

# T & L UPDATE

BFFF TECHNICAL AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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**British Frozen Food Federation**

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## FOREWORD

### **Welcome to the latest ‘further improved’ edition of the BFFF Technical and Legislative update.**

Building on the positive feedback we’ve received about recent editions of the T&L we are pleased to announce that we have teamed up with the Anaphylaxis Campaign and Campden BRI to bring you articles from the real experts on subjects we know are high on your agenda. Turn to page 10 where you will find an interesting article written by David Reading OBE, Founder and Honorary Vice-President of the Anaphylaxis Campaign on allergens outside “the Big 14”- with the dramatic rise in prevalence of food allergies it’s certainly worth considering the wider picture when developing any new food product.

And it’s not just allergens the product developer has to consider. Turn to page 26 where you will find a link to a white paper written by Dan Hall, Product Technologist and David Miles Manager of Food Composition Section, at Campden BRI on ‘Avoiding the pitfalls of nutritional analysis’. Have a read, and if you find this is an area where you need some support then I’m sure Campden would be more than happy to help.

Of course, with August just around the corner many of you will be eagerly awaiting the launch of Issue 8 of the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety. In anticipation of this, why not have a look at page 24 where you will find a very comprehensive summary provided to us by Richard Leathers at Campden BRI on the key changes since version 7, including the new requirement for food defence.

In addition to articles from the experts, this edition once again brings you a focus section on Food Safety with reports from the FSA on Food incidents, the latest RASFF Early Warning System (EWS) data for food and feed and the latest reinforced checks data in relation to companies exporting to the EU. This is all in addition to the usual articles keeping you up to date on the latest happenings in industry. From the latest updates on Fipronil, which despite the product recalls last year still seems not to have been resolved to updates from the FSA on the review of meat cutting plants and cold stores and PHE on the Sugar Reduction Programme... I’m sure you’ll find something of interest!

Enjoy!

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



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



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# ACTIVITY OF EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

## FRANCE DEBATES FOOD AND AGRICULTURE BILL

Debates on the Food and Agriculture Bill in France have seen the backing of mandatory labelling for GM animal feed and pesticide use on fruit and vegetables but measures to stop marketing unhealthy foods to children rejected.

French politicians also voted for a ban on using 'meaty' names such as steak or sausage, as well as measures intended to end France's price war by limiting price promotions and prohibiting retailers from selling products below the actual purchase price.

Ministers voted in favour of more detailed food information to consumers as well as a proposition that by January 2023 additional on-pack information would be given on the conditions in which animals are raised and whether they have been fed genetically modified (GM) animal feed, or the number of pesticide or herbicide applications that have been used on fresh fruit and vegetable products. A bill that will see 50% of food served in public canteens by 2022 being either organic, local or produced to certain environmental standards was also given backing.

Politicians also voted in favour of all abattoirs nominating one person to be in charge of animal welfare as well as increased protection for members of staff that become whistleblowers. Penalties for those found to be mistreating animals will be doubled, punishable by up to one year in prison and a fine of €15,000.

Ministers did however reject a number of measures. They voted against making the NutriScore nutrition label mandatory on advertising materials, as there was concern that it could cause problems within Europe's single market.

They were also not in favour of banning companies from advertising children's foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) and rejected a proposal to introduce vegetarian meals in canteens with politicians arguing it could be seen as imposing a lifestyle on citizens.

A proposal to make video surveillance cameras mandatory in abattoirs was also rejected in favour of a softer, voluntary measure to be rolled out over a two-year trial period. This will allow abattoirs to choose to install video cameras in the area where animals are killed and bled, with footage kept for internal quality control and veterinary services only.

The measures will now be put before the senate.



## EC TO INVEST €10BN IN AGRI-FOOD RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

The European Commission plans to make a significant investment of €10bn in supporting agri-food research and innovation under its framework programme Project Horizon, 2021-27.

Launched in 2017, Project Horizon was designed to facilitate efforts to make European food production more sustainable and food healthier and builds on the long-term strategic approach to EU agricultural research and innovation, published in 2016. In the six-year funding cycle to 2020, the EU will have spent a total of €6bn on food research and innovation.

Horizon 2020 has selected around 150 projects of interest, with double this level still to come and an overall investment of €1.8bn. Most are large and ambitious transnational projects, delivering excellent science-based answers to the challenges set out in earlier calls for projects. Others are bottom-up projects such as thematic networks which translate academic science into practical tools for farmers and speed-up innovation.

To stimulate innovation, the EC has developed "new tools" for the 2014-20 period, including the European Innovation Partnership on agricultural productivity and sustainability (EIP-AGRI). Six hundred EIP-AGRI organisations have already been formed, with 3200 "operational groups" expected by the end of 2020.

However, this latest investment comes in contrast to a planned 5% drop in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) budget. The total CAP budget for 2021-27, adjusted for inflation, will be about €365bn versus the existing budget (excluding the UK) of €382.5bn in 2014-20.

You can read more about Project Horizon 2020 here: <https://tinyurl.com/y75g5963>

## EU PROJECT TO HELP ADOLESCENTS CHOOSE HEALTHY DIET AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

An international research consortium is to investigate how society can help adolescents choose a healthy diet and an active lifestyle.

CO-CREATE is a five-year project of the European Commission Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme which is led by Folkehelseinstituttet (FHI/Norwegian Institute of Public Health). Planned to run until 2023, it includes 14 partners from six European countries plus South Africa, Australia and the US.

Adolescents will participate by helping to create, inform and disseminate policies among their peers in the hope that it will help to reduce overweight and obesity among young people in Europe. By 2025, overweight and obesity are expected to affect one in five European children (or 16 million).

You can find out more about the CO-CREATE project here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9pchzek>

## ADDITIVES, CHEMICALS, CONTAMINANTS & FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

### GUIDANCE ON IDENTIFYING ENDOCRINE DISRUPTORS IN PESTICIDES AND BIOCIDES

Following a consultation which ran from December 2017 to January 2018, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) have now published guidance on how to identify substances with endocrine disrupting properties in pesticides and biocides.

The European Commission tasked EFSA and ECHA with developing harmonised guidance to ensure that the endocrine disruptor criteria adopted by the EU in 2017 are applied consistently for the assessment of biocides and pesticides in the EU. The guidance was drafted with the support of the Joint Research Centre, the European Commission's science and knowledge service. ECHA is responsible for the assessment of biocides and EFSA assesses the safety of active substances used in pesticides.

The guidance will be used for the assessment of biocides going forward (from 7th June). For pesticides, it will be used in the assessments of those substances for which a decision is scheduled on or after 10 November 2018. This is because the criteria for identifying endocrine disruptors in pesticides were agreed later than those for biocides.

The guidance can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ya6ldaxn>

### FSA ISSUES ACRYLAMIDE AND FURAN SURVEY RESULTS

The FSA have recently published the results from their latest study looking at levels of acrylamide and furan in an extensive range of UK retail foods.

Based on samples taken from 271 products collected between January 2017 and December 2017, the survey gives a snapshot of the range of acrylamide and furan levels in UK retail foods. Of the 271 products sampled, 269 were analysed for acrylamide and 120 analysed for furan. The results do not increase the FSAs concern about the risk to human health and therefore they will not be changing their advice to consumers.

This study is part of an on-going programme, in response to European Commission recommendations to all member states to investigate the levels of acrylamide and furan in food. As with previous years, the survey results for acrylamide and furan will be sent to European Food Standards Agency for collation, trend analysis and, in the case of furan, a risk assessment.

It is worth noting that where an acrylamide level has exceeded an indicative value in the survey, the FSA will ask the relevant local authority to investigate with the food business on what action may have already been taken to limit acrylamide formation and to see whether further action is possible.

However, as the FSA points out, indicative values are performance indicators only and used to verify the effectiveness of actions businesses have taken to keep levels as low as reasonably achievable. They are not a maximum level and will not be used for enforcement purposes.

Acrylamide is a chemical that is created when many foods, particularly starchy foods like potatoes and bread, are cooked for long periods at high temperatures, such as when baking, frying, grilling, toasting and roasting.

Furan can be produced in food and drink when naturally occurring sugars, polyunsaturated fats and ascorbic acid (vitamin c) degrade when they are heat treated.

You can download the report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/yarply8n>

## FRANCE TO BAN TITANIUM DIOXIDE

French policymakers have prepared an amendment to draft law as part of the General States of the Food Industry that allows it, if necessary, to ban titanium dioxide and its use in food by the end of 2018. The additive has no nutritional value and “its only virtue is aesthetic”, the French government have said.

Listed as E 171 in Europe, titanium dioxide is a colouring, mainly used in sweets, chewing gum, bakery and sauces to give a white, opaque or cloudy effect. It is also a principal component in sun cream because it reflects UV light, and is used in toothpaste and paint.

According to a 2012 study, it is one of the five most common engineered nanomaterials used in daily consumer products, including food. Nanomaterials offer many new food industry applications - for instance they can make products creamier without the need to increase the fat content, intensify flavours and show when food begins to go off. However, the UN's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified it as a possible human carcinogen.

Some French confectionery manufacturers have already phased out the colouring substance – a move which the French government is determined to highlight as best practice.

However, functionally-equivalent alternatives to the colouring can be hard to find. Titanium dioxide possesses quite unique properties, as its refractive index gives it a high level of opacity and whiteness, which other materials do not have. Other techniques for imparting opacity and whiteness to food products are being sought by food manufacturers, but they may not be as technically effective as titanium dioxide.

## FIPRONIL UPDATE

Following a monitoring programme put in place after widespread detection of fipronil residues in eggs last summer, a recent report has shown that more than one in seven egg and chicken samples submitted by member states to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) contained fipronil residues exceeding legal limits. The European Commission Maximum Residue Level (MRL) for fipronil in eggs and poultry meat is 0.005 mg/kg (5µg/kg).



Member States provided results for 5,439 samples of eggs and chicken muscle/fat which were analysed for fipronil and other active substances proposed by the European Commission in view of potential misuse in poultry farms against red mites. Analysis showed 742 of them collected between September and November 2017 contained residues in quantities exceeding legal limits.

These came from the Netherlands (664 samples), Italy (40), Germany (13), Poland (11), Hungary (six), France (five), Slovenia (two) and Greece (one). Malta, Lithuania and Sweden did not provide data.

Food affected was mainly chicken eggs (including products of egg yolk and white) and fat of laying hens. Quantifiable residues were most frequently in chicken eggs (467 samples) produced in the Netherlands, followed by fat of laying hens (184 samples) from the same country.

574 out of 2,540 suspect samples contained residues above the legal limit and of 2,899 random samples, 168 exceeded the limit. Samples above the MRL were mostly fipronil with unprocessed chicken eggs (601 samples), fat of laying hens (134), muscle of laying hens (five) as well as dried egg powder (two).

Meanwhile another major fipronil incident has been reported in Germany, with eggs originating from the Netherlands.

Eggs from an organic laying hen farm in the Netherlands were sampled in the German city of Vechta and found to contain 0.014; 0.019 and 0.007 mg / kg fipronil. The Fipronil residues detected did not exceed levels considered by the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) as potentially harmful to health. However, an independent analysis from a second laboratory confirmed contamination with fipronil in 73,545 eggs.

From 17 May to 4 June, 97,200 eggs from the Netherlands were delivered to the German packing station, of which around 73,000 were put on sale. Authorities said 98% of the eggs were supplied to the retail trade in Niedersachsen, Baden-Württemberg, Hessen, Bayern, Schleswig-Holstein and Nordrhein-Westfalen.

The British Egg Industry Council have expressed their concern that the initial issues following the product recalls last year have not been thoroughly resolved. They have asked the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to take decisive action to protect UK food businesses and called for random testing of all imported eggs and egg products.

A spokeswoman from the FSA said: “At present, we do not have any evidence to suggest that affected eggs have been distributed to the UK. We are monitoring the situation closely and are in touch with the relevant authorities in Germany.”

Meanwhile, Belgian police raided the country's food safety agency (AFSCA) in relation to the fipronil incident- with Brussels prosecutors saying that the search concerned suspicion of dissemination of false information relating to the contamination of eggs by fipronil.

## STUDY ON ZINC IN CANNED FOODS RETRACTED

A study reporting high levels of zinc in canned foods, particularly tuna, has been retracted. The study measured levels of zinc in canned tuna, asparagus and chicken. It concluded that, based on the results, a meal containing typical amounts of tuna could contain 996 mg of zinc.

However, it was then found that, due to a miscalculation, the actual figure should have been 2.1 mg zinc – below the recommended daily allowance of 9.5 mg for men and 7 mg for women.

Unfortunately, the retraction came too late for news providers such as The Daily Mail to pull back reports that canned foods contained 'dangerous levels of zinc' that could be 'wreaking havoc with people's digestive systems'.

Zinc is an essential mineral that helps with many bodily functions, including making new cells and healing wounds. High doses can reduce the amount of copper the body can absorb, which could lead to anaemia and weakening of the bones.



## FURTHER RESTRICTIONS ON NEONICOTINOIDS AGREED

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), George Eustice MP, Lord Gardiner of Kimble, and The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP recently published a news story following a vote by EU Member States to ban the outdoor use of three neonicotinoids - Clothianidin, Imidacloprid and Thiamethoxam. The UK voted in favour of the proposals to further restrict these neonicotinoids.

The current restrictions (their use is banned for oilseed rape, spring cereals and sprays for winter cereals, but they can be used to treat sugar beet, various horticultural crops and as seed treatments for winter cereals) will stay in place until the new measures come into force following a phasing out period of around eight months, giving farmers and businesses time to adjust. Unless the scientific evidence changes, the government will maintain these increased restrictions post-Brexit.

The UK reserves the right to consider emergency authorisations but will only do so where there is a real need for the products and the risk to bees and other pollinators is sufficiently low.

You can read the news story in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8syxln2>

## EC APPROVES DANISH NATIONAL PROVISION FOR NITRITE USE IN MEAT PRODUCTS

Commission Decision (EU) 2018/702 of 8th May 2018 concerning national provisions notified by Denmark on the addition of nitrite to certain meat products was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L118/7, 14/05/2018.

On 10th November 2017, Denmark had notified the Commission of its intention to maintain national provisions on the use of nitrite additives in meat products that differ from Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008. In support of its notification, Denmark submitted information that includes data on consumption and imports of meat products, exposure to nitrites, analysis of nitrites in meat products, prevalence of botulism and updated risk assessment from the Technical University of Denmark (DTU) National Food Institute.

The Danish provisions are more stringent than the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 in so far that they lay down lower maximum added amounts than for several types of products (in many cases 60 mg/kg) and in so far as they do not allow the placing on the market of certain traditional meat products on the basis of maximum residual levels. The Commission considers that the Danish national provisions can be approved until 8 May 2021, applying to both domestic products and products made in other Member States.

You can read the document in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y765evso>

## EXTENSION OF USE FOR THAUMATIN (E957) AS FLAVOUR ENHANCER IN SAUCES & SNACKS

Commission Regulation (EU) 2018/677 of 3rd May 2018 amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the use of thaumatin (E 957) as a flavour enhancer in certain food categories was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L114/10, 04/05/2018.

On 12th November 2014 an application was submitted for the extension of use of thaumatin (E 957) as a flavour enhancer in several food categories at specific use levels. The use of thaumatin as a flavour enhancer improves the organoleptic properties of savoury food products and can enhance the existing umami and savoury taste in sauces and snacks, making food products more appealing for human taste.

On 13 November 2015 the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) issued a scientific opinion on the safety of proposed extensions of use and use levels of E 957 as a food additive. EFSA concluded, based on the existing toxicological evaluations, that the proposed extension of uses and changes to use levels would not represent a safety concern. In the Commission's view it was therefore appropriate to authorise the use of thaumatin (E 957) as a flavour enhancer in products of food categories 12.6 'Sauces' and 15.1 'Potato-, cereal-, flour- or starch-based snacks' at a maximum level of 5 mg/kg in each food category. Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 has therefore been amended accordingly.

The Regulation came into force on 24th May 2018 and can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybqdg2kr>

## REVIEW OF THE EXISTING MAXIMUM RESIDUE LEVELS FOR GLYPHOSATE

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published on 17th May 2018 a reasoned opinion on a review of the existing maximum residue levels for glyphosate according to Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No 396/2005. Based on the assessment of the available data, MRL proposals were derived and a consumer risk assessment was carried out. Although no apparent risk to consumers was identified, some information required by the regulatory framework was missing. Therefore, the consumer risk assessment is considered indicative only and some MRL proposals derived by EFSA still require further consideration by risk managers.

You can read the review here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybwverww>



## SCOPAFF (NOVEL FOOD AND TOXICOLOGICAL SAFETY) MEETING REPORT PUBLISHED

The Summary Report of the The Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (SCoPAFF) (Novel Food and Toxicological Safety) meeting held on 17th April 2018, has been published. The Committee discussed amongst other things:

- Acrylamide - guidance, replacement of Commission Recommendation 2013/647/EU on indicative levels for acrylamide and monitoring in foods such as crisps, roasted nuts, dried fruit and certain bakery, potato and cereal products.
- PAHs in traditionally smoked meat and meat products and fish and fish products
- Mercury levels in fish
- 3-MCPD levels in food supplements, baby foods and processed cereal-based foods for children
- Monitoring of mineral oil hydrocarbons in foods and food contact materials
- Pyrrolizidine alkaloids in tea, herbal infusions, food supplements and honey
- Reinforced control on the presence of hydrocyanic acid in apricot kernels;
- Titanium dioxide (E171) and the possible need for the suspension of its placing on the market/use in all food of European origin and measures for suspension of third country imports containing it.

You can read the report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/yaazy4y7>

# ALLERGENS

## BEYOND THE 'BIG 14' – A LOOK AT PEAS



Supporting people at risk of severe allergies

The following article has kindly been provided by David Reading OBE, Founder and Honorary Vice-President of the Anaphylaxis Campaign.

The prevalence of food allergies has risen dramatically in the last quarter of a century and it is well-known in the food industry that the main culprits are common allergens such as peanuts, milk and egg. EU law gives special status to 14 allergens, which must always be declared and highlighted when they appear in pre-packed food. But what about foods outside “the Big 14”? Are there any that deserve special attention among food companies?

Recently the son of a member of the Anaphylaxis Campaign suffered a moderately severe allergic reaction to a frozen dessert. He was not allergic to any of the common allergens so on the face of it the reaction was a mystery. But his mother looked closely at the label and realised the dessert contained pea protein. The boy had a known allergy to green peas but the presence of pea protein in this product was quite unexpected. Some allergy clinics have reported seeing increasing numbers of people allergic to peas, and reactions can be severe.

A few years ago, the Anaphylaxis Campaign’s information staff noticed that some continental companies were taking advantage of the high protein content in peas and using pea protein in a wide range of foods including meat, fish, baked goods, soups, sauces, cereals and snacks.

Some people with allergy to green peas may have problems with other legumes, such as chick peas, kidney beans, lentils or peanuts. This is because of a process known as ‘cross-reactivity’ – where the proteins in one food or substance share characteristics with those in another food or substance. This is most likely to occur when there are close taxonomic relationships between the plant or animal origins of the foods. Allergy to legumes, including green peas, appears to be relatively common in children from an Indian sub continental ethnic background.

Symptoms reported include nettle rash (otherwise known as hives or urticaria), facial swelling and asthma. Rarely, there may be anaphylaxis – which is the most severe form of allergy and may involve breathing difficulties and even collapse and unconsciousness.

Authors of a Spanish study reported in 1995 that pea resulted in a 54-year-old woman suffering asthma following exposure to the cooking vapours.

The fact that processed foods can involve complex recipes presents obvious hazards for people with food allergies, particularly if their symptoms are severe. The message for these people is clear: whatever you are allergic to, read the label of every product you buy.

*David Reading OBE is the Founder and Honorary Vice-President of the Anaphylaxis Campaign, the only UK wide charity solely focused on supporting people at risk of severe allergic reactions. They provide tailored advice to the food industry through corporate membership and expert-led conferences to support you to protect your customers. Their next Conference on 18th Sept 2018 in London will address the topic of emerging allergens and Dr Michael Radcliffe, Consultant in Allergy Medicine, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust will be speaking on ‘Food allergy in the real world’. Book your tickets online at [www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/corporate](http://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/corporate)*



## SPAIN TO ADOPT GLUTEN-FREE EUROPEAN LICENCING SYSTEM

The Federation of Coeliac Associations of Spain (FACE) has pledged to use the European licencing system Espiga Barrada (the Crossed Grain Trademark) from 2020.

According to the Association of European Coeliac Societies (AOECS), which administers the system, the Espiga Barrada symbol is regarded as the best guarantee in the countries that it is used and easily recognizable when crossing the language barriers.

The Crossed Grain Trademark is registered and protected across the European Union, Switzerland, Norway, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina. It guarantees that food producers in these countries comply with the strict production standards required by the AOECS, which include an annual audit of the manufacturing facilities to ensure that the gluten content is kept to a maximum of 20ppm throughout the manufacturing process.

At present, it is estimated there are five million potential customers of gluten-free products in Europe. 1% of the population is estimated to suffer from coeliac disease, while the number of healthy people who have made the lifestyle decision to eliminate gluten from their diets is growing rapidly.

## BENEFITS OF PROBIOTICS IN RELATION TO PEANUT ALLERGY EXPLORED

Researchers in Australia are continuing to explore the benefits of probiotics in relation to peanut allergy, spurred on by the findings of a follow-up study 4 years after their first published randomised controlled trial (RCT).

Professor Mimi Tang and her colleagues from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute pioneered probiotic and peanut immunotherapy (PPOIT) treatment in order to try to combat the rising number of allergy cases, their impact on quality of life, and the burden it places on healthcare costs.

An initial RCT in 2013 provided the probiotic *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* CGMCC 1.3724 and peanut oral immunotherapy — essentially small amounts of the allergen — (PPOIT) to allergic children aged one to 10. The primary outcome was assessed to see if there was 'sustained unresponsiveness' to the allergy two to five weeks after the discontinuation of treatment. At the end of the trial, 82% of children who had received the PPOIT were deemed tolerant of peanuts.

The findings were published in the *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology* and concluded: This is the first randomised placebo-controlled trial evaluating the novel co-administration of a probiotic and PPOIT, and assessing sustained unresponsiveness in children with a peanut allergy. PPOIT was effective in inducing possible sustained unresponsiveness and immune changes that suggest modulation of the peanut-specific immune response.

The subjects peanut intake and adverse reactions in the four years after treatment cessation were then systematically documented with a structured questionnaire administered by allergy nurses.

The study found that the majority of children who had gained initial tolerance were still eating peanuts as part of their normal diet (80% versus 4% in the placebo group) and that many had passed a further challenge test confirming long-term tolerance of the product (70%). This led the researchers to conclude that PPOIT provides long-lasting clinical benefits and persistent suppression of the allergic immune response to peanuts.

The team is now embarking on a third-phase multi-centre, RCT of PPOIT in inducing desensitisation or tolerance in children with peanut allergy, compared with OIT alone, and with placebo.



## MRC DEVELOPS NEW TEST FOR PEANUT ALLERGY

Medical Research Council scientists have developed a new laboratory test to diagnose peanut allergy. The test apparently has 98% specificity and, unlike current options, it doesn't run the risk of false-positives or causing allergic reactions. Members may wish to follow up on this research. Whilst there is no indication of commercial development at this stage, it looks promising.

You can find further information here: <https://tinyurl.com/yc6l8tkj>

## COELIAC UK LAUNCHES £750K GLUTEN-FREE RESEARCH FUND

A £750,000 fund for research into gluten-free food production has been made available to UK food manufacturers by the charity Coeliac UK. Grants ranging from £50,000 to £250,000 are available, aimed at researchers and businesses investing in projects to help people suffering from coeliac disease. The fund has received an injection of £500,000 from Innovate UK, which, in addition to £250,000 from the charity, will support this new research competition.

The aim is to bring industry and researchers together to make improvements in three priority areas, for people living with coeliac disease:

- Coeliac disease diagnostics
- Enhanced quality of gluten free foods
- Digitally supported self-care

Although there is a diagnosis pathway for coeliac disease with blood tests and an endoscopy with biopsy, it relies on a person continuing to eat gluten – the very thing that is making them ill. People are seeking alternative methods of diagnosis where ongoing ingestion of gluten is not necessary or where tests are less invasive than endoscopy and biopsy.

Over the last decade the variety and quality of gluten free products has vastly improved however they continue to be expensive and can have a poorer nutrient profile. There is an ongoing need for further innovation in gluten free staple foods, this could include; novel ingredients, foods with improved nutrient profiles and desired flavour texture characteristics, new methods of preservation, innovation in processing and manufacturing efficiency for lower cost options and technologies to improve shelf life.

You can read more about the fund here: <https://tinyurl.com/y73udooe>

## COCHINEAL FOUND TO CAUSE SERIOUS ALLERGIC REACTIONS

Cochineal dye which is used to give a red colour in food, drinks and cosmetics has been found to cause allergic actions such as redness, itching, swelling and anaphylaxis in a small number of cases, Japanese researchers say. Most allergic reactions happen immediately or within an hour.

According to the Japanese researchers at Oita University, Liquor such as Campari and processed food including macaroons have been linked to causing allergic reactions.

They conducted a review of 29 reported cases in Japan that happened in 1999 to 2016. Besides European products, the researchers found that local Japanese products such as fish-meat sausage, strawberry milk or juice can also cause allergies. Notably, all patients diagnosed were adult females in their 20s to 60s. Some of them did not have any prior allergic history, while some had allergic history of atopic dermatitis or allergic rhinitis.

All except three of the patients had anaphylaxis with symptoms including rashes, swelling, shortness of breath, vomiting, light-headedness, and low blood pressure. The researchers also believe that as all those diagnosed were females this suggests that patients are sensitised by cosmetics containing cochineal dye, whereas immediate allergic reactions occur after ingestion of food containing cochineal dye.

The number of reports of food allergy associated with cochineal dye has been increasing in Japan since 2012. Researchers believe that this could be a result of an alert published in 2011 by the Consumer Affairs Agency of the Japanese Government to call attention to cochineal dye allergy. Another possible reason could be a decline in gaining immunity to the cochineal dye allergen in foods during childhood but more frequent exposure to the allergen during adulthood.

Outside Japan, 56 cases were reported in academic journals published in 1981 to 2015. Most had allergic reactions from both food consumption and cosmetics use. Similar with Japan, an overwhelming number of patients were female (50), three were males, while gender of the remaining three patients is unknown. The patients were between 19 to 67 years old. In these cases, Campari remained a main source of food allergen, while cakes, candies, fruit juice, artificial crab are also common sources of allergen.

Although cochineal dye is a natural red colourant extracted from the body and eggs of dried female cochineal insects, its main component (carminic acid) usually contains contaminating proteins, including a 38-kDa protein thought to be the primary allergen.

In Japan, carmine, an aluminium- or calcium-chelated product of carminic acid (which is the main component of cochineal dye), cannot be used as a food additive, although it can be used in cosmetics and pharmaceuticals. Whereas in Europe, there is no regulation for the upper limit of protein contamination for cochineal dye.

Peru is the biggest exporter of cochineal dye. The dye is also produced in Spain, Africa and Australia.

# ANIMAL WELFARE

## DATA FOR NON-STUNNED ANIMAL EXPORTS RAISES CONCERNS

The British Veterinary Association (BVA) have raised concerns over the lack of information on UK exports of meat from animals that have not been stunned before slaughter.

Citing figures from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) that 22% of sheep and goats were not stunned before slaughter, an increase from 15% in 2013, the BVA warned: "This lack of information has been brought into sharp relief by the recent government announcement on a trade deal with Saudi Arabia that could greatly increase the exports of British lamb and other meat, some of which may be from non-stun slaughter."

The BVA is calling for all animals to be stunned before slaughter and has been urging an end to non-stun slaughter in the UK for several years. If non-stun slaughter is permitted, the BVA believes that non-stun meat should only be provided to match domestic demand and not exported for consumption.

It suggested that the UK follow the example of its European neighbours. Other EU countries that allow non-stun slaughter have measures in place to limit the export of non-stun meat to help ensure that meat killed by this method is for the domestic market. For example, Germany requires that abattoirs apply for a licence by defining the number of animals to undergo non-stun slaughter to meet local demand only.

BVA president John Fishwick said: "Each year millions of animals in the UK are not stunned before slaughter and BVA will continue to push for an end to non-stun slaughter in the interests of animal welfare. The latest FSA figures suggest that a sizeable proportion of sheep and goats that are slaughtered in the UK are done so without stunning and that this seems to outstrip the requirements of the religious communities who consume meat that has been slaughtered in this way. It is difficult to unpick the possible factors that contribute to this mismatch but an essential step to understanding this better would be to provide data on how much, if any, non-stun meat is exported abroad. With Brexit on the horizon and in the light of announcements about export deals with non-EU countries, there is a pressing need for clarity on the quantities and destinations of exports of non-stun meat. While not illegal, if meat from non-stun religious slaughter is exported, we consider this to be outside the spirit of the legislation which allows non-stun as a derogation from the law to meet the needs of religious communities."

Meanwhile, the European Court of Justice have issued a press release confirming its decision that ritual slaughter without stunning may take place only in an approved slaughterhouse: <https://tinyurl.com/y9s4lxg5>

## AVIAN INFLUENZA LATEST UPDATE

Defra have recently issued an updated rapid risk assessment on the finding of H5N6 HPAI in wild birds in England, Scotland and Wales. The report can be found here <https://tinyurl.com/yajf8vjd> but to summarise:

- Same strain of virus detected sporadically in wild water birds across North Europe.
- Note: reported numbers of H5N6 have not been as high as last year with H5N8 HPAI and species have been different.
- Very few poultry or captive or wild bird cases - suggests primarily an infection of wild birds.
- 20 separate sites with 101 wild birds testing positive - dabbling ducks, swans, geese, raptors, gulls and other waterfowl.
- No cases in commercial or non-commercial poultry in the UK this year
- Poultry sector retains its OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) disease free status.

This assessment suggests that there is now a decrease in the likelihood of finding more cases in wild birds in England and Wales, while Scotland is still considered to have an even lower likelihood. The risk level for wild birds is therefore reduced to LOW in comparison to the previous national risk of incursion level (HIGH).

The length of time since a positive bird has been detected, together with the departure of the wintering waterfowl and the environmental conditions (notably higher temperature) suggests that the risk of virus still being present in the environment or circulating in waterfowl/ wild birds is greatly diminished since the last report. The risk level for the direct and indirect exposure to poultry is now considered to be LOW both for housed and free-range birds although it is still recommended that poultry keepers remain vigilant to any notifiable avian disease and continue to maintain strong biosecurity.



## BLUETONGUE LATEST UPDATE

Defra have recently issued an updated outbreak assessment regarding Bluetongue virus (BTV-4) in France which can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yascsp2a>

Since Defra's last report on the 4th January 2018, France has recently reported 23 new cases of BTV-4 in various regions and more than 500 cases of BTV-8. Of note is a new case of BTV-4 in Normandy, on the northern French coast. However, whilst this is the nearest known case of BTV-4 to the UK, it is still over 150 km away and therefore there are no restriction zones in the UK for bluetongue.

Over the winter, France declared low vector activity seasons in several regions, but the majority of the country was not reported as having a low vector activity season. The UK vector season, particularly in the South of England has recently started (end of April) and average temperatures in Northern France and Southern England had been below or on the threshold for vector transmission (12°C). To date, no outbreaks of BTV-4 with clinical signs have been detected in mainland France.

Defra advise that trade in susceptible species may continue to other Member States, provided the animals are vaccinated or naturally immune against both BTV-4 and BTV-8 prior to leaving the restriction zone and transport has been treated with insecticide. Some countries may agree under a bilateral arrangement to accept animals which have not been vaccinated or are not naturally immune but are moved during the low vector activity season. However, the UK has no such arrangement with France and therefore these animals are not accepted by the UK for trade purposes.

## CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE LATEST UPDATE

Defra have recently issued an updated outbreak assessment regarding Chronic Wasting Disease in Europe: <https://tinyurl.com/ya8yphca>

Back in March 2016, cervid Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE), or Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) was reported in reindeer in Europe for the first time with a case in Norway. This report provides an update on the surveillance results in Norway

There have been no detections of CWD in Europe outside Norway and Finland to date and no cases of cervid TSEs in the UK. Since live reindeer are not imported into the UK, it is assessed that the overall risk to the UK is negligible to very low which reflects the uncertainty around the different possible sources of infection and similar pathways.

## AFRICAN SWINE FEVER LATEST UPDATE

Defra have recently issued an updated outbreak assessment regarding African Swine Fever in Europe: <https://tinyurl.com/yc6wjrb8>

Since Defra's last update in December last year, the numbers of cases of African Swine Fever (ASF) reported in wild boar in Europe and in domestic pigs and farmed wild boar in western Eurasia have increased. Of particular note is a new case in a wild boar in Hungary with the most likely source being contaminated meat or food waste brought in by non-EU workers. Cases also continue to be reported in Poland and the Czech republic.

Commercially produced meat from affected regions cannot be traded as fresh or frozen meat to other member states. However, there are clearly concerns around pork products from non-EU countries entering the EU in passenger luggage and then being discarded in areas where wild boar are present.

The current risk of ASF introduction to the UK shows no signs of decreasing and is therefore still considered to be "low". The ASF virus persists well in cool temperatures and therefore winter is often a season of increased risk when the persistence of the virus is compounded by greater difficulty in cleansing and disinfecting vehicles.

## RESPONSES TO TSE CONSULTATION PUBLISHED

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) have recently published the summary of the responses to its consultation on amending the TSE regulations in England and Wales. A total of 17 responses were received and now changes will be made to the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies Regulations for England (2010) and Wales (2008).

The amendments will make both regulations consistent with EU rules and provide appropriate enforcement powers. Once the changes are drafted they will be laid before Parliament later in 2018.

The summary of responses, government response and next steps can be viewed in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybn2bf5g>

## FIRST ACCREDITED STANDARD FOR EUROPEAN PIG WELFARE LAUNCHED

UK-based continental meat supplier Winterbotham Darby has claimed to be the first company to gain accreditation for pig welfare across its European farms.

The 'Pig Module' accreditation will be applied across the suppliers' farms in Belgium, Germany, Spain, France and Italy. It introduces higher welfare standards, covering antibiotic usage, medicine, feed, veterinary procedures, biosecurity and pest control, to meet current UK supermarket and retail requirements.

The standard was written by animal welfare specialists at Winterbotham Darby, then presented to its technical working group. Following sign-off there were reviews and farm audits by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). The UKAS-accredited EFP Pig Module, will be audited by certification body KIWA Agri Food, on behalf of Winterbotham Darby.

According to Winterbotham Darby, changes in legislation and the retailers' code of practice had prompted the accreditation route. Winterbotham Darby technical director David Houghton said the accreditation was a tiered system, which the supplier could use to encourage farmers to continually improve standards.

## RESPONSES TO WELFARE OF LAYING HENS CONSULTATION PUBLISHED

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) have recently issued the summary of the responses following the consultation on the code of practice for the welfare of laying hens.

The draft code was placed in Parliament on 5th June 2018. If there are no objections from Parliament, it will come into force in August 2018. You can view the summary of responses here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybfyhjmu>

## LOW ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE STUNNING KILL METHOD APPROVED

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/723 of 16 May 2018 amending Annexes I and II to Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing as regards the approval of low atmospheric pressure stunning was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L122/11, 17/05/2018.

The Commission has now updated the Regulation to include permission and conditions for use of this kill method for the stunning of broiler chickens. This followed a request from a private business operator and the subsequent opinion of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

You can view the regulation in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/yb6ew25d>

## REGULATIONS ON MANDATORY USE OF CCTV IN SLAUGHTERHOUSES IN ENGLAND

The Mandatory Use of Closed Circuit Television in Slaughterhouses (England) Regulations 2018, SI 2018 No. 556 have now entered into force (on 4 May 2018) for the duty to install and operate a closed circuit TV system (CCTV) and retain images and information. The remainder of the regulations will enter into force on 5th November 2018.

These Regulations introduce requirements for slaughterhouses in England to install and operate a CCTV system in all areas where live animals are present and require the retention of the CCTV footage and associated data for a period of 90 days. The Regulations also require the Secretary of State to review the operation and effect of the Regulations and publish a report by 4th May 2023 and every five years thereafter.

The regulations can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yap4jkmf>



# BREXIT

## CUSTOMS AND REGULATORY ARRANGEMENTS IN THE FUTURE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The UK Parliament have published a research paper entitled “Brexit: Customs and Regulatory Arrangements in the Future Partnership Agreement”. This paper considers the proposals the UK Government has made to satisfy the simultaneous objectives to leave the EU Customs Union but have a cooperative ‘customs arrangement’ following Brexit; and to leave the Single Market but maintain trade that is ‘as frictionless as possible’ following Brexit. The full report can be downloaded here: <https://tinyurl.com/y92ro9qz>

## BREXIT DEBATE PACK PUBLISHED

The UK Parliament have published a ‘debate pack’ on Brexit ahead of the Opposition Day debate which was held in the Commons Chamber on 16th May 2018.

The pack outlines where we are now with the Brexit negotiations, where we are with the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill and also provides a number of useful links to relevant Library Briefing Papers: <https://tinyurl.com/yanez7lm>

## DEFRA REASSURES THAT STANDARDS WILL BE MAINTAINED POST-BREXIT

Speaking at a British Meat Processors Association (BMPA) conference in London, Defra Minister of State George Eustice said current food processing standards will be maintained once the UK leaves the EU.

When questioned about the potential for the British market being “flooded with cheaper imports”, with US poultry given as an example, Eustice said “the Government will not water down standards in pursuit of a trade deal. We have standards that we will not abandon and we cannot get spooked about what other countries might ask for,” he said.

Eustice said although many businesses are expressing concern about the UK’s impending exit from the EU, he expected that there will be some consistency from later this year until 2020 as the Government negotiates the exit. He dismissed the suggestion that countries such as the US have the upper hand in talks saying that the US wants to have access to the UK market as much as we want access to the US. He also said it was a similar situation for the EU.

Eustice also expressed hope that labour issues would be resolved and that leaving [the EU] wouldn’t mean pulling up the drawbridge but rather help “set the numbers”.

## FSS EXPRESSES CONCERN FOR BREXIT FOOD SAFETY RISKS

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) has highlighted concerns over a potential drop in food safety and standards in the country once the UK leaves the EU.

Ross Finnie, chairman of FSS, wrote to the minister of UK Negotiations on Scotland’s Place in Europe, Michael Russell, highlighting his “concerns about the risks and potential detriment to consumers in Scotland” regarding the UK Government’s (UKG’s) proposals to take control of devolved responsibilities following Brexit, particularly relating to food standards. In his letter to the minister, he expressed fears that Scotland could be overlooked when it came to forming post-Brexit food safety regulation.

“Clearly, negotiations are ongoing between the Scottish and UK governments, but from the perspective of food safety and standards, it seems likely that UKG will argue the need for cross-UK consistency as being essential for trade once the UK leaves the EU, as regulatory assurance is intrinsic to securing trade deals. However, if those matters are reserved to the UKG to determine, it will be difficult for Scottish stakeholders’ voices to be heard, or for the needs of businesses or consumers in Scotland to be given priority. If the UKG’s proposals do proceed, then Scotland’s food regulator would lose its status as the policy-maker and competent authority in Scotland in areas where the UKG proposes restrictions on Scottish ministers and that competence has been conferred on FSS. In these areas, FSS would become subservient to the wishes of the UKG, and whichever Whitehall department it conferred competence on a UK basis. Such a reservation of competence would put Scotland in a significantly worse position than before FSS was established in 2015.”

In response to these concerns, Russell said: “While good progress has been made in agreeing where common frameworks across the UK may be appropriate in the future upon EU exit, it is essential that this is done on a basis of trust between the governments and where the Scottish Parliament agrees that is appropriate. It remains the Scottish government’s position that we are not opposed to common frameworks where these are in Scotland’s best interests. However, we will continue to defend the right of the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government to decide what those best interests are.”

## SCOTLAND WARNS OF DAMAGE TO RURAL BUSINESSES IF FREE MOVEMENT ENDS

Reducing access to seasonal labour and skills from the EU by ending free movement will damage businesses in every sector of the rural economy, Scottish rural economy secretary Fergus Ewing has warned.

He said research has shown that the agricultural sector has already experienced a shortage of seasonal non-UK workers of 15-20% last year. This is because many EU workers were choosing to leave the UK due to continued uncertainty about their status after Brexit, but also because seasonal EU workers could earn more in the Eurozone, due to the weak pound.

Another reason cited was that membership of the EU has helped improve employment conditions and social protections in the country of origin of many seasonal workers.

“Stakeholders have repeatedly highlighted the fact that seasonal non-UK workers provide a significant, valuable contribution to the rural economy and that filling the employment gap, post-Brexit will be extremely challenging. So it is concerning that the UK Secretary of State Michael Gove has failed to provide the complete clarity on future access to migrant agricultural workers, which he committed to by the end of March.”

He has called on the UK Government to end the ongoing uncertainty by committing to remaining in the EU single market and customs union.

## REPORT ON POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF BREXIT PUBLISHED

The EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee recently published a report on the potential impacts of Brexit on the price and availability of food for UK consumers. The report finds that even in the ‘best case scenario’, with no tariffs and few customs barriers, international rules would oblige the UK to conduct more customs and borders checks. An increase in tariffs could lead to significant price rises for consumers. You can read the report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9hbh95f>

## EFRA EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER AGRI-POLICY POST BREXIT

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Select Committee have called on government to ring-fence funding for farming post-Brexit, provide more detail on new support measures for farmers and ensure environmental and welfare standards are maintained on products entering Britain.

Once the UK leaves the EU, the government plans to implement a new system based on paying public money for public goods. However, the committee warned that without adequate funding to police an independent inspection regime, any such system would be flawed from the start and an effective minimum baseline of regulation must be ensured.

It repeated the need to improve country of origin labelling following the UK’s departure from the EU and introduce mandatory method of production labelling. It also recommended that government produce a farm productivity plan by May 2019.

The government published its agriculture consultation paper in February and results will inform the Agriculture Bill due later this year. The committee said the paper was ‘in many ways unfinished’ and lacked detail on levels of future funding and the design of a future agricultural support system. Evidence from agricultural businesses indicates they will face significant impacts from the proposed withdrawal of direct payments with the level varying by sector. MPs added that it lacks discussion of wider food policy and fails to link agricultural policy to wider public health goals and reducing diet-related diseases.

## UK RESPONDS ON THE FUTURE FOR FOOD, FARMING AND THE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) have announced that more than 44,000 responses were received on the government’s proposals for the future for food, farming and the environment once the UK leaves the EU.

Throughout the 10-week consultation, Defra hosted 17 events across the country alongside groups including the National Trust, NFU and the Eden Project, to hear first-hand from more than 1,250 representatives of the UK’s food and farming sectors.

The consultation included proposals to redirect payments under the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) which are based on the amount of land farmed, to a new system of paying farmers public money for public goods, principally their work to enhance the environment. It highlighted a number of public goods which could be supported such as biodiversity, high animal welfare standards and improved soil health.

Responses to the consultation will now be analysed carefully and the Government will publish a response shortly.

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

### 'MEAT BUSINESS WOMEN' LAUNCHES 'ONE TO WATCH' ANNUAL PRIZE

Industry networking group Meat Business Women has launched the 'One to Watch' annual prize. The winner of the 'One to Watch' initiative will receive a place on the 'Women Leaders' course at Cranfield University, worth over £4,000, in addition to selecting one of the Meat Business Committee as a mentor for 12 months.

Laura Ryan, founder of Meat Business Women, said: "Evidence shows that companies with gender-diverse boards achieve superior financial returns, are more resilient to group-think and benefit from women represented at all levels of management. Meat Business Women was established three years ago to assist in making the image, culture and landscape of the meat industry more attractive to female talent, skilfully improve networking and nurture new female entrants into the sector. We want to help build that pipeline of female talent for our industry and the 'One to Watch' prize will help us to do that. This prize is for an inspirational female who has made an incredible impact in her place of work in a very short period and the winner receives more than just a trophy".

'One to Watch' is an annual prize awarded to a female aged under 30 who has been working within the meat industry for up to five years. It is free to enter and applications are open until 31st August 2018. You can find more information, along with a link to download the application form here: <https://tinyurl.com/ychn4p9p>

### DEGREE LEVEL APPRENTICESHIP STANDARD FOR PACKAGING DUE TO LAUNCH NEXT YEAR

Packaging education in the UK, relating to food and drink, is set to improve dramatically, with at least one university-based degree apprenticeship course due to get off the ground next year. In a move welcomed by industry, the National Skills Academy for Food and Drink (NSAFD) is continuing to develop 'Packaging Professional' – a new degree-level apprenticeship standard.

The standard has been worked on by an industry group chaired by the head of packaging for confectionery at Nestlé's Product Technology Centre, and including Premier Foods, Bakkavor and Fera Science. Indicative numbers suggest a sustainable cohort for the next three years for one and potentially two universities with courses starting as early as January 2019.

You can read more about the NSAFD and the standard here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9m6x3vc>

### PEPSICO LAUNCHES €300,000 START-UP FUND

Drinks giant PepsiCo has launched a €300,000 (£263,713) grant to help fund food and drink start-ups operating in the nutrition space.

Part of the second year of the company's Nutrition Greenhouse incubator programme, PepsiCo is seeking to identify up to 10 emerging brands, with products aimed at European consumers. The selected companies will receive €20,000 (£17,580) in funding, as well as the opportunity to work alongside experts from the business' leading brands, including Quaker, Alvalle, Sunbites and Tropicana.

Entrepreneurs that get on to the programme will benefit from a six-month mentorship, including one-on-one pairing with PepsiCo executives. At the end of the programme, one winning company will be awarded a €100,000 (£87,904) prize to continue its expansion.

### BUSINESS CONDITIONS REMAIN STABLE IN FIRST QUARTER OF 2018

A new survey carried out by the Food and Drink Federation (FDF) has shown that despite rising production costs, the majority of UK food and drink manufacturers have reported stability in general business conditions in the first quarter of 2018.

The Q1 Business Confidence Survey showed that just over half (55%) of respondents believed that general business conditions remained the same as in the fourth quarter of 2017. 27% said that general conditions had deteriorated, while 18% had seen business conditions improve. 66% expected input prices to increase in 2018 while 52% predicted a rise in Consumer Price Inflation during the year. Analysing key impacts on food and drink businesses in 2018, 77% reported increased packaging costs, 72% reported increased ingredient costs and 52% saw energy costs rise.

Looking ahead, businesses earmarked the potential for increased domestic demand, investment in NPD and the growing interest in healthy foods as opportunities this year. On the negative side, increased ingredient costs, exchange rate volatility and the UK/EU situation were cited as risks in 2018.

## BRITISH POULTRY INDUSTRY LAUNCHES NEW APPRENTICESHIP STANDARD

A new apprenticeship standard developed in an effort to create a “pipeline to bring skilled workers into the sector and develop existing skills and talent” has been launched by The British poultry industry.

Applicable to those working in England, the apprenticeship is expected to place a greater emphasis on all-round development, which could include a work-based diploma and assessments which consider the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed for an apprentice to be properly trained. A higher-level apprenticeship targeted at farm and hatchery managers will be launched later this year and apprenticeships are also being developed across the food supply chain, including food science, butchery, processing and engineering.

NFU poultry board chairman Thomas Wornham said: “The poultry sector is an incredibly rewarding, innovative sector that can offer the next generation a fantastic career. These new apprenticeship standards will play a huge role in attracting new talent to our sector and allow us to develop our skills. Apprenticeships offer farmers an excellent way to recruit new people and develop their skills, and ensure farm businesses can continue to be productive, profitable and progressive.”

BPC chief executive Richard Griffiths said: “The new apprenticeship standards will help position us as a responsible food sector that is fit for the future and demonstrate how we are playing a vital role in shaping the future of young people. Recruiting, training and retaining high-calibre talent will not only take our sector from strength to strength, but will also bolster the heart of Britain’s food supply and secure it for generations to come.”

British Poultry Training chair Andrew Brodie added: “Our vision for the new model of poultry apprenticeships is one which delivers tangible skills and mentoring in the workplace, leads to a return on investment for the employer and provides full competence for the apprentice. Through the new apprenticeship standards poultry businesses will be able to review and put in place training plans to develop their whole workforce, effectively grow their skills base and offer great apprenticeship opportunities to Britain’s school leavers.”

## FOOD SAFETY AND ZONOOSES

### CAMPYLOBACTER ON CHICKEN EGGS

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has now determined the level of knowledge about the occurrence of Campylobacter on chicken eggs and is giving advice on how infections can be prevented.

It’s easy to understand why the detection of chemicals in eggs, such as the insecticide fipronil, caused such an uproar recently but what is largely unknown is that the most common bacterial pathogen for food infections, Campylobacter, is also to be found on chicken eggs.

Roughly 70,000 cases of Campylobacter enteritis are reported to the Robert Koch-Institute every year, with a slight increase expected. Furthermore, there is a large number of unreported cases. The disease- induced by bacteria usually originates from chicken intestines in which they live but cannot cause harm. These bacteria are often transferred to humans via insufficiently cooked chicken meat. Although the infection risk through chicken eggs is estimated to be much lower, infection can be spread through bacteria-containing excrement which sticks to the eggshell. Food companies should therefore reduce the contamination of chicken eggs with chicken excrement through hygiene measures during production and packaging.

“The risk of infection can be reduced even further by maintaining good kitchen hygiene,” explains BfR President, Professor Dr. Dr. Andreas Hensel. “Kitchen utensils and hands should be washed thoroughly after contact with raw eggs. And if dishes that have been prepared with eggs are heated sufficiently, Campylobacter and other disease pathogens are killed reliably.”

Campylobacter bacteria causes intestinal inflammation (enteritis) accompanied by stomach ache, fever and – sometimes even bloody – diarrhoea

You can read the opinion in more detail here: <https://tinyurl.com/yconoevj>



## EU EXPERTS RANK FOODBORNE PARASITE IMPORTANCE

*Echinococcus multilocularis* and *Toxoplasma gondii* are the most important foodborne parasites in terms of public health for Europe, according to a study carried out by The European Network for Foodborne Parasites (Euro-FBP). The work, carried out by a team of 35 European parasitologists was based on the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and World Health Organisation (WHO)'s 2012 recommendation to repeat global ranking of foodborne parasites on a regional level.

The team ranked FBP in terms of importance for Europe based on a set of criteria. The multi-criteria decision analyses (MCDA) method, also applied by FAO/WHO, was used as well as two methodologies (direct rating and swing weighting).

For *E. multilocularis*, the criteria 'geographical distribution', 'morbidity severity', and 'case-fatality ratio' contributed to the majority of the ranking score. It ranked first or second in all regions except Western Europe where it was seventh. For *E. multilocularis*, the cause of alveolar echinococcosis, there is a lack of illness cases in some parts of Europe while it is endemic in some countries in Western Europe.

For *T. gondii* the 'number of foodborne illness cases' and 'geographical distribution' gave more than 50% of the ranking score. *T. gondii* was considered the top priority in Western Europe and was third to fifth in other regions.

The position of *Cryptosporidium* spp. and *T. spiralis* showed the greatest variability among the top-10 ranked parasites within Europe and foodborne parasites considered of greatest importance to Europe differed from those listed globally, said researchers. For example, *Taenia solium* ranked first in the global ranking but tenth in Europe. This is because *T. solium* is practically absent in Europe but is common in many Asian, South American and African countries.

Parasites ranking second (*E. granulosus*), third (*E. multilocularis*) and fourth (*T. gondii*) at the global level were also among the top four in the European ranking. The biggest difference was for *T. cruzi*, ranking 10th globally and 21st in Europe.

You can read the research paper in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/yb5evvz5>

## FSA UPDATE ON REVIEW OF MEAT CUTTING PLANTS AND COLD STORES

The Food Standards Agency recently issued an interim update regarding the review of cutting plants and cold stores, which was to be tabled at their board meeting on 20th June.

The update summarises the progress made by the review to date (phase one) and highlights priority focus areas for the second phase from June to September. It outlines the activities undertaken by the FSA and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) from announcement to launch including the publication of terms of reference, meetings with a range of industry organisations, progress letters to stakeholders and the correspondence and engagement with Local Authorities.

According to the plan, Phase 2 (June to September) will validate findings from Phase 1, and explore the implications these have for food businesses, working with the sector to identify and assess options for improvement, develop recommendations, and prepare an implementation delivery plan.

Also mentioned is a planned survey of Food Business Operators (FBOs) to gather feedback on areas such as competency levels of staff, relationships with regulatory authorities, conduct and effectiveness of inspections and participation and effectiveness of industry assurance schemes (both retailer and third-party assurance).

The update includes (on pages 9-10) a table outlining the complex overlap of roles and responsibilities between the LAs and the FSA on aspects of traceability, use by dates and food standards. As the report acknowledges, stakeholders find this dual responsibility confusing and uncoordinated. Point 35 onwards, highlights just how unfocussed the inspection/audit regime is - with some evidence of inconsistency in training for officers carrying out approval and limited guidance. The guidance that is available for LA's and the FSA and FSS predominantly focuses on hygiene issues, rather than durability and there is no specific guidance on checks that should be carried out on cold stores following their approval.

The FSA concludes however, that current meat industry practices do not present a systemic risk to public health but the overall system of assurance and regulation does require modernisation.

The interim update can be read in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8ajcx9p>



## HEPATITIS A: OUTBREAK AND DEATH FROM CONTAMINATED FROZEN POMEGRANATE

Six EU countries (Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK) have reported 42 confirmed and 50 possible hepatitis A cases in a potential foodborne outbreak. Cases are infected with one of two hepatitis A virus (HAV) genotype IA strains historically epidemiologically associated with Morocco. For the 42 confirmed infections, 39 were infected in the EU but only three have travel history to Morocco. Thirteen people have been hospitalised but no deaths reported.

Based on molecular findings in returning travellers from Morocco and in residents, it is likely these strains have been circulating in the country since at least 2011 and that transmission has been ongoing until recently. However, the two outbreak strains are not related to those associated with strains implicated in two foodborne outbreaks in 2012–14, which were linked to frozen strawberries and mixed berries.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) said although the source is unknown it is likely to be foodborne or via person-to-person transmission. “Epidemiological investigations are currently ongoing in some of the affected EU countries to test several hypotheses. Considering that the source of the outbreak has not been definitively identified, there is a risk of further cases as part of this outbreak” said the agency.

Meanwhile, a woman in South Australia recently died from Hepatitis A contracted from contaminated frozen pomegranate arils. In April, Creative Gourmet recalled frozen pomegranate arils sold at Coles supermarkets after the product was linked with 11 cases of hepatitis; nationally, there were 24 cases linked to the product. The fruit originated from Egypt.



## FSA ISSUE SECOND RESPONSE TO 2SFG REPORT

The FSA have issued a second response to DEFRA's Nov 17th report on 2 Sisters and Standards in Poultry Processing. This update is intended to demonstrate the progress made since the last FSA report in February and provide further assurance of the commitments made by the 2 Sisters Food Group (2SFG), Red Tractor (RT) and BRC Global Standards (BRC GS) accreditation agencies, the Local Authority (LA) and the FSA itself. The response can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycts4qmq>

The document outlines how the FSA have been working closely with 2 Sisters Food Group to “share intelligence and agree how best to present information in a consistent and comprehensible format”. A 2 Sisters Intelligence Sharing Group has been established, where the FSA and 2 Sisters senior technical management “review intelligence from consolidated audit results, feedback from company mystery employer and whistle-blower schemes; and regulatory audit and inspection results”. This is a pilot initiative but the FSA are considering rolling this out to all FBOs. There is also a useful update on the review of the meat cutting plants and cold stores which provides detail of what is and what is not in scope and timings.

Additionally, Red Tractor Assurance have also issued a response updating on the actions they have taken, specifically the need to “work towards systematic sharing of data and intelligence to allow for unified records” and for “Accreditation firms to tighten processes and remove obvious loopholes”. Their response can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8gn3exj>

## EFSA APPOINTS SCIENTIFIC PANEL EXPERTS

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) recently announced that over 170 scientific experts have been selected to sit on its Scientific Panels with effect from July 2018. The experts come from 24 countries and a wide array of scientific disciplines. Over one-third of the experts have never been on an EFSA panel before and it has also attracted more women experts and young scientists than previously.

Over 1,000 scientists applied to become EFSA panel members following a call for experts held in the summer of 2017. The 170-plus nominees were chosen after an exhaustive selection process and thorough screening of their declarations of interest.

For the first time since 2008 EFSA will renew all 10 of its scientific panels and its Scientific Committee simultaneously. Each of the 10 panels has an average of 17 members who will officially begin their new three-year mandates on 1 July.

You can find links to all the panel members' CVs and declarations of interest here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8c7qrkf>

## BFFF LINKS UP WITH SOUTH AFRICA FOLLOWING MAJOR LISTERIA OUTBREAK

According to the South African Government cases of Listeria have dropped to single figures compared to 40 a week before the recall of meat products from Enterprise (a subsidiary of Tiger Brands) and Rainbow Chicken.

It has been shown that a single strain of Listeria (ST6) was responsible for the outbreak in which 204 people died. Tiger Brands has issued a statement saying that in a batch of one of its products tested by the company on 14 February 2018, the presence of the ST6 strain could not be confirmed and that the relevant samples had been sent to an external laboratory for the identification of the strain. The test results were received on 15 March 2018, but these had proved inconclusive and, as a result, the samples were sent for further re-testing'. The Enterprise facilities in Polokwane, Pretoria, and Germiston still remain closed.

At the end of April, the BFFF were contacted by a food safety training company, Entecom, in South Africa who commended our work in producing the BFFF Guide to the Management of Listeria in Food Processing. In light of the Listeria outbreak, Entecom wanted to develop a 1-day public training course for the food industry and were looking to include a section dedicated to Listeria monocytogenes. As a result of our discussions, the BFFF were pleased to agree that material from the BFFF Guide could be used in the development of the course for which we received due recognition.

Members are reminded that they can download a copy of the BFFF Guide to the Management of Listeria in Food Processing from the BFFF website: <http://bfff.co.uk/technical/guidance/>

## FSA LAUNCH NATIONAL FOOD SAFETY WEEK

The FSA launched on 4th June its National Food Safety Week with the focus this year being on the work of FSA staff and thousands of others across the food supply chain working behind-the-scenes to ensure that food is safe and what it says it is. Under the banner of 'the people who protect your plate', Food Safety Week highlighted the people working day in, day out to make sure consumers can trust the food on their plates including staff in abattoirs, and inspectors who visit vineyards, warehouses, cutting plants and dairies. It also featured staff who tackle food crime and those who help to keep people living with food allergies and intolerances safe.

You can read more about 'the people who protect your plate' here: <https://tinyurl.com/ydxfed9j>

## FOOD SECURITY, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

### JRC MAKES DUAL QUALITY FOODS TOP PRIORITY

The Joint Research Centre, the European Commission's science and knowledge service, has made efforts to collect evidence on the issue of dual quality foods a "top priority".

The JRC was tasked with developing a scientific basis for understanding the issue of dual quality foods in March, when the Commission established the Knowledge Centre for Food Fraud and Quality. The centre's mandate included the operation of an early warning and information system for food fraud through media monitoring.

The JRC is now collecting samples of branded food products from across the bloc. This will enable researchers to assess whether the food industry is selling sub-standard products in some European Member States. This EU-wide testing campaign will be used to generate a "map" of food quality, which is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

The food industry has consistently denied accusations that branded manufacturers sell worse quality products in certain member states, stressing that recipe changes frequently reflect local taste preferences.

In order to account for differing consumer perceptions, the JRC intends to use sensory panel testing and is considering working with behavioural psychologists. There are however, other "justifiable or legitimate reasons" why there may be recipe variations, such as a desire to use local ingredients.

The issue of so-called dual quality foods was drawn into the lime light after politicians from some central and eastern European countries, such as Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, seized on it to highlight disparity between standards in eastern and western Europe. This prompted EC president Jean-Claude Juncker to stress that "EU law outlaws such practices" in his State of the Union speech in September last year. Juncker stressed that, if such practices are found to exist, the EC will take the necessary steps to stamp them out.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/yc476erd>

## EU INDUSTRY CALLS FOR PROTECTION OF DAIRY PRODUCTS

Together with the European Dairy Association (EDA) and Eucolait, Copa and Cogeca are urging the EU to continue to ensure that dairy products are protected against misleading sales descriptions in EU legislation and the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

The group stresses that the aim of EU legislation on labelling is to provide consumers with information about their food and make sales descriptions more transparent to avoid misleading practices.

“The European Court of Justice (ECJ) recently issued a ruling that states that the terms milk, whey, cream, butter, buttermilk, cheese and yogurt may not be used to describe a plant-based product. This will help to stop food companies who sell products labelled “soya milk” or “tofu butter” from being labeled as “milk” or “butter.” The issue is not about having plant-based, innovative products on the market, it is about ensuring that consumers are not misled or confused vis a vis the nutritional characteristics of livestock produce and plant-based produce,” Copa and Cogeca Secretary-General Pekka Pesonen explained.

“Dairy produce, for example, is full of calcium and a wide range of essential nutrients which is particularly essential for children and the elderly. It is misleading for consumers to see products like soya “milk” and “tofu butter” being described as “milk” and “butter” replacers when talking about absolutely different products whose nutritional characteristics are far from the blend of macro- and micronutrients of milk and dairy,” added the European Dairy Association (EDA) Secretary-General Alexander Anton.

“The European Dairy Association and Eucolait, Copa and Cogeca consequently urge the EU to ensure that dairy terms and marketing standards remain protected under EU legislation and are respected by all supply chain partners. They need to be fully enforced by Member States authorities at all times. It is also vital that they continue to be protected under the future CAP and used exclusively for milk and dairy products. Marketing standards set out basic product specifications that have to be respected by all supply chain actors in the interest of ensuring high-quality products and fair competition,” concluded the Eucolait Secretary-General Jukka Likitalo.

## EC REPORT ON OPERATION TO DETECT ILLEGALLY TREATED TUNA

The European Commission recently reported on the Europol/Interpol OPSON VII operation, to which the EU Food Fraud Network contributed, in order to detect tuna intended for canning that had been illegally treated with substances that enhance the colour and fraudulently sold as fresh.

Justice, police, customs and food experts were mobilised to investigate and ensure the success of the operation with investigations taking place on fishing vessels and processing plants and extensive sampling plans taking place at distribution and retail levels. 11 countries were involved in total - Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Portugal, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland

The practice of treating tuna with substances to enhance colour can represent a serious risk to public health, as the modification of the initial colour can mask spoilage allowing the development of biological amines (histamine) responsible for scombroid syndrome in humans.

Spain and France are also conducting judicial inquiries into tuna destined for canning and sold as fresh and on the illegal use of additives, the results of which cannot currently be disclosed. In total, more than 51 tons of tuna were seized.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7jktbq3>

## GLOBAL STANDARDS

### CODEX ALIMENTARIUS PROGRESS ON DRAFT STANDARDS

Codex Alimentarius recently issued a news item informing interested parties of its work on two draft Codex texts. The first deals with regulatory approaches to third party assurance schemes and aims to promote a harmonised and robust approach when countries consider such schemes to enhance their regulatory arrangements and delivery of official controls within the National Food Control System (NFCS).

The second refers to the use of systems equivalence and is intended to cover situations where it can be reasonably expected that the NFCS of the exporting country will, on an ongoing basis, reliably deliver food that meets similar overall human health, food suitability and technical outcomes as achieved within the importing country.

Further discussion on the texts will take place in October 2018. You can read the news item here: <https://tinyurl.com/yamd4n92>



The following article has kindly been provided by Campden BRI in anticipation of the release of Issue 8 of the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety.

### What is Issue 8 of the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety and when will it be released?

The BRC Global Standard for Food Safety is the most widely used of the commercial standards for assuring production of safe food, with over 19,000 food certificates issued annually by 1,500 auditors working for 64 certification bodies. The eagerly anticipated 'Issue 8' is the new update, which will be released in August 2018. First audits will be conducted against this from 1st February 2019.

### What are the changes in 'BRC issue 8'?

One of the most noticeable visible change is that there are now nine sections instead of the historical seven sections. There are now sections on 'Production Risk Zones' and 'Traded Goods', in addition to the previous sections on: Senior Management Commitment; HACCP; Food Safety & QMS; Site Standards; Product Control; Process Control; and Personnel, but there are changes throughout – with some discussed below.

### Compulsory food safety and quality culture

Regarding the new and significantly updated clauses that will have an impact and will require action and attention on certificated sites, the earliest new addition is clause 1.1.2 which introduces food safety and quality culture as a compulsory requirement.

Previously, this has been a voluntary module for companies but following several well publicised issues in the food sector related to this, the importance of food safety and quality culture for all manufacturers was recognised. Culture is not just about training, nor is it simply a tick box audit. Rather, it asks the company how it defines, undertakes and measures around 20 elements of behaviour, such as communication, empowerment and teamwork.

Once a system and measures are implemented, sites will then be expected to review the effectiveness of these activities. Campden BRI and TSI have developed a Food Safety Culture module that covers all 20 elements, to make implementation as efficient and painless as possible.

Linked in part to this is new clause 1.1.6 which requires companies to have a confidential reporting system for staff.

### Changes to supplier approval and monitoring

Some of the significant areas of non-conformance during BRC audits are around supplier approval and monitoring. At present, these are covered by a single clause. But they are different activities. So, in issue 8, they are being separated as clause 3.5.1.2 for mechanisms which control initial supplier approval, and clause 3.5.1.3 for ongoing supplier monitoring which will allow additional focus and direction for auditors and manufacturers.



## New requirements for food defence

Food Defence and the potential for deliberate malicious contamination from both internal and external sources will now need to be risk assessed, defined, documented, controlled, monitored and reviewed as requirements of clauses 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.3.

Many sites are looking at combining this with the requirements for Food Fraud in clauses 5.4.1, 5.4.2 and 5.4.3 because the methodology and principles defined in the TACCP guidance document PAS96:2017 is similar. Campden BRI Guideline 72 for TACCP also covers both food fraud and food defence.

## Changes to environmental monitoring

A whole new section of 4.11.8 on Environmental Monitoring requires risk-based programmes to be in place for pathogens or spoilage organisms for all production areas with open and ready to eat products. The individual clauses detail some very specific protocols and systems to be in place in this area, which may involve significant work for many sites.

## Updates to other sections

There are also many areas and sections of the updated standard that are subtler but no less significant to manufacturers, such as:

- the need to validate cooking instructions and shelf-life
- training on labelling procedures
- cyber security related to documents, records and equipment settings
- understanding the significance of laboratory results
- traceability procedures
- defining Root Cause Analysis

## What are the next steps?

These changes will all need to be worked on from the release date of the Standard in August 2018 right through to first audits starting in February 2019. This leaves six months to implement the new clauses. Campden BRI can offer advice on BRC issue 8 and will be running seminars to guide you through the changes between September and November 2018.

For more information about BRC issue 8 please contact [Richard.Leathers@campdenbri.co.uk](mailto:Richard.Leathers@campdenbri.co.uk) +44(0)1386 842105

## **CHILE PARTNERS WITH GFSI TO ADVANCE FOOD SAFETY**

The Chilean food safety and quality agency, ACHIPA, has signed a partnership with the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) to advance food safety and progress at a regional level. The strategic partnership focuses on piloting operational approaches on food safety culture, building food safety capacity in Chilean facilities based on the GFSI's Global Markets Program, and identifying opportunities for regional and global collaboration.

"Deepening partnerships with food safety regulators is a critical part of advancing sustainable food safety on a global scale," said Michel Leporati, Head of ACHIPA. "In today's complex global food supply ecosystem, any one company or country in isolation cannot achieve food safety objectives. The partnership is essential for Chile."

According to a GFSI press release, the agreement is part of initiative's mission to build more public-private partnerships (PPPs) between companies, government regulators and intergovernmental organizations, reducing trade barriers, and harmonizing global food safety legislation.

These PPPs give countries access to private sector expertise and best practices, said the GFSI release. Governmental agencies may also benefit from GFSI's food safety capability-building expertise and core curriculum. GFSI's Global Markets Programme is a framework outlining how countries with underdeveloped food safety systems can reduce hazards in supply chains and improve market access.

"The partnership will provide all parties with guidance through the Global Markets Programme, supporting Chilean companies with underdeveloped food safety systems and buyers, as well as helping to address food safety challenges," said Erich Jaeger, VP of Food Safety for Walmart Chile and Argentina and leader of the GFSI Chile team. "The agreement will also reduce hazards and enhance market access through enrolment in the GFSI's recognized certification programs."



# HEALTH & NUTRITION

## AVOIDING THE PITFALLS OF NUTRITIONAL ANALYSIS

This article and the link to the white paper contained within it have kindly been provided by Campden BRI.

Using emerging ingredients may allow product developers to improve the nutritional profile of products, boosting or adding nutrients and allowing claims to be made. With limited or variable nutritional levels often available from literature it is likely that nutritional analysis will be required.

This can prove challenging, as different forms of analysis will yield different results depending on which compounds they detect. In order to aid selection of emerging ingredients to make health and nutritional claims, or simply boost nutritional profile, it is important to ensure the correct approach is used and that there is an awareness of the potential pitfalls.

The following briefing note considers these: <https://tinyurl.com/y7yl8ktt>

If this is an area in which you need technical support, please get in touch with [dan.hall@campdenbri.co.uk](mailto:dan.hall@campdenbri.co.uk) or [david.miles@campdenbri.co.uk](mailto:david.miles@campdenbri.co.uk)

## EVOLVED NUTRITION LABEL TO BE LAUNCHED IN SOME EU COUNTRIES

Mondelēz International, Nestlé, PepsiCo, The Coca-Cola Company and Unilever have announced they will start to add the Evolved Nutrition Label (ENL) to products in some EU countries.

An ENL spokesperson said that in compliance with EU Competition Law, the member companies would communicate separately about their trials, including the which countries it would be rolled out in, the product categories and the timing. The ENL labels will begin to appear gradually on shelves by end 2018 and the companies anticipate to have gathered preliminary consumer insights as of end 2020.

The five companies carried out a survey on the ENL model, questioning 3,500 consumers in seven EU countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Spain) on their preferences for nutrition logos. According to the companies, the survey found that eight out of 10 consumers found the ENL label easy to understand and helpful to assess the nutrient content of food and beverages, allowing them to make an informed product choice at a glance. A majority of those questioned expressed a preference for coloured labels over the black and white Reference Intake label, and European consumers in general prefer per portion labelling over per 100g labelling when it comes to comparing the nutrient content of different products using a colour-coded label.

However, the European consumer rights group BEUC have questioned the validity of the ENL's survey findings saying it was unsurprising that consumers said they preferred colour-coding more than black and white nutritional information and the ENL companies chose not to compare their scheme with member state-approved colour-coded systems such as the UK Traffic Light or the French Nutriscore and only compared it with monochrome nutritional information.

Mars used to be an ENL member but announced in March this year it was leaving the group and would not be using the logo, citing a lack of credibility and consensus. The logo has also drawn criticism from the dairy industry, which slammed it as "nonsense" while French consumer groups UFC-Que Choisir said it was "an attempt to scramble" France's official NutriScore.

Last month the European Commission convened a multi-stakeholder meeting to discuss various approaches to labelling, during which the ENL logo was presented, alongside other interpretative nutrition labels.

## IGD LAUNCH WEBINAR ON FRONT-OF-PACK NUTRITION LABELS

The IGD recently released an on-demand webinar on how to help people make better use of nutrition labels. According to the IGD, 46% of shoppers feel that nutrition labels are too difficult to read and therefore the webinar aims to address this. The webinar covers the following:

- The main areas of confusion highlighted in IGD consumer research
- What gets in the way of people using nutrition labels
- The simple messages that can be used when talking to consumers
- How to use the IGD essential messaging toolkit and messaging guide
- How to include IGD recommendations for consistent labelling format

You can access the webinar here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybww6nte>

## FSAI REPORT ON EXPOSURE TO FLUORIDE IN IRELAND

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) recently published the Total Diet Study 2014-2016: Assessment of Dietary Exposure to Fluoride in Adults & Children in Ireland which concludes that there is no safety concern from exposure to fluoride through intake of foods and beverages, or drinking water, in Ireland.

The report is based on a comprehensive study, which considered exposure by different segments of the population, including children, and can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8od6bsp>

## IRELAND'S SUGAR TAX COMES INTO EFFECT

After years of debate, Ireland's sugar-sweetened tax on soft drinks has come into effect, pushing up the price of sugar-laden beverages in a bid to cut spiralling obesity rates in the country. Soft drinks companies were early movers in sugar reduction and reformulation has been going on for many years. However, Ireland's tax will push up the price of popular sodas, adding 30 cents per litre to the cost of soft drinks containing more than 8g of sugar per 100ml.

There are two rates of tax; 20 percent litre on drinks with 5g of sugar or more but less than 8g/100ml and the 30 percent per litre applies to beverages containing 8g or more of added sugar per 100ml. The tax only applies to water-based drinks and juice-based drinks which have had added sugar content so pure fruit juices are excluded from the levy and dairy products also fall outside the scope.

However, the Irish Beverage Council (IBEC), a group that represents soft drinks companies, says that three-quarters of soft drinks sold in Ireland are sugar tax-free. This is due to industry's 35-year journey to reduce sugar content in drinks, according to the group.

## COMMISSION FINDS VARIATION IN AMR POLICIES

The Commission have recently published an overview report of the responses to a questionnaire sent to non-EU countries concerning their national policies and measures to address Anti-Microbial Resistance.

The responses received have been analysed in an anonymised way in this report, which presents an interesting overview of measures taken around the world to address the important challenge posed by AMR, both in human and veterinary medicine. This action is in line with the EU One Health Action Plan against AMR, which aims for stronger cooperation with international organisations and countries worldwide.

You can download the report here: <https://tinyurl.com/yboqxvvo>

## WHO PUBLISH GUIDE FOR ELIMINATING INDUSTRIALLY PRODUCED TRANS-FATTY ACIDS

The World Health Organisation have published a step by step guide for the elimination of industrially-produced trans-fatty acids from global food supply.

The 'REPLACE' guide proposes six strategic actions to ensure the prompt, complete, and sustained elimination of industrially-produced trans fats from the food supply:

- **R**Eview dietary sources of industrially-produced trans fats and the landscape for required policy change;
- **P**romote the replacement of industrially-produced trans fats with healthier fats and oils;
- **L**egislate or enact regulatory actions to eliminate industrially-produced trans fats;
- **A**ssess and monitor trans fats content in the food supply and changes in trans fat consumption in the population;
- **C**reate awareness of the negative health impact of trans fats among policy makers, producers, suppliers, and the public;
- **E**nforce compliance of policies and regulations.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8ysfm9x>

## FSS LAUNCHES HEALTHY EATING CAMPAIGN

Food Standards Scotland have launched a marketing campaign to encourage people in Scotland to say 'no to upsizing' more often. This follows research which revealed that 23% of Scots regularly upsize food and drink when eating out of the home in restaurants, cafes, shops and takeaways. The campaign identifies the calorific consequences of some popular upsizing options and you can read more about it here: <https://tinyurl.com/y79qr3bx>

## PHE UPDATE ON SUGAR REDUCTION PROGRAMME AND WIDER REFORMULATION

Public Health England (PHE) have recently issued a detailed report assessing progress in the first year of the sugar reduction programme. The report includes:

- A detailed assessment of progress by the food industry towards the 5% reduction in the first year of the sugar reduction programme;
- Top line results showing progress to date in reducing sugar and calories in the product categories included in the programme and the drinks covered by the Soft Drinks Industry Levy;
- Detailed assessment of progress for retailers and manufacturers across the majority of categories and some assessment for the out of home sector;
- Analyses to look at progress by individual businesses and in top selling products in each category and case studies supplied by industry businesses;
- Detailed methodology and information on data limitations;
- An update on progress through the other workstreams in the wider reduction and reformulation programme.

Overall across the reported categories the 5% reduction has not been achieved. However there has been substantial progress in some categories and less in others e.g. puddings category where levels of sugar actually rose.

There are also some issues - cakes and morning goods could not be reported on due to date issues and the Out of home (OOH) sector is generally suffering from a lack of consistent date which PHE hope to resolve with the provision of a new data provider who came on board during the period being reported on and thus data reporting has not been consistent in this sector. OOH products consumed on a single occasion is also a problem of high sugar levels compared to retail products presumably partly because of portion size. The Soft drink industry levy is also assumed to have led to the largest reduction category of 11% in sugar.

PHE also seen to suffer from a skewed definition of OOH products and you will note the imperfect reporting has a retail brand bias and appears to be restricted to products purchased directly by consumers rather than any other part of the foodservice sector.

Methodology improvements for sugar are planned over 2018/19. This will include improvements in all of the problem areas noted above.

You can read the report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9ufcvlt>



## PHE REPORT ON BASELINE 2017 SUGAR REDUCTION LEVELS FOR DRINKS

Public Health England (PHE) issued in May a technical report outlining guidelines for industry, 2017 baseline levels for drinks in scope and next steps. The report includes guidelines that set out the sugar reduction ambitions for the juice and milk-based drinks industry, including:

- Clarity on products included in the categories;
- Baseline figures for juice and milk-based drinks;
- Mechanisms through which the sugar reduction ambitions can be achieved.

You can read the technical report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y848b6gu>

# IMPORTS AND THE SUPPLY CHAIN

## FOOD EXPORTS GROW 5.5% TO £5.2BN

UK food and drink exports grew 5.5% to £5.2bn in the first quarter of 2018, according to new statistics from the Food and Drink Federation (FDF).

Total exports to EU markets (+8.2%) grew faster than those to non-EU markets (+1.2%), with Ireland remaining the UK's biggest export market – worth £981m, up 13.6%. Exports to France, the second-largest market, fell 0.4% to £518.8m.

Of the top ten product categories, eight saw growth, while salmon and beer saw a decline in sales, down £40.7m and £16.1m respectively. Breakfast cereals saw the fastest growth, up 30.2% to £111.2m, while whisky remained the UK's top export, with sales up 6.5% to £955m. The Czech Republic moved into the top 20 export markets for UK food and drink, up 52.3% after sales of sugar confectionery increased in Q1 2018.

You can find more information here: <https://tinyurl.com/yapr94og>

## 2 SISTERS LAUNCHES SUPPLY CHAIN INITIATIVE



2 Sisters Food Group is supporting two initiatives to help educate future farmers and Tesco store managers on the supply chain.

The first initiative - The Future Farmer Foundation programme supports budding farmers, aged 20 to 35, to build their business skills. You can find more information here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8onrdh3>

The second, dubbed 'Feet on Farm', entails 2 Sisters becoming the first supplier to host Tesco store managers, to develop their understanding of where quality chicken products come from. The

visits include a presentation, tour of the farm and an opportunity to see different types of birds including free-range and organic. The first visit is due to take place in June at a Lincolnshire farm.

## BRF REMOVES 12 SITES FROM EUROPEAN EXPORT LIST

Brazilian processor BRF has had 12 of its facilities delisted from its European export list.

It informed shareholders of the EU's decision to remove 12 of its Brazilian-based industrial facilities from the list that permits imports of animal origin products by the countries. The measure entered into effect as of 16th May 2018.

In a statement, it said: "The decision appears to be motivated by protection of the local market, rather than health and quality issues, as recently certified by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Supply (MAPA)."

The company also warned of the impact on the entire Brazilian market. "It is worth noting that the European Commission's decision affects not only the Company but Brazilian trade in general, given the significant contribution of the Company to a positive balance of exports. Market data indicate that poultry is one of the main generators of jobs in Brazil, with approximately 3.5 million positions in the country. At BRF alone, 65,000 direct employees work in plants."

The measure only affects BRF's facilities located in Brazil and ones that are licensed to export to the European Union. It is not expected to affect supply to other markets, or even the supply from other BRF facilities located abroad which export to the European market.

## CALLS FOR EQUAL COMPETITION BETWEEN IMPORTED AND EU FISHERY PRODUCTS

The European Parliament recently published a press release calling on the EU Commission and the Member States to intensify their efforts to ensure that existing EU legislation is more consistently implemented and applied at all stages of the supply chain.

MEPs urged the Commission to examine the possibility of creating a label to identify the EU's fishery products and extending control measures to imported fisheries products to promote fairer competition and avoid a discriminatory market that could adversely affect EU fisheries.

You can read the press release here: <https://tinyurl.com/y96uz6zs>

# REGULATORY

## COMMISSION PROPOSES NEW RULES FOR COMMON FISHERIES POLICY

The Commission recently published a proposal aimed at amendments to modernise and simplify the way in which fishing rules are monitored and complied with in the EU (COM (2018) 368 final) including enhanced traceability of EU and imported fishery and aquaculture products. The proposal will now go to the European Parliament and Council for adoption.

You can read the proposal in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y899qtnb>

## SUMMARY REPORT FROM LATEST SCOPAFF (GENERAL FOOD LAW) MEETING PUBLISHED

The Summary Report of the SCoPAFF, section on General Food Law, held on 16th April 2018, has been published. The Committee discussed amongst other items;

Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation laying down rules for the application of Article 26(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of food information to consumers, as regards the rules for indicating the country of origin or place of provenance of the primary ingredient of a food.

The summary report can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8xfmwzk>

## COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION ON ORIGIN LABELLING

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/775 of 28th May 2018 laying down rules for the application of Article 26(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of food information to consumers, as regards the rules for indicating the country of origin or place of provenance of the primary ingredient of a food was published in the Official Journal of the EU, L131/8, 29/5/2018.



Under the Food information to consumers regulation (FIC), the origin of primary ingredient must be indicated if different from the origin of the food in order to not mislead consumers and to harmonise the presentation of such information.

The Implementing Regulation states that the country of origin or place of provenance of the primary ingredient of a food, which is not the same as the given country of origin or the given place of provenance of the food shall be given with reference to listed geographical areas, or by means of a statement such as '(name of the primary ingredient) do/does not originate from (the country of origin or the place of provenance of the food)' or any similar wording likely to have the same meaning for the consumer.

The Regulation entered into force on 31 May 2018 and applies from 1st April 2020. It can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycqychd2>

## SUMMARY REPORT FROM LATEST SCOPAFF (BIOLOGICAL SAFETY) MEETING PUBLISHED

The Summary Report of the SCoPAFF, section on Biological Safety of the Food Chain, held on 3rd May 2018, has been published. The Committee discussed amongst other items;

- Discussion and possible endorsement of a guidance on legal aspects related to high pressure processing;
- Discussion and possible endorsement of a guidance on identification (ID) marking;
- Exchange of views and possible endorsement on the “draft EURL *Listeria monocytogenes* guidance document to evaluate the competence of laboratories implementing challenge tests and durability studies related to *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat foods”;
- Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Regulation possibly revising Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 as regards certain methods and *Listeria monocytogenes* in sprouted seeds and unpasteurised fruit and vegetable juices (ready- to-eat).

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

## ASA UPHOLDS COMPLAINT WHICH LINKED MILK TO CANCER

The ASA published on 16th May 2018 an adjudication concerning a localised poster advertising campaign in Bristol by Viva! - a charity advocating veganism. A poster was displayed on buses, seen on the 7th and 8th September 2017 and featured an image of a cow's udder and included the claims "Some dairy industry facts we bet you don't know ... Most cows are pregnant when milking. That's why milk contains 35 hormones, including oestrogen ... some of these are linked to cancer. Milk is for babies, so let Viva! wean you off the teat!".

Complaints were upheld by the ASA which concluded that the claim "milk contains 35 hormones, including oestrogen ... some of these are linked to cancer", would be understood by consumers to mean that due to the presence of hormones, drinking cow's milk could increase a person's risk of developing cancer, and that this had not been substantiated and was therefore misleading.

Viva! said the claim referred to hormones that were naturally occurring in cow's milk, which increased during pregnancy and were essential for calf development. The claim did not refer to hormone treatments or artificial hormones.

They highlighted that the ad stated the hormones were "linked to" cancer, rather than that they "caused" cancer. They said "linked to" was wording commonly used to express an association between two factors when there was a potential or likely relationship but not an absolute causative relationship, and consumers were used to seeing the phrase "linked to" as opposed to "causes" in that context. They provided examples of health organisations, including the NHS and World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) and a science news website referring to "links" between consumption of certain types of substances or foods and certain cancers. Viva! said they also believed it was appropriate to use the phrasing "linked to" because dairy consumption and the hormones present in milk had been implicated in increasing the risk of some cancers.

You can read more about the case here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9jct6og>

## NEW RULES FOR ORGANIC PRODUCTION TO ENTER INTO FORCE 1 JANUARY 2021

The European Commission have published a statement by the Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Phil Hogan, on new rules for organic production. Speaking after the Council had approved the text of the Regulation on 22nd May 2018, Mr Hogan stated that "Today is a day for which a lot of people worked very hard and showed tremendous patience. The approval by the Council of the text of the Regulation allows existing and potential organic producers to plan with confidence and certainty on the basis of new rules which will enter into force on 1 January 2021."

The statement and more information about the new rules can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9daagf>

## RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY

### SCIENTISTS SHOW PLANTS CAN BE A DIETARY SOURCE OF VITAMIN B12

Scientists at the University of Kent have made a significant discovery about how the vitamin B12 content of some plants can be improved to make vegetarian and vegan diets more complete. Vitamin B12 (cobalamin) is an essential dietary component but vegans and vegetarians are more prone to vitamin B12 deficiency as plants neither make nor require this nutrient.

A team, led by Professor Martin Warren at the University's School of Biosciences, has shown that common garden cress can take up cobalamin. The amount of B12 absorbed by garden cress is dependent on the amount present in the growth medium, and the researchers were able to confirm B12 uptake by showing that the nutrient ends up in the leaf.

The discovery also has implications for combating some parasitic infections. Not only did the researchers demonstrate that some plants can absorb vitamin B12, but they were also able to use the same technique to follow the movement of fluorescent B12 molecules into worms. These results demonstrate that this is a powerful model to learn about how B12 is absorbed and, as worms must use a different absorption system to mammalian systems, there is the possibility of exploiting this difference to try and treat worm-based parasites such as hookworms.

You can read more about the research here: <https://tinyurl.com/yalo472f>



## GENE-EDITED 'SUPER-CROPS' TO BE GROWN IN THE UK

Scientists have exploited a legal loophole to grow gene edited (GE) 'super-crops' in the UK for the first time. The Government has approved the farming of 2 lines of gene-edited (GE) camelina plants (a flowering annual in the mustard family whose seeds are useful in oil production) as part of a trial to 'super-charge' the plants to produce omega 3 fish oils. The pilot was approved because the camelina oilseed crops contain no foreign DNA but they have had their genetic code altered in a way that could have happened naturally.

The trial starts as the European Court of Justice prepares to decide whether GE plants can be legally treated as if they were conventional crops across the EU and Defra is being accused of pre-empting a decision by the court that could end up requiring GM-style regulation of GE crops.

You can read more about the trials in the following report: <https://tinyurl.com/y9qng4kh>

## RECYCLABLE AND COMPOSTABLE POUCHES TO EXTEND SHELF-LIFE LAUNCHED

UK-based absorbent food packaging specialists, Sirane, have launched Earthpouch - the first plastic-free compostable food pouch with shelf-life-extending capabilities. Made from paper, the pouch is both compostable and recyclable, meeting the demand for more environmentally-friendly packaging solution.

Earthpouch was developed in conjunction with B&G Products and HAVI and launched with Troofoods after approximately two years of development. It is made from paper with a 100 percent plastic-free heat-sealable coating which is then formed into a preformed stand-up pouch which provides total food security for dry and moist food products. It is also said to be cost effective.

## NEW ECO-FRIENDLY PAPER BOTTLE DEVELOPED

A Scottish entrepreneur has developed a new eco-friendly bottle that could help combat the growing mountain of plastic litter entering the world's oceans. It is fully biodegradable, made from sustainable plant-based materials, uses no fossil fuels in its production and can actually benefit wildlife and the landscape when it breaks down.

The plastic-free container decomposes within about three weeks in seawater, compared with hundreds, even thousands, of years for its plastic equivalent. It can also be harmlessly eaten by sea creatures and can neutralise acidic soils.

Now he wants to roll out production from a new Fife premises. To do this he hopes to raise at least £25,000 to buy new moulds and machinery to produce the bottles on a commercial scale.

You can read more about this development here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9fglf34>

## IRISH FOOD TECH CLUSTER CREATED TO STRENGTHEN INDUSTRY AND RESEARCH LINKS

A food and beverage technology cluster has been established in Ireland thanks to government funding.

The Irish Food Tech Cluster is a consortium of seven of Enterprise Ireland's Technology Gateways operating within the food and beverage technology sector. The cluster can connect industry with researchers in a wide selection of areas that include bioprocessing, food for health, process control and packaging, amongst many others. Specialised research resources are leveraged from within the seven participating Institute of Technologies and applied to industry problems of all sizes.

John Halligan, minister of state for Training, Skills, Innovation, Research and Development, announced funding of €26.75m for the network over five years until 2022.

You can read more about the Food Tech cluster here: <https://tinyurl.com/y6uwsce>

## STUDY UNCOVERS ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS

Research led by the University of Stirling has found that omega-3 fatty acids can be created by many invertebrates inhabiting marine ecosystems, including corals, worms and molluscs. The discovery runs contrary to the generally held principle that marine microbes, such as microalgae and bacteria, are responsible for virtually all primary production of omega 3s.

The researchers note that their findings could 'revolutionize our understanding of omega 3 long chain polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) production on a global scale', potentially paving the way for the production of alternative and sustainable omega-3 products. You can read more about this breakthrough here: <https://tinyurl.com/yar6mv5e>

# SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENT & CSR

## SELF-SUSTAINING 'FUTURE FOOD CITY' A POSSIBILITY FOR SINGAPORE

A self-sustaining 'future food city', featuring a mixed crop cultivation of vegetables, seaweed and fish could be established off the coast of Singapore. Oceanus Group Ltd has been in talks with Singapore government entities on the likelihood of the new self-sustainable Oceanus Aquapolis City being located there.

Oceanus Aquapolis City will be a sea-based high-tech aquaponics farm that will integrate the farming with renewable technology and sustainable resources such as rainwater collection and solar energy.

Recent discussions have been held with government bodies such as the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA), the Economic Development Board (EDB) and Enterprise SG. Should the points of discussion be confirmed, the Oceanus Aquapolis City will be launched within five to seven years, be located offshore in the South of the island and will be worth several hundred millions of dollars.

The island nation imports 90% of its food supply and barely grows anything. In order for the country to be sustainable, production needs to increase by 70%, and about 40% of land needs to be set aside for food production. This is improbable in land-scarce Singapore.

## DAIRY INDUSTRY REVEALS PROGRESS ON SUSTAINABILITY

The UK dairy industry has revealed its progress toward reducing its environmental footprint over the past ten years, outlined in the Dairy Roadmap 10th anniversary report.

The report highlighted the milestones achieved by the sector over the past decade, including a 24% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions associated with milk production, a 24% improvement in water efficiency and an 18% improvement in energy efficiency. It also found that 85% of high-density polyethylene milk containers were now recycled and that there was a decrease in the proportion of waste sent to landfill from 35% to only 4%.

The Dairy Roadmap recognised there was no endpoint for environmental sustainability. Dairy UK, working alongside the National Farmers Union and the Agriculture, Horticulture & Development Board, said the roadmap would continue to set "ambitious" targets to improve sustainability.

The UK is currently the third-largest producer of milk in Europe and the tenth-largest globally. The sector employs more than 70,000 people in the UK, represents 15% of the value of agricultural produce in the UK and accounts for an estimated £8.8bn in sales at wholesale.

You can read the UK Dairy Roadmap in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/yc7y6s8l>



## NEW £443K SUSTAINABILITY AWARD OPEN TO UK FOOD FIRMS

A new \$600,000 (£443,811) prize for sustainability has been opened to small- and medium-sized food and drink businesses in the UK.

The Zayed Sustainability Prize is an annual award that seeks to reward achievements in sustainability, as well as encourage "innovative, impactful and inspirational solutions and individuals".

Established in 2008 as the Zayed Future Energy Prize and run by the United Arab Emirates Government, the prize has been broadened this year to include categories for food and water sustainability.

Applicants wishing to enter the award need to show examples of providing safe and affordable foods, including: taking part in ending hunger and malnutrition; ensuring sustainable food production systems; increasing agricultural productivity and promoting seed type; and animal population diversity.

You can find more about this prize, including how to enter here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9dt8r7m>

The deadline for entries is 9th August 2018 and it is free to enter.

## UK TO RATIFY INTERNATIONAL AIR POLLUTION PROTOCOL

Defra announced on 18th May 2018 that an Explanatory Memorandum signed by the Environment Secretary and the text of the amendment to the Gothenburg Protocol were laid before Parliament on 17 May 2018.

The amended Protocol sets ambitious international targets for the reduction of damaging air pollutants including new national emission reduction commitments to be met by 2020 and beyond for sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, ammonia, non-methane volatile organic compounds and fine particulate matter.

You can view the news story here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybgw2ucc>

Around the same time, Defra also published a Policy Paper: Air quality - explaining air pollution at a glance. This paper can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ya6kflxb>



## FINE FOR COMPANIES FOLLOWING RIVER POLLUTION INCIDENT

The Environment Agency announced on 16th May 2018 that two companies have agreed to pay nearly £30,000 to a Norfolk charity after admitting their respective roles in a river pollution incident. The pollution came from rotting potatoes which had been stored in a rented warehouse and as they decomposed they released liquid that entered the surface water drains at the site and subsequently passed into a tributary of the river.

You can read the press release about the incident here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7gj39xt>

## RECOMMENDATIONS ON PACKAGING REGULATORY REFORM

WRAP, together with the Industry Council for Packaging and the Environment (INCPEN) and Defra's Advisory Committee on Packaging have presented recommendations to the Secretary of State on how packaging regulatory reform could help to reduce the environmental impact caused by the way we use and dispose of packaging, especially plastic packaging. This followed six workshops and a summit on packaging producer responsibility.

Amongst many other points they call for:

- Consistent labelling of materials showing their recyclability
- Funding for a consistent local authority consumer collection scheme
- Methods to improve reprocessing feedstock
- Measures to help to recycle more plastics in particular

You can view a copy of all of the recommendations, along with a link to the Secretary of State's response here: <https://tinyurl.com/y735zjo7>

The BFFF are pleased to confirm that Paul Vanston of INCPEN will be presenting at our next Technical Expert Group meeting in July. Please feel free to forward any points you wish to raise to [Deniserion@bfff.co.uk](mailto:Deniserion@bfff.co.uk) as these recommendations will form part of the latest government thinking on this subject and may drive questions which you need answered.



# FOOD SAFETY REPORTS

## RASFF

Updated on a monthly basis, the table below provides members with a rolling yearly update of results from the FSA's Early Warning System (EWS) for food and feed. Note: this system is based primarily (but not exclusively) on analysis of the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) information issued by EU Member States for imports of food and feed. Also now included is information about food and feed from the EU.

Early warning system for imported food & feed General commodities – Foods not of animal origin (FNAO) only Period covered: June 2017 to May 2018						
			RASFFs issued during the last:			
Product	Country of origin	Hazard	1 year	6 months	1 month	Comments (s) = serious risk (ud) = undecided
Almonds	USA	Aflatoxins	10	6	2	Two in May from Italy and Austria both (S), Two in Apr 2018 both from Italy and both (S) Two in Mar 2018 from The Netherlands (S) and Italy (S), Three in Nov 2017 all from Spain [2] (S) [1] (UD), One in Aug 2017 from Italy (S) and Two in May 2017 both from Italy both (S)
Ricer	India	Pesticide residues	9	8	5	One in Jun 2017 from Italy (UD) and Three in Apr 2018 from [1] Norway (UD), [1] Austria [1] Finland all(UD), and Five in May 2018 [4] Austria [1] Norway and all (UD)
Black Pepper	Brazil	Salmonella	10	6	2	Two in June 2017 both from Spain and both (S), One in July 2017 from Spain (S), One in Nov 2017 from Spain (S), One in Dec 2017 from Italy (S), Two in Mar 2018 both from Spain (S) and One in Apr 2018 from Spain (S) and Two in May 2018 both from Spain and both(S)
Paprika Powder	China	Salmonella	5	5	4	One in Apr 2018 and Four in May 2018 all from Spain and all (S)

NB: The RASFFs in May for pesticide residues in rice are cases where the levels are over the Maximum Residue Limit but not above the Acute Reference Dose.

Early warning system for imported food & feed Banned Commodities Period covered: May 2018			
Product	Country of origin	Hazard	Comments
Jelly	Bangladesh	Unauthorised food additive E407 Carrageenan	RASFF 2018.1368 1 in May 2018

**Early warning system for food & feed from the EU**  
Period covered: May 2018

Product	Country of Origin	Hazard	6 months	1 month	Comments (S) = serious risk (UD) = undecided
Chicken	The Netherlands	Salmonella	5	3	Three in May 2018 [1] Belgium (S) [1] France (S) [1] Germany (UD)
Meat Spread	The Netherlands	Listeria Monocytogenes	2	2	Two in May 2018 both The Netherlands (S)
Oysters	France	Norovirus	27	3	Three in May 2018 all from Italy and all (S)
Oysters	The Netherlands	Norovirus	3	2	Two in May 2018 both from Italy, both (S)

## Other Information Sources

### Fera

#### Highlights concerning Processed foods - Date Issue Summary

22/May/2018 Seven people have been sickened and four have died in an outbreak of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Sweden. The outbreak in Västra Götaland has been linked to ready meals with potatoes from Food Company i Lidköping. Swedish *Listeria* outbreak

#### Highlights concerning Beverages - Date Issue Summary

30/May/2018 Punjab Food Authority's (PFA) operations team have sealed a juice factory for producing substandard fruit juice. Officials found the production unit of AK Foods was producing fruit juice using artificial flavours and prohibited chemicals, with fruit not being used. Factory closed for producing adulterated fruit juice

#### Issues concerning Apricots - dried - Date Notified By Issue Country of Origin Company

31/May/2018 The United States. Undeclared sulphur dioxide may be present in dried apricots Pakistan Al-Shaikh Enterprises, Nazimabad Karachi, Pakistan

31/May/2018 The United States Undeclared sulphur dioxide may be present in dried apricots Pakistan Ashrafi Food Industries, Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan.

### PHE

The PHE study on imported leaves has now been peer reviewed and accepted for publication - <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/jam.13931> No other testing of imported food this month.

### FSA Latest Summary of Food Incidents

The FSA has published a summary of food incidents handled between October and December 2017, where an alert has been issued by the FSA to recall products from sale.

The information published describes the overall details of the incident, the level of risk to consumers and what action the FSA, industry and local authorities took and can be downloaded here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9npx45h>

### FSA Latest Reinforced Checks Data

Below is a link to a list of companies exporting to the European Union currently made subject by the European Commission to re-enforced checks (those with the statuses 'Active', 'Imposing checks' or 'New' in the re-enforced checks part of the TRACES system): <https://tinyurl.com/yddxtuux>

Note: It is possible that certain companies who have recently been made subject to checks and have yet to have a check carried out on them may not be on this list.

Re-enforced checks are required under Article 24 of the Veterinary Checks Directive where checks on a consignment of imported food have exposed a serious or repeated infringement.

## CONSULTATIONS

Consultation	Purpose	Link	Deadline
Commission - Regulation on the Review of Biocidal Active Substances	Feedback invited on the draft Delegated Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 1062/2014 on the review of biocidal active substances.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/y95ay7pg">https://tinyurl.com/y95ay7pg</a>	29th June 2018
The Health and Social Care Committee -Antimicrobial Resistance Inquiry	Inquiry into how the Government is responding to the challenge of Antimicrobial resistance (AMR).	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/ybe6zh98">https://tinyurl.com/ybe6zh98</a>	29 June 2018
PHE - Consultation on Draft SACN Report on Saturated Fats	Inviting comments on the scientific content of the draft report 'Saturated fats and health' and its supporting documents.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/y8eqcmzf">https://tinyurl.com/y8eqcmzf</a>	3rd July 2018
Commission - Climate Change and Emissions to Air – Proposal on Heavy Duty Vehicle Emissions	Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council setting CO2 emission performance standards for new heavy-duty vehicles ((COM)2018 284 final).	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/y7t23ruh">https://tinyurl.com/y7t23ruh</a>	19 July 2018
Commission- proposal for a Directive on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment (COM(2018)340)	Prevention and reduction of plastic marine litter from single use plastic items and fishing gear.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/yd47m6la">https://tinyurl.com/yd47m6la</a>	24 July 2018
EC - The Evaluation of the 7th Environment Action Programme	Seeking views on what worked well in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and added value, and how it could have been better. Focuses on the structure and strategic role played by the 7th EAP and asks how it helped deliver a better environment in practice.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/y8h62hs5">https://tinyurl.com/y8h62hs5</a>	26th July 2018
Defra -consultation on the Environmental Principles and Governance Bill	Seeking views on how a new environmental watchdog will work, and on the application of environmental principles, in England after EU exit.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/ybzxzdl2">https://tinyurl.com/ybzxzdl2</a>	2 August 2018
Defra - Climate Change and Emissions to Air – Draft Clean Air Strategy 2018	New primary legislation will be introduced to give local government new powers to improve air quality. For the first time the government will take action to tackle ammonia from farming – which is responsible for 88% of ammonia emissions – by requiring farmers to invest in the infrastructure and equipment that will reduce emissions.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/y8nxor89">https://tinyurl.com/y8nxor89</a>	14th August 2018



# British Frozen Food Federation Technical & Legislative Expert Group

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**Meeting of the Technical and Legislative Expert Group  
To be held at 10am on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2018  
Belton Woods Hotel, Grantham**

- 1. Apologies and Welcome**
- 2. Minutes of previous meeting**
- 3. Action Points & 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. Guest Speaker - 11.30-12.30pm - Lynne Regent, Chief Executive Officer, The Anaphylaxis Campaign**

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**Agenda Item 4 – Items for discussion**

- 4.1 Allergen Update (no paper)**
- 4.2 L. mono. Outbreak linked to frozen sweetcorn (2018\_02\_AC, 2018\_02\_AD)**
- 4.3 Durability date Q+As /meat cutting plants & 2-Sisters investigations (2018\_02\_V, 2018\_02\_W, 2018\_02\_AE)**
- 4.4 Dairy UK paper on protection of dairy terms (2018\_02\_H)**
- 4.5 Technical Seminar – feedback and next year’s event (no paper)**
- 4.6 Major Incidents MIG update (no paper)**

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

- 5.1 MSM – open letter from the Commission (no paper)**
- 5.2 Regulating Our Future (2018\_02\_O, 2018\_02\_P, 2018\_02\_AB)**
- 5.3 Sugars - Consultation on dietary sugars in food (2018\_02\_R) & PHE definition of free sugars (2018\_02\_AF)**
- 5.4 Alleged issues with 3rd party accredited labs (2018\_02\_F)**
- 5.5 BHA Industry Guide to mitigating acrylamide (2018\_02\_L)**
- 5.6 Voluntary Origin Rules consultation (2018\_02\_D)**
- 5.7 T&L publication – feedback and ideas for improvement (no paper)**

#### Agenda Item 6 – Items for Information

- 2018\_02\_A - Outbreak Assessment Report on Bluetongue virus (BTV-4) in France
- 2018\_02\_B - Leatherhead white papers
- 2018\_02\_C / 2018\_02\_K - Special guarantees concerning Salmonella spp. to broiler meat intended for Denmark
- 2018\_02\_E - Hygiene business expert group meeting notes
- 2018\_02\_G - Defra consultations on welfare of pigs & welfare of laying hens
- 2018\_02\_I - EC stakeholder notice on implications of UKs withdrawal re. Food Law
- 2018\_02\_J / 2018\_02\_T - Avian Influenza - latest updates
- 2018\_02\_M - Suspension of Bureau Veritas lifted
- 2018\_02\_N - New Bisphenol A regulations and useful Q&A info
- 2018\_02\_P - Removal of Calcium Sorbate (E 203) from Approved Food Additive List
- 2018\_02\_Q - Latest research on rodent resistance to anticoagulant rodenticides
- 2018\_02\_S - Transport of Warm Meat - implementation of requirements delayed
- 2018\_02\_U - Fitness check on General Food Law Regulation published
- 2018\_02\_X - Brazilian meat issue update
- 2018\_02\_Y - FuturePack 2018 conference
- 2018\_02\_Z – Consultation - Transparency and sustainability of the EU risk assessment model in the food chain

#### Agenda Item 7 – Items Carried Forward

Standing agenda items awaiting further development:

- 7.1 Glaze Methodology
- 7.2 Whole Genome Sequencing
- 7.3 Salt in Scampi Challenge
- 7.4 BRC Audit Optimisation Initiative Project – ongoing
- 7.5 GFSI
- 7.6 FRPERC project on Frozen storage of meat
- 7.7 FSA/FSS Efficacy of Withdrawals and Recalls project
- 7.8 WRAP - BFFF engagement
- 7.9 Peas Please Initiative
- 7.10 PA3 relaunch programme – due April through to July
- 7.11 BRC v8 – publication due August

#### Agenda Item 8 – Contact with other Organisations

- Dods Group - Lucy Singleton, Hannah French
- STS

#### Agenda Item 9 – Projects

- 9.1 Gold Book – completed and published electronically.
- 9.2 Shelf Life Project – no further progress

#### Agenda Item 10– Any Other Business

- 10.1 Future Expert Group meetings – Dates, Times, Venues, Formats (Webinars etc)

#### Agenda Item 11– Guest Speaker

Lynne Regent, Chief Executive Officer, from The Anaphylaxis Campaign

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