



food safety award goes to dit, cathal brugha street

fsai news

The FSAI held its annual competition for best food safety related project in Irish colleges on 14 June last. The winning student was Matthew Morris, from Dublin Institute of Technology, Cathal Brugha Street. His project, entitled 'Public access to food control data' investigated the issues surrounding the availability of official food control data to consumers. In his study, the attitudes of food business operators, environmental health officers and consumers were assessed to determine how much access each stakeholder group thinks consumers are currently entitled to and how this should change in the future. The study also aimed to compare the perceived impact of implementing a system whereby grade-cards/scores-on-doors are made available to members of the public, with an actual experience of doing so. The study examined issues including the interrelationships between food laws, freedom of information and data protection laws. Systems currently in use for giving members of the public access to official food control data were also examined.

Brendan Healy, School of Agriculture, University College, Dublin, came second for his project entitled 'Identification of biomarkers contributing to the persistence and potential virulence of the powdered infant formula pathogen *Enterobacter sakazakii*'. *Enterobacter sakazakii* is an opportunistic pathogen associated with powdered infant formula products. The primary aim of the project was to characterise a collection of strains of the bacteria based on their biochemical characteristics. Molecular analysis was also performed to support the biochemical data and the isolates were grouped accordingly. The project also aimed to identify a biomarker for potentially more pathogenic isolates.

Third place went to Paul Fenton, Waterford Institute of Technology, for his project entitled 'Athletes taking extra protein supplements - is it bone safe?' The objective of this study was to assess dietary and supplemental protein intake in athletes and investigate if additional protein intake is associated with increased urine acidity and decreased bone health.

Pictured are the six finalists, from left to right: Aine Higgins, Kevin Street, Dublin Institute of Technology; Thomas O'Mahony, Dublin Institute of Technology, Cathal Brugha Street; Brendan Healy, School of Agriculture, University College, Dublin; Matthew Morris (winner), Dublin Institute of Technology, Cathal Brugha Street; Maria Killeen, Dublin Institute of Technology, Cathal Brugha Street and Paul Fenton, Waterford Institute of Technology.



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world seafood congress, 2007



The World Seafood Congress 2007, hosted by the FSAI, Bord Iascaigh Mhara (The Irish Sea Fisheries Board) and Enterprise Ireland, in association with the International Association of Fish Inspectors will take place from 25 – 27 September in Croke Park Conference Centre, Dublin. Co-Organisers of the Congress are the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and IFQC:SMART GROUP.

Topics which are exercising the minds of seafood professionals around the world today will all be receiving in-depth coverage. They include key import requirements, communicating risks and benefits, supply chain perspectives on sustainability, seafood health and nutrition, trends in fishing technology, trends in seafood certification, functional foods from marine resources, and innovations in risk management and testing.

Workshops will be run by international experts in their field and will cover a range of issues from access requirements into the main markets of the EU, USA and Canada; sustainability standards; seafood HACCP; mercury versus health and traceability and logistics. They will give all attendees a genuine chance to be involved in understanding and discussing the issues.

Companies and organisations from all around the world are expected to be in attendance, including the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore, At-sea Processors Association, Bruce Shallard and Associates, Center for Earth Research and Environment Management, CSIRO Food Science Australia, Department of Health Western Australia, Direcção Geral das Pescas e Aquicultura, Faculdade de Tecnologia CENTEC and many more.

An exhibition will also take place during the course of the three days, opening and closing 40 minutes before and after the conference times.

For further information and to register for the event, go to www.worldseafoodcongress07.com

food business operators urged to submit health claims

The newly adopted European Regulation on Nutrition and Health Claims (EC) No. 1924/2006 applies from 1 July 2007. The primary aim of this Regulation is to allow consumers to make more informed food choices by ensuring they have accurate information and are not misled in relation to the health effects of foods. Food business operators (FBOs) are now urged to make submissions to the FSAI regarding Article 13 and Article 14 health claims which appear in Ireland on their food products or on any related advertising.

article 13 health claims

On 11 June, the FSAI opened an online submission process on its website for the Irish health claims list required under Article 13 of the Regulation. As stipulated in the Article, Member States are responsible for compiling health claims on food products which describe or refer to *'the role of a nutrient or substance in growth and development; psychological or behavioural functions; or slimming, weight control, reduction in the sense of hunger or increase in satiety.'*

The FSAI will develop a national list of these health claims which meet the conditions of the Regulation and are accompanied by scientific evidence of effectiveness. The national list will be submitted to the European Commission by 31 January 2008 and each claim will be considered for

inclusion on the European Community approved list of health claims which will take two years to develop. This process will involve assessment of submitted scientific justification by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). The claims on the EU list will be the only health claims allowed on food products from 31 January 2010 onwards.

FBOs are encouraged to avail of the guidance document available on our website and to have all pertinent information to hand when completing the online application. Information is required under the following headings for each submission:

- Food
- Diet and health relationship
- Conditions for claim to be valid
- Source and nature of evidence
- References

The application process will close on **28 September 2007**.

article 14 health claims

Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No. 1924/2006 relates to claims referring to reduction of disease risk and children's development and health. Article 14 health claims require the submission of a full application for authorisation by EFSA. These applications will be evaluated by EFSA prior

to their inclusion in a Community list of permitted claims.

In Ireland, applications for authorisation of Article 14 health claims must be submitted to the FSAI, who will then make the application available to EFSA for evaluation. EFSA will provide an opinion within five months from the date of receipt of a valid application.

On 26 July, EFSA published its final guidance to applicants on the submission of health claims for authorisation entitled *'Guidance document for presentation and format of dossiers for authorisation of health claims'*. The purpose of this guidance is to assist applicants in preparing and presenting their applications for authorisation of Article 14 health claims. It is recommended that applications be developed and presented according to this guidance document. FBOs are now invited to submit Article 14 applications to the FSAI.

Please refer to our website at www.fsai.ie/industry/hn_claims/hn_intro.asp for further information on the development of applications and the submission requirements.

Information is also available on the EFSA website at: www.efsa.europa.eu/en/science/nda/nda_opinions/claims/ej530_guidance_health_claims.html

food colour withdrawn from irish market

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is currently undertaking a systematic review of all permitted food additives and has started this process by reviewing the safety of food colours. On 5 July, the EFSA Panel on Food Additives, Flavourings, Processing Aids and Materials in Contact with Food (AFC) adopted an opinion on the safety of Red 2G, also known as E128. The Panel concluded that the colour should no longer be permitted for use in food due to possible safety concerns over aniline, one of the metabolites of Red 2G.

Red 2G (E128) has been approved for use as a food additive for a number of years, but is only permitted to be used in breakfast sausages with a minimum cereal content of 6%, and burger meat with a minimum vegetable and/or cereal content of 4%. In both foodstuffs, a maximum level of 20mg/kg is allowed.

Red 2G can be metabolised in the body to aniline and therefore, when undertaking the review of the colour, the AFC Panel considered recent reviews on the safety of aniline. These other opinions had noted that aniline has the potential to cause cancer in animals and that available data were not sufficient to be able to discount that it could also be genotoxic, i.e. damages DNA. The

available data were also not sufficient to exclude these possible effects in humans. Following the review of the available data, EFSA has concluded that the previously established acceptable daily intake (ADI) for Red 2G should be withdrawn given the potential safety concerns. Therefore, the substance is not suitable for use as a food additive.

The FSAI contacted the Irish food industry to determine the extent of use of Red 2G in Irish products and it appears that it has been used for a number of years in Ireland by some sausage manufacturers, and to a very limited extent in the manufacture of burgers. As a result of the EFSA opinion, the FSAI instructed Irish manufacturers to stop using the colour in sausages and burgers, and to undertake this change to their products as soon as possible. The FSAI did not require manufacturers and retailers to remove products from sale that had already been made using Red 2G because it considers that any risk to consumers is likely to be very small. The FSAI will continue to work with the industry to ensure products are reformulated to remove Red 2G.

The full EFSA opinion on the safety of Red 2G is available on the EFSA website at: www.efsa.europa.eu/en/science/afc/afc_opinions.html

junior achievement programme



Junior Achievement Ireland is part of a worldwide organisation which, through developing partnerships with schools and leading organisations, uses hands-on experiences to help young people understand business and enterprise.

It was established in Ireland in 1995 and since then has built up strong links with schools around the country. Junior Achievement Ireland brings business volunteers throughout Ireland into the classroom to teach enterprise skills. Programmes are delivered to young people in both primary and secondary level schools and include areas such as science and engineering, entrepreneurship, communications and interpersonal skills. These programmes are tailored to meet the needs of young people aged five right up to age 18, helping to prepare students for their future careers.

This year, nine FSAI staff got involved and delivered a range of teaching programmes in a number of primary and secondary inner-city schools in the vicinity of the FSAI offices. They were fully trained before they began teaching and were provided with high quality course material by Junior Achievement Ireland. The FSAI is very pleased to be involved in such a worthwhile and rewarding programme.

For more information see www.juniorachievement.ie



Pictured is Michelle Beggan teaching the 'Our Region' programme to sixth class boys in St. Laurence O'Toole's CBS, Dublin 1. The 'Our Region' programme is designed to provide practical information about natural, human and man-made resources found in regions and used by businesses to produce goods and services.



Pictured are some of the FSAI staff who participated in the Junior Achievement Ireland programme in 2007. From left to right: Miriam McDonald, Deborah Ryan, Jasdeep Bhamra, Bridget Kenna and Michelle Beggan. Felicity McManus, David Lyons, Pat Farrell and Judith Giles also participated, but are not pictured here.

legislation update

irish legislation

labelling

The Department of Health and Children has published S.I. No. 376 of 2007: The European Communities (Labelling, Presentation and Advertising of Foodstuffs) (Amendment) Regulations, 2007. The Regulation amends the European Communities (Labelling, Presentation and Advertising of Foodstuffs) Regulations, 2002 (S.I. No. 483 of 2002). It gives effect to specific provisions relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs of Council Directive 2006/107/EC of 20 November 2006, adapting Directive 89/108/EEC relating to quick-frozen foodstuffs for human consumption and Directive 2000/13/EC relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, by reason of the accession of Romania and Bulgaria.

food supplements

European Communities (Food Supplements) Regulations, 2007 (S.I. No. 506 of 2007) has been published by the Department of Health and Children. This Regulation gives further effect to Directive 2002/46/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to food supplements. It also gives effect to Commission Directive 2006/37/EC amending Annex II to Directive 2002/46/EC as regards the inclusion of certain substances. It revokes the European

Communities (Food Supplements) Regulations, 2003 (S.I. No. 539 of 2003).

Food supplements must be manufactured in accordance with the requirements of S.I. No. 506 of 2007. However, a derogation from the Regulation is granted which permits the use of vitamins and minerals not listed in Schedule 1, or in forms not listed in Schedule 2 of the S.I., provided that:

- (a) the substance in question was used in one or more food supplements marketed in the Community on 12 July 2002, and
- (b) the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, after consultation with the Minister, has either:
 - submitted a dossier, supporting use of the substance, or its use in that form, or
 - indicated in writing its approval of a dossier submitted by another Member State,

and such dossier or written approval had been sent to the Commission by 12 July 2005. Where (a) and (b) are satisfied, the substance in question may be used until 31 December 2009, or until the European Food Safety Authority has given an unfavourable opinion in respect of the use of that substance, or its use in that form in the manufacture of food supplements, whichever is the earliest.

The S.I. also sets out specific labelling provisions which the labels of food supplements must bear in addition to the general labelling provisions of Directive 2000/13/EC.

drinking water

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government has published the European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations, 2007 (S.I. No. 278 of 2007).

This S.I. gives full effect to Council Directive 98/83/EC on the quality of water intended for human consumption and to Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy. It prescribes quality standards to be applied, and supervision and enforcement procedures in relation to supplies of drinking water, including requirements as to sampling frequency, methods of analysis, the provision of information to consumers and related matters. The Regulation revokes the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2007 (S.I. No. 106 of 2007), to provide for indictable offences.

For further information on the above Regulations, please see our website at: www.fsai.ie/legislation/food

eu legislation

marketing of meat (veal)

Council Regulation (EC) No. 700/2007 of 11 June 2007 on the marketing of the meat of bovine animals aged 12 months or less was published in the Official Journal of the EU (OJ L161, p1, 22/06/2007) and lays down sales descriptions and marketing conditions for the sale of veal. This legislation comes about after lengthy discussions with interested parties over the past few years, including a public internet consultation in March 2005.

The Regulation applies to the meat of bovine animals aged 12 months or less slaughtered after 1 July 2008, whether produced in the European Community or

imported from third countries. On slaughter, bovine animals aged 12 months or less must be classified into one of the following two categories:

- (a) Category v: This category which includes bovine animals aged eight months or less will be identified by the letter 'v'. The sales description in Ireland for this category will be 'veal'.
- (a) Category z: For bovine animals aged more than eight months, but not more than 12 months. It will be identified by the letter 'z' and, in Ireland, the sales description for meat in this category will be 'rosé veal'.

The term 'veal' or any new name deriving from the sales descriptions in the proposals must not be used in the labelling of meat from animals aged more than 12 months.

The sales descriptions provided for in the Regulation may be supplemented with other voluntary information if it does so in accordance with the existing rules on beef labelling i.e. Council Regulation (EC) No. 1760/2000 (OJ L204, p1, 11/08/2000) establishing a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals and regarding the labelling of beef and beef products.

welfare labelling of poultrymeat

In the recently published Council Directive 2007/43/EC (OJ L182, p19, 12/07/2007) of 28 June 2007 laying down minimum rules for the protection of chickens kept for meat production, an obligation has been placed on the European Commission to submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council on the possible introduction of a specific harmonised mandatory labelling scheme for chicken meat, meat products and preparations, based on compliance with animal welfare standards.

The report, which must be submitted no later than 31 December 2009, must consider possible socioeconomic implications, effects on the Community's economic partners and compliance of such a labelling scheme with World Trade Organization rules. It is also required to include appropriate legislative proposals taking into account such considerations and the experience gained by the Member States in applying voluntary labelling schemes.

eu factsheet on food traceability

The European Commission has published a factsheet on food traceability (June 2007). The document outlines the legal framework (Regulation (EC) No. 178 of 2002), the specific requirements and the responsibilities it imparts. A case study is

also provided in the document along with examples of labels and an overview of relevant ongoing EU initiatives. A copy of the factsheet can be accessed at:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/foodlaw/traceability/factsheet_trace_2007_en.pdf

eu green paper on bio-preparedness

The European Commission has published a Green Paper on bio-preparedness. It is intended that the paper will stimulate a debate and launch a process of consultation at European level on how to reduce biological risks, and to enhance preparedness and response.

The term 'preparedness' is defined in the paper as covering all aspects such as prevention, protection, prosecution of criminals/terrorists, surveillance, response and recovery. The term also covers the steps taken to minimise the threat of deliberate contamination of the food supply through biological agents and to protect against biological warfare which is defined as the deliberate use of microorganisms or toxins derived from living organisms to induce death or disease in humans, animals or plants.

In terms of food safety, the focus is on the setting of standards regarding the safety of food, good manufacturing practices and quality control of agricultural products at all steps of the processing chain.

The Green Paper can be accessed on the Europa website at: http://ec.europa.eu/food/resources/biopreparedness_en.htm and the European Commission invites responses to the paper by October 2007.

efsa/fda agreement on assessment of food safety risk

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) signed the first European/US agreement in the area of assessing food safety risk on 2 July. This is the first formal international cooperation agreement EFSA has signed. While informal cooperation has been established between the two bodies for a number of years, this agreement formalises and extends previous arrangements. The agreement is designed to facilitate the sharing of confidential scientific and other information between EFSA and the FDA, such as methodologies to ensure that food is safe. A formal agreement ensures appropriate protection of such confidential information under the applicable legal frameworks in both the European Union and the United States. EFSA will be looking to develop similar working arrangements with other authorities world wide in the coming years. For further information see: www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press_room/press_release/pr_fda.html



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

S.I. No. 241 of 2007 European Communities (Dietary Foods For Special Medical Purposes) (Amendment) Regulations, 2007

S.I. No. 278 of 2007 European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations, 2007

S.I. No. 376 of 2007 European Communities (Labelling, Presentation and Advertising of Foodstuffs) (Amendment) Regulations, 2007

S.I. No. 506 of 2007 European Communities (Food Supplements) Regulations, 2007

The National Standards Authority of Ireland has revoked the Standard Specifications: (Hygiene in the Catering Sector), Declaration, 1994 (I.S. 340:1994)

(Hygiene in Food Retailing and Wholesaling), Declaration, 1998 (I.S. 341:1998)

and has declared the following specifications to be Standard Specifications:

I.S. 340:2007 Hygiene in the Catering Sector

I.S. 341:2007 Hygiene in Food Retailing and Wholesaling

open consultation

launch of irish food hygiene standards

The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) recently launched the revised food hygiene standards for the catering (I.S. 340:2007) and retail and wholesale sectors (I.S. 341:2007). These are voluntary standards which provide guidance for compliance with the food hygiene legislation (i.e. Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs which is given effect in Irish law by S.I. No. 369 of 2006).

Speaking at the launch, Mr Trevor Sargent, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, said that the European food sector employs more than 2.6 million people and is worth in the region of €540 billion. In Ireland, it is estimated that the food sector gives direct employment to 300,000 people. In 2006, it was reported that food retailing and tourism (of which catering is a major component) contributed €12 billion and €5.9 billion to the Irish economy, respectively. The new food hygiene standards have an important role to play in assisting these sectors in maintaining consumer confidence in relation to food safety.

The standards cover the typical steps in catering, retail and wholesale operations; from registration of the business, control of suppliers, food hygiene requirements during food handling, preparation, storage, service and sale. Particular emphasis is placed on maintenance of the cold chain, reflecting the importance placed

on this requirement in the Regulation. Guidance is also given on application of HACCP principles. In addition, critical limits, monitoring and corrective actions for typical critical control points (CCPs) in these businesses are provided.

The standards were developed by two working groups with representation from industry (caterers, restaurateurs, hoteliers, retailers and wholesalers), regulators (Health Service Executive, Environmental Health Officers Association and the FSAI) and the National Hygiene Partnership.

The FSAI will present the standards to the Department of Health and Children for formal recognition as national guides to compliance with Articles 3, 4 and 5 of Regulation 852/2004 in line with Article 8 of the Regulation. If recognised, the standards will subsequently be notified to the European Commission and listed in the EU Register for National Guides to Good Practice.

See http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/hygienelegislation/register_national_guides_en.pdf

I.S. 340:2007 will be made available in Polish and Mandarin Chinese, in addition to English and Irish. The standard can be obtained by contacting NSAI, on 01 8073800 or www.nsai.ie.

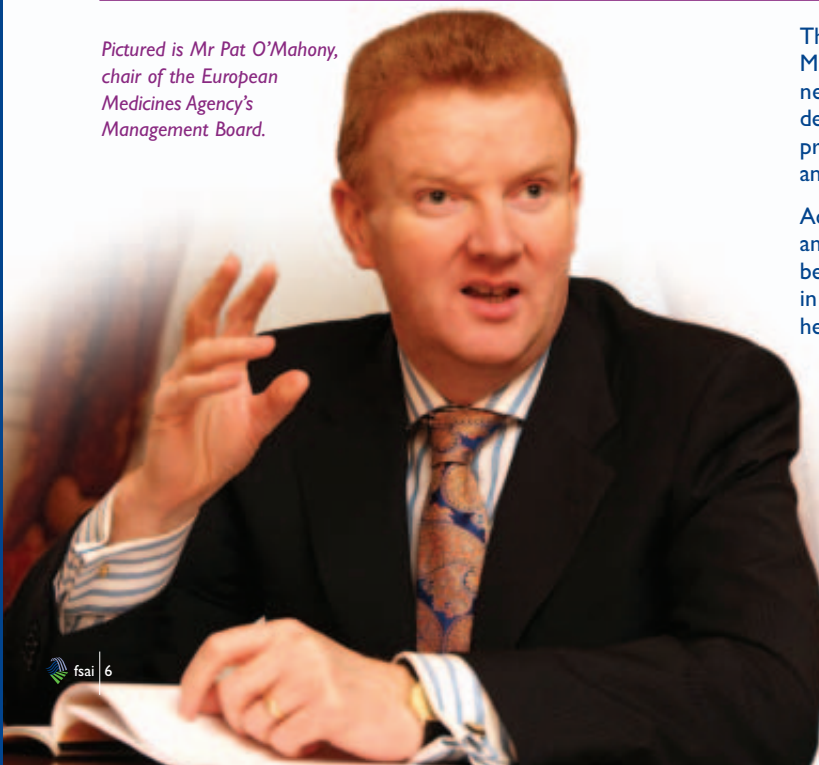
jifsan workshop

Pictured at a recent workshop in Washington DC, entitled 'Tools for Prioritising Food Safety Concerns' organised by the US Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN) were, from left to right, Dr Susan Barlow (member of the Scientific Committee of the European Food Safety Authority), Professor David Lineback, Director-Retired of JIFSAN and Dr John O'Brien, CEO, FSAI.



board member honored at european level


Pictured is Mr Pat O'Mahony, chair of the European Medicines Agency's Management Board.



The European Medicines Agency's Management Board has elected Mr Pat O'Mahony, Chief Executive of the Irish Medicines Board, as its new chair. The European Medicines Agency (EMA) is a decentralised body of the European Union. Its main responsibility is to protect and promote public and animal health through the evaluation and supervision of medicines for human and veterinary use.

Accepting his election, Mr Pat O'Mahony stated that it is his ambition to do the very best during his three year mandate (which began on 7 June) to make a difference for public and animal health in Europe. EMA Executive Director Thomas Lönngren has said that he is looking forward to working with him as the new chair of the Board. Mr O'Mahony has long-standing management experience in the public health domain and will help EMA to cope successfully with the challenges ahead.

Mr Pat O'Mahony is a trained veterinarian, who also holds an MBA degree from the Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business, University College Dublin. Mr O'Mahony spent a number of years in private veterinary practice, and as technical manager in the pharmaceutical industry in Ireland and the U.K. Before joining the Irish Medicines Board as Chief Executive in 2002, he was Director of Consumer Protection at the FSAI. He is a current Board member of the FSAI and the Irish National Accreditation Board.



illegal gm rice and gm-free labels a problem in 2006

Testing of various foods on the Irish market for GM ingredients in 2006 identified the presence of illegal GM rice originating in the USA, along with further examples of foods labelled as 'GM free', even though they contained low levels of GM ingredients.

A GM food ingredient is permitted on the EU market only where it is authorised for food use. A GM ingredient must be labelled if it constitutes more than 0.9% of the total ingredient. Where 0.9% or less of an ingredient is comprised of an authorised GM ingredient, to avoid GM labelling, the operator must be in a position to demonstrate that its presence is adventitious or technically unavoidable. GM maize and soya bean varieties are globally traded with some authorised for food use within the EU. For this reason, FSAI surveys tend to focus on foods containing maize and/or soya ingredients using validated analytical tests to detect, identify and quantify GM ingredients.

Additional sampling and analyses of rice products were carried out across the EU in 2006 due to the reported presence of unauthorised GM rice (LLRICE601) in certain products containing American long grain rice. Emergency EU legislation imposed certain import restrictions and required all Member States to check existing stocks of a number of rice products originating in the USA, with action to be taken where the unauthorised GM rice was identified.

A total of 19 different rice samples were purchased from retail outlets in Dublin during September 2006 and analysed by the State Laboratory, the national reference laboratory for GM testing in Ireland. Five of the 19 samples tested were found to contain low levels of the GM rice LLRICE601 (Table 1). The FSAI contacted the food businesses involved and the products were voluntarily removed from the market. The entire lines of the affected Tesco, Nice Price and Marks & Spencer products were withdrawn from sale, while just the affected batch of the St. Bernard rice was withdrawn. As required by EU emergency measures, the FSAI notified the European Commission of positive results through the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed. While it was considered that imported long grain rice containing trace levels of LLRICE601 was not likely to pose safety concern to humans, its presence on the market represented a technical breach of EU legislation and thus product removal was warranted.

Whilst the main 2006 survey focused primarily on products containing maize and soya ingredients, which were sampled at retail level and analysed by a commercial laboratory, the survey also included a number of rice samples.

In November 2006, 78 food products containing rice, soya or maize ingredients were randomly purchased by the FSAI at a range of retail outlets including supermarkets and health food shops in

Dublin city centre. Samples of rice products were included to determine whether there was any further evidence for the presence of unauthorised GM rice on the market in Ireland. Samples were submitted to a commercial laboratory for analysis to detect, identify and quantify GM ingredients.

Out of the 78 samples analysed, 11 (14%) were found to contain low levels of three varieties of GM maize (Bt176, Mon810 and NK603) or Roundup Ready GM soya, all of which were authorised within the EU (Table 2). None of the GM ingredients constituted greater than 0.9% of the total ingredient and therefore GM labelling was not required. GM rice was not detected in any of the rice samples tested. Three of the samples containing low levels of GM soya carried the claim 'made from non-GM soya' or 'GM free' on their labelling. These products were voluntarily withdrawn from the market.

The FSAI contacted all food businesses whose products were found to contain GM ingredients and requested evidence to demonstrate that the presence of GM ingredients was adventitious or technically unavoidable. Products containing GM ingredients, but carrying labels to indicate the absence of GM ingredients were removed from sale voluntarily by the food business operators. The GM-free labelling issue was again highlighted, however, one of the food companies involved has committed to altering its labels accordingly so as to not mislead consumers.

Table 1: Rice Samples Found to Contain LLRICE601

Brand	Product	Best Before Date	Batch	GM Result
Tesco	American Long Grain Rice	Sept 2007	6068 05:34	35S positive; LL601 positive, <0.1%
Nice Price	Long Grain Rice	Nov 2007	VT 6138 03.27	35S positive; LL601 positive
Marks & Spencer	American Easy Cook Rice Long Grain	06/08/2008 07/05/2008	6213c 06:51 6122c 12:09	35S positive; LL601 positive 35S not detected; LL601 positive, very low levels
St. Bernard	Easy Cook Rice	Dec 2007	L-06022 6177	35S not detected; LL601 positive, very low levels

Table 2: Foods Found to Contain GM Ingredients and Labelled with a Non-GM Claim

Product	Best Before Date	Batch	Non-GM Claim	GM Result
Realeat Vege Burger Mix	30/09/2007	L6268/1/2	'Made from non-genetically modified soya'	0.3% RR soya
Direct Foods Sosmix with Country Herbs	31/03/2008	L6257/2/1	'Made from non-genetically modified soya beans'	<0.1 % RR soya
Free & Easy Cheese Flavour Sauce Mix	31/08/2007	6227/02	'GM free; non GM cornstarch'	<0.1% RR soya

call for expressions of interest for the position of member of the management board of efsa

Applications are invited for the positions of seven out of 14 members of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

The responsibilities of the Management Board include, in particular:

- general monitoring of the work of the Authority to ensure that it carries out its mission and performs the tasks assigned to it in accordance with its mandate and within a culture of independence and transparency;
- the appointment of the Executive Director on the basis of the list drawn up by the Commission, and, if necessary, his or her dismissal;
- the appointment of the members of the Scientific Committee and Panels which are responsible for providing the scientific opinions of the Authority;
- the adoption of annual and multi-annual programmes of work of the Authority and the general report of annual activities;
- the adoption of the Authority's internal rules and financial regulation.

The Board operates by formal meetings, private sessions, informal contacts between members and correspondence. EFSA papers, Board correspondence and private or informal sessions are held in

English. Formal sessions include interpretation where Members need this. The Board meets four to six times per year, predominantly in Parma but also in other EU locations where appropriate.

The Management Board is composed of 14 members appointed by the European Council in consultation with the European Parliament, plus a representative of the Commission. Following the publication of an open call for expression of interest in the Official Journal of the European Communities (OJ 2007/C 174/08) and elsewhere, the European Commission will send a list of possible candidates to the Council. The Council, after consultation with the European Parliament, will appoint the Board members.

The 14 members of the Management Board were appointed on 15 July 2002 by Council Decision, the term of office for seven of whom expired on 30 June 2006. They were replaced or had their mandate renewed until 30 June 2010. The term of office of the other seven members of the Management Board will end on 30 June 2008. Three of them were appointed as having a background in organisations representing consumers and other interests in the food chain.

Further details are available on the EFSA website at: www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press_room/news/wms_mb_call.html

The deadline for submission of applications is 24 September 2007.

efsa executive director visits the fsai

The Executive Director of EFSA, Ms Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle, recently visited the FSAI. Ms Geslain-Lanéelle intends to visit food safety agencies in Member States as part of maintaining positive ongoing external relations with national bodies. She made her first visit to the FSAI and the staff of the FSAI were very pleased to welcome her to Ireland. She addressed all staff and gave an outline of how EFSA works and cooperates with national agencies. As Executive Director, she is the legal representative of EFSA and is in charge of the day-to-day management of the Authority. Her post is for a five year term from her appointment in July 2006.



Ms Geslain-Lanéelle met with the senior management team at the FSAI. Pictured from left to right are: Dr Brian Redahan, Director Consumer Protection Division; Mr Alan Reilly, Deputy CEO and Director Food Science and Standards; Ms Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle, Executive Director, EFSA; Dr John O'Brien, CEO and Mr Raymond Ellard, Director Audit and Compliance.



Executive Director of EFSA, Ms Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle addresses the staff at the FSAI

travel associated trichinosis in ireland

Trichinosis is a foodborne disease caused by eating the raw or undercooked meat of animals infected with the larvae of a parasitic worm called *Trichinella*. The incubation period of trichinosis is 8 - 15 days and though infections may be asymptomatic, clinical manifestations can include fever, diarrhoea, weakness, muscle pain, headache, encephalitis, meningitis, myocarditis and (rarely) death.

In most EU countries, including Ireland, there have been reports of *Trichinella* infection among certain wild carnivorous animals. In other EU countries, including France, Germany, Italy, and Spain, human infections due to the consumption of local animals have been reported, particularly associated with pork and more recently horse meat. In Ireland, trichinosis is a very rare infection and pigs slaughtered for human consumption have to be tested and shown to be free from this parasite.

In June, the FSAI was advised through the EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed, that a product recall was being initiated in Poland on a raw sausage product due to the presence of the *Trichinella* parasite. The recall was undertaken by Polish authorities following an outbreak of food poisoning in a North-West region of Poland, bordering Germany. The outbreak involved 214 cases with 81 patients been hospitalised. The particular raw sausage product was not exported to Ireland.

A Polish national and his fiancée, both resident in Ireland, returning from holidays in the affected region of Poland, presented with symptoms of trichinosis infection in an Irish hospital in June. During their holiday they had purchased and consumed lightly-smoked pork sausages. They had also brought some of the product back to Ireland, however, nobody else had consumed it. While an initial diagnosis of trichinosis was not made, the male patient indicated

that a Polish radio station, reacting to a press release issued by the FSAI, had reported an outbreak of trichinosis in the region of Poland that he had visited. As a result of this, and based on his clinical presentation and blood investigations, a presumptive diagnosis of trichinosis was made, which was subsequently confirmed. Three further linked cases were found in a family in Germany who had travelled to the region in Poland during May.

While the case has little relevance to the high safety standards of Irish produced pork products, it does illustrate the changing role of the FSAI in its mission to protect consumers' health and consumers' interests. The changing demographics of Ireland's population and the integration of people of various ethnic backgrounds and traditions means that food products once only found in foreign countries will be found on the Irish market. As such, unusual and rare food safety issues such as trichinosis may occur in Ireland.

efsa celebrates its five year anniversary



This year the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is celebrating five years since its foundation. EFSA was set up in 2002, following a series of food crises in the late 1990s, as an independent source of scientific advice on food safety. To date, it has produced over 450 scientific risk

assessments on a wide variety of topics which now inform the policies and decisions of risk managers in the European institutions and Member States. By contributing to the European policy and legislation on food safety, EFSA's advice contributes to a healthier, better-protected Europe.

Throughout 2007, EFSA has planned a series of events and activities to mark its first five years. Through these activities, those interested in food safety in Europe can

understand more about EFSA, how it works and its achievements over the last five years. Participation and interaction are keywords for its activities throughout the year. Developments on its fifth anniversary programme are available on the EFSA website, which includes webcastings of key events and allows registration to conferences and seminars in Member States.

See: www.efsa.europa.eu/en/about_efsa/efsa_5th_anniversary.html

conference on nanotechnology

The FSAI, the Dublin Institute of Technology and the Irish Society of Toxicology are jointly organising a conference entitled '*Nanotechnology: implications for human health, the environment and food safety*'. The conference will take place in the Carlton Dublin Airport Hotel on Friday 2 November.

Nanotechnology is a collective term encompassing aspects of various scientific fields, such as physics, chemistry, biology, etc. Nano means 10^{-9} , or one billionth. Nanotechnology, or nanoscience, refers to the science and technology of objects that have dimensions on this length scale. Exact definitions for how small an object has to be

to qualify as nano can vary, but it is generally taken to be 100nm or less.

The conference will focus on the emerging discipline of nanotoxicology and its implications to the broader nanotechnology community. Particular emphasis will be given to the food, environment and medical sectors. The conference will bring together a number of international leaders in the area of nanotoxicology and represents the first conference on this novel topic to be held in Ireland.

Key topics to be addressed at the conference include the mechanism of nanoparticle toxicity, physio-chemical indicators of toxicity, environmental and

health impacts of nanotechnologies, nano and micro techniques for the food industry, nanotechnology and food safety, nanomaterials in food products and packages, nanomedicine and risk communication and the public dialogue.

The conference will be of interest to toxicologists, eco-toxicologists, risk and exposure assessors, nanotechnology researchers, members of industry and governmental regulatory agencies and societal stakeholders.

For further information, including the conference brochure, please see: www.nanotech.dit.ie/events/ist07.html



general audits under regulation 882/2004: the

At a meeting of the chief veterinary officers and heads of service on 27 June 2007, the Director of the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO), Mr Colm Gaynor, outlined the strategy that the European Commission would be adopting regarding general audits as specified in Article 45 of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 on Official Controls Performed to Ensure the Verification of Compliance with Feed and Food Law, Animal Health and Animal Welfare Rules. Article 45 requires that the European Commission shall carry out general and specific audits in Member States (MS). The main purpose of these audits will be to verify that official controls take place in accordance with the Multi-Annual National Control Plan (MANCP) and in compliance with Community law. The Article also states that specific audits and inspections in one or more targeted sectors may supplement general audits.

Specific audits and inspections shall serve to:

- verify the implementation of the MANCP, feed and food law and animal health and welfare legislation. Specific audits may include, as appropriate, on-the-spot inspections of official services and of facilities associated with the sector being audited;
- verify the functioning and organisation of competent authorities;
- investigate important or recurring problems in MS;
- investigate emergency situations, emerging problems or new developments in MS.

The requirements of Article 45 will result in a fundamental change in the approach of the FVO to its inspection and audit systems.

how will fvo roll out the general audit and review cycle programme?

From 2008 onwards the FVO will adopt a three year review cycle for all MS. During the first year it will carry out a general audit and a number of specific and on-the-spot audits. Following the completion of the general audit the MS involved will be required by the Commission to develop an action plan to resolve any findings or recommendations contained in the general audit report. During years two and three it is envisaged that the FVO will carry out a general review of the MS. The general review will involve updates on how the MS is progressing and the close-out of issues identified in the action plan. The outcome of the general review process will also result in an update of the MS country profile.

Outlined in Figure 1 opposite is the general audit process which will commence with a preparatory phase within the FVO.

preparatory phase

Preparatory work will be carried out exclusively by FVO officials. Documentation used during the preparatory phase will include the MS MANCP and information provided to the Commission by the MS on its national audit systems as required by Article 4(6) of Regulation 882/2004. The Commission will also assess information contained in the annual reports submitted by the MS as required by Article 44 of the Regulation. The preparatory phase will also be informed by the current country profile of the MS. Following the initial phase in the preparatory process, the FVO may contact a MS for any updates in the MANCP, audit reports or annual reports. On completion of this activity, an internal meeting of the general audit team for the MS will take place in the FVO. This and subsequent meetings will agree the audit priorities for the MS and the proposed specific audits to be conducted during the general audit activity. The outcome of the preparatory phase will provide the FVO general audit team with a programme for the MS general audit.

audit activity

The general audit will commence with an opening meeting between the competent authorities of the MS and the FVO general audit team. At this meeting the FVO will outline the scope of the general audit and audit priorities. The meeting will also involve initial discussions on the specific audits to be carried out during the general audit activities (See Figure 2).

The specific audit activities will follow typical FVO mission procedures. For each specific audit, an opening meeting will be conducted with the relevant competent authorities. The mission team will then carry out the specific audit in the sector under assessment. A draft report on the outcomes of the specific audit will be sent to the MS for comment. A significant change in FVO activities comes about at this stage, in that the specific audit report will not be published on the Commission website. The outcome of each specific audit will inform a general audit report. The audit activity proceeds with the completion of the specific audit programme and includes the development of a draft sector report for each specific audit which at all times the MS will have an opportunity to comment on. When the specific audit programme has been completed, the general audit team will hold an internal meeting to discuss the outcome of the general audit. Following this meeting(s) the draft general audit report (DGAR) is then completed.

general audit report

When the DGAR is complete, a closing meeting is held between the FVO and the competent authorities who were involved in the general audit activities. The closing meeting will involve a presentation by the FVO and a discussion on the outcome of specific audits, of the general audit, and of the DGAR. Following the closing meeting between the FVO and relevant competent authorities, the DGAR will be forwarded to the MS for comment. On receipt by the FVO of comments from the MS the general audit team will commence a process of consideration of the comments forwarded by the MS and the finalisation of the DGAR. When the general audit report has been approved by the Director of the FVO it will then be sent to the MS, the European Parliament, and will be published on the Commission website (See Figure 3).

Mr Gaynor concluded by advising the meeting that he considered the purpose of general, specific and national audit systems was primarily to verify that overall official controls take place irrespective of who conducts the audits i.e. the FVO or the MS themselves. These audits should verify that official controls are:

- in compliance with Community law;
- in accordance with the MANCP;
- suitable to achieve the objectives of Regulation 882/2004.

The outcome of all audit activity should be to ensure that FVO and MS audit resources are deployed in the most efficient and effective manner. The FVO is currently piloting its general audit methodologies in Austria and the Netherlands. It is intended to carry out six to eight general audits in 2008, of which Ireland is one of the MS scheduled for audit.

new fvo strategy

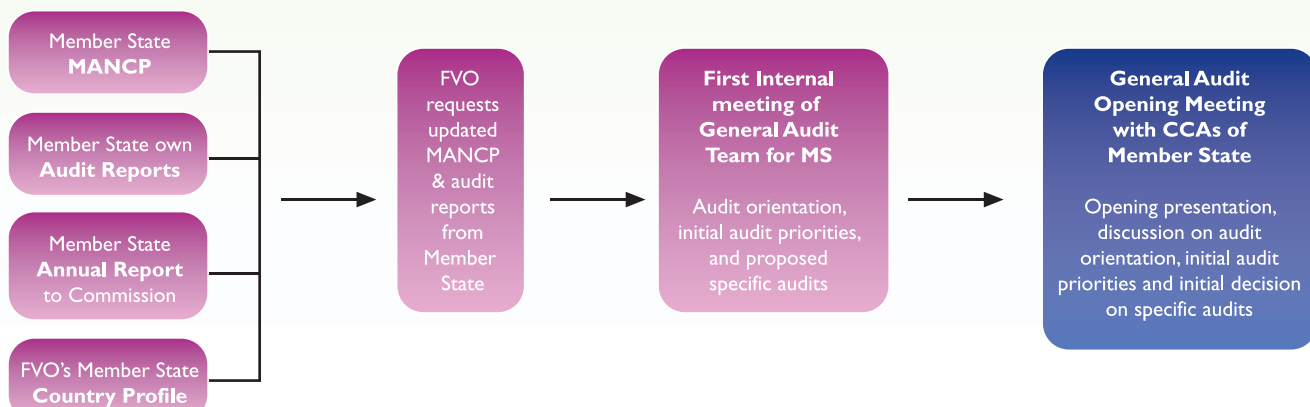


Figure 1: General Audit - Preparatory Phase

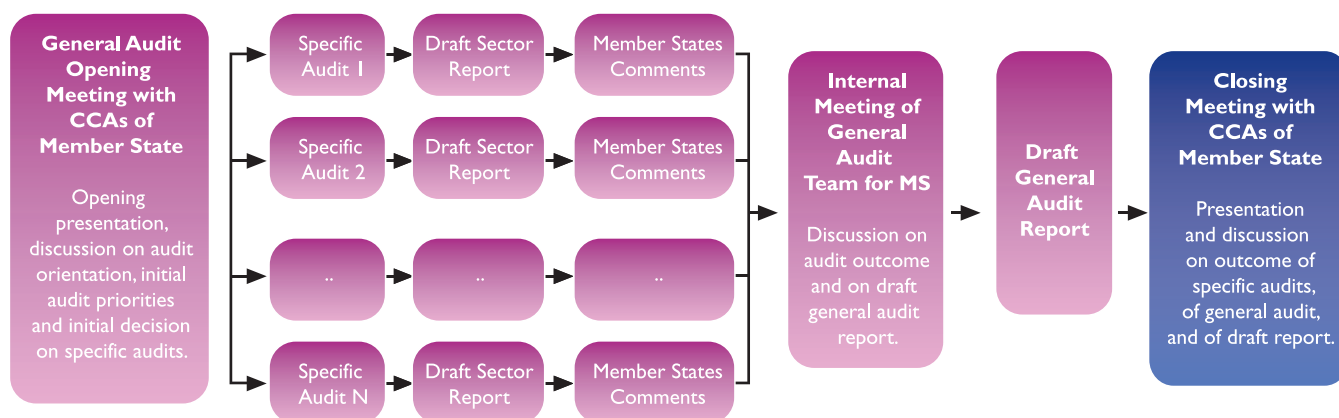


Figure 2: General Audit - Audit Activity

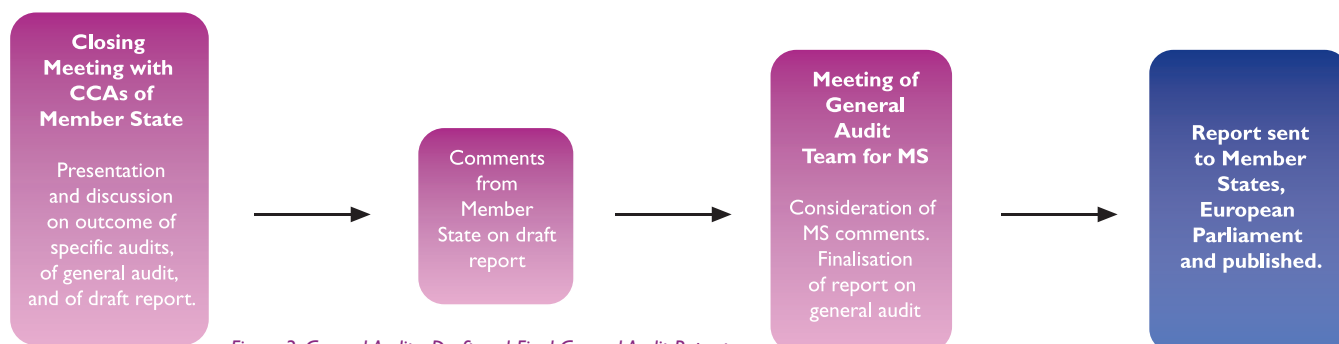


Figure 3: General Audit - Draft and Final General Audit Report



nhp meeting

Pictured at the meeting of the National Hygiene Partnership in Dublin on 24 April were, from left to right, Mr John Carroll, Chairman, NHP, Senator Cybrian Brady who opened the meeting, and speaker Dr John O'Brien, CEO, FSai.



mailing list

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minister of state visits fsai



Pictured are (l-r): Mr Eamonn Ryan, Chair, FSAI Board, Mr Pat 'the Cope' Gallagher TD, Minister of State at the Department of Health and Children with responsibility for Health Promotion and Food Safety and Mr Alan Reilly, Deputy CEO, FSAI.

Mr Pat 'the Cope' Gallagher TD, Minister of State at the Department of Health and Children with responsibility for Health Promotion and Food Safety visited the FSAI on 31 July last. Mr Gallagher, who was accompanied by Ms Joan Regan and Mr Eamon Corcoran, Food Unit, DoHC, met informally with all staff in the organisation. He then attended a meeting with Mr Eamonn Ryan, Chair, FSAI Board and a number of senior managers. Mr Alan Reilly, Deputy CEO, FSAI gave a general overview of the work of the FSAI. He also outlined and discussed some specific areas of work, such as the salt reduction initiative, recommendations for a national policy of vitamin D supplementation for infants, fortification of food with folic acid, BSE trends and the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed. Ireland's participation at European level was also discussed at the meeting.

recent publications

The following publication has recently been produced by the FSAI:

- Guidance Note No. 23: *Development and Assessment of Recognised National Voluntary Guides to Good Hygiene Practice and the Application of HACCP Principles.*

This publication is available on our website at www.fsai.ie/publications.

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