

# T & L UPDATE

BFFF TECHNICAL AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2017 - ISSUE 90



Technical Seminar 2018  
Book your place now!

**British Frozen Food Federation**

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## FOREWORD

Just when you thought it was safe to go on your summer holidays and relax, the issue of an insecticide contamination of imported eggs arose! Whilst the initial focus was on whole shell eggs it quickly became clear that a potentially major issue was arising involving egg products and egg as an ingredient which would have affected many BFFF members. For a time there was also a risk that products containing egg or end of lay chicken products, even at very low percentage inclusion, would also need to be withdrawn from the supply chain.

With a lot of industry engagement and taking the best science based risk assessment into account some pragmatism as to the level of risk has been adopted and so far (at the time of writing) the impact has been on a limited number of products and dates codes.

As always with these types of major incidents there are lessons to be learnt primarily by the authorities but also on occasion by BFFF. Our members found benefit from the information that we have been sending out to the Technical Expert Group and a couple of our MIGs. However with such a general major issue there will be other members who could benefit from this type of information more quickly. Thus we will be introducing a Major Incidents MIG shortly so if you would like to drop Martin or Denise a line we will enrol you as a member. This will clearly be for Major Issues/incidents only and given the way in which incidents seem to work they will be numerous different communications in a short space of time as information becomes available to us. As with all our MIGs its free and all part of the service.

We will shortly be asking you as our main Technical contact to spend just a few minutes giving us some feedback in the form of a short questionnaire regarding what you find useful and perhaps what you don't and any ideas you may have as to how we can improve our T+L outputs for you and your business. It will be really useful to understand your views so we can improve for the future.

We are pleased to be able to introduce both our first ever BFFF Technical seminar and our inaugural BFFF People Awards. Whilst we are working on the detailed agenda for the seminar as shown on the next page we are really pleased that we already have support from 3 government departments that matter – FSA/FSS and BEIS.

We have invited senior speakers to discuss a number of relevant topics and will be keeping you informed regarding the varied and we hope interesting agenda partly driven by the many topics we cover in the T+L. By attending we hope you will be able to gain an understanding of the technical challenges any food business faces in 2018.

There will also be plenty of opportunities to ask questions in a panel format at the end of each of our sessions to really maximise the interaction and allow the opportunity to get your problems solved.

You would expect me to say it but there are a limited number of tickets so it will pay dividends to book early.

Also don't miss the opportunity to at least nominate your best people for our inaugural BFFF People Awards and if you are coming to the technical seminar then consider attending the Awards Dinner with accommodation for which we have a very competitive package. With the richly deserved reputation BFFF has for events this is sure to be a must attend event.

I hope you enjoy the latest T+L update which includes the usual detail in the food world. There is quite a lot of focus on antimicrobial resistance and animal welfare in its widest sense. But there is a wide range of different information and something to please everyone! Enjoy.

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



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

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# BFFF Technical Seminar and People Awards Dinner

Thursday 22nd February 2018

Birmingham Hilton Metropole

BFFF are pleased to announce their inaugural Technical Seminar to join with our other events to form one of the industry must attend events of the year.

Join us for a wide ranging and interesting debate on the major technical issues facing food businesses today. The seminar will focus on the practical- whether it is the future horizon scanning issues that will have an impact on your business or the solutions that are available now to help current challenges.

#### Key Topics covered include:

'Regulatory Impacts for the Future including Brexit implications'

'Risk Management including Fraud mitigation measures'

'Practical Emerging Science and the Where Next? Issues'

Our detailed agenda will be announced shortly but already includes confirmed senior speakers from:



PLUS lots of opportunities to put your questions to our panels of experts at the end of each session.

Book your place here: <http://tinyurl.com/ybjod66w>



2018 will see British Frozen Food Federation's (BFFF) inaugural People Awards ceremony, aimed at celebrating the unsung heroes within the frozen food industry.

*"For 30 years our annual product awards have recognised the most exciting and innovative new products at our sell-out Gala Dinner Dance event. This year we have decided it is high-time we celebrated the people behind those products and the £8billion frozen food industry as a whole and give them the recognition they deserve."*

– John Hyman, Chief Executive Officer, BFFF.

Entries for the awards are still open, and we would encourage you to nominate those who deserve recognition at [www.bffpeopleawards.co.uk](http://www.bffpeopleawards.co.uk)

## ACTIVITY OF EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

### EFSA LAUNCH NEW FOOD AND FEED CHEMICAL HAZARD DATABASE

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has launched its OpenFoodTox database of chemical hazards in food and feed. The database is a rich source of toxicological information for risk assessment that can also potentially support the reduction of animal testing.

OpenFoodTox provides open source data for the substance characterisation, the links to EFSA's related output, background European legislation, and a summary of the critical toxicological endpoints and reference values.

OpenFoodTox is a tool and source of information for scientific advisory bodies and stakeholders with an interest in chemical risk assessment. You can download summary data sheets for each individual substance in pdf or xls format.

More detail about the OpenFoodTox database can be found on the EFSA website here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9jvbx9x>

### EUROPEAN COMMISSION LAUNCH ACTION PLAN TO TACKLE AMR

The European Commission has launched its new EU action plan to tackle antimicrobial resistance (AMR). According to the Commission, AMR is already responsible for an estimated 25,000 deaths per year in the EU and current worldwide mortality from AMR is estimated at 700,000 deaths per year. Inaction is projected to cause yearly millions of deaths globally and by 2050 AMR has the potential to become a more common cause of death than cancer.

It also has wide impacts on the economy, with higher costs of treatments and economic losses due to reduced productivity caused by sickness. In the EU alone it is estimated that AMR annually costs EUR 1.5 billion in healthcare costs and productivity losses. Furthermore, the World Bank warns that, by 2050, drug-resistant infections could cause global economic damage on a par with the 2008 financial crisis.

This new plan builds on the 2011 action plan and supports the EU and its Member States in delivering innovative, effective and sustainable responses to AMR; strategically reinforcing the research agenda on AMR and enabling the EU to actively promote global action and play a leading role in the fight against AMR. Its overarching goal is to preserve the possibility of effective treatment of infections in humans and animals. It provides a framework for continued, more extensive action to reduce the emergence and spread of AMR and to increase the development and availability of new effective antimicrobials inside and outside the EU.

The action plan is built around three pillars:

- Make Europe a best practice region;
- Boost research, development and innovation;
- Shape the global agenda.

The Commission has also adopted the first deliverable of the plan: EU Guidelines on the prudent use of antimicrobials in human health. The guidelines aim to reduce inappropriate use and promote prudent use of antimicrobials in people. They target all those who are responsible for or play a role in antimicrobial use.

More information can be found in a recent press release by EFSA: <https://tinyurl.com/y9gtau6b>

### EFTA SURVEILLANCE AUTHORITY PUBLISH MISSION REPORT ON ANTIMICROBIAL USE

The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Surveillance Authority published a joint mission report with the EC on how the prudent use of antimicrobials in Norway can be an example to other Member States: <https://tinyurl.com/y928g9pa>

Norway has consistently reported some of the lowest sales of veterinary antimicrobials in the EU by implementing a broad range of measures to AMR in veterinary medicine. The joint fact finding mission identified good practices that may be helpful to other European countries which included the promotion of nationwide and farm-level biosecurity and vaccination programmes, the de-coupling of the prescribing and sales of veterinary medicinal products and a policy of culling animals with recurring, chronic conditions.

### CODEX ALIMENTARIUS - FAO/WHO FOOD CONTROL SYSTEM ASSESSMENT TOOL

Codex Alimentarius announced on 19 July 2017 that the FAO and the WHO have jointly developed a tool to help countries assess their National Food Control Systems. The tool is to be launched publicly soon, as its second pilot version has been successfully implemented. Further detail can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yd87k9qs>

## ANALYTICAL & METROLOGY

### EU COUNTRIES URGED TO LOOK FOR CYCLOSPORA

European countries have been urged to assess and potentially increase Cyclospora testing and reporting capacity following an increase in cases for the third successive year. Researchers also suggested increasing cyclosporiasis risk awareness among travellers to Mexico, reporting cases early and collaborating in investigations to identify sources and assess the extent of outbreaks.

Over the summers of 2015 and 2016, the UK reported outbreaks of cyclosporiasis in travellers returning from Mexico, mainly the Riviera Maya and Cancun regions. As the source was not identified, there was the potential for a similar outbreak to re-occur. Previous outbreaks have been linked to various types of imported fresh produce. This year at least 78 cases have been reported in the UK, of which 37 travelled to Mexico, 20 are awaiting travel history, 14 went to nine other places overseas and seven had no overseas travel.

The UK incident management team (IMT) met in May this year in advance of an anticipated increase in cases to coordinate response and focus on early communications and raising awareness. Cyclospora is not routinely tested for in primary diagnostic laboratories in the UK and requires additional microscopical procedures to identify the parasite. Maintaining competencies in identifying the parasite can be difficult when laboratories are not routinely observing Cyclospora. To improve testing, reminders were sent to diagnostic laboratories to consider Cyclospora in cases where individuals had compatible symptoms and travel history.

Discussions among UK parasitology reference labs looked at sharing confirmatory methodologies (fluorescence and stained microscopy and/or PCR), reviewing usefulness of quantitative PCR for monitoring assay development and performance and considering methods for genotyping and progression of whole genome sequencing. The World Health Organization (WHO) was informed and alerts were sent to European Union countries via the Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) Epidemic Intelligence Information System (EPIS).

Cyclosporiasis is transmitted through contaminated food, water or beverages and has an average incubation period of seven days after ingestion of sporulated oocysts.

## ANIMAL WELFARE

### AVIAN INFLUENZA EPIDEMIOLOGY REPORTS UPDATED

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) updated on 17 and 18 July 2017 the reports on investigations carried out to describe and explain cases of avian influenza in the UK.

National epidemiology reports on cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N8 on 3 additional infected small-holder premises from April to May 2017 were added.

In addition, the June 2017 epidemiology report has been updated, to amend the description of IP9 to change from grandparent broiler-breeder unit to broiler-breeder unit, in order to more accurately reflect the nature of the business. The updated reports can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycop5n9d>

### DEFRA OUTBREAK ASSESSMENT FOR FOOT AND MOUTH IN N. AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) have published a preliminary outbreak assessment for foot and mouth disease in North Africa and the Middle East. This year, the Algerian Authorities have reported three further outbreaks of FMD serotype A in cattle, while Tunisia has reported 2 outbreaks of FMD.

Over the last few years Tunisia has been undertaking vaccination campaigns, with no outbreaks being reported. Therefore, it is likely that the infected animals were the result of illegal movements into the country. The serotype identified in Tunisia was the same type that was reported in Algeria. This serotype had previously only been found in West Africa and it is likely that live animal movements in the region are the cause of spread. In conclusion, Defra considers there is an overall "low risk" of introduction of disease from any affected region in the world and that the Middle East and North Africa currently merit enhanced support and vigilance. The full assessment can be viewed here: <http://tinyurl.com/y8oevass>

## UPDATE ON OUTBREAKS OF AFRICAN SWINE FEVER IN PIGS IN EASTERN EUROPE

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) have issued an updated outbreak assessment for African Swine Fever in Europe. New outbreaks of African Swine Fever (ASF) continue to be reported leading to the risk level of ASF introduction to the UK being raised to “low”.

Northern Romania has reported ASF outbreaks for the first time, one being in a small backyard farm which is within the enhanced surveillance zone for ASF along the border with the Ukraine. The Czech Republic has reported 18 cases in wild boar and there has also been an increase in reported cases in wild boar in the Ukraine. Further outbreaks in domestic pigs in Poland and in backyard pigs in East Russia have also been reported.

Defra conclude that, the continuing cases appear to be due to several breakdowns in biosecurity. It signifies a spread in geographic distribution, a possible drop in biosecurity awareness and therefore an increase in the weight of infection in East Europe.

The full assessment report can be viewed here: <http://tinyurl.com/yd6l8hkg>

## UPDATE ON AVIAN INFLUENZA SITUATION

As of July 17th, there are no longer any Surveillance Zone or Protection Zone controls in place in relation to Avian Influenza. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) states that bird flu does not pose a food safety risk for UK consumers and Public Health England (PHE) advises that the risk to public health is very low.

However, the advice remains that if a dead wild bird (particularly a duck, goose or swan) is found, it should be reported straight away to the Defra helpline (03459 33 55 77). This will allow Defra to collect, test, and help understand how the disease is distributed.

With help from the British Veterinary Association, Royal Veterinary College and British Veterinary Poultry Association, Defra have also recently put together a short leaflet to help keepers of ‘backyard flocks’ to look after their birds. This can be viewed here: <http://tinyurl.com/y7ts38aq>

Further information on the latest situation can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/zzdcs95>

## EFSA PUBLISH SCIENTIFIC OPINION ON BSE CASES BORN AFTER THE EU TOTAL FEED BAN

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) BIOHAZ Panel have published a Scientific Opinion on bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) cases born after the EU total feed ban on 1 January 2001: <https://tinyurl.com/yclbeg4y>

A total of 60 BSE cases of classical or unknown type (BARB-60 cases), were born after the date of entry into force of the EU total feed ban. The Commission requested EFSA to provide a scientific opinion on the most likely origin(s) of the BARB-60 cases, and whether feeding with material contaminated with the BSE agent can be excluded as the origin and, if so, whether there is enough scientific evidence to conclude that such cases had a spontaneous origin.

The Panel concluded that there is considerable uncertainty associated with the data collected through the field investigation of these cases, therefore, feeding with contaminated material cannot be excluded as the origin of any of the BARB-60 cases, nor is it possible to definitively attribute feed as the cause.

Their recommendations included:

- The maintenance of the current EU-wide surveillance system in order to: (1) monitor the evolution of the tail of the BSE epidemic; (2) detect a potential re-emergence of BSE and (3) detect a new BSE form in cattle, should it appear.
- To create an EU-level reporting system of the existing feed testing for the monitoring of the feed ban that would allow the collection, collation and analysis of MS feed testing data.

## DEFRA CONSULT ON CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE WELFARE OF MEAT CHICKENS

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) opened on 11 August 2017 a consultation seeking views on a new statutory code of practice for the welfare of meat chickens and meat breeding chickens, for England.

The code is intended to provide up-to-date guidance on the current legislation, maintain animal welfare standards, and reflect the latest scientific and veterinary knowledge.

The consultation closes on 6 October 2017 and can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9douduo>

## DEFRA ANNOUNCE MANDATORY CCTV IN ALL SLAUGHTERHOUSES

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) announced on 11 August 2017 plans that CCTV will be mandatory in all slaughterhouses in England. The proposals will deliver a manifesto commitment for CCTV to be required in every slaughterhouse in England in all areas where live animals are present, with unrestricted access to footage for Official Vets - reassuring consumers that high welfare standards are being effectively enforced.

The Government has also confirmed it will raise standards for farm animals and domestic pets by modernising statutory animal welfare codes to reflect enhancements in medicines, technology and the latest research and advice from vets. The codes will remain enshrined in law and the first to be updated will cover chickens bred for meat.

Under the new plans for CCTV, footage would be accessible to the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) Official Veterinarians (OVs), who monitor and enforce animal welfare standards in the slaughterhouse. The FSA has strict processes in place for the approval of slaughterhouses, and specially trained vets carry out checks to make sure the welfare of animals is protected throughout their time in the slaughterhouse. If breaches are found, a slaughterhouse can be given a welfare enforcement notice, have its staff's licences suspended or revoked, or be referred for a criminal investigation.

A consultation on CCTV in slaughterhouses will run until 21st September and can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybs28ws2> while a consultation on the Code of Practice for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Meat Breeding Chickens will run until 6th October and can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9douduo>

## DEFRA UPDATE ON BLUETONGUE VIRUS IN EUROPE

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) have published research and analysis on the current situation relating to Bluetongue virus in France. The preliminary assessment findings update the situation in France, Corsica and Italy. Defra stated that the risk of BTV incursion into the UK population remains at a low level to reflect the low levels of infection in northern France. Further information can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yaqcqge7>

## DEFRA ISSUE GUIDANCE ON THE PREVENTION OF FISH OR SHELLFISH DISEASES

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) together with two other Government agencies published at the beginning of August 2017, updated guidance on reducing the risk of disease in fish and shellfish, where notifiable diseases have been found and what to do if fish or shellfish have a disease.

Updates to the list of where notifiable diseases have been found include the addition of fisheries in Kent, Lancashire, Staffordshire Hertfordshire and Humberside. Also, removal from the list of a fishery in Wiltshire.

The updated guidance can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/q6rnb7b>

## DEFRA UPDATE WEST NILE FEVER GUIDANCE

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) updated on 1 August 2017, guidance on 'West Nile fever: how to spot and report the disease'. West Nile fever affects a variety of animals including, but not limited to horses, birds and humans. It is a notifiable disease, so if it is suspected the APHA must be informed immediately; failure to do so is an offence. Information on the risk to humans has been updated and linked to Public Health England guidance: <https://tinyurl.com/yao42v35>

## DEFRA ISSUE ANIMAL WELFARE GUIDANCE

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) have published comprehensive advice and guidance on protecting animal welfare on farms, in transport, at markets and at slaughter, which includes references to the legislation and codes of practice. The full set of advice and guidance can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/nbh72dx>



# BREXIT

## UK TARGETS PREFERENTIAL TRADE TERMS WITH MEXICO AFTER BREXIT

Mexico and Britain have begun informal talks on an agreement to maintain UK's preferential trade deal with Mexico after Brexit, according to British international trade secretary Liam Fox.

Fox also told reporters on a visit to Mexico City that he hoped Mexico and the European Union (EU) would press ahead with concluding their updated free trade agreement. Fox said he and Mexican economy minister Ildefonso Guajardo have begun a dialogue aimed at ensuring "that the preferential agreements that the U.K. currently enjoys with Mexico remain in place."

The British government supports the "ambitious and speedy outcome" to the free trade talks between Mexico and the European Union, Fox said, and will later undertake a process to adopt the deal so it also applies to Mexico-British trade post-Brexit. "In other words, we will replicate (the Mexico-EU) agreement into U.K. law so that as we leave the European Union there is no disruption to the trading environment," Fox said.

He went on to say that he would like to see topics such as e-commerce added to an updated Mexico-United Kingdom trade deal, which would go beyond what EU and Mexican negotiators have discussed. Fox did not detail the timeline for future trade talks.

Last year, the United Kingdom was Mexico's fifth largest trade partner within the European Union, with bilateral trade totaling \$5.36 billion, according to the economy ministry.

## FOOD AND DRINK SUPPLY CHAIN KEY PRIORITIES FOR EU BREXIT NEGOTIATIONS

In a joint letter, signatories from 26 representative bodies from across the UK food and drink supply chain, including the BFFF, have agreed 10 key priorities for the negotiations with the EU to protect the UK's food security and our world leading food and farming section.

These priorities include securing an adequate interim and transitional period, maintaining consumer confidence in food safety and authenticity through a stable, equivalent regulatory framework and recognising the unique nature of our relationship with Ireland by agreeing a series of special solutions on workforce, regulation and borders.

The full letter can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y6vye3ox>

## DIT CALLS FOR GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE MORE HELP TO EXPORT

The UK is 'open for business' with the rest of the world; however, the Government needs to do more to promote food and drink exports before and after Brexit, a senior figure at the Department for International Trade (DIT) has suggested.

It was essential to create a future trading environment that both protected current trade routes and opened up new ones, Rosa Wilkinson, director for trade policy business engagement at the DIT said. However, it was up to government departments to "communicate the opportunities effectively" to food and drink manufacturers, she acknowledged. This would then have to be backed up with trade export support and promotion work, she added.

Wilkinson called on food and drink manufacturers to tell government what their export priorities were, and what regulatory changes they would like to see. "I also advise you to explore and test new markets – and use the fact that the pound is down in the doldrums – to strike deals and build the relationships that will carry you through when it recovers," she added.



## FARM ANIMAL WELFARE POST BREXIT

The Lords Select Committee published on 27 July 2017 a report by the EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee on farm animal welfare after Brexit. The report follows up on some themes identified and explored in the Committee's recent report.

The report covers topics such as:

- The threat to farm animal welfare standards from UK farmers competing against cheap, imported food from countries that produce to lower standards than the UK;
- The demand for high-welfare products driven by cost, rather than buying cheaper, lower-welfare products;
- The overwhelming reliance on non-UK EU citizens to fill crucial official veterinary positions in the UK

The full report can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/yddcod9r>



## UK GOVERNMENT PROPOSE INTRODUCTION OF 'TEMPORARY CUSTOMS UNION'

UK Government plans to introduce a 'temporary customs union' to ease the blow for UK businesses post-Brexit has overall been welcomed by food and drink industry leaders.

FDF director general Ian Wright said: "The UK government's drive for greater clarity on the Brexit process is most welcome. The proposals for an interim customs regime, if they can be agreed, go some way in protecting business from a cliff-edge. "FDF's priority is to ensure that our access to EU markets is not undermined during the transition period. Ensuring a single point of change would help to minimise unnecessary disruption for businesses that have established trading relationships with the EU."

The government's bigger challenge would be maintaining the benefits of the Customs Union and the Single Market, Wright added. "The real challenge will then follow in designing and negotiating a model that maintains these benefits beyond the transition period, delivering the same ease of trading that UK food and drink currently enjoys with the EU27, with zero tariffs and no new regulatory or other non-tariff barriers," Wright said.

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

### FIRMS SLOW TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF APPRENTICESHIP LEVY

Companies are being slow to take advantage of the new Apprenticeship Levy that came into effect in April, claims the Bis Henderson Academy, which offers training programmes for supply chain and logistics professionals. Such inaction could lead many businesses to miss out on the opportunities afforded under the scheme to upskill individuals across their enterprises, the company argued.

Under the Apprenticeship Levy scheme – a tax raised at 0.5% of the total payroll bill on all firms with a wage bill that exceeds £3M – monies can be returned to the employer through an online account, along with an uplift of 10% from the government. The employer can spend the money, but only on the delivery of apprenticeship-based training offered through an approved training provider. Funds have to be used within 24 months, after which they expire.

More information about the Apprenticeship Levy can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9unhfhx>

# CHEMICALS, CONTAMINANTS & FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

## FIPRONIL IN EGGS

Concerns have recently been raised in the Netherlands about a substance called fipronil which has been used inappropriately in cleaning products on chicken farms. Fipronil is a broad-spectrum insecticide used to combat insects such as ants, fleas, lice, ticks, cockroaches and mites. Use on food-producing animals (livestock) is not permitted.

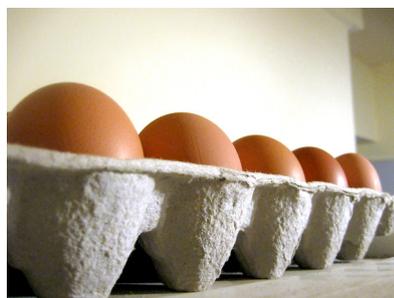
The FSA initially identified that a very small number of eggs had been distributed to the UK from the farms affected and on 7 August 2017 issued the following update: <https://tinyurl.com/yaw4bq9j>

The government had already taken action to prevent any risk to UK consumers by adding fipronil to its surveillance programme in UK farms and stated that there seemed to be no evidence that eggs laid in the UK are contaminated or that fipronil has been used inappropriately in the UK.

The FSA issued a further update on fipronil in eggs on 10 August 2017 stating that investigations into the Fipronil incident in Europe continue and they had now established that more eggs from affected farms than previously identified came to the UK: <https://tinyurl.com/ya4famku>

The FSA issued another update on fipronil in eggs on 17 August 2017 to add 14 additional products had been withdrawn but which are still within their shelf life. Most of these products had been distributed to food manufacturers and catering outlets: <https://tinyurl.com/y8owdoaw>

The BFFF have been keeping members of the Technical Expert Group and the relevant Member Interest groups up to date and have attended meetings which have taken place between FSA, Defra and interested food businesses, to review the current situation with regards to the fipronil contamination in eggs and composite products. Should you wish to receive copies of any of the numerous technical papers sent out on this matter please let us know: [deniserion@bfff.co.uk](mailto:deniserion@bfff.co.uk)



## EFSA CONSULT ON DRAFT APPROACH FOR RE-EVALUATION OF BPA

An EFSA international working group have developed a draft “scientific protocol” for its next re-evaluation of the toxicity of bisphenol A (BPA). The protocol was developed under the guidance of EFSA’s expert Panel on Food Contact Materials, Enzymes, Flavourings and Processing Aids (CEF), and defines upfront the scope, methodology and information needs before the re-evaluation starts in 2018.

The CEF Panel will carry out the re-evaluation and experts from Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland were appointed by their governments to take part in the protocol working group as well as four independent scientists appointed by EFSA.

EFSA completed a comprehensive safety review of BPA in 2015. At the time, EFSA’s scientific experts set a temporary tolerable daily intake (t-TDI) for BPA and committed to re-evaluate its toxicity when the results of extensive studies in the USA became available. The new data will help to further assess possible effects on humans identified in EFSA’s previous work on BPA. EFSA’s review will also include other relevant studies published since the December 2012 cut-off point for EFSA’s last review of BPA safety.

Feedback on the proposals was invited via an online form with a deadline of September 3rd. After this date EFSA informed that a follow-up meeting would be held with contributors to the consultation on 14 September in Brussels, to discuss and consolidate their feedback and any additional comments.

Further information can be found on the EFSA website here: <https://tinyurl.com/y74ap6tu>

## DEFRA PUBLISH RESULTS OF MONITORING PROGRAMME FOR 2016

Defra published on 13 July 2017 rolling results from the Government’s monitoring programme to check home-produced and imported food for any pesticide residues: <https://tinyurl.com/ycle5pyy>

School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme 2016 to 2017 results have been added: <https://tinyurl.com/ybb8he3f>

Also, the quarterly results from the government’s monitoring programme in 2016 to check home-produced and imported food for pesticide residues were updated to include quarter 4 results: <https://tinyurl.com/yd9kbd58>

## EC PROPOSES SCIENTIFIC CRITERIA TO IDENTIFY ENDOCRINE DISRUPTORS IN PPPS

The EC has put forward a proposal on scientific criteria to identify endocrine disruptors in the field of plant protection products (PPPs), which is an important step towards greater protection of citizens from harmful substances.

Once adopted, the criteria will provide a stepping stone for further actions to protect health and the environment by enabling the Commission to start working on a new strategy to minimise exposure of EU citizens to endocrine disruptors, beyond pesticides and biocides.

The criteria, endorsed by the EC, concerning substances falling within the plant protection products legislation are based on the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition, which identify known and presumed endocrine disruptors. They also specify that the identification of an endocrine disruptor should be carried out by taking into account all relevant scientific evidence including animal, in-vitro or in-silico studies, and using a weight of evidence-based approach. The Commission intends to adopt the same criteria for biocides. This is important because the properties which make a substance an endocrine disruptor do not depend on the use of the substance.

Further detail can be found in the EC press release here: <https://tinyurl.com/yb5gx8gn> along with answers to a set of frequently asked questions regarding Endocrine Disruptors: <https://tinyurl.com/ycnrraza>

## FSA PUBLISH LATEST UPDATE ON FOOD CONTAMINANTS

The FSA have issued an update on rapidly developing policy on food contaminants covering salient issues that have recently been discussed at European Commission working group meetings and Standing Committees. Subjects include:

- Erucic acid in food;
- Ochratoxin A in food;
- Ergot alkaloids in food;
- Mycotoxins T-2 and HT-2 in food;
- Alternaria toxins in food;
- Citrinin in food;
- Peanuts imported from the US;
- Opium alkaloids in poppy seeds;
- Draft Regulation on Maximum Levels for Mercury;
- Acrylamide in food
- Glycidyl esters in food;
- Lead in baby food.

A summary of each issue discussed can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yb6zazgw>

## AGREEMENT ON COMMISSION PROPOSAL ON ACRYLAMIDE

The European Commission announced on 19 July 2017 that the proposal on establishing mitigation measures and benchmark levels for the reduction of the presence of acrylamide in food has been agreed at the Standing Committee on Novel Food and Toxicological Safety of the Food Chain.

The text agreed will now be sent to the Council and the European Parliament. The two institutions will have three months to examine it before final adoption by the Commission. It's anticipated that it will be published in the official Journal in November and a four month transition period will follow meaning the measures will apply in April 2018.

Under pressure from other Member States, the Commission have committed to discuss maximum levels again in the Autumn. They may see it being more practical to set maximum levels for some food categories e.g. baby food. Indeed, some Member states have already taken action under general food law where extremely high levels have been seen so the industry should bear this in mind and be prepared to have fall back positions ready.

Text of the draft regulation is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8ym6dzb>

The BFFF recently attended an FSA/FDF meeting to discuss the draft regulation and full details of the discussions which took place were circulated to the Technical Expert Group and other interested parties. Please let [deniserion@bfff.co.uk](mailto:deniserion@bfff.co.uk) know should you wish to see a copy of that technical paper.

## SCOPAFF PHYTOPHARMACEUTICAL COMMITTEE UPDATES ON BIOCIDES AND CHLORATES

The latest minutes of the meeting of the Standing Committee On Plants, Animals, Food And Feed (SCoPAFF) – Phytopharmaceuticals, held in Brussels in June, has now been published. The Committee discussed, amongst other items Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) for various active substances along with Mercury, Updates on Chlorate and MRL setting for Biocides, and the state of play of Honey guidance.

With regards to Chlorates, the Commission informed that a general multi-disciplinary action plan for reducing the dietary exposure to chlorate and for resolving the systemic non-compliance with the pesticides MRLs was presented on 23 May 2017 for endorsement to the meeting of heads of national food safety agencies (HoA) in Oslo. It is now with the HoA to provide their coordinated point of view on this action plan by September 2017. Once the general way forward has been decided, discussions on specific measures for the different policy areas will be conducted in the relevant sections of the SC PAFF. The main action points of proposed plan are:

- Recommendations on good food hygiene practices in order to reduce chlorate residues in food
- Reducing chlorate residues in drinking water by e.g. setting EU limit for chlorate in drinking water
- Dietary recommendations at national level for children to reduce the exposure to chlorate and to limit its impact on the thyroid
- Setting of MRLs for chlorate in regular food at more realistic levels and based on occurrence data.

As for Biocides, the Commission informed that the interim approach for the establishment of MRLs for residues of active substances contained in biocidal products was endorsed by the competent authorities for biocidal products in March 2017. Full detail of all the areas discussed can be found in the minutes: <http://tinyurl.com/yck4uu87>.

BFFF continue to be an active member of the Food & Biocides Industry Group (FBIG) and to keep members up to date, have circulated numerous technical papers on this subject to members of the Biocides and Chlorates Member Interest Group (MIG). Should you wish to be added to this MIG, please do not hesitate to contact us: [Deniserion@bfff.co.uk](mailto:Deniserion@bfff.co.uk)

## EU REPORT ON IMPORTS CONTAINING PLANT PESTS

The European Commission announced on 19 July 2017 that it has published the Europhyt Annual Report for 2016 which presents selected statistics and analysis of the interceptions of consignments made by EU Member States and Switzerland for reasons of phytosanitary non-compliance.

The report shows that the number of interceptions made due to the presence of harmful organisms was 1,815, a reduction of 15% compared to 2015. The main non-EU country commodities intercepted due to the presence of harmful organisms were fruit and vegetables (particularly peppers, mango, basil, citrus and various gourds), wood packaging material, cut flowers and planting material. The report can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/yc335jjz>

## FOOD SAFETY AND ZOOSES

### EFSA REPORT ON LISTERIA MONOCYTOGENES IN READY-TO-EAT (RTE) FOODS

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published an external Scientific Report on a quantitative risk characterisation of *Listeria monocytogenes* in various ready-to-eat (RTE) food categories in the EU.

The overall objective of the report aimed to provide EFSA with a quantitative risk characterisation of *L. monocytogenes* in various RTE food categories in the EU; starting from the retail stage. The report focused on heat-treated meat; smoked and gravad fish; and soft and semi-soft cheeses.

The objectives were:

- To search and critically review data and existing microbial risk assessments on listeriosis and *L. monocytogenes* in RTE foods;
- To determine the exposure of humans in the EU to *L. monocytogenes* from consumption of various RTE food categories;
- To assess the potential for *L. monocytogenes* to cause illness in human populations; and
- To apply an appropriate model, integrating exposure and dose response models, in order to estimate the public health risks from consumption of various RTE food categories contaminated with *L. monocytogenes*.

More information can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybhud76r>

## DEFRA ISSUE UPDATE ON ZONOOSES

Defra have issued their latest annual report on zoonoses in the UK which includes reported cases of zoonotic infection in humans and animals during 2015. The report includes feature articles which highlight human and animal incidents and issues of public health significance which occurred during 2015 as well as a summary of reported cases of zoonotic infection in humans and animals. As usual, the report highlights significant trends in a number of zoonoses, and whilst these will continue to be monitored, they also emphasise the need for continued surveillance and collaboration between veterinary and human health practitioners.

More information about zoonoses, including a list of zoonotic diseases, guidelines for managing risk and surveillance reports can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pgqemrk>

The latest 2015 report can be accessed here: <http://tinyurl.com/y7svurmu>. This is an annual report on zoonoses in the UK, providing information on reported cases of zoonotic infection in humans and animals.

## ZONOOSES MORE SENSITIVE TO CLIMATE THAN SOLELY HUMAN OR ANIMAL PATHOGENS

The impact of climate change on emergence and spread of infectious diseases could be greater than previously thought, according to University of Liverpool research.

The university's Institute of Infection and Global Health said findings will help policymakers prioritise surveillance for pathogens that may respond to climate change and contribute to strengthening resilience for infectious diseases.

They assessed the scale of climate change impact on a range of diseases that significantly affect human and animal health. Climate-sensitive infectious diseases could change spatial distributions, annual/seasonal cycles or disease incidence and severity.

Diseases spread by insects and ticks (vector-borne diseases) were the most climate sensitive, followed by those transmitted in soil, water and food. Zoonotic pathogens – that spread from animals to humans – were more climate sensitive than those that affect only humans or only animals.

Primary climate drivers were: climate change, climate oscillations, extreme weather events, moisture, rainfall, temperature and wind and Secondary: altitude, vegetation, particulate matter and salinity. Moisture and rainfall were the most frequently occurring and most commonly linked drivers. As 75% of emerging diseases are zoonotic, such diseases may be impacted by climate change. Along with vector-borne and soil-borne, waterborne and foodborne pathogens were the most likely to have one or more climate drivers, and 39% of waterborne and nearly 31% of foodborne pathogens had three or more climate drivers according to the researchers. Foodborne and waterborne pathogens were also significantly more likely to be zoonotic (transmitted from animals to humans), and zoonoses are more sensitive to climate than human-only or animal-only pathogens, so there are definite linkages of these two transmission routes to climate sensitivity. Nearly two-thirds of the pathogens examined were found to be sensitive to climate; and two-thirds of these have more than one climate driver.

Researchers said being sensitive to a broader range of climate variables likely means climate change is more likely to affect a disease or will affect it in more complex ways. However, they stressed that response to climate change will depend on other drivers such as changes to travel and trade, land-use, deforestation, new control measures and development of antimicrobial resistance.

## EFSA PUBLISH REPORT ON RISKS FROM PYRROLIZIDINE ALKALOIDS

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) have published a statement regarding the risks for human health related to the presence of pyrrolizidine alkaloids (PAs) in honey, tea, herbal infusions and food supplements: <https://tinyurl.com/ycqrvjbf>

Based on occurrence data limited to honey, the CONTAM Panel concluded that there was a possible health concern for those toddlers and children who are high consumers of honey. A new exposure assessment including new occurrence data was published by EFSA in 2016 and was used to update the risk characterisation.

The CONTAM Panel established a new Reference Point of 237 µg/kg body weight per day to assess the carcinogenic risks of PAs, and concluded that there is a possible concern for human health related to the exposure to PAs, in particular for frequent and high consumers of tea and herbal infusions.

The Panel noted that consumption of food supplements based on PA-producing plants could result in exposure levels causing acute/short-term toxicity. From the analysis of the available occurrence data, the CONTAM Panel identified a list of 17 PAs of relevance for monitoring in food and feed. The Panel recommended continuing the efforts to monitor the presence of PAs in food and feed, including the development of more sensitive and specific analytical methods. A recommendation was also issued on the generation of data to identify the toxic and carcinogenic potency of the PAs commonly found in food.

## EFSA PUBLISH SCIENTIFIC OPINION ON RISKS OF HEPATITIS E VIRUS

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published on 11 July 2017 a Scientific Opinion on public health risks associated with hepatitis E virus (HEV) as a food-borne pathogen: <https://tinyurl.com/yadfff9z>

The Opinion reviews current methods for the detection, identification, characterisation and tracing of HEV in food-producing animals and foods, reviews literature on HEV reservoirs and food-borne pathways, examines information on the epidemiology of HEV and its occurrence and persistence in foods, and investigates possible control measures along the food chain.

Food-borne transmission of HEV appears to be a major route in Europe; pigs and wild boars are the main source of HEV and the Opinion concluded that the level of awareness of HEV risk associated with pig meat products and other reservoirs and sources is low. It recommends that the dissemination of information and advice to consumers and those working with potential sources of infection should be optimised. In particular, information regarding the risk of consumption of raw or undercooked pig, wild boar and deer products to vulnerable groups (e.g. persons with a weakened immune system or pre-existing liver damage) may help prevent the most serious HEV infections.

EFSA also issued a news story to highlight the recommendations that Member States increase awareness of public health risks associated with raw and undercooked pork meat and advise consumers to cook pork meat thoroughly: <https://tinyurl.com/yanngpsz>

According to the British Meat processors Association (BMPA), 'UK pork manufacturers are committed to understanding more about the virus and are supporting further research to develop reliable methods of detection to assist in identifying potential sources of contamination and animal/food treatments to eliminate the virus from the supply chain'.

## COMMISSION PUBLISH RASFF Q&AS

The European Commission have recently published a Fact Sheet which gives a list of questions and answers to explain the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF).

The RASFF is primarily an IT tool designed to swiftly exchange information between national authorities on health risks related to food and feed. A member country of the network that identifies a health hazard informs the rest of the system's network on the product concerned and the measures taken to address the risk. Measures include: withholding, recalling, seizing or rejecting products. This rapid exchange of information allows all RASFF members to check in real time whether they are also affected and if urgent action is needed. The authorities of affected countries have the responsibility to take the necessary emergency measures, including giving direct information to the public, withdrawing products from the market, and making controls on the ground.

The fact sheet can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/yajoe3va>

## FSA ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF DR COLIN SULLIVAN AS CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Jason Feeney, Chief Executive of the Food Standards Agency, has confirmed that he has appointed Dr Colin Sullivan as Chief Operating Officer. Colin, who is currently the lead civil servant for the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) public inquiry, will take up his role on 25 September.

Colin has extensive experience in health and social care. He joined the Senior Civil Service in 2008 as Operations Director of the Northern Ireland Social Security Agency, before moving on to be the Director for Universal Credit in Northern Ireland in 2011. In 2013, he was promoted to Director of Strategic Policy & Reform within the Northern Ireland Department of Finance where his duties have included being SRO for the devolution of Corporation Tax and NI lead for Public Sector Reform. From January 2017, he has also been lead civil servant for the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) public inquiry.

A organisational chart for the FSA can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y937277c>

## FSA PUBLISH LATEST SUMMARY OF FOOD INCIDENTS

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) announced on 2 August 2017 that it has published a summary of food incidents handled between April and June 2017.

Over the three month period, the FSA issued 33 food notices, of which 23 were allergy alerts, with the top three undeclared allergens being gluten, milk and egg. The FSA also issued five food alerts relating to possible risk of food poisoning, four relating to physical contamination and one concerning poor food hygiene.

The summary can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/yb8drlno>

# FOOD SECURITY, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

## ITALY PUSHES FOR INDICATION OF ORIGINS ON LABELLING FOR PASTA AND RICE

The latest minutes of the meeting of the Standing Committee On Plants, Animals, Food And Feed (SCoPAFF) – General Food Law, held in Brussels in June, have now been published. The Committee discussed, amongst other items the Indication of origin on the label of durum wheat for durum wheat flour pastas in Italy and the Indication of origin on the label of rice in Italy.

The Italian delegation provided presentations of their notified draft decrees and their justifications. The Italian authorities explained that the draft notified measures were based on the consumers' interest and the specific quality of the Italian durum wheat in pasta and the Italian rice. In addition, the beneficial effects of the measures for the Italian farmers were underlined.

The draft decrees were met with strong criticism however from 11 Member States who objected to the increasing number of national notifications requiring mandatory origin indication and hence fragmenting the Internal Market.

More detail can be found in the minutes from the SCoPAFF meeting: <http://tinyurl.com/yb4cz5l8>

## CONTROLLING AND COMBATING FOOD FRAUD OUTLINED AT FAO/WHO COMMITTEE MEETING

At a recent session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East, Dr Chris Elliott, Vice-Chancellor in the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences at Belfast University spoke about the current situation with food fraud and gave his advice on how Codex can contribute to controlling and combating fraud in the food chain by working on an international definition of food fraud.

Elliott called for "a food supply system that produces safe food, produces nutritious food, and also produces authentic food, which is free of fraudulent activity". He spoke about the need for developing countries to begin a process of education and advised small businesses to always think where they are sourcing materials from and that appropriate checks and measures are in place. He also called for large industries to support this process by ensuring their suppliers are regularly audited and highlighted the enormous role technology such as smart phones will play.

We have circulated numerous technical papers on this subject and now have a Food Fraud Member Interest Group (MIG). Should you wish to be added to this MIG, please do not hesitate to contact us: [Deniserion@bfff.co.uk](mailto:Deniserion@bfff.co.uk)

## FSA ANNOUNCE SUCCESSFUL HORSEMEAT PROSECUTION

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) published on 26 July 2017 a news story which welcomed the successful prosecutions of businessmen on charges of conspiracy to defraud consumers by labelling meat products that contained both beef and horsemeat as 100% beef. The case, investigated by the City of London Police, is a significant landmark for the FSA who first began looking into the circumstances behind the adulteration of meat products with horsemeat in 2013.

Two men were sentenced to four years and six months and three years and six months at Inner London Crown Court with a third man, given an eighteen month suspended sentence.

You can read the news story here: <https://tinyurl.com/yayvtykj>

## SPANISH POLICE DISMANTLE CRIME GROUP TRADING HORSEMEAT

Europol issued a press release on 16 July regarding an operation that has successfully dismantled an organised crime group that was trading horsemeat in Europe which was unfit for human consumption.

The Spanish Guardia Civil, in coordination with Europol carried out a comprehensive operation in co-operation with several EU Member States which resulted in 65 people in Spain being arrested and charged with crimes such as animal abuse, document forgery, perverting the course of justice, crimes against public health, money laundering and being part of a criminal organisation.

More information can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yadg25f2>



# GLOBAL STANDARDS

## EPRS CONDUCTS REVIEW OF DRINKING WATER DIRECTIVE

The European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) is carrying out a review of the Drinking Water Directive taking into account the problems/challenges that have been identified with the DWD over the years, most notably as regards how out of date it is versus the WHO's parameters/values and the overall risk management approach.

The Drinking Water Directive (DWD) sets quality standards for drinking water and requires that Member States ensure monitoring and compliance with these standards. By and large, it has been successful, best exemplified by the high, and increasing, levels of compliance across the European Union (EU) with the microbiological, chemical and indicator parameters and values set in the DWD.

However, despite this overall success, evidence collected over the past years, most notably through evaluation as well as public and stakeholder consultation, confirm the existence of challenges. These include an outdated list of parameters and parametric values; over-reliance on compliance testing at the end of the water supply chain (at the tap) and related lack of a risk-based approach to managing water quality; problems related to water quality in small water supplies; lack of connection to public water networks for many citizens; problems related to water contact materials; as well as a lack of information for citizens.

Although European Commission Directive 2015/1787 recently introduced elements of a risk-based approach, the current text of the directive does not appear to integrate the World Health Organization guidelines on drinking water quality sufficiently, both in terms of parameters and parametric values (which have not been updated in the DWD since 1998), as well as the lack of a comprehensive risk-based approach in water quality management that would systematically address potential risks throughout the water supply chain.

The European Commission is expected to make a proposal to amend the directive in late 2017.

The full briefing document can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybk43b6o>

## PALM OIL FREE CERTIFICATION SCHEME LAUNCHED

A new certification programme, the International Palm Oil Free Certification Accreditation Programme (POFCAP), has been developed to enable food makers to demonstrate that their products were manufactured without the use of palm oil.

The POFCAP trademark has been approved by regulators in Australia and the UK. A further 14 countries have applications pending for the certification scheme, which was established in response to growing consumer demand for transparency over the use of palm oil in FMCG products.

"A company applies to POFCAP, we assess their application and if we can prove their products are 100% palm oil free the products will be certified and the company will then have access to the Palm Oil Free Certification trademark to use on their certified products," according to a spokesperson from POFCAP.

The team is currently liaising with an unspecified number of "large and small" companies interested in adopting the mark but have stated that they are unable to provide further details on the level of food industry interest as yet.

POFCAP claims that "POFCAP is a world's first of its kind. Up until now, there has been no government approved body able to certify if a product contains palm oil or not. We differ from any existing schemes as we are not involved in certifying anything to do with palm oil supply.... We are only focused on certifying a product to be palm oil free."

Other palm oil certification schemes, such as the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, look at whether the palm oil used has been sourced in a sustainable fashion.

POFCAP noted that, while these programmes have been important in fighting deforestation, progress on building sustainable palm oil supply chains is "slow and arduous". For example, currently, only 17% of globally sourced palm oil can be classed as 'non-conflict', POFCAP claimed.

POFCAP aims to allow manufacturers who produce products without using palm oil to communicate this to consumers in a clear and trusted way. It is believed that a palm oil-free message is increasingly gaining traction with consumers.

Certification is product based, not brand based, because many companies have both products containing palm oil or its derivatives and palm oil free products within their portfolios.

More information about POFCAP can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8gcp8xa>

# IMPORTS AND THE SUPPLY CHAIN

## DEFRA AND MMO ISSUE GUIDANCE ON CATCH CERTIFICATES

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) have recently published guidance on how to prove your fish has been caught legally. Catch certificates for marine caught fish for human consumption are required for the following:

- Export fish to certain non-EU countries (UK catch certificate);
- Import fish into the EU from non-EU countries (EU catch certificate);
- Export fish caught by a UK fishing vessel to a non-EU country (for example, for processing) and it's re-imported back to the EU.

Catch certificates are issued by the country where the fishing vessel is registered (the flag state) and contain information regarding when and where the fishing took place, and how much fish was caught.

It's an offence to import fishery products without a validated catch certificate – you can be prosecuted and fined up to £50,000!

The guidance, along with the certificate application form can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycd59lor>



## GUIDANCE ON LICENCES REQUIRED FOR ANIMAL/ANIMAL PRODUCT IMPORTS

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) have published guidance on the list of general licences and authorisations which allow certain animals and products of animal origin to be imported into Great Britain. This update relates to form IMP/GEN/2016/12.

Certain animals and products of animal origin that are not covered by European Union legislation or where EU legislation states that the animal or product must be authorised, require a general import licence or authorisation before they can be imported into Great Britain.

If the general licence or authorisation you need appears on the list, you don't have to apply, but you must make sure you follow the conditions in the published licence. If there's no general licence or authorisation for the commodity you wish to import, you must apply for one.

The guidance can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yacavc5v>

## FSA UPDATE ON IMPORTS FROM THIRD COUNTRIES

The FSA wrote to enforcement officers on 21 July 2017 regarding an update of recent results from their Early Warning System (EWS) for food and feed based primarily on analysis of the RASFF information issued by EU Member States for imports of food and feed: <https://tinyurl.com/yckrumb1>

The update included amongst other issues:

- Aflatoxins in groundnuts and peanut butter from the USA;
- High pesticide residues of unauthorised substances carbofuran and propargite in goji berries from China;
- Salmonella in black pepper from Brazil;
- Dried beans from Nigeria banned under Regulation 2015/943;
- Listeria monocytogenes in chilled smoked duck breast from Belgium.

## EC WANTS TO BUILD A 'FAIRER FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN'

The European Commission is launching a public consultation on how Europe's food supply chain can be made 'fairer'.

The Commission is gathering data on the "necessity and expedience" of possible measures that could be implemented at a European Union level to address or regulate "unfair trading practices with respect to agrifood products".

The Commission noted that it is "keen" to assess the level of market transparency across the supply chain and where it can be improved. "Considering the need for some degree of competition, the consultation will help judge whether the introduction of supplementary EU market transparency arrangements is necessary," the EC said.

Finally, the EC added, it wants to gauge interest in "producer cooperation" and the use of so-called "value sharing agreements". This could include sharing "market bonuses and losses" resulting from changes in market prices. These mechanisms are already in use in some sectors, such as sugar.

Releasing details of the consultation, the Commission suggested that there is evidence that "added value" in the food sector is not "adequately" distributed across the supply chain. It said that there are differences in bargaining power between "vulnerable operators" such as small businesses and farmers, with power concentrated in the hands of "highly concentrated" large food manufacturers and retailers.

"Farmers are the first link in the chain and without them, there would not be food to process, sell and consume. However, we notice that they often remain the weakest link," agriculture and rural development Commissioner Phil Hogan said. "It is to address the shortcomings in the food supply chain that we are leading the way to act, in accordance with the Commission's longstanding position to stand by European farmers."

The consultation has been designed to build on the findings of the Agricultural Market Task Force (AMTF), which was established by Hogan in January last year.

The AMTF made a number of recommendations on how the EC can address the imbalance of power in the supply chain. These included increased transparency, legislation and enforcement to combat unfair trading practices, financial support for farmers and improved risk management tools.

The consultation can be found here and has a closing date of 17th November: <https://tinyurl.com/y8qhp4yu>

## LABELLING AND GENERAL FOOD LAW

### COMMISSION DRAFT REGULATION ON THE MARKETING STANDARDS FOR FREE RANGE EGGS

The European Commission published a draft Delegated Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 589/2008 as regards marketing standards for free range eggs where hens' access to open air runs is restricted.

Current marketing standards provide that "free-range" eggs can no longer be labelled as such when laying hens' outdoor access is restricted for veterinary reasons for more than 12 weeks. Avian influenza outbreaks in 2016/17 have been such that veterinary housing orders exceeded this limit and eggs had to be marketed as "barn" eggs with a corresponding loss in value.

The Commission concludes therefore that it appears necessary to amend Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 589/2008 to adjust the relevant marketing standard and provide for a longer derogation period. With a view to harmonise implementation throughout the Union, the present revision also clarifies the starting point of the derogation period.

The consultation on the draft Delegated Regulation runs until 4 September 2017 and views are invited from interested parties. It can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9dlzkwu>

### FSAI PUBLISH GUIDANCE FOR SELLING OR ADVERTISING FOOD ONLINE

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) published on 20 July 2017 guidance for selling or advertising food online.

The guide sets out the information that must be provided to consumers by food businesses promoting or selling food online via websites or social media. It is the first guide that specifies what a business must do to comply with the law to ensure that consumers get the same information online, before making a purchase, as they would if they bought the product in store. The legislation around labelling, advertising, health claims, nutrition claims and allergen declarations apply to foods sold online, as well as over the counter.

More information can be found in the recent FSAI press release: <https://tinyurl.com/ycqtsjhc>

## WRAP CONSULT ON UPDATED GUIDANCE ON DATE MARKS

WRAP, the FSA and Defra recently drafted and launched for public consultation updated guidance to food businesses on the application of date marks and related consumer advice.

The guidance aims to assist further reductions in food waste at home and remove key barriers to redistribution. It will cover:

- What the different date labels mean, and how best to decide which date to apply in relation to curtailing food waste (and the consequences of this decision);
- The importance of maximising both 'closed' and 'open' life, whilst ensuring quality and safety are maintained;
- The importance of correct storage guidance, including fridge temperature and freezing advice; and
- What can (and cannot) be done as the date approaches / is past (for sale / redistribution).

The draft guidance was available for review and comment until 3 August 2017 but can still be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycjkpr26>

The responses are now being considered and WRAP is planning to publish a short summary of the feedback from the consultation in Autumn 2017 followed by the completed guidance later in 2017. We will keep members updated as to the launch date.

In the meantime, if you wish to become a member of the Food Waste Member Interest Group (MIG) to ensure you receive updates in this area please contact [deniserion@bff.co.uk](mailto:deniserion@bff.co.uk)

## NUTRITION, ADDITIVES AND HEALTH

### PHE ANNOUNCE PLANS FOR A CALORIE REDUCTION PROGRAMME

Public Health England (PHE) in conjunction with the Department of Health (DoH) announced on 18 August 2017 that they will now consider the evidence on children's calorie consumption with the aim of then launching the calorie reduction programme to remove excess calories from the foods children consume the most.

Reducing calorie consumption from sources other than sugar is critical to reversing the obesity trend, which shows:

- 1 in 3 children are either overweight or obese by the time they leave primary school;
- More young children in the UK than previously are being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes;
- Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to be obese.

Ready meals, pizzas, burgers, savoury snacks and sandwiches are foods which are likely to be included in the programme. Adults currently consume on average between 200 to 300 calories too many each day and children are following suit.

The full announcement can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/ydfj3ekr>

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) issued a statement on 18 August 2017 welcoming the PHE announcement of a calorie reduction programme to be achieved by reformulation as being in accord with their own recommendations to tackle Scotland's diet-related poor health. The statement can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/yaxcs35l>

### FLAVOURING SUBSTANCE 4, 5 EPOXY DEC-2(TRANS)-ENAL NOW PROHIBITED

EFSA recently concluded that the use of 4, 5 epoxy dec-2(trans)-enal (FL No 16.071) raises safety

concerns with respect to genotoxicity and therefore established legislation to remove this substance from the Union positive list of flavourings. The legislation entered into force on July 13th 2017 after publication in the Official Journal of the European Union and applies in all Member States.

Whilst there is no list of products that contain this flavouring, it may be used in dairy products, edible ices, meat & meat products, spices, soups, sauces, etc., soft drinks and ready-to-eat savouries (i.e. snack foods). If not already done so, we would advise members to take action now to ensure new foods containing this flavouring are not placed on the market.

The Regulation (EU) 2017/1250 of 11 July 2017 can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y964xkfp>

## CHILDHOOD OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY REPORT ISSUED

Council conclusions to contribute towards halting the rise in Childhood Overweight and Obesity has been published in the Official Journal of the EU, C205/46, 29/06/2017

The report calls on Member States to make the tackling of childhood overweight and obesity a priority of the European Union, reflected across sectoral policies and the Commission Working Agenda, while fully respecting Member States competences and in addition, calls upon the commission to continue to support and resource research projects and surveillance initiatives directed at tracking and tackling childhood overweight and obesity, including the dissemination of examples of good practice and success stories selected on the basis of rigorous criteria.

For further detail, the full report can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y95dedk5>

## INCREASE IN HEALTHIER FOOD AND DRINK CHOICES FOR CONSUMERS

At the end of June the FSA published a news story on their website urging food businesses from across Northern Ireland to make the food and drink they produce healthier, with the aim of improving people's health and encouraging and supporting the industry to take action in reducing the amount of salt, fat and sugar in food.

The FSA is calling on industry to make food healthier by:

- reformulating products to lower the levels of sugar, salt or fat in foods,
- reducing the portion size, and/or the number of calories in single-serve products,
- shifting consumer purchasing towards lower or no added sugar products.

To help small and medium businesses reduce the levels of sugar in certain food they sell, the FSA in partnership with Invest NI are urging businesses to take advantage of the innovation voucher scheme which provides £5000 funding for technical expertise to innovate their products to make them healthier. The FSA is also encouraging greater use of red, amber and green traffic light nutrition labelling on the front of food packets. Additionally, work is taking place with local cafes, restaurants and canteens to display calories on menus so that people have the information they need to make healthy choices when eating out.

Further information can be found here : <https://tinyurl.com/yctv6m74> along with information on the Innovation Voucher Scheme which can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybhghm3p>

## FSA PUBLISH RESULTS FROM FOOD ALLERGY STUDY

The FSA published on 18 July 2017 details of new research which shows that people with food allergies and intolerances are more confident about eating out since allergen information rules were introduced in 2014.

The study, using a UK representative sample of people with food allergies and intolerances, focused on consumer preferences when eating out, both before and after the implementation of the EU FIC. The research found that, post FIC:

- 70% of food allergic and intolerant consumers feel more confident in asking staff for allergen information;
- 56% of food allergic and intolerant consumers value staff more as a source of information;
- 44% of food allergic and intolerant consumers are more 'adventurous' about eating out;
- 67% feel allergen information on food business websites is dependable;
- 63% say talking to the chef about their allergen needs can be relied on;
- 35% report an improvement in allergen information in the menu.

More information on the research can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycn5ey8w>

## BRC AND FDF CONSULT ON SUGAR REDUCTION TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

The Food and Drink Federation (FDF) announced on 15 August 2017 that the British Retail Consortium (BRC) and FDF are inviting ingredient manufacturers, product specialists and researchers to submit details of sugar alternative ingredients and products that may help companies reformulate.

The BRC and the FDF will use the information to create a list for manufacturers and retailers in order to further support sugar reduction efforts across the food and drink industry. Suppliers who produce suitable sugar alternative ingredients are encouraged to complete an on-line application form: <https://tinyurl.com/y78wclal>

## FSS USING SCIENCE AND EVIDENCE IN DIET AND NUTRITION

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) published on 11 August 2017 a blog from its Chief Scientific Advisor (CSA) on how it is using science and evidence in diet and nutrition.

Using examples of the consequences of having too much salt and the potential for unhealthy promotions influencing consumer purchases; the CSA's blog aims to illustrate how science and evidence can be used to overcome the national problem of overconsumption of sugar, salt and fat.

The blog can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycymnc9x>

## IGD PUBLISH GUIDE TO CALCULATING FRUIT AND VEG PORTIONS IN COMPOSITE FOODS

The IGD published on 18 July 2017 its updated best practice guide to calculating and communicating fruit and vegetable portions in composite foods.

The document has been reviewed and the principles updated in light of new legislation and government guidelines. In particular the Government's SACN report on sugars is referenced in relation to the definition of 'free sugars' and intake recommendations and PHE salt reduction targets for 2017.

The guide can be downloaded here: <https://tinyurl.com/y6ucseg5>

## FSS PUBLISH RESPONSE TO THE 'OBESITY IN SCOTLAND: A PERSISTENT INEQUALITY' REPORT

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) published on 27 July 2017 a news update following the publication of a report into obesity in Scotland. The report adds to the mounting body of evidence showing that little progress has been made towards improving the Scottish diet for the last 20 years.

The Head of Nutrition Science and Policy at Food Standards Scotland commented that there is an urgent need for government, industry, the media and individuals to take action. Research conducted by Food Standards Scotland has shown that three quarters of people in Scotland would support further regulation of ingredients as one way of helping improve the Scottish diet.

The news report can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/yb3gdaus>

## EU SCHOOL CHILDREN TO RECEIVE MILK, FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

The European Commission published a press release on 31 July 2017 regarding the new EU school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme which will be in place on 1 August, ready to be implemented across the Union as of the first day of the 2017/2018 school year.

Aimed at promoting healthy eating habits among children, the scheme will include the distribution of fruit, vegetables and milk products, as well as dedicated educational programmes to teach pupils about the importance of good nutrition and to explain how food is produced. This single scheme merges and optimises the existing projects that last year reached over 20 million children. Although participation is optional, all 28 Member States indicated they will take part in the initiative in the 2017/2018 school year

The press release can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y77a7ln4>

## EFSA PUBLISH ANALYSIS ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE AND OCCURRENCE

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published on 27 July 2017 a joint Interagency Antimicrobial Consumption and Resistance Analysis (JIACRA) Report on the on the integrated analysis of the consumption of antimicrobial agents and occurrence of antimicrobial resistance in bacteria from humans and food-producing animals.

The report on the integrated analysis of antimicrobial consumption (AMC) and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in bacteria from humans and food-producing animals addressed data obtained by the Agencies' EU-wide surveillance networks for 2013–2015. The results suggest that from a 'One-health' perspective, there is potential in both sectors to further develop prudent use of antimicrobials and thereby reduce AMR. The report can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y82rer4t>

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) also published on 27 July 2017 a press release regarding the report suggesting that there is more evidence on the link between antibiotic use and antibiotic resistance: <https://tinyurl.com/ydhfkh85>

## DEFRA PUBLISH INFORMATION ON PLANS TO SLOW ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR)

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) published on 24 July 2017 information and resources on the government's plans to slow the growth of antimicrobial resistance: <https://tinyurl.com/olbw52a>

The Department of Health, Defra, PHE and NHS England are leading the implementation of the UK 5 year Antimicrobial Resistance strategy. A cross government steering group is overseeing implementation of the strategy. The group works with a range of partners across the human and animal health, research, industry and academic sectors.

This update includes information on reducing infections in the NHS.

## FSA ALLERGEN INFOGRAPHIC FOR FOOD BUSINESSES

The FSA wrote on 27 July 2017 to all heads of Environmental Health Services and all Directors of Trading Standards Services regarding a new Infographic for Food Businesses, which includes 'Top Tips for the Provision of Good Allergy Information'.

Following new research by the FSA, this Infographic and e-cards will hopefully improve the allergen information offered to customers by businesses. The infographic can be downloaded following the link on the FSA letter here: <https://tinyurl.com/ya8gqftp>

## PROCESSING AND RETAIL

### FOOD-TO-GO SECTOR TO BE WORTH £23.5BN BY 2022

The UK food-to-go market will be worth £23.5bn by 2022, according to grocery think-tank IGD. The sector's value will increase £6.1bn over the next five years, up from £17.4bn this year, IGD said. Food-to-go specialists – including high street baker Greggs and sandwich maker Subway – would see the biggest rise in value after rapid range and innovation development, it added.

IGD senior insight manager Gavin Rothwell said: "Food-to-go specialists are really setting the pace on product innovation and range development, as well as expanding quite rapidly outside London, which is why we're forecasting them to become the biggest part of the food-to-go market by the end of 2022. "We're seeing some highly innovative product and menu development, much of this inspired by shopper trends towards health and wellness and global flavours and tastes. Many operators are looking to tempt shoppers with ranges tailored to different times of day, while also improving the quality of their fresh food and coffee offers."

Food-to-go specialists would overtake quick-service restaurants as the biggest part of the market by 2022, IGD predicted. But, the quick-service restaurant sector was still expected to grow £900M in value over the next five years.

"Many quick-service restaurant chains are updating their menus and reinventing the in-store experience to bring in more technology, creating a more premium look and feel to appeal to younger consumers," said Rothwell. "There are also many newer players emerging and expanding across the UK in this segment."

The market segments were expected to cross-over more by 2022, the grocery think-tank said.

Rothwell said: "It's common for shoppers to visit more than one store to complete their food-to-go shop, especially at breakfast but also throughout the day. Suppliers to the food-to-go sector therefore have a great opportunity to work closely with retailers and specialists to create winning ranges that will ultimately meet more shoppers' needs, making their lives easier."

Meanwhile, in June, IGD highlighted the opportunity for food manufacturers to exploit the growing demand for food-to-go products from millennials.

IGD 2022 food-to-go segment value forecasts:

- Food-to-go specialists – £7.7bn
- Quick service restaurants – £6.3bn
- Coffee specialists – £4.2bn
- Convenience, forecourt and other retailers – £3.6bn
- Supermarkets and hypermarkets – £1.7bn

# REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT AND OFFICIAL CONTROLS

## GOVERNMENT RESPONSES ISSUED TO PA CONSULTATION

Regulatory Delivery and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy published on 2nd August 2017 government responses to a consultation on the potential of Primary Authority which took place between 13 February and 7 April 2017. This consultation sought views on the draft Co-ordination of Regulatory Enforcement Regulations 2017.

The draft regulations include measures to ensure that Primary Authority can operate from 1 October 2017 when the scheme is extended and simplified by provisions in the Enterprise Act 2016. It also sought views on replacing the 'categories' system for defining the scope of partnerships with an approach where, by default, a partnership will cover all the regulatory functions of the local authority within scope of Primary Authority.

As a result of the consultation responses and the feedback from wider engagement with stakeholders the draft regulations have been amended. They specify the Competition and Markets Authority, the Food Standards Agency, the Gambling Commission, the Health and Safety Executive, and the Secretary of State as 'supporting regulators'.

The draft regulation and the government response to the consultation can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/gvwb4yg>

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## 8 out of 10

businesses in Primary Authority Partnerships  
are co-ordinated



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## FSA PUBLISH LAW ENFORCEMENT DATA

The FSA have published interim food law enforcement data by local authorities across the UK for the year 2016/17. The information has been provided by local authorities and compiled by the FSA which gives a detailed breakdown of food law enforcement activity. This is the first time the FSA have published interim data, and is a bid to improve transparency and to provide more timely data ahead of the full 2016/17 statistics report.

This latest publication includes data received up to the start of June 2017 for individual local authority food hygiene and food standards statistics and is important in providing assurance on how the system of food controls is working.

The full report can be accessed via a link on the FSA website here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycglhj73>

## CABINET OFFICE PUBLISH UK GUIDE TO MAKING LEGISLATION

The Cabinet Office have published a comprehensive guide covering the procedures followed when preparing primary legislation and taking it through Parliament. The guide covers the procedures to be followed in preparing primary legislation, outlining the different stages in preparing legislation and taking it through Parliament in chronological order and setting out what is required of Bill teams at each stage of the process, from bidding for a slot in the legislative programme to gaining Royal Assent.

The guide can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yalctaaj>

## FSA REGULATING OUR FUTURE PROPOSALS

The FSA published on 19 July 2017 its plans to change food regulation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The plans include an enhanced system of registration for all food businesses, based on the application of proportionate, risk-based controls.

The outcome from the changes is aimed at ensuring a more robust, sustainable regulatory regime, that sees standards improve in risky businesses, reduces the administrative burden for businesses that demonstrate they are compliant with food law, and focuses on effective enforcement action against food businesses that fail to fulfil their obligations.

The plans can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycltxt4x>

## RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

### FSA PUBLISH NEW RESEARCH ON PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF NOROVIRUS

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have published new research carried out by Ipsos MORI, 'Food handlers and norovirus transmission: Social science insights'. This study, aims to help stop the 'winter vomiting bug' norovirus from spreading, by understanding and improving food handler behaviours. The literature review identified 5 strategies for controlling norovirus:

- Personal hygiene;
- Food handling;
- Washing and cooking food;
- Surface and uniform cleaning;
- Fitness to work.

Visits to food catering establishments involved in-depth interviews, surveys, and structured environmental and behavioural observations. Data analysis and behavioural theories were then used to rank behaviours which risk spreading Norovirus. Several behavioural interventions were recommended based on the findings.

The full report can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7p65xmu>

### CROSS-REACTIVITY BETWEEN CYPRESS POLLEN AND PEACHES/CITRUS FRUITS EXPLAINED

The fight against allergies has received some good news as researchers have identified, for the first time, the likely origin of the cross-reactivity between cypress pollen, peaches and citrus fruits. Their work has shown that these sources contain allergens belonging to a new family of proteins involved in pollen food associated syndrome.

The translational study combined clinical observation and academic research and was directed by researchers from the Institut Pasteur and AP-HP, working in partnership with teams from the Prague University of Chemistry and Technology (Czech Republic) and Hokkaido University (Japan) and also the Pneumo-Allergy Unit at La Timone Hospital in Marseille (AP-HM). It has revealed for the first time the underlying physicochemical and immunological mechanisms behind the cross-reaction between cypress pollen and certain fruits.

In their study, the scientists analyzed the physicochemical, immunological and structural properties of BP14, an allergen identified in cypress pollen. They were able to demonstrate numerous similarities with the peach allergen Pru p 7 and the orange allergen Cit s 7, both of which belong to the "snakin/GRP" (gibberellin-regulated protein) protein family. These observations led the researchers to find out that BP14, Pru p 7 and Cit s 7 were members of a new family of respiratory and food allergens involved in pollen food associated syndrome.

"A new concept has emerged – conditional sensitization," study coordinator Pascal Poncet, from the Institut Pasteur's Center for Innovation and Technological Research, explains. "Once the immune system of an individual develops an intolerance to an allergen such as BP14, it is then more likely to become sensitive to similar allergens within the same protein family which are present in other allergen sources."

In Mediterranean regions, allergic reactions to cypress pollen/peach and cypress pollen/citrus fruits have been described in clinical practice, reports Hokkaido University. In these cases, certain people, having been exposed and sensitized to cypress pollen from a young age, go on to develop allergies to citrus fruits and peaches in adulthood. It is estimated that 60 percent of food allergies occur in combination with respiratory allergies.

Although several explanations had been put forward about the increase in these combination allergies, such as environmental or lifestyle changes, the reason for the cross-reaction between cypress pollen and certain fruits had, until now, not been formally identified.

Demonstrating this cross-reactivity and identifying its causes could allow the new allergen family to be included in the battery of tests for allergy sufferers from which it is currently absent, the University of Hokkaido reports. As such, the discovery should contribute to improving allergy diagnosis, and it could lead to better patient treatment in keeping with the development of a personalized medicine.



## SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENT & CSR

### MSC CERTIFY NORTH SEA COD AS SUSTAINABLE

Over a decade since North Sea cod stocks came close to collapse, shoppers and diners can finally buy the popular fish with a clear conscience following the announcement that Scottish and English cod boats, which are members of the Scottish Fisheries Sustainable Accreditation Group, are now MSC certified.

Thanks to the enormous efforts of a coalition of fishing organisations with support from supermarkets, seafood brands and the industry body, Seafish, North Sea cod has passed an independent assessment against the MSC's strict standard. The news means that – subject to strict traceability requirements – North Sea cod can now be sold in supermarkets and restaurants bearing the MSC 'blue tick' label, indicating that it is sustainable and fully traceable.

The announcement marks a momentous achievement for the industry. Cod stocks in the North Sea peaked at 270,000 tonnes in the 1970s, when North Sea cod was widely sold and enjoyed. However, stocks fell to just 44,000 tonnes in 2006. Since then the industry has worked with the Scottish Government and EU Fisheries Council to agree and implement a 'Cod Recovery Plan' that would nurse the stock back to health. The plan linked the number of days fishing that boats were given to the conservation measures they signed up to. The plan aimed to reduce cod catches by 25 per cent in 2009, followed by subsequent annual reductions of 10 per cent. In response, the Scottish industry closed large spawning areas to fishing and introduced a system of real time closures to protect aggregations while trialling new nets and developing a system of remote electronic monitoring using CCTV cameras on board boats.

Mike Park, Chairman of the Scottish Fisheries Sustainable Accreditation Group (SFSAG), comments: "This is a massive development for the catching sector and is a testament to the power of collective action. The years of commitment to rebuilding North Sea cod has shown that fishermen are responsible and can be trusted to deliver stable and sustainable stocks. The consumer can now eat home-caught cod with a clear conscience."

Marcus Coleman, chief executive of Seafish, said: "This is brilliant news for both the industry and consumers, and Seafish is delighted to see North Sea cod awarded MSC certification. It is our mission to support a profitable, sustainable and socially responsible seafood industry, and this is a shining example of how industry and science can work together for a profoundly positive outcome. The MSC set standards for sustainable fishing and supply chain traceability. Products which pass these standards are awarded the blue MSC label which gives consumers assurance that their favourite fish is sustainably sourced and fully traceable. This certification not only enhances the reputation of North Sea cod, but helps widen the number of sustainable choices available to the British consumer, enabling them to eat more fish more often."

## TECHNOLOGY AND NOVEL FOODS

### 'SMART LABEL' COULD TACKLE FRAUD AND BOLSTER FOOD SAFETY

Scientists have developed what they describe as a 'low-cost, portable, paper-based sensor' that could be used produce 'smart labels' that detect food spoilage and contamination. Dr Andreescu, who works at Clarkson University, said that the work reflects her interest in technologies that "are accessible to both industry and the general population".

What makes Dr Andreescu's sensors unique, she claimed, are the nanostructures they use to catch and bind to compounds they're looking for. "Most people working on similar sensors use solutions that migrate on channels," she said. "We use stable, inorganic particles that are redox active. When they interact with the substances we want to detect, they change colour, and the intensity of the change tells us how concentrated the analyte is."

Because all of the reagents needed to operate the device are incorporated in the paper, users don't need to add anything other than the sample being tested. The research team said that the potential applications for the tech are "wide-ranging". Much of the sensor work to date has focused on detecting antioxidants in tea and wine. Dr Andreescu and her team found these products have unique antioxidant "fingerprints" that can be used for authentication purposes to combat food fraud.

The researchers have also extended their work to look at food contamination and environmental pollutants. One sensor prototype can spot ochratoxin A, a fungal toxin commonly found in a range of products, including cereals and coffee. She noted this direction could be expanded further to look for salmonella and E. coli.

Dr Andreescu's next focus is the development of paper-based devices that change colour when food spoils. These sensors bind to the reactive oxygen species that products accumulate as they age and eventually go bad. Although testing for this application is still ongoing, Dr Andreescu said this technology could one day be incorporated into smart labels that would tell consumers when to throw a product out.



# British Frozen Food Federation Technical & Legislative Expert Group

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## Meeting of the Technical and Legislative Expert Group

To be held at 10am on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July

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 to discuss if time – see list following**
6. **Items for information – see list following**
7. **Items carried forward – see list following**
8. **Contact with other organisations**
9. **Projects**
10. **Any other business**
11. **Presentation** – Approx. 12pm – Estelle Herszenhorn, Special Advisor (Food and Drink) – WRAP  
Food waste, its prevention and how frozen can be part of the solution.
12. **Date of next meeting** – Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September at The Belton Woods Hotel, Grantham

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### Agenda Item 4 – Items for discussion

- 4.1 **MSM/Wishbone** (2017\_04\_J / 2017\_04\_W / 2017\_04\_AC)
- 4.2 **BRC V8** (2017\_04\_AD)
- 4.3 **Audit Burden** (2017\_04\_AE)
- 4.4 **Information Sharing** (2017\_04\_AG)
- 4.5 **Technical Seminar** (2017\_04\_AB)
- 4.6 **WRAP & Food Waste** (2017\_04\_D / 2017\_04\_AH)

### Agenda Item 5 – Items to discuss if time

- 5.1 **FSA Withdrawal /Recall Process** (2017\_04\_AF)
- 5.2 **Brazilian meat issue** (2017\_04\_A / 2017\_04\_R / 2017\_04\_X)
- 5.3 **Biocides and Chlorates Update** (2017\_04\_B / 2017\_04\_G / 2017\_04\_N / 2017\_04\_S)
- 5.4 **Risk - Identification of hazardous substances, risk assessment and management** (Assessment used by EU Scientific Committee E.g. Diacetyl- 2017\_04\_H / FSA board meeting papers- chemical contaminants and identifying risks-2017\_04\_Z)
- 5.5 **Technical Questionnaire** (paper to follow after meeting)
- 5.6 **Training and Education needs** (no paper)

### Agenda Item 6 – Items for Information

- 6.1 **Review of the Campden BRI Scientific and Technical Needs document (2017\_04\_C)**
- 6.2 **Offer of free FSDF event to expert groups (2017\_04\_E)**
- 6.3 **FERA update (2017\_04\_F)**
- 6.4 **PAS 96 For SG REVIEW (2017\_04\_I)**
- 6.5 **Westminster Forum -Implementing policy on Sugar Reduction (2017\_04\_K)**
- 6.6 **Audit consistency (2017\_04\_L)**
- 6.7 **Leatherhead Science Day (2017\_04\_M)**
- 6.8 **EC Public Consultation - Draft Regulation on acrylamide (2017\_04\_P)**
- 6.9 **French NutriScore labelling- evidence base (2017\_04\_Q)**
- 6.10 **Halal update (2017\_04\_T)**
- 6.11 **Food Fraud roundup (2017\_04\_U)**
- 6.12 **Campden Open day (2017\_04\_V)**
- 6.13 **Extension of special guarantees on hygiene of food of animal origin (Salmonella) to Denmark (2017\_04\_Y)**

### Agenda Item 7 – Items Carried Forward

Standing agenda items awaiting further development:

- 7.1 **Glaze Methodology**
- 7.2 **Whole Genome Sequencing**
- 7.3 **Review of Date coding guidance**
- 7.4 **Salt in Scampi Challenge**
- 7.5 **BRC Agents & Brokers Standard 2**
- 7.6 **PA3**

### Agenda Item 8 – Contact with other Organisations

#### **8.1 Contacts Made**

Sharon Neeves, Bob Taylor, Iain Shipley - Air Liquide (Cryogenic Freezing)  
John Simmons - Acheta Consulting Ltd (Pest Awareness & Management)  
Roel de Hoop - SpecPage AG (Specification Management Systems)  
Emiljano Delibashi - Selerant SRL (worldwide food regulatory database)  
Matthew Sharman - FERA Science Ltd (Next Generation Sequencing (NGS))

#### **8.2 Future Meetings Arranged**

Bulher/Sortex – date TBC

### Agenda Item 9 – Projects

- 9.1 **Gold book (DR)**
- 9.2 **Shelf life project (MPF)**

### Agenda Item 10– Any Other Business

#### **10.1 Future Guest Speakers**

September 2017 – Suggestions invited.

#### **10.2 Nominations for TXG Vice Chair**

- 11. **Presentation – Approximately 12pm – Estelle Herszenhorn, Special Advisor (Food and Drink) – WRAP**

## 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 - Group Technical Manager, Apetito Ltd.
- David Jones - Director of Technical Service, Bidfood
- Sandra Brand - European Head of Policy & Regulatory Affairs, Birds Eye Ltd.
- Ken Glauch - Head of Technical, Booker Ltd.
- Gerry Thomas - Technical Director, Brakes
- Philip Proud - European Technical Director, Cargill Meats Europe
- Angela Doherty - Head of Responsible Sourcing, CP Foods UK Ltd.
- Brendan McIntyre - Technical Director, Flagship Europe Ltd.
- Graham Christy - Group Technical Manager, Froneri UK Ltd.
- Chris Roddis - Subject Matter Expert (Protein), Greencore Grocery Leeds
- Bill Wadsworth - Group Technical Director, Greggs Plc.
- Emma Meredith - Food Legislation Manager, Iceland Foods Ltd.
- Janet Williams - Technical Manager, Kent Frozen Foods
- Vince Craig - Meadowbrae Technical Services (Chair)
- Scott Johnston - Technical Director, Youngs Ltd.



**BOOKER**



Cargill Meats Europe



**Iceland**



DELIVERING QUALITY TO THE CATERER





# Introducing the British Frozen Food Federation People Awards

2018 will see BFFF's inaugural People Awards ceremony, aimed at celebrating the unsung heroes within the frozen food industry.

*"For 30 years our annual product awards have recognised the most exciting and innovative new products at our sell-out Gala Dinner Dance event.*

*"This year we have decided it is high-time we celebrated the people behind those products and the £8billion frozen food industry as a whole and give them the recognition they deserve."* – John Hyman, Chief Executive Officer, BFFF.

**Key dates**

15<sup>th</sup> May 2017  
Entries live now

6<sup>th</sup> October 2017  
Entry Deadline

21<sup>st</sup> November 2017  
Shortlist announced

22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018  
The People Awards ceremony

**Technical Champion**

This person will be a front-runner in the fields of food safety and quality management. They will focus on excellence in food safety management systems and driving innovation in instilling a food safety and quality in their business.

**Nominate now at:**  
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