

# T & L UPDATE

BFFF TECHNICAL AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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**British Frozen Food Federation**

Registered Office: Warwick House, Unit 7, Long Bennington Business Park, Main Road, Long Bennington, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 5JR

Tel: 01400 283090 Fax: 01400 283098 Websites: [www.bfff.co.uk](http://www.bfff.co.uk) [www.coolcooking.co.uk](http://www.coolcooking.co.uk)

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## T & L EXPERT GROUP

T&L Expert Group Agenda - March 2016

Meet the T&L Expert Group

# FOREWORD

## Welcome to the May Edition of the T&L Update

In this offering we have tried to highlight the activities of the BFFF and its recognised centre of excellence: the Technical Expert Group. The vast majority of the technical papers and discussion items are available to BFFF members upon request. We have highlighted these throughout the T&L Update to show you where BFFF have additional information other than that summarised here but also to show the general areas of interest of both BFFF and its Technical Expert Group.

We are continuing to include the latest agenda from the meetings so that you can see the broad range of subjects covered. As always please get in contact with Martin or Crystal below for more information on any of these subjects.

As mentioned in the last T&L Update, the Member Interest Groups provide subject matter experts with the opportunity to join a group of like-minded members to discuss various technical subjects. The current list includes:

- Chlorates
- FIC
- Fish
- HAV Berries
- Into the Light
- Meat Trading
- MSM

There is a review planned shortly of the current MIG number/ structure and format of contact (currently these are e-mail groups) that will hopefully give more opportunity for general members experts to gain knowledge of specific issues. All ideas on subject matter are gratefully received as new groups are planned dependent upon membership demand. These proposals will hopefully be endorsed at the next Technical Expert Group meeting and will then provide a platform for further technical management involvement with BFFF.

Please let us know if you would like to be involved and which areas you would like to sign up for. These are ideal development opportunities for all grades of technical management and will provide discussion opportunities on a wide range of subjects placing the role they perform in the wider food sector context.

The sheer breadth and amount of change in the food sector is reflected in the wide scope of articles included here. We take the opportunity to include the widest possible definition of 'frozen' and try to place this in the context of the wider food sector and the challenges and changes it faces. Our hope is that even if you don't have the time to read through all of the articles (and their attachments) that you will find one or two items of relevance for your business. Please let us have your feedback on the areas that are of most interest and we will seek to include more details of these in the future.

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

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



Crystal Holmes  
Technical Assistant  
[crystalholmes@bfff.co.uk](mailto:crystalholmes@bfff.co.uk)



Martin Forsyth  
Head of Technical  
[martinforsyth@bfff.co.uk](mailto:martinforsyth@bfff.co.uk)

# ACTIVITY OF EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

## EFSA GUIDANCE ON COMMUNICATION DURING A FOOD CRISIS

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published guidance which it has created together with EU Member States based on best practices gained from previous food-related crises.

The report contains recommendations for communicating during a crisis that can serve as a reference for the national food safety authorities of EU Member States, including:

- Taking control of communicating about a situation.
- Communicating quickly to protect human health.
- Identifying target audiences and the tools to reach them.
- Communicating clearly and transparently.
- Collaborating with partners because food-related crises do not stop at international borders.

The EFSA guidance can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/hwc88gw>

The Cabinet Office has also published guidance on emergency planning. More information can be found under the Business Development, Certification and Training.

## EFSA PUBLISHES ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published its Annual Activity Report 2015, detailing its achievements in the past year. Along with the account of its recent work, EFSA has published a revised version of its programming document for 2016-2019 that reflects its new strategic outlook.

EFSA delivered an impressive body of scientific work in 2015. With more than 600 scientific outputs covering issues along the entire food chain, EFSA contributed to evidence-based decision-making that helped to protect European consumers.

Key scientific outputs included the full risk assessment of acrylamide, a scientific opinion on caffeine, a re-evaluation of the safety of bisphenol A, and scientific advice on outbreaks such as African Swine Fever and the bacterium *Xylella fastidiosa* that is causing olive disease in southern Italy.

2015 was an important year for EFSA as it looked ahead and charted a course for the future. Preparing the groundwork for its Strategy 2020, EFSA identified key work priorities against the backdrop of anticipated opportunities and challenges.

EFSA made significant changes to the way it carries out its work. The Authority tested new methodologies in the use of scientific evidence and drafted new guidance on how to assess and communicate scientific uncertainty.

Transparency and engagement in scientific risk assessment remained key topics throughout the year. EFSA made significant progress in sharing its data by opening up its data warehouse to a growing number of stakeholders. Open meetings of EFSA's Scientific Panels and Scientific Committee are now easier to attend – since 2015 they have been held in Brussels.

The report can be viewed here: <http://tinyurl.com/zpfvou> and the programme for 2016 -19 can be viewed here: <http://tinyurl.com/gqzve3h>

## COMMISSION BLUE GUIDE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF EU PRODUCT RULES

The European Commission has published on a Notice regarding the Blue Guide on the implementation of EU product rules (C(2016) 1958 final).

This Guide is intended to contribute to a better understanding of EU product rules and to their more uniform and coherent application across different sectors and throughout the single market. The Guide covers areas such as regulating the free movement of goods, product requirements and market surveillance.

The Blue Guide is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/gvztu2v>

## EFSA STUDY IDENTIFIES KEY TOPICS FOR FUTURE WORK IN FOOD SAFETY

A study commissioned by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to prioritise future work in the area of food safety has identified 28 key topics. The results of this study will guide collaboration between EFSA and EU Member States and contribute to the development of a common risk assessment agenda.

The study used the Delphi methodology with a three-round iterative survey. It involved more than 200 scientists and experts from a wide range of fields related to risk assessment in the area of food safety.

The experts were asked to identify and rate food safety priorities according to certain criteria such as their potential for saving resources, their added value to support risk assessment activities and their potential to improve harmonisation of risk assessment.

The 28 topics are grouped in five categories: chemical, microbiological and environmental risk assessment, nutrition and a generic category of cross-cutting issues. Using an aggregate rating measure, two topics in each category were identified as top-rated.

These include:

- common data collection across Europe,
- risk assessment of aggregated exposure,
- antimicrobial resistance,
- zoonoses,
- environmental contaminants in food, and
- the development of standard risk-benefit assessment methods of foods.

For the full report see here: <http://tinyurl.com/hgb29dp>

## ANALYTICAL & METROLOGY

### NMRO PUBLISH UPDATED WEIGHTS AND MEASURES GUIDANCE

There is an updated version of the guidance for weights and measures, including the packing rules and the appropriate design of a weight control system.

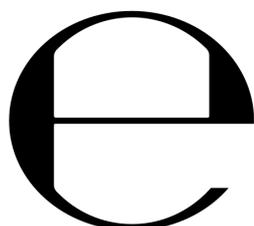
This document has been extensively revised following the introduction of FIR and an updated Consumer Rights Act 2015.

The latest version should form part of all manufacturers /specifiers of product weight control systems. Of course this is part of general food legislation requirements and not specific to frozen.

The latest version can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zpaetwt>



### WELMEC GUIDE ON E-MARKED PREPACKED PRODUCTS



The European Cooperation in Legal Metrology (WELMEC) has published an updated Guide for packers and importers of e-marked prepacked products (Guide 6.4 2015).

This document is part of a series of documents published by WELMEC, which are primarily intended to provide guidance to all those concerned with the application of Directives 76/211/EEC and 2007/45/EC for prepacked products. This guide serves as a manual for packers using the e-mark who want to have their procedures recognised in accordance with the Directive, or who want to modify procedures that have already been recognised.

The updated WELMEC guide can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/jdmocbo>

## ANIMAL WELFARE

### EU MEDICAL GROUPS CALL FOR NO ANTIBIOTIC USE ON HEALTHY ANIMALS

Fifty medics, scientists and public health organisations have signed a letter initiated by the Alliance to Save Our Antibiotics demanding a ban to the “routine, purely preventative treatment of groups of animals where no disease has been diagnosed in any of the animals”. The letter underlines the contribution of agriculture to antibiotic resistance in humans and notes that a large majority of farm antibiotics are used for group treatments.

Healthy animals not showing clinical signs of infection are only to be allowed antibiotic treatment when at high risk of infection or contamination from already sick animals, and only individually, not in groups through mass medication. Healthy animals could therefore still be preventatively treated, but under far greater restrictions. The Parliament in plenary is scheduled to vote on this report before the summer.

While a strong legal text is important, it is only the beginning. In reality, the incentives and culture along the chain will give practical meaning to terms like “individual treatment”, “routine”, “animals at high risk”, “justified by a veterinarian” etc. Experiences from countries like Denmark and the Netherlands show that under strong government leadership, antibiotics use in agriculture can be more than halved without reducing production intensity.

More information can be found on the European Public Health Alliance website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/j5oje75>

### RESISTANCE TO BACTERIA IN ANIMAL HEALTH

The European Parliament has published a press release regarding superbugs and proposed a curb on the use of antibiotics.

To fight the growing resistance of bacteria to today’s antibiotics, the use of existing antimicrobial drugs should be restricted, and new ones should be developed. In a vote on draft plans to update an EU law on veterinary medicines, MEPs advocate banning collective and preventive antibiotic treatment of animals, and backed measures to stimulate research into new medicines.

To help tackle antimicrobial resistance, the revised law would empower the European Commission to designate antimicrobials which are to be reserved for human treatment.

More information can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/hf3vru2>

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

### CABINET OFFICE PUBLISH GUIDANCE ON EMERGENCY PLANNING

The Cabinet Office has published guidance on how to prepare for emergencies. The guidance is aimed at helping people, businesses and communities to identify and prepare for hazards and threats that could disrupt their lives.

The guidance contains information on:

- What risks should you plan for?
- Prepare yourself for emergencies
- Prepare your business for emergencies
- Prepare your community for emergencies
- Further information

The business section provides information for basic, quick and easy preparation, more advanced preparation and also more advanced preparation for flooding. It also has a plethora of links to resources that businesses can access and use in creating emergency plans.

The guidance can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/gn5usl2>

## FOOD HYGIENE RATING SCHEME: REVISION 4 OF THE 'BRAND STANDARD'

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) wrote to the Heads of Service (Environmental Health) in Local Authorities in England to advise that Revision 4 of the Food Hygiene Rating System (FHRS) 'Brand Standard' has been published and is available.

The 'Brand Standard' provides guidance to local authorities on the implementation and operation of the FHRS. The FSA has given a commitment to keep this under review and to revise and update it as appropriate.

The letter to LAs can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/z4559qq> and Revision 4 of the 'Brand Standard' is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/glvo6sv>

## BIS PUBLISH INFORMATION ON SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE AND EMPLOYMENT ACT

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has published information on the implementation of the Small Business Enterprise and Employment Act 2015.

All companies will be affected in some way, as the Act changes your legal requirements, including what you file with Companies House. This will impact your company's systems and processes.

The changes with the highest impact will be delivered in the final stage, giving you more time to get your company ready.

Changes may still happen as secondary legislation passes through Parliament. BIS will keep their website updated and release more information as this becomes available.

From June 2016, the annual return is being replaced. Instead, you'll now file a 'confirmation statement' at least once a year. You need to 'check and confirm' the company information held for you and inform BIS of any changes.

There'll be a fee to pay with the confirmation statement. You can update your record as many times as you need to, but you'll only be charged once a year.

For most companies, this will be the first time notifying BIS of your employees with significant control (PSC). New companies will also provide this information on their incorporation documents.

The BIS webpage outlines everything businesses need to know to get ready for the changes, and can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/oafvdd7>



## CHEMICALS, CONTAMINANTS & FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

### FDE GUIDELINES ON PAPER AND BOARD FROM RECYCLED FIBRES

FoodDrinkEurope has published Guidelines on the safe use of paper and board made from recycled fibres for food contact use.

The document is intended to illustrate best practice in relation to the use and selection of recycled paper and board for food contact packaging. The purpose of this document is to encourage a "risk evaluation" approach to assess the suitability of a given item of recycled paper packaging, for use with a specific food product in given packaging format, and also to encourage an appropriate dialogue between food producers and their packaging suppliers.

A copy of the Guidelines can be downloaded for free here: <http://tinyurl.com/zkbs5sf>



## COMMISSION REPORT ON SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIOCIDES

The European Commission has published a report to the European Parliament and Council on the sustainable use of biocides pursuant to Article 18 of Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal products.

Biocidal products, such as disinfectants, wood preservatives, insecticides, insect repellents or rodenticides, are a family of products intended to destroy or control harmful or unwanted organisms (such as viruses, bacteria, fungi, insects or vertebrate animals) that have detrimental effects on the environment, animals, or humans, or their activities or the products they use or produce. Biocidal products are used in a wide variety of ways by both industrial and professional users as well as by the general public.

The objective of the Biocidal Products Regulation (BPR) is to improve the functioning of the internal market whilst ensuring a high level of protection of human health, animal health and the environment. The purpose of this report is therefore to examine the elements listed in Article 18 of the BPR and which relate to:

- The promotion of best practices as a means of reducing the use of biocidal products to a minimum;
- The most effective approaches for monitoring the use of biocidal products;
- The development and application of integrated pest management principles with regard to the use of biocidal products;
- The risks posed by the use of biocidal products in specific areas such as schools, workplaces, kindergartens etc., and whether additional measures are needed to address those risks;
- The role of improved performance of the equipment used for applying biocidal products.

The Commission report can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/jb99td3>

## SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS EXPOSURE TO ACRYLAMIDE AND LEAD AS KEY CONTAMINANTS

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) has published the results of a Total Diet Study carried out to assess the dietary exposure of the Irish population to a number of chemicals that may pose a risk to health if consumed in excessive amounts.

The study, which analysed the most commonly consumed foods in Ireland for particular chemical contaminants, is an important tool for identifying and assessing potential food safety risks to consumers. It complements existing food monitoring and surveillance programmes carried out by the FSAI and other competent bodies.

Overall, the results show that the Irish population is generally not at risk from the chemical contaminants analysed in the diet. However, in line with international findings, potential concern is identified in relation to exposure to acrylamide (a chemical formed during the frying, roasting or baking of a variety of foods); aflatoxins (natural chemicals produced by certain fungi); and, to a lesser degree, lead. These findings are not specific to Ireland; rather, they are of concern worldwide. Continuous efforts are being made by risk managers nationally and internationally to reduce exposure to these substances to as low as reasonably achievable, bearing in mind that zero exposure is impossible. These measures include continuous review of legislation and applying best practices in agriculture and food manufacturing.

The study assessed 147 foods and beverages representative of the normal diet consumed by the population in Ireland during the period of 2012–2014. Samples analysed were based on the most commonly used food preparation practices. Chemicals studied included contaminant metals: aluminium, arsenic, cadmium, chromium, lead, mercury and tin; essential nutrients: iodine and selenium; food additives: nitrates and nitrites; food contaminants: acrylamide, mycotoxins, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs); pesticide residues; and bisphenol A and phthalates which are present in some food contact materials.

More information, and a link to the full survey, can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/jylsz5h>

## DEFRA PUBLISH PESTICIDE MONITORING IN FOOD FOR QUARTER 3 2015

Defra have published the third quarter results from the government's monitoring programme in 2015, to check home-produced and imported food for pesticide residues.

Monitoring is carried out by the Health and Safety Executive. The results are reviewed by the Expert Committee on Pesticide Residues in Food (PRiF). The most recent third quarter results, along with relevant annexes, can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/zhfnw48> The results for the fourth quarter are expected to be published in June 2016.

# FOOD SAFETY AND ZOOSES

## FSA PUBLISHES CAMPYLOBACTER SURVEY RESULTS

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published the latest set of results from its survey of Campylobacter on fresh chickens, a food micro-organism which is mainly found on raw poultry and is the biggest cause of food poisoning in the UK.

The results for the second quarter of testing, from October to December 2015, showed a decrease in the number of birds with the highest level of contamination from the same months in the previous year. The latest data show that 11% of chickens tested positive for the highest level of contamination, down from 19% in October to December 2014. Campylobacter was present on 59% of chicken samples, down from 74% in the same months of the previous year.

In this second quarter of the FSA's second survey, 966 samples of fresh whole chilled UK-produced chickens and packaging were tested.

The full results report can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/jeabbo4>

## FDA PUBLISH FINAL RULE ON SAFETY OF FOOD IN TRANSIT

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has finalised a new food safety rule under the landmark FDA Food Safety Modernisation Act (FSMA), which will help to prevent food contamination during transportation.

The rule will require those involved in transporting human and animal food by motor or rail vehicle to follow recognized best practices for sanitary transportation, such as properly refrigerating food, adequately cleaning vehicles between loads and properly protecting food during transportation.

The action is part of a larger effort to focus on prevention of food safety problems throughout the food chain, and the rule implements the Sanitary Food Transportation Act of 2005 (SFTA) as well as the requirement in section 111 of FSMA that instructed FDA to issue SFTA regulations. The regulation will apply to food transported within the United States by motor or rail vehicle, whether or not the food is offered for or enters interstate commerce.

Shippers, loaders, carriers and receivers engaged in transportation operations of food imported by motor or rail vehicle and consumed or distributed in the United States are also subject to the final rule.

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

## FSS RESEARCH ON PRODUCE AND SPROUTING SEED CONTAMINATION WITH E.COLI

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) has published two research project reports investigating the survival of microbial contamination during the production of fresh produce and the effectiveness of controls to minimise the risk to the consumer.

The first project was commissioned in response to an outbreak of E. coli O157 in Great Britain during 2011, associated with the handling and consumption of soil covered vegetables and simulated a 'worst case scenario' contamination event occurring to growing crops a week prior to harvest. The research showed that the commercial processes used to clean, prepare and store vegetables did reduce contamination, however in the unlikely event of a large crop contamination occurring close to harvest, some contamination may remain.

More information on the first project can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/zetbpl7>

The second project was commissioned as a result of an E. coli O104 outbreak in Europe in 2011, where consumption of sprouts grown from contaminated seeds was associated with illness. FSS investigated four different treatments that could be used to reduce contamination when sprouting seeds at home. A hot water (90°C for 2 minutes) treatment was found to be the most effective, although it was not 100% effective when the seeds were heavily contaminated.

More information on the second project can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/hrdd23z>

The findings from both of these projects will be used by FSS to inform future risk assessments and food safety advice in relation to fresh produce.



## EFSA PUBLISH REPORT ON USE OF SAFETY ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR CHEMICALS

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have published a report on the joint workshop they held to review the Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC) approach to chemical risk assessment.

The experts who attended the meeting agreed that the TTC approach is fit for purpose as a screening tool to assess low-dose exposure to chemical substances and identify chemicals for which further data are necessary to assess risks to human health.

The meeting made a number of proposals to improve and expand the TTC approach, including a revised decision tree, based on the current state-of-the-science and available toxicological databases.

It also recommended that a permanent repository should be set up for data supporting TTC and the Cramer classification scheme by merging existing databases, using clear inclusion criteria for studies.

A spokesman for EFSA said that the Authority was now considering how best to incorporate the recommendations of the expert group into its risk assessment practice.

The report was finalised following an eight-week online public consultation carried out by EFSA and the WHO, and can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/znbu5v7>

## FOOD SECURITY, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

### FSA PUBLISH SUMMARY OF FOOD INCIDENTS

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published a summary of food incidents handled between October and December 2015. This list, which has been compiled for the first time, summarises alerts issued by the FSA to recall or withdraw products. It also includes information about where the FSA has supported foodborne outbreak investigations, and can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/htdjeej>

Over the three month period, 38 food notices were issued, of which 26 were allergy alerts, with the top three undeclared allergens being cereals, milk and mustard. The FSA also supported three foodborne outbreak investigations. The information describes the overall details of the incident, the level of risk to consumers and what action we, industry and/or local authorities took.

The intention of the collated data is to make it easier for consumers to access incident information.

Each year, a small number of incidents or investigations are put forward for a detailed review so that the FSA can make improvements and identify lessons learned. An investigation was launched concerning a case that was handled in September 2014 where there were reports of the presence of soya in wheat flour. A separate report regarding the outcome of this incident can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/jlmfm2o>

This short report followed an issue raised by industry with the FSA in late 2014.

It arose from suspected adventitious contamination with soya flour within consignments of wheat flour (usually imported from USA/Canada). Soya is sometimes grown alongside wheat and bulk handling facilities (silos etc.) handle these materials. Formal sampling took place following the raising of this issue by industry and 61 samples were taken.

'Very low levels were found'. It is not reported but these results appeared to be above the LOD but below 1%.

However 'may contain' statements for soya were not recommended because risk assessments taken at the time did not demand it. A quote from the report: "Adventitious presence of soya protein in flour would require precautionary allergen labelling only if levels were high enough to pose a health risk to allergen sufferers."

Members may wish to note this stance as it appears to be the first time that precautionary labelling has not been recommended when levels above an LOD have been found. If you would like any further information on this matter, please contact [martinforsyth@bff.co.uk](mailto:martinforsyth@bff.co.uk)



## FIRST ASSESSMENT OF FOOD CRIME IN THE UK

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published the first assessment of food crime in the UK. The Food Crime Annual Strategic Assessment (FCASA), carried out by the FSA's National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) on behalf of the FSA and Food Standards Scotland, examines the scale and nature of the food crime threat to the UK's £200 billion food and drink industry. The assessment will inform the NFCU's priorities over the next year.

The assessment identifies a wide range of vulnerabilities and risks across the food industry but found little to suggest that organised crime groups have so far made substantial in-roads into UK food supply chains. However, with the UK food and drink sector representing 11% of the UK economy and chances of detection relatively low, the report suggests that there remains a significant risk to consumers and legitimate businesses from serious fraud. The assessment was carried out to:

- Highlight themes and trends in food crime intelligence;
- Establish a baseline understanding of the UK food crime threat;
- Enable the prioritisation of issues which pose the greatest risk of harm; and
- Identify gaps in understanding.

This assessment report can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/jmdpk7j>

## SCIENCE REPORT ON DEVELOPMENTS IN WHOLE-GENOME SEQUENCING

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published the new Science Report by its Chief Scientific Adviser Professor Guy Poppy. In this third issue of the Science Report, Professor Poppy looks at whole-genome sequencing, the science of mapping the genetic make-up of micro-organisms, and how this new technology can help the FSA's work to ensure food is safe and authentic.

Professor Poppy says: 'This report focuses on the exciting developments in whole-genome sequencing, and how this powerful and rapidly developing technology is being increasingly utilised by the FSA.'

The report examines how the increasing speed and decreasing costs of whole-genome sequencing has transformed scientists' ability to investigate foodborne disease outbreaks, providing faster identification and control of outbreaks. The report also looks at how whole-genome sequencing is being used in other countries for tracking certain pathogens like listeria and its potential for checking the authenticity of food.

As well as discussing the benefits that developments in whole-genome sequencing brings to a range of competencies across the FSA's remit, the report also identifies some of the key areas where the FSA, in collaboration with partners, is supporting future advancements in the technology.

The Report on whole-genome sequencing can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/za8lrre>



## LARGEST SEIZURES OF FAKE FOOD AND DRINK IN INTERPOL-EUROPOL OPERATION

More than 10,000 tonnes and one million litres of hazardous fake food and drink have been seized in operations across 57 countries in an INTERPOL-Europol coordinated initiative to protect public health and safety.

Operation Opson V, resulted in seizures ranging from nearly nine tonnes of counterfeit sugar contaminated with fertilizer in Khartoum, Sudan to Italian officers recovering more than 85 tonnes of olives which had been 'painted' with copper sulphate solutions to enhance their colour.

Involving police, customs, national food regulatory bodies and partners from the private sector, checks were carried out at shops, markets, airports, seaports and industrial estates between November 2015 and February 2016.

A number of arrests were made worldwide throughout the operation and investigations are continuing. Among the aims of the operation is to identify and disrupt the organized crime networks behind the trafficking in fake goods and enhance cooperation between the involved law enforcement and regulatory authorities.

First launched in 2011, the Opson operations have grown from involving just 10 countries across Europe, to involving nearly 60 countries in every region of the world resulting in the seizure of tens of thousands of tonnes of fake and substandard food and drink.

The report can be viewed here: <http://tinyurl.com/jce9bgc>

## ENVIRONMENT AGENCY WARNING ON ILLEGAL SALMON AND SEA TROUT

The Environment Agency has announced that enforcement officers are targeting restaurants, hotels, pubs and fishmongers in Yorkshire to target illegal sales of salmon and sea trout.

Fisheries enforcement officers are visiting food businesses to check coolers, freezers and fish storage facilities as well as giving advice on how to spot wild salmon and sea trout that have been caught illegally.

Wild salmon and sea trout that have been caught legitimately must possess an Environment Agency tag that identifies the source of the fish. This tag must remain attached until a fish is processed.

More information on the investigation, and what requires an Environment Agency tag, can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zc2w7ou>

## ESTABLISHING PREVALENCE OF FRAUDULENT PRACTICES IN MARKETING OF HONEY

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has written to Heads of Enforcement Authorities regarding the coordinated control plan establishing the prevalence of fraudulent practices in the marketing of honey.

In 2015, the EU Recommendation 2015/1558 required Member States to participate in a co-ordinated control plan with a view to establishing the prevalence of fraudulent practices in the marketing of honey. In the UK 147 honey samples were taken and the report accompanying the letter summarises the UK's findings as part of this survey.

The purpose was to check compliance with EU rules, looking specifically at the prevalence of adulteration with sugars or mislabelling with regard to botanical source or geographical origin or other particulars. It also aimed to improve the knowledge and strengthen the analytical capability to detect the presence of exogenous (or added) sugars or sugar products in honey.

The results show that 93% of the samples were found to be compliant. 5% of the samples were classed as non-compliant. These non-compliances were mostly related to the incorrect botanical source (4%) and or for the presence of exogenous sugars or sugar products (1%). 2% of samples were classified as being in "suspicion of non-compliance" with regards to geographical region (1%) and possible presence of exogenous sugars or sugar products (1%).

The letter to Heads of Enforcement Authorities can be found on the FSA website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/jteu8h8>



## GLOBAL STANDARDS

### BRC STANDARDS DRAFTS FOR STORAGE & DISTRIBUTION AND RETAIL

BRC are currently reviewing their Storage and Distribution Standard.

Updating this standard will bring it into line with other standards and the grading requirements are to be generally welcomed, as major customers will recognise the system.

The BRC are also in the process of creating a new standard for retail. This is currently in draft form, and has been developed with significant input from a number of retail organisations and other stakeholders.

The opportunity for comment has now passed on both of the above documents, but if you would like any more information, please contact [martinforsyth@bff.co.uk](mailto:martinforsyth@bff.co.uk) or [crystalholmes@bff.co.uk](mailto:crystalholmes@bff.co.uk) who can pass on the information that has previously been circulated to the Technical Expert Group.

# IMPORTS AND THE SUPPLY CHAIN

## UPDATE ON TARIFF RATE QUOTAS

Discussions to review TRQ trade mechanisms started in 2014 and stalled for most of 2015. Discussions between MS and the Commission have now recommenced. It is hoped that a regulatory proposal will be agreed by the summer. Any new system is hoped to be in place for early 2017.

At a meeting in March, Defra gave a number of reasons demonstrating the Commissions' intention to change the current system for administering TRQ and reject the status quo sought by some European importers and traders. Not only is there the ongoing commitment to review, harmonise and simplify TRQ regulations but there is both evidence and ECJ judgements to demonstrate that the current system is being abused. When the Commission are aware of this they have a regulatory obligation to do something to correct it.

The Commission have genuinely not decided on their solution and are in an options gathering exercise currently. This gives the UK the opportunity to present, via UK negotiators, a cohesive solution. There was general agreement amongst the businesses represented on the key issues and potential solutions.

If you would like any more information on this, please contact [martinforsyth@bff.co.uk](mailto:martinforsyth@bff.co.uk)

## EU DG TRADE PUBLISH 'TRANSPARENCY' DOCUMENTS RELATING TO TTIP

The European Commission has published further documents from the ongoing negotiations on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), in line with its commitment to enhanced transparency in the ongoing trade negotiations with the United States.

The documents made public include the recent EU proposal on regulatory cooperation which the Commission submitted to the United States during the last round of talks in February.

Regulatory cooperation is an innovative part and a key pillar of TTIP. Regulatory cooperation with the United States has been on the agenda for many years and has produced good results in areas of common interest (e.g. ranging from aviation and marine safety to organic labels, electric cars and smart grids).

Explanatory documents about this key aspect of the talks are available online, here: <http://tinyurl.com/oynd9wx>

## CODEX COMMENT ON WTO TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE AGREEMENT

The World Trade organization's Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement encourages members to base their technical regulations, standards, and conformity assessment procedures on international standards in order to facilitate trade.

Speaking at the TBT Committee meeting in Geneva, Codex Secretary Tom Heilandt recalled that "when standards and other Codex texts are adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission they are purely recommendations for application by host governments."

The Codex Secretary also explained that the uptake of standards depended, to a fair extent, on the strength of consensus achieved in the Commission and also on the national situation in countries that may require the use of a different measure. This measure would need to be justified by risk assessment in case of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, but he confirmed that there was a less explicit link when dealing with trade.

More than 20 recent cases have risen concerning food at TBT and on numerous occasions the statement "not in line with Codex standards" is heard.

He went on to give examples ranging from expiry date labelling, nutrition front of pack labelling and nutrition warnings as well as GM labelling and misleading claims on labels.

In highlighting ongoing work in Codex he confirmed that work on Codex nutrient reference values (NRV) intended for the general population for labelling purposes (in relation to the risk of Non-Communicable Diseases - e.g. asthma, diabetes, heart disease, cancer) has started to set the scene for "warnings" on labels. Codex has also developed extensive guidance on claims in general and especially health and nutrition claims (claims which should not be misleading to the consumer).

More information on this can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zf28ggz>

## AUTHORISATION TO INTRODUCE FRESH MEAT INTO EU FROM SINGAPORE

The European Commission presented a draft implementing Regulation, amending Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 206/2010, which adds Singapore to the list of third countries authorised for introduction of fresh meat into the EU.

This is based on a request from Singapore and will provide for the possibility of transit through Singapore of fresh meat originating from New Zealand, for which New Zealand is authorised for introduction into the Union. To verify the procedures and control thereof in Singapore, the model veterinary certificate ("NZ-Transit-SG") is drawn up.

The draft text was submitted to a vote and was supported unanimously by the Member States.

The Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/535 can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/hataksb>

## LABELLING AND GENERAL FOOD LAW

### EU TRADE MARK REGULATIONS 2016

The European Union Trade Mark Regulations 2016 SI 2016/299 was laid before Parliament on 7 March 2016 and entered into force on 6 April 2016.

The purpose of this Regulation is to update references and terminology in UK legislation - in particular the Trade Marks Act 1994 ("the 1994 Act") and the Community Trade Mark Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/1027) ("the 2006 Regulations") – in order to reflect amendments to Council Regulation (EC) No. 207/2009 on the European Union Trade Mark ("the EU Trade Mark Regulation") that governs matters relating to the EU-wide trade mark and which come into effect from 23 March 2016.

The changes include substituting "European Union" in place of "Community" (for example, "Community trade marks" become "European Union trade marks") and replacing references to Articles of the previous (now repealed) Regulation with references to the corresponding Articles of the EU Trade Mark Regulation.

The Trade Mark Regulations 2016 can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/glvfs4a>

### EU COURT RULING ON HEALTH CLAIMS RELATING TO GLUCOSE

The General Court of the European Union has issued a press release confirming that a number of health claims relating to glucose may not be authorised.

Despite positive advice from the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), which considered that a cause-and-effect link could be established between the consumption of glucose and normal energy yielding metabolism, the Commission previously refused to authorise those health claims.

In the press release the General Court observed in particular that, although the Commission does not question the advice from EFSA, the Commission must, as a risk-management measure, take account of the applicable EU legislation as well as other legitimate and relevant factors. Since, according to generally accepted principles of nutrition and health, the average consumer must reduce their consumption of sugar, the Commission did not err in finding that the health claims in question, which highlight only the beneficial effects of glucose for energy metabolism without mentioning the dangers inherent in increased sugar consumption, were ambiguous and misleading and, accordingly, could not be authorised.

The press release relating to this issue can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/zs2mbmm>

### ECJ JUDGEMENT ON THE LABELLING OF CITRUS FRUIT FROM SPAIN

The Court of Justice of the European Union has published a Press Release regarding the previous ruling of the European Court concerning the labelling of citrus fruit indicating preserving agents and other chemical substances used in post-harvest processing.

The Court previously concluded that the labelling relating to the possible post-harvest processing of citrus fruits is necessary in order to ensure adequate consumer protection and it is not acceptable to distinguish in that regard between consumers within the EU and those outside.

This judgment dismisses Spain's appeal against the ruling.

The full press release can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zn39enj>

## FSA N.I PUBLISH GUIDANCE ON USE OF ORIGIN MARKING 'IRISH'

European food labelling legislation Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 on Food Information to Consumers introduced in December 2014 sets out requirements for 'voluntary labelling'- including country of origin - stating that any additional voluntary claims must not mislead, be ambiguous or confuse consumers.

Further European food labelling legislation introduced in April 2015 (Regulation (EU) No. 1337/2013) for fresh, chilled and frozen unprocessed meat of swine, sheep, goat and poultry stated that any additional voluntary information must not contradict or detract from the mandatory country of origin information.

Country of Origin labelling is compulsory in certain circumstances and any additional voluntary labelling claims must not mislead, be ambiguous or confuse consumers.

The FSA's current position on using the additional voluntary term 'Irish' on food produced in Northern Ireland is that it may be misleading to consumers as this term is also used to describe another member state of the EU. However, whether or not the use of the term 'Irish' in food labelling is misleading, can only be determined by a court of law.

As the Central Competent Authority, the FSA continues to advise District Councils (who enforce the Regulations in Northern Ireland) on a case by case basis taking into account all labelling information on the product, including illustrative material such as maps, flags, emblems etc. Ultimately it is the food manufacturers' responsibility not to mislead consumers with the labelling information that they provide.

## ITALY LAUNCHES OLIVE OIL CERTIFICATION LABELS

A certification label added to bottles of extra virgin olive oil will combat fraud and allow consumers to trace their oil from tree to table, the Italian olive oil sector has said.



The label will include a QR barcode so consumers can instantly find out more about the oils' origins. Only oil from Italy that can be traced back to the producer will be allowed to bear the label, which was jointly developed by the Italian Agricultural Confederation (CIA), National Consortium of Olive Growers (CNO) and Italy's State Mint.

The CIA described its 'super seal' as "an instrument designed to deal a lethal blow to those who intend to defraud, adulterate and counterfeit, but also to those who cunningly circumvent the rules and regulations or exploit their weaknesses, deceiving the distracted consumer".

According to the CIA, there are more than 800,000 olive groves in Italy producing 400,000 tonnes of extra virgin olive oil annually.

Italy has 40 varieties of olive oil that have been granted European designated origin protection (PDO) and two that have protected geographical indication (PGI) status.

More information can be found on the news story, here: <http://tinyurl.com/j6brzl>

## MEP'S CALL FOR MANDATORY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELLING FOR MEAT AND MILK

The European Parliament has published a Press Release regarding their support for introducing mandatory country of origin labelling of meat and milk.

The motion for a resolution restates Parliament's position in favour of mandatory labelling of the country of origin or place of provenance of meat in processed foods. MEPs add that this labelling should also be made mandatory for meat other than that of bovine, porcine, ovine and caprine species and poultry meat, for milk and milk used as an ingredient in dairy products, for unprocessed foods, single-ingredient products and for ingredients that make up more than 50% of a food.

This will be put to a vote by the full House during the April or May plenary sessions in Strasbourg.

More information can be found on the press release here: <http://tinyurl.com/hwrxf6s>



# NUTRITION, ADDITIVES AND HEALTH

## PHE PUBLISHES NEW DATA ON SALT CONSUMPTION LEVELS

Public Health England has published a press release detailing new data on UK salt consumption.

The National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) shows that on average, adults are eating 8 grams of salt per day, but have cut their average salt consumption by 0.9 grams per day in the decade from 2005 to 2014.

Public Health England commissioned an assessment of the salt content of 24-hour urine collections made from May to September 2014. A random sample of 689 adults aged 19 to 64 years, designed to be representative of adults in England, took part in the study. This report continues the series of urinary sodium surveys across the general adult population in United Kingdom countries since 2005/06. The results are used by government to monitor progress towards the recommended maximum salt intake for adults of no more than 6 grams per person per day.

Too much salt in the diet can raise blood pressure, which increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. A reduction in average salt intake from 8g to 6g per day, it is estimated, would prevent over 8000 premature deaths each year and save the NHS over £570million annually.

The PHE press release can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/z8dop9s> and the NDNS survey is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/hqlb9sd>

## FOOD MANUFACTURERS RESPOND TO NEW SALT INTAKE DATA

The Food and Drink Federation (FDF) has published comments on new figures from Public Health England measuring salt intakes.

Salt consumption in the UK has been on a downward trend for years, with voluntary recipe change from Britain's food and drink producers credited with driving much of this progress. FDF has reported that its members alone have on average cut salt in their products by 8% since 2011.

The FDF commented that current data shows that intakes of salt continue to drop, although at a slower rate. Continued public education and action from more companies across the food industry is needed to drive further progress. Producers of packaged foods, which have been at the forefront of this work, are finding it harder to further reduce salt without compromising product safety, quality, taste or shelf-life.

Comments from FDF's Corporate Affairs Director, Tim Rycroft, can be found here <http://tinyurl.com/hv9e2p>

## FSA LAUNCH NEW EATWELL GUIDE IN N. IRELAND

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has launched 'The Eatwell Guide' in Northern Ireland to replace the Eatwell plate which now reflects updated dietary recommendations, including those on sugar, fibre and starchy carbohydrates, from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) report on Carbohydrates and Health in 2015.

The guide shows that a healthy diet should now include more fruit, vegetables and starchy carbohydrates and have fewer sugary foods and drinks, as well as the revised proportions of the food groups that help us meet official advice and nutrient requirements.

Sugary soft drinks have been removed from the image, and foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar have been moved to the periphery of the guide, reflecting advice that they are not an essential part of a healthy and balanced diet.

The new 'Eatwell Guide' can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/j4kjhb3>



### The Eatwell Guide Helping you eat a healthy, balanced diet



## GOVERNMENT'S HEALTHY EATING GUIDELINES RECOMMEND MSC CERTIFIED FISH

Following a recent update, the UK government's official healthy eating guidelines now recommend that consumers choose fish from sustainable sources, including Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified seafood.

The EatWell Guide, produced by Public Health England, gives official recommendations on which foods should be eaten for a healthy, balanced diet. Longstanding advice that consumers should eat at least two portions of fish a week, including one portion of oily fish, has been updated to specify that fish should come from sustainable sources, "to ensure that there are enough fish to eat now and in the future."

Commenting on the new recommendation, Toby Middleton, Programme Director for MSC in the UK & North Atlantic, said: "Until now, the government's advice on eating fish has focused solely on the health benefits of including seafood in your diet but now, for the first time, there's recognition that we need to choose sustainable seafood if we want to protect the ocean environment and protect seafood supplies for future generations."

The government's information on fish specification can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/7qdbxkr>

## DECISION PAPER ON 5 A DAY LOGO AND UPDATED LICENSING GUIDELINES

Public Health England (PHE) has published a Decision Paper on the outcome of work regarding extending the existing government 5-a-day logo to composite foods, updating wider 5-a-day messaging around fruit juice and smoothies, amending the criteria for use of the government 5-a-day logo on smoothies to reflect this and refreshing the logo visual image.

The key points are:

- A decision has been made not to extend the existing government 5-a-day logo to include composite foods. This means, as previously, the government logo can only be used on products with no added fat, sugar or salt;
- New advice on smoothies has been developed, and smoothies and fruit juice are now being treated as one category. This means the advice is that smoothies and fruit juice in total should only be consumed as one 150ml portion per day and that this should be with a meal to reduce the risk of tooth decay;
- The use of the government 5-a-day logo on smoothies has been amended to reflect this and can only be used to show 1 of your 5-a-day;
- More generally the government 5-a-day logo can only be used to show a maximum of 2 portions, even if the product contains more;
- It is now free to use the government logo, but a licence is still required.

PHE has also updated its Government 5-a-day Licensing Guidelines. This document sets out the criteria a person, company or organisation must meet to be granted a licence, and the conditions for the use of the Government 5-a-day logo when licensed by Public Health England.

The decision paper can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/jr4aubo> and the updated 5-a-day licensing guidelines are available here: <http://tinyurl.com/hu8fmp8>

## UK BUDGET – SUGAR TAX

The UK Government announced in its March 2016 Budget a new soft drinks industry levy targeted at producers and importers of soft drinks that contain added sugar.

The levy will be designed to encourage companies to reformulate by reducing the amount of added sugar in the drinks they sell, moving consumers towards lower sugar alternatives, and reducing portion sizes.

It is hoped that the introduction of a sugar tax will help to tackle childhood obesity, with the taxes funding a doubling of the primary schools sports premium to £320 million per year from September 2017.

Under this levy, if producers change their behaviour, they will pay less tax. The levy is expected to raise £520 million in the first year.

The full Budget can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/hdyxgz>



## WORLD HEALTH DAY CALL FOR GLOBAL ACTION TO TACKLE RISE IN DIABETES

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is focussing the 2016 World Health Day on global action to halt the rise in, and improve care for people with diabetes.

The number of people living with diabetes has almost quadrupled since 1980 to 422 million adults, with most living in developing countries. Factors driving this dramatic rise include overweightness and obesity.

WHO think that health-promoting environments can help to reduce the risk. Measures needed include expanding health-promoting environments to reduce diabetes risk factors, like physical inactivity and unhealthy diets, and strengthening national capacities to help people with diabetes receive the treatment and care they need to manage their conditions.

For more information, please visit: <http://tinyurl.com/gwuzfsz>

## FDF RESPOND TO CALL FOR ACTIVITY CALORIE LABELLING

The Food and Drink Federation (FDF) has responded to the recent call for calorie and activity equivalent labelling.

Tim Rycroft, Corporate Affairs Director at the FDF, said:

“Weight gain occurs when more calories are consumed than are burned during physical activity. For this reason, initiatives which reinforce the well understood calorie message and encourage people to be more active are to be encouraged.

“As an industry, we are looking at what more we can do to help people use the existing nutrition information provided to understand how different foods and drinks fit within a healthy lifestyle. Activity equivalent information is an interesting concept and the role it could play in driving meaningful behaviour change is certainly worth exploring.

“However, we believe further research is needed into whether activity equivalent calorie information could be an effective way of encouraging consumers to achieve a healthier lifestyle. EU rules which dictate what companies can and cannot put on their food labels would need to be considered in any proposals to add to on-pack information.”

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULT ON NUTRITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR HOSPITAL FOOD

Scotland's NHS has published refreshed and extended nutritional guidelines for hospital food to ensure all patients get the best possible nourishment.

A consultation has also been launched on whether these guidelines should be made legally binding – a move which would be a first for the UK.

Food in Hospitals 2016, published by NHS Health Facilities Scotland, is a revision of previous guidelines from 2008. It sets out nutrition and catering criteria for patients in hospitals.



It also gives information on how the guidelines can be met, through assessments of the patients' dietary needs menu planning and practical suggestions on food choices suitable for different dietary needs.

The revised guidelines include:

- A new section to cover food in children's hospitals and wards, including nutrition standards for specific age groups, and guidance on portion sizes and appropriate kitchenware
- New guidance on the provision of hospital food and fluid based on updated research and guidance from experts
- Updated guidance on food allergens
- Guidance on the importance of audit and monitoring of standards

The consultation is asking for views on whether these guidelines should be placed on a statutory footing, as school meals are. This would mean NHS boards would have a legal obligation to ensure that minimum nutritional standards are adhered to.

The consultation is open until 13th June 2016. To respond, please find the consultation paper and survey here: <http://tinyurl.com/glcw2>

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT PUBLISH REVISED DIETARY GOALS

Scottish ministers have made changes to the goals based on evidence and advice from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) and Food Standards Scotland.

The new guidelines match SACN recommendations, issued last year, that a person's diet should consist of no more than five per cent free sugars. This is a 50 per cent reduction from the previous recommended level.

This equates to roughly 30g, or six teaspoons of sugar per day for a typical adult, and less for children. Free sugars are those added to food, or those naturally occurring in fruit juices, honey and syrups. Eating too much sugar can lead to health problems including obesity and diabetes.

The new goals recommend that people eat 30g of fibre a day – a 25 per cent increase on previous levels. Fibre helps to prevent heart disease, diabetes and weight gain, improve digestive health and can reduce the risk of some cancers.

There is also a new goal that carbohydrates should make up around 50 per cent of a person's total energy intake.

Maureen Watt, Minister for Public Health, said: "Despite some improvements in recent years, obesity levels are still too high in Scotland. Also, in common with most of Western Europe, we have seen continued increases in the levels of Type 2 diabetes. It's clear that, as a nation, we need to improve our diet and think more about reducing our sugar intake and eating more fibre."

The revised Scottish dietary goals can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zchjudg>

## DOH PUBLISH REPORT ON ENCOURAGING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY 'START ACTIVE, STAY ACTIVE'

The Department of Health (DoH) has published the Chief Medical Officers Report with guidelines on the volume, duration, frequency and type of physical activity required to achieve general health benefits.

The report from the 4 Chief Medical Officers in the UK is intended for the NHS, local authorities and a range of other organisations designing services to promote physical activity.

The report will be of use to professionals, practitioners and policymakers concerned with formulating and implementing policies and programmes that utilise the promotion of physical activity, sport, exercise and active travel to achieve health gains.

The guidelines allow greater flexibility for achieving the recommended levels of physical activity. Bringing all of these aspects together creates a number of key features of this report, including:

- a lifecourse approach
- a stronger recognition of the role of vigorous intensity activity
- the flexibility to combine moderate and vigorous intensity activity
- an emphasis upon daily activity
- new guidelines on sedentary behaviour.

The report can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/p78j7zg>

## EFSA TO ASSESS SUCRALOSE FOLLOWING CANCER CONCERNS

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) will conduct a scientific evaluation of sucralose following the publication of a study which found a link between the sweetener and cancer. The request was made by the European Commission on 22nd February 2016. It also requested that EFSA carries out an assessment of the study in question and to provide a statement of validity of its conclusions.

The study, led by Italian researcher Morando Soffritti of the Ramazzini Institute, found that artificial sweetener sucralose induces a dose-related incidence of leukemia in male mice.

EFSA first conducted a safety assessment of sucralose in 1989 and then in 2000, fixing an acceptable daily intake (ADI) of 15mg per kilo body weight. A more recent opinion in December 2015 proposed extending the sweetener's use in foods for special medical purposes for children.

Sucralose is listed as E955 in Europe, and is around 600 times sweeter than sugar that is used in over 4,500 food, beverage and pharmaceutical products around the world. BFFF will report the findings of the scientific evaluation when it is concluded.

## GIVING ALLERGENIC FOODS TO INFANTS MAY PREVENT ALLERGIES

A major new study for the Food Standards Agency (FSA) which has been published in the New England Journal of Medicine, has found that introducing allergenic foods to the infant diet from three months of age may be effective in food allergy prevention if the recommended quantity of allergenic food was consumed.

The research compared those infants that were breastfed and consumed allergenic foods from three months with those solely breastfed and given foods at six months.

Overall, food allergy was lower in the group introduced to allergenic foods early but the difference was not statistically significant. Early introduction of all the foods was not easy but it was safe.

Among the infants who did manage to consume the recommended quantity of the allergenic foods there was a two-thirds reduction in overall food allergy.

Chief Scientific Adviser at the Food Standards Agency Guy Poppy said: 'The FSA has an important role to play in helping consumers manage food allergies and this includes expanding our knowledge about how allergies develop. This research is an important part of that work. These findings will add to the body of scientific evidence that helps us inform public health policies and guidelines on infant feeding.'

The full study report can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/j96yj7w>



## ALLERGY UK LAUNCHES NEW ACCREDITATION SCHEME FOR CATERERS

Allergy UK is launching the Allergy Aware Scheme, a new accreditation for catering outlets, after conducting research that found food allergy and intolerance sufferers do not feel confident eating out.

Their March 2016 survey found that 87% of the food allergic community do not feel confident eating out at a restaurant they haven't eaten at before, and 96% do not feel confident ordering a takeaway they haven't used before.

There is also a lack of trust in the allergy knowledge of catering staff, with 75% stating this as a reason for choosing to not eat out.

To gain accreditation catering outlets will undertake an internal audit to show 'front of house to kitchen' allergen knowledge and practice. An Environmental Health Officer or food safety expert will then visit and complete an independent review to see if the catering outlet has achieved the standards required.

Each outlet will be required to sign an Allergy Aware Scheme Charter. The scheme is assured by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH).

Catering outlets will receive a window sticker to show that they have been successful in gaining the accreditation. The scheme will also help signpost those with allergies and intolerances to accredited catering outlets with a premium listing on 'Can I Eat There?' an online restaurant and menu directory for the allergic and coeliac community. Users can search by location, cuisine or allergy rating, then filter the menu by allergen to see what they can eat.

The scheme could benefit an estimated 6.4 million individuals in the UK with a food allergy or intolerance. Food allergy is fast becoming a modern epidemic with the rate of hospital admissions for the condition rising by 72% in the last 10 years in England alone.

More information on the scheme is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/jaqrac>

## PROCESSING AND RETAIL

### WELSH GOVERNMENT HIGHLIGHT HYGIENE RATINGS ON TAKEAWAY MENUS

Takeaway businesses in Wales will be required to promote their food hygiene ratings on leaflets which enable customers to order food by phone or online. This new rule will come into force in November 2016 the Welsh Government has announced,

Wales was the first country in the UK to create a statutory food hygiene rating scheme in November 2013 when the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013 made it compulsory for all food businesses – such as restaurants, pubs, cafes, takeaways, hotels and supermarkets – to publicly display their food hygiene rating on their premises.

From 28 November 2016 – the third anniversary of the statutory Food Hygiene Rating Scheme in Wales coming into force – all takeaway food businesses will be required to publish a bilingual statement on certain hardcopy publicity materials directing customers to the food hygiene ratings website.

If a takeaway leaflet or menu shows food for sale, the price and a way of ordering the food without visiting the premises, it will also have to show a statement which will remind customers they can check the food hygiene rating of the food business on the food hygiene ratings website.

The statement will also remind consumers they have a legal right to ask the food business for their food hygiene rating when they order.

The latest statistics show more than 60% of food businesses in Wales have been awarded the highest (very good) rating – a five. This is up from 33.2% in March 2012.

More information can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/gno9hu6>

### MSC SURVEY FINDS CONSUMERS SCEPTICAL OF FISH ORIGINS

New research from the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) has revealed the level of consumer trust in seafood labelling.

Early results from the MSC's latest survey of more than 16,000 seafood consumers show that more than half (55%) doubt the seafood they consume is what it says on the packet.

Across the 21 countries surveyed, 65% of those purchasing seafood say they want to know their fish can be traced back to a known and trusted source, with six in ten (63%) saying they look to ecolabels as a trusted source of information.

The findings come as the organisation released results from its DNA testing of MSC labelled seafood products. In 2015, the MSC commissioned the Wildlife DNA Forensics unit at Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA) to conduct DNA tests on a random sample of 257 MSC labelled seafood products from 16 countries.

The test verifies that the species described on the packaging is the same as that in the product. The DNA test results show that over 99% of MSC labelled products are correctly labelled.

The latest round of DNA testing is the fifth to be commissioned by the MSC. Previous results also showed very little mislabelling of MSC labelled seafood. The MSC's DNA testing program and results are captured in a new report, Ocean to plate: how DNA testing helps to ensure traceable sustainable seafood, which can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zk2q7qq>



## UPDATE ON GLAZED METHODOLOGIES REVIEW

Seafish recently held an industry forum on the subject of glaze weight determination.

The stakeholder meeting held on the 22nd March was well attended with some 20 representatives from industry. Defra provided an update on the Commission desire for an agreed set of methods to determine 'glaze' driven by the requirement within Regulation 1169/2011 (the FIC regulation). The meeting was starting the discussion to produce a UK preferred approach in future EU negotiations on this subject. There is no date set for these discussion to take place thus it is likely to be some time before any EU agreement is in place.

Representatives from the National Measurement and Regulation Office described existing methods and regulatory tolerances and their desire to work with industry to establish a UK standard. There was general agreement for some products that use the CODEX method produced acceptable and reproducible results e.g. glaze on prawns. Whilst there were some concerns regarding the number (and hence cost) of samples required as part of the method, the general consensus was that this was an acceptable method as a starting point for the UK position.

A Seafish glazed weight indication guide is under development and should be produced shortly. This will form the basis of best practice guidance in this area until the legal framework as indicated here is in place.

If you would like any more information on this, please contact [martinforsyth@bff.co.uk](mailto:martinforsyth@bff.co.uk) who can pass on the information that has previously been circulated to the Technical Expert Group.

## REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT & OFFICIAL CONTROLS

### FSA GUIDANCE ON FOOD BROKERS

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) wrote to local authorities on 31 March 2016 regarding new guidance on food brokers.

The guidance is intended to help local authority officers make assessments about the identification, registration, recording and inspection of food brokers. It also provides clarification on the distinction between brokers and agents.

Food brokers play an important role in the food supply and distribution network, but the horsemeat incident in 2013 'exposed' the complexity of supply chains and identified a lack of clarity in this area.

The guidance is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/j52q6v4>

If you would like any more information on this, please contact [martinforsyth@bff.co.uk](mailto:martinforsyth@bff.co.uk) who can pass on the information that has previously been circulated to the Technical Expert Group.

### COURT RULING ON NEWBY FOODS

Court proceedings have been published following the case brought by Newby Foods Ltd against the FSA, following a European Court of Justice ruling on whether meat produced by Newby Foods Ltd is Mechanically Separated Meat (MSM).

The Judge concluded that the product which results from the first stage of Newby's process is not MSM. However, because of the Commission's strict interpretation of the definition of 'meat preparation' (any loss of muscle fibre structure precludes a product from being a meat preparation), the product is not a meat preparation either.

The Judge concluded that the product is 'fresh meat' and there is nothing to disqualify it from being a material which can be used for the preparation of minced meat (preparation of minced meat being the second stage of the Newby process).

The full judgement can be read here: <http://tinyurl.com/hqq6l2r>

If you would like any more information on this, please contact [martinforsyth@bff.co.uk](mailto:martinforsyth@bff.co.uk) who can pass on the information that has previously been circulated to the Technical Expert Group.



## BRDO COMBINES WITH NMRO TO FORM REGULATORY DELIVERY DIRECTORATE

The Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO) and the National Measurement and Regulation Office (NMRO) have combined to form the Regulatory Delivery Directorate. This is hoped to simplify regulation for UK businesses.

The launch of Regulatory Delivery combines policy expertise and practical experience to ensure that regulation is effectively delivered in ways that reduce burdens on business, save public money and properly protect citizens and communities.

Regulatory Delivery will work to ensure that the way regulation is enforced is proportionate and risk-based, delivering existing functions such as Primary Authority, legal metrology and hallmarking policy, technical regulation and enforcement work.

The Regulatory Delivery homepage can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/jzawlg9>



## CUTTING RED TAPE REVIEW OF LOCAL AUTHORITY REGULATORY SERVICES

The Cabinet Office launched a consultation on 3 March 2016, on a cutting red tape review of local authority regulatory services.

The review will examine any aspects of regulation and the way it is implemented or enforced which could be made simpler, or more cost-effective, efficient, proportionate, or consistent. The review will take into account burdens imposed by food safety, standards and hygiene, environmental protection and health and safety amongst others.

BFFF responded to the consultation with members views, including the following points:

- In general cash strapped Local Authorities should be directed to spend more of their time giving their advice/ concerns and legal compliance inspection and checks towards the poor performers within the food supply chain. Central government and policy departments should make rapid strides to agree and define the factual criteria that will allow risk based decisions to make this determination.
- There should be much wider use of the earned recognition principles which work well in the animal feed/dairy and fresh produce inspection supply chains. In general these use appropriate 3rd party regimes to replace some of the inspection burden imposed by current interpretations of both official and local controls.
- The current interpretation for Article 27(3) of Council Regulation (EC) 834/2007 requiring wholesale depots handling only prepacked organic products to be inspected every 3 years should be reviewed. The risk involved should be reassessed with a risk based approach. If continuing 'reassurance' is required this simple assessment inspection can be managed by the involvement of the third parties mentioned above.
- The interpretation that requires wholesale depots handling products of animal origin to be approved (Under 853/2004) rather than registered (Under 852/2004) should be reviewed. If the risk assessments used are correct then the derogation for retail depots handling exactly the same products should also be reviewed. There is an un-level playing field. The burden on both operators and enforcers in this area is substantial and will continue in the next few years.
- The need for multisite businesses to seek repetitive approval (for retail units or other parts of the supply chain as above) across different local authorities is wasting time and effort. If there is a Primary Authority agreement in place and the Food safety systems have been agreed by the recognised partner authority, industry cannot understand why each local authority then asks for either the same information for each unit operating the same system or even worse different information required to review the same risks. At worst a sampling plan of a subset of units undertaken by the Primary Authority should be sufficient. The argument that each unit needs to be approved begins to undermine the basis of a professional Primary Authority Memorandum of Understanding.

There are a number of other points that have been subsequently raised with Regulatory Delivery in discussions. If you would like any more information on this, please contact [martinforsyth@bfff.co.uk](mailto:martinforsyth@bfff.co.uk) who can pass on the information that has previously been circulated to the Technical Expert Group, along with details of the subsequent points raised.

## GOVERNMENT TO SAVE £10 BILLION AND REVIEW LOCAL AUTHORITY ENFORCED REGULATION

The Business Secretary has unveiled measures that will help deliver the government's commitment to cut a further £10 billion of red tape.

The UK already has the lowest burden of regulation in the G7, according to the World Economic Forum. Businesses from across the country have been responding to the Cutting Red Tape review programme to identify further areas in need of reform.

A One-in, Two-out rule was introduced by the previous administration, which was the first in recent history to reduce the overall burden of regulation on business. The move to One-in, Three-out for new government legislation raises the bar and will help drive delivery of the £10 billion target.

Results from the Cutting Red Tape reviews into the Care, Energy and Waste sectors highlight a range of issues that businesses face when dealing with regulation and its enforcement and implementation.

Actions agreed by government and regulators to help ease these burdens include:

- the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs will publish new business-focused guidance into the definition of waste and revised guidance for the environmental permitting regime. Delays and unnecessary burdens associated with the permitting system cost legitimate businesses millions of pounds each year.
- the Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government will lead a programme of work to make sure that the multiple interventions made by public bodies that deal with care homes are targeted, proportionate and co-ordinated. It will seek to make it clear what each agency does, and why.

More information can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/h2g4d4l>

## FSA SCIENCE, EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION STRATEGY 2015-2020 DELIVERY PLAN

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has announced on that it has published three documents setting out how it uses science, evidence and information to deliver safe food.

The documents are:

- Science, Evidence and Information Strategy 2015-2020 Delivery Plan, updated February 2016 (available here: <http://tinyurl.com/hj64ktu>);
- Programme of work (available here: <http://tinyurl.com/zq73r66>); and
- Forward evidence plan 2016 (available here: <http://tinyurl.com/zs8d3ad>).

The delivery plan sets out at a high level our priorities for the science which needs to develop and apply (the 'what'), and the way the FSA conduct our science (the 'how').

The other two documents give more detail on the specific activities the FSA will carry out, to inform stakeholders and invite comment – the programme of work sets out the main activities of the programme over the five years of the strategy, and the forward evidence plan gives more detail on the new science and evidence work which is hoped to commence this year.

## EFSA REPORT ON EMERGING RISKS 2015



The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published a Report of the activities of the stakeholders consultative group of emerging risks for 2015.

In 2015, the group discussed a total of ten signals of potential emerging issues using a standard briefing note template developed by the Scientific Committee and Emerging Risks unit of EFSA.

The issues were a selection of potential emerging issues of particular relevance to the stakeholders. The issues discussed were in the area of plant health, allergens, mycotoxins, chemical contaminants and animal welfare.

The report can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/jn5ysqn>

## PHE PUBLISHES STRATEGIC PLAN TO 2020

Public Health England (PHE) has published its' strategic plan up until 2020.

The Strategic Plan sets out how PHE intends to protect and improve the public's health and reduce inequalities over the next 4 years. It also outlines actions PHE will take over the next year to achieve these aims and deliver its core functions.

It builds on the Department of Health's Shared Delivery Plan, the NHS 5 Year Forward View, and From Evidence into Action. It confirms the role that PHE will continue to play in the health and care system, building on evidence, prioritising prevention and supporting local government and the NHS.

The full plan can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/grdgx4h>

## MMO LAUNCH CAMPAIGN TO TACKLE ILLEGAL SALE OF FISH

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is appealing for the public to anonymously report potentially illegal sale of fish to Crime Stoppers.

The campaign was launched on 11 April 2016 at an event attended by representatives of the fishing industry including the National Federation of Fisheries Organisation (NFFO), the Angling Trust and the Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authorities (IFCAs).

The campaign is designed to promote adherence to the registered buyers and sellers scheme and to encourage the public to report any suspicions of illegal activity. Under the Registration of Buyers and Sellers (RBS) Scheme 2005, enforced by the MMO, only small quantities of fish can be purchased for personal consumption direct from a registered and licensed fishing vessel. Fish caught from recreational fishing activities cannot legally be sold and it should not be purchased.

The campaign will see the MMO work to raise awareness of the rules through the media, online and through stakeholder organisations such as the British Hospitality Association, Angling Trust, the IFCAs as well as the NFFO. Information will also be distributed to fish and chip shops across the country through Seafish. Further information can be found on the MMO website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/z5b4doq>

## REVIEW OF SIX FSA SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published a review of our six Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs), which was carried out to ensure the FSA continues to get the best independent expert scientific advice to support its work.

The findings of the review have been accepted by the FSA Board and by the Cabinet Office. The review covers the following six SACs, which provide the FSA with independent expert advice on food risks and on the FSA's use of scientific evidence:

- The General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS)
- The Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT)
- The Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)
- The Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF)
- The Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)
- The Social Science Research Committee (SSRC)

Amongst the eight recommendations, the review concluded that the role of providing independent, high-level advice and challenge on FSA's use of science should pass from the GACS to a new Science Council. This mirrors similar models in other Government departments. It is also recommends that the FSA should consult on moving the functions of the ACNFP and ACAF into a new committee, with a wider remit on innovation in the food chain. This would be established by December 2017. The SSRC will work as an expert committee of FSA, focusing on providing advice and challenge on how FSA can use social sciences to deliver its strategic priorities. The ACMSF and COT will retain their current structure and function.

The review reinforces the importance of ensuring that the advisory committees continue to operate to the established high standards of independence, openness and transparency. This includes holding open meetings and publishing papers, minutes and reports, and having access to FSA officials and the Board.

The full triennial review of the FSA SACs can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zlxane7>

## BIS REGULATORY DELIVERY PUBLISH DETAILED HANDBOOK ON PRIMARY AUTHORITY

Regulatory Delivery (formerly the Better Regulation Delivery Office - BRDO) has published a detailed Primary Authority Handbook.

The Handbook contains information for businesses, local authorities and co-ordinators, and explains the entire process of signing up to Primary Authority and the benefits that it can bring.

Sections of the handbook include:

- The role of enforcing authorities;
- Establishing partnerships (both direct and co-ordinated);
- Providing Primary Authority advice;
- Developing and managing inspection plans; and
- What happens in the instance of a notification.

The handbook can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/jv7rqvg>

BFFF offer a Primary Authority Scheme which covers a number of topics: Food Standards, Metrology, Food Safety and Hygiene, Fair Trading, Health and Safety and Fire Safety. To get involved in any of the above, or for more information, please contact [crystalholmes@bfff.co.uk](mailto:crystalholmes@bfff.co.uk)

## BIS PUBLISH GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO EXTENSION OF PRIMARY AUTHORITY

BIS has published a summary of feedback from stakeholder meetings and responses to their discussion document and the extension and simplification of Primary Authority.

The government wants to ensure that as many businesses as possible can access the benefits of Primary Authority as simply as possible. After reviewing the operation of the scheme with many of those who use it, improvements have been identified that would make it work more effectively. Their proposals were considered at meetings with a range of stakeholders during 2015. This document summarises both the feedback received and the 35 responses to the discussion document, which presented the proposals for the extension and simplification of Primary Authority.

The majority of the changes to the scheme will be made through the Enterprise Bill, which is now before Parliament.

The full government response can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/hz95yqh>

## DEFRA PUBLISH PLANS TO IMPLEMENT EU SMARTER RULES FOR SAFER FOOD PACKAGE

The 'smarter rules for safer food' package is a set of EU proposals for protecting against animal disease and pests in the food chain.

The package will simplify and strengthen health and safety standards across food, farming and horticulture supply chains from production to final use. It will affect anyone involved in the production manufacture, supply and regulation of food, feed, live animals and plants.

Collectively the package will replace over 70 existing European Directives and Regulations, simplifying legislation and making it easier to use for everyone involved.

The basic principles cover three main topics:

- official controls: how we will monitor and enforce the new rules
- animal health: a framework for the principles of European animal health for the next 20 years
- plant health: controls for protecting plants from disease and pests

Defra are currently negotiating with the rest of the EU about the basic principles of the package and are expecting the proposals to be agreed in 2016. Once agreed, there will be a transition period while the detailed rules are developed.

The Defra Policy Paper on this can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/gtfhbod>



## ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION POLICY TEAM TRANSFER FROM BIS TO DEFRA

The Environmental Regulation team has transferred from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) on 1 April 2016.

The Business Secretary Sajid Javid and the Environment Secretary Elizabeth Truss have agreed that the Environmental Regulation team will transfer from BIS to Defra under a Machinery of Government change. The team will transfer into the Defra Environmental Quality Directorate. A written ministerial statement was published today (24 March 2016), detailing the change.

The Environmental Regulation team has policy responsibility for a range of waste and product-related EU-derived regulations that have either Single Market or producer responsibility objectives. Their responsibilities include:

- upholding the UK's domestic Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) system including running the distributor takeback scheme
- regulating producers (vehicle manufacturers and importers) and Authorised Treatment Facilities for the UK's end of life vehicles (ELV) system
- policy development and monitoring for the Restriction of Hazardous Substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS)
- policy development for the substance restrictions (Essential Requirements) related to packaging
- the placing on the market for all batteries and accumulators and the waste disposal regime for automotive and industrial batteries

The team also has policy responsibility for the enforcement of these regulations through contracts held with the Environment Agency, the National Measurement and Regulation Office (NMRO) and trading standards departments in local authorities.

With much of the legislation and related work split between the 2 departments, transferring the team and resource from BIS to Defra will enable, and ensure, greater coordination of government policy and the combined regulatory responsibilities.



## THE FOOD HYGIENE RATING REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) AND ASSOCIATION ORDERS

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has launched a consultation to seek stakeholders' comments on the proposed Food Hygiene Rating (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2016, and associated Orders, and guidance for district councils on operating the statutory Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

The FSA is seeking views and comments from stakeholders on:

- the draft Food Hygiene Rating Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016,
- the draft Food Hygiene Rating (Commencement and Transitional Provisions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016,
- the draft Food Hygiene (Fee and Fixed Penalty Amount) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016, and
- the potential impact on food businesses and district councils.

It is also seeking views and comments on FSA guidance for district councils on the operation of the new statutory scheme.

The consultation, which opened in March, closes on 10th June 2016. The FSA have issued a full consultation pack, which is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/zr44tte>

## RESEARCH

### FSA: OUR FUTURE FOOD REPORT

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published a Report entitled 'Our Food Future' which presents the findings of a study to help understand how changes to the food system might impact on consumers in the UK.

The research was commissioned by the FSA, Food Standards Scotland, and Sciencewise, and carried out by social research agency TNS BMRB. Participants in the study were concerned that the growing trends of convenience foods, online grocery shopping, and 'eating on the go' could decrease the social and cultural importance of sharing meals.

Other key findings from the research show:

- increased clarity on food labels has been widely welcomed by consumers, with many hoping the food industry will provide more information on a wider range of food issues;
- consumers are concerned that access to healthy and nutritious food could become a luxury as pricing prompts people to buy cheaper, processed food;
- participants hope that Government and regulators will play a more visible role in the future of food, to ensure that their interests are protected in a more complex world.

The full report 'Our Future Food' can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/j6gsj5x>

## SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENT & CSR

### CPET SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL NEWSLETTERS

Defra has issued an update to the Central Point of Expertise of Timber (CPET's) newsletters.

The newsletters contain guidance, news items and information on sustainable palm oil, and the final one was published in March 2016.

This edition provides information and guidance on sourcing baked goods and prepared foods made with sustainable palm oil derivatives. It covers:

- the complexities in the derivatives supply chain
- what foods contain palm oil and palm kernel oil
- an overview of palm-based oleochemicals in the UK
- challenges in sourcing sustainable palm derivatives
- a quick guide to sourcing certified derivatives

The newsletter can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/zu9s2gm>



### PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY OBLIGATIONS (PACKAGING WASTE) REGULATIONS 2016

The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2016, SI 2016 No. 241 came into force on 24 February 2016.

These Regulations amend the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007 (PROR) and the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007 (Northern Ireland).

The PROR is amended to remove provisions requiring submission of an operational plan. New regulations set out conditions of approval of a scheme, confer power to withdraw approval of a scheme and provide for cancellation of registration of a scheme.

The Producer Responsibility Obligations Regulations can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/h2wzms6>

## FSA SIGNS PLEDGE TO CUT FOOD WASTE

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has announced that it is a founding signatory in the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) Courtauld 2025 campaign.

The campaign will:

- Reduce the resource intensity of the UK's food and drink by one-fifth;
- Bring together leading organisations from across the food chain to work together to tackle food and drink waste, greenhouse gas emissions and water intensity;
- Gather signatories including all major UK food retailers, brands, food service companies, trade bodies and local authorities.

The FSA will build on the work it has done with WRAP and Love Food Hate Waste already to help reduce food waste. This year the FSA is focusing on food waste for its annual Food Safety Week (June 2016).

The announcement can be found on the FSA news centre, here: <http://tinyurl.com/j2knuon>

## CUTTING RED TAPE REVIEW: WASTE AND RECYCLING

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has published a Policy Review entitled "Cutting Red Tape: review of the waste sector".

The report summarises the findings of the Cutting Red Tape review of regulatory barriers to growth, productivity and innovation in the waste sector. Some of the principal themes emerging from the review are:

- Definition of waste: decisions on whether or not materials are waste or have ceased to be waste are burdensome, costly and time consuming;
- Exemptions: the requirement for registering exemptions for low-risk activities creates unnecessary burdens compared to the levels of risk;
- Producer responsibility: the systems around delivering producer responsibilities are too complex, costly and burdensome

The review of the waste and recycling sector can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zp6hvsx>

## WRAP LAUNCH COURTAULD 2025 ENVIRONMENT COMMITMENT

The UK's resource efficiency charity WRAP, on behalf of the UK Government and Devolved Administrations, has unveiled a pioneering commitment which brings together organisations from across the food system for the first time to make food and drink production and consumption more sustainable for the future.

The Courtauld Commitment 2025 is the world-leading voluntary agreement to work along the entire food chain to reduce the environmental impact of our food and drink, from farm to fork and beyond. Signatories announced at the launch of the agreement include the world's largest food and drink manufacturer, and all the major UK retailers representing over 93% of the 2016 UK food retail market.

The commitment goes further than ever before with three ambitious targets:

- A 20% reduction in food and drink waste arising in the UK
- A 20% reduction in greenhouse gas intensity of food & drink consumed in the UK
- A reduction in impact associated with water use in the supply chain

The Commitment will drive best practice through its unique whole-system approach to the way food and drink is produced, sold and consumed in the UK. For the first time it will bring all parties together under one voluntary agreement to achieve collective goals. By building on the progress already achieved with retailers, brands, manufacturers and the hospitality sector and bringing in the farming sector and local authorities it will be more challenging, but also more rewarding. Signatories will work together with WRAP to identify new actions and opportunities to save resources which can be shared across the entire supply chain, to make the whole system more sustainable and resilient to supply chain disruptions. Signatories also commit to implementing changes, measuring the benefits, and helping other businesses and people to realise savings.

More information, and a list of the signatories, is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/grhd8cw>

## DEFRA PUBLISH STATUTORY CODE OF PRACTICE ON WASTE DUTY OF CARE

The Code of Practice sets out practical guidance on how to meet your waste duty of care requirements. It applies to you if you produce, carry, keep, dispose of, treat, import or have control of waste in England or Wales.

The law requires anyone dealing with waste to keep it safe, make sure it's dealt with responsibly and only given to businesses authorised to take it.

If you are authorised or registered in Scotland or Northern Ireland but you store, transport or transfer waste in England or Wales, you should also take account of this code.

This code is issued under section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

The Code of Practice can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/h72c6f2>

## MCS LAUNCH NEW SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD FINDER APP

The Marine Conservation Society (MCS) has launched the most up-to-date guide to sustainable seafood, as an App. This puts the information needed by fishmongers, restaurants and supermarkets in now available at your fingertips.

The MCS's Guides to Sustainable Seafood provide comprehensive listings of the best sustainable choices, the fish to avoid completely, and the fish that can be eaten occasionally to limit pressure on their stocks.

The App allows you to search by common fish name and provides all the information from the Good Fish Guide, both at a glance, and in full detail if needed. It also explains the traffic light ratings systems which explains what you can and can't eat, and the fish that you should eat only occasionally.

For more information, and to download the App, please visit: <http://tinyurl.com/h64czbp>

There's also a downloadable pocket version for those who prefer it, which can be downloaded from here: <http://tinyurl.com/gpmh3oz>



## TECHNOLOGY & NOVEL FOODS

### ANNUAL REPORT FOR RISK ASSESSMENT OF GMOS FOR 2015

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published the annual report of the Scientific Network for Risk Assessment of GMOs for 2015.

The goals of the GMO Network are:

- to improve dialogue among members;
- build mutual understanding of risk assessment principles;
- enhance knowledge and confidence in the scientific assessment carried out in the EU; and
- increase the transparency of the process among Member States and EFSA.

The annual reports of the GMO Network inform the public and the EFSA Advisory Forum about the specific activities and achievements of the network.

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



# British Frozen Food Federation

## Technical & Legislative Expert Group

### AGENDA

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Meeting of the Technical and Legislative Expert Group  
To be held at 10am on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016  
The Urban Hotel, Grantham

1. Apologies and Welcome
  2. Minutes of previous meeting
  3. Matters arising
  4. Items for discussion - see list following
  5. Items for Information – see list following
  6. Items carried forward – see list following
  7. Contact with other organisations
  8. Any other business
  9. Date of next meeting Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at The Urban Hotel, Grantham
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#### Agenda Item 4 – Items for Discussion

- 4.1 Food Fraud- 2016/02/V-see questions within the paper. Is there a role for BFFF?
- 4.2 Future Food Regulatory Strategy- 2016/02/X- see questions within the paper. Earned recognition what is it from a practical point of view?

#### Agenda Item 5 – Items for Information

- 5.1 Date of First Freezing – 2016\_02\_A in addition 2016\_02\_Y
- 5.2 Risk to Supply of Thai Seafood – 2016\_02\_B
- 5.3 Health Committee Review Next FSA Chair – 2016\_02\_C
- 5.4 Outbreak Assessment for AI – 2016\_02\_D & H
- 5.5 Dual Weight Indications Draft Guidance – 2016\_02\_E in addition 2016\_02\_Y
- 5.6 New Approach to Microbiological Food Safety – 2016\_02\_F
- 5.7 Horsemeat – Eddie Selten Customers Released – 2016\_02\_G
- 5.8 Ethical Audits and their Usefulness – 2016\_02\_J
- 5.9 Display on Food Hygiene Rating Scores – 2016\_02\_M
- 5.10 Food Allergy Research: Management of Food Manufacturers – 2016\_02\_N
- 5.11 Biocides & Chlorates Review – 2016\_02\_O
- 5.12 Deglazed Weight Determination – 2016\_02\_Q
- 5.13 Biocides Data Collection – 2016\_02\_S
- 5.14 EU Consultation Planner – 2016\_02\_U

### Agenda Item 6 – Items carried forward

Standing agenda items awaiting further development:

- 6.1 **Into the Light**
- 6.2 **BRC Storage & Distribution Standard Review**
- 6.3 **Donating Food to good causes**
- 6.4 **Gold Book Review- see 8.1 below**
- 6.5 **MSM/Baardered Wishbone**
- 6.6 **Tariff Rate Quotas (TRQs)**

### Agenda Item 7 – Contact with other Organisations

- 7.1 **Future BRDO Trade Facilitation Panel Meeting Dates – 2016\_02\_I**
- 7.2 **BRDO Food Standards & Labelling Meeting – 2016\_02\_K**
- 7.3 **Meeting with Alice Biggins, FSA – 2016\_02\_L**
- 7.4 **Seafish Food Legislation Expert Group – 2016\_02\_P**
- 7.5 **FSA Climate Change Food Safety Implications Workshop – 2016\_02\_T**

### Agenda Item 8 – Any Other Business

- 8.1 **Resource/Administration review/Diary review**

If there are any other items that you would like to add to the agenda, please let me know and I will include it under AOB

**Martin Forsyth**

## MEET THE TECHNICAL & LEGISLATIVE EXPERT GROUP

The Technical & Legislative Expert Group maintains scrutiny of incoming information regarding legislative and technical developments from Brussels, the UK and other sources. The Expert Group informs and advises the Board to assist with determining Federation policy in technical and legislative areas.

Uniquely, members of this Expert Group represent the whole frozen food supply chain including imports, production, wholesaling and retailing. Their assessment of the impact of forthcoming legislation enables effective lobbying and influence in matters which could otherwise adversely affect member companies commercially and from a legal compliance perspective. The Group also provides expertise, guidance and oversight of BFFF technical and regulatory guidance including our Primary Authority assured advice.

### Members of the Group

Iain Mortimer - Apetito Ltd.  
 Susan Tilbury - Bidvest Foodservice  
 David Graham - Birds Eye Ltd.  
 Ken Glauch - Booker Ltd.  
 Gerry Thomas - Brakes  
 Philip Proud - Cargill Meats Europe  
 Angela Doherty - CP Foods UK Ltd.  
 Brendan McIntyre - Flagship Europe Ltd.  
 Helen Jackson - Freiberger UK Ltd.  
 Chris Roddis - Greencore Grocery Leeds  
 Bill Wadsworth - Greggs Plc.  
 Emma Meredith - Iceland Foods Ltd.  
 Janet Williams - Kent Frozen Foods  
 Vince Craig - Meadowbrae Technical Services (Chair)  
 Joanna Frost - Sam Browne Foods Ltd.  
 Scott Johnston - Youngs Ltd.

If you would like any further information on the activities of the Technical & Legislative Expert Group, please contact [martinforsyth@bfff.co.uk](mailto:martinforsyth@bfff.co.uk)

Cargill Meats Europe



# MEMBER BENEFIT

## Primary Authority Scheme

*BFFF is delighted to be able to offer Primary Authority Schemes exclusively for members*

### *Introducing Primary Authority*

BFFF can now offer agreed industry advice for members under the Primary Authority Scheme. The advice is 'assured' which means it is legally backed. If the advice is followed, another Local Authority cannot ask you to do anything different.

BFFF has partnered with the Environmental Health team in Wakefield and the Trading Standards team in Cambridgeshire to deliver this service. Both of these Local Authorities specialise in Primary Authority and have expertise in the frozen food industry.

The scheme is free for members to join and will help support members to stay on the right side of regulation.

BFFF have also launched a Fire Safety Primary Authority Scheme in partnership with Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue. This innovative scheme allows members to join to receive industry level advice on all aspects of Fire Safety, but also have a dedicated fire safety contact to provide bespoke advice to businesses. The fire scheme has flexible membership options.

To take part Members can choose to sign up to any combination of the regulatory categories below:

*Fair Trading*

*Fire Safety*

*Food Safety*

*Food Standards (Labelling & Composition)*

*Health and Safety*

*Weights and Measures*

### *Key benefits for signed up members include:*

- Advice and guidance has Regulatory backing, if you follow it, you cannot be asked to do something different.
- Access to the advice of dedicated Environmental Health and Trading Standards Professionals who are experts in the Frozen Food Sector and know how enforcement works!
- It is free to join the scheme and the key benefits of assured advice and guidance with legal backing are also free. Support through any enforcement action or business specific queries do attract a modest 'at cost' charge.



*If you have any queries about the scheme please contact:*



Martin Forsyth  
Tel: 01400 283094  
Email: martinforsyth@bfff.co.uk  
Food Safety  
Food Standards (labelling & composition)  
Weights and Measures  
Fair Trading



Crystal Holmes  
Tel: 01400 283090  
Email: crystalholmes@bfff.co.uk  
General Enquiries



Joanna Hancock  
Tel: 01400 283096  
Email: joannahancock@bfff.co.uk  
Health and Safety  
Fire Safety

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