

FSAI NEWS

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In this issue [Page 2 > Looking Forward](#) [Page 3 > Antimicrobial Resistance – Report Launched; FSAI Joins Multiagency Checkpoint Network](#) [Page 4 > Targeted Audit of Cold Stores](#) [Page 6 > Legislation Update](#) [Page 8 > Event Round-up](#) [Page 9 > Prestigious Award for Scientific Committee Member; Agri-Food Graduate Development Programme](#) [Page 10 > FAQ](#) [Page 11 > EFSA's Executive Director Visits Dublin; New EFSA Website](#) [Page 12 > Recent Publications; EFSA EXPO: Conference Material Now Online](#)

Features in focus



Page 3:
Antimicrobial
Resistance –
Report Launched



Page 4:
Targeted Audit
of Cold Stores



Page 11:
EFSA's Executive
Director Visits
Dublin



Pictured at the launch of the allergen tool are Dr Pamela Byrne, Chief Executive, FSAI, with Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar and Prof. Mary Flynn, Chief Specialist Public Health Nutrition, FSAI.

Minister Launches **Allergen Tool for Businesses**

A new, online and mobile-compatible tool has been developed by the FSAI to assist Ireland's 22,000 food service businesses identify and manage allergens in the food they serve. The easy-to-use facility was launched by Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar, to help food businesses comply with their legal requirements to display allergen information on loose food so that consumers can make more informed choices about the food they purchase. The tool is an additional application as part of the FSAI's MenuCal calorie calculator, which is available free-of-charge. MenuCal also enables food service businesses to calculate the calorific content of the food they serve to customers.

The legal requirement to display allergen information on loose food applies to all food businesses, including restaurants, pubs, takeaways, contract caterers, food stalls, as well as businesses offering delivery services. This legal requirement was introduced in December 2014 to complement the already

existing legislation requiring allergen labelling on prepacked food. Written food allergen information must be easily located and accessible to the consumer and clearly identify the food allergen associated with individual food items.



Looking Forward

December has been a considerable month of activity as this issue of FSAI NEWS outlines further. One such highlight was having the pleasure of welcoming our Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar, to our offices to launch our latest technical innovation to MenuCal. It now incorporates a new facility to assist food businesses easily identify allergens in the food they serve. MenuCal is considered a first of its kind in Europe and we have received interest from other jurisdictions wishing to adopt our system and indeed our neighbour, the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland, has it already in place. It's a free resource and we encourage those 22,000 food service businesses in Ireland to use it to assist them identify allergens and calculate the calories in the food they serve to customers. It will become an even more relevant asset for chefs and caterers in the coming year, as Minister Varadkar has stated recently that it will become enshrined in legislation for businesses to display calories on menus. In effect, all restaurants, take-aways and food service outlets will be legally required to post calorie details on all meals alongside the price for all items offered on menus, at the point where the food is ordered, whether at tables or counters.

The month also saw a nationally important report being published by the FSAI's Scientific Committee. The *Potential for Transmission of Antimicrobial Resistance in the Food Chain* is the culmination of months of research, analysis and scientific deliberations by some of Ireland's leading scientific community who participate on our Scientific Committee's working group. The report finds that antimicrobial-resistant bacteria are being transmitted to humans through the food chain. Although the relative contribution of antimicrobial use in animals to the public health problem of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in humans is unclear, action is needed in the animal sector to combat the growing problem of AMR in humans and animals. This will no doubt continue to be an area of great concern that will require a cross-sector approach - otherwise levels of AMR will continue to rise and it will become increasingly difficult to treat human infections and maintain animal health.

As 2015 draws to a close, I would like to acknowledge the support and hard work of a very dedicated and committed team in the FSAI and those who enforce food safety legislation on our behalf in the agencies and the laboratories, whose focus is purely on protecting consumers of Irish food at all times. The authority works in partnership with the Department of Health, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Environmental Health Service of the HSE, the public analyst laboratories and the official food microbiology laboratories, the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority, the Marine Institute, the Local Authority Veterinary Service and other organisations who support us to enforce food legislation. These partnerships are critical to the FSAI's ability to protect the health and interests of Irish food consumers.

There is no doubt that inter-agency collaboration and cooperation throughout the years has led to greater consistency in enforcement and enhanced integration of the national food safety control system. Guided by the principles of scientific excellence, independence, openness and transparency, the FSAI has and will continue to be a resource to offer solid advice so that science underpins food safety policy and risk management decisions. Science will also be fundamental to guide us as the regulator and our partners through the increasing complex nature of the global food chain. It will require us to continue to provide a regulatory system that is not only trusted by the consumer, but is agile enough to adapt to new challenges and evolving risks in a continually changing landscape. Our Strategic Plan 2016-2018 to be published early in the New Year will be a crucial asset to the FSAI to guide our approach and actions. I would like to thank the team in the FSAI and all our external stakeholders, who provided valuable feedback and insight during its consultation phase.

From all of the team in the FSAI, may you have a very happy Christmas and a happy and fruitful New Year.

Dr Pamela Byrne
Chief Executive

Antimicrobial Resistance – Report Launched

A recent report, produced by the FSAI's Scientific Committee, recommends a series of control strategies along the food chain to reduce the risk of transmission of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). This forms part of a cross-sectoral response across all areas – veterinary, human, and environmental – to address the serious impact posed by the potential transmission of AMR in the food chain.

While antimicrobial agents, such as antibiotics, have revolutionised the treatment of microbial infections, their use and misuse in humans and animals has resulted in the development and spread of AMR – where antimicrobial agents are no longer effective. The rise in AMR is now recognised worldwide as one of the greatest potential threats to human and animal health, with possible serious consequences for public health, animal welfare and the agri-food sectors. For example, the European Centre for Disease Control estimates that antimicrobial-resistant bacteria are responsible for 25,000 deaths in the EU per year, with associated health care costs and productivity losses of €1.5 billion.

A key recommendation of the report is to achieve a reduction in the demand for antimicrobial use on farms through improved measures to prevent infection. When antimicrobial treatment is required, it should be done prudently. In veterinary medicine, 'prudent use' means that the correct medicine is used to treat the particular disease that has been accurately diagnosed, and that the medicine is used at the correct dose rate for the correct duration in line with veterinary consultation. The report recommends that prudent use of antimicrobial agents should be supported by improving training and therapeutic guidelines; introducing equivalent regulatory control of all antimicrobial formulations; developing targets and incentives for each animal sector



Pictured at the launch of the FSAI's Scientific Committee report on antimicrobial resistance, are (l-r): Dr Pamela Byrne, Chief Executive, FSAI; Prof. Martin Cormican, Medical Microbiology, University College Hospital, Galway and FSAI Scientific Committee member and Dr Lisa O'Connor, Chief Specialist Biological Safety, FSAI.

to drive more prudent use and; by developing systems that allow more targeted delivery of antimicrobial agents to the animals that actually need to receive them.

In addition, the report recommends that systems to improve surveillance of antimicrobial use in animals and of AMR along the food chain should be further developed and findings published annually as an integrated human and food chain report.

AMR must be viewed as a shared challenge requiring a vigorous response by

stakeholders at each stage in the food chain. Continuing emphasis on good agricultural practice, good hygiene practice and robust food safety management systems are fundamental, as these are key safeguards against transfer of bacteria including antimicrobial-resistant bacteria through the food chain.

The full report: 'Potential for Transmission of Antimicrobial Resistance in the Food Chain' can be accessed on our website at: www.fsai.ie/publications_AMR/

FSAI Joins Multiagency Checkpoint Network

On November 18, the FSAI and the Road Safety Authority participated in two multiagency checkpoints organised by the Garda Traffic Corps in Monaghan. The FSAI team was accompanied by the county veterinary officer for Monaghan. At the checkpoints Gardaí are solely responsible for stopping the vehicles, and the agency staff then proceed with their inspections.

The purpose of participating in the checkpoint was to target temperature controlled vehicles with no food business operator identification. The FSAI and official agencies are anxious to ensure those involved in the transport of food in such vehicles comply with relevant legislation relating to hygiene, traceability and accompanying documentation. While the operation in Monaghan did not yield any significant breaches of food law, the exercise was very worthwhile and one which the FSAI intends to roll out nationwide.



Pictured are FSAI staff members on duty at the Garda checkpoint.

Targeted Audit of Cold Stores

The FSAI regularly carries out targeted audits of food businesses to determine the level of compliance with food law and the effectiveness of its implementation. Most recently, an audit of cold stores was completed. Compliance was examined, with particular focus on requirements regarding traceability, labelling and identification of products stored in each establishment.

The programme consisted of 18 on-site audits in commercial cold stores; that is cold stores where the operator provides a service to other food business operators (FBOs) by way of rental of space; or provision of services, for example, blast freezing and tempering. Establishments were selected based on size, type of products stored and services offered. Each cold store operator was provided with an individual report following the audit and these reports were copied to the relevant supervising official agency. Verification of the implementation of corrective action to address audit findings will be carried out by the official agencies as part of official controls.

The audit revealed that 44% of the businesses were not capable of providing the required information during the traceability checks.

Of the 18 establishments visited, two were not carrying out commercial cold storage activities at the time of the audit; thus the results presented in the report are drawn from the findings in the 16 operational cold stores.



Movement and handling of product and the additional services commercial cold stores offer to clients generates more revenue than storage of product. This has led to commercial cold stores expanding their businesses to include a wide range of services. It was noted during the audit that 22 distinct services were being offered by the commercial cold store operators. This expansion of services to clients has meant that cold stores are now routinely operational outside normal working hours, with many providing clients with 24 hour access. The practice of sub-letting cold store chambers, or dedicated space within a chamber to tenants, has become common. These tenant operations varied from being "an outpost" of a larger company, to small

food businesses using the space in the cold store as their sole premises. In some instances these tenant FBOs were operating unsupervised.

Operational controls, documented procedures and records maintained by the cold store operator were assessed during the audit. Electronic warehouse management systems were being used by the cold store operators to record and manage a significant amount of detail relating to product storage and consignments entering and leaving the cold store. Compliance checks on prerequisite programmes, food safety management systems, temperature controls, returns, traceability, product identification and location, labelling, product description and the use of the identification mark were carried out. Four specific checks were carried out in relation to the electronic warehouse management systems, which were in place in 14 of the 16 cold stores. These checks focused on recording of empty pallet spaces, product held on-site for a specific client, out-of-date product and also incoming consignments for a specified period of time.

In the past, cold stores were at the periphery of the food chain, either storing raw materials or

Recommendations to strengthen controls in this area

1. Cold store operators must put procedures in place to ensure full compliance with the requirements of food law
2. Food businesses sub-letting space within cold stores must be separately registered or approved as required by food law
3. Warehouse management systems should cover the full range of activities in operation in the cold store. The information inputted to the system should be done in a timely manner and all products in the cold store should be traceable on the system
4. The illegal practice of applying identification marks from other approved establishments to products in cold stores must cease immediately
5. The practice of splitting outer packs without ensuring that the labelling information is maintained, having unlabelled and unidentifiable product in the cold store, product with insufficient information on the label and products labelled with incorrect information must be corrected immediately
6. Corrective action is required where non compliances were noted with regards to temperature control, structural deficiencies and poor hygiene practices
7. Contraventions in relation to pre-requisite programmes and food safety management systems including incomplete, incorrect and out-of-date documentation must be remedied
8. Documented arrangements between cold store owners and tenants must be in place and made available to the relevant inspector
9. A guide to good practice for cold store operators and food businesses operating from cold stores should be developed and agreed with the sector
10. A full review of the official controls being carried out in cold stores is required to ensure that controls are applied with sufficient frequency, that they are effective and include all aspects of the establishments operations, including those being carried out by tenant FBOs and staff of clients operating within the establishment
11. A review of training required by inspectors supervising cold stores is required to ensure that inspectors are familiar with warehouse management systems and operational practices, to ensure official controls are effective
12. The inspectors in a geographical area of a cold store should have cross-agency meetings to discuss cross-trading and activities between their plants; in particular relating to those establishments that either use the cold store as the beginning or end of their process as well as those FBOs with establishments elsewhere, that sub-let space within the cold store
13. A review of the risk categorisation of cold stores needs to be undertaken to ensure that the activities now being carried on have been factored into the risk rating exercise

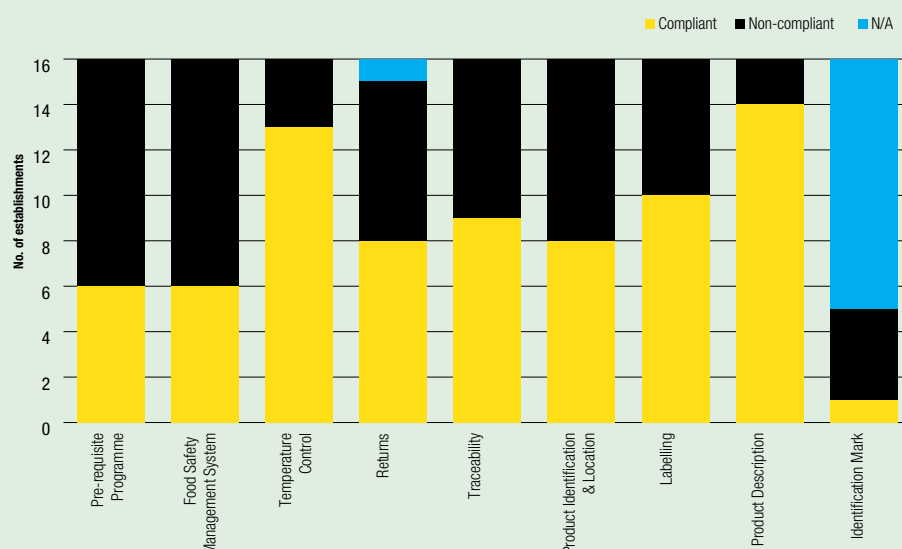


Figure 1: Compliance Checks

finished product for processors. The activities undertaken in cold stores are now more closely aligned with those of processors or wholesalers. All food businesses are legally obliged to have a food traceability system in place. This requires cold stores to have the documentation to identify what products are coming in and what products are going out of the cold stores. The audit revealed that 44% of the businesses were not capable of providing the required information during the traceability checks.

It is a legal requirement that packages of fresh meat must be sealed with the Identification Mark in a manner which ensures that the mark will be destroyed if the package is opened. The audit found instances of non-compliance with this requirement, of both Irish and EU origin meat.

In total, there were 71 breaches of legislation identified (Fig 1). This highlights the need for the cold store operators to improve compliance

with food law relevant to their business. In some of the audits, fundamental deficiencies relating to the basic management of product traceability, associated information and documentation were identified.

The legislation breaches were categorised as follows:

- 63% - prerequisite programmes (basic good hygiene and practices) and food safety management systems
- 50% - product identification and location (tracking)
- 47% - inadequate controls in place to accept returns
- 44% - unable to provide the required information during the traceability checks
- 38% - labelling

In contrast, numerous examples of best practice were also observed during the audits; many of which included the customisation of the electronic warehouse management system to track and record movement of product within the cold store, integration of the system with client software and scanning of associated paperwork.

The full report, is available on our website at: <http://bit.ly/1Okb80E>



Legislation Update



Increased Level of Official Controls on Imports

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 2015/1607 amending Annex I to Regulation (EC) No. 669/2009 as regards the increased level of official controls on imports of certain feed and food of non-animal origin has been published in the EU Official Journal.

Commission Regulation (EC) No. 669/2009 lays down rules concerning the increased level of official controls to be carried out on imports into the EU of feed and food of non-animal origin listed in the Annex to the Regulation. These particular foods may only be imported at specified points of entry.

Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No. 669/2009 requires that the list is to be reviewed on a regular basis taking into account the occurrence and relevance of recent food incidents notified through the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed, the findings of audits to third countries carried out by the EU Food and Veterinary Office, as well as the quarterly reports on consignments of feed and food of non-animal origin submitted by Member States to the Commission in accordance with Article 15 of Regulation (EC) No. 669/2009.

As the relevant sources of information indicate the emergence of new risks regarding consignments of groundnuts and derived products originating from Gambia and raspberries originating from Serbia, these consignments have been included on the list

and will be subject to an increased level of official controls.

In addition, the list is amended by deleting the entries for commodities for which the available information indicates an overall satisfactory degree of compliance with the relevant safety requirements provided for in EU legislation and for which an increased level of official controls is therefore no longer justified. Therefore, the entries in the list concerning vine fruit from Uzbekistan, betel leaves from Thailand and mint from Morocco are deleted.

Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) in Certain Foods

Commission Regulation (EU) No. 2015/1933 as regards maximum levels for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in cocoa fibre, banana chips, food supplements, dried herbs and dried spices was published in the EU Official Journal at the end of October.

Maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs are set down in Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1831/2006. According to that Regulation, maximum levels for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) must be safe and as low as reasonably achievable based upon good manufacturing, drying and agricultural/fishery practices.

Cocoa Fibre

Cocoa fibre is a specific cocoa product produced from the shell of the cocoa bean and contains higher levels of PAHs than the

cocoa products produced from the cocoa nibs. The cocoa fibre and derived products are intermediate products in the food chain and are used as an ingredient in the preparation of low calorie, high fibre foods. Therefore it has been agreed that it is necessary to establish specific levels of PAHs for cocoa fibre and derived products. Given that these products have a low fat content, the maximum levels are established on a wet weight basis.

Banana Chips

Banana chips are used in breakfast cereals and confectionery as well as eaten as snacks. High levels of PAHs have recently been found in banana chips. Those findings are related to the frying of banana chips in coconut oil. Therefore it is appropriate to establish maximum levels of PAHs for banana chips. As a first step, due to a lack of sufficient occurrence data, these maximum levels correspond to the maximum levels of coconut oil intended for direct human consumption or use as an ingredient in food. The maximum levels will be reviewed within two years, taking into account the available occurrence data.

Food Supplements

High levels of PAHs have also been found in certain food supplements which contain or are derived from botanical ingredients. The presence of high levels in these food supplements have been linked to the poor drying practices applied to these botanical ingredients. These high levels are avoidable by applying good practices. It is therefore appropriate to establish maximum levels for PAHs in these products which are achievable by applying good drying practices and which ensure a high level of human health protection.

Food supplements containing or derived from propolis, royal jelly and spirulina have also been found to contain in certain cases high levels of PAHs which have been linked to the application of poor production practices. As lower levels can be achieved by applying good practices, it is appropriate to establish maximum levels for PAHs in these products.

Dried Herbs and Dried Spices

High levels of PAHs have also been found in dried herbs and dried spices which are also related to the application of bad drying practices. Traditional smoking and processing methods applied to smoked paprika and cardamom result in high levels of PAHs. Given that the consumption of these spices is low and to enable these smoked products to remain



on the market, the EU has exempted these particular spices from the maximum levels.

Date of Application

The maximum levels set out in the Regulation for cocoa fibre and products derived from cocoa fibre intended for use as an ingredient in food became applicable on 17 November 2015. For all the other foods above, the levels set out in the Regulation will not apply until 1 April 2016. Where these foods are lawfully placed on the EU market prior to 1 April 2016, they may remain on the market after that date until their date of minimum durability or use-by date is reached.

Food Flavouring

Commission Regulation (EU) No. 2015/1760 amending Annex I to Regulation (EC) No. 1334/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards removal from the European Union list of the flavouring substance p-mentha-1,8-dien-7-al has been published in the EU Official Journal.

Annex I to Regulation (EC) No. 1334/2008 lays down the EU list of flavourings and source materials approved for use in and on foods and their conditions of use. The flavouring substance p-mentha-1,8-dien-7-al (FL-no 05.117) was included in the list as a flavouring substance under evaluation for which additional scientific data must be submitted. The substance p-mentha-1,8-dien-7-al (FL-no 05.117) occurs naturally in the peel of fruits from some plants from the genera Perilla, Citrus and others. The European Food Safety Authority evaluated data submitted and concluded in its scientific opinion of 24 June 2015 that p-mentha-1,8-dien-7-al (FL-no

05.117) is genotoxic in-vivo and therefore its use as a flavouring substance raises a safety concern.

Accordingly, the use of p-mentha-1,8-dien-7-al (FL-no 05.117) does not comply with the general conditions of use for flavourings set out in Article 4(a) of Regulation (EC) No. 1334/2008 and the European Commission has therefore removed it from the list without delay in order to protect human health.

Due to low use levels and the low total amount of p-mentha-1,8-dien-7-al (FL-no 05.117) that have been added to foods in the EU, the presence of that substance in food does not raise immediate safety concerns. Therefore, foods to which the flavouring substance has been added and which were lawfully placed on the market before 3 October 2015 may continue to be marketed until their date of minimum durability or use-by date is reached. Foods imported into the EU to which the flavouring substance has been added may be marketed until their date of minimum durability or use by date is reached, however the importer of such food must be able to demonstrate that the food was dispatched from the third country concerned and was en-route to the EU before 3 October 2015.



New Regulations

The following Regulations have been introduced over the last few months in Ireland:

S.I. No. 431 of 2015

European Communities (Official Controls on the Import of Food of Non-Animal Origin for Pesticide Residues) (Amendment) (No.4) Regulations 2015

S.I. No. 432 of 2015

European Communities (Official Controls on the Import of Food of Non-Animal Origin) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 2015

S.I. No. 458 of 2015

European Union (Nutrition and Health Claims Made on Foods) (Amendment) Regulations 2015

S.I. No. 459 of 2015

European Union (Special Conditions Applicable to the Import of Guar Gum Originating in or Consigned from India due to Contamination Risks by Pentachlorophenol and Dioxins) Regulations 2015

S.I. No. 468 of 2015

European Communities (Spirits Drinks) (Amendment) Regulations 2015

S.I. No. 459 of 2015

European Communities (Pesticide Residues) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2015



Event Round-up



Pictured at the Breakfast Bite on allergen labelling are members of the FSAI Public Health Nutrition team, from left to right: Frances Douglas, Technical Executive; Kate McElroy and Michelle Clements, both student placements; Oonagh Lyons, Research Assistant; Aileen Ward, Senior Administrative Assistant and Orlagh Feehan, student placement.

Breakfast Bites

Our most recent Breakfast Bite, held on 2 December was entitled 'MenuCal - helps you comply with the laws on allergen labelling'.

MenuCal now has a new added feature to aid compliance with the laws on allergen labelling. This tool helps food businesses to maintain up-to-date allergen information in food and menu items. This new feature was outlined during the Breakfast Bite, with demonstrations on how it can be used. MenuCal also helps calculate calories for menus.



Pictured speaking at the Breakfast Bite 'MenuCal - helps you comply with the laws on allergen labelling' was Prof. Mary Flynn, Chief Specialist Public Health Nutrition, FSAI.



Pictured with the delegation from China, are (l-r): Dave O'Brien, HSE; Raymond Ellard, FSAI, and Derek Bauer, HSE. Fourth from the left is Mr Jiannan LIU, Director, China Food and Drug Administration.

Visit from China

In November, a number of officials from the food control services in the People's Republic of China visited Ireland on a two week internship programme, sponsored by

the Department of Foreign Affairs. The five person group spent one day at the FSAI and met staff from the Environmental Health Service of the HSE.



Pictured at Breakfast Bites are Tom Duane, Diageo and Aoife Cronin, Lilliput Stores.



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Ms Ita Saul is pictured here (centre) with Prof. Mary Flynn, FSAI, and Leo Varadkar, Minister for Health.

Prestigious Award for Scientific Committee Member

A special awards night took place in October for the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute (INDI) members. At the event, Minister for Health, Leo Varadkar, presented FSAI Scientific Committee member and Chair of the Sub-committee on Public Health Nutrition, Ita Saul, with the prestigious Honorary Membership award for her contribution to paediatric dietetics and the health of children in Ireland over the last 35 years.



Pictured are students of the Agri-Food Graduate Development Programme.

Agri-Food Graduate Development Programme

An Agri-Food Graduate Development Programme, designed by University College Dublin, University College Cork (UCC) and Teagasc, provides skills training to postgraduate students and early career researchers in universities and research institutions in Ireland. These postgraduate students specialise in the areas of agriculture, forestry, horticulture, food and nutrition.

The FSAI participated in the Management and Career Development Skills for the Food Industry module which took place in UCC from 23-25 November and was coordinated by the UCC Careers Service. The focus of the FSAI involvement was a 'Start Your Own Food Business Case Study'. Requirements for

starting your own business, which included food hygiene legislation, HACCP, food safety training and food labelling, were outlined.

As part of this module, the postgraduate students were asked to design a food product or food business, taking account of all of the

relevant food legislation that would apply. Five groups, each comprising five students, were required to submit proposals explaining their chosen food product or business. The students then presented their proposals to the entire group during an interactive session.



FAQ

Many people contact our Advice Line each month to ask questions on a variety of food safety issues. Some questions get asked time and time again – so in each issue of FSAINEWS, we feature a Frequently Asked Question. **This issue's question is:**

What are the Rules for Hunters Supplying Wild Game for Human Consumption?

Hunters of wild game who intend placing the game on the market for human consumption are considered food business operators and must register as such. As a food business the food they produce has to meet the relevant requirements of food law. Wild game hunted for private domestic consumption is excluded.

Whilst the FSAI has overall responsibility for the enforcement of food law, the competent authorities directly involved with wild game controls are the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), the Local Authority Veterinary Service (LAVS) and the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

A hunter is permitted to do no more than the necessary preparation that is part of normal hunting practice before supplying game into the food chain. Such preparation may be done 'in the field' or in a 'game larder'.

This necessary preparation includes killing and where appropriate, bleeding and the removal of stomach and intestines ('the green offal'). For trained hunters, this preparation will also involve the removal of the heart, lungs and associated tissues and the head. As part of the overall examination, the live wild animal, the wild game body and viscera are checked for abnormal behaviour characteristics or suspicions of environmental contamination. Any further processing (such as skinning, plucking, cutting) of the wild game must be performed in an approved game handling establishment (AGHE).

AGHEs have been approved by the relevant competent authority (DAFM or LAVS) and are obliged to have the necessary structures and operations in place to carry out the further processing of wild game, including the inspection of the game by an official veterinarian, to ensure that food safety is not compromised.

Hygiene Requirements

Wild game hunters must comply with the general hygiene requirements of Annex I of Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 and must take adequate measures, as appropriate, in relation to the following:

- The primary products, i.e. the hunted 'in-fur' or 'in-feather' eviscerated or non-eviscerated wild game bodies, must be protected from contamination from the point of production (hunting) onwards, having due regard to the processing that primary products of hunting will subsequently undergo at an AGHE
- Any facilities used in connection with this primary production activity (including equipment, transport facilities and storage facilities) must be kept clean using potable water and, where necessary, disinfected
- Prevent pests, animals, waste and hazardous substances from causing contamination to the primary products
- Report suspected outbreaks of contagious disease to the relevant competent authority
- Ensure that persons involved in the handling of such primary products are in good health and undergo training on health risks

Storage

Hunters must endeavour to maintain the cold chain for hunted wild game, namely:

- 4°C or below for small wild game
- 7°C or below for large wild game

The storage temperatures referred to above must be achieved within a reasonable period of time (24 hours of killing). Storage of wild game prior to sale may be in a "game larder". Game larders must have facilities for active chilling. Game must be separated from each other in the larder.

Records and Traceability

In order to ensure traceability, hunters must keep certain records and must be able to promptly supply this information to the authorities, if requested. The following records must be kept:

- Date, time and location as well as the type (e.g. deer, pheasant, rabbit) and number of wild game killed
- Details of the AGHEs and intermediaries (e.g. game dealers), if applicable, to whom they have sold wild game as well as the date of supply

Training

Hunters supplying wild game to AGHEs must be trained in animal health and hygiene relevant to wild game. It is recommended that all hunters undertake such training. All game supplied to an AGHE must have been inspected by a trained hunter and be accompanied by a trained hunter declaration. This is a statement confirming that when the hunter examined the hunted game no abnormal characteristics were found, no abnormal behaviour was observed before killing and there is no suspicion of environmental contamination.

The competent authorities have encouraged hunters' organisations to provide such training for their members and some hunter's organisations have developed training courses. Within the Irish Republic a course in this area is currently provided by the National Association of Regional Game Councils in Fermanagh, Co. Offaly.

More detailed information can be found in our publication 'Guidance on Hunting and Processing of Wild Game for Human Consumption'. This is available to download from our website at www.fsai.ie/resources_publications.html





Pictured are Mr Jeffrey Moon, Advisory Forum Team Leader, Advisory Forum and Scientific Cooperation Unit, EFSA; Dr Marta Hugas, Acting Head of Department of Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance, EFSA; Dr Bernhard Url, Executive Director, EFSA; Dr Pamela Byrne, Chief Executive, FSAI and Mr Raymond Ellard, Director of Consumer Protection, FSAI.

EFSA's Executive Director Visits Dublin

Dr Bernhard Url, Executive Director, EFSA, together with colleagues Dr Marta Hugas, Acting Head of Department of Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance, and Mr Jeffrey Moon, Advisory Forum Team Leader, Advisory Forum and Scientific Cooperation Unit visited the FSAI in late October. The purpose of the visit was to strengthen collaboration between the agencies and plan for cooperative working into the future.

Discussions focused on the agencies current and possible future strategies, EFSA's priority work areas in risk assessment and scientific cooperation, food safety controls in Ireland, scientific cooperation and Irish 'Article 36' organisations.

Technical matters for discussion included guidance on the risk assessment of food allergens in terms of the mandatory labelling of food allergens set out in the FIC Regulation (1169/2011), EFSA as the centralised risk assessor for GM food and feed applications in the EU and VTEC implications for the raw milk cheese sector.

Discussions were also held with EFSA, the FSAI and representatives from the Irish food sector. These discussions included EFSA's future plans for communicating a science-based approach to risk assessments, achieving a science-based and synchronised approval process for GM feed and food and views on third country safety legislation pertaining to imports and exports.



Pictured at the meeting with EFSA at the FSAI are (l-r): Mary Hughes, Executive, Regulatory Affairs, Food and Drinks Industry Ireland; Karina Cassidy, Executive, Meat (MII), Food and Drinks Industry Ireland; Paul Kelly, Food and Drinks Industry Ireland; Dr Pamela Byrne, Chief Executive, FSAI; Dr Bernhard Url, Executive Director, EFSA and Cormac Healy, Senior Executive, Dairy (IDIA) and Meat (MII), Food and Drinks Industry Ireland.



New EFSA Website

The European Food Safety Authority has just launched a new website. The launch is the culmination of a two-year rebuild grounded in extensive user research. The overhaul involved re-structuring and rationalising content, introducing a fresher, uncluttered visual style, and switching to a modern technology platform that boosts performance, works on any device and paves the way for further online innovations. The new website is three times faster when loading pages, has improved usability features and fresh, modern visuals. It is running on an open-source, easy-to-expand technology platform.

Features of the new website:

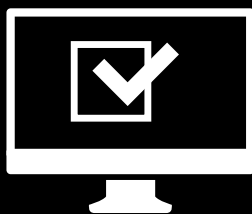
- A new "Science" section contains all the more technical content organised by the scientific areas in which EFSA works
- New sub-sections on "Methodology" and "Data" with improved access to guidance documents and the EFSA Data Warehouse
- "Engage" is a one-stop shop for stakeholders to attend open meetings, provide scientific data, services and expertise to EFSA
- All corporate reports and publications are in a single "Documents" repository
- A visually attractive, easily navigable "News" page
- "Discover" contains materials like topics, factsheets, videos and infographics for entry-level users who want a taste of our food safety work

You can view the new EFSA website at:
www.efsa.europa.eu



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All our publications, most of which are available free of charge, can be downloaded from our website and may also be ordered in hard copy. See www.fsai.ie/publications.

Recent Publications

The following publications have recently been produced by the FSAI and are available on our website:

- Factsheet: Chemical Residues and Contaminants in Foods of Animal Origin (revised)
- Potential for Transmission of Antimicrobial Resistance in the Food Chain
- Targeted Audit of Cold Stores
- Audit of Compliance of Official Food Microbiology Laboratories with Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 and Service Contract Obligations – Health Service Executive
- Factsheet on Aspartame (update)



EFSA EXPO: Conference Material Now Online

In October this year, over 1,000 scientists, policy-makers, academics and young researchers gathered in Milan at EFSA's scientific conference: 'Shaping the future of food safety, together'. They participated in an open debate on the challenges and opportunities of the future work in the field of food safety. The lively discussions focused on two overarching themes: the future of assessment science and the interplay between science, innovation and society.



EFSA has now made available all the material from the conference. Video coverage and presentations from the plenary and break-out sessions are available from the programme tab on the dedicated conference website. EFSA has also published a video report in which participants give their impressions of the conference. See: www.efsaexpo2015.eu



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