

T & L UPDATE

BFFF TECHNICAL AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

NOVEMBER 2017 - ISSUE 91



Technical Seminar 2018
Book your place now!



British Frozen Food Federation

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FOREWORD

Welcome to the latest edition of the BFFF Technical and Legislative update. We know you are finding this type of summary useful because you have told us so! Thank you to all of you who helped in our recent member survey via Survey Monkey- we are working our way through the findings- but one thing is clear you like the T+L update every 2 months.

We will explore how we can add to the value of the current document by including food safety and food fraud updates and following your input revising/amalgamating some of the sections to make them easier to follow. However that is for the future so watch out for future editions.

We have also made a lot of progress in the organisation of our first Technical Seminar to be held on February 22nd at the Birmingham Hilton Metropole Hotel. We can now confirm a real talented and senior representative line up of speakers. There are more details on the opposite page but with:

The Director of Regulatory and Legal Strategy at the FSA/The Deputy Chief Executive of Food Standards Scotland PLUS the technical seminar keynote speaker from the FSA PLUS experts in food fraud, new laboratory techniques, nutrition PLUS the opportunity to see Dame Kelly Holmes give the motivational speech in our linked Business Conference- why wouldn't you be coming along?

The final conference agenda will be published shortly but tickets are selling now - see opposite for more details.

We hope that you find something useful in the summaries that we provide - with a membership base as wide as the BFFF we hope there is something for everyone but inevitably some items that are not relevant for you. Keep feeding back what more/less you want to see as we are trying to make small changes that benefit the majority.

The winter is nearly upon us and last year avian influenza caused major supply and labelling issues. Given the root cause has not disappeared and the risk is increasingly linked to migratory birds it may be worth reviewing the articles on A.I.

The FSA retail campylobacter survey is reported on with further changes to the emphasis on future testing as there is now a discernible/quantifiable difference between standards in some retail chicken and other sectors. This should be a big success story for the practical controls of a food poisoning organism in a modern food system. Whilst the focus will change to those more difficult to reach sectors (smaller retailers/butchers/foodservice) the key measure is whether consumer food poisoning rates for Campylobacter are going down as a result of the very expensive and significant interventions made over the past 2-3 years. If not the root cause of why Campylobacter continues to cause significant issues remains to be determined but the role of the consumer as in many other things needs to be re-examined.

Finally have a look at the section on food fraud - you will note the increasing sophistication of the control techniques/ the range of products affected and the increasing sources of information. What works for your business will not necessarily work for others so as with most technical issues - you pay your money/you take your choice!

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.

Technical Seminar Sponsored by:



Book your place here: <http://bfff.co.uk/technical/seminar/>



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.

ACTIVITY OF EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

'VEGAN' AND 'VEGETARIAN' DEFINITIONS NOT A COMMISSION PRIORITY

The use of vegetarian or vegan symbols and labels on food may be on the increase but the uncertainty around exactly what is meant by 'vegan' or 'vegetarian' seems likely to remain for some time.

The terms have yet to be legally defined by EU food law but despite the pressure from the REFIT platform and developments by certain member states at a national level, the Commission has made it clear that the drafting of an implementing act regarding the suitability of a food for vegetarians or vegans is not a priority and furthermore they cannot commit at this time to a specific date or content of the implementing act.

The Commission's Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) programme ensures that EU legislation delivers results for citizens and businesses effectively, efficiently and at minimum cost. REFIT aims to keep EU law simple, remove unnecessary burdens and adapt existing legislation without compromising on policy objectives.

In accordance with the EU Food Information to Consumers Regulation 1169/2011, the Commission is obliged to adopt an implementing act on voluntary labelling information pertaining to the suitability of a food for vegetarians or vegans. However, the requirement to adopt such an implementing act is not subject to a specified deadline.

At a national level, authorities are progressively supporting the establishment of clear definitions for the terms 'vegan' and 'vegetarian'. For instance, Germany agreed on uniform definitions for 'vegan' and 'vegetarian' back in 2016. These definitions will now be used as a reference by German enforcement authorities when controlling food products labelled as 'vegan' or 'vegetarian'. In addition, horizontal guidelines are also being developed for vegan and vegetarian food products in the German food code that serves as the orientation for business operators.

The European Vegetarian Union (EVU) previously made a submission to the REFIT platform to define the terms 'vegan' and 'vegetarian' which, in June 2017, the government group and the stakeholder group of the platform had expressed their support for.

FRENCH PRESIDENT PROPOSES LEGISLATIVE CHANGE TO HELP FARMERS

The President of France, Emmanuel Macron, has put forward a proposal which will see French food prices set on the basis of producers' costs – a move that has been welcomed by producers, manufacturers and retailers.

The proposal means that the starting price for food in negotiations is set by the seller (the farmer or relevant agricultural organisation) and not the manufacturer or retailer which was previously the case. Over the last four years France's farmers, and to a lesser extent manufacturers, have seen their margins squeezed due to an ongoing supermarket price war.

Additionally, the minimum price at which certain food products can be sold by retailers (known as the SRP in French), which is defined by French law, will also be raised.

"We should allow farmers not to rely on subsidies anymore and therefore ensure that they be paid a fair amount for their work," President Macron said.

However, he made it clear that he is not offering "a blank cheque" to the food industry so it can raise prices. Stakeholders must make efforts in terms of product quality, efficiency and their own professional organisations if they are to justify the higher price.

Despite the move, consumers probably won't notice much of a difference in the price of their groceries as although helping France's significant agricultural sector is important for Macron, he could not afford to alienate consumers by raising food prices either. The idea is actually more of a rebalancing process. The retailers will raise the price of certain products that had hit the SRP threshold while lowering the price of other products for which their margins were higher, such as their private label ranges or regional products.

The measures will not be applied immediately; trade negotiations are due to start at the end of the month with Macron's law due to take effect in 2018. However, many have committed to applying the principles of Macron's proposal during this year's trade negotiations.

However, French consumer rights group UFC Que Choisir have raised concerns that the farmers may not actually see the benefit. According to the group, the price war mainly concerns branded products of major manufacturers such as Nestlé and Coca-Cola, and does not concern unprocessed agricultural products such as fruit, vegetables or meat. The group also highlighted the fact that there was "no visibility" regarding how Macron intended to carry out his aims.

EFSA MANAGEMENT BOARD EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR SCIENTIFIC WORK

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) recently held their 74th Management Board Meeting in which the Board was updated on, amongst other things, the renewal of the Scientific Committee and Panels, the Prometheus project and EFSA's coordination of the EU agencies network.

The Board expressed great support for EFSA's scientific work, considering it to be an essential part of the regulatory decision-making process. In June 2017, EFSA had called for expressions of interest for scientific experts to join its 10 Scientific Panels and Scientific Committee for the period 2018-2021. The call closed on 8 September 2017, having attracted no less than 985 eligible applications. The Management Board will now look to endorse the Panel and Scientific Committee members by 21 March 2018.

The Management Board was also updated on the progress made and the next steps for EFSA's PROMETHEUS project (PROMoting METHods for Evidence Use in Scientific assessments). The project is a major initiative to strengthen the approach EFSA's scientists take to select, appraise and integrate evidence in scientific assessments. This effort involves developing harmonised methodologies and guidance documents for risk assessment across the EU and internationally.

EFSA also updated the Board on the achievements of the EU agencies network (EUAN), which they have chaired since March 2017. The EU Agencies Network was set up by the EU Member States and the EU Institutions to carry out specific legal, technical or scientific tasks. Based on evidence-based advice they help shape informed policies and laws at the EU and national level.

Further information including the documents and audiocasts from the Board meeting can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y84l4dxt>

EU COMMISSION LAUNCH NEW FOOD WASTE GUIDELINES

The European Commission has launched new guidelines to combat food waste by redistributing excess food products and help increase access to food for the poorest people in the region.

"The primary focus of food waste prevention should be to act directly at source by limiting the generation of surplus food at each stage in the food supply chain (i.e. production, processing, distribution and consumption). If this cannot be achieved, the best destination for food surplus, which ensures the highest value use of edible food resources, is to redistribute this food for human consumption where safe to do so", the Commission said as it announced the move.

As part of its Circular Economy Action Plan, the Commission believes that food donation can be used to boost food security by reducing the economic burden and the pressure on the world's finite resources.

According to Eurostat, in the EU, close to one-quarter of the population— 119.1m people – were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2015. Of these, 42.5m people were not able to afford a quality meal every second day. At the same time, it is estimated that around 88m tonnes of food waste is generated annually in the EU with associated costs estimated at €14bn.

In addition, according to some studies, food that is harvested but ultimately lost or wasted consumes about one-quarter of all water used by agriculture each year. The United Nation's FAO estimates wasted food requires cropland the size of China and generates about 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions annually.

The Commission said it will also launch a pilot project in 2017 to further assess food donation practices in Member States and "promote the dissemination and uptake of the EU food donation guidelines".

The EU's Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste, which supported the Commission's work on food donation, is also backing a project from EU REFRESH to launch a digital network to encourage further collaboration on food waste.

The network, named 'Community of Experts' (CoE), aims to help drive action at every level of the supply chain by sharing the skills, knowledge and resources needed to act against food waste. Its aim is to help users share and access information and ideas to develop and deliver their own initiatives. In total, 120 experts and 80 resources are already online.

Further information about the EU REFRESH and the Community of Experts network can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybwkdrdr>



REVISION OF THE DEFINITION OF NANOMATERIAL

The European Parliament has published a roadmap setting out the revision of Commission Recommendation 2011/698/EU on the definition of nanomaterial. Nanomaterials are materials manipulated at very small scale that have new or enhanced properties compared to the same material at bigger scale

Following a review of 2011/698/EU in 2013, the intention is now to prepare a revised Recommendation to be adopted by the Commission, accompanied by a Staff Working Document that will report on the review undertaken and the rationale for the modifications. It is envisaged that the Commission will then do the following:

- promote the revised Recommendation within the EU and, as appropriate, in the international community;
- develop guidance (including technical requirements), sector-specific guidance and implementation tools;
- support the uptake of the Recommendation in the relevant policy areas (chemicals, cosmetics, food; etc.);
- setup a system of continuous monitoring of implementation across sectors, facilitate quick dissemination and uptake of any relevant scientific/technical developments, and if considered appropriate trigger actions to support quality assurance and control of the measurements and their application in the nanomaterial definition.

More information along with the roadmap can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7lsmr24>

ECJ RULE EMERGENCY MEASURES ON GM FOOD CANNOT BE ADOPTED

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) have ruled that Member States may not adopt emergency measures regarding genetically modified food and feed unless it is evident that there is a serious risk to health or the environment.

This follows the request back in 2013 by the Italian Government for the Commission to adopt emergency measures to prohibit the cultivation of maize MON 810 in the light of some new scientific studies carried out by two Italian research institutes. On the basis of the European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) scientific opinion, the Commission concluded that there was no new science-based evidence to support the requested emergency measures and to invalidate its previous conclusions about the safety of maize MON 810.

Despite this, in 2013 the Italian Government adopted a ministerial decree prohibiting the cultivation of MON 810 in Italian territory and furthermore, in 2014 the Italian Government successfully brought a prosecution against the cultivation of maize MON 810.

Further detail can be found in a recent press release from the ECJ: <https://tinyurl.com/y8pxpye6>

SPAIN NOTIFY EC ON NATIONAL RULES FOR DAIRY ORIGIN LABELLING

On 5th September the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Environment notified the EC regarding the Draft Royal Decree on the indication of the origin of milk used as raw material on the labelling of milk and milk products.

The royal decree aims to regulate the mandatory indication of the origin on the labelling of milk and milk products manufactured in Spain that are marketed on Spanish territory. This issue will be regulated, on a test basis, for a period of two years, in line with similar regulations established in other neighbouring Member States. It shall enter into force on the day following four months after its publication.



COMMISSION ISSUE GUIDELINES REGARDING DUAL QUALITY PRODUCTS

Guidelines have been issued by the Commission on the application of EU food and consumer laws to dual quality products i.e. those sold under identical packaging and branding, but for which the quality of the produce is different.

The guidelines were outlined by President Juncker during his 2017 State of the Union Address in Strasbourg and will help national authorities determine whether a company is breaking EU laws when selling products of dual quality in different countries. The guidance lists and explains the relevant requirements from EU food laws and EU consumer laws to which authorities need to refer when analysing a potential dual quality product issue.



The Food Information Regulation, requires that consumers must not be misled and that they are given truthful and sufficient information about a particular food product. In addition, the Unfair Commercial Practices directive, prohibits unfair commercial practices, such as marketing identically branded products in a way that has the potential to mislead consumers.

Consumers from a number of EU countries have complained that the quality of some products, such as soft drinks, coffee or fish fingers, is lower in their home country than that of those sold by the same producer under the same brand across the border.

President Jean-Claude Juncker stated “In a Union of equals, there can be no second-class consumers. I will not accept that in some parts of Europe, consumers are sold food of lower quality than in other countries”

In response, Food and Drink Europe (FDE) published a joint statement with AIM (European Brand Association): <https://tinyurl.com/ybwaz3ne>. The joint statement welcomed Commission President Juncker’s view that consumers cannot accept inferior food in certain markets, and practices which are not in line with existing EU legislation, if any, should be clearly addressed. In addition, FDE welcomed the Commission’s commitment to improve and harmonise testing methodologies and looked forward to the establishment of a multi-stakeholder dialogue to assess and address the perceptions that exist in some Member States.

More information can be found in the Commission Notice published in the Official Journal of the EU, C327/1, 29/9/201; <https://tinyurl.com/y9jgnhyq>

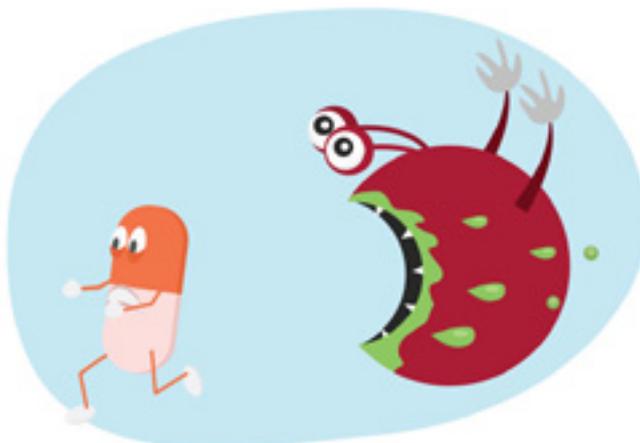
EU AND FAO TO JOIN FORCES TO TACKLE FOOD WASTE AND AMR

The EU and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) have signed a joint letter of intent committing them to intensified cooperation on tackling the spread of AMR on farms and in food systems and to halve per capita food waste by 2030.

The decision to intensify joint efforts comes at an important moment in time with both partners sharpening their focus in the areas of food security, nutrition, resilience, sustainable agriculture, ocean governance, all within the context of working together towards the achievement of Agenda 2030 and the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

The European Union is among FAO’s most important partners through programmes implemented across the world and is the largest resource partner in terms of voluntary contributions to FAO.

Further detail can be found in the Commission press release here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8j7gsan>



ANALYTICAL AND METROLOGY

GUIDANCE ON PROFICIENCY TESTING FOR FOOD, WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL MICROBIOLOGY

Public Health England (PHE) have issued the following updates to its guidance for testing laboratories:

- European food microbiology legislation scheme - This scheme is designed for laboratories that examine foods for compliance with Regulation (EC) 2073/2005 and subsequent amendments: <https://tinyurl.com/y9bfzu2q>
- Shellfish scheme - The shellfish scheme provides external quality assessment samples for laboratories that examine raw bivalve molluscs from: 1) harvesting sites in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 854/2004 and 2) the production chain between harvest and consumption, in accordance with Regulation (EC) 2073/2005 and subsequent amendments: <https://tinyurl.com/yagzemjc>
- Environmental swab scheme - This scheme is suitable for laboratories that routinely analyse swabs for hygiene indicator organisms from both random and template areas as well as swabs for pathogens: <https://tinyurl.com/y7mtycmz>
- Pathogenic vibrio scheme - This scheme is suited for laboratories examining food samples for *Vibrio* spp.: <https://tinyurl.com/y8lqpfzu>
- Standard scheme - This scheme is suitable for laboratories that routinely test for a range of food-borne pathogens and indicator organisms: <https://tinyurl.com/ybdw76ph>
- Bottled and mineral water scheme - This scheme is suitable for laboratories that routinely monitor bottled and mineral water for indicator organisms: <https://tinyurl.com/yddgvxhl>

GOVERNMENT CHEMIST OFFICE REPORT ISSUED

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) have published a Government Chemist Annual Review which provides highlights from the referee cases, advisory work and research carried out during the year, including:

- aflatoxins - evaluating the levels of these toxins in seeds, spices and nuts
- food authenticity - assessing geographical origin and botanical source of honey
- allergens - analysing sulphites in food containing interfering ingredients such as garlic
- quantifying protein allergens - assessing the recovery of proteins from processed food for immunoassay and mass spectrometry analysis
- horizon scanning - identifying adjustments which might be required in the Government Chemist programme so it can deliver against longer-term changes
- knowledge transfer and dissemination - summary of events and activities undertaken to maximise the reach of the work performed by the Government Chemist team

In addition, the Review outlines their regulatory advisory activities which include consultation responses and legislation updates.

The report can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybogc9dq>

BEIS AND RD PUBLISH ANNUAL REVIEW OF NATIONAL MEASUREMENT SYSTEM

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and Regulatory Delivery (RD) have recently published an annual review of the national measurement system (NMS). The report provides a snapshot of the success of the government's investment in the system over the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

The UK National Measurement System (NMS) is comprised of a core infrastructure of measurement laboratories that are connected with the wider measurement community of service providers that ensure we can have confidence in the measurements we make or are made on our behalf.

The annual review can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ydyuu7ak>

PHE UPDATES ON FOOD, WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORIES

Public Health England (PHE) have published updates on their food, water and environmental (FW&E) laboratories which provide accredited specialist microbiology tests on food, dairy, water and environmental samples, expert advice on the threat to health from pathogens found in food, water and dairy products, and training for staff from organisations such as local authorities and port health authorities.

The update includes the link to UK national reference laboratory for food microbiology and can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9el6yq2>

PHE UPDATE GUIDANCE ON THE DRINKING WATER SCHEME

Public Health England (PHE) published on 10 October 2017 updated guidance on the drinking water scheme. The scheme is suitable for laboratories that routinely monitor drinking water, examining for low levels of indicator organisms and can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycgyowpy>

DEFRA UPDATE GUIDANCE ON LABORATORY TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR ABPS

The Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) have issued an update on its guidance to industry on how to take samples from processed Animal By-Products (ABPs), find laboratories to test them, and what to do if a sample fails a test - The section on 'selecting a test method' has been updated.

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

ANIMAL WELFARE

AVIAN INFLUENZA UPDATES

Along with the EU Commission, The Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) have continued to provide updates to its preliminary outbreak assessments for avian influenza (bird flu) in Europe and in the UK. The most recent update can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/zndjqem>

Reports of H5N8 HPAI have continued in a number of countries. Italy has reported seventeen more outbreaks including in fattening turkeys and layers and seven smallholdings. However, one of the outbreaks was reported in one of the largest layer farms in Italy, with over 850,000 birds having to be destroyed. Three cases of wild birds (mute swans) testing positive for H5N8 HPAI have also been reported.

In order to prevent any unnecessary disturbance to trade within the Union, and to avoid unjustified barriers to trade being imposed by third countries, the protection and surveillance zones established in Italy needed to be re-defined and therefore the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 has been amended. Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1593 of 20 September 2017 amending the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 on protective measures in relation to outbreaks of the highly pathogenic avian influenza in certain Member States was published in the Official Journal, L243/14, 21/09/2017: <https://tinyurl.com/y7jdfhnh>

The Commission also provided the following update: <https://tinyurl.com/y9bxmtkk> which confirmed that outbreaks in poultry and cases in wild birds have sharply declined since the end of April. However, Italy, as well as Germany, the UK and Switzerland have found a few infected wild birds (swans and mallards) and Bulgaria has detected two outbreaks in poultry holdings. In response to these outbreaks the veterinary authorities of those affected Member States immediately took measures to try and prevent the virus spreading to other poultry holdings and established protection and surveillance zones around the infected holdings. The Commission are calling for member states to maintain extreme vigilance and strict biosecurity on farms to prevent contacts between wild birds and poultry.



EFSA PUBLISH ADVICE ON AVIAN INFLUENZA

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published a number of papers in relation to Avian Influenza including scientific advice aimed to enhance the EU's preparedness. The advice is based on a review of information about avian influenza outbreaks in recent years and can be found here:

- Examining the mechanisms and risk factors for mutation from low to highly pathogenic avian influenza virus <https://tinyurl.com/yaopq6b9>
- An overview of avian influenza in European countries between October 2016 and August 2017 <https://tinyurl.com/ybm5xlg4>
- A narrative overview on wild bird migration in the context of highly pathogenic avian influenza incursion into the European Union <https://tinyurl.com/y87mlzfk>
- A report about HPAI introduction into Europe, HPAI detection in wild birds and HPAI spread between European holdings in the period 2005-2015 <https://tinyurl.com/ydhx5orp>
- Data analysis and predictive modelling of HPAI H5 and H7 outbreaks in the EU 2005-2015 <https://tinyurl.com/yajrr9jx>
- LPAI detection in wild birds and LPAI spread between European holdings in the period 2005-2015 <https://tinyurl.com/y87xz3fs>
- A scientific opinion on avian influenza <https://tinyurl.com/yd9wvlqb>

DEFRA LAUNCH BOVINE TB SERVICE

The Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) have launched a new bovine tuberculosis (TB) service for farmers in England to help them protect cattle against the disease.

The service will offer advice both by phone and email to farmers in High Risk and Edge Areas of England with trained consultants providing knowledge to help prevent the spread of bovine tuberculosis based on the biosecurity 5 point plan:

- Restrict contact between badgers and cattle
- Manage cattle feed and water
- Stop infected cattle entering the herd
- Reduce risk from neighbouring herds
- Minimise infection from cattle manure

Bovine tuberculosis costs taxpayers over £100 million every year and England has the highest incidence of the disease in Europe. In 2016 more than 29,000 cattle had to be slaughtered in England to control the disease, causing devastation and distress for farmers and rural communities.

More information including instructions on how to register for the service can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y764vqkh>

THE ANIMAL FEED (BASIC SAFETY STANDARDS) REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2018

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) have launched a consultation concerning the draft regulations for Northern Ireland on The Animal Feed (Basic Food Safety Standards).

The draft regulations provide for the provisions of a revised EU Basic Safety Standards Directive laying down basic safety standards for the protection against the dangers arising from exposure to ionising radiation as it applies to animal feed. In particular:

- Prohibiting the intentional addition of radioactive substances in the production of animal feedingstuffs;
- Prohibiting the import or export of animal feedingstuffs to which radioactive substances have been intentionally added during production; and
- Providing the accompanying enforcement powers to deal with non-compliance.

The consultation closes on 13 November 2017 and can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yd579u2d>

DEFRA CONSULT ON MANDATORY CCTV IN SLAUGHTERHOUSES

The Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) recently carried out a consultation to seek views on a proposal for mandatory CCTV recording in slaughterhouses in England for animal welfare purposes, in line with the Government's manifesto commitment.

The objective of the proposal was to improve animal welfare in slaughterhouses and provide assurance that there is effective monitoring and verification of animal welfare standards in slaughterhouses.

The proposal related to the mandatory installation of CCTV equipment in all areas of approved slaughterhouses where live animals are present, e.g. where they are unloaded, kept, handled, stunned and killed; and for authorised officers such as Official Veterinarians of the Food Standards Agency to have unfettered access to these facilities for the purpose of monitoring and verifying of animal welfare standards in the slaughterhouse.

The consultation closed on 21st September but can still be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybmjdfs3> along with the impact document: <https://tinyurl.com/y7ectmqy>

Defra will now summarise all the responses and publish in due course. The summary will include a list of names of organisations that responded but not people's personal names, addresses or other contact details.

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT TO CONSULT ON MANDATORY CCTV IN SLAUGHTERHOUSES

Fergus Ewing, the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity in Scotland, has confirmed that a recommendation has been made that CCTV is installed as best practice in Scottish slaughterhouses for the monitoring of animals at the time of killing. According to Ewing however, an estimated 95% of animals sent to abattoirs are slaughtered in plants where CCTV has already been installed voluntarily.

The Scottish Government will now consult on the introduction of compulsory video recording of slaughter at abattoirs in Scotland to aid the enforcement of welfare requirements by abattoir management and Food Standards Scotland. Animal welfare at the time of slaughter will continue to be monitored through the presence of Food Standards Scotland veterinary and inspection staff in all approved slaughterhouses to ensure compliance with animal welfare standards.



FSA BOARD WELCOME PROGRESS ON NEW CHRONOS SYSTEM FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

The Food Standards Agency have published a summary of the discussions at its Board meeting held on 20 September 2017 where amongst other items on the agenda were the FSA's programme to drive improvements in animal welfare standards in slaughterhouses in England and Wales. It welcomed the progress the Agency has made in delivering its Deter, Prevent, Detect, Enforce programme and especially the success made so far of its new animal welfare reporting system, Chronos.

Chronos integrates recording and analysis of all FSA compliance, audit and enforcement activity in a single system for the first time. It is envisaged that this will lead to significantly improved, cross-referenced reporting.

The initial business reports will focus on numbers and types of welfare breaches recorded in stun and non-stun slaughterhouses, enforcement activity carried out and throughput figures, by species, for premises with full and partial CCTV.

Using the outcomes from sources including themed audits, a new welfare reporting system, CCTV survey results and local intelligence the FSA state they are better placed to deliver targeted, risk based official controls. The Chief Operating Officer has set up an Animal Welfare Steering Group to lead the successful delivery of this programme of activity with membership drawn from across the stakeholder community.

The papers from this meeting can be viewed in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/ydd96k3f>

DEFRA CONSULT ON WELFARE CODE FOR MEAT CHICKENS

The Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) recently carried out a consultation to seek views on a new statutory Code of Practice for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Meat Breeding Chickens, for England.

The purpose of the existing statutory code is to provide owners and keepers of meat chickens and meat breeding chickens with guidance on how to comply with relevant welfare legislation. The new statutory code aims to provide up-to-date guidance on the current legislation, maintain animal welfare standards, reflect the latest scientific and veterinary knowledge and be presented in a clear and relevant way for farmers.

The existing code has not been updated since it was published in 2002 and as such it does not reflect the additional rules relating to the welfare of conventionally reared meat chickens which came into force in 2010.

Guidance on these requirements was also published in 2011 in a separate document "Interim guidance for keepers of conventionally reared meat chickens in relation to the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 as amended by the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010".

The proposal is to revoke the existing statutory Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock: Meat Chickens and Breeding Chickens (2002) and to replace both it and the interim guidance with a new statutory code.

The consultation closed on 6 October 2017 but can still be viewed along with a list of consultees and the new draft statutory code: <https://tinyurl.com/yd5xar3l>

Defra will now summarise the responses and place a summary on their website in due course.



BREXIT

IRISH FOOD BOARD TO INCREASE INVESTMENT IN GERMAN FOOD INDUSTRY

The Irish food board has outlined its plans to increase investment in the German food and beverage market post-Brexit as Irish exporters continue to look outside the traditional UK market.

CEO Tara McCarthy said Bord Bia found a huge interest among German consumers around the topics of food sustainability, origin and animal welfare.

"Ireland as a food producing nation was viewed favourably and the image of our food production system is one that is pure, green and natural where animals freely graze on green pastures. It is a premium market, our sixth largest, with an estimated value of €600m last year. Sustainably produced food is increasingly sought by German consumers and we are offering our customers a solution to this demand through our Origin Green programme." she said

The Origin Green programme is the food board's sustainability programme that operates on a national scale, involving government, the private sector and food producers. Members including Danone Nutricia, Glanbia and The Kerry Group have committed to sustainability targets under the Origin Green Charter and have their sustainability plans independently verified by international auditors.

Irish exports to Germany have an estimated value of €600m for 2016. Export performance to date for 2017 was up 24%, driven by increases in dairy and prepared foods. Notable increases have also been recorded for sheep meat (+14%), seafood (+26%), pig meat (+19%), edible horticulture (+25%) and beverages (+9%).

Private label penetration was also earmarked as an area of opportunity with approximately 45% of retail sales in the German market being through private label. Research funded under the Brexit initiative will now focus on 10 categories to identify those opportunities: yoghurt, frozen value-added chicken, ice cream and frozen desserts, functional meal replacements/super foods, chocolate and frozen pizzas / pies.

DEXEU PUBLISH KEY DOCUMENTS ON ARTICLE 50 NEGOTIATIONS

The Department for Exiting the European Union has recently issued a number of documents providing information about the Article 50 process and the negotiations for a new partnership with the European Union.

The documents, which include a position paper on continuity of availability of goods for the EU and UK can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ya6zol9n>

FSA BOARD DISCUSSES IMPACT OF BREXIT ON ITS RESPONSIBILITIES & OPERATIONS

At its meeting on 20 September, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Board discussed the FSA's preparations for the UK's departure from the EU in 2019 given that the vast majority of what the FSA currently does is driven by the EU regulatory regime.

The Board's starting point was its statutory purpose to protect public health in relation to food and consumers' wider interests in relation to food. It emphasised that independence in matters of food safety and standards is critical to achieving consumer trust and confidence and should be central to whatever future regime is in place.

The Board agreed that future arrangements should be judged against four over-riding principles:

- effectiveness in protecting public health;
- maintaining confidence in food safety and the regulatory regime;
- minimising disruption for consumers and industry;
- alignment with the principles of the FSA's Regulatory Strategy.

A summary of the discussions can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y88mguwr>



BRC & FDF REPORT ON WORKFORCE CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE SUPPLY CHAIN ON BREXIT

The British Retail Consortium and the Food and Drink Federation have published a report on the key workforce considerations for the supply chain as we leave the EU.

The report entitled 'Breaking the Chain' presents findings from a survey they jointly carried out to establish the supply chain's Brexit priorities from a labour and workforce perspective and to address some of the gaps in official data. Their ambition was to build a clear, evidence-based picture of non-UK EU nationals working from farm to fork to support and to inform the negotiations on exiting the EU.

The survey showed that on average around a third of the food and drink supply chain's permanent workforce are EU nationals. Almost three quarters of the respondents faced challenges when recruiting permanent local staff and almost two thirds when looking for local seasonal/ temporary workers. If organisations across the food chain did not have access to EU nationals, over a third of respondents stated their business would become unviable.

The full report can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y84av4d9>

LGA PUSH FOR MANDATORY DISPLAY OF FOOD HYGIENE RATINGS POST BREXIT

According to the Local Government Association (LGA) all food premises in England should be forced to display 'Scores on the Doors' ratings when EU laws governing food safety are converted into UK law after Brexit, to improve hygiene standards and protect people from harm.

Businesses in Wales and Northern Ireland are legally required to display their rating. However, in England, businesses do not have to display the rating they have been awarded, with those scoring low marks much less likely to put them on show to customers.

The Government has set out its intention to convert EU law into UK law on the day we leave the European Union. With EU laws impacting many of the council services that affect people's day-to-day lives, the LGA said councils must play a central role in deciding whether to keep, amend or scrap them.

Local government leaders say current EU laws regulating food safety are good and need to be kept after Brexit. But the LGA wants the Government to see Brexit as an opportunity to strengthen these food safety laws and empower councils by legally extending the mandatory display of 'Scores on the Doors' to England. They argue that this would not only improve consumer confidence and raise standards, but also reduce the need for, and therefore cost of, enforcement action by councils. Furthermore, the LGA believes that businesses - including restaurants, pubs, cafes, takeaways, sandwich shops, supermarkets and delicatessens that fail to comply should be fined or prosecuted.

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ISSUE REPORT ON KEY ISSUES FOR BUSINESS WITH BREXIT

The Scottish Government has issued a report on Brexit and the key issues from the point of view of businesses. 'Brexit: What's at stake for businesses' focusses on real companies with real people and real examples, in their own words. Also collected are comments of some relevant trade associations.

Those quoted say that the negotiations between the UK and EU matter hugely and highlight that they need urgent clarity on:

- People (Being able to attract and retain the right staff)
- Profit (Being able to minimise extra cost burdens and to maximise income)
- Practicalities (Being able to do business with certainty and minimum fuss)
- Possibilities (Being able to avoid missing out as the single market grows).

The report will be followed later in the year by material on what's at stake for individuals and families.

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



CIEH BACKS GOVE'S PLEDGE TO MAINTAIN FOOD STANDARDS POST BREXIT

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) published a press release on 14 September 2017 commenting on the Environment Secretary's comments that the UK will not allow its food safety standards to be undermined as it leaves the EU.

During an evidence session with the House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, the Environment Secretary said that the Government was committed to not relaxing food or animal welfare standards as part of future trade agreements.

The press release can be viewed in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y96kmtst>

DIT ISSUE POLICY PAPER ON PREPARING FOR FUTURE UK TRADE POLICY

The Department for International Trade (DIT) have issued a policy paper on preparing for future UK Trade policy. This paper explores the emerging approach to establishing an independent international trade policy as we exit the EU and has 2 parts: the first part outlines the world in which the UK trades and the role of trade in an economy that works for everyone.

The second part outlines the basic principles that will shape our future trading framework, and our developing approach to our trade policy.

The paper can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7mmsr32>

UK AND EU SEND JOINT LETTER TO WTO REGARDING TRADE POST BREXIT

In preparation for the UK's withdrawal from the European Union, UK government and the European Commission have set out a number of proposals for future global trading arrangements in a joint letter to World Trade Organization (WTO) members.

Since the EU referendum a year ago, the Department for International Trade has been forging ahead to establish the UK's future independent trade policy as we leave the EU. This includes separating out the UK's trading commitments to other WTO members from the EU's overall commitments; as the UK's current commitments to other WTO members, such as the tariffs it sets, are applied through the EU.

The proposals put to the WTO include apportioning the EU's existing commitments on the amount of imported goods on which a lower duty is charged. These tariff-rate quotas (TRQs) apply to a range of everyday items such as dairy products and meat.

The letter can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/yay929np>

CHEMICALS, CONTAMINANTS & FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

RESEARCH REPORT ON FINDINGS OF PROLONGED FRYING ON POTATOES

Portuguese and Spanish scientists have carried out research to quantify the impact of a prolonged frying life on potato nutrients, taste and appearance, and how this differed depending on which monounsaturated-rich oil was used – extra virgin olive oil, canola or peanut oil.

Their findings, published in the journal Food Chemistry, noted differences between each oil for various nutrients but using fresher oil was generally associated with greater nutrient preservation. Fresh oil was also best at reducing acrylamide, regardless of oil type.

In order to replicate conditions used for commercial frying, the scientists heated the oils for eight hours a day and then left them to cool for 16 hours, with frying cycles every 30 minutes. Potatoes were cut into chips (1 × 1 × 4 cm) and fried for six minutes each time.

Potatoes that were fried in the fresh batch of oil (the first eight hours) and the last batch (at 28 hours) absorbed similar amounts of oil, regardless of the oil.

Vitamin C was significantly reduced with frying time across all three oils, from around 60% of the recommended daily amount at 8 h to only 20%, per 100 g potatoes. They found that the 31 mg of vitamin C (ascorbic acid) naturally present in 100 g of fresh potatoes was “drastically reduced” by longer frying time for all three oils.

Extra virgin olive oil was better at preserving vitamin E (tocochromanols) while peanut oil and canola oil performed well for preserving the phenolic compounds present within potatoes. Extra virgin olive oil, however, actually enriched the potatoes with its own phenols and, even though these degrade with frying time, the oil continued to enrich the potatoes even after 28 hours of fry-time, although to a lesser extent.

From a nutritional point of view, canola oil was more balanced, with “interesting amounts” of essential fatty acids and vitamin E, which remained “superior” during all the frying sessions.

As regards Acrylamides, potatoes fried in the first batch of oil had similar acrylamide levels regardless of oil type, and these were also the lowest levels recorded. The highest acrylamide levels were observed with fried potatoes at 16 h in peanut oil, closely followed by canola oil at 16 h and 28 h or extra virgin olive oil at 24 h. Overall, acrylamide content ranged from 62 to 125 µg/100 g which is close to indicative acrylamide values for ready-to-eat French fries (60 µg/100 g), and potato crisps (100 µg/100 g), they noted.

Twelve individuals, both male and female aged between 23 and 55 years old, sat on the sensory panel and evaluated each sample for taste and texture. They noted no marked differences in taste between the oils, although increased frying time (and consequent oil degradation) induced “perceptible changes” in colour intensity and homogeneity, crispiness and smell.

GOV. CHEMIST SAYS SULPHITE DETERMINATION WAS MOST CHALLENGING INVESTIGATION

Determining low concentration levels of sulphites in foods such as garlic was the most challenging investigation last year due to interferences, according to the Government Chemist Annual Review.

The agency was asked to look into possible undisclosed addition of sulphites close to the cut-off concentration of 10 mg kg⁻¹ in a niche product containing several known interfering foods.

However, reference methods are variations of the Monier-Williams procedure which is interfered with positively by dried garlic and soya proteins and to a lesser extent by onions and cabbage. They found that only LC-MS/MS methods, owing to chromatographic separation and mass spectrometric identification, gave sufficient confidence to results. Investigations continue to develop a method to achieve the rigour desired in a referee analysis.

During 2016, eight cases were referred to the Government Chemist – seven in connection with food and one with animal feed. This is down from 14 cases in its referee function in 2015 and 16 the year before.

The Government Chemist will be investing more in developing capabilities in genetic, protein and rapid testing methods for food and agricultural products as part of its programme of work for the period 2017-2020. Novel molecular methods including Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) will be evaluated and high accuracy digital PCR will be further developed and applied.

Future work will also evaluate the accuracy and application of ‘point of use’ technologies to address the emerging concept of ‘the consumer as analyst’ and the use of rapid measurements generated outside a controlled laboratory environment.

EU BANS BPA IN PACKAGING FOR 0-3 YEAR OLDS

The European Commission has tightened the rules around bisphenol A (BPA) by banning it in the manufacture of packaging for infants and young children 0-3 years.

Member States' experts endorsed the measure and regulation should be adopted early next year. After the transitional period of six months products placed on the market can remain until exhaustion of stocks. The substance already cannot be used in the manufacture of polycarbonate infant feeding bottles.

The move sets a stricter limit for the amount allowed to migrate from all plastic food contact materials into food and varnishes and coatings (e.g. inside food cans). It means that BPA will not be able to be used to manufacture plastic 'sippy' cups and bottles for infants and young children 0-3 years. There is also a ban on migration of the substance from varnishes and coatings applied on food contact materials used for infant formula, follow-on formula, processed cereal-based food, baby food, food for special medical purposes or milk-based drinks.

A specific migration limit (SML) of 0.05 mg/kg food for BPA migrating from varnishes or coatings applies to materials or articles intended for food contact. Current levels allow an SML of 0.6 mg of BPA per kg of food (mg/kg).

Belgium already has a national ban on BPA in food contact materials for infants and young children; Sweden has a ban only in coatings and varnishes for food contact materials for infants and young children and France banned BPA in all food packaging, containers and utensils. However, while it is prohibited to export BPA in food packaging to France it is legal for French companies to manufacture and export it to the EU.

The toxicity of BPA will be re-evaluated in 2018 by the Food Contact Materials, Enzymes, Flavourings and Processing Aids (CEF) panel. The review will include other relevant studies published since the December 2012 cut-off point for the last review.

COMMISSION PROGRESS REPORT ON DIRECTIVE ON THE SUSTAINABLE USE OF PESTICIDES

The Commission issued on 10 October 2017 a report on Member State National Action Plans and on progress in the implementation of Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides:

The report which can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ydaryqq8> is based on four sources of information;

- Commission assessment of the national action plans, concluded in 2015.
- Two audit series on pesticides performed between 2012-2014 and 2015-2016 (the first on controls on plant protection products and the second on the marketing and use of pesticides)
- A survey and a questionnaire sent in 2016 to all Member States to get an update on progress with the implementation of Action Plans.
- Fact-finding visits to six Member States in 2017 specifically to investigate the overall progress made with implementation of the Directive.

The Commission also released on 10 October 2017 a press release concerning the need for sustainable use of pesticides by EU countries which can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y84jlny3>

BEN AND JERRY'S TO LAUNCH ORGANIC, GLYPHOSATE-FREE ICE CREAM

Ben & Jerry's has announced that it will introduce an 'organic dairy' in a bid to produce glyphosate-free ice cream. This follows results of a survey showing that 13 out of 14 tubs of Ben & Jerry's ice cream (on sale in the UK, France, the Netherlands and Germany) contained glyphosate.

Glyphosate is an active substance which has been used in plant protection products ("pesticides") in the EU for several decades. Glyphosate is the most frequently used herbicide worldwide and in the EU, and one of several hundred active substances that have been thoroughly assessed by Member States and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in recent years.

Glyphosate-based pesticides (i.e. formulations containing glyphosate and other chemicals) are used as herbicides in agriculture, horticulture and in some non-cultivated areas, primarily to combat weeds that compete with cultivated crops or present problems for other reasons.

A spokesperson for Ben and Jerry's has said that the company is 'disappointed but not totally surprised' about the results, as glyphosate is used 'everywhere' in agriculture. It is intended that the new 100% certified organic ice-cream products will be launched next year.



BRC Global Standards has published the first edition of a Global Guidance on Migration from Packaging Materials into Food.

The guidance was developed with the Food and Drink Federation (FDF) and Campden BRI and aims to provide organisations involved in the delivery of food to consumers with a common understanding, terminology and point of reference for good practice with regard to the potential migration of substances from packaging materials into food.

The guidance is comprehensive in its approach, outlining what migration is, how it occurs and how it can be minimised through new product or existing product development. It provides a best-practice approach to reducing the risk of migration of substances into food products of all types. The guidance also includes an outline of the European Union (EU) and US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) legislative requirements relating to migration.

It will be of value to organisations in the supply chain including retailers, brand owners, agents or brokers, food processors, packaging manufacturers, and companies providing storage and distribution services.

The guidance will be made available to Campden BRI, and FDF members, and will be available for purchase from BRC.



FOOD SAFETY AND ZOOSES

FSAI ANNUAL REPORT PUBLISHED

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) has published its annual report outlining its key activities for 2016 which highlight the significant outputs delivered across its core regulatory functions to strive to protect public health in relation to food.

The key highlights and achievements in 2016 include:

- 39 food alerts issued which is the highest number of food alerts in ten years. The food alerts resulted in product recalls or withdrawals from the Irish market for a range of reasons including presence of foreign bodies, pathogens (bugs) or chemical contamination.
- 28 food allergen alerts were issued. In Ireland, milk, soybeans, eggs and nuts were the most common allergens incorrectly labelled or declared in 2016.
- Some 49,404 food businesses were under the supervision of official agencies under service contract to the FSAI, representing a small (0.65%) increase since 2015.
- 106 Enforcement Orders were served on food businesses for breaches in food safety legislation. The Enforcement Orders were issued by environmental health officers in the Health Service Executive and by veterinary inspectors from the local authorities. This included 94 Closure Orders, 3 Improvement Orders and 9 Prohibition Orders served on food businesses.
- The Advice Line handled 10,497 queries from a wide range of requesters, including consumers; people working in the food service sector; manufacturers; retailers; researchers and consultants. Of these 3,202 related to complaints by consumers in relation to food, food premises and/or food labelling.
- 2,625 food supplements were assessed for safety and health claims.
- The FSAI orchestrates and oversees sampling and testing of foodstuffs for compliance with all aspects of food legislation. Over 56,588 samples were sampled and tested in 2016.
- 166 risk assessments were carried out providing scientific basis to underpin risk management decisions.
- 34 suspected breaches of food law and food fraud were investigated.

The full report can be downloaded here: <https://tinyurl.com/y715f34o>

HISTAMINE OUTBREAK CAUSED BY TEMPERATURE ABUSE ACCORDING TO EFSA

A histamine outbreak linked to tuna that sickened hundreds in Spain, Italy, France, Croatia and Denmark was caused by potentially recurring inadequate temperature and poor hygiene conditions, said the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

EFSA said it could not find a single event at a specific point in the supply chain (e.g. incorrect storage at one company) that could be considered the origin of all clusters of cases but tuna was from suppliers based in Spain and Mexico. It was likely however that temperature abuse during post-harvest chilling, storage and/or processing played an important role.

Foods likely to contain high levels of histamine include fish, fish products and fermented foodstuffs. Histamine intoxication results from eating inadequately preserved and improperly refrigerated fish and resembles an allergic reaction. Intoxication is characterized by an incubation period ranging from a few minutes to hours, with symptoms usually noticeable for a few hours only. Typical manifestations include skin flushing on the upper half of the body, rash, gastrointestinal complaints and headache.

EFSA assessed incidents of histamine intoxication in EU countries linked to consumption of tuna and notified through the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF). A total of 30 notifications were identified and 21 were chosen based on their connections and grouped into four different events.

Cold chain conditions of tuna at vessel level saw freezing temperatures up to -10°C , -9.9°C , -11.5°C and -11.6°C in some fishing vessels despite Commission Regulation 853/20049 that requires temperatures below -18°C for frozen fishery products.

At processing level, six non-compliant results were reported: one sample with >600 mg/kg, two non-compliant samples up to 565 mg/kg and three analytical results of up to 866 mg/kg. A total of 28 non-compliant results were found at wholesaler/retailer level.

EFSA CONCLUDE MODIFIED STARCHES POSE NO SAFETY CONCERNS

A dozen modified food starches used to make sauces and pie fillings have received regulatory backing by the European and Food Safety Authority (EFSA) after a re-evaluation found no safety concerns with levels currently used in food products.

EFSA ruled that 12 modified starches (E 1404, E 1410, E 1412, E 1413, E 1414, E 1420, E 1422, E 1440, E 1442, E 1450, E 1451 and E 1452) could be authorised as food additives.

“Modified starches (i.e. E 1413, E 1414, E 1420, E 1450) were well tolerated in adults up to a single daily dose of 60,000 milligrams per person (mg/person) (860 mg/kg bw),” EFSA stated.

“The Panel concluded that there is no safety concern for the use of modified starches as food additives at the reported uses and use levels and that there is no need for a numerical acceptable daily intake (ADI).”

There had been concerns around modified starches not being absorbed intact posing distribution, metabolism and excretion issues in the human body that could result in toxic build-up. However, supporting studies indicated that the two major components of starches, amylose and amylopectin, are fermented during their passage through the large intestine by strains of bacteria found in the human colon.

Despite the absence of data for two modified starches (E 1451 and E 1452) and the absence of in vivo studies in humans for other modified starches, the Panel were satisfied that modified starches were excreted via intestinal enzyme break down and intestinal microbiota fermentation.

The full report can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7j2upvt>

ERRINGTON CHEESE UPDATE

It has been announced that criminal charges will not be brought against Errington Cheese, although a fatal accident inquiry will be conducted. If it is judged that the cheese was fit to eat, the company will recover its legal costs and compensation for the cheese that was seized.

Errington Cheese has already spent GBP800,000 to clear its name after its Dunsyre Blue cheese was linked to an outbreak of E. coli in 2016. Seventeen people were hospitalised and a 3-year-old girl died in the outbreak, which Food Standards Scotland (FSS) linked to unpasteurised cheese made by the company.



ISLE OF WIGHT E. COLI OUTBREAKS LINKED TO RAW MILK

Three people have a potentially fatal kidney condition following an outbreak of E. coli on the Isle of Wight which has been linked to unpasteurised milk from a farm. The patients were being treated in hospital for haemolytic uremic syndrome, a complication of E. coli that can lead to kidney failure.

Another four people affected by the bacteria have made a good recovery, Public Health England said. The outbreak has been identified as the E. coli O157 strain and the source has been traced to Briddlesford Lodge Farm near Newport. Public Health England said the raw milk had been removed from sale.

Professor Guy Poppy, chief scientific adviser at the Food Standards Agency (FSA), said: “Unpasteurised or ‘raw’ milk may contain harmful bacteria that cause food poisoning because it has not been heat-treated. Long-standing FSA advice has been that older people, infants, children, pregnant women and those with weakened immune systems, who are more vulnerable to food poisoning, should not consume raw drinking milk.”

E. coli O157 is found in the gut and faeces of many animals, particularly cattle, and can contaminate food and water. Outbreaks of O157 are rare compared with other food-borne diseases.



EU CONCLUDES BRAZILIAN FOOD SAFETY CONTROLS FALL SHORT OF REQUIRED STANDARDS

Brazil's food safety controls for poultry and horsemeat fall short of the standards needed to ensure produce hits EU trade rules, an audit has found. Brazil has a system that could, in theory, guarantee food reaching EU consumers is safe, said the European Commission audit. However, it has identified shortcomings in a system already under intense pressure.

The European Commission carried out its audit in Brazil from 2-12 May 2017 and the results were published at the end of September. The probe covered 13 slaughterhouses – six for beef, five for poultry and two for horsemeat – across six Brazilian states.

It found that Brazil's control system for beef, horse and chicken was capable of providing the guarantees the EU wants, but many systems, barring beef, were not up to scratch. Audits that should check meat is okay to be sold to the EU were not effective in detecting or acting upon non-compliance, the audit found. The report concluded that:

- staff in meat factories were not always free from conflicts of interest;
- authorities failed to ensure all chicken slaughterhouses were under supervision of official veterinarians;
- Brazilian officials signed export certificates without being able to verify the accuracy of traceability or inspection claims;
- a list of establishments eligible to export to the EU – which Brazil has to send to the European Commission – was not accurate or up-to-date.

While the EU does not recommend suspending trade with Brazil over the so-called shortcomings, 12 recommendations have been sent to the Brazilian Minister of Agriculture to consider. These include ensuring the industry system for checking salmonella presence is equivalent to that in the EU, and enhancing measures to prevent conflicts of interest for meat factory workers.

SCOPAFF BIOLOGICAL SAFETY MEETING REPORT PUBLISHED

The Summary Report of the SCoPAFF, section on Biological Safety, held on 4 July 2017, has recently been published and can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yafblanl>

The Committee discussed, amongst other items:

- A draft Commission Regulation amending Annex III of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 on temperature conditions during storage and transport;
- A draft Commission Implementing Decision amending Decision 2007/453/EC as regards the BSE status of Poland, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

FSAI ISSUE DETAILS OF CLOSURE ORDERS

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) published on 9 October 2017 a press release concerning the nature of closure orders served in Irish food premises in September.

Rodent infestation and dirty premises were amongst the reasons for 10 closure orders served. The agency states that the objective of naming non-compliant food businesses is to increase transparency as a regulator and to raise food safety and hygiene standards in food businesses

The press release can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybf7hv3r>

EFSA PUBLISHES PEER REVIEW ASSESSMENT OF GLYPHOSATE

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published a review of the pesticide risk assessment of the potential endocrine disrupting properties of glyphosate carried out by the competent authority of the member state, Germany: <https://tinyurl.com/y9rh4uk4>

This follows the submission and evaluation of pertinent data made available by the applicants. The current conclusion presents a follow-up assessment to the existing EFSA Conclusion on the peer review for the renewal of the approval of glyphosate (EFSA Journal 2015;13(11):4302) focussed on the outstanding issues identified in relation to the potential endocrine activity of glyphosate.

The assessment concluded that the weight of evidence indicates that glyphosate does not have endocrine disrupting properties through oestrogen, androgen, thyroid or steroidogenesis mode of action based on a comprehensive database available in the toxicology area.

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has come under criticism however with several media reports accusing them of copying significant portions of its assessment of glyphosate from the dossier of the applicants and including them in the German assessment report and of doing so uncritically without any review for plausibility and scientific correctness. The BfR strongly rejects these accusations.

To provide some background, the Commission proposed to Member States to renew the approval of glyphosate in early 2016 but there was no qualified majority in favour of the renewal. In the light of divergent opinions on the potential carcinogenicity of glyphosate, the Commission asked the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) to assess the hazard properties of the substance before taking a decision on its potential renewal at EU level. On 29 June 2016, the Commission adopted an extension of the approval of glyphosate for a limited period to allow the ECHA to conduct this assessment. This extension was limited to 6 months after the receipt of ECHA's opinion or 31 December 2017 at the latest.

Additionally, Member States also voted in favour of amending the conditions of the existing approval of glyphosate in July 2016, adding further restrictions to ensure the highest safety standards for humans and the environment. ECHA sent its opinion to the Commission on 15 June 2017. Therefore, the current approval of glyphosate expires on 15 December 2017.

FSA AND FSS UPDATE ON FIPRONIL

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) continue to provide updates on the Fipronil contamination issue. Both agencies have been meeting with industry to gather all the available information and to set out clearly which products need to be withdrawn. They reiterate that products will be withdrawn if the amount of implicated egg is more than 15% of the product and that food businesses must comply with this or show that the egg ingredient used is compliant with the EU maximum residue level.

They state that it remains very unlikely that there is any risk to public health, but as Fipronil is not authorised for use in food producing animals they are continuing to track down implicated food products and ensure that they are removed from sale where they breach the limit.

It remains the case that the egg the FSA has identified as contaminated represents only a fraction of a single percentage of the eggs we consume in the UK every year. Therefore, the advice remains that there is no need to change how people buy or consume eggs as there is no concern about any risk to health.

The egg which was found to be contaminated was incorporated into processed foods; fresh eggs on sale in the UK remain unaffected. 85% of the eggs we eat in the UK are laid here. The lists of products withdrawn is being kept updated and as a precaution, UK eggs are being tested for the presence of Fipronil. - all initial results have been clear.



SHOOTING VERMIN IN GRAIN STORES COULD LEAD TO PRODUCT CONTAMINATION

Wheat growers are being warned that using shotguns to control vermin in grain stores has led to complaints from millers about increasing amounts of lead shot in grain. According to the National Association of British and Irish Millers (Nabim), 'while some shot can be screened out, a significant quantity may remain to contaminate end-products'. During the milling process, the shot becomes flattened and may not be identified by metal detection systems. It is pointed out that recalls of finished baked products can be very costly and damage the reputation of food producers.

FSS UPDATE ON APRICOT KERNELS AND BITTER ALMONDS

The FSS published on 21 September 2017 an update to Food Business Operators (FBO) on the sale of apricot kernels and bitter almonds: <https://tinyurl.com/ya3778zq>

This follows the recent introduction of the maximum level (ML) of 20 mg/kg for Hydrogen Cyanide (HCN) in raw apricot kernels set in Commission Regulation EU 2017/1237 amending Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006.

Following discussions with the European Commission and other Member States, legislation has now been agreed to control the presence of cyanide in apricot kernels. A maximum level of 20 mg/kg has been established for hydrocyanic acid in raw, unprocessed apricot kernels both bitter and sweet varieties, including milled, cracked or chopped raw products set out in Commission Regulation EU 2017/1237 amending section 8 of the Annex to Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006.

Processed apricot kernels used as flavourings or ingredients in some foods e.g. persipan, will have undergone heat treatment which reduces cyanide levels. These are subject to cyanide maximum levels, set out in Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008 on flavourings and certain food ingredients with flavouring properties for use in and on food.

Bitter almonds which are also known to have high levels of cyanide are currently not included within the scope of the 20 mg/kg cyanide maximum level as it is understood that they are normally used only after further processing or home cooking and would not be eaten raw. However, if it is evident that raw kernels are being sold for direct human consumption and there is an indication of risk to human health, enforcement action can be taken in accordance with general food law.

Enforcement officers are reminded that raw, unprocessed apricot kernels including the milled, cracked or chopped forms should not be sold for human consumption unless evidence can be provided that cyanide levels are compliant with the maximum level of 20 mg/kg; and to request that FBOs provide evidence of compliance with the maximum level. If meant for further processing, there should be clear evidence for this in the labelling or accompanying documents.

In addition, where officers become aware that raw bitter almonds are being sold for direct human consumption, they are instructed that action can be taken under Articles 14 and 19 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, ("food shall not be placed on the market if it is unsafe"). Requests should be made that these are withdrawn from sale.

FSA CLARIFY ROLE OF TEAM IN ENSURING SAFE PRODUCTION OF MEAT

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) published on 19 September 2017 a news item clarifying the role of its teams in ensuring that meat is produced safely, following media reports about practices in slaughterhouses.

The FSA commented that staff do not allow contaminated meat to enter the food chain and work in more than 300 slaughterhouses in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure the safety and authenticity of food. Meat Hygiene Inspectors and Official Veterinarians inspect every red meat and poultry carcass for visible contamination, with 99.5% of them passing the test, and the remainder rejected and returned to the food business, so that it can rectify the problem.

The news item can be read in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9ypfq4v>

BEUC LAUNCH ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE ONLINE CAMPAIGN

The European Consumer Organisation BEUC and 13 of their member organisations have launched an online campaign to raise awareness among consumers about antibiotic resistance from farming and how it ultimately harms people.

Every week, a consumer organisation from the BEUC network will host a resistant bacterium 'Superbug' virtually to inform consumers about antibiotic use in farm animals in their country and how it can fuel antibiotic resistance.

The Superbug's online journey started in Cyprus and will end on 18 November, which incidentally is European Antibiotic Awareness Day. More about European Antibiotic Awareness Day can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7qaxmth>

Should you wish to take a look at the campaign, it can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y85l2jl3>

FSA UPDATES ON CAMPYLOBACTER IN RETAIL CHICKEN AND CHANGES TO THE SURVEY

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published the final results of the third annual retail survey on Campylobacter in UK-produced retail chicken. A total of 3,980 chickens were sampled and results showed that 5.6% of chicken sold by the nine top retailers had a high level of Campylobacter; lower levels of contamination were in chickens from Morrisons (2.9%), Waitrose (2.7%) and Tesco (4.2%); and higher levels were in chickens from Asda (7.6%), Lidl (7.1%) and M&S (6.4%). The number of chickens with any level of Campylobacter contamination was down from 73.2% in 2014/2015 to 54% in 2016/2017.

The FSA Chair, Heather Hancock, has said 'The full year's results from our third annual survey show the significant progress the industry has made in reducing campylobacter levels in chicken, compared with their starting point. The major retailers are now taking on the responsibility to publish their own results, according to a protocol we have agreed. This is a welcome step towards greater transparency'.

Following discussions with industry the FSA campylobacter retail survey of fresh shop-bought UK-produced chickens will be changing. The FSA will be shifting focus to smaller processors /establishments such as independent traders, catering establishments and market stalls where it is felt improvements could be made. As such, the top nine retailers will now not be included in the annual survey and have agreed to publish their own campylobacter results on their consumer websites. The sampling and analyses carried out by the retailers will be in accordance with robust protocols established by the FSA that will also ensure that their published results are comparable.

You can read the full announcement from the FSA here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybwhulze>

AMENDMENT TO REGULATION WITH REGARDS TO CAMPYLOBACTER IN BROILER CARCASSES

Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/1495 of 23 August 2017 amending Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 as regards Campylobacter in broiler carcasses was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L218/1, 24/8/2017.

Amendments to Regulation No 2073/2005 on Microbiological Criteria have been made in order to achieve reduction of Campylobacter in broiler meat at different stages of the food chain.

The amended regulation entered into force on 12 September 2017 and will apply from 1 January 2018. It can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yc6k4d2m>

FOOD HYGIENE RATING SCHEME CENTRAL TO MODERNISATION PLANS

The Food Standards Agency published on 13 September 2017 a press release reaffirming the organisation's commitment to introducing the mandatory display of food hygiene ratings in England. This follows the successful introduction of legislation in Wales and Northern Ireland that requires food businesses to display their ratings.

The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) was launched in November 2010 and is established in all local authorities across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is an FSA and local authority partnership initiative which provides consumers with information about hygiene standards in food premises, based on inspections carried out by local authority food safety officers.

CIEH WARN OF FOOD SAFETY ISSUE WITH BAGS FOR LIFE

Following the news that bags for life can spread deadly bacteria if they are re-used for both raw and 'ready to eat' food, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) has urged consumers to stick with the bags but be cautious about which food stuffs are placed in which bag.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have raised the dangers of mixing bag usage, with it being highlighted that some food packaging can carry salmonella, E.coli and campylobacter; the most common cause of food poisoning in the UK.

However, bags for life play an invaluable role in improving environmental health across the country, contributing to the reduction of plastic waste going to landfill or incineration.

Responding to the news, Tony Lewis, Head of Policy at the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, said:

"Shoppers should absolutely be mindful of what food they are putting in which bag, and not mixing raw food with things which are ready to eat straight away. By being aware of the need for good hygiene, people can quite easily avoid picking up any damaging bacteria from their bags for life."

"We must not cut down on our use of bags for life as a result of this warning from the Food Standards Agency. The excessive use and disposal of plastics in our country is a growing problem which affects all of us and deeply damages our environment. Bags for life are integral to efforts to tackle this."

FSA REVISE ADVICE ON CONSUMPTION OF RUNNY EGGS

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have recently announced changes to its advice about consumption of eggs produced under the British Lion Code of Practice.

The revised advice, based on the latest scientific evidence, means that people vulnerable to infection or who are likely to suffer serious symptoms from food poisoning (such as infants, children, pregnant women and elderly people) can now safely eat raw or lightly cooked hen eggs or foods containing them.

The decision to change the advice is a result of the findings from an expert group that was set up by the Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF) in February 2015 to look at egg safety. Its report published in July 2016, highlighted that the presence of salmonella in UK eggs has been dramatically reduced in recent years, and the risks are very low for eggs which have been produced according to food safety controls applied by the British Lion Code of Practice. More than 90% of UK eggs are produced under this scheme.

The revised advice does not apply to severely immunocompromised individuals, who require medically supervised diets prescribed by health professionals, and is only for eggs produced under the British Lion Code of Practice. The existing advice on UK non-Lion eggs, non-hen eggs and eggs from outside the UK is that they should always be cooked thoroughly for vulnerable groups.

However, the egg assurance scheme 'Laid in Britain' has criticised the new FSA guidelines as they said that 'UK-laid non-Lion eggs' should always be thoroughly cooked. Laid in Britain says that eggs produced under this scheme are 'just as safe'. The scheme requires all egg-producing chickens to be fed a probiotic formula to hinder the growth of Salmonella. Laid in Britain aims to support small egg producers in the UK that cannot afford Lion accreditation.

More information on the new advice can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycxlknnc>

FOOD SECURITY, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

FSAI REPORT INCREASE IN FOOD FRAUD INVESTIGATIONS

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) has said it is increasingly investigating suspected breaches of the law relating to food fraud.

They report that there were 21 investigations in 2014, 35 in 2015; 34 in 2016 and 20 to date this year. This pattern is reflected in Europe with the European Commission's Food Fraud Network dealing with 156 cases in 2016, up from 108 in 2015 and 60 in 2014.

Dr Pamela Byrne, CEO of FSAI, said it must remain vigilant and enhance inspection and enforcement systems to keep pace with new and emerging risks. Investigations to date have focussed on fish, olive oil, honey, soft drinks, alcohol and beef.

UK FACING 'GREATEST THREAT' TO FOOD SECURITY SINCE WWII

The UK is facing the 'greatest threat' to the integrity of its food supply chain since the Second World War, according to Professor Chris Elliott, Chair of Food Safety and Microbiology at Queen's University Belfast.

Professor Elliott, warned that a combination of factors ranging from the UK's exit from the European Union to global warming mean that the country's food supply is potentially less secure than at any point in the past 70 years.

"We have made good progress on the issue of food fraud since the publication of the Elliott Review into the Integrity and Assurance of Food Supply Networks in 2014. However, although food fraud remains a priority to those of us concerned with the integrity of our food supply, we need to be versatile and responsive in how we deal with other – potentially greater – challenges to come, especially around Brexit and global warming" he said

He also warned that the UK is not yet prepared to meet the many challenges that Brexit will pose to the safe supply and production of food. This, he argued, means compromises on food safety standards is a real and immediate threat.

Additionally, Professor Elliott stressed a lack of action on global warming is leading to a rise in diseases and drought in key commodities and also suggested that increased price pressure on food suppliers is escalating the risk of food fraud.

"As a country, we need to seriously begin considering how we future-proof the integrity of our food supply in the face of the challenges coming in the next few years. To understand what we are eating, where it comes from and how it was produced are of fundamental importance to regaining trust. To reconnect with our food system should be considered a national imperative" he said.

SCIENTISTS MAKE BREAKTHROUGH IN SEED DORMANCY FOR FOOD SECURITY

Worldwide production of food, beverages and medicinal plants could become cheaper and more reliable using information from a germination discovery by Australian scientists.

Their study, published in the journal *Genome Biology*, aimed to decipher how a crop's genome can control the time that a seed wakes up. With the knowledge gained from the research, they hope to perfect the genome-editing technology needed to produce new plant cultivars that will germinate differently, giving farmers the ability to precisely control when their crops are ready for harvest.

The researchers say that the findings would be incredible for food security around the world, and especially supplies of rice, corn and wheat. The production of beer and spirits would also benefit from this level of control, along with medicines such as morphine and codeine.

The next step is to transfer the findings from the model research plant into crop plants such as barley and rice. They will then look to generate varieties that have accelerated or slowed-down germination and will study how they control the genetic switches that turn this off and on.

BANANAS UNDER THREAT

According to recent media coverage, bananas could face extinction due to the fungal disease 'Fusarium wilt', which has devastated banana plantations in Australia and South-east Asia. The disease is now affecting crops in Africa and the Middle East, and could soon pose a problem in Latin America. The disease is reported to be resistant to fungicides and fumigants, and can remain dormant for years. The worldwide banana industry is worth GBP27bn a year.

DANISH TESTING SHOWS HIGH LEVEL OF OREGANO IS ADULTERATED

Four out of ten oregano samples contained other plant material, according to testing from a Danish consumer watchdog, Forbrugerrådet Tænk. In three of the products only about 50% of oregano was present and in a fourth there was around 70%. The other ingredients included dried leaves from other plants such as olive or myrtle. Samples were bought and tested this summer from supermarkets and stores around Copenhagen.

The Danish Veterinary and Food Administration, who at the end of 2016 had tested oregano and found no signs of adulteration, has contacted Forbrugerrådet Tænk regarding the results.

Coop is investigating and until they can guarantee the quality of their oregano has decided to remove all Ånglamark oregano from shelves.

IN 2015, Which? – the UK consumer organisation – found 19 of 78 samples contained other ingredients, mostly olive and myrtle. They made up between 30-70% of the products.

FSAI AUDIT REPORT ON TRACEABILITY IN FOOD AND FOOD PRODUCTS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN

The FSAI have recently published a report from its Audit of Traceability in Food and Food Products of Animal Origin. The FSAI has overall responsibility for the enforcement of food law in Ireland. It carries out targeted audits of food businesses to determine the level of compliance with current food law and the effectiveness of its implementation.

This targeted audit of food businesses was undertaken as part of the FSAI's 2016 planned programme of audits, with eighteen audits conducted between May 2016 and May 2017 in 16 food businesses. The audit focused on the assessment of food business operator controls in place to ensure maintenance of traceability and labeling information along the food chain.

The objective was to assess food business operator compliance with food legislation applicable to its business with particular emphasis on traceability and control of rejected, returned or quarantined products.

The audit identified 27 breaches of legislation and highlights the need for food business operators to improve compliance with particular requirements of food law relevant to their business. Twelve breaches of legislation relating to traceability were identified. Additionally, nine breaches of legislation were identified relating to the documented and operational controls as part of the businesses' food safety management systems. This is an area that has been identified in previous audits and it continues to be an area of noncompliance among food businesses.

The report recommends that food businesses should ensure that their food safety management systems cover the full range of activities relating to their business, and that such systems adequately address all relevant hazards or processes, including those relating to rejected, returned, re-worked or re-labelled products. It also recommends that food businesses should review traceability systems to ensure that the required level of traceability and accurate traceability records can be produced in a timely fashion. The report can be downloaded in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/yae3mgex>

UNDECLARED SUGAR IN IMPORTED COCONUT WATER

The Food Standards Agency's (FSA's) National Food Crime Unit has found that coconut water imported into the UK contains added, undeclared sugar. The Unit tested samples of Chi, Foco, Go Coco, Tropical Sun, Suncrest, Yaco and Pearl Royal brands of coconut water and found that 60% had added sugar. The investigation was carried out due to concerns about standards in the coconut-water sector.

COMMISSION AGREE MEASURES TO COMBAT FOOD FRAUD

In a follow-up to the Fipronil issue the EC published a press release confirming agreement on 19 definitive measures, which will reinforce the EU's action against food fraud by Member States and the Commission.

The aim is to improve risk communication between Member States and the Commission, to make sure information reaches the general public in a more coherent and timely way. It must also be easier to ensure rapid common risk assessment when such situations emerge, by bridging the gap between the use of RASFF and the Administrative and Cooperation system (AAC).

The Commission will also consider how to establish a 'food safety officer' in each Member State to help make sure that information flows as fast and as efficiently as possible.

The RASFF and AAC systems and the improvement of co-ordination and communication among Member States including the establishment of a 'food safety officer' will be further discussed in a working group within the Standing Committee for Plants, Animals, Food and Feed. The discussion will be finalised at the CVOs and CMOs meeting and Heads of Food Safety Agencies meeting in the near future. The press release can be viewed in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8vm6x93>

GLOBAL STANDARDS

IFAAO GRANTED 'OBSERVER' STATUS BY CODEX

The International Food Authenticity Assurance Organization (IFAAO) has been granted Observer Status by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. This will enable the IFAAO to provide expertise, guidance and advice to Codex – which was established by the World Health Organization (WHO) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

IFAAO has said there is a lack of proven methods to establish food authenticity and a need for authenticity assurance and technical improvements in methods by which the integrity of ingredients can be verified at source. IFAAO will now be able to participate in and contribute to discussions, capacity building and scientific research associated with food authenticity and integrity.

IFAAO is an industry-driven non-profit organization pushing for the authentication of every ingredient in food. The current focus commodities include milk, eggs, fruits and vegetables, honey, seafood, meat and poultry and spices, seasonings and flavourings.

CODEX DISCUSS FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STANDARDS

The Codex Alimentarius Committee met on 2nd – 6th October 2017 to discuss standards for fresh fruits and vegetables including garlic, potatoes and eggplants, kiwi fruits and fresh dates.

The session was co-hosted by the Government of Uganda together with the Government of Mexico in a bid to address challenges in penetrating international markets due to non-compliance to international standards.

Documents relating to this meeting can be found here including the draft standards and respective comments: <https://tinyurl.com/y8unuxwk>

CODEX HIGHLIGHT COUNTRIES REQUIRING 'DEVELOPMENT'

The Codex Alimentarius Committee published on 11 October 2017 a press release regarding safer food training for effective participation in Codex: <https://tinyurl.com/y8e6tdub>

Codex stated that in some countries the level of technical knowledge, skills, capacity and resources to actively and effectively participate in Codex is still 'under development'. According to Codex, countries need buy-in and coordination from high levels of government so that investment is solid and sustainable and a country is able to reap the benefits of engagement with international standard setting.

IMPORTS AND THE SUPPLY CHAIN

CIEH COMMENT ON FOOD IMPORTS

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) published a press release on 20 September 2017 commenting that food imports to the UK could be brought to a standstill as a result of the need for new food safety checks, if the Government is unable to conclude a trade deal with the EU.

Currently, food imports to the UK from Europe meet EU-wide standards. However, this is not guaranteed to be the case following Brexit. The potential for delays comes as additional checks on imported food would have to be carried out at British ports, with the cost being passed on to UK consumers.

The press release can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y85me59g>

HONG KONG TEMPORARILY BANS IMPORTING REGIONAL DUTCH POULTRY

Hong Kong has temporarily stopped importing poultry from a western province in the Netherlands.

All poultry meat and eggs produced in the Dutch province of Zeeland can no longer be sold to Hong Kong after a Sint Philipsland-based farm culled over 41,000 chickens in October, following an outbreak of low pathogenic avian influenza (AI).

The source of the outbreak remains unknown, but it was identified at the farm on Friday 13 October and was reported three days later.

In the first six months of 2017, Hong Kong bought 2,500 tonnes of frozen poultry and one million eggs from the Netherlands, according to Hong Kong's Centre for Food Safety (CFS).

A spokesperson for the food safety agency said: "The CFS has contacted the Dutch authorities over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) on avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation."

WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED IN ICELANDIC IMPORT CONTROLS

The EFTA Surveillance Authority (ESA) issued on 29 September 2017 a mission report finding that Iceland needs to improve its controls concerning imports and transit of consignments of both products of animal origin and live aquatic animals.

These relate in particular to shortcomings in identification of consignments requiring veterinary checks, and in carrying out documentary checks. Weaknesses were also identified with the controls, monitoring and follow-up of consignments in transit and trans-shipment in Iceland. ESA noted this in previous missions and Iceland had not taken steps to fully address this at the time of the latest mission. ESA also found that Iceland must improve its use of the Trade Control and Expert System ('TRACES') which is compulsory for EEA states.

The ESA report sets out recommendations to Iceland on how to rectify the shortcomings identified and can be viewed in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9yqjv3m>

UPDATED ADVICE ON IMPORTS FROM THIRD COUNTRIES OF COMPOSITE PRODUCTS

Defra, the FSA and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) have jointly issued updated versions of the following documents which provide advice and support in relation to imports from third countries of composite products:

- Import Information Note (access here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybc8ksbl>)
- Q and A (access here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycuhvt3l>)
- Flowchart (access here: <https://tinyurl.com/ya2wcn5r>)

Also, the 'certain products not subject to veterinary checks' (IMP/GEN/2007/01) licence has been revoked due to amendments to Annex II of Commission Decision 2007/275/EC. Therefore, an import licence is no longer required. Guidance on the relevant import conditions for the revised Annex II products is available within the Import Information Note above.

CHANGES TO EXPORT HEALTH CERTIFICATES REQUIRED FOR CHINA

The FSA issued on 28 September 2017 a letter to enforcement officers concerning an update on changes to Chinese food law.

The requirement for harmonised Export Health Certificates to be provided for all food and drink products being exported to China has been postponed following discussions with WTO, Defra, the Commission and Chinese Authorities. The new arrangements are now not expected to come into force until October 2018.

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

LABELLING AND GENERAL FOOD LAW

GERMANS BACK DRAFT REGULATIONS ON 'MEATY NAMES'

Controversy is mounting over how vegetable-based meat substitutes should be labelled in Germany as draft regulations backing “meaty names” is released.

The German Food Code Commission (DLMBK) has closed feedback on its draft proposals on how “meaty names” such as “schnitzel”, “meatball” or “bratwurst” can be used to describe vegetarian and vegan meat alternatives.

Previously, German Minister of Food and Agriculture, Christian Schmidt, had publicly announced that he wants to legally forbid any “meaty names” being used to describe vegan and vegetarian meat alternatives. The DLMBK, which oversees the labelling of food products, reached a different conclusion, meaning that terms like “vegan Schnitzel” or “vegan Bratwurst” can still currently be used to label vegan and vegetarian products.

The European Vegetarian Union (EVU) insisted that this is perfectly reasonable since these terms are used to inform the consumer about typical characteristics of the vegan and vegetarian alternatives.

However, while these generic terms have been deemed acceptable, specific terms that name cuts of meat or whole animals cannot be used for the labelling of meat alternatives, according to the DLMBK’s draft document. This includes items such as vegetable-based salami – which would need to be re-labelled “vegan tofu-sausage Salami-style”.

It is expected that DLMBK is likely to postpone its final decision on the issue and instead of finalising its plans this year, a final decision from the regulator is now not expected until early 2018.



COMMISSION GUIDANCE ON ALLERGEN LABELLING

The Commission adopted on 13 July 2017 a notice updating the previous guidance document on allergen labelling.

The notice on the provision of information on substances or products causing allergies or intolerances is intended to assist consumers, businesses and national authorities in understanding the new requirements of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 related to the indication of the presence of certain substances or products causing allergies or intolerances.

The notice can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9I9tt95>

EDA CRITICISES TRAFFIC LIGHT LABELLING PLANS

The European Dairy Association (EDA) has criticised the new traffic lights labelling system claiming that it falls short in certain areas relating to nutrition, dietary recommendations and what to limit in people’s diets. While the EDA believes and supports the fact that consumers should be fully informed on the nutritional properties of foods it says that new Evolved Nutrition Labelling Initiative (ENL) proposals do not go far enough and is an inadequate system for milk and dairy products.

More information can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8rkua88>

NUTRITION, ADDITIVES AND HEALTH

IRELAND TO INTRODUCE SUGAR SWEETENED BEVERAGE TAX IN 2018

The Irish Government has confirmed that it will introduce a tax on sugar sweetened beverages next year, outlining its plans in its Budget for 2018. The tax will come into effect in April next year, at the same time as a similar levy in the UK.

The government says the levy is 'one of a suite of measures' to tackle obesity, with the aim of reducing sugar drink consumption and encouraging the industry to reformulate products. The two-tier levy will apply to non-alcoholic drinks with more than 5g sugar per 100ml. Pure fruit juices will be exempt, as will dairy products, on the grounds of their nutritional value. Small producers, who are exempt from particular EU food labelling obligations, will also be exempt from the tax. For sugar-sweetened drinks with a content of 5 grams sugar or more per 100ml, a tax of 20c per litre will apply; and for drinks with 8 grams sugar or more the rate will be 30c per litre. The tax uses the same two-tier divisions as the UK levy.

It estimates it will yield in the region of €30m (\$35m) in 2018 and €40m (\$47m) in a full year. According to studies, 14% of the Irish population consume sugar sweetened drinks daily; in the 15-24 year old age group this figure is 22%. Furthermore, 37% of Irish women and 38% of Irish men will be obese by 2025, according to a recent study from Imperial College London.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT BLOCK COMMISSION PROPOSAL ON ENDOCRINE DISRUPTORS

The European Parliament issued on 4 October 2017 notification that it has blocked an EU Commission proposal which would have exempted some chemicals in pesticides from being identified as endocrine disruptors.

Environment MEPs had previously called on Parliament to veto the proposal saying that the Commission exceeded its mandate by proposing to exempt some substances, such as pesticides deliberately designed to attack a target organism's endocrine system, from the scope of scientific criteria for identifying endocrine disruptors.

The exemption would have meant that certain substances with an endocrine disrupting effect could not be included in the scope of scientific criteria being developed for the purpose of regulating endocrine disruptors. Under today's EU legislation, an active substance can be approved only if it is not considered to have endocrine-disrupting properties on non-target organisms. MEPs also argued that the proposal failed to include a category of "suspected" endocrine disruptors, meaning that "no action can be taken against such substances, unless a complementary proposal is made".

PHE PUBLISH SUGAR REDUCTION INTERIM REVIEW

Public Health England (PHE) have published an interim review outlining progress towards achieving the 20% sugar reduction and the next steps.

The document details the actions PHE has taken since publication of the technical report in March 2017 and covers the period from April to September 2017. It also covers the next steps for the following 6 months (up to end of March 2018) which are:

- Progress on sugar reduction since March 2017 specifically developing the monitoring and reporting approach for sugar reduction and product ranges targeted at babies and young children;
- Soft drinks;
- Engagement with businesses providing food consumed out of home;
- Wider reformulation programme (calorie, salt and saturated fat)

The first detailed assessment of progress towards the 5% reduction will be published in March 2018.

The interim report can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7jtws7l>



PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON DIETARY REFERENCE VALUES FOR SODIUM

EFSA launched on 29 September 2017 a public consultation on its draft scientific opinion on dietary reference values (DRVs) for sodium.

In particular, EFSA is seeking feedback on the way it plans to select and use evidence in its assessment. The consultation can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7pigtj> and comments are invited by 12 November 2017

SCOPAFF PHYTOPHARMACEUTICALS SUMMARY REPORT PUBLISHED

The Summary Report of the SCoPAFF, section on Phytopharmaceuticals, held on 4 July 2017, has been published. The Committee discussed a draft Commission Regulation amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 by setting out scientific criteria for the determination of endocrine disrupting properties. The report can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycy2f2on>

PROCESSING AND RETAIL

MINTEL RESEARCH REVEALS KEY TRENDS IN FOOD MANUFACTURING FOR 2018

Food manufacturers are likely to be impacted by two key consumer trends from a list of four, set to dominate shoppers' spending next year, according to new research from Mintel.

The trends towards recycled packaging and greater transparency will have a direct impact on food and drink producers, predicted the research group.

The first trend, Sea change, referred to a growing number of consumers looking to buy products that used recycled packaging. This was to lessen the impact of plastic contamination to the seas and oceans. Mintel research found that 72% of UK consumers would be interested in buying products made from wholly or partially recycled plastic.

Of those asked, 73% said they wanted to see more food and drink products that were guaranteed to be sourced from unpolluted water and 79% believed people should be incentivised to recycle.

Mintel said: "While plastics won't be wholly demonised – they prolong shelf-life and prevent food waste – intensified eco-lobbying will produce more recyclable products, as well as incentives and initiatives to promote recycling. In food and drink consumer markets we will see pure, unpolluted sourcing claims and sustainable marine ingredients mainstream."

The second trend that will impact food and drink firms, Accountants, called for companies to become more transparent. Quantified and qualified facts would be in high demand from manufacturers, claimed Mintel, whether this was related to production processes or how effective the product is.

The full list of consumer trends was:

Sea Change – Ocean plastic fashion and recycled packaging launches, ingredient bans and activism are focusing consumer and government attention on maritime conservation.

Shareholders – Hacks and data disclosure legislation form a new breed of consumers who will hold on tight to their data and demand something in return before sharing it.

Teenaiders – Teens are increasingly defined by anxieties around image, health and work, and are looking for brands to alleviate the pressure and help them build both their confidence and prospects.

Accountants – In a world of post-truth politics and unsubstantiated media, consumers are looking for brands to court them with transparency, simplicity and evidence.



REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT AND OFFICIAL CONTROLS

FSA PUBLISH REPORT ON UK MULTIANNUAL FOOD CONTROL PLAN

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published its 2016 annual report on progress towards implementation of the UK Multi-Annual National Control Plan (MANCP). The report, which is based on data collected for 2016, shows that overall level of compliance in all sectors in the UK was satisfactory when assessed against expectations.

The MANCP sets out the roles, responsibilities and strategies of the different authorities and organisations involved in monitoring and enforcement of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and welfare rules and plant health requirements in the UK. It is a requirement of Regulation (EC) 882/2004 for each Member State to produce an annual report detailing progress made each year. The full report can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/ydz96yu2>

NATIONAL REGULATION ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

Defra and several other government departments issued on 10 October 2017 an update to information on how Regulatory Delivery contributes to the national regulatory landscape.

An enforcement services summary leaflet has been added and can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8unjbc8>

FSA PUBLISHES LOCAL AUTHORITY FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT INFORMATION

The FSA published on 18 September 2017 official statistics on food law enforcement by local authorities for the year 2016/17.

The information provided by local authorities and compiled by the FSA, gives a detailed breakdown of enforcement activity across the UK. The new data shows:

- an increase in food hygiene compliance in food establishments, continuing the trend of increases since 2014/15;
- a decrease in the number of planned interventions for food standards, which covers areas such as authenticity and food fraud;
- the percentage of due food hygiene interventions, which covers food safety, has continued to rise, 85% compared to 84% last year;
- a continuing fall in staffing levels which reduced by 2.7% in 2016/17 compared with the previous year.

The information can be found in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y944hmcb>



CABINET OFFICE PUBLISH LIST OF GOVERNMENT MINISTERS AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Cabinet Office has recently published an updated list of Government Ministers and their areas of responsibility. This list, which was last updated in October 2016, details the following:

- ministerial departments
- the ministers within ministerial departments
- private offices of all the ministers
- the executive agencies within each department

The updated list can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ya76mksz>

RESEARCH & INNOVATION

SMOKED WATER DEVELOPED

A new 'oak smoked water', has been developed by the owners of sea salt company Halen Mon for Heston Blumenthal, who was looking for a method to give risotto at his Fat Duck restaurant a smoky flavour. The water has been used in at least ten products by seven major food manufacturers to date and costs more than some single malt whiskies!

SPANISH COMPANY DEVELOPS LOW-FAT AVOCADOS

A low-fat avocado has been developed by the Spanish company, Isla Bonita. Named 'Avocado Light', its fat content is claimed to be up to 30% lower than the traditional avocado. They also say it ripens faster, and oxidises slower.

The avocados are grown under special soil and climate conditions to provide the same nutritional benefits with less fat, according to the company.



NEW ZEALAND MEAT PROCESSOR LAUNCHES INNOVATIVE PACKAGING

New Zealand meat processor Silver Fern Farm has rolled out new retail packaging with a unique traceability code for its range of grass-fed beef.

The packaging will come with a supposedly fraud-proof QR code on every pack of meat. Once scanned, users will be redirected to a web page that not only verifies which region the animal came from, but has a bio of the firm's farmers and recipe ideas that are different for each product.

Silver Fern Farm has also worked with origin verification company Oritain for over three years to develop a traceability system that can provide proof of origin certification for consumers.



FOOD EXPIRY LABEL UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Mimica Touch food labels is developing an award-winning food expiry label called Mimica Touch (formerly Bump Mark). The label sits on the package and decays in the same process the food would, going bumpy to show consumers when their food is going off.

The way it works is the gel inside Mimica Touch is made from a by-product from the food industry: gelatine. Because it is a foodstuff itself, it behaves in the same way packaged food does due to the molecular composition. The gel reacts to changes in the packaged food and to temperature changes in the cold chain. These result in a molecular breakdown.

DEXEU PUBLISH PAPER ON FUTURE COLLABORATION ON SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

DEXEU have published a future partnership paper which outlines how continued collaboration in science and innovation is an important part of the UK's future partnership with the EU. It sets out examples of where the UK sees potential mutual benefit in a close working relationship, exploring precedents for each. The paper invites discussion with the EU on how best to shape our future partnership in this area and can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yd7vgyud>

SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENT & CSR

MSC CONSULT ON OPERATION OF FISHERIES CERTIFICATION PROCESSES

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) recently consulted on the operation of fisheries certification processes. Stakeholders were given the opportunity to contribute to the MSC's requirements for sustainable fishing in a bid to ensure that they continue to reflect international best practice in fisheries certification and seafood traceability

Dr David Agnew, Science and Standards Director for the MSC said: "Transparency, third-party scrutiny and stakeholder consultation are central to the MSC's values and commitment to continually improve and maintain world-leading standards. The MSC works tirelessly to understand the complex set of often differing views among our stakeholders and ensure they are reflected in our standards and procedures. These consultations offer the opportunity for everyone to inform how the MSC program evolves and continues to reflect international best practice."

Included in the consultations was the opportunity to comment on the Unit of Assessment used to define MSC certified fisheries. In particular, stakeholders were encouraged to provide feedback on a range of options that the MSC has developed in response to stakeholder concerns over the allowance for fishing vessels to catch both certified and uncertified products in a single fishing trip.

These options were developed following a workshop involving more than 30 organisations, coordinated by the MSC in June this year, and discussion with the MSC's Stakeholder Council, Technical Advisory Board and Board of Trustees, made up of independent experts from across the seafood and conservation community, including fisheries, NGOs, scientists, retailers and brands.

More information on the consultation can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y85gsnzd>

FSAI PROVIDES FOOD DONATION GUIDANCE TO CHARITIES AND BUSINESSES

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) published on 19 September 2017 four new guidance documents for charities and donating food businesses to ensure that the highest food safety standards are maintained to protect consumer health. The documents cover:

- Businesses donating food
- Charities receiving donated food
- Food banks/distribution centres
- Compiling food into food parcels for redistribution

The growth in awareness and the increase in food donation to reduce food waste over the past number of years is welcomed, but all operators in the food supply chain whether donating, receiving or handling donated food must comply with the law in relation to food safety. The aim of these new guidance documents is to make it as easy as possible to comply with food law.

Further information and the guidance documents themselves can be located here: <https://tinyurl.com/ya97np23>



UK SIGNS UP TO DAIRY DECLARATION OF ROTTERDAM

The UK dairy industry has endorsed a declaration to promote the sustainability of dairy systems around the world. The Dairy Declaration of Rotterdam, a unique partnership between the International Dairy Federation (IDF) and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) signals a recognition of the dairy sector's commitment towards feeding the world with safe, nutritious and sustainable products. More information can be found in the following article: <https://tinyurl.com/ybkmzchb>

CHINA BANS IMPORTS OF GLOBAL WASTE

By the end of 2017, imports of global waste such as mixed paper, scrap plastics including PVC, PET, polyethylene and polystyrene etc. will be banned from entering China.

Since the 1980s, recyclable material has been one of the largest exported goods to China and based on last year's figures of 29 million tonnes of paper and seven million tonnes of plastic being exported to China it's hard to see just where it will now end up!

The ban is thought to have a lot to do with China cracking down on facilities at home that do not meet tightening environmental standards. It has an ambition to grow its own domestic collection and recycling infrastructure and is keen to recover more of its packaging. Beijing officials are also concerned about the country's poor environment and public health.

This is not the first move China has made to clean things up. A programme called Operation Green Fence, which started in 2013, took a tougher line on tackling poor-quality and contaminated imported material for recycling. This drove UK waste resource companies to invest significant sums to ensure they met the stricter requirements of China's manufacturing sector, with most recyclers now producing much higher-quality material for export.

Although industry is waiting for more clarity on the ban the UK currently lacks the capacity to recycle all the material likely to be affected by the import restrictions and building up that capacity will take time. From 2018, demand from China will plummet and prices are likely to go down as paper and plastics from across the world compete for any spare processing capacity. Costs for Chinese packaging material could also go up which could have a wider knock-on effect on the packaging and manufacturing industries given that China exports a lot of goods in cardboard boxes.

The hope now is that China's new export restrictions will force the UK government to speed up plans for a post-Brexit strategy on domestic recycling.



TECHNOLOGY AND NOVEL FOODS

FASTER SALMONELLA TEST DEVELOPED

A new test has been developed which allows for accurate, rapid testing for Salmonella, a bacterium that is one of the leading causes of foodborne illness across all regions of the world.

Tests that used to take days now take 24 hours, with a hundredfold improvement in detection for at least one type of Salmonella - Salmonella Dublin - that is an emerging concern and is difficult to grow in culture, making diagnosis difficult.

The new method, first developed for automated food safety testing and then adapted by Cornell scientists for a wider range of sample types, can detect the bacteria from environmental and clinical samples, including swabs, faeces, milk and blood.

DRAFT UNION LIST OF NOVEL FOODS PUBLISHED

The Commission published on 5 October 2017 a draft Commission Implementing Regulation establishing the Union list of novel foods in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 of the European Parliament and of the Council on novel foods.

The Annex provides 2 tables:

- Table 1 includes the authorised novel foods, conditions under which the novel food may be used, any additional specific labelling requirements;
- Table 2 includes the specifications on each novel food.

The document can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybswcbgy> and was open for feedback from interested parties until 2 November 2017. Feedback will be taken into account by the Commission when further developing the act.



British Frozen Food Federation Technical & Legislative Expert Group

Meeting of the Technical and Legislative Expert Group
To be held at 10am on Wednesday 13th September
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 – Geoff Spriegel, Chairman BRC Advisory Board- Audit Optimisation Initiative
12. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 8th November at The Belton Woods Hotel, Grantham

Agenda Item 4 – Items for discussion

- 4.1 Fipronil in eggs (2017_05_X / 2017_05_Y / 2017_05_Z / 2017_05_AB / 2017_05_AC / 2017_05_AD / 2017_05_AE / 2017_05_AF / 2017_05_AL and all addendums).
- 4.2 BRC Audit Optimisation Initiative (2017_05_AN)
- 4.3 Acrylamides – Interpretation of regulation and approach (2017_05_M)
- 4.4 Indian Aquaculture Product Issue (2017_05_U / 2017_05_AF / 2017_05_AM)
- 4.5 GFSI schemes – IFS, SQF, FSSC etc (2017_05_F)

Agenda Item 5 – Items to discuss if time

- 5.1 Admin – Updates on Technical & Legislative Questionnaire (2017_05_C), Gold Book, Technical Seminar
- 5.2 HepE in pork and pork products (2017_05_D / 2017_05_AI)
- 5.3 FSA Regulating our Future published (2017_05_K)

Agenda Item 6 – Items for Information

- 6.1 Ban on the use of the flavouring substance 4,5 epoxy dec-2(trans)-enal in foods (2017_05_A)
- 6.2 Amends to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 (temperature conditions during transport of meat) (2017_05_B)
- 6.3 Important reminder from Defra re. imports of meat extracts, meat concentrates and products (2017_05_E)
- 6.4 Defra Update on imports of meat and meat products from Brazil (2017_05_G)
- 6.5 FSA - MSM update (2017_05_H)

- 6.6 PAS 96 - Food security - Public review DEADLINE 15 August 2017 (2017_05_I)
- 6.7 MSs vote in favour of scientific criteria for endocrine disruptors (2017_05_J)
- 6.8 Chlorates update (2017_05_L)
- 6.9 Horsemeat prosecution (2017_05_N)
- 6.10 EFSA Listeria consultation (2017_05_O)
- 6.11 Defra clarification re. Imports of meat & meat products from Brazil (2017_05_P)
- 6.12 Health and Food Safety Newsletter (2017_05_Q)
- 6.13 Defra seeking views on future regulation of ABPs and TSEs (2017_05_R)
- 6.14 BRC Global Standard for Agents & Brokers Issue 2 published (2017_05_5)
- 6.15 Product withdrawal and recall project (2017_05_T)
- 6.16 BFFF Seafish Importers Forum 17 7 17 (2017_05_V)
- 6.17 National Food Crime Unit - Quarterly Bulletin July 2017 (2017_05_W)
- 6.18 NFCU Alert - stolen salmon (2017_05_AJ)
- 6.19 Draft Regulation on the Marketing Standards for Free Range Eggs (2017_05_AG)
- 6.20 PHE Calorie Reduction Programme & call for sugar reduction data (2017_05_AK)
- 6.21 Food Standards Agency Meat Hygiene Policy research programme review (2017_05_AO)
- 6.22 GPFH questionnaire for stakeholder comments (2017_05_AP)
- 6.23 Comments on Marketing Free Range Eggs consultation (2017_05_AQ)

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 PA3

Agenda Item 8 – Contact with other Organisations

- 8.1 **Contacts Made**
Dr Edward Haynes – Molecular Biologist, FERA Science Ltd (Whole Genome Sequencing)
- 8.2 **Future Meetings Arranged**
Bulher/Sortex/BOC – date TBC
The Anaphylaxis Campaign – date TBC

Agenda Item 9 – Projects

- 9.1 Shelf Life (MPF)
- 9.2 Gold Book (DR)

Agenda Item 10– Any Other Business

- 10.1 Future Guest Speakers - Suggestions invited.
 - 10.2 Expert Group member update & Nominations for Vice Chair
11. **Presentation – Approx. 12pm – Geoff Spriegel, Chairman BRC Advisory Board- Audit Optimisation Initiative**

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



FRONERI



Iceland





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

15th May 2017

Entries live now

6th October 2017

Entry Deadline

21st November 2017

Shortlist announced

22nd February 2018

The People Awards ceremony

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



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