

T & L UPDATE

BFFF TECHNICAL AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

JULY 2016 - ISSUE 84



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 www.coolcooking.co.uk

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FOREWORD

Welcome to the July Edition of the T&L Update

It is sometimes tempting to forget the importance of the rules when there is so much happening in the wider world. Trying to align your business to what appears to be the current shifting sands of political uncertainty is a very difficult task. The Brexit vote will have many ramifications for both UK and foreign based businesses and as we keep hearing what business does not like is uncertainty.

You are your business expert and the implications for your business will be best judged by you.

BFFF will do its best to keep you informed regarding developments for the food sector. With so much undecided there are only vague estimations of possible impacts. When the situation becomes clearer and policies affecting food and farming/imports and markets are being announced there will be more information to provide.

Thus the detail of another T+L update is useful to look forward to and where you can assess the risks/prioritise the risks and deal with the appropriate risks via controls measures (a bit like a common sense approach to Brexit!).

You may wish to review the current articles on antibiotic use if relevant. Or Bisphenol A, a contaminant, that is at the early stages of control but is a subject of fierce debate at EU level possibly leading to an outright ban. Always trying to look for the wood rather than the trees, the FSA summary report on Incidents is a real world summary of the challenges facing food manufacturers today and a useful reminder of the subjects senior management should be asking of their food safety and quality experts.

Some of the summaries may not be immediately connected with frozen but the Irish report on salt levels not matching the label claims is yet another area of risk for brand owners. When was the last time you checked your label information by analysis like an enforcement officer will?

Did you know that the Germans now have an official definition of vegetarian and vegan? There is a short summary of recent developments. They will apparently press the European Commission to adopt the same in an area where there is currently no EU legally agreed definition. Time and politics will tell if they are successful.

The BFFF Technical Expert Group agenda from the last meeting is again included for your information and if you want any further details on the papers circulated please contact Martin or Crystal.

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



Martin Forsyth
Head of Technical
martinforsyth@bfff.co.uk

ACTIVITY OF EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

FOODDRINKEUROPE REPORT ON GOOD PRACTICES AND TOOLS FROM THE INDUSTRY

FoodDrinkEurope has announced the publication of a report entitled “Good practices and tools from the food and drink industry in Europe”.

This report builds on the findings of a previous joint study on ensuring sustainable employment and competitiveness in the EU food and drink sector. This joint FoodDrinkEurope and European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT) study showed that, although the food and drink manufacturing and processing sector had shown considerable resilience during the recent economic and financial crisis, it was unfortunately not seen as an attractive choice by many potential employees and therefore had difficulty recruiting some of the skills needed to improve the sector’s productivity and international competitiveness.



The toolbox publication is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/hbgywk2>

EFSA STRATEGY 2020

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published its Strategy for 2020.

The Strategy 2020 identifies a number of “drivers” that EFSA expects to significantly influence the direction it takes between now and 2020. These range from high-level issues such as public expectations of greater transparency and the impact of globalisation, to concerns such as how EFSA can become more efficient and continue to attract scientific expertise. The document outlines five strategic objectives that will frame the way EFSA responds to the expected challenges and opportunities.

The EFSA Strategy 2020: Trusted Science for Safe Food is available in full here: <http://tinyurl.com/zaznnqd>

EFSA PUBLISHES SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION ANNUAL REPORT

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published its Scientific Cooperation Annual Report.

This annual report gives an overview of the activities undertaken by EFSA in 2015 together with different stakeholders, in particular with Member States. It also highlights how EFSA supports the European Commission in policy-making decisions and enlargement programmes.

The annual report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/qt7vzb6>

ANALYTICAL & METROLOGY

ROMER LABS PUBLISHES ‘CHALLENGES IN ALLERGEN TESTING’



Romer Labs has published an online magazine ‘Spot On’ which focusses on the Challenges in Allergen Testing.

The issue contains:

- Challenges in Allergen Testing: Spiking and Recoveries
- The Hook Effect – When a Negative is not a Negative
- A Look Beyond Immuno-Based Allergen Testing
- Allergen Thresholds are VITAL – The Relevance of Action Levels

The magazine is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/zm9cxzk>

ANIMAL WELFARE

EU DG WELCOMES PHASE OUT USE OF ANTIBIOTICS AS GROWTH PROMOTERS

The European Commission has welcomed the commitment by the G20 Agriculture Ministerial meeting to support sustainable agriculture for ensuring global food security and to fight antimicrobial resistance, including the phasing out of antibiotics as growth promoters in animals. The G20 conclusions also called for greater cooperation in ICT roll-out in farming and reaffirmed the group's commitment to the major global agreements including the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Climate Agreement and the Nairobi WTO deal.

EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development Phil Hogan, who was representing today the EU at the meeting in Xi'an, China, said: *"I welcome the G20 conclusions as a sign of our common commitment to tackle the global challenges of food security, sustainable agriculture, innovation and ICT use in farming."*

In Brussels, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis Andriukaitis also welcomed today's outcome and declared: *"It is encouraging to see progress in cooperation on fighting AMR on international level given the global nature of the challenge. European Union will continue contributing to broader collective actions, including in promoting international awareness, methodologies, and surveillance systems, where the EU can act as a global leader."*

O'NEILL REVIEW ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE PUBLISHED

The review in antimicrobial resistance (AMR) titled 'Tackling Drug-Resistant Infections Globally: Final Report and Recommendations' has been published.

In 2014, David Cameron commissioned the independent Review on Antimicrobial Resistance, Chaired by macroeconomist Jim O'Neill, to examine the growing threat of AMR from an economic perspective and to recommend solutions. The Review has been co-sponsored by the Wellcome Trust and the Department of Health. Over the last 19 months the Review has published eight thematic papers that address different aspects of the problem of AMR. These are as follows:

- Antimicrobial Resistance: Tackling a crisis for the health and wealth of nations, December 2014
- Tackling a global health crisis: Initial steps, February 2015
- Securing new drugs: The pipeline of antibiotics, May 2015
- Rapid Diagnostics: Stopping unnecessary use of antibiotics, October 2015
- Safe, secure and controlled: Managing the supply chain of antimicrobials, November 2015
- Antimicrobials in agriculture and the environment: Reducing unnecessary use and waste, December 2015
- Vaccines and alternative approaches: Reducing our dependence on antimicrobials, February 2016
- Infection prevention, control and surveillance: Limiting the development and spread of drug resistance, March 2016

The final report pulls together all the previous recommendations as a package of actions that is believed will be needed to tackle this rising threat.

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

HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA H7N7 IN ITALY

Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2016/697 of 4 May 2016 concerning certain protective measures in relation to highly pathogenic avian influenza of subtype H7N7 in Italy was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L120/35, 05/05/2016.

Italy notified the Commission of an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza of subtype H7N7 in a holding on its territory where poultry or other captive birds are kept and it immediately took the measures required pursuant to Directive 2005/94/EC, including the establishment of protection and surveillance zones.

Italy must ensure that the protection and surveillance zones established in accordance with Article 16(1) of Directive 2005/94/EC comprise at least the areas listed as protection and surveillance zones in Parts A and B of the Annex to this Decision. This Decision, which is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/jygr52t>, is addressed to the Italian Republic and applies until 31 July 2016.

INTERNATIONAL EVENT TO TACKLE OVERUSE OF ANTIBIOTICS

A conference was held on 12th May at the Royal Society, which focussed on the need to ensure antibiotics are used responsibly in animal and human health.

The Prince of Wales, a long-standing advocate of sustainable agriculture, joined senior leaders, experts, academics and ambassadors from around the world to discuss:

- antibiotic resistance and the link between human and animal health
- farming practices
- barriers to improved practice
- the need to build on the successful surveillance networks already in place

For decades, humans and animals have relied on antibiotics and other antimicrobials. However, as a result, infections are developing resistance to the drugs.

If this continues, it is estimated that by 2050 the world will face an additional 10 million deaths due to antibiotic resistant infections at a cost of \$100 trillion to the global economy.

Chief Medical Officer Professor Dame Sally Davies and Chief Veterinary Officer Professor Nigel Gibbens hosted the event, while Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt, Defra Minister George Eustice and Public Health Minister Jane Ellison addressed the meeting.

This is part of the UK 5 year antimicrobial resistance (AMR) strategy being implemented by Department of Health, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and Public Health England (PHE).

The Defra UK 5 year antimicrobial resistance strategy can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/p8zlrto>

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

BUSINESS LEADERS EXPRESS CONCERNS OVER APPRENTICESHIP LEVY

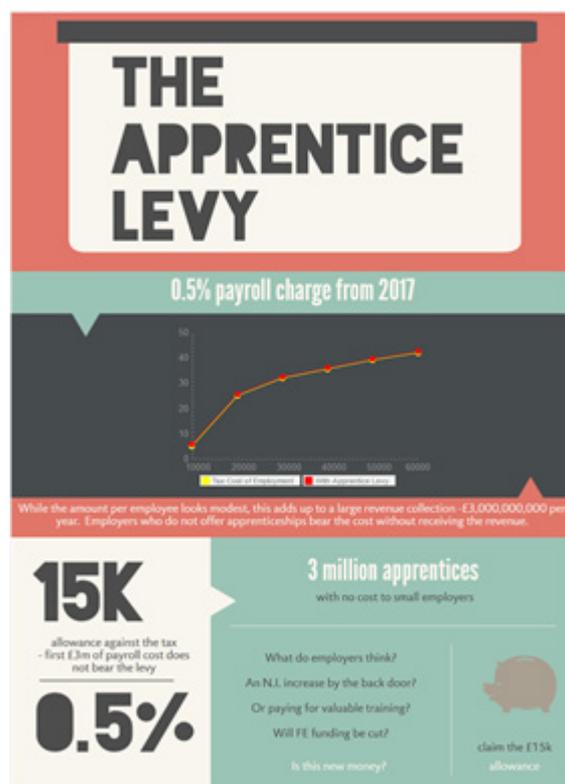
Business leaders have expressed their concerns about the risks of the current Apprenticeship Levy for apprentices, businesses and the Northern Irish economy and urged close collaboration with business – from the Executive and Westminster – to address this.

Due to be introduced in April 2017, the Apprenticeship Levy will affect all firms across the whole of the UK with a payroll of over £3m, adding 0.5 per cent to payroll costs. The Levy will also apply to public sector employers including health trusts, universities and district councils.

Northern Ireland business leaders expressed their views to senior Department for the Economy officials at a CBI seminar hosted by Deloitte. They highlighted that businesses are committed to raising skill levels and apprentice numbers, but there are growing concerns among firms about the design and viability of the system. In particular, about how levy paying firms will access their funds and the tight deadline meaning that businesses lack crucial information about the levy and a realistic lead-in time to prepare for it.

Emphasising the willingness of the business community to help and advise on how the system could best work, both in Stormont and Westminster, those around the table urged ministers and officials involved to draw on businesses vast experience and take the time to get it right. The system must incentivise firms to offer more apprentices – if the system design is wrong, as is the case in England, firms may have to cut back on training to afford the levy.

More information on this can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/zxog26n>



COORDINATED MULTIANNUAL CONTROL PROGRAMME FOR PESTICIDE RESIDUES

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/662 of 1 April 2016 concerning a coordinated multiannual control programme of the Union for 2017, 2018 and 2019 to ensure compliance with maximum residue levels of pesticides and to assess the consumer exposure to pesticide residues in and on food of plant and animal origin was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L115/2, 29/04/2016.

This Regulation requires Member States during the years 2017, 2018 and 2019 to take and analyse samples for the pesticide/product combinations, as set out in the Regulation. Member States shall submit the results of the analysis of samples tested in 2017, 2018 and 2019 by 31 August 2018, 2019 and 2020 respectively.

The Regulation enters into force on 1 January 2017. Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/595 is repealed although it continues to apply to samples tested in 2016. It can be found in the Official Journal here: <http://tinyurl.com/hgtbrzd>

EFSA WORKING GROUP ON SAFETY OF BISPHENOL A ON IMMUNE SYSTEM

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has announced that it is setting up a working group of international experts to evaluate new scientific evidence on the potential effects of bisphenol A (BPA) on the immune system.

EFSA is conducting the review following publication of a report that raises concerns about the effects of BPA on the immune system of fetuses and young children. The report by the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) examines two studies describing pre- and perinatal effects of BPA on the immune system that were unpublished when EFSA reviewed the available scientific literature for its 2014 risk assessment of BPA. The report recommends supporting research on alternatives to BPA and advising consumers to reduce their exposure to BPA from food and other sources.

In addition to its review of the RIVM report, EFSA is preparing for its upcoming evaluation of the hazards of BPA by developing a "scientific protocol" for a structured literature search and a transparent review of all the new scientific evidence not included in EFSA's previous assessment.

The EFSA announcement can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zqumkx9>



NOTIFICATION OF DRAFT EU REGULATION ON BISPHENOL A LEVELS TO WTO

The European Commission has notified a draft proposal to the WTO to limit the migration of Bisphenol A (BPA) from food contact materials to food.

The Commission proposal would amend Regulation 10/2011 on plastic materials and articles in contact with food to include a Specific Migration Limit (SML) of 0.05mg of BPA per kg of food for plastic materials and articles to "fully ensure that exposure to BPA remains below the temporary tolerable daily intake and does not endanger human health".

The Regulation also introduces a SML of 0.05 mg for BPA from varnishes or coatings applied to materials and articles.

The draft proposal can be downloaded from here: <http://tinyurl.com/jtxkfmq>



FAIR TRADING

EUROCOMMERCE NOTES EU PARLIAMENT VOTE ON UNFAIR TRADING PRACTICES

EuroCommerce has taken note of the European Parliament vote on unfair trading practices (UTPs). They are respecting the views of a very large majority of MEPs on the subject and are already working with other actors in the supply chain to make fair trading practices the norm. They are also looking actively at how to further improve the working of the Supply Chain Initiative (SCI), which has attracted more than 1,000 companies to commit to its principles and disciplines.

These principles are supplemented by national legislation in most member states. They are designed to address problems in supply contracts which are overwhelmingly agreed within member states, and according to their differing legal and commercial circumstances. EU legislation cannot, therefore, realistically add value to this.

It is unfortunate that, in the debate leading up to the vote, the issues related to UTPs have become conflated with the structural and short-term economic problems faced by farmers, especially in the milk and meat market, when the latter are essentially due to global overproduction and lower demand.

Retailers want to see a healthy and flourishing agricultural sector in Europe, and even though they have few direct relationships with farmers, have acted to help them overcome some of these problems in the short term, and in the longer term work with farmers to target production more closely with what consumers want to buy.

FOOD SAFETY AND ZOOSES

FSA PUBLISHES LIST OF INCIDENTS JANUARY - MARCH 2016

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published a list of food incidents, handled between January and March 2016, that led to an alert being issued by the FSA to recall or withdraw products from sale.

This quarterly list also includes information on investigations the FSA supported relating to potential widespread risks from food poisoning and harmful contamination.

The information describes the overall details of the incident, the level of risk to consumers and what action the FSA, industry and local authorities took. Over the three month period, the FSA issued 49 food notices, of which 24 were allergy alerts, with the top undeclared allergen being milk. The FSA also supported twelve major investigations linked to possible risks of food poisoning and nine concerned with physical contamination.

The list of incidents can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/gw3afcb>

FSA ANNUAL REPORT OF INCIDENTS 2015 PUBLISHED

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published its latest Annual Report of Food Incidents. It shows that in 2015, the FSA and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) were notified of, investigated and managed 1,514 food, feed and environmental contamination incidents in the UK.

The overall number of incidents was similar to those seen in recent years. However, in most categories, the numbers of incidents differ considerably from year to year

The four largest contributors to the total number of recorded incidents in 2015 were:

- Pathogenic micro-organisms (18%)
- Allergens (14%)
- Chemical contamination (other) (12%)
- Residues of veterinary medicinal products (8%)

The full report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/gu4af2m>

EFSA PUBLISH MULTILINGUAL GLOSSARY DEFINING SCIENTIFIC TERMS

Unsure what margin of exposure means? Want to know what molecular typing is? Confused by mode of action? EFSA's new glossary will guide you through the key scientific terms used in EFSA's communications.

Simple definitions of more than 250 scientific terms will bring extra clarity to EFSA's communications, helping lay audiences with an interest in our work to understand what are sometimes complex scientific concepts and conclusions.

The idea of building up a glossary of scientific terms most often used in EFSA's communication materials was raised at a meeting of EFSA's Advisory Forum Working Group on Communications, which brings together communication experts from national food safety agencies across the EU. The new glossary will support national food safety authorities in their communications to consumers about food safety.

The layman definitions have been developed specifically for communication purposes to explain concepts or terms that may be unfamiliar to many.

The glossary is available in English, French, German and Italian in the form of an A-Z list. It will also be gradually integrated into EFSA news and topics, so that every time a term is used for which a layman definition exists, a pop-up opens up where you can read more. For example: acceptable daily intake or adequate intake.

The EFSA glossary is a living document that will be regularly updated. It can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/z49ypbv>



FDA REQUIRES SUPPLIERS TO U.S. TO OPERATE FOOD DEFENCE PLAN

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has finalised a new food safety rule under the landmark, bipartisan FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) that will help to prevent wide-scale public health harm by requiring companies in the United States and abroad to take steps to prevent intentional adulteration of the food supply. While such acts are unlikely to occur, the new rule advances mitigation strategies to further protect the food supply.

Under the new rule, both domestic and foreign food facilities, for the first time, are required to complete and maintain a written food defence plan that assesses their potential vulnerabilities to deliberate contamination where the intent is to cause wide-scale public health harm. Facilities now have to identify and implement mitigation strategies to address these vulnerabilities, establish food defence monitoring procedures and corrective actions, verify that the system is working, ensure that personnel assigned to these areas receive appropriate training and maintain certain records.

“[This] final rule on intentional adulteration will further strengthen the safety of an increasingly global and complex food supply,” said Stephen Ostroff, M.D., incoming deputy commissioner for foods and veterinary medicine, FDA. “The rule will work in concert with other components of FSMA by preventing food safety problems before they occur.”

The rule was proposed in December 2013 and takes into consideration more than 200 comments submitted by the food industry, government regulatory partners, consumer advocates and others.

The FDA is committed to working with both industry and its state, local and tribal partners to ensure effective implementation of this new rule. Implementation of the Intentional Adulteration rule and all FSMA final rules will require partnership, education, and training. The FDA and others will provide industry with valuable tools to make compliance with the final rules easier, such as guidance, training courses and a technical assistance centre.

Food manufacturers are required to comply with the new regulation within three to five years after publication of the final rule, depending on the size of the business.

The more information on the rule can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zpfney3> along with links to a Q&A and further information documents.

FSA SURVEY CLAIMS FALLING CAMPYLOBACTER LEVELS IN FRESH CHICKEN

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have published the latest results from their survey of campylobacter on fresh shop-bought chickens. The results for January to March 2016 continue to show a decrease both in the number of birds with campylobacter on them and those with the highest level of contamination from the equivalent quarter last year.

The latest data show 9.3% of chickens tested positive for the highest level of contamination in this quarter, down from 21.8% for the three months from December 2014 to February 2015.

Campylobacter was present on 50% of chicken samples, down from 71% in the equivalent quarter of the previous year. FSA tested 1,009 samples of fresh whole chilled UK-produced chickens and packaging this quarter.

Steve Wearne, Director of Policy at the FSA, said: 'These results are moving in the right direction and I am delighted with progress. It shows what can be done by a real commitment to tackle this bug and I am encouraging industry to go even further, more quickly, to continue to get the numbers down.'

LGA CALLS FOR MANDATORY DISPLAY OF FOOD HYGIENE RATING SCORES IN ENGLAND

All food premises should be forced to display 'Scores on the Doors' ratings to drive up standards and protect people from the risk of eating poorly prepared food cooked by rogue operators in unsafe and unhygienic kitchens, council leaders said.

Council environmental health teams score outlets from zero to five based on factors such as kitchen cleanliness, cooking methods and food management. However, in England, businesses do not have to display the 'Scores on the Doors' rating they have been awarded. Compulsory 'Scores on the Doors' ratings already exist in Wales, and Northern Ireland will follow suit in October this year.

The Local Government Association (LGA), which represents more than 370 councils in England, is calling for mandatory display to be legally extended to England to help raise food hygiene standards at restaurants, pubs, cafes, takeaways, sandwich shops, supermarkets and delicatessens, to improve transparency and reassurance for consumers. It believes that failure to comply should result in either a fine or prosecution.

Councils regularly take action against poor hygiene and safety standards at food outlets. Recent cases have seen them prosecute food outlets infested with cockroaches, dangerous structural and electrical failures and mouse droppings in food preparation areas.

Forcing food outlets to display their 'Scores on the Doors' rating would not only improve consumer confidence and raise standards, but would reduce the need for and cost of enforcement action by councils, the LGA insists.

More information from the LGA on this, along with EHO enforcement case studies can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zg2j5ej>

FOOD FACTORIES TO BECOME SAFER THANKS TO DNA TESTING

A major food safety initiative aimed at revolutionising food safety in manufacturing plants has been launched in Ireland with the involvement of six food companies.

Using so-called next generation sequencing (NGS) technologies, the Sequencing Alliance for Food Environment (SAFE) project plans to develop new predictive software that will enhance approaches to food quality and safety.

By creating a 'toolbox' of data that will be able to define and track bacterial characteristics at the DNA level, the architects of SAFE hope to replace current methods used to control bacteria in factories, which they describe as "neither sufficiently rapid nor specific".

The three year £.135M project is a partnership between Enterprise Ireland and the University College Dublin Centre for Food Safety, Dairygold, Dawn Farm Foods, Glanbia, Kerry Group, Mead Johnson Nutrition and Nutrition Supplies. Creme Global will supply the predictive intake modelling software. Through the software toolbox, SAFE aims to mitigate the risk of bacterial contamination in the food supply chain.

More information on this can be found on the Food Manufacture website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/zfvcuvq>



FOOD SECURITY, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

FSAI WELCOMES COURT RULING FOR MISLEADING COOL MARKING OF MEAT

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) has welcomed Judge Gráinne Malone's ruling at Navan District Court in a case involving Keelaghan Wholesale Meats Ltd and six offences related to breaches of food safety legislation. These included falsely declaring Irish origin for beef imported from Poland, Lithuania or Germany; the application of false Irish slaughter and cutting plant codes used on packaging labels and; having an inadequate beef traceability plan.

Keelaghan Wholesale Meats Ltd. was found guilty of six charges. The company was fined a total of €16,000 with €10,000 as an agreed contribution to costs.

The case was brought by the FSAI and follows an investigation undertaken by the FSAI in conjunction with Meath County Council. The District Judge referred to the fact that this was a very serious matter and is a fraud not only on the consumer, but on the entire industry.

According to Dr Pamela Byrne, CEO, FSAI, the breaches related to deliberate misleading of the consumer with false labelling of beef incorrectly indicating the country of origin as Ireland, and also using incorrect Irish slaughter and cutting plant codes on the labels.

NEW GUIDANCE ON HERBS AND SPICES FOR FOOD BUSINESSES LAUNCHED

A new resource has been launched will provide food companies that use culinary dried herbs and spices with industry best practice guidance on assessing and protecting the authenticity of these products.

Protection against adulteration and substitution is of the utmost importance given that many herbs and spices are materials that may be of high intrinsic value. Food businesses need to ensure that they have appropriate controls and mitigation measures in place to prevent or detect product vulnerabilities.

As with any raw material and its supply chain, the emphasis should always be on prevention rather than detection of issues. As each herb and spice is unique, this document concentrates on identifying and assessing general vulnerabilities.

Food companies will be able to use the practical guidance to ensure that they have the appropriate measures in place to play their role in assuring the integrity of these products. The guide was developed by the British Retail Consortium (BRC), Food and Drink Federation (FDF) and Seasoning and Spice Association (SSA) in liaison with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS).

The full guidance is available to access here: <http://tinyurl.com/hnl5lft>



PROJECT TO DEVELOP FRAUD RESILIENT GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

TiFSiP is managing a project to develop a good practice guide to improve food and drink businesses' fraud resilience. The project is a collaboration between TiFSiP, the National Food Crime Unit, the Centre for Counter Fraud Studies and PKF Littlejohn LLP.

To inform the development of the guide, TiFSiP are consulting with industry stakeholders about the extent to which counter fraud good practice is currently applied by the food and drink industry.

TiFSiP are inviting BFFF members to participate in the consultation, to find out about business' approach to addressing fraud, and whether counter fraud practices from other sectors may be applicable to your businesses.

TiFSiP are keen to consult widely and would appreciate your help by completing the survey designed for businesses. The survey is a self-assessment tool prepared by the Centre for Counter Fraud Studies at University of Portsmouth. It consists of a series of questions about factors important to fraud resilience, providing an initial assessment of an organisation's likely level of fraud resilience and an indicative financial cost.

If you would like to get involved, the survey is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/zga2hw4>

Any members that participate will receive a free copy of the good practice guide.

IMPORTS AND THE SUPPLY CHAIN

CHINA LIFTS IMPORT BAN ON ANIMAL PRODUCTS FROM EU COUNTRIES

China has confirmed that it is lifting its import ban introduced 4 years ago on bovine & ovine genetic material from Denmark, France, Germany and United Kingdom due to Schmallenberg virus.

The decision – preceded with joint efforts of various Commission services and EU Member States - was announced by the Chinese Minister of Agriculture, Minister HAN Changfu, during the visit of EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development Phil Hogan to China. The Commission welcomes the lifting of this ban that should allow now for real trade starting to take place rapidly and looks forward to seeing China opening its market for these safe products from the rest of the EU in the near future.

In May 2012, China introduced an import ban on imports of bovine semen, bovine embryo, ovine semen and ovine embryo produced after 1 June 2011 from several EU countries, referring to an alleged risk of Schmallenberg virus (SBV) which can cause birth defects and stillbirths in cattle, sheep, and goats. This measure went beyond the international standards set by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), which considers that the virus does not meet the OIE requirements for setting an international standard, meanings therefore that trade measures for this disease are not required.

COMMISSION PUBLISHES FURTHER TTIP DOCUMENTS IN TRANSPARENCY COMMITMENT

The European Commission has published a report detailing the progress achieved during the 13th round of talks for a trade and investment agreement with the United States, together with its proposal on regulatory cooperation in pharmaceuticals, submitted to the US during the last round of talks. The publication of these documents from the ongoing negotiations on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is in line with the European Commission's commitment to enhanced transparency.

The round report shows that negotiators made good progress in all three pillars of the negotiations, namely:

- i) better access to markets for EU and US firms,
- ii) simplifying technical regulations without lowering standards and
- iii) global rules of trade, including sustainable development, labour and the environment and a dedicated chapter for smaller firms (SMEs).

However, significant differences still remain, such as in the areas of services and public procurement.

The proposal for cooperation in the pharmaceuticals sector aims to help regulators work more closely together to achieve better efficiency and thereby deliver benefits for patients.

The cooperation would take place in areas such as:

- i) recognising good manufacturing practice inspections to avoid unnecessary duplication,
- ii) exchange of confidential and trade secret information between regulators,
- iii) supporting each other's work on developing regulations in new areas which could lead to faster and cheaper approval of medicines.

The proposal clearly states that both the EU and the US reserve the full right to regulate to achieve public policy objectives and protect human and animal health, and the environment.

The report detailing the progress can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/gtjp523>



DRAFT STUDY ON IMPACT OF TTIP OPEN FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The independent consultant, Ecorys, carrying out a Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) for the European Commission on the trade agreement being negotiated between the EU and the United States has published its draft interim report.

The technical report highlights the opportunities that a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) could create for people and businesses across Europe, and is now available for public consultation. This work is being conducted by Ecorys, in a process involving wide consultation with more than 500 stakeholders.

The 400-page report indicates that all Member States' economies would grow as a result of the new trade agreement. The study also predicts that EU exports to the US would rise by 27% and a mix of social indicators shows a combined benefit both for European and US citizens. The report goes beyond the numbers to also look in detail at the social and environmental impact that TTIP could have.

All interested stakeholders now have the opportunity to review the draft and offer feedback, before Ecorys moves on to work on the final interim report and recommendations for the end of 2016. The Commission also organised a civil society dialogue with the authors of the report, which took place on 30 May. The Commission has been carrying out sustainability impact assessments on all negotiated trade agreements since 1999. These assessments take place during the negotiations and feed into the work of the negotiators as the negotiations evolve.

More information, and the consultation, is available on the Ecorys website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/zkbaa6o>

BIS POLICY PAPER ON CROSS BORDER ENFORCEMENT

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has published a policy paper explaining the UK's position on cross-border enforcement of consumer protection within Europe.

The policy paper puts forward UK proposals to ensure effective cross border enforcement which works for consumers and businesses.

The European Commission published on 29 April 2016 a press release on new EU rules for a simpler, faster and safer Customs Union.

New customs rules which came into force on 1 May 2016 aim to:

- allow traders to clear customs procedures more simply and quickly, getting goods to consumers faster and more cheaply;
- better protect consumers against illegal goods or goods which don't respect European environmental, health and safety requirements;
- improve cooperation between customs administrations with the help of new IT systems.

The policy paper is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/jap2ua3>

FDF/FDEA EXPORT GUIDANCE

The Food and Drink Federation (FDF) has published new export guidance. The guidance entitled "Exports – Five Steps to Food and Drink Exporting Success" has been developed by the FDF and Food and Drink Exporters Association (FDEA).

The guide provides useful information and tips on how food and drink manufacturers can begin exporting to foreign markets, including details of necessary research, and how to create exporting opportunities and useful contacts.

The document contains:

- Step One – Is now the right time to export?
- Step Two – Do your research
- Step Three – Create opportunities
- Step Four – Export Practicalities
- Step Five – Growing exports
- Useful contact

The guide is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/gqetaem>

LABELLING AND GENERAL FOOD LAW

BFFF PUBLISH ASSURED ADVICE ON DUAL WEIGHT LABELLING

British Frozen Food Federation is pleased to announce that our Assured Advice issued by Cambridgeshire County Council under the Primary Authority Partnership co-ordinated by BFFF has now been published. This advice has legal backing for participating members, which means that if you are in the scheme and follow it you cannot be asked to do anything different by another local authority.

The advice covers: *Glazed Seafood Weight Indication Guidance*

The full advice document can be accessed through the BFFF website under *Primary Authority Assured Advice*, here: <http://tinyurl.com/q7jk2uc>

If there are other areas where you could benefit from advice that might be suitable to form the basis of Primary Authority Assured Advice in to bring consistency and clarity across the sector please contact martinforseyth@bfff.co.uk

If you would like to join the BFFF Primary Authority Scheme to benefit from the legal backing that the advice provides, please contact crystalholmes@bfff.co.uk

DEFRA PUBLISH GUIDANCE ON ORGANIC FOODS LABELLING RULES

Defra have published guidance on how organic food producers, sellers and importers must label organic food products.

The guidance covers:

- Label food as organic
- List organic ingredients in non-organic products
- Display the EU logo
- Links to organic control bodies
- Links to organic standards

The guidance can be found on the Gov.uk website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/zqrszwe>

EVALUATION OF THE REGULATION ON NUTRITION AND HEALTH CLAIMS

The European Commission has updated its position as to the re-evaluation of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods.

The Commission's plan to carry out a REFIT evaluation of the EU legislation on nutrition and health claims was announced in its Better Regulation Communication of 19 May 2015. This REFIT evaluation aims at focusing on nutrient profiles and health claims on plants and their preparations added to foods.



REFIT is the European Commission's Regulatory Fitness and Performance programme. Action is taken to make EU law simpler and to reduce regulatory costs, thus contributing to a clear, stable and predictable regulatory framework supporting growth and jobs. To do this successfully, REFIT requires a joint effort between the European Parliament, the European Council, the European Commission, Member States and stakeholders.

It also aims at considering the more general regulatory framework for the use of such substances in foods since it is closely related to the use of health claims.

The Commission published a Roadmap, on 8 October 2015, on the REFIT Evaluation of the EU Nutrition and Health Claims legislation. This Roadmap is a first step in the evaluation process and outlines the purpose, content and scope of the evaluation. Stakeholders submitted their feedback on the roadmap via a dedicated webpage and the feedback received during the first four weeks after publication of the roadmap was considered in the design of the evaluation. The extent to which feedback received after that period can be taken into account is determined by the progress made in the evaluation process.

For more information, and links to other relevant documentation, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/jy8kx2h>

REPORT ON OPTIONS FOR ECO-LABEL SCHEME FOR FISHERY PRODUCTS

The European Commission has published a Report on options for an EU eco-label scheme for fishery and aquaculture products.

The report describes the context in which eco-labels have developed in the fishery and aquaculture sector and relevant public and private initiatives at EU and international level on environmental voluntary claims are presented. The situation of the market for eco-labelled products is described, as are the main issues raised with regard to eco-labels. Finally, the report identifies areas of possible action in relation to an eco-label scheme for fishery and aquaculture products and evaluates their respective feasibility. The three options are:

- strengthening the control of existing regulations and further supporting the implementation of available tools, including e.g. marketing measures;
- setting minimum requirements on sustainability claims;
- creation of a self standing Union-wide voluntary eco-label scheme.

The report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/hk55sf9>

MEPS RENEW CALL FOR MANDATORY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELLING FOR MEAT AND MILK

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

The non-binding resolution restates Parliament's position in favour of mandatory labelling of the country of origin or place of provenance of drinking milk, milk in dairy products and meat in meat products, adding that the EU Commission and member states should also consider extending it to other single-ingredient foods, or those with one main ingredient.

FoodDrinkEurope also published a Statement regarding the European Parliament's call for mandatory country of origin labelling of meat ingredients and milk.

FoodDrinkEurope reiterates its strong concern with the impact of such a mandatory requirement for businesses, consumers and the environment. Mandatory country of origin labelling of ingredients in processed foods would require production lines and batches to be differentiated according to country; this would reduce the flexibility to buy from different sources, would make supply chains less efficient, make production more costly and create more food waste.

The European Parliament press release is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/jthnebz>

SALT LEVELS IN IRISH BACON HIGHER THAN NUTRITION LABELS SUGGEST

The salt levels in bacon and ham products may be up to 50% higher than what the nutrition label suggests, according to research.

The survey was conducted by Teagasc, the national body which provides research, advisory and training services to the food industry. Teagasc is involved in researching ways to reduce the salt and fat content of processed meats as well as minimising the use of additives, and took the samples as part of this PROSSLOW project. *"Before reducing fat and salt content, it is paramount to establish the benchmark levels for these products, not only according to the regulatory authorities' guidelines, but also to determine the current mean industry levels"* it said.

It purchased 30 different cooked ham products and 36 bacon products from Irish retailers.

One quarter of the bacon samples were over guidelines set by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) despite the fact that the nutrition label on every product said the salt content was equal to or below FSAI guidelines. The salt content in some products around 50% higher than the label suggested.

There were wide variations in the salt content of bacon according to the brand, ranging from 1.24% to 4.71% with an average content of 2.53%.

Half of the ham samples contained salt that was above the guidelines.

However, the variation in salt levels suggests that it is technically possible to make further reduction in salt, said Teagasc. *"The observation that some retail products had salt levels below the guidelines suggests that the task can be accomplished. The strategy to follow varies depending on the product and composition."*

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that adults should have less than 5g of salt per day but the mean daily intake for Irish adults in 7.4g according to 2011 figures.

NUTRITION, ADDITIVES AND HEALTH

FOODBOURNE ILLNESS STRATEGY FOR SCOTLAND CONSULTATION

Foodborne illness remains an important public health problem for Scotland, and results in disruption to the workforce and burdens on health services which can impact the Scottish economy. Therefore Food Standards Scotland (FSS) is now consulting on a draft proposal for a new Foodborne Illness Strategy for Scotland which sets out the approach for the next five years and aims to protect the safety of foods produced and sold in Scotland, and reduce the risks of foodborne illness to the Scottish population.

FSS are keen to ensure that the development of the strategy takes the views of consumers and stakeholders into account, and would welcome your comments. If you'd like to provide feedback, make suggestions on how the proposals could be improved, or let FSS know whether you think they need to take a different approach, you can follow the link to the consultation below.

The deadline for responses is 23rd August 2016, and the consultation can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zwfb8b4>

PHE RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL OBESITY FORUM OPINION PAPER

An opinion paper published by the National Obesity Forum and the newly-formed Public Health Collaboration is irresponsible and misleads the public, says Public Health England (PHE).

Professor John Newton, chief knowledge officer at Public Health England, said:

“Suggesting people should eat more fat, cut out carbs and ignore calories conflicts with the broad evidence base and internationally agreed interpretations of it. The report from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition on carbohydrates alone included around 600 peer-reviewed scientific reports. That review was carried out over a number of years, reflecting how long it takes to thoroughly consider evidence ahead of changing dietary guidelines.

“We engage with a broad range of stakeholders when we make changes to advice, and this includes representatives of the food and drink industry. As the organisation that advises the government on dietary guidelines, it would be irresponsible for us to not engage with those who produce and market the food we all eat.”

PHE have stated their priority is to advise the public, clearly and consistently, basing the advice on broad, robust and objective evidence. To improve diet, reduce obesity levels and the risk of serious illnesses such as heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and some cancers, our advice remains that people should:

- base meals on starchy carbohydrates, especially wholegrain
- eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables each day
- cut back on food and drink high in saturated fat, salt, sugar and calories

It is difficult to conduct research linking diet to later health. That is why PHE base its dietary guidelines on comprehensive reviews of the totality of the evidence. They state that their advice is based on reviews by independent experts whose reports consider all the evidence, are subject to public consultation and which go through agreed processes to ensure objectivity.

PHE consults with academia, health charities, including the National Obesity Forum, public health professionals, representative professional bodies, local government and the food and drink industry. However, they continue to monitor changes in the evidence base, and where new evidence emerges, carry out a new review to ensure guidance remains current.

PHE say that the opinion paper from the National Obesity Forum and Public Health Collaboration is not a systematic review of all the relevant evidence. It does not include an assessment of the methodological quality of the studies and should not be confused with the comprehensive reviews of the evidence that are produced by our process. For example, this paper highlights one trial suggesting high dairy intake reduced the risk of obesity, while ignoring a systematic review and meta-analysis of 29 trials which concluded that increasing dairy did not reduce the risk of weight gain.



LGA HIGHLIGHT TYPE 2 DIABETES IN CHILDREN AND NEED FOR CHILDHOOD OBESITY STRATEGY

Latest figures show that there are 533 children and young people, including 11 aged nine or under, in England and Wales with Type 2 diabetes.

Unlike Type 1 diabetes, Type 2 is largely preventable and is closely linked to lifestyle, such as unhealthy eating or lack of exercise.

To coincide with Diabetes Week, the Local Government Association (LGA), which represents more than 370 councils with responsibility for public health, says the number will continue to rise unless bold action is taken in the Government's childhood obesity strategy.

A survey of children under 17 in the UK found that 95 per cent of those diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes were overweight and 83 per cent obese.

The first cases of Type 2 diabetes in children were diagnosed in overweight girls of Asian ethnic origin in 2000 and first reported in white adolescents in 2002.

The single greatest risk factor for children developing Type 2 diabetes is being overweight, which in turn can lead to obesity.

Data from the National Child Measurement Programme, carried out in schools and funded by councils, shows one in 10 four and five-year-olds and one in five 10 and 11-year-olds are obese.

The LGA has previously called for teaspoon sugar labelling and a reduction of sugar content in fizzy drinks, greater provision of tap water in schools and restaurants, and for councils to be given powers to ban junk food advertising near schools, to be included in the childhood obesity strategy. This strategy will be published later in 2016 by the Department of Health.

More information on this can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/hwhwpx8>



LGA CALL FOR FREE TAP WATER IN OBESITY STRATEGY

The Local Government Association (LGA), which represents more than 370 councils with responsibility for public health, says tap water needs to be made more freely available, rather than something you have to ask for.

It wants the Government to use its forthcoming childhood obesity strategy as an opportunity to encourage restauranteurs to take responsibility and offer parents and children the choice of tap water as an alternative drink.

One-in-five people do not know that licenced premises have to provide free tap water by law. Many restaurants however, currently only do so on request. Council leaders want restaurant owners and chains to step up and give tap water without customers feeling the need to ask for it.

This comes as figures show most people don't ask for tap water when they eat out. Eight out of 10 people usually drink tap water at home, yet only a third do so when eating out at restaurants. The same survey also found that 15 per cent of people who usually drink tap water at home, never think of asking for water in cafes or restaurants, while 13 per cent said it made them feel awkward.

The LGA wants government to promote initiatives where children are encouraged to drink more water in the childhood obesity strategy, and has previously called for tap water to be made more freely available in schools, nurseries and children's centres.

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

FSS PUBLISH BENCHMARK SURVEY ON CONSUMER ATTITUDES TO FOOD

Just over one year from launch, Food Standards Scotland (FSS) has published its first Food in Scotland Consumer Tracking Survey, lifting the lid on the nation's views and habits on food safety and hygiene, food authenticity and healthy eating.

This survey, conducted eight months after FSS was created on 1 April 2015, shows that of most concern to people in Scotland is making sure they and their families eat a healthy, balanced diet (31%), closely followed by concerns over becoming ill through eating unsafe food (30%).

With these issues on the nation's agenda though, only 37% of people surveyed know what *Campylobacter* is – the bacteria which causes the biggest number of food poisoning cases in Scotland each year. *Campylobacter* poisoning is strongly linked to eating chicken which hasn't been prepared or cooked properly, and there are significant spikes during the summer months, when more people are buying and barbecuing chicken pieces, such as drumsticks and thighs.

A high proportion of Scots recognised that Scotland has a problem in relation to diet, with half (50%) concerned about people having an unhealthy diet, and 74% agreeing that 'there are too many people who eat unhealthily in Scotland'.

However, there is a disconnect between this and the Scottish public's view of their own diets, with over half (53%) believing the food and drink their family normally consume is healthy. The links between diet and health are also familiar to most, with 85% agreeing that they 'know that an unhealthy diet can cause lots of health problems, like cancer and heart disease'.

Just over half of the participants (51%) 'know they need to do something to eat more healthily', and likewise, a significant proportion (41%) agree they 'know they eat too many 'treats' like cakes, biscuits, chocolates or sweets every day'.

These results support the FSS Board's recommendation to Scottish Ministers in January, to consider a range of proposals from a sugar tax to portion size reduction, and tougher targets for reformulation of food and drink to tackle head on the growing obesity crisis in Scotland. It is projected that if it continues to rise it is expected that 40% of the Scottish population will be obese 15 years from now.

The FSS survey report can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/jalcjzx>



PHE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION ANNUAL REPORT 2015

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) has published its annual report for the calendar year 2015.

This report provides a summary of the work of SACN and its working groups and subgroup, along with details of members' declarations of interest and their biographies.

SACN is a UK wide advisory committee set up to provide advice to Public Health England as well as other government agencies and departments. Its remit includes matters concerning nutrient content of individual foods, advice on diet and the nutritional status of people.

Members are appointed as independent scientific experts on the basis of their specific skills and knowledge. There is also a lay member and a member to represent consumers.

The SACN is supported in its work by a secretariat provided by Public Health England. The secretariat members have scientific expertise that enables them to provide SACN members with comprehensive background information and briefing papers to inform the decision-making processes of the committee.

The full annual report is available to download here: <http://tinyurl.com/z62576n>

QUARTER OF PEOPLE WITH ALLERGIES SUFFER REACTIONS WHEN EATING OUT

A survey by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Allergy UK has shown there have been improvements for those with allergies since new labelling rules came in, but more needs to be done.

The survey found one in four has suffered a reaction while eating out in a restaurant or cafe since new allergen labelling legislation came in a year ago. It also found that nearly one in five (19%) of those allergic reactions resulted in a hospital visit.

The EU Food Information for Consumers (FIC) legislation came into force in December 2014, and means that food businesses have to make information on 14 allergens available to consumers. This ranges from the most common allergens, such as peanuts and gluten, to less well known triggers for allergic reactions such as mustard and celery. Around 2 million people in the UK suffer from allergies, including 2% of adults and 8% of children.

The survey, which was carried out to mark Allergy Awareness Week 2016, found that overall 83% of respondents reported noticing an increase in measures designed to make life easier for allergic consumers – including menus marking out allergens, and staff actively checking food information with the kitchen. More than half (58%) of allergic consumers said that their overall experience of eating out has improved; just 6% said it has got worse. As a result, a similar proportion (52%) say they now feel more confident eating out than they did before the legislation was introduced. The survey 'Eating out with a food allergy' and results can be accessed in full here: <http://tinyurl.com/zu8g4pu>

BFFF JOINS ANAPHYLAXIS CAMPAIGN

As discussed at the last T&L Expert Group, it was requested that BFFF get more involved with allergens. As part of this project we have now become corporate members of the Anaphylaxis Campaign. The Anaphylaxis Campaign aims to create a safe environment for all people at risk of severe allergic reaction by educating the food industry, schools and other key audiences. They focus on food labelling, risk reduction and allergen management. More information on the campaign can be found on their website, here: <http://tinyurl.com/6bexpry>

We have spoken with our contact at the campaign and registered our interest in the important issue of thresholds for allergens/risk assessments/improvements in the accuracy of testing. They have agreed to put this on the agenda of their next Industry Panel meeting.

Being part of this campaign will give us a chance to raise the issues on allergens that are key to your businesses. If you have any questions on this topic that you would like us to raise on your behalf we can do so, and we would welcome your input on the following:

- What are the areas you want to know more about?
- What challenges you see ahead?

As the topic of allergens will be an ongoing item on the agenda, we propose to make this a topic for discussion at the next BFFF Technical Expert Group meeting, to get an idea of how to further get involved, and the best way to raise key issues for our industry. If you would like more information on the outcome of the discussion, or would like to feedback on the above, please contact martinforsyth@bfff.co.uk

COMMISSION WEBPAGE ON FLAVOURINGS UPDATED

The European Commission has updated its webpage on EU rules on flavourings. The page includes links to the legislation, including the lists of flavouring substances and smoke flavourings, background on older legislation that are still partly valid and repealed legislation.

Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008 on flavourings and certain food ingredients with flavouring properties for use in/on foods was adopted on 16 December 2008 and entered into force on 20 January 2009. This Regulation repealed Directive 88/388/EEC and Commission Directive 91/71/EEC from 20 January 2011 onwards. Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008 lays down general requirements for safe use of flavourings and provides definitions for different types of flavourings. The Regulation sets out substances for which an evaluation and approval is required. The Union list of flavouring substances, approved for use in and on foods, was adopted on 1 October 2012 and was introduced in Annex I of this Regulation.

The Regulation prohibits the addition of certain natural undesirable substances as such to food and lays down maximum levels for certain substances, which are naturally present in flavourings and in food ingredients with flavourings properties, but which may raise concern for human health.

The updated webpage can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/zq3jhuz>

PROCESSING AND RETAIL

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT PLEDGE £50K TO DEVELOP ORGANICS SECTOR

The Scottish Government will drive forward growth in the organics sector with a £50,000 development fund, Rural Economy Secretary Fergus Ewing has announced.

The fund will help deliver 'Organic Ambitions' – the industry's Action Plan for 2016-20, with an initial focus on developing innovative approaches to strengthening the Scottish organic supply chain.

The news comes on the back of the 2015 Organic Farming Statistics which were published earlier this month.

The report indicated that the amount of organic land in Scotland fell by 7% in 2015, from 136,000 hectares to 126,000 hectares, and is now the lowest area since the 1990s, while the numbers of cattle, pigs and poultry that are certified organic have increased.

The Cabinet Secretary said: "The supply and demand of organic food has a significant role to play in driving forward Scotland's rural economy, whilst contributing to protecting the environment. The Scottish Government is committed to developing this sector which is why I'm delighted to support it with the Organic Ambitions Fund. The aim is to strengthen and promote Scotland's organic food and drink supply chain through better partnership working.

"Organic spend in Scotland increased by 2.6% between February 2015 and January 2016, and around £52.6 million was spent on organic food and drink products in Scotland in the year up to 31 January 2016. There is clearly evidence of strong demand and potential to boost the rural economy, whilst at the same time enhancing Scotland's already stellar reputation for quality food and drink. I hope that this funding will help to improve on these statistics."

More information on this can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zd8thth>

NEW REPORT SUGGESTS WAYS TO IMPROVE ENFORCEMENT OF CONSUMER RIGHTS

Better and more systematic cooperation between public authorities and consumer organisations would help improve consumer protection. That's one of the key conclusions from the final report of the COJEF II project which The European Consumer Organisation BEUC ran with 10 national consumer associations over the last two years.

The project partners underlined that, instead of being in competition, consumer organisations and public authorities could benefit from more frequent exchanges and taking more joint actions.

Detecting market failures and consumer problems early is essential. The 'Enforcement of consumer rights' report suggests to find a way to gather and evaluate consumer complaints quickly and electronically across the EU in order to prevent what is often a fragmented, inefficient response to consumer complaints in different countries.

Another of the report's recommendations is to make collective redress effective across the EU. The EU's recommendation on collective redress has still not been implemented in many EU countries, which means consumers are left without this mechanism to seek redress when large numbers have had their rights infringed.

The COJEF II project looked to strengthen enforcement of EU and national consumer law by improving enforcement strategies and training on enforcement among consumer organisations. The project covered several areas including online services, telecommunications and the car emissions scandal.

More information on the COJEF II project can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zs9rsto>

EFSA CONSULTATION ON NUTRIENT SOURCES GUIDANCE

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has announced the launch of a public consultation on a concept paper on the revision of the 'Guidance on submissions for safety evaluation of sources of nutrients or of other ingredients proposed for use in the manufacture of foods'. EFSA's food additives experts are calling for input before they revise the guidance on submitting scientific information for the safety evaluation of nutrient sources used as ingredients in manufactured food.

EFSA assesses two things in this type of evaluation: the safety of the source and the bioavailability of the nutrient from the source. The current guidance needs to be updated in light of the experience of EFSA's experts assessing nutrient sources over recent years and the evolving principles of risk assessment in the area of food ingredients. More information and a link to submit comments can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/jz6xrq3> Comments are invited by 20 July 2016.

REFRIGERATION

NEW BFFF MEMBER INTEREST GROUP PROPOSAL – REFRIGERATION & COOLING

The BFFF Expert Groups are supported by a series of Member Interest Groups (MIGs) and these are available to all members to join. They consist of electronic information dissemination which may evolve into teleconferences over time, but currently does not involve attending meetings.

These e-MIGs offer members the opportunity to feedback on BFFF policy and proposed regulation consultations. Working closely with the relevant parts of the Expert Groups these e-MIGs currently cover Meat, Fish, Fruit and Vegetables and Biocides & Chlorates. As the food landscape increases in complexity we continue adding to the MIGs to ensure they represent member interests so they can be kept up to date on the issues that are most relevant to their business.

We are proposing to set up a new MIG for Refrigeration and Cooling which we feel may be relevant to members, and this new group will cover:

- Refrigerant Gases
- Refrigeration Systems
- All Cold Storage Refrigeration
- Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Industry Board (ACRIB) & Institute of Refrigeration (IOR) Updates

We are currently inviting any members with an interest in this area to contact crystalholmes@bff.co.uk to get involved and get your name on the list for any information that we distribute.

REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT & OFFICIAL CONTROLS

ADDITIONAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY UNDER SCOTLAND ACT 2016

New powers for the Scottish Parliament will be used to create a fairer country, Constitution Secretary Derek Mackay has pledged. In May the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government receive new powers through the Scotland Act 2016.

Many of these powers allow for legislation to be taken forward in areas including equal opportunities, consumer advocacy and advice, competition and transport.

The social security powers which are being devolved will be transferred at a later date, while most of tax powers which are being transferred will also take practical effect at a later date.

Mr Mackay said: *“The Scotland Act sees the most substantial change to the powers of the Parliament since devolution.*

“The Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government have new powers over many areas, notably in equality, consumer advocacy and transport. Reflecting our priorities, we are already working to use these powers as quickly as possible, to tackle inequality and create a fairer, more prosperous country.

“That includes our plans to promote equality by legislating for gender balance on the boards of public bodies.

“Our consumer and competition strategy will take account of Scotland’s geographic, social and economic circumstances. We will use the newly devolved consumer powers to develop a robust system which protects and empowers consumers and supports businesses which are innovative, efficient and fair. And we will also remove employment tribunals fees that act as a barrier to justice.

“On transport, we’ll allow public sector operators to bid for future rail franchises and integrate the British Transport Police into Police Scotland, while retaining the specialisms that are highly valued by the rail industry and passengers. And we will look to attract more international flights to Scotland, boosting investment and jobs, by reforming Air Passenger Duty, which under the UK Government is one of the highest taxes of its kind in the world.

“While the Scotland Act does not go as far as we would wish, we will always use all the powers available to us in the best interests of Scotland.”

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT APPOINT CHIEF SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR

The Scottish Government have announced their new Chief Scientific Advisor, award winning Professor Sheila Rowan MBE.

Professor Rowan is the director of the University of Glasgow's Institute for Gravitational Research, which has been part of a global effort leading to the discovery of gravitational waves.

John Swinney, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, said:

"I am delighted to welcome Professor Rowan to the Scottish Government and look forward to working with her as Chief Scientific Adviser."

"The Scottish Government values science and the expert scientific advice provided by our network of specialist science advisers. As CSA, Professor Rowan will help to ensure that science informs the Scottish Government's work, and advise on the impact that new developments in science may have."



CAP/ASA CONSULTATION ON REVISED FOOD ADVERTISING RULES

The Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) and Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) have launched a consultation on introducing new rules on the advertising to children of food and soft drink products in non-broadcast media, including online.

The action comes in response to wider societal concerns around childhood obesity, as well as the need to ensure the advertising rules reflect changing media habits amongst young people.

The main proposals are to:

- Introduce a new rule to the UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising, Direct and Promotional Marketing (the CAP Code) to limit where advertising for food and soft drink products high in fat, salt or sugar (HFSS products) can be placed in all non-broadcast media, including traditional and online media
- Explore through consultation whether the new rule should prohibit HFSS product advertising in media targeted at or of particular appeal to children under 12 or under 16
- Apply the existing rules prohibiting the use of promotions and licensed characters and celebrities popular with children to HFSS product advertising only, allowing more creative ways for healthier foods to be advertised to children

Available evidence shows that advertising has a modest effect on children's food preferences, but other factors like parental influence, opportunities for physical exercise, education etc. play greater roles in the causes of and solutions to childhood obesity. However, CAP/ASA believe even a relatively small positive impact from new advertising restrictions could make a meaningful contribution to tackling this important health issue.

The proposals are informed by an understanding of the costs that would emerge from a failure to address the obesity crisis affecting the UK. A third of children are overweight or obese which in turn adds to the wider adult obesity problem; overweight and obese children are more likely to become obese adults and have a higher risk of morbidity, disability and premature mortality in adulthood. The consultation explores what role advertising regulation can reasonably play – alongside a co-ordinated approach involving parents, schools and a wide range of public health professionals and regulatory bodies – in helping tackle this deep-seated public health challenge.

The full consultation and relevant documents are available here: <http://tinyurl.com/zbeus6o> The consultation is open to all for comment, and closes on Friday 22nd July.

CMA PUBLISH REVISED STRUCTURE CHART

The Competition Markets Authority has published a revised and updated structure. The document sets out the structure of the organisation as at June 2016.

The updated structure can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/zkdcyq9>

FDF APPOINTS HELEN MUNDAY AS CHIEF SCIENTIFIC OFFICER

The Food and Drink Federation (FDF) has appointed Helen Munday as Chief Scientific Officer. Helen will take up her new role in early summer 2016.

Helen has a wealth of experience in the food and drink industry, having held senior European and global roles in companies such as Mars and Coca-Cola over her career. From 2007 - 2010 she worked as Director of Food Safety and Science for FDF. Most recently Helen has been Lead Technologist in AgriFood for Innovate UK.

FDF Director General Ian Wright CBE said: "I am thrilled that Helen is joining the team here at FDF. It has never been more important for industry action, public debate and policy-making to be informed by robust science. As the newest member of FDF's Leadership Team, Helen will help us to deliver more for the UK's food and drink industry which is a vital national asset."

Helen Munday said: "It's a real privilege to be joining FDF in the role of Chief Scientific Officer. I deeply believe that growth in the food and drink sector needs to be based on the application of sound science as well as innovations driven by so many factors that shape the way we live today. Whilst the sector faces many challenges I'm looking forward with great enthusiasm to working with the industry partners and stakeholders that I have always so much enjoyed working with."

ACS URGE TO GO FURTHER IN CUTTING RED TAPE FOR CONSISTENCY IN REGULATION

The Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) has called on the Government to go further in their Red Tape Review to ensure that local authorities are consistent in their approach to enforcement, as well as removing the costly and unnecessary burdens experienced by licensed retailers.

In the submission, ACS welcomes the Government's intention to remove £10 billion worth of regulation over the course of this Parliament but has highlighted that the local enforcement and interpretation of regulations cause significant problems for retailers in addition to the regulations themselves.

ACS has called for the following measures to help retailers deal with enforcement at a local level:

- Encouraging local authorities to take a more targeted approach to regulation, which includes recognising responsible businesses and targeting those that are non-compliant
- Removing the £2.7m annual burden on businesses who currently have to communicate licensing applications through local newspaper adverts
- Introducing a single, consistent platform for retailers and local authorities to manage licensing applications
- Removing the requirement for businesses to display their premises licence, as local authorities already have the information on which premises are licenced or not.
- Changing the way licensing conditions are put forward to ensure that they are justified on the basis of an individual store and its relationship to the licensing objectives

ACS chief executive James Lowman said: "We believe that retailers should be able to focus on their business instead of having to jump through hoops and spend money unnecessarily to meet the needs of local authorities. Removing the cost of advertising licensing applications and introducing a more consistent approach to licensing enforcement should be a core part of the Government's red tape review."

DEFRA GUIDANCE ON ORGANIC PRODUCE TESTS AND INSPECTIONS

Defra has published guidance on organic produce tests and inspections. The guidance covers areas such as providing samples for testing, detailed inspections for livestock keepers, what happens if tests show that products might not meet organic standards, appeal against test results and reporting products suspected or known to be non-organic.

The guidance, which is available here <http://tinyurl.com/jzchx5s>, covers:

- Get inspected
- What happens if tests show that your product might not meet organic standards
- Appeal against test results
- Stop labelling products as organic if they don't meet organic standards
- Report products suspected or known to be non-organic

SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENT & CSR

FOOD ETHICS COUNCIL PUBLISH 'CATERING FOR SUSTAINABILITY'

The Food Ethics Council has been commissioned by WWF-UK and Sodexo UK and Ireland to undertake independent research to explore the business cases for adopting and promoting sustainable diets in the foodservice sector.

The work comprised a mix of desk-based research and semistructured interviews with 16 senior foodservice sector personnel and other opinion leaders linked to the industry. The report, 'Catering for sustainability,' reflects the authors' findings from the research and draws extensively on the interviewees' insights and opinions.

The work aims to understand whether, why and how sustainable diets are promoted by individual foodservice companies, and to assess the business cases for adopting and promoting sustainable diets across the sector. It seeks to understand the policy environment and other external drivers of change in the industry.

It makes recommendations for foodservice within businesses, as well as across their stakeholders and the industry as a whole.

The full report is available to download here: <http://tinyurl.com/zpmlbd1>



FSS PRODUCE NEW GUIDANCE ON FISH TRACEABILITY

Over the past year officials from Food Standards Scotland (FSS), Marine Scotland and Seafish have been consulting with onshore and offshore representatives of the fishing industry, to put together guidance on how this sector may meet the requirements set out in European marketing regulations, to ensure traceability information on catches of fish are made available up to first point of sale.

A full technical guide was produced last year, and FSS have now published a short guidance note along with an easy to follow template.

Whether buying fish prepacked, loose from fishmongers or direct from vessels, consumers can expect to see:

- the commercial name of the fish along with its scientific name
- whether it was caught at sea, in freshwater, farmed or cultivated
- the catch or production area, and for sea fish, the type of fishing gear
- for sea fish caught around the UK, detailed descriptions of the catch area such as 'North Sea' or 'Rockall' may be used
- for freshwater fish the body of water and EU or non-EU country is needed and for farmed fish and cultivated products, the EU or non-EU country in which the most significant rearing period took place should appear

The guidance document is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/z5kprt7>

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT CALL FOR STRONGER TRACEABILITY FOR FISH

The European Parliament has published a Press Release announcing that the European Parliament has adopted a resolution calling for the creation of a strong traceability system for fish, from landing to consumption, to help prevent cases of mislabelling.

MEPs voiced concern about various studies showing significant levels of mislabelling of fish products sold on the EU market and called on EU member states to step up national checks, including on non-processed fish supplied to restaurants and the catering sector, in order to tackle fraud and to identify the stage in the supply chain at which fish is mislabelled. MEPs called on the European Commission to exploit the potential of DNA barcoding to help identify species.

The full press release is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/zbvy3cn>

FOODDRINKEUROPE MICROSITE ON INGREDIENTS FOR A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

FoodDrinkEurope has announced that it has launched a microsite on ingredients for circular economy.

Through the use of infographics, FoodDrinkEurope explains how its members work to achieve a more sustainable food chain both within their operations and across the food supply chain. In addition, the microsite features a series of recommendations to policy makers with the objective to unlock further sustainable growth and innovation for building a more circular economy.

FoodDrinkEurope also published a Press Release on unlocking a sustainable future for the food and drink industry.

The European Commission's definition of 'circular economy' is discussed and the launch of the microsite which outlines the goals, how they are already achieving these, and how they aim to improve future performance.

The microsite can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/j7le5na>

NEW GUIDANCE ON THE DEFINITION OF WASTE

Defra, together with several other government departments, have published guidance on how to decide if a material is waste or not for organisations such as businesses, local authorities and charities.

The general guide explains how to work out if waste rules apply to a material. Organisations will need to:

- decide if their material is waste;
- identify when waste rules apply;
- find out when waste ceases to be waste;
- find out when waste rules do not apply.

The full document is set out in 3 parts, they are:

- part 1 – sets out the background and rationale for providing guidance on end of waste;
- part 2 – a practical guide for businesses and other organisations;
- part 3 – detailed guidance on the legal definition of waste and its application.

The general guide is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/j22w6dj>

WRAP REPORT CLAIMS £300M OF AVOIDABLE FOOD WASTE IN SUPPLY CHAIN

New research from food waste prevention experts, WRAP, estimates that 1.9 million tonnes of food is wasted in the UK grocery supply chain every year. However, 0.7 million tonnes of material, which could have become waste, is either being redistributed to people (47,000 tonnes; the equivalent of 90 million meals a year) or diverted to animal feed. Looking ahead, action to increase prevention of food waste could save businesses £300 million a year.



The report, Quantification of food surplus, waste and related materials in the grocery supply chain, funded mainly by Defra and Welsh Government, is the most comprehensive review of surplus food and food waste from UK food manufacturers and grocery retailers. Not only does it highlight the overall avoidable food waste figures (1.1Mt) for the sector but, for the first time, breaks it down into manufacturing sub-sectors, such as meat and dairy.

It also shows that the food manufacturing and retail sectors in the UK are highly efficient, with less than 5% food surplus and waste, and that food waste levels are lower than previously reported. While good progress has already been made in reducing food waste, the report identifies that a further 450kt of food waste a year could be prevented by 2025, a reduction of 23% compared to total food waste levels reported today. Realising this potential, in particular preventing food from being wasted in the first place and increasing redistribution will be hugely challenging.

The research also identifies that of the current food surplus and waste, around 270kt may be suitable for redistribution. Even after efforts to prevent food waste arising in the supply chain (potentially saving businesses £300 million a year), there will still be the opportunity to increase redistribution four-fold, to the equivalent of at least 360 million meals. The amount of food surplus diverted to animal feed could also increase by up to 20%.

The full report can be downloaded, by submitting details, from here: <http://tinyurl.com/zg2j6br>



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

Food Safety

Health and Safety

Fire Safety

Food Standards (Labelling & Composition)

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



British Frozen Food Federation Technical & Legislative Expert Group

AGENDA

Meeting of the Technical and Legislative Expert Group
To be held at 10am on Wednesday 11th May 2016
Belton Woods 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. Consultations
 7. Items carried forward – see list following
 8. Contact with other organisations
 9. Any other business
 10. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 13th July 2016 at The Belton Woods Hotel, Grantham
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Agenda Item 4 – Items for Discussion

- 4.1 Date of First Freezing - 2016_03_N
- 4.2 Country of Origin (COO) – 2016_03_U
- 4.3 Cutting Red Tape Review - 2016_03_E & Update
- 4.4 BFFF Administration - 2016_03_T

Agenda Item 5 – Items for Information

- 5.1 Biocides & Chlorates Update - 2016_03_I
- 5.2 MSM - Newby Foods High Court Judgement - 2016_03_J & Update
- 5.3 FSA Incidents Report and Soya in Flour Report - 2016_03_Q
- 5.4 Science Report on Developments in Whole-Genome Sequencing - 2016_03_R
- 5.5 BRC Draft Global Standard for Retail - 2016_03_A
- 5.6 FSA Approvals Guidance - 2016_03_D
- 5.7 Industry Best Practice Guidance on Herbs & Spices - 2016_03_F
- 5.8 Palm Oil Marketplace - 2016_03_G
- 5.9 Weights & Measures Guidance - 2016_03_M
- 5.10 Glazed Methodology Review - 2016_03_O
- 5.11 Dual Weight Indication
- 5.12 Into The Light Review (email 18/4/16)
- 5.13 Pesticides Update

Agenda Item 6 – Consultations

- 6.1 Adulteration of Food: Setting Thresholds Consultation - 2016_03_H
- 6.2 Food Brokers Fact Sheet - 2016_03_P
- 6.3 BRC Storage & Distribution Review - 2016_03_C (now closed)

Agenda Item 7 – Items carried forward

Standing agenda items awaiting further development:

- 7.1 **CODEX Frozen Fruit and Veg Specs Review - 2016_03_B**
- 7.2 **Gold Book Review**

Agenda Item 8 – Contact with other Organisations

- 8.1 **Defra/RPA TRQ Meeting - 2016_03_K**
- 8.2 **BRDO Trade Facilitation Panel - 2016_03_L**
- 8.3 **BR Food Hygiene Panel**
- 8.4 **BR Food Standards and Labelling Panel**
- 8.5 **FSA Meeting – Rod Ainsworth/Nicki Bell**
- 8.6 **TiFSiP Update**

Agenda Item 9 – Any Other Business

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

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