product.

There is an exception for wild caught fish, which does not require an EU approved residue plan. If countries do not have this approved plan, the products would not be allowed to be sold.

The requirement for approved residue plans applies to any POAO, no matter the volume/percentage contained in the finished product. This has been confirmed recently during discussions at European level. The list of approved residue plans is given in Decision 2011/163/EU as most recently amended by Decision 2015/1338.

The FSA letter can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/o3e8j23>

### Europe Authorises Imports of Aquaculture Goods from Three Countries

The European Commission has published a Decision that opens the door to imports of aquaculture goods from Myanmar/Burma, Kenya and Armenia. These three countries now have residue monitoring plans in place that meet the Commission's requirements, and fishery products from these countries produced by aquaculture are now authorised for importation into the EU.

The updated Annex of Decision 2011/163, which now lists these countries, is available in Commission Implementing Decision 2015/1338 here: <http://tinyurl.com/ov4zegu>

## 3 MILLION SIGNATURE ANTI-TTIP PETITION

A petition against the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), a trade deal between the EU and US, has been handed into the European Commission's UK delegation.

The petition has been signed by 3 million people from all corners of Europe and over 500,000 from the UK alone.

Friends of the Earth (FOE) and over 500 other European organisations are calling on the institutions of the European Union and its member states to stop negotiations with the USA on TTIP and not to ratify the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with Canada.

FOE's stance is that: TTIP threatens to undermine health, food safety and environmental standards. It will make it harder for governments to pass laws that protect us in future. It will also lead to even more investment in fossil fuel extraction.

FOE have provided more information on the TTIP, which is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pdrhq7m>



# LABELLING AND GENERAL FOOD LAW

## HOW TO REGISTER PROTECTED FOOD NAMES PRODUCTS



DEFRA have reissued their guidance and procedures to be adopted to register products under the EU protected food names law. If you are a food or drink producer, you can apply to the DEFRA/EU to have the name of your product protected under EU law.

This means that another producer can't market their product using that name unless they both:

- produce it in the area you have agreed with the EU
- use the methods you have agreed with the EU

There are 3 protection marks you can apply to the EU for:

- protected geographical indication (PGI)
- protected designation of origin (PDO)
- traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG)

The process can take up to 4 years to complete.

### **Protected geographical indication (PGI)**

To get your product protected under PGI, it must be produced, processed or prepared in the geographical area you want to associate it with.

Yorkshire Wensleydale cheese or Cornish sardines are examples of existing UK foods protected with the PGI mark.

### **Protected designation of origin (PDO)**

To get your product protected under PDO, it must be produced, processed and prepared in one area and have distinct characteristics from this area.

PDOs differ from PGIs in that all 3 production stages must take place in the area you want to associate with the product.

Jersey Royal potatoes and Stilton blue cheese are examples of existing UK foods protected with the PDO mark.

### **Traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG)**

To get your product protected with the TSG mark, it must have a traditional name and characteristics that distinguish it from other similar products.

These characteristics can't be due to the area the product is made in or based purely on technical advances used in production.

Traditionally farmed Gloucester old spots pork and traditional farm fresh turkey are examples of foods protected with the TSG mark.

More information about how to apply, and what your application needs to include can be found on the [Gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/p2qqplc>

## DEFRA PUBLISH LIST OF EU PROTECTED NAME APPLICATIONS

Defra have published a list of applications currently being considered for the EU protected food name scheme in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. The list also includes products where amendments are being considered in those places.

This list includes all the food products from the UK which are currently being considered under the EU protected food name scheme.

This scheme highlights regional and traditional foods whose authenticity and origin can be guaranteed. Food or drink products which are designated under the scheme are given legal protection against imitation throughout the EU.

The list can be found on the [Gov.uk](http://tinyurl.com/pzc9n5d) website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/pzc9n5d>

## SECRETARY OF STATE CALLS FOR MORE LOCAL FOOD LABELLING

The Environment Secretary, Elizabeth Truss, spoke at Norfolk Local Flavours show and urged businesses to provide more local food labelling.

“I think what this festival reflects is the booming interest locally, nationally, and internationally in Britain’s wonderful regional, county and local food.

“Local food is vital. It is [one of] the building blocks of what British Food is and what it means to us. It’s impossible to imagine British food without Norfolk turkey, Stilton cheese or Melton Mowbray pork pies.

“I think what we are seeing now is a revolution, powered from the bottom up which is making a difference in towns and villages across the country—from local food markets, seaside cafés and pubs.

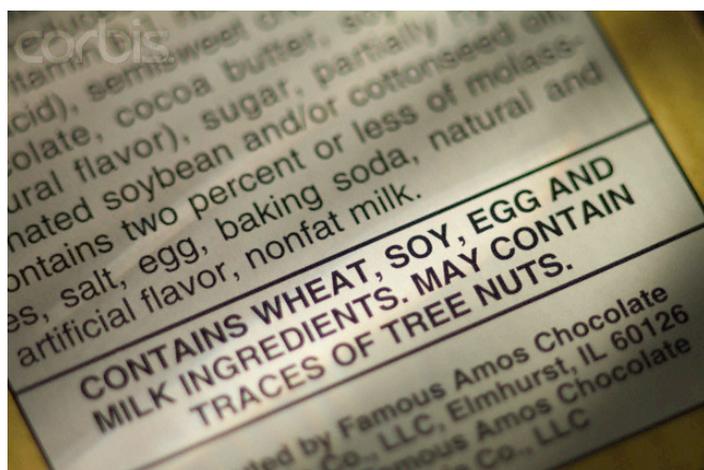
“In a world where we are seeing globalisation, with many farm and food producers struggling with the volatility of commodity prices, I think strong local brands and local identity are very important to ensure that producers continue to get value from their products and are able to sell in a global market.”

To read the full speech given at the show, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/onhqfze>



## IMPROVING USE OF ‘MAY CONTAIN’ ALLERGEN STATEMENTS

The Institute of Food Safety, Integrity and Protection (TIFSiP) and the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) have jointly published a White Paper: Improving the use of ‘may contain’ allergen statements.



This paper considers concerns raised at industry events, in particular those voiced at an expert roundtable held in June 2015. The focus of the paper is on the ‘may contain’ issues raised by the roundtable attendees. It identifies measures that could reduce uncertainty related to the provision and interpretation of ‘may contain’ statements, identifies key guidance documents and suggests areas for improvement.

The Paper is intended to highlight issues related to food service operators passing on ‘may contain’ statements from manufacturers to consumers.

The White Paper can be downloaded for free from the TIFSiP website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/nljuoc8>

## THE ORGANIC PRODUCTS (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2015

The Organic Products (Amendment) Regulations 2015, SI No. 2015 No. 1669 were laid before the UK Parliament on 10 September 2015 and entered into force on 1 October 2015. The Regulations amend the Organic Products Regulations 2009.

Changes include:

- Removal of some powers conferred upon organic Control Bodies to permit organic operators to make use of certain exceptions from the organic production rules. These changes bring the powers fully into line with Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008, laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products with regard to organic production, labelling and control;
- Removal of reference to fees chargeable by Defra for the issue of import authorisations;
- Updating the fee levied by Defra on applications to become an organic Control Body which has been updated in line with full cost recovery calculations.

The Regulation can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/pe5wh48>

## NUTRITION, ADDITIVES AND HEALTH

### BULGARIA CONSIDERS JUNK FOOD TAX

The Bulgarian Ministry of Health has unveiled plans to introduce a new tax on junk food which is set to cover a wide range of food products and drinks considered unhealthy by the country's authorities.

Bulgaria's Deputy Health Minister Adam Persenski told local daily Trud that the tax will be in the range of 3% to 10%, with varying rates applied to various kinds of food products. The rates will be determined by the perceived health risk related to each product.

The factors which will be taken into consideration are to include the amount of salt, sugar, trans-fat acids, caffeine and taurine in each of the analysed products, according to Persensk. The government expected the designed tax would raise the prices of such products by not more than 10%.

With its latest move, the Bulgarian government is following in the steps taken by the authorities of neighbouring Romania. In March 2010, the country became the first European Union Member State to introduce a tax on junk food. The tax is paid by Romania-based producers, importers and processors of food which contain a significant amount of sugar, salt, fats and other additives, and the proceedings are earmarked to finance health-related programmes. The products covered by the tax include a wide range of fast food products, sweets, cookies and cakes, snacks and soda.

More information can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/nl8zqy8>





Sustain and Jamie Oliver have launched a petition calling on Government to tax sugary drinks.

The Children's Health Fund has also been launched by Jamie and Sustain, with funds coming from a self-imposed sugary drinks levy by Jamie's UK restaurants. Leon are the first group to join Jamie's UK restaurants in adopting the levy contributing to the Children's Health Fund.

If over 100,000 people sign the petition then the Government must consider debating the issue in parliament. The petition can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/p88aw2k>

Doctors, dentists, dietitians and many other public health experts support a tax of just 7p per regular-sized can (20p per litre) of soft drink with added sugar. This could generate £1 billion per year which Jamie and Sustain believe should be ring-fenced to support much needed preventative work around childhood obesity and diet-related disease, and improving the environment they grow up in.

More information can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pbcb7z1>

The Government has issued a response to the petition saying:

"The Government has no plans to introduce a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages. The Government will announce its plans for tackling childhood obesity by the end of the year."

The full Government response can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pjj865v>

## LATVIA LATEST EU COUNTRY TO BAN TRANS FAT



Latvia has banned the use of trans fats in domestically produced and imported food, joining ranks with Austria, Hungary and Denmark, whilst campaigners continue to push for an EU-wide ban.

The regulation will limit trans fats to 2% of the total fat in food. As in Austria, specific limitations will be set for low fat products, allowing 4g of trans fats per 100g of the product if total fat content is 3-20% of the product's weight, or 10g per 100g if fat content is less than 3%.

Food manufacturers will have a two year transition period with full compliance required from 1 January 2018 onward.

While many manufacturers in Western Europe have voluntarily reduced their use of trans fats, they remain common in Eastern Europe, with a 2012 study showing that some Eastern Europeans could consume as much as 30g per day.

More information on this, can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/pcf2c7>

## NORTHERN IRISH FSA LAUNCHES MENU CAL FOR CATERERS



The Food Standards Agency (FSA) in NI has launched a free business tool, MenuCal, designed to help caterers manage allergen information and calculate calories for the food they serve.

MenuCal has been designed to help food businesses provide information to their customers about the 14 main allergen ingredients which businesses are required by law to provide if they are present in the food they serve. The tool will mean businesses can be assured that the information they have to provide to customers is correct and means consumers can feel more confident to ask about allergenic ingredients when eating out.

In addition, MenuCal can calculate the energy values (kilojoules and kilocalories) of the food that businesses serve. It is hoped that by using the tool, businesses have the potential to increase their profitability through for example, tailoring the portion sizes to reduce the food's energy value or changing the ingredients to give a healthier option and reducing waste.

The MenuCal tool is available for free download here: <http://tinyurl.com/qx55s8y> and is accompanied by an online training facility.

## FSAI CONSIDER MANDATORY CALORIE POSTING ON MENUS

The Irish Department of Health has been seeking views on the introduction of mandatory posting of calorie information on menus. The consultation is based on the Government's proposed Health & Wellbeing Bill, which makes provision for the introduction of mandatory calorie posting on menus.

The objective of the Bill, when enacted, is to provide consumers of non-prepacked food with information on the energy content of food by providing calorie information on menus at the point of choice/purchase. It will apply to non-prepacked food which is served by food business operators for immediate consumption on or off premises e.g. meals served in a restaurant.

The proposed Bill will apply to food business operators regardless of the size of the business, type of food on offer for sale, type of ownership or location. As part of this consultation, the Department of Health has sought opinions on specific aspects of the proposed legislation and its implementation e.g. how to calculate the energy content (calorie) of foods offered to consumers, displaying information on 'self-serve' food, menu specials and loose food such as sandwich fillings served in delis.

The consultation closed on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and we will update in the next issue with the outcomes. Find out more at <http://tinyurl.com/okvkbxv>



## EUFIC 8 FACTS ON FATS

The European Food Information Council (EUFIC) have produced a Q&A Factsheet containing facts about fats.

Fats are important for good health and proper functioning of the body. They are a source of energy, essential fats and enhance the absorption of fat soluble vitamins. However, too much fat and/or the wrong type of fat may negatively affect our health. Fats also give foods a particular texture, appearance and flavour. This article summarises the types of fats we eat, the foods in which they are found, their effect on our health, and the recommended consumption levels.

The Factsheet covers:

- What are dietary fats?
- What are the main types of fats and in which foods are they found?
- Why should we eat fats?
- How much fat should we eat?
- Does eating fat make us fat?
- What are the health consequences of being overweight, obese or eating too much fat?
- How much fat do we actually eat?
- How does the type of fat affect the properties of food?

The 8 facts on fat can be found on the EUFIC website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/otwp9uk>



## HIGH SALT INTAKE MAY DIRECTLY INCREASE RISK OF OBESITY



A study published in a recent issue of Hypertension (02.09.15); 'High salt intake: independent risk factor for obesity?', has shown high salt intake can potentially increase risk of obesity in both adults and children.

In the first study of its kind, researchers suggest there may be a direct link between salt intake and obesity, independent of total energy intake or sugar sweetened beverage consumption (SSB). This has been highlighted in a nationally representative sample of the UK population, with a 1g/day increase in salt intake being associated with an increased risk of being overweight or obese by 28% in children and 26% in adults.

Data obtained from a total of 458 children and 785 adults taking part in the UK National Diet and Nutrition Survey's (NDNS) rolling programme was used to assess energy intake and salt consumption [REF 2]. Results showed a consistent significant association between salt intake and BMI, waist circumference and body fat mass – independent of total energy intake and sugar-sweetened beverage consumption.

Current guidelines suggest we should be eating no more than 6g salt a day but the latest statistics show we are eating far more than we require ([8.1g/day](#)). Collaborative efforts between the government and food industry however have led to progressive reductions in salt intake, resulting in a reduction in stroke and heart disease events and deaths but further reductions need to be made.

More information can be found on the CASH website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/qz4qmpo>

## NHS ENGLAND TO FOCUS ON IMPROVING FOOD NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS

NHS England Chief Executive Simon Stevens has kick-started a major drive to improve the health and wellbeing of 1.3m health service staff, in a bid to benefit both staff and taxpayers.



The new £5 million initiative has three pillars:

- First, a major drive for improved NHS staff health, spearheaded by a group of leading NHS hospital, mental health, ambulance, community and clinical commissioning group employers, in partnership with NHS Employers and Public Health England;
- Second, a new nationally-specified occupational health service for GPs suffering from burnout and stress, in partnership with the Royal College of GPs and BMA General Practitioners Committee;
- Third, national action by NHS England working with Public Health England and other agencies to challenge and support catering contractors and PFI providers to raise the standards of food and nutrition.

NHS England will meet the major hospital catering vendors and PFI contractors to discuss how to ensure that the NHS leads the way in offering healthy food to its staff and patients.

There is much that can be done within existing contracts to provide healthier choices for staff, and some Trusts have already shown what is possible by promoting healthy options (e.g. including fruit rather than confectionary in discounted meal deals) and working to reshape their overall offer.

NHS England will stress Stevens' view that it is unacceptable for health sector organisations to be contracting with caterers who mainly sell foods which don't meet nutritional standards, or actively promote unhealthy eating. Officials will also push for organisations to ensure that they are providing easily understandable nutritional information and appropriate portion sizes, building on the Government Food Buying Standards to ensure a healthy and sustainable food and drink offer. Food and drink offered in vending machines should meet existing nutritional standards, so that staff have a choice of healthy options, including when working at evenings and weekends.

More information on this drive can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/npadzox>

## PHE PUBLISH PAPERS FROM 5-A-DAY REFERENCE GROUP

Public Health England (PHE) has established an external reference group to support PHE activity to refresh messages to encourage consumption of more fruit and vegetables.

The reference group will support PHE's consideration of the possible extension of the 5-A-DAY logo to include composite foods, and it forms part of PHE's activities outlined in its Sugar reduction – responding to the challenge discussion paper: <http://tinyurl.com/lbcw4dl>

The agenda and terms of reference for the 5-A-DAY external reference group can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/olh7m86>

## COMMISSION TO REVIEW NUTRITION AND HEALTH CLAIMS LEGISLATION

The Commission has published a Roadmap on the evaluation of the EU Nutrition and Health Claims legislation.

This Roadmap is a first step in the evaluation process and outlines the purpose, content and scope of the evaluation. This evaluation will look mainly into whether the rules currently in place on health claims are fit for purpose to deal with health claims on botanicals.

It will also assess whether nutrient profiles, for which rules have not yet been put in place, are still warranted to achieve the objectives of the Regulation. The results of the evaluation will be used as a basis to decide whether there is a need to review the current rules. Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods governs the use of these claims in the labelling, presentation and advertising of foods. It aims at enabling consumers to make healthier choices by protecting them from misleading information and ensuring a level playing field for food businesses to operate within the single market.

The Roadmap for the evaluation of the Nutrition and Health Claims legislation is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/p2uwtjx>

## BHF CALL ON GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S DIETS

The British Heart Foundation (BHF) is calling on government to take action to improve children's diets.

Around 30% of children in the UK are overweight or obese, and the BHF is urging the government to put strong measures in place with the publication of their upcoming Childhood Obesity Strategy.

They are calling for better regulations that will make being healthy the easy choice and help stem the tide of serious health problems and health costs associated with obesity, such as heart and circulatory disease, for future generations.

They have called for action on the following issues:

- A 9pm watershed ban on junk food marketing with better restrictions of online content.
- The Government should issue guidelines on portion sizes and work with industry to ensure that the layout of shops and promotions are not used to aggressively promote unhealthy choices.
- Sugary sweetened beverages should be taxed to reduce consumption of a range of products which are both harmful and unnecessary and offer no nutritional benefit other than energy. These include soft drinks or energy drinks that have added sugars, syrups or other sweetening ingredients, but does not include pure fruit juices, without added sugar.

The BHF policy on junk food marketing to children can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pmceur7>



## FDE FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON DIET, ACTIVITY AND HEALTH

The trade umbrella organisation FoodDrinkEurope, representing food manufacturers and processors, has launched a new commitment: 'Framework for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health'.

The Framework Commitment will further reinforce its action in support of the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. It will cover five key action areas:

- product formulation and innovation (including portion sizes);
- responsible marketing and advertising;
- consumer information;
- promoting healthy lifestyles; and
- research.

FoodDrinkEurope aims to report annually on the progress of this initiative under the existing EU Platform monitoring framework.

The FDE Framework announcement is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/p3qx42d>



## PROCESSING AND RETAIL

### CHARGES FOR SINGLE-USE PLASTIC CARRIER BAGS

On 5<sup>th</sup> October the 5p charge for single-use plastic carrier bags came into effect in England.

The charge, which applies for all retailers with 250 or more full-time employees, is expected to significantly reduce the number of plastic bags taken from shops. It follows the success of similar schemes in Scotland and Wales – in Wales the charge led to a 79 per cent decrease in plastic bags in three years.

Good causes are set to benefit from the charge, and as much as £730 million could be donated to charities and not-for-profits over 10 years.



More information for consumers and retailers on the carrier bags charges can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/oxre6dl>

### NEW CONSUMER RIGHTS ACT – FIVE CHANGES

The new Consumer Rights Act became law on 1 October 2015 and is seeking to 'simplify, strengthen and modernise' UK consumer legislation.

It is being promoted as the biggest shake-up in consumer rights law in a generation, bringing together several pieces of legislation into one. The three big pieces of consumer legislation to be replaced by the act are the Sale of Goods Act, Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations and the Supply of Goods and Services Act.

The changes will also introduce clearer remedies and timeframes for consumers to claim a refund, repair or replacement on faulty or unsatisfactory goods and poor services.

Which? has produced a guide to the regulatory changes, which can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/p8uo6ok>

### PRICING PRACTICES IN THE GROCERIES MARKET

The government have responded to the Competition and Markets Authority's (CMA's) report on the super-complaint earlier this year by Which?

Government is pleased to see the CMA do not consider there to be a systemic problem in the groceries market in how retailers present prices, concluding that problems are not occurring in large numbers across the whole sector and that generally retailers are taking compliance with legislation seriously to avoid such problems occurring.

The CMA did, however, identify examples of particular pricing and promotional practices which had the potential to mislead or confuse consumers, and Government welcomes the CMA's commitment to take further action with the businesses concerned to address these issues and secure any changes necessary.

The full response is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/noqul76>



## CTSI PUBLISH DRAFT PRICING GUIDE FOR CONSULTATION

The Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) has published a draft Pricing Practices Guide; marking the start of a consultation process.

Proposals are mindful of the recent Which? super-complaint on groceries pricing and the Competition and Marketing Authority's response.

CTSI is intending to create a framework for all consumer-facing businesses to trade products and services fairly and is not focused on one sector. The proposed guidelines will replace the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills' 2010 guide and were drafted as part of CTSI's role in educating businesses.

In addition to business, submissions are being sought from consumer groups, enforcers, trade associations and other stakeholders.

The draft Pricing Practices Guide can be downloaded here: <http://tinyurl.com/qfqbsho> The closing date for responses is 6 January 2016.



Chartered Trading Standards Institute

## REFRIGERATION

### F GAS IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES

ACRIB (The Air Condition and Refrigeration Industries Board) has produced some useful resources on implementation of the new F Gas Regulations which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015.

The resources include:

- The British Refrigeration Association (BRA) have produced a report on Putting into Use Replacement Refrigerants (PURR). The free report can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/og4w8lw>
- The European Partnership on Energy and the Environment (EPEE) has produced a useful video on the F Gas phase down, available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pugb33h>
- The Institute of Refrigeration's (IOR) Refrigeration Emissions and Leakage Zero (REAL Zero) has a series of resources, to investigate the causes of and solutions to refrigerant leakage. The range of 5 guides has been updated, and can be downloaded from <http://tinyurl.com/o5kylgz>, where other resources are also available.



## REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT AND OFFICIAL CONTROLS

### GUIDANCE ON TESTING OF MILK FOR ANTIBIOTIC RESIDUES

Updated guidance from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) on the testing of milk for antibiotic residues has been published after a routine review. The review took into account the recommendations made following the European Commission Food and Veterinary Office audit of official controls related to the milk and dairy sector.

The guidance is intended for all interested parties along the milk production chain including farmers, milk purchasers and processors, and the enforcement authorities and provides advice which will help with compliance with the Regulations in regard to antibiotic residues in milk and dairy products.



The FSA guidance can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/o4s8vjin>

### FOOD HYGIENE RATING SCHEME UPDATE REPORT FOR WALES

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has laid before the National Assembly for Wales the update report on The Implementation and Operation of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme in Wales.

The original report provides an overview of the first year of operation of the statutory Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, and the update contains statistically updated information with regard to migration, ratings issued, requests for re-rating inspections and appeals.

In this report, the Agency has also considered the information on migration, ratings issued, requests for re-rating inspections and appeals for the 3 month period from 28 November 2014, the first anniversary of the scheme. The information showed that around 10,000 food businesses have been migrated to the statutory scheme, and that the food hygiene ratings of businesses in Wales have continued to improve since the scheme was implemented. The requirement for food businesses in Wales to display their food hygiene rating sticker continues to build on the effects of the non-statutory scheme.

The FSA update report for Wales can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/peullg>



## FSA BOARD DECISION ON RARE BURGERS

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) Board has agreed that the preparation and service of rare burgers in food outlets is unacceptable unless a validated and verified food safety management plan is in place.

The FSA's long-standing advice to consumers that they should cook burgers thoroughly to kill any bugs that may be present is unchanged.

The FSA Board had been asked to consider a range of controls businesses should make sure are in place if they are serving rare burgers. These include sourcing meat only from establishments which have specific controls in place to minimise the risk of contamination of meat intended to be eaten raw or lightly cooked and providing consumer advice on menus regarding the additional risk from burgers which aren't thoroughly cooked.



The FSA Board voted to support the new approach but with the following requirements:

- businesses wanting to serve burgers rare pre-notify their local authority
- the Board is given reassurances on the controls that suppliers of mince intended for consumption rare or lightly cooked in burgers have in place
- effective consumer advisory statements will be required on menus where rare burgers are served; the Board agreed the FSA should take a lead ensuring these statements are consistent
- an FSA communications plan is implemented to explain the risks and controls to the public
- infection rates continue to be kept under close review and any changes brought to the attention of the Board

More information can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/n9tyncg>

## BIS ENTERPRISE BILL PUBLISHED

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has published a number of documents relating to the recently laid Enterprise Bill and the measures contained within it that related to the extension of the Primary Authority Scheme as follows:

Amongst a number of measures the Enterprise Bill includes extending the Business Impact Target to include regulators and simplifies the Primary Authority Scheme. The measures regarding the Primary Authority Scheme propose to:

- widen access to more small businesses and simplify access to advice for trade association members;
- enable national regulators to support Primary Authority partnerships alongside local authorities and to issue advice and guidance to businesses;
- reduce the uncertainty faced by businesses working across the four UK nations as a result of increasing devolution through introducing mechanisms to help regulators recognise advice issued in other nations;
- extend the scheme to other regulatory areas which stakeholders have asked to be brought into scope;
- help businesses by removing regulatory burdens, reducing compliance costs through improved regulatory advice and reducing time and costs caused by inconsistent enforcement; and
- provide small businesses with easier access to tailored advice with reduced administration.



Department  
for Business  
Innovation & Skills

Relevant document links are: The Enterprise Bill Summary Factsheet: <http://tinyurl.com/o2vzrq9>; BRDO discussion document: <http://tinyurl.com/on4glhx>; The full Enterprise Bill: <http://tinyurl.com/p94bsgk>

## FOOD STANDARDS SCOTLAND FOOD CRIME AND INCIDENT UNIT

A new Scottish Food Crime and Incident Unit (SFCIU) is to be set up by Food Standards Scotland (FSS) to tackle food fraud.

At its meeting in September the FSS Board agreed the remit of the new unit which will be responsible for surveillance and detection of fraud and deliberate non-compliance within the food chain, and is being set up as a result of the recommendations of the Scudamore Expert Advisory Group which was established by Scottish Ministers in February 2013 in the wake of the horsemeat incident.

The Unit will also have the power to take enforcement action where necessary although primary responsibility for dealing with food fraud at a local level will remain with local authorities, and where serious organised crime is involved, the investigation will be referred to the Police for further action.

The new Unit will develop its capability over the coming months, and Food Standards Scotland is currently recruiting for additional specialists to add to the existing Incidents team within the organisation.

More information on this can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/nzlou9c>



## BRDO PUBLISH 'BETTER BUSINESS FOR ALL PROGRAMME'



Better Business for All (BBfA) brings together businesses and regulators to consider and change how local regulation is delivered and received. It involves the creation of local partnerships to identify the issues facing local businesses and shape the provision of effective support services to them. It was initially developed by the Better Regulation Delivery Office

(BRDO) in 2011-2012, working with two Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) pathfinders.

Drawing on good practice and material provided by LEPs and regulators, BRDO created a toolkit of resources for local partnerships, launched in October 2012. In essence, its elements grow from local activity and benefit from a national perspective, but can then be adapted for use in accordance with local needs.

The toolkit and BBfA brand are managed by BRDO on behalf of the LEP pathfinders and provided on the GRIP portal website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/oso6fpf>

## NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVES AT CIEH AND ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) has appointed a new Chief Executive after Graham Jukes announced he was standing down earlier this year.

Anne Godfrey will be in post from 1 January 2016 and is joining CIEH from CIM, the Chartered Institute of Marketing, where she has served as Chief Executive since 2012.

Sir James Bevan has also been appointed as the new Chief Executive of the Environment Agency. Sir James has had a long career in government and will leave his role as the UK's High Commissioner to India to take up the role of Chief Executive on 30 November 2015.

David Rooke, the Environment Agency's current Executive Director for flood risk management, is the acting Chief Executive until Sir James takes up the role.



Chartered  
Institute of  
Environmental  
Health

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT PUBLISH GUIDANCE ON PROCUREMENT BY PUBLIC BODIES

The Scottish Government has formalised its commitment to making Scotland a fairer place to work with new statutory guidance for public sector procurement.

The document represents the first time any administration has gone as far, and ensures that public sector procurements can take account of the fact that employers whose staff are treated fairly are likely to deliver higher quality services. Those bidding for public contracts will now be expected to adopt fair work practices, which may include –

- paying the Living Wage
- no unnecessary use of zero hours contracts
- giving workers an active voice in the workplace

The Scottish Government is prevented by EU procurement law from making the Living Wage mandatory in contract agreements, but the new statutory guidance means that companies who want to secure business with public bodies are now obliged to sign up to these fair work conditions for anyone working on the contracts.

The Statutory Guidance addressing fair work practices in procurement is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/orv6vzx>



## CABINET OFFICE PUBLISH GUIDANCE NOTES ON WORKING WITH DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATIONS

The Cabinet Office has published devolution guidance notes (DGNs) which set out advice on working arrangements between the UK government and the devolved administrations.

Following the May 2015 general election, the Prime Minister agreed that those areas of constitutional reform for which the Deputy Prime Minister previously held responsibility, should transfer to the Chancellor for the Duchy of Lancaster and continue within the Cabinet Office. This includes responsibility for constitutional matters, devolution and electoral reform. Responsibility for the Electoral Commission, the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) and the Boundary Commissions also remains in the Cabinet Office.

The devolution guidance notes (DGNs) set out advice on working arrangements between the UK government and the devolved administrations. They provide an introduction to the main principles involved in the managing of the devolution settlements, bilateral relations, correspondence, parliamentary business, legislation and concordats.

All of the DGNs can be found on the [Gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/p2dnyre>

## NEW EU REGULATION FOR TRICHINELLA IN MEAT



Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1375 laying down specific rules on official controls for *Trichinella* in meat was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L212/7, 11/8/2015.

Commission Regulation (EC) No 2075/2005 has been substantially amended several times and Regulation (EU) No. 2015/1375 codifies this Regulation. Regulation 2075/2005 is now repealed.

This Regulation lays down rules for the sampling of carcasses of species susceptible to *Trichinella* infection, for the determination of the status of holdings and compartments and conditions for the import of meat into the Union, and also provides for reference methods and equivalent methods for the detection of *Trichinella* in samples of carcasses. This Regulation entered into force on 31 August 2015.

The Regulation can be found in the EU's Official Journal, here: <http://tinyurl.com/pg6e7y4>

## FSA FOOD LAW GUIDE UPDATED

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has recently updated its on line Food Law Guide.

The Food Law Guide covers legislation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, including current, recently revoked and expected legislation.

The first (and main) table lists all current food legislation, with details of associated EU legislation and links to any FSA guidance where this exists. Since the FSA's change of remit earlier in 2010, food standards work in England has moved to Defra, and nutrition and dietary health work for England has moved to the Department of Health and for Wales to the Welsh Assembly Government.

For legislation where responsibility for the English statutory instrument has moved out of the FSA, the new lead department is indicated in red, and gives details and links to the equivalent legislation in the other UK countries.

The updated Food Law Guide is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/p2fpj9a>

## SCOTTISH LEVY MONEY USED TO PROMOTE NORWEGIAN FISH



Fisheries Secretary says competing interests of Seafish shows need for action.

Fisheries Secretary, Richard Lochhead, has said that further progress to give the Scottish Government responsibility for food levies is needed urgently.

Mr Lochhead has written to UK Government Secretary of State Liz Truss calling for urgent clarity on whether the UK Government will go ahead with the devolution of food levies.

As an example of why progress must be made, the Cabinet Secretary highlights the National Fish & Chip Awards, organised by the Seafish Industry Authority, which are being used to promote frozen Norwegian white fish into the UK market while North Sea stocks of white fish are improving.

More information is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/nnpal8r>

## RESEARCH

### HEALTH RISK OF SATURATED FAT VS TRANS UNSATURATED FAT

A team of researchers from Canada conducted a large study on the health effects of both saturated and trans unsaturated fatty acid consumption. They combined data from 70 previously conducted observational studies and looked at the associated roles of these fatty acids in increasing the risk of death, cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes.

Overall findings suggested that eating higher amounts of saturated fat was not associated with an increased risk in comparison to lower amounts for these health outcomes, it is the consumption of higher amounts of trans fat was associated with an increased risk. The authors are cautious about drawing conclusions and point to methodological limitations of the included studies and to the fact that these observational studies cannot provide evidence for a cause and effect relationship. Moreover, they warn that one must carefully consider the effects of alternative foods before amending dietary guidelines for saturated and trans fatty acids.

The full brief on this research can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pebdxrn>

## LEATHERHEAD FOOD RESEARCH ACQUIRED BY SCIENCE GROUP PLC

Leatherhead Food International Limited, on September 16th 2015, was acquired by Science Group plc, a publicly listed provider of science and technology services with an international presence and global customer base.



Science Group provides independent advisory and advanced product development services focused on science and technology initiatives in medical, consumer, industrial and oil & gas markets. Science Group was founded 30 years ago, is financially very strong and employs leading scientists and engineers in the markets in which it operates.

This creates the opportunity for Leatherhead to build on existing expertise in regulatory consultancy, product development, consumer research, nutrition science, food safety, information services and training. Going forward the business will operate as Leatherhead Research Ltd and the addition of Leatherhead to the Science Group of companies brings benefits to all parties.

## FSA N.I. PUBLISH FOOD SURVEILLANCE REPORT 2014

The Northern Ireland Strategic Committee on Food Surveillance has published its eighth report on food sampling activity in Northern Ireland in 2014.

The report covers the targeted, risk-based, sampling and testing of food carried out by local councils in Northern Ireland across the food supply and retail chain.

Overall, a high percentage of the wide range of foodstuffs sampled were found to comply with food safety and standards legislation. The main issues continue to be in relation to incorrect labelling and description of food.

Similar to 2013, the results of sampling in 2014 indicate that there have been relatively few detections of foodborne pathogens. In 2014, 6,371 samples were submitted for microbiological examination and 1894 samples were submitted for chemical analysis.

The full FSA N.I. report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/ppufxtd>

## BFFF AGE OF INGREDIENTS SURVEY

Further to a discussion by the BFFF Technical Expert Group on the age of meat and fish that is frozen more than once before it is marketed to the consumer, the BFFF have conducted a survey amongst members to better understand the true age of frozen meat and fish ingredients that may be frozen more than once before sale to the consumer.

The discussion related to the requirement to label meat, meat preparations and unprocessed fishery products with a date of first freezing and the subsequent debate with the European Commission on the most appropriate date to label if a raw material has been frozen more than once.



Data received as a result of the survey included information on Beef, lamb, pork, venison, poultry and fish, with the Provision Trade Federation and British Meat Processors Association members also contributing.

A variation in results was found, but there were many areas of consistent feedback:

- Materials are mostly used at considerably younger than 12 months, but generally maximum life is up to 24 months to cope with volatility and variations in market conditions and consumer demand
- There are commercial and economic volatilities in markets for most of the frozen ingredients.
- Global sourcing practises i.e. UK, EU or global policies affect the life of meat and fish at use
- Fish and lamb are the proteins most subject to seasonality
- Oxidation and dehydration are the main quality limitations to maximum life
- Raw material and final product life are managed separately
- Very deep freezing i.e. @-40°C is not the norm in respect to practices to extend frozen life beyond 24 months.

A summary of the findings and an accompanying document are available by contacting [crystalholmes@bfff.co.uk](mailto:crystalholmes@bfff.co.uk)

# SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENT & CSR

## INDUSTRY APPETITE FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION ON FOOD SECURITY

British food businesses would welcome more government intervention on food security issues, according to a new report from WWF-UK.

The report, produced with the Food Ethics Council, is based on workshops, roundtables and interviews with representatives from major food companies including Marks & Spencer, Asda, Waitrose, Aldi, Tesco, Alpro, Coca Cola and Unilever.

It found that there was an “appetite for greater sustainability regulation” among senior food executives, who recognised the need to work more collaboratively on food security issues.

Suggestions for government intervention included subsidies and tax relief to incentivise actions that contribute to long-term food security a review of competition policy to better allow business to work together on sustainability and better support British farmers.

There were also calls for government-led sustainability labelling to allow people to make “more informed choices about the food they buy”.

The WWF-UK Report can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/pkcepnz>

## STUDY CLAIMS EU CIRCULAR ECONOMY WOULD CREATE 3M JOBS

A recent WRAP study shows expansion of the circular economy could create 3 million extra jobs and reduce unemployment by 520,000 across EU member states by 2030.

‘Economic Growth Potential of More Circular Economies’ builds on the report published earlier this year, ‘Employment and the Circular Economy – Job creation in a more resource efficient Britain’ to show the picture across the EU.

The study is the first that details the employment potential for each Member State, the industries that would support it, and the skills that would be required.

Currently, it’s estimated that there are 3.4 million people employed in circular economy jobs such as repair, waste & recycling and rental & leasing sectors across the European Union. Expansion in circular economy potentially offers employment opportunities in all Member States (large and small) and jobs that match the skills that are under supplied in the market.

Several scenarios illustrated are considered in this paper, showing that, by 2030 expansion in circular economy in Europe could: create an extra 1.2 million jobs; and reduce structural unemployment by around 250,000

However, a more ambitious approach to the circular economy in Europe, by 2030 has the potential to: create an extra 3 million jobs; and reduce structural unemployment by around 520,000

More information on ‘Economic Growth Potential of More Circular Economies’, and the document itself can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/nmwmauu>

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT TO SET FOOD WASTE REDUCTION TARGETS

Scotland’s Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment, Richard Lochhead, has announced that avoidable food waste across Scotland has reduced by almost 8 per cent since 2009 – with households saving around £92 million a year by avoiding unnecessary purchases.

Currently, two billion tonnes of food waste is generated globally every year, with Scotland contributing around 1.4 million tonnes to that figure, and 600,000 tonnes of that comes from our households. Sixty per cent of that household food waste is avoidable – for example unused leftover food, food that has gone off and been thrown away.

The current reduction in avoidable food waste saves approximately 140,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions globally, each year. The Cabinet Secretary will set out further details of his food waste target in his circular economy strategy which will be published later this year.

## WRAP LAUNCHES 'RECYCLE NOW' PLASTIC CAMPAIGN

WRAP have launched a 'Recycle Now' plastic recycling campaign. The campaign, which runs until the end of November 2015, aims to support a range of partners such as local authorities, brands and retailers to expand consumer's knowledge of the variety of plastic packaging items that can be recycled and to clarify what should actually be going into their recycling containers at home.

A suite of more than 50 communication materials including digital resources, posters, pull-up banners and leaflets have been designed specifically for plastic recycling. The materials can be customised by partners, allowing them to add their own plastic recycling collection information. All of the communication materials are free, easy to use and are available to download from the WRAP resource library here: <http://tinyurl.com/pfw9m3>

WRAP's plastic recycling campaign is part of a long term project focusing on specific dry recycling materials per quarter. The quarterly platforms are an opportunity for partners to deliver focused campaigns on specific material streams. The next quarters will be paper & card running December 2015 – February 2016 and metal & glass running March – May 2016.

## EU TO REFORM EMISSIONS TRADING SCHEME

The formal Environment Council of the EU has taken a step forward in reforming the EU's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS).

The EU ETS is the European Union's flagship climate policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the least cost whilst stimulating investment in the low-carbon economy. A cap is set on the total amount of certain greenhouse gases that can be emitted, and within the cap, companies receive or buy emission allowances which they can trade with one another as needed.

The Environment Council has agreed a measure, known as the Market Stability Reserve (MSR), to tackle the surplus of allowances built up in the ETS over the last five years.

The Council also agreed the EU negotiating approach to the Paris COP. These set out a strong and positive position for the final negotiations to secure an ambitious global deal to tackle climate change.

More information on the reforming of the ETS can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pcohz54>

## TECHNOLOGY AND NOVEL FOODS

### DRAFT LAW REJECTED ON IMPORTS OF GM FOOD AND FEED

The European Parliament has issued a press release concerning the rejection by the agriculture committee, of the Commission's draft law that would give member states the power to restrict or prohibit the use of EU-approved GM food or feed on their territory.

Parliament fears that arbitrary national bans could distort competition on the EU's single market and jeopardise the Union's food production sectors which are heavily dependent on imports of GM feed.

The agriculture committee's opinion, adopted by 28 votes in favour to eight against, with six abstentions, will now be scrutinised by the environment committee, which has the lead on this file, before the Parliament as a whole votes on the matter.



The press release is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/pc5b72b>

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