

T & L UPDATE

BFFF TECHNICAL AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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British Frozen Food Federation

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CONTENTS

ACTIVITY OF EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

EC launch new knowledge centre	5
ECJ publish ruling on copyright protection of taste	5
European Parliament Vote on Use of Antibiotics on Farms	5
ECR opinions published	6

ADDITIVES, CHEMICALS, CONTAMINANTS & FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

FSS publish Chemical Contaminant Review	6
Amendment to Plant Protection Authorisation	7
UK Pesticide Usage Survey 2017	7
Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2018 published	7

ALLERGENS

#EasyToAsk Living with a Food Allergy Survey launched	8
DHSC publish consultation results for gluten free food regulations	8
Secretary of State meets to discuss proposed changes on allergen labelling	9
Peanut allergy treatment 'in sight'	9

ANIMAL WELFARE

Update on Asian Hornet Sightings in the UK	10
Updated Guidance on How to Spot and Report African Swine Fever	10
EFSA Report on Hazard Identification and Ranking for Poultry at Slaughter	10
UK urged to take action to reduce risk of disease in poultry	11
Defra update Avian Influenza guidance	11
Evaluation of UK National Foot and Mouth Disease Exercise	11
EFSA publish TSE Surveillance summary report	12
Bovine Tuberculosis Guidance Updated	12

Review of Tuberculosis Strategy Published	12
Animal Health and Welfare Framework 2018	13
Report on Animal Welfare in the EU published	13
Defra publish Updated Guidance on Newcastle Disease	13
Government launches £60K fund to Help Protect Pollinators	14

BREXIT

Councils Advised to Set Up Food Resilience Teams	14
Brexit Glossary published	15
Brexit Timeline Published	15
Guide to the Meaningful Vote Published	15
Updated Guidance on Intellectual Property and Brexit	15

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

BFFF Technical Seminar 2019 programme revealed	16
Campden Listeria Seminar now launched!	16
FREE one to one support for members in Greater Lincolnshire area	17

FOOD SAFETY AND ZOOSES

FSA publish review of Food Standards delivery	17
Report on Escherichia coli O157 Super-Shedding	18
EFSA Opinion on Public Health Risks from Food-Borne Parasites	18
FSA publish Review of Food Standards Delivery	19
Proposal for More Efficient and Transparent Working	19
Survey on Levels of AMR E. coli in UK Retail Meat	20
Multi-Country Outbreak of L. mono Linked to Salmon Products	20
Draft Implementing Decision on Crisis Management for Food and Feed Safety	21

FOOD SECURITY, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

EU Citizens' Initiative on Mandatory Non-Vegetarian, Vegetarian or Vegan Labelling	21
Defra publishes new vision strategy	21
Latest FSA Communications to Enforcement Officers	22
FSS Independent Scrutiny of the Audit Process	22

GLOBAL STANDARDS

BRC START! programme now available	23
GFSI 2019 Conference announced	24
Codex Alimentarius - Codex Work on Antimicrobial Resistance Presented	24
Redefinition of International System of Units	25
An upcoming conference will focus on the future of food safety to boost international commitments	25

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Interactive Tool on Dietary Reference Values	26
Planetary Health Inquiry Launched	26
European Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health October Meeting	27
Survey on Public Perception of Obesity and Sugar/Calorie Reduction Programmes	27
Updated Public Consultation on Calorie Labelling on Food and Drink Outside the Home	28
Promoting Healthy Weight in Children, Young People and Families	28
FSS publish Consumer Tracking Survey	28
Government Policy Paper on Helping People to Live Well for Longer	29

IMPORTS AND THE SUPPLY CHAIN

Registration of UK approved premises exporting POAO's post Brexit	29
Guidance on Special Rules for Exporting Food, Drink and Agricultural Products	30
EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement	30
European Commission Report on Free Trade Agreements	30

REGULATORY

FSA confirm Health ID marks format post Brexit	31
FSS publish Register of Approved Establishments	32
FSA publish 11th Regulating Our Future Newsletter	32
Government Chemist publishes Quarterly Food and Feed Law Legislation Review	32

RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

Research reveals benefits of eating fatty fish in asthmatic children	33
Toolbox to Assess Safety of Nanomaterials	33

SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENT & CSR

Defra announces World Soil Day	34
WRAP Global Programme to Tackle Food Waste in Mexico City	34
UK Climate Projections 2018 published	34
Environmental Charities to Benefit from Environmental Offences Payments	35
UK to lead the world in development of sustainable packaging	35
BEIS publish Bioeconomy Strategy 2018 – 2030	36
UK Plastics Pact Roadmap to 2025	36
EU Commitments for Clean, Healthy and Safe Oceans	37

CONSULTATIONS

Recent Consultations	37
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BFFF TECHNICAL EXPERT GROUP

Agenda for meeting on 10th October 2018	38
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FOREWORD

Welcome to the latest edition of the BFFF Technical and Legislative update, the first edition for 2019!

I hope you enjoyed the Christmas festivities and have come back refreshed and ready to face all that we may be challenged with in the wonderful world of Technical!

As always, we've tried to focus on the topics which are most relevant to your business whilst at the same time bring you as much factual information as we can in these particularly uncertain times. Turn to the section on Brexit where you'll find handy links to a Brexit glossary of commonly used terms and acronyms in relation to the UK leaving the EU along with updated guidance on IP and Brexit. There's also a link to a guide published by The House of Commons on the 'meaningful vote' which explains the role of Parliament in the approval or rejection of any withdrawal agreement that may be reached between the UK and the EU 27 Member States.

Whilst all the debates have been taking place, we've been working away at organising the Technical Seminar for 2019. The programme is now finalised, bookings are being taken and with a great line up of speakers, on subjects really relevant to your business, it's sure to be a must attend event. You'll find more detail and links to the programme and booking form on page 16 - Places are limited though so don't leave it too late or you'll miss out!

However, the Technical Seminar is just one of many projects the BFFF continue to work on. And whilst they may not be covered here, they can be found in our Technical Group papers. The agenda from our latest Technical Expert Group meeting is available for your information at the back of this edition and you will see just how wide a variety of subjects the group discusses and monitors in the interests of the whole membership. If there are any papers you would like to see then, please just let me know and we can organise that for you deniserion@bfff.co.uk

But as it's a new year it is also time to reflect.... We would really welcome your feedback on the Technical services offered to you as part of your BFFF membership – from the publications we produce to the helpline advice we offer or the member interest groups (MIGs) we operate – please let us know what you think – what works well?, what does not?, what would you like to see more or less of? As you know we are a small team and we can't cover everything off but with your guidance we can strive to bring you the services you really need. Now is the time to influence! - just drop me an email on deniserion@bfff.co.uk . I look forward to hearing from you.

Happy reading!



Denise Rion
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ACTIVITY OF EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

EC LAUNCH NEW KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

The European Commission have recently announced the launch of a Knowledge Centre for Global Food and Nutrition Security. Funded by the European Commission and led by the Joint Research Council (JRC), the knowledge centre has the following remit:

- To make information and tools available through a user-friendly web platform
- To identify priority topics for European Commission action, based on scientific knowledge
- To identify horizontal synergies within the Commission and with external partners
- To promote the European Commission's role in generating new relevant knowledge
- To support initiatives of the main international food and nutrition security agencies

You can read more about the Knowledge centre in the following recent press release:

<https://tinyurl.com/ydhk44fo>

ECJ PUBLISH RULING ON COPYRIGHT PROTECTION OF TASTE

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) has published a ruling on the copyright protection of the taste of cream cheese and herb spreadable dip.

In the judgment, the Court clarified that, in order to be protected by copyright under the Copyright Directive, the taste of a food product must be capable of being classified as a 'work' within the meaning of the Directive. Classification as a 'work' requires that the subject matter concerned is an original intellectual creation and there is an 'expression' of that original intellectual creation.

The Court concluded that the taste of a food product cannot be classified as a 'work' and consequently is not eligible for copyright protection under the Directive.

You can read more about the ruling in the following ECJ press release: <https://tinyurl.com/yb539kd4>

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT VOTE ON USE OF ANTIBIOTICS ON FARMS

The European Parliament have announced that it has adopted plans to limit the use of antibiotics on farms, in order to keep food free from resistant bacteria. The adopted text sets out measures to curb the use of antibiotics on farms, empowers the European Commission to select antimicrobials to be reserved only for treating humans, imposes that imported foodstuffs will have to meet EU standards and that antibiotics cannot be used to enhance the growth of animals.

Separately, MEPs also approved new rules on more responsible ways to produce, sell and use medicated feed to tackle the spread of antimicrobial resistance. The agreement has to be formally adopted by the European Council before publication in the Official Journal.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7laqrgg>

ECR OPINIONS PUBLISHED

The following opinions of the European Committee of the Regions (ECR) have been published in the Official Journal (OJ) of the EU:

- 2018/C 387/05 of 25 October 2018 - Local and regional incentives to promote healthy and sustainable diets.
- 2018/C 387/08 of 25 October 2018 - Climate governance after 2020: a European and global perspective.
- 2018/C 387/09 of 25 October 2018 – Unfair Trading Practices (UTPs) in the food supply chain.

Should you wish to read the opinions in more detail they can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybxc8bnx>

ADDITIVES, CHEMICALS, CONTAMINANTS & FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

FSS PUBLISH CHEMICAL CONTAMINANT REVIEW

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) have published a report on the review of priority chemical contaminant risks, food production and consumer diets in Scotland. The review looked at scientific and grey literature and the report focuses on contaminants that can impact on foods that are most commonly consumed in Scotland, as well as those of relevance to Scottish food industries.

The review found that there were no contaminants or aspects of the Scottish diet which were of concern for Scotland but recommendations on future work needed by FSS included:

- The contaminants programme should be kept under review and include emerging contaminants
- It should maintain awareness of EFSA activities and continue intelligence gathering on chemical contaminants
- FSS funding of Local Authority sampling grants should continue and include emerging contaminants and take account of Commission Recommendations and other sources
- Laboratory capability and capacity is a key element of food safety and technical knowledge and analytical capacity must be kept fit-for-purpose.

These findings will allow FSS to refine the chemical contaminants component of its Strategy for Reducing Foodborne Illness in Scotland and allow more efficient targeting of its chemical contaminants research and messaging, to protect consumers in Scotland.

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

AMENDMENT TO PLANT PROTECTION AUTHORISATION

The Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) have recently published a plan to reduce the use of glyphosate in Germany. This plan comes despite renewed approval of the use of glyphosate by the EU. The plan looks at measures to amend the national Application of Plant Protection Products Regulation by stipulating restrictions to and conditions of the use of glyphosate in Germany. It reiterates the German Government's objective to discontinue use of glyphosate.



You can read more here (English translation available): <https://tinyurl.com/ybyrcof7>

UK PESTICIDE USAGE SURVEY 2017

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have published a report on the UK's pesticide usage for 2017. The report contains information on the application of pesticides to grassland and fodder crops grown and harvested in the UK in 2017.

This is the second survey of pesticide usage on grassland & crops in the United Kingdom. The previous report for the United Kingdom was published in 2014 covering pesticide usage on grassland & fodder crops in 2013 (Garthwaite et. al.,2014). Previous reports, including those in 2005 and 2009, covered Great Britain rather than the UK. For the purposes of this report Great Britain and Northern Ireland data has been amalgamated.

You can read the report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9c75nbu>

MATERIALS AND ARTICLES IN CONTACT WITH FOOD (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS (NI) 2018 PUBLISHED.

The Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018, SI 2018 No. 186 came into force on 29 November 2018. These Regulations amend the Materials and Articles in Contact with Food Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 to allow for the enforcement of Commission Regulation (EU) 2018/213 in relation to Bisphenol A (BPA) in varnishes and coatings and plastic food contact materials.

You will find the amendment here: <https://tinyurl.com/yako3l3g>

ALLERGENS

#EASYTOASK LIVING WITH A FOOD ALLERGY SURVEY LAUNCHED

Allergy UK along with the Food Standards Agency and the Anaphylaxis Campaign have launched a survey and are now inviting anyone aged 16-24 with a food allergy to take part.

Living with a food allergy is never easy, but for some young people it's having worrying implications. Many young people are too embarrassed to talk publicly about having a food allergy or intolerance especially when in a social setting – risking allergic reactions or even more fatal consequences.

Research shows that 41 per cent of young people (16-24-years-old) with food allergies or intolerances don't feel confident at all or only feel a little confident to ask serving staff for allergen information. The research also reveals that 60 per cent of those surveyed avoid dining out due to their condition.

The Easy to ASK campaign is designed to empower young people to ask about allergens when eating out, so that they can make safe choices.

You can find more information along with a link to complete the survey here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8qxdq9f>

DHSC PUBLISH CONSULTATION RESULTS FOR GLUTEN FREE FOOD REGULATIONS

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) have now published the summary of responses and final impact assessment to the consultation on the gluten-free food regulations.

The consultation, ran from 21st August to 1st October 2018 and sought views on proposed changes to what gluten-free foods are available on NHS prescription in England. Nine hundred and thirty-two responses were received, from a range of stakeholders and these are detailed in the summary.

The National Health Service (General Medical Services Contracts) (Prescription of Drugs etc.) (Amendment) Regulations 2018, for the prescribing of gluten-free foods in England, was proposed to be laid in November, coming into force early December 2018.

Under these amendment regulations only gluten-free foods that fall into the categories of 'gluten-free bread' and 'gluten-free mixes' will be available on prescription in primary care in England.

It is expected that NHS England guidance on the prescribing of gluten-free foods will be published but at the time of writing, it was not available.

You can view the responses and impact assessment here: <https://tinyurl.com/yaz96czo>



SECRETARY OF STATE MEETS TO DISCUSS PROPOSED CHANGES ON ALLERGEN LABELLING

At the end of November, Secretary of State, Michael Gove, met with allergen groups, retailers and other stakeholders to discuss proposed changes in the law around allergen labelling. The meeting which involved allergy groups, academics, clinicians and industry stakeholders, including Allergy UK, the British Retail Consortium and FDF focused on options for the introduction of revised allergen labelling laws.

The Secretary of State reiterated that the review of allergen labelling rules was progressing well and on track to bring forward proposals to change the law around the turn of the year. He also stressed that businesses do not need to wait for the law to change and should be doing all they can now to make sure consumers have the information they need to stay safe.

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

PEANUT ALLERGY TREATMENT 'IN SIGHT'

Research published in the New England Journal of Medicine, suggests that children who are allergic to peanuts will be able to be protected from having a severe reaction after accidental exposure.

The UK chief investigator for the Palisade study, Prof George du Toit, a consultant at Evelina London Children's Hospital, said:

“The results of this ground-breaking study are very promising and suggest that we will be able to protect children who are allergic to peanuts from having a severe reaction after accidental exposure. This is extremely good news as the number of children being diagnosed with peanut allergy in the UK has more than doubled over the past two decades. Peanut allergy is extremely difficult to manage for children and their families, as they have to follow a strict peanut-free diet. Families live in fear of accidental exposure as allergic reactions can be very severe and can even lead to death.”

During the study, participants were randomly assigned into groups that either received capsules of peanut protein or a dummy powder. The amount given gradually increased to cause tolerance.

You can read about the study in more detail here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8nqggge>



ANIMAL WELFARE

UPDATE ON ASIAN HORNET SIGHTINGS IN THE UK

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) published at the end of November the latest update on sightings of Asian hornet in the UK in 2018. At the time of writing, there have been thirteen confirmed sightings of the Asian hornet in England and six nests have been destroyed. No Asian hornets have been seen in the UK since 14th October 2018 and the latest situation has been updated to reflect the reduced risk of finding live hornets during the winter.

The Asian hornet (*Vespa velutina*) is a species of hornet which isn't native to the UK but is native to China. It arrived in Europe in 2004 and is now widespread in parts of France, Spain, the Channel Islands and Portugal. It is smaller than our native hornet and poses no greater risk to human health than other hornets or bees. However, they do pose a risk to honey bees and pollinating insects.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7bfsfno>

UPDATED GUIDANCE ON HOW TO SPOT AND REPORT AFRICAN SWINE FEVER

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) recently published updated guidance on how to spot and report African swine fever. The guidance covers how to spot African swine fever, what to do if it is suspected and how to stop it spreading and it can be found here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y8fvalmm>

EFSA REPORT ON HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RANKING FOR POULTRY AT SLAUGHTER

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) have published a report on the hazard identification and ranking for poultry at slaughter, from an exercise conducted at the National Contact Points Animal Health and Welfare Network meeting held in October 2018.

Based on responses to a hazard identification questionnaire, a list of all indicated hazards for each phase of the slaughter process was discussed and common terminology agreed. Hazard ranking was achieved through an online voting system. The resulting ranking gives an indication of the hazards that are most common in European Member States and most urgent to be addressed in order to safeguard animal welfare during the slaughter process.

You can access the report here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8o8sfri>

UK URGED TO TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE RISK OF DISEASE IN POULTRY

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) has urged all UK poultry keepers to take action to reduce the risk of disease over the winter, particularly avian influenza.

The press release outlines the measures that all bird keepers should take to protect their animals against the threat of avian influenza in the coming winter months, particularly if they are in or close to one of the Great Britain Higher Risk Areas. These measures include:

- keeping the area where birds live clean and tidy
- clean footwear before and after visits
- placing birds' feed and water in fully enclosed areas that are protected from wild birds
- where possible, avoiding keeping ducks and geese with other poultry species

It also highlights that all bird keepers across Great Britain should register their birds on the Great Britain Poultry Register. In Northern Ireland it is a legal requirement for all bird keepers to register every bird on the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Bird Register.

You can read the press release in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/ydh68jry>

DEFRA UPDATE AVIAN INFLUENZA GUIDANCE

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) has recently published an update to the guidance on avian influenza. The guidance covers how to spot avian influenza, what to do if it is suspected, and measures to prevent it. It has been updated to include a link to the rationale for deciding Higher Risk Areas and a revised link to the interactive map.

It can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/zzdcs95>

EVALUATION OF UK NATIONAL FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE EXERCISE

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) have recently published the UK National Foot and Mouth Disease Exercise Evaluation and Lessons Identified Report for 2018.

The exercise was organised by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) with input from Defra and the devolved administrations, and conducted over a period of ten months. The purpose was to test the four UK governments' contingency plans for a UK-wide, medium to large outbreak of foot and mouth disease.

It concludes that although overall the exercise had been well planned out some principal lessons were identified, including:

- a need for better internal communications and improved IT connectivity at APHA local offices;
- plans for resourcing a large-scale outbreak need to be improved, specifically around cross government sharing of resources.

You can read more about 'Exercise Blackthorn' here: <https://tinyurl.com/yaugcytv>

EFSA PUBLISH TSE SURVEILLANCE SUMMARY REPORT

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) have recently published the EU summary report on surveillance for the presence of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE) in 2017.

The report presents the results of surveillance on TSEs in bovine animals, sheep, goats, cervids (deer) and other animal species, as well as genotyping in sheep, carried out in 2017 in the EU, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland.

In total 1,331,240 cattle were tested and, although there were no cases of classical BSE, 6 atypical BSE cases were reported. During the year, 314,547 sheep and 117,268 goats were also tested in the EU. In sheep, 947 cases of scrapie were reported; of the classical scrapie cases, 98.2% occurred in sheep with genotypes of susceptible groups. In goats, 567 cases of scrapie were reported. Eleven cases of chronic wasting disease (CWD) were also reported in cervids by Norway.

You can read the report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/ydecmfz3>

BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS GUIDANCE UPDATED

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) have published an update to the guidance on bovine TB. The guidance details the tests that must be arranged for bovine TB, what happens if cattle test positive, when also provides updated details on slaughter and compensation.

You will find the updated guidance here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7wqfjge>

REVIEW OF TUBERCULOSIS STRATEGY PUBLISHED

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) have recently published a report on the review of the government's 25 year bovine Tuberculosis strategy.

The report, commissioned by the Environment Secretary in February 2018, aims to inform future strategies around the government's goal of eradicating TB by 2038. Key findings include:

- Industry must take greater responsibility for on-farm controls, biosecurity and safe trading practices, to stop the disease spreading
- More can be done to help farmers make purchasing decisions reflecting the risks of cattle being infected
- Evidence shows that badgers transmit bovine TB to cattle and contribute to the persistence of the disease
- Disease reduction would benefit from greater flexibility and agility in adapting bovine TB control measures as new research findings emerge
- A new independent body on disease control would be helpful to take over the control of those operations from APHA, Natural England and local authorities.

You can read the report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/yahh3eeo>

ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE FRAMEWORK 2018

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) have published an animal health and welfare framework 2018. The framework is to help local authorities in England carry out controls under animal health and welfare legislation (excluding animal establishment licensing).

The approach is risk based and can be adapted easily to suit the unique priorities of local communities and resources available. It also recognises the need for effective regulatory controls across the country to protect against animal disease and meet the requirements of trading arrangements.

It has been produced in partnership with other organisations, including the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and the National Animal Health and Welfare Panel.

You will find the report here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycyz53dd>

REPORT ON ANIMAL WELFARE IN THE EU PUBLISHED

Following audits of five member states (Germany, France, Italy, Poland and Romania), the European Court of Auditors have published, in the Official Journal of the EU, a special report entitled 'Animal welfare in the EU: closing the gap between ambitious goals and practical implementation' (C418/3, 19/11/2018).

The report shows that weaknesses still persist in relation to farm animals. For example, the routine tail docking of pigs, non-compliance of long-distance transportation rules and stunning procedures at slaughter. However, some successes are also highlighted including the ban on cages that restrict laying hens.

Various recommendations are made including, for example, the strategic framework for animal welfare, more effective enforcement, guidelines for compliance and strengthening the links between cross compliance and animal welfare.

You can access the report here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9a9obs6>

DEFRA PUBLISH UPDATED GUIDANCE ON NEWCASTLE DISEASE

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) have published updated guidance on Newcastle disease. The guidance covers how to spot Newcastle disease, what to do if it is suspected and measures to prevent its spread. The guidance has been updated to change the current level of risk for the disease, from medium to low.

You can access the guidance here: <https://tinyurl.com/yblcd7gr>

GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES £60K FUND TO HELP PROTECT POLLINATORS

A £60,000 project has been launched by the government to develop and test pollinator habitat mapping in order to help protect bees and other pollinators. Organisations involved include Natural England, Buglife, The Wildlife Trusts and other bodies who will help to identify where new habitats will provide the greatest benefit for bees, wasps, beetles, butterflies, moths and other pollinators.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/yc4mf7ne>

BREXIT

COUNCILS ADVISED TO SET UP FOOD RESILIENCE TEAMS

Local authorities should set up “food resilience teams” to prepare for different Brexit scenarios, according to an advice notice written by specialists at the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH), City, University of London and the University of Sussex.

The advice has been sent to every council in the UK and suggests authorities should consider creating food resilience teams to make risk assessments of how different outcomes of Brexit might affect food provision and supply in their local areas.

The advice notice suggests food resilience teams should:

- Map existing food systems in their regions
- Conduct rapid assessments of where risks and potential disruptions lie
- Clarify the limits to stockpiling
- Bring together relevant professionals and expertise
- Be prepared to convey this information to the Government and public.

It highlights local authorities’ responsibility for the enforcement of food safety and standards regulation, with a scope ranging from school meals to imported and exported products.

However, it says the Government’s guidance notes for a no-deal Brexit are “welcome but inadequate” and warns that local authorities have not been given enough advice.

You can read more detail and download the notice here: <https://tinyurl.com/y76k38lw>



BREXIT GLOSSARY PUBLISHED

The House of Commons recently published a glossary of commonly used terms and acronyms in relation to the UK leaving the EU. Terms covered include various forms of ‘Brexit’; ‘Article 50’; and ‘Backstop’. The glossary is to be revised and updated periodically and can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ya69juhx>

BREXIT TIMELINE PUBLISHED

The House of Commons have published a report on the Brexit timeline. The report covers major events leading up to the EU referendum, subsequent important dates and future expected events as the Brexit negotiations continue and the UK plans to leave the EU.

You will find the report here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9qqytq6>

GUIDE TO THE MEANINGFUL VOTE PUBLISHED

The House of Commons have published a guide to the meaningful vote. The guide explains the role of Parliament in the approval or rejection of any withdrawal agreement that may be reached between the UK and the EU 27 Member States, in relation to the UK’s exit from the EU under Article 50. It also covers what the “meaningful vote” is, what it involves, the timescales involved and Parliament’s role if a deal is accepted, rejected or not reached.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/ydfzm3su>

UPDATED GUIDANCE ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND BREXIT

The Intellectual Property Office published on 26 October 2018 an update to the guide on intellectual property and Brexit. The update includes new text for statutory legislation and business guidance and copyright and related rights. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ip-and-brex-it-the-facts>



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

BFFF TECHNICAL SEMINAR 2019 PROGRAMME REVEALED

Following the successful first ever Technical Seminar in 2018 we have been working away to be able to bring you something even better for 2019!

We are now excited to be able to reveal the programme for the day which will cover 'A Look Ahead', 'Innovative solutions', 'Building a Stronger Future' and 'What's in a Story'.

Intrigued?.....click here to view the programme in more detail: <http://bfff.co.uk/technical/seminar/>

The event takes place on Thursday 7th February 2019 at the Birmingham Hilton Metropole, and tickets are already selling fast and are limited so please don't leave it too late to book.

The booking form can be found here: <https://lnkd.in/dGqxzD8>.

CAMPDEN LISTERIA SEMINAR NOW LAUNCHED!

BFFF members may be interested in attending the following event to be held at Campden BRI on Wednesday 30th January 2019:

Controlling Listeria in food production

Listeria continues to dominate the headlines with recent outbreaks associated in frozen sweetcorn and processed meat.

How do you prevent Listeria contamination in your food manufacturing facility and if you find it, what do you need to do? This seminar will help you answer these questions:

- How to manage Listeria in the food manufacturing environment
- Which decisions need to be made if you find Listeria
- Which food commodities are of concern

Delegates will also hear from academia and industry on the impact of management practices on Listeria monocytogenes and the survival of Listeria monocytogenes on fresh leafy produce.

Campden BRI, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, GL55 6LD, UK

Members of Campden BRI: £250 + VAT

Non-members: £350 + VAT

Group discounts available on request. Contact sian.twinning@campdenbri.co.uk

Who should attend? - Food microbiologists, laboratory personnel, technical managers, hygiene supply companies, quality assurance staff, food safety managers

To view the full programme click here: <https://tinyurl.com/yb3mw85g>



FREE ONE TO ONE SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS IN GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE AREA

Agri-food chain members of BFFF based in the Greater Lincolnshire area (Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire, or North Lincolnshire) might be interested to learn of a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funded project which could offer them free help with innovation work.

Delivered by Experienced Food Industry experts the project offers bespoke help for individual SMEs to meet specific challenges, from 2 days to 12 months or more dependent on development needs.

The experts have come together from the Food Refrigeration and Process Engineering Research Centre (FRPERC) at Grimsby Institute, Lincoln Institute of Agri-Food Technology (LIAT) at University of Lincoln and the National Centre for Food Manufacturing (NCFM) at University of Lincoln.

The project has funding until October 2020 and for more information you can contact FRPERC directly on: frperc@grimsby.ac.uk or phone: 01472 315565 / 315522

FOOD SAFETY AND ZOOSES

FSA PUBLISH REVIEW OF FOOD STANDARDS DELIVERY



The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have recently published a review on how food standards work is delivered across England, Wales and Northern Ireland:

The FSA have been growing concerned that the delivery of food standards official controls is not working as well as it should be and this survey of LAs (which received 104 responses) now provides robust evidence of the scale and nature of the problems.

Results vary across the 3 countries but overall the report shows that food standards delivery is hampered by inadequate resources, and an out of date and inflexible approach to regulation.

The FSA Board was due to discuss the review and the survey findings on the 5th December with a view to agreeing a way forward. According to the FSA, addressing food standards is to become the next priority in the ROF programme.

You can read the report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9qpwu52>

REPORT ON ESCHERICHIA COLI O157 SUPER-SHEDDING

Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency have published a report regarding a research project which provides important new evidence on E. coli O157 - a bacterium carried by cattle which can cause serious illness when it enters the food chain.

The four-year research project shows that the overall prevalence of Escherichia coli O157 in cattle is similar across Great Britain and has remained relatively consistent in Scotland over the last decade. Cattle in Scotland however, were found to have a higher level of Escherichia coli O157, which is associated with super-shedding. Local exposure to this particular subtype could be a potential factor for the rates of human Escherichia coli O157 infection in Scotland being around three times higher than in England and Wales.

The research also trialled a vaccine, developed to limit the bacteria's excretion from and transmission between cattle. Results indicated that the vaccine may be effective in reducing human exposure and infection.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8ftfw9l>

EFSA OPINION ON PUBLIC HEALTH RISKS FROM FOOD-BORNE PARASITES

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) BIOHAZ Panel have recently published a scientific opinion on public health risks associated with food-borne parasites. This opinion reviews current methods for detection, identification and tracing of three parasites in relevant foods, reviews literature on food-borne pathways, examines information on their occurrence and persistence in foods, and investigates possible control measures along the food chain.

The parasites considered are: Cryptosporidium spp., Toxoplasma gondii and Echinococcus spp.

The opinion stresses that the prolonged period between infection and clinical symptoms means that source attribution studies are very difficult. It highlights however, that knowledge of the animal lifecycle for Echinococcus granulosus means that this parasite is controllable, though this is expensive and complicated. Quantitative risk assessments have been described for Toxoplasma in meat, although the report explains that development of further detection methods is required for there to be efficient control measures

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybp7dqfw>

FSA PUBLISH REVIEW OF FOOD STANDARDS DELIVERY

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have recently published a review of food standards delivery across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, as part of the FSA Board papers discussed at the Board meeting on 5th December 2018.

The survey assessed how local authorities plan and prioritise their food standards work, the resources and capacity they have and how they measure the success of their programmes. Key findings from the survey include:

- Levels of food standards resource in England are generally lower than in Wales and Northern Ireland
- 15% of food businesses are unrated for food standards risk, although the figures for some local authorities are higher
- Local authorities had difficulty in recruiting qualified officers.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9s84go8>

PROPOSAL FOR MORE EFFICIENT AND TRANSPARENT WORKING

A proposal to allow the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) to work more efficiently and transparently had been adopted by the Environment and Health Committee members on by 43 votes in favour, 16 against and one abstention.

The new rules aim to improve transparency in risk assessment, reliability, objectivity and independence of studies used by EFSA in its risk assessment, risk communication and governance.

A new pre-submission procedure has been introduced, to allow the application process to be speeded up, as EFSA may provide advice to the applicant on how to provide all required information.

The proposal also states that a common European Register of commissioned studies should be set up, to deter companies that are applying for an authorisation from holding back unfavourable studies. Once the studies submitted to EFSA are made public, the agency could also consult third parties to identify whether other relevant scientific data or studies exist.

The committee also agreed on a set of criteria to decide what kind of information can be kept confidential, e.g. the trademark under which a product will be marketed or detailed descriptions of preparations.

You will find more details here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9j4m9ry>

SURVEY ON LEVELS OF AMR E. COLI IN UK RETAIL MEAT

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have recently published the third annual results of an EU survey to assess the frequency of certain types of antimicrobial resistant Escherichia coli in raw UK retail pork and beef.

The 2017 survey included the testing of 314 beef and 310 pork samples from retailers in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The results show that the levels of antimicrobial resistant E. coli remain consistently low. However, one beef sample was found to be contaminated with an E. coli containing the mcr-1 gene, which confers resistance to the antibiotic colistin.

You can read the report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybvt87et>



MULTI-COUNTRY OUTBREAK OF L. MONO LINKED TO SALMON PRODUCTS

The European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) have published a joint technical report with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control on the multi-country outbreak of Listeria monocytogenes sequence type 8 infections linked to the consumption of salmon products.

The report covers 12 cases of Listeria monocytogenes, including four deaths, reported in Denmark (6 cases), Germany (5 cases) and France (1 case). The first cluster of cases were reported in Denmark in 2017 and linked to the consumption of ready-to-eat smoked salmon produced in Poland. Later in 2017, the same strain of Listeria was identified in marinated salmon in France. The salmon had originated from the same Polish processing company. There has also been a new human case of listeriosis in Germany in 2018.



The outbreak has been identified through whole genome sequencing and the report highlights that the extent of this outbreak has likely been underestimated. Due to the lack of whole genome sequencing data from the environmental and food samples taken at the Polish processing plant, it is not currently possible to confirm the contamination with the Listeria monocytogenes ST8 outbreak strain at the plant itself. Possible contamination at primary production level cannot currently be excluded either. Despite implemented control measures, the report highlights that ongoing cases suggest that the source of contamination is still active. Therefore, vulnerable individuals, including pregnant women and the elderly are at increased risk of invasive listeriosis.

You can read the report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7thg95e>

DRAFT IMPLEMENTING DECISION ON CRISIS MANAGEMENT FOR FOOD AND FEED SAFETY

The European Commission have recently published a draft Implementing Decision establishing a general plan for crisis management in the safety of food and feed in accordance with Article 55 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002.

This draft Decision takes account of experience in crisis management coordination gained during several food- and feed-borne incidents. It covers situations requiring enhanced Union coordination and those requiring the setting up of a crisis unit. It also sets out the practical procedures necessary for enhanced preparedness and the management of incidents at Union level, including a communication strategy.

This draft Decision will repeal Commission Decision 2004/478/EEC and requires the Commission to draw up a 5-year plan to implement the general plan.

You can view the draft Implementing decision here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9nkv725>

FOOD SECURITY, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

EU CITIZENS' INITIATIVE ON MANDATORY NON-VEGETARIAN, VEGETARIAN OR VEGAN LABELLING

The European Commission have recently registered an EU Citizens' Initiative entitled 'Mandatory food labelling Non-Vegetarian / Vegetarian / Vegan'. The initiative calls on the European Commission to propose mandatory pictorial representation on all food products to indicate whether they are non-vegetarian, vegetarian, or vegan. Once an initiative is registered it kicks off a one year registration process of gaining statements of support and, if one million signatures from at least seven different Member States are received, the Commission will have three months in which to react.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybv2aafz>

DEFRA PUBLISHES NEW VISION STRATEGY

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) have recently published a new strategy which sets out a shared vision, set of strategic objectives and goals for the whole of Defra. The 'Creating a Great Place for Living' strategy has four objectives underpinned by ten goals and five principles, covering: EU Exit; food, farming and fisheries; and the environment

It is intended to provide staff across the whole group of Defra organisations (including non-ministerial departments, executive agencies, non-departmental and other public bodies) with a clear understanding of how the Defra group is creating a great place for living.

You can read the strategy in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8rh6gov>

LATEST FSA COMMUNICATIONS TO ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

Since the last edition of the T&L the FSA have issued numerous notices to Enforcement Officers, some of which may be of interest to members, including:

- OVS/2018/16 of 25/10/2018 - Amendment to Annexes I and II of Decision 2006/766/EC
- FSAEN18045 of 25/10/2018 - FHRS National consistency exercise
- PLGEN18041 of 25/10/2018 - Regulating our Future paper - 'Changing food regulation: what we've done, where we go next'
- PLGEN18042 of 29/10/2018 - Transport of over temperature meat from slaughterhouses
- CNSEN18021 of 29/10/2018 - Regulating our Future - Competency Framework Reference Group
- PLGEN18043 of 29/10/2018 - Shellfish official controls (primary production) and incidents management
- CNSEN18022 of 29/10/2018 - Consultation on the Food (Amendment) (EU Exit) (England) Regulations 2018 – note consultation now closed.
- CNSEN18025 of 12/11/2018 E. coli O157 control of cross-contamination guidance for food business operators and local authorities.
- 2018 FSAEN18049 of 15/11/2018 Regulating our Future (ROF) – online food business registration service
- OVS 2018 18 of 16/11/2018 Bivalve molluscs from Massachusetts and Washington
- IMPEN18030 of 19/11/2018 Amendments to Regulation (EC) No. 669/2009 and Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 885/2014

Should members require information on any of the above, it can be obtained from the FSA website here: <https://fsa.riams.org/login>

However, please note due to the revised format for the FSA website, users must now request and use login details from the FSA directly to access this information.

FSS INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY OF THE AUDIT PROCESS

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) have recently published the findings of an 'Independent Scrutiny' of the audit process. The report covers audits performed by FSS in accordance with the Food (Scotland) Act 2015, The Official Feed and Food Controls (Scotland) Regulations 2009 and Article 4(6) of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004.

An 'Independent Scrutiny' is a regular and planned process external to the audit body and the audited organisation with particular focus on the audit process to ensure that the process is capable of producing objective results and meeting its obligations under Regulation (EC) No 882/2004.

The whole audit process is covered, including programming, planning and executing audits, reporting (including approval of reports), corrective action and follow-up. It should also cover the different threats to independence and mechanisms to manage them.

The objectives of independent scrutiny are to provide:

- An objective evaluation of the effectiveness and independence of the audit process and audit body.
- A critical evaluation of documentary evidence with a specific focus on objectivity of the audit body.
- Feed-back for continuous improvement.
- Confidence that the audit process is meeting the objectives of Article 4(6) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004

You can read the report in more detail here: <https://tinyurl.com/y77tumu4>

GLOBAL STANDARDS

BRC START! PROGRAMME NOW AVAILABLE

The BRC START! Programme is now available to complement the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety.

As certification to the Standard continues to develop, it is important to provide opportunities to recognise and encourage the development of food safety systems in small sites where the full requirements of the Standard may not always be practical or add value and in sites that are still developing food safety management systems.

The START! programme is aligned with the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) Global Markets programme and will enable audits and certification against two levels of requirements: basic and intermediate.

The basic and the intermediate - level requirements of the START! programme provide recognised stepping stones towards eventual certification to the full Standard (if required). They also provide assurance to customers about the food safety systems operating at those supply sites that have gained certification at either of these two levels.

The START! programme sets out the requirements for the manufacture of processed foods and the preparation of primary products supplied as retailer-branded products, branded food products, and food or ingredients for use by food service companies, catering companies and food manufacturers. The audit and certification will apply only to products that have been manufactured or prepared at the site where the audit has taken place and will include storage facilities that are under the direct control of the production site management.

The START! programme does not apply to food products that do not undergo any process at the audited site or to activities relating to wholesale, importation, distribution or storage outside the direct control of the company.

The programme can be downloaded for free from the BRC bookshop here: <https://tinyurl.com/yayta3dv>

A quick start guide can also be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8mj65w5>

GFSI 2019 CONFERENCE ANNOUNCED

The Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) have announced that the 18th edition of their conference is to be held in Nice, on 25th-28th February 2019 and this time round the will focus be on Emerging Challenges and the Future of Food Safety.

With changing demographics and consumer demand, new developments in science and technology, and an ever-changing global marketplace to name just a few, the food retail industry is experiencing extensive, exponential change.

Whilst more changes are sure to come the future may also hold unique challenges for the industry. The conference is set to explore just what this means for the future of food safety as well as looking at how industry leaders stay one step ahead.

More information can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7z273xs>

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS - CODEX WORK ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE PRESENTED



Codex Alimentarius recently announced that its work on antimicrobial resistance had been presented at the Second OIE Global Conference on Antimicrobial Resistance and Prudent Use of Antimicrobial Agents in Animals.

The conference, which was held in Morocco between 29-31 October 2018, heard from the Codex Alimentarius Senior Food Standards Officer on the work of the Codex Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance. The presentation highlighted the importance of the guidelines that Codex is developing on antimicrobial resistance, particularly on how to design and implement integrated surveillance of foodborne antimicrobial resistance and to promote harmonisation of approaches

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8yxu5e7>

REDEFINITION OF INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM OF UNITS

In a landmark decision, representatives from 60 countries voted to redefine the International System of Units (SI), changing the world's definition of four of the seven base units of the SI: the kilogram, ampere, kelvin and mole; and all units derived from them, such as the volt, ohm and joule.

The decision, made at the General Conference on Weights and Measures in Versailles, France, which is organised by the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM), means that all SI units will now be defined in terms of constants that describe the natural world. This will assure the future stability of the SI and open the opportunity for the use of new technologies, including quantum technologies, to implement the definitions. The changes, which will come into force on 20 May 2019, will bring an end to the use of physical objects to define measurement units.

The definition of the kilogram for more than 130 years, the International Prototype of the Kilogram (IPK), a cylinder of a platinum alloy stored at the BIPM in France, will now be retired. It will be replaced by the Planck constant – the fundamental constant of quantum physics. While the stability of the IPK could only be confirmed by comparisons with identical copies, a difficult and potentially inaccurate process, the Planck constant is ready for use everywhere and always.

The kilogram – will be defined by the Planck constant (h)

The ampere – will be defined by the elementary electrical charge (e)

The kelvin – will be defined by the Boltzmann constant (k)

The mole – will be defined by the Avogadro constant (N_A)

Although the size of these units will not change (a kilogram will still be a kilogram), the four redefined units will join the second, the metre and the candela to ensure that the set of SI base units will continue to be both stable and useful.

The revised SI will maintain its relevance by facilitating technical innovations. Just as the redefinition of the second in 1967 provided the basis for technology that has transformed how we communicate across the globe, through GPS and the internet, the new changes will have wide-reaching impact in science, technology, trade, health and the environment, among many other sectors.

AN UPCOMING CONFERENCE WILL FOCUS ON THE FUTURE OF FOOD SAFETY TO BOOST INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

The Codex Secretariat is part of a team preparing events for early 2019 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Geneva, Switzerland which will identify key actions and strategies to address current and future challenges to food safety.

“The Future of Food Safety – Transforming knowledge into action for people, economies and the environment” is the overall topic of the events, co-organized by FAO, WHO, WTO and the African Union.

The Addis Ababa meeting will centre on:

- the burden of foodborne diseases and the benefits of investing in safe food
- safe and sustainable food systems in an era of accelerated climate change

- science, innovation and digital transformation at the service of food safety
- empowering consumers to make healthy choices and support sustainable food systems.

The Geneva Forum will be held on the WTO premises and address the trade-related aspects and challenges of food safety.

The events will bring together health and agriculture officials, food safety authorities, scientific experts, representatives of consumers and food producers associations as well as other organizations including the private sector. More information can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybjs92m6>

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

INTERACTIVE TOOL ON DIETARY REFERENCE VALUES

The European Food Safety Initiative (EFSA) have launched an interactive tool on Dietary Reference Values (DRVs), called DRV Finder. The tool is based on opinions on DRVs published by EFSA in recent years and covers: water; fats; carbohydrates and dietary fibre; protein; energy; 14 vitamins; and 13 minerals. Searches can be conducted by population group or nutrient, to extract and combine the information needed.

You can find more information here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9uczm7v>

PLANETARY HEALTH INQUIRY LAUNCHED

The Environmental Audit Committee recently launched a planetary health inquiry to investigate the effect of environmental damage and climate change on health. The inquiry will examine the use of technology to mitigate risks, global interdisciplinary collaborations, and action taken by the UK Government. The Committee is particularly interested in the risks relating to nutrition for UK and global human populations, as a result of the effects of climate change and environmental deterioration.

More detail can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yba9vdx>

EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR ACTION ON DIET, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH OCTOBER MEETING

Minutes of the Plenary meeting of the European Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, held on 26th October 2018 have recently been published. The Platform discussed, amongst other items:

- An update on the thematic network on the promotion of fresh fruit and vegetables, a platform for sharing information, knowledge and good practices on how to increase fresh fruit and vegetable consumption
- An ITV initiative to promote health issues and tackle obesity in the UK.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/ydfx8q2y>

SURVEY ON PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF OBESITY AND SUGAR/CALORIE REDUCTION PROGRAMMES

Public Health England (PHE) recently published the results of a survey, conducted by Ipsos MORI, to explore the public's perception of obesity, and PHE's reduction programmes that have challenged the food industry to reduce sugar and calories.

The survey was undertaken before the government published chapter 2 of its Childhood Obesity Plan and the results show that around 9 in 10 people support the government working with the food industry to make everyday foods and drinks healthier. Other key findings from the survey include:

- More than 9 in 10 respondents think obesity is a problem in the UK;
- Obesity is seen as the third biggest health concern for the UK population, behind cancer and mental health;
- People believe the greatest responsibility for tackling obesity lies with individuals and families, the food industry and the government;
- 87% of respondents supported replacement of unhealthy products near supermarket tills and checkouts, with healthier ones.

In 2019, PHE will also publish further progress towards reaching the 20% sugar reduction ambition by 2020, as well as guidelines for industry to achieve the 20% reduction in calories by 2024.

More information can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycbs5g8h>



UPDATED PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON CALORIE LABELLING ON FOOD AND DRINK OUTSIDE THE HOME

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) have recently published changes to the impact assessment associated with the 12 week public consultation on how to introduce calorie labelling for food and drink consumed outside of the home.

Changes made to the impact assessment include:

- Providing contextual information on international policies;
- The addition of Canada to the list of countries that have accepted regulations to mandate calorie labelling;
- Corrected information on legislative intentions to introduce calorie labelling in Northern Ireland;
- More detail has been provided about the 'Calorie Wise' scheme.

The impact assessment along with the consultation which took place can be found here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y6wn9unx>

PROMOTING HEALTHY WEIGHT IN CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

Public Health England (PHE) have recently published guidance on promoting healthy weight in children, young people and families. The guidance is designed as a resource to support local authorities, NHS commissioners and providers and voluntary and community sector organisations to take action to reduce obesity and it also references the sugar reduction programme.

You can read the guidance in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y6vndlpa>

FSS PUBLISH CONSUMER TRACKING SURVEY

Food Standards Scotland have now published the Consumer Tracking Survey Wave 6, measuring changes in Scotland's attitudes, behaviours and knowledge in relation to food over time. The survey is undertaken biannually and comprises a set of consistent questions at each wave, with modules focussing on food safety and authenticity, and diet and nutrition, running annually.

The survey shows that concerns about ensuring a healthy, balanced diet have risen by 8% since the start of tracking in 2015, despite 58% regarding their own diets as being healthy. Almost half of respondents agreed that affordability is a barrier to healthy eating, whilst nine out of ten people indicated they were concerned about the levels of salt, sugar, fat and saturated fat found in food. Concerns about consuming unnecessary sugar is at its highest since tracking began.

You can view the survey in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/ygs878dl>

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) recently published a policy paper entitled 'prevention is better than cure: our vision to help you live well for longer'. The document sets out the government's vision for preventing health problems from arising and supporting people in the management of their health problems.

The vision for prevention covers decisions around food, drink and activity, amongst others. The objective of the vision is to improve healthy life expectancy by at least an extra 5 years by 2035, and to close the gap between the richest and poorest. You can read the policy paper in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7rcft9o>

DHSC have also released a collection of case studies, showing examples of good practice where organisations are:

- stopping health problems from arising in the first place
- supporting people to manage their health problems when they do arise.

These case studies can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yd2vl9yk>

IMPORTS AND THE SUPPLY CHAIN

REGISTRATION OF UK APPROVED PREMISES EXPORTING POAO'S POST BREXIT

At the end of November, The Food Standards Agency (FSA) sent a letter to UK-approved Food Business Operators indicating that in the event of a no deal Brexit the UK would need to apply to be listed by the EU as a 'third country' in order to export fish, shellfish and other POAO to the EU.

To enable an application to be submitted by Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) on behalf of the UK, producers who export POAO to the EU; who supply products subsequently exported to the EU; or who wish to do so in the near future were asked to provide certain information to the FSA:

- Confirmation that they would like to be included on the list of approval to export POAO into the EU.
- Product(s) and volume of material exported to the EU over the last 12 months and the number of consignments dispatched to the EU.
- Product(s) and volume of material produced in the last 12 months that is not exported.
- Approval number.
- Name, address email and telephone number.

Those who deal with EU countries but haven't responded, risk not being added to the approval list and losing a proportion of their market in a no deal scenario.

GUIDANCE ON SPECIAL RULES FOR EXPORTING FOOD, DRINK AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) have published an update to the guidance on special rules for the export of food, drink and agricultural products. The guidance provides information on whether a certificate is required to export such products and the Export Health Certificate list has been updated.

You will find the updated guidance here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8mj9gym>

EU-JAPAN ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The European Parliament recently announced that its International Trade Committee had given its recommendation to approve the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement. The Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and Japan will eventually remove almost all tariffs on goods. It opens up services, including e-commerce, maritime transport, postal services, energy and telecommunications. It also creates common rules for bilateral trade, and common standards for the two trading blocs.

This positive move, the largest bilateral trade deal ever for the EU, has been welcomed by the agri-food chain, recognising the strategic importance of Japan as an export destination for the EU.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8pa5kq3>

EUROPEAN COMMISSION REPORT ON FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

The European Commission recently published a report on implementation of free trade agreements (FTAs) between 1 January 2017 - 31 December 2017 (COM/2018/728 final).

This second Annual Report on FTA Implementation is intended to increase awareness and transparency, enabling the other EU institutions, Member States and other stakeholders to scrutinise and debate how the EU is applying its FTAs.

The information will also inform future trade negotiations. The report details developments regarding 35 EU FTAs, covering nearly 70 global markets. It shows that FTAs are proving effective in removing barriers to trade and promoting high standards of labour and environment protection, but that European exporters could make even more out of the opportunities offered by the agreements. For that reason, the Commission is boosting its efforts to inform and help EU companies, especially smaller ones, to benefit from trade deals.

The report can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9nk7mc4>

REGULATORY

FSA CONFIRM HEALTH ID MARKS FORMAT POST BREXIT

Between the 27th July and the 8th October 2018 the Food Standards Agency (FSA) consulted in England, Wales and Northern Ireland on proposed changes to the UK's health and identification marks as a result of the UK leaving the EU. Food Standards Scotland (FSS) undertook a similar exercise in Scotland.

Health and identification marks are the oval stamps that must be applied to certain food products of animal origin (POAO) and confirm that such products have been produced in a UK approved establishment. The mark also indicates that the product has been inspected and is fit for human consumption.

Having evaluated the information provided by stakeholders the FSA have stated that it was clear that respondents would prefer to:

- retain the existing oval form and dimensions of the marks, and
- retain the abbreviated UK prefix that represents England, Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland

Therefore, the only change proposed to the marks is the removal of the EC abbreviation.

The UK health and identification marks to be applied when the UK is no longer a Member State of the EU are:

The UK health mark



The UK identification mark



In a 'no deal' scenario, the revised form of the health and identification marks would have to be applied to certain Products of Animal Origin (POAO) intended for export on 'Day 1' onwards.

Under a negotiated exit with an implementation period, depending upon the precise terms agreed with the EU, the EC health and identification marks would be retained for all POAO produced in the UK during the implementation period. The new form of the marks would be introduced on Day 1 following the expiry of the implementation period.

Changes that will finalise the UKs health and identification marks have been incorporated in a draft Statutory Instrument, The Specific Food Hygiene (EU Exit) Regulations 2018, to be laid before Parliament for approval.

FSS PUBLISH REGISTER OF APPROVED ESTABLISHMENTS

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) have published the register of approved establishments in Scotland that handle, prepare or produce products of animal origin, according to Regulation (EC) 853/2004.

Authorities in all European Union Member States have to approve establishments that handle, prepare or produce products of animal origin, according to Regulation (EC) 853/2004

The register can be accessed here: <https://tinyurl.com/yddcdt6b>

FSA PUBLISH 11TH REGULATING OUR FUTURE NEWSLETTER

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have now published the 11th Regulating Our Future newsletter. This issue focuses on the progress made on Primary Authority National Inspection Strategies and the next steps in preparing local authorities for changes to food business registration, particularly the roll out of the digital service. These are both significant parts of the overall design for a modernised regulatory framework.



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You can read the newsletter in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/yawrg624>

GOVERNMENT CHEMIST PUBLISHES QUARTERLY FOOD AND FEED LAW LEGISLATION REVIEW

The Government Chemist has published the quarterly food and feed law legislation review, covering the period from July to September 2018. This report provides information and updates on UK food and feed law and related scientific and regulatory issues. It covers areas including, amongst others: exiting the EU; animal welfare; import controls; meat and processed meat; and novel foods.

You can read the report in full here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycv3cgj4>

RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

RESEARCH REVEALS BENEFITS OF EATING FATTY FISH IN ASTHMATIC CHILDREN

An international study has found that children with asthma who followed a healthy Mediterranean diet enriched with fatty fish had improved lung function after six months.

Lead researcher Maria Papamichael from La Trobe University said the findings added to a growing body of evidence that a healthy diet could be a potential therapy for childhood asthma.

“We already know that a diet high in fat, sugar and salt can influence the development and progression of asthma in children and now we have evidence that it’s also possible to manage asthma symptoms through healthy eating. Fatty fish is high in omega-3 fatty acids which have anti-inflammatory properties. Our study shows eating fish just twice a week can significantly decrease lung inflammation in children with asthma.”

The clinical trial involved 64 children from Athens in Greece, aged five to 12 who had mild asthma. Researchers from Australia and Greece divided the children into two groups and instructed around half to eat two meals of cooked fatty fish (of at least 150 grams) as part of the Greek Mediterranean diet every week for six months. The remaining children followed their normal diet.

At the end of the trial, they found the group who ate fish had reduced their bronchial inflammation by 14 units. Above 10 units is significant under international guidelines.

You can read more about the research here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8v5m5j7>

TOOLBOX TO ASSESS SAFETY OF NANOMATERIALS

Joint Research Council (JRC) scientists have made an inventory of publicly available tools for the safety assessment of nanomaterials.

Under the European chemical safety regulation (REACH) and similar legislation around the world, the safety of nanomaterials to human health and the environment must be assessed. This poses some difficulties, since the hazards of nanomaterials result from their physical as well as chemical properties. Some of the tools needed for assessing their safety do not yet exist or are still in development.

The NANoREG project made an extensive inventory of publicly available, ready-to-use tools for nanomaterial safety assessment. This inventory, the NANoREG Toolbox, was first published last year in the JRC Data Catalogue as a freely accessible Microsoft Excel®-based dataset. JRC scientists have now also published a scientific article describing the NANoREG Toolbox and analysing its content. The dataset describes and locates more than 500 tools for various assessment tasks, an unprecedented effort in identifying tools for nanomaterial safety assessment.

The safety assessment tools recorded in the NANoREG Toolbox are relevant and useful for similar assessments anywhere in the world. They also support alternative approaches to nanomaterial safety, such as safe-by-design and life cycle assessment. Regulators, scientists and the industry can use the NANoREG Toolbox as a starting point to search for available tools for specific needs.

You will find more detail here: <https://tinyurl.com/yblxm65w>

SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENT & CSR

DEFRA ANNOUNCES WORLD SOIL DAY

The Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) announced on 5th December 2018 the details of World Soil Day, a UN-led campaign to highlight the importance of healthy soil and the role it plays.

Soil holds three times as much carbon as the atmosphere, reduces the risk of flooding by absorbing water and delivers 95 per cent of our global food supplies. For World Soil Day 2018 the UN is calling on people to #StopSoilPollution, noting that one third of our global soils are already degraded.

Outside the EU and the Common Agricultural Policy, a new system of “public money for public goods” will reward farmers for environmental outcomes such as clean air and water, flood prevention, thriving plants and wildlife and the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. Soil is an important asset that can help deliver many of these outcomes.

You can read more about World Soil Day here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8sulmtn>

WRAP GLOBAL PROGRAMME TO TACKLE FOOD WASTE IN MEXICO CITY

The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) have recently announced that its international section, WRAP Global, has received funding to develop a bespoke programme to tackle the problem of food waste in Mexico City.

WRAP Global will use the \$250,000 of funding to scale up its approach to the problem of food waste in a large city and along the whole supply chain; from farm to fork. The initial funding is for two years, with work beginning in early 2019.

More detail can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9vu9et7>

UK CLIMATE PROJECTIONS 2018 PUBLISHED

The Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) have announced the launch of the UK Climate Projections 2018 - a comprehensive picture of how the climate could change over the next century.

UKCP18 has been developed by the Met Office Hadley Centre, in partnership with Defra, BEIS, the Devolved Administrations and the Environment Agency, and has been extensively peer reviewed by an independent science panel.

Using the latest science from the Met Office and around the world, the UK Climate Projections 2018 illustrate a range of future climate scenarios until 2100 – showing increasing summer temperatures, more extreme weather and rising sea levels are all on the horizon and urgent international action is needed.

People and businesses will be able to use UKCP18 to explore the types and magnitude of climate change projected for the future, while government will use the projections to inform its adaptation and mitigation planning and decision-making.

You can read more about UKCP18 here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8th6neg>

ENVIRONMENTAL CHARITIES TO BENEFIT FROM ENVIRONMENTAL OFFENCES PAYMENTS

The Environment Agency have announced that environmental charities are to benefit from payments made by a number of companies and individuals for environmental offences they have committed.

Payments totalling more than £2.2 million will be made to 15 environmental charities for offences including:

- pollution of rivers or the sea
- not meeting permit conditions
- not taking reasonable steps to recover packaging waste

The companies and individuals involved have accepted liability, demonstrated restoration of harm and will make improvements to avoid future offences

You will find more detail here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7d9xvhk>

UK TO LEAD THE WORLD IN DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING

Up to £60 million of new government funding is to be set aside to help in the development of sustainable packaging, a key part of the government's modern industrial strategy. The funding will be delivered by UK Research and Innovation through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund with industry support and will be accessed by competitions to meet the challenge of developing smart sustainable plastic packaging to reduce the impact on the environment.

Amongst the possibilities the fund could help to develop are:

- new forms of packaging and plastic - made from farming, food and industrial waste, like sugar beet, wood chippings and food waste – moving away from oil-based plastics
- smart packaging labels - which, alongside a smart bin, could tell consumers the right bin to put recycling into and revolutionise the way recycling is sorted in waste plants
- 'live' sell-by-date patch - a living sell-by-date which deteriorates at the same rate as produce to show consumers when their food is going off – cutting down on food waste
- reduce single use plastics - increase use of recycled plastic in new products

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/y96dsv46>

BEIS PUBLISH BIOECONOMY STRATEGY 2018 – 2030

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) have now published the Bio economy Strategy for 2018 to 2030, setting out the approach that government, industry and the research community will take to harnessing the power of bioscience, using renewable biological resources to replace fossil resources in products, processes and services.

The strategy has 4 main goals, and looks to boost national productivity and address key challenges in food, chemicals, materials, energy production, health and the environment, including:

- Producing smarter, cheaper materials such as bio-based plastics and composites
- Reducing plastic waste and pollution by developing a new generation of advanced and environmentally sustainable plastics
- Providing sustainable, healthy, affordable and nutritious food for all
- Increasing the productivity, sustainability and resilience of UK agriculture and forestry

You can read about the strategy in more detail here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8xoavz6>

UK PLASTICS PACT ROADMAP TO 2025

The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) published on 15th November 2018 the UK Plastics Pact Roadmap to 2025, providing a framework and key actions for businesses, to deliver ambitious targets and help reduce pollution of the environment by plastic packaging.

The actions are aligned with the targets of The UK Plastics Pact, and will require significant investment. The Roadmap itself precedes the forthcoming Resources and Waste Strategy and will evolve over time, reflecting changes in policy and innovations.

The Roadmap aims to move plastics from being single-use to a valued resource, in line with the circular economy model, while avoiding unintended environmental consequences of actions such as substitution or blanket removal. It also sets interim targets for increasing recycling and recycled content. Three key milestone dates have been set: April 2019; end of 2022; and end of 2025. If the targets are achieved, all plastic packaging will be recyclable or compostable by 2025.

You can read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8nwc394>

EU COMMITMENTS FOR CLEAN, HEALTHY AND SAFE OCEANS

The European Commission have announced that the EU has made 23 new commitments, with €300 million of EU funding, to ensure clean, healthy and safe oceans.

The EU initiatives include:

- €100 million for Research and Development projects to tackle plastic pollution
- €82 million for marine and maritime research, such as innovative aquaculture systems.

Alongside this, the European Commission has published a fact sheet as an annex to the EU commitments. The fact sheet includes a section on marine pollution which covers, amongst other items, reducing plastic waste and marine litter and measures within and to support the EU plastics strategy. Sustainable fisheries are also covered.

You can read more in the following press release: <https://tinyurl.com/y9yvga3r> and the fact sheet can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9jhppaz>

CONSULTATIONS

Consultation	Purpose	Link	Deadline
EC - Draft Roadmap on the Circular Economy	Examines options and actions for a more coherent policy framework of the different strands of work of EU product policy and their contribution to the circular economy.	https://tinyurl.com/ybagwalt	24 January 2019
FSS - Food Consumed Out of Home in Scotland	proposals to improve food eaten outside of the home in Scotland, to make it healthier.	https://tinyurl.com/y8zp7s38	28 February 2019
FSA - Delayed and partial evisceration of poultry	proposed process for authorising delayed and partial evisceration of poultry in FSA approved poultry slaughterhouses	https://tinyurl.com/ydcl84y6	11 February 2019



British Frozen Food Federation Technical & Legislative Expert Group

Meeting of the Technical and Legislative Expert Group
To be held at 10am on Wednesday 10th October 2018
NFU Mutual, Ryon Hill House, Stratford-upon-Avon.

1. Apologies and Welcome
2. Minutes of previous meeting
3. Action Points & Matters arising
4. People Awards update (J. Hyman)
5. Items for discussion - see list following
6. Items to discuss if time – see list following
7. Update on activities of other groups/associations- see list following
8. Items for information – see list following
9. Items carried forward – see list following
10. Contact with other organisations
11. Projects
12. Any other business
13. Guest Speaker (12:00)- “Food Safety – Managing Product Recall Risks”, Natasha Catchpole - CFC Underwriting

Agenda Item 4 – People Awards Update

- 4.1 Update from John Hyman on the People Awards 2019

Agenda Item 5 – Items for discussion

- 5.1 FCELG meeting - CO2 shortage and Brexit Impact (2018_04_P / 2018_04_R)
- 5.2 WRAP & BFFF - Food Waste Reduction Roadmap and Potential areas of activity on Citizen Food Waste (2018_04_Z, 2018_04_Y)
- 5.3 PHE Calorie Reduction Programme - OOH Calorie labelling & industry and stakeholder forums (2018_04_T)
- 5.4 Defra Power Resilience Meeting (2018_04_AB)
- 5.5 Tech seminar- Planning progress update

Agenda Item 6 – Items to discuss if time

- 6.1 ID Health Marking & Marketing Standards consultations (2018_04_J)
- 6.2 ROF Food Law Code of Practice consultation (2018_04_M)
- 6.3 ECJ ruling on crops obtained by mutagenesis (GMOs) (2018_04_N)
- 6.4 Roundtable meeting with SoS on Resources & Waste Strategy (2018_04_X)
- 6.5 Open Consultations: DIT Free Trade Agreement (2018_04_Q), FSA Retention of EU Law (2018_04_U), EC origin labelling of meat (2018_04_V)

Agenda Item 7 – Activities of other groups/associations

7.1 Feedback from members on any activities of other groups/associations as relevant (2018_03_M):

- FSA Regulating Our Future
- Food Industry Intelligence Network (FIIN)
- Seafood Industry Alliance (SIA)
- Provisions Trade Federation (PTF)
- British Poultry Council (BPC)
- BRC Labelling and Legislation Working Group
- Campden BRI working groups and Scientific Technical Committee
- Food & Biocides Industry Group (FBIG)
- Updates from IM:
 - ‘Safe Provision of Food in Healthcare Settings’ guidance (FDF)
 - Science outstripping policy

Agenda Item 8– Items for Information

2018_04_A - FSA Consultation - Operational Policy for the approval of meat establishments

2018_04_B - BRC GS Suspension of Swiss Safety Centre

2018_04_C - Expert Committee report on pesticide residues in food

2018_04_D - Link to BRCv8 webinar

2018_04_E - Childhood Obesity Plan Chapter 2

2018_04_F - NFCU expansion & Product Fraud guidelines

2018_04_G - Risk profiling Listeria in RTE foods

2018_04_H - Courtauld 2025 e-magazine

2018_04_I - BRCv8 now published

2018_04_K - Listeria - BFFF Guide to the Management of Risk of Listeriosis from Frozen Vegetables

2018_04_L - Issue with imports of Brine Frozen Tuna

2018_04_O - FSA survey of AMR bacteria in retail chicken and pork mince

2018_04_S - ACMSF letter re_ changes to pesticides MRLs and impact on food safety

2018_04_W - FSA board meeting - ROF & NIS_ Animal Welfare_ Incidents and AMR

2018_04_AC - Transport of Warm Meat - implementation of requirements further delayed

2018_04_AD - Export Certification guidance (to non-EU countries)

Agenda Item 9 – Items Carried Forward (Standing agenda items awaiting further development):

- Glaze Methodology
- Salt Reduction -Scampi
- GFSI
- FRPERC project on Frozen storage of meat
- Audit Optimisation Project
- 3rd Party accredited labs issues

Agenda Item 10– Contact with other Organisations

- Anaphylaxis Campaign
- SAI Global
- Christeyns Food Hygiene
- Abbott Informatics

Agenda Item 11 – Projects

11.1 Shelf Life Project – no further progress

Agenda Item 12– Any Other Business

Suggestions from the group welcomed

Agenda Item 13– Guest Speaker

“Food Safety – Managing Product Recall Risks”, Natasha Catchpole - CFC Underwriting

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