

FSAI NEWS

November/December 2014

Vol 16 Issue 6 ISSN 1393-6972

In this issue [Page 2 > More Action Needed on *Campylobacter*](#) [Page 3 > Extending Mandatory Allergen Declaration to Non-Prepacked Foods](#) [Page 4 > FSAI Certified Food Safety Training Skills Workshop; EFSA Scientific Opinion; Ireland Ranks Number One for Food Safety](#) [Page 5 > MenuCal Shortlisted for Eircom Spiders Award; FVO Aquaculture Missions; Meeting of the European Federation of Bottled Water, Irish Beverage Council and FSAI](#) [Page 6 > Legislation Update](#) [Page 8 > FSAI Hosts Bangladeshi Delegation; Food Supplements Training for EHOs](#) [Page 9 > EFood Safety Information on the Irish Point of Single Contact Website; FSAI/Local Authority Regional Meetings](#) [Page 10 > Event Round-up](#) [Page 11 > FAQ](#) [Page 11 > Inaugural Dean's List Award for Work Placement Student; Recent Publications](#)

Features in focus



Page 3: Extending Mandatory Allergen Declaration to Non-Prepacked Food



Page 4: Ireland Ranks Number One for Food Safety



Page 11: Event Round-Up

FSCC Open Meeting on Food Addiction

The FSAI's Food Safety Consultative Council (FSCC) recently hosted an open meeting to discuss the topic of food addiction and to explore the possibility of becoming addicted to certain food products. The event provided a platform for international and national experts to debate the attitudes and consumption patterns of consumers and whether food choices can lead to addictive behaviours.

The event was opened by Mr Leo Varadkar, T.D., Minister for Health. He stated that food choices and consumer behaviour are particularly relevant in Ireland today, as overweight and obesity is now a public health priority. Studies now show that two out of three Irish adults, and one in four primary school children, are overweight or obese. These statistics represent a major challenge, for health professionals, for parents, for individuals and for society as a whole. He highlighted a number of initiatives aimed at tackling obesity that are now in place and stated that many more are planned, mainly through the Government's Healthy Ireland initiative.

Ms Veronica Campbell, Chair of the FSCC, introduced the experts, who sought to dispel some myths and to explain the facts on whether food addiction is a reality or simply a misinterpretation. The concept of food addiction has been widely and frequently reported in the media, and it would be easy to form the view that this provides an explanation for the weight problems that many people experience. However, evidence that specific foods or ingredients are addictive is largely absent.

The event was chaired by Ms Suzanne Campbell, Food Writer. Speakers included Prof. Mary Flynn,



Pictured at the FSCC open meeting are: Ms Paula Mee, Nutrition Consulting, Mr Leo Varadkar, T.D., Minister for Health and Prof. Mary Flynn, FSAI.

Chief Specialist in Public Health Nutrition, FSAI, Prof. Julian Mercer, Head of Obesity and Metabolic Health at the University of Aberdeen, Dr John Menzies, Research Fellow with the Centre for Integrative Physiology, University of Edinburgh and Ms Paula Mee, Nutrition Consulting. The open format of the meeting gave the public an opportunity to see the workings of the FSCC and to participate in the discussions.



Alan Reilly
Chief Executive

More Action Needed on *Campylobacter*

Of all infectious diseases which must be notified to health authorities in Ireland, one of the most frequently reported is *Campylobacter* infection, surpassing influenza and some hospital acquired infections. It is Ireland's number one cause of foodborne illness. So far this year almost 2,500 cases have been identified, ten times more than those caused by *Salmonella*. Given that actual cases far exceed reported cases, we estimate that there could be as many as 25,000 cases of campylobacteriosis annually in Ireland. The number is steadily rising year after year.

Campylobacteriosis is a nasty infection, which typically lasts a week. Summer is the peak period, with children under four the group most affected. Sufferers develop diarrhoea or bloody diarrhoea, and often develop severe cramping and abdominal pain, coupled with fever, within two to five days after exposure to the organism. Nausea and vomiting are also common. Although complications are rare, infection is associated with reactive arthritis, Reiter's syndrome or Haemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS). Approximately one in 1,000 cases leads to a neurological disorder called Guillain-Barré Syndrome.

The organism does not grow in food, but food is the most common source, with poultry the primary reservoir. A very low dose is enough to cause illness. Even one drop of juice from raw chicken meat can contain enough *Campylobacter* to make a person ill. Results from the most recent FSAI survey of *Campylobacter* in retail chicken shows that about 50% of products harbour the bacteria. Cooking easily destroys it, but cross-contamination from raw poultry is how it manages to infect so many of us. It might be argued, therefore, that good hygiene practices in the home or the catering sector should be enough to provide protection. However, this alone has not proven enough, as evidenced by the increase in reported cases year-on-year. It is equally valid to argue that elimination of *Campylobacter* from poultry would be a far more successful strategy. Clearly consumer behaviour in the home cannot be the sole means of prevention.

In 2011, the FSAI Scientific Committee issued its second report on *Campylobacter*: Recommendations for a Practical Control Programme for *Campylobacter* in the Poultry Production and Slaughter Chain. If we are to tackle *Campylobacter* infection effectively, then more action is required by poultry farmers, slaughter plant operators and retailers, as well as consumers.

The adoption by retailers of leak proof packaging on chickens was a welcome improvement. Current media campaigns to remind consumers not to wash poultry before cooking also helps to raise awareness of the danger of cross-contamination. The industry, however, needs to do more.

Flocks should be systematically tested for *Campylobacter* before they are presented for slaughter. These results need to be communicated back to producers. How can poultry producers improve the biosecurity needed to keep *Campylobacter* out of poultry houses unless they know the *Campylobacter* status of their flocks? Processors and retailers should come together to fund this testing programme as the burden cannot be borne by the producer alone. It is also time to incentivise change and for retailers to pay bonuses for *Campylobacter*-free flocks as they do elsewhere in Europe. This will drive improvement and reward those who are serious about keeping *Campylobacter* out of their flocks. Little will happen without some sort of financial incentive, and vital and immediate changes are necessary to combat *Campylobacter* infection.

A significant research project, funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and headed by University College Dublin and Teagasc, is currently underway and focusing on the practicalities of control options. Other challenges still remain to be tackled, in particular improving biosecurity on the farm. This is where Government could play a crucial role. Money needs to be found to fund an advisory service for poultry producers. This could, for instance, be tied into grant aid to help producers upgrade poultry housing which will strengthen biosecurity so that farmers can stay in business and produce a safer product for consumers. It is also time to consider setting in national legislation, an appropriate and challenging process hygiene microbiological criterion at the end of slaughter, as recommended in the 2011 FSAI report. This will set a target for the improvement of slaughter hygiene.

There are many players on the pitch, all with a role to play in reducing *Campylobacter* infection. As 2015 approaches we need to focus on tangible action. The time for talking is over and the consumer deserves better.



Extending Mandatory Allergen Declaration to Non-Prepacked Foods

From 13 December food businesses must provide written allergen information for all foods and beverages they provide. The 14 allergens specified under EU law include cereals containing gluten, crustaceans, eggs, fish, peanuts, soyabeans, milk, nuts, celery, mustard, sesame seeds, sulphur dioxide and sulphites, lupin and molluscs. The purpose of providing this information is to fully equip consumers with sufficient information on the presence of allergens so they can choose food that is safe for them or for people in their care.

Until recently, allergen labelling was required only for prepacked foods. Evidence suggests, however, that most food allergy incidents can be traced back to non-prepacked or loose foods. EU Regulation 1169/2011 on the Provision of Food Information to Consumers (FIC) extends the requirement to provide allergen information for prepacked foods to non-prepacked foods. The Regulation permits EU Member States to introduce national legislation to determine how this legal requirement is put into effect within their jurisdictions. In Ireland, this has been achieved through S.I. No 489 of 2014 which specifies that allergen information must be provided in written format for non-prepacked

foods. The information must be at least in the English language, legible, must clearly identify the allergens contained in a food or beverage and must be easily located and accessible by the consumer. Furthermore, as a list of ingredients is not generally used for non-prepacked foods, the information provided must use the word 'contains' followed by the specific allergens, e.g. contains wheat, egg and milk.

The mandatory labelling requirement applies to all food businesses using or handling food allergens and selling directly to the consumer, including restaurants, pubs, takeaways, caterers, food stalls and businesses offering delivery services. The requirement to declare food allergens also applies to the sale and supply of non-prepacked food through retail outlets such as shops and supermarkets, as well as food businesses engaged in distance selling, e.g. via website or telephone.

The particular way in which food businesses can declare food allergens will vary depending on the non-prepacked food and the type of food business in question. It is envisaged that there will be a number of ways in which a food business can comply with this requirement and so each business must examine the options available and determine which is most suitable for their business.

The FSAI has published a guidance note and information leaflet to assist food businesses with the implementation of the requirements of S.I. 489 of 2014. Further information is available on our website at www.fsai.ie, or by contacting our advice line on 1890 33 66 77.

Information Resources:

FSAI Guidance Note 28 on Food Allergen Information for Non-Prepacked Foods in Ireland
www.fsai.ie/publications/gn28/

Leaflet on Allergen Declarations for Non-Prepacked Food
www.fsai.ie/publications/allergen_non_prepacked/

Health (Provision of Food Allergen Information to Consumers in Respect of Non-Prepacked Food) Regulations 2014
www.fsai.ie/uploadedFiles/SI489_2014.pdf

FSAI Certified Food Safety Training Skills Workshop

The FSAI has just completed its 2014 training schedule for the 'Food Safety Training Skills' workshops. The two-day workshop is designed to provide managers, supervisors and trainers with the skills to deliver induction training in their workplace using the FSAI's three-hour induction training programme 'Food Safety and You'. The induction programme is based on the skills outlined in the FSAI's Guide to Food Safety Training - Level 1, and has been designed to promote active learning and the application of training in the work environment.

The programme is now being offered as an **FSAI-Certified "Industry Specific Award"**. The FSAI certification process requires trainers to complete a skills demonstration assessment



and successfully compile a collection of practical work in their workplace.

For further information or to request an application form for the course, please contact training@fsai.ie.



Pictured are participants taking part in group work at the course held on 18 and 19 November 2014

EFSA Scientific Opinion

Following a request from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, the EFSA Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies (NDA Panel) was asked to deliver a scientific opinion on the evaluation of allergenic foods and food ingredients for labelling purposes.

In view of the request, the NDA Panel decided to update its previous opinions relative to food ingredients or substances with known allergenic potential listed in Annex IIIa of 2003/89/EC, as amended. These include cereals containing gluten, milk and dairy products, eggs, nuts, peanuts, soy, fish, crustaceans, molluscs, celery, lupin, sesame, mustard and sulphites. The opinion relates to immunoglobulin (Ig)E- and non-IgE-mediated food allergy, to coeliac disease and to adverse reactions to sulphites in food, and it does not address non-immune-mediated adverse reactions to food. It includes information on the prevalence of food allergy in unselected populations, proteins identified as food allergens, cross-reactivities, the effects of food processing on the allergenicity of foods and ingredients, methods for the detection of allergens and allergenic foods, doses observed to trigger adverse reactions in sensitive individuals and risk assessment methodologies that have been used to derive individual and population thresholds for selected allergenic foods.

For further information, see: www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/3894.htm

Ireland Ranks Number One for Food Safety

A report published by the Conference Board of Canada's Centre for Food in Canada in collaboration with the University of Guelph's Food Institute ranks Ireland and Canada in joint top place for food safety among 16 OECD countries*.

The report measures and ranks Canada's food safety performance against that of 16 peer OECD countries including Australia, France, Germany, the UK and the USA. It provides an overall world ranking of food safety performance. All of the countries surveyed have very high food safety standards, but

Canada and Ireland, in particular, earned excellent grades relative to their peers. The report's authors place great emphasis on the need to ensure food safety and the availability of allergen labelling.

It is very positive to know that the efforts of the FSAI, the Department of Health, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the HSE's Environmental Health Service, Local Authorities, the Marine Institute and the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority to ensure that public protection and Ireland's reputation as a producer of high quality and safe foodstuffs is recognised internationally.

*The Report covered: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the UK and USA.





Pictured are FSAI representatives attending the awards ceremony, from left to right, Sharon Williams, Frances Douglas, Aileen Ward and Mary Flynn.

MenuCal Shortlisted for Eircom Spiders Award

The FSAI's online calorie calculator MenuCal was shortlisted for an Eircom Spider award under the e-Learning and Education award category. The Eircom Spider awards are considered an important benchmark for distinction and excellence in web-based business strategies.

About MenuCal's e-Learning System

MenuCal incorporates an interactive e-Learning training support system to assist food businesses at every stage of putting calories on menus. The interactive e-Learning programme

embedded in MenuCal provides unrestricted support and consists of a 'starter', 'main course' and 'dessert' training menu. A number of online video simulations and 'e-supports' are used to show food businesses exactly how to use the core features of MenuCal. Each course finishes with key 'take-away' tips and a downloadable checklist to help users with the practical aspects of working through putting calories on their menus.

For more information on MenuCal see www.menucal.fsai.ie

FVO Aquaculture Missions

Aquaculture Fact Finding Mission

The EU Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) carried out a pilot fact finding mission to Ireland on official controls in the finfish aquaculture sector in September 2014. This pilot was part of a fact finding series to Member States whose primary objective is to gain a broad overview of the structure and variety of aquaculture finfish production in Europe and the degree to which EU legislative requirements concerning food safety, food quality, animal health and animal welfare standards are being achieved in aquaculture. As the mission to Ireland was a pilot, there will not be a published report, but there will be an overall report at the end of the fact finding series.

Country Profile Mission

The FVO conducted a general follow-up mission in Ireland from 3-6 November last. The objective of this mission was to review progress on the implementation of recommendations identified during previous FVO missions in Ireland. As required under Article 45 of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 on official controls, the FVO auditors, Jennifer Egan (lead auditor and desk officer for Ireland) and Eva Bencini (FVO Inspector, Health and Consumer Directorate-General) assessed Ireland's level of compliance with EU and Irish legislation governing the feed, food, animal health and welfare and plant health sectors.

The FVO audit team met with representatives of the relevant competent authorities during the course of the mission and discussed in detail any outstanding recommendations from previous FVO missions.

A preliminary summary of findings was presented by the FVO and a draft report is expected to be issued within the coming months.



Attending the meeting were Dr Michelle Riblet, Service Contracts Executive, FSAI; Ms Mary Hughes, IBEC; Mr Raymond Ellard, Director of Consumer Protection, FSAI; Ms Patricia Fosselard, Secretary General, EFBW; Ms Ana Marie Collins, Quality Manager, Ballygowan (Britvic); Ms Therese Moore, Regulatory Manager, Global Brand Assurance, Britvic plc and Mr Declan Jackson, Director of Irish Beverage Council, IBEC.

Meeting of the European Federation of Bottled Water, Irish Beverage Council and FSAI

A meeting of the European Federation of Bottled Water (EFBW), Irish Beverage Council and the FSAI took place on 12 November at the FSAI office. This meeting provided

a valuable opportunity for discussion on the Irish bottled water market, regulations, emerging issues and priorities relating to bottled water.

Legislation Update



New Food Labelling Rules

Work on a major revision of the rules governing food labelling began in the European Union (EU) a number of years ago and culminated in the publication on 22 November 2011 of Regulation No. (EU) 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers (FIC). The Regulation came into effect on 13 December 2011 and has applied from the 13 December this year to food business operators at all stages of the food chain where their activities concern the provision of food information to consumers.

Whilst FIC maintains the original objectives and the core components of the previous labelling legislation, it also introduces some new requirements in order to provide clearer information to consumers to enable them to make informed choices when buying food.

Foods placed on the market or labelled prior to 13 December 2014

Foods which were placed on the market or labelled prior to 13 December 2014 and which are compliant with the previous rules on general labelling (Directive 2000/13/EC) but which do not comply with the requirements of FIC may be marketed until the stocks of the foods are exhausted i.e. until the date of minimum durability/use by date has expired.

Nutrition labelling

From 13 December 2016, nutrition information will be mandatory for most prepacked foodstuffs (see Annex V to FIC for the list of exemptions). Food businesses who make a nutrition or health claim on their product or who provide nutrition information on a voluntary basis must comply with the requirements of FIC from 13 December 2014.

Foods which were placed on the market or labelled prior to 13 December, 2014 in compliance with Directive 90/496/EEC (nutrition labelling rules) may be marketed until the stocks of the foods are exhausted i.e. until the minimum date of durability/use by date has expired.

Further information on these rules is available on the FSAI website www.fsai.ie

Fish Labelling

New rules on the mandatory and voluntary information to be provided for prepacked and non-prepacked fishery and aquaculture products will apply from 13 December 2014. These rules, which are set out in Regulation (EU) No. 1379/2013 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products, apply to the following:

a) CN 0301: Live fish

CN 0302: Fish, fresh or chilled, excluding fish fillets and other fish meat of heading 0304

CN 0303: Fish, frozen, excluding fish fillets and other fish meat of heading 0304

CN 0304: Fish fillets and other fish meat (whether or not minced), fresh, chilled or frozen

b) CN 0305: Fish, dried, salted or in brine; smoked fish, whether or not cooked before or during the smoking process; flours, meals and pellets of fish, fit for human consumption

c) CN 0306: Crustaceans, whether in shell or not, live, fresh, chilled, frozen, dried, salted or in brine; crustaceans, in shell, cooked by steaming or by boiling in water, whether or not chilled, frozen, dried, salted or in brine; flours, meals and pellets of crustaceans, fit for human consumption

CN 0307: Molluscs, whether in shell or not, live, fresh, chilled, frozen, dried, salted or in brine; aquatic invertebrates other than crustaceans and molluscs, live, fresh, chilled, frozen, dried, salted or in brine; flours, meals and pellets of aquatic invertebrates other than crustaceans, fit for human consumption

d) CN 1212 20 00: Seaweeds and other algae

Article 35 of the Regulation sets out the mandatory information that must be provided for prepacked and non-prepacked products and specifies the following indications:

- Commercial and scientific name of the species
- Production method (“...caught...” or “...caught in freshwater...” or “...farmed...”)
- Area where the product was caught or farmed
- Category of fishing gear used



- Whether the product has been defrosted (with limited exceptions)
- Date of minimum durability (‘best-before’ date) – where appropriate

In addition to the above, prepacked products must also display all the relevant information specified in Articles 9 and 10 of Regulation (EU) No.1169/2011 (FIC).

The Regulation also permits the provision of the following information on a voluntary basis, provided that it is clear, unambiguous and verifiable:

- Date of catch of fishery products or the date of harvest of aquaculture products
- Date of landing of fishery products or information on the port at which the products were landed
- More detailed information on the type of fishing gear
- In the case of fishery products caught at sea, details of the flag State of the vessel that caught those products
- Environmental information
- Information of an ethical or social nature
- Information on production techniques and practices
- Information on the nutritional content of the product

Voluntary information must not be displayed to the detriment of the space available for mandatory information on the marking or labelling.

The EU has published a guide to these rules which can be accessed at <http://bit.ly/1tS0fJ2>



Food Additives

Prepared Yeast Based Doughs

Commission Regulation (EU) No. 1084/2014 of 15 October 2014 amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No. 1333/2008 as regards the use of diphosphates (E 450) as a raising agent and acidity regulator in prepared yeast based dough was published in the EU Official Journal.

Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 lays down an EU list of food additives approved for use in foods and their conditions of use. This list may be updated either on the initiative of the EU Commission or following an application. An application for authorisation of the use of diphosphates (E 450) as a raising agent and acidity regulator in prepared yeast doughs was submitted to the EU in July 2013.

A raising system based on sodium bicarbonate (E 500), diphosphates (E 450) and yeast is required for fresh dough that is used in the preparation of pizzas, quiches, tarts and similar products. The raising of this dough is activated during final preparation. Sodium bicarbonate is mainly responsible for the raising, while yeast with low raising activities is needed to develop the typical aromatic taste. The diphosphates are required as acidity regulators in order to control the carbon dioxide formation from the sodium bicarbonate. Such a raising system based on sodium bicarbonate, diphosphates and yeast can be used as an alternative to the use of self-raising flour in which phosphates are authorised. Therefore, the use of diphosphates as a raising agent and acidity regulator in refrigerated prepacked yeast based doughs used as a base for pizzas, quiches, tarts and similar products is authorised under this Regulation.

Sweeteners in Certain Fruit or Vegetable Spreads

Commission Regulation (EU) No. 1092/2014 (OJ L299, p19, 17/10/2014) of 16 October 2014 amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No. 1333/2008 as regards the use of sweeteners in certain fruit or vegetable spreads

An application was submitted to the EU for authorisation of the use of sweeteners in all products belonging to sub food category 'Other similar fruit or vegetable spreads' of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No. 1333/2008.

That category includes jams, jellies and marmalades as defined by Council Directive 2001/113/EC. Fruit or vegetable spreads, similar to jams, jellies and marmalades, are also included within the same category and these products may contain ingredients other than those listed in Annex II to Directive 2001/113/EC.

Annex II to Regulation (EC) No. 1333/2008 authorises the use of sweeteners Aspartame (E 951), Neotame (E 961) and Salt of aspartame-acesulfame (E 962) in energy-reduced jams, jellies and marmalades, as well as in other similar fruit spreads such as dried-fruit-based sandwich spreads that are energy-reduced or with no added sugar.

This Regulation updates the list in Annex II to Regulation (EC) No. 1333/2008 by extending the use of those sweeteners to all other

energy-reduced similar fruit or vegetable spreads to allow their use in a similar way as in energy-reduced jams, jellies and marmalades.

EU Consultation on Guidelines on Allergen Information

The EU have opened a public consultation on a document entitled 'Guidelines relating to the provision of information on substances or products causing allergies or intolerances as listed in Annex II of Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 (FIC) on the provision of food information to consumers'. The consultation will remain open until 4 January 2015.

These proposed guidelines have been drawn up with the aim of providing informal guidance on the requirements of FIC regarding the mandatory indication of the presence of certain substances or products causing allergies or intolerances as described in Article 9.1(c) and listed in Annex II to the Regulation.

Included in the consultation document is guidance on the modalities for the provision of allergen information on prepacked foods as well guidance on the derogations from the obligation to inform consumers of the presence of the allergenic substances.

Full details of the consultation are available at <http://bit.ly/1rUwtsN>



New Regulations

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

S.I. No. 420 of 2014

Abattoirs Act 1988 (Veterinary Examination and Health Mark) (Revocation) Regulations 2014

S.I. No. 453 of 2014

European Communities (Hygiene of Foodstuffs) (Amendment) Regulations 2014

S.I. No. 454 of 2014

European Communities (Official Controls on the Import of Food of Non-Animal Origin) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 2014

S.I. No. 489 of 2014

Health (Provision of Food Allergen Information to Consumers in respect of Non-Prepacked Food) Regulations 2014

S.I. No. 500 of 2014

European Communities (Official Controls on the Import of Food of Non-Animal Origin for Pesticide Residues) (Amendment) (No.4) Regulations 2014

S.I. No. 556 of 2014

European Union (Provision of Food Information to Consumers) Regulations 2014



The photograph shows the Bangladeshi delegation with Professor Alan Reilly and Dr Bernard Hegarty of the FSAI and Dr Orla Cahill of DIT.

FSAI Hosts Bangladeshi Delegation

The FSAI welcomed Dr Shah Mahfuzur Rahman from the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization to Dublin on 12 November. Dr Rahman led a delegation of officials from the regulatory and implementation authorities, and six food inspector course co-ordinators from Higher Education Institutions in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is in the process of revitalising and overhauling its food inspection system through the implementation of risk-based approaches including upgrading the

academic curriculum for inspectors involved in food inspection and enforcement activities. Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) is working with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on a project titled "Improving Food Safety" to provide technical support for this project. As part of the project, Dr Rahman and his colleagues attended a week long executive education programme run by DIT School of Food Science and Environmental Health in collaboration with the Academic Quality Assurance Office, the Learning Teaching and Technology Centre and the FSAI.

During the visit, the delegation discussed how risk-based official controls are carried out, how food incidents and food-borne outbreaks are managed, training of food safety inspectors and the development of scientific advice and standards for food safety. The FSAI also arranged for the delegation to visit Dublin port, where they were hosted by the HSE Environmental Health Service to discuss controls on food imports, and a slaughterhouse, where they saw official controls conducted by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Food Supplements Training for EHOs

The FSAI hosted a two-day training session for environmental health officers (EHOs) on controls on food supplements. EHOs from all areas of the country with responsibility for supervising manufacturers, distributors, packers and retailers of food supplements attended the training. This training is part of the activities undertaken by both the FSAI and the HSE with the aim of improving official controls in the food supplement sector.

The training took place on 30 September and 1 October and consisted of a number of presentations and workshop sessions that allowed for discussion and experience sharing on the practical aspects relating to food supplement controls. The training was delivered with the assistance of Gemma O'Dwyer from GXP Quality Systems.

The FSAI and the HSE will continue to work closely to strengthen the controls in this area to ensure that food supplements are safe for consumers.



Pictured are speakers at the event, from left to right: Dorothy Guina Dornan, FSAI; Gemma Dwyer, GXP Quality Systems; Gail Carroll, FSAI; Martin Nestor, HSE and Anna Blasco Picazo, FSAI

Food Safety Information on the Irish Point of Single Contact Website

The Irish Point of Single Contact (PSC) is located in the Internal Market Unit of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and can be accessed on www.pointofsinglecontact.ie. It was established as the PSC for Ireland as required under Directive 2006/123/EC on services in the internal market. With the introduction of this legislation, the EU was seeking to forge ever closer links between the Member States (MS) and to ensure economic and social progress.

The main role of the PSC is to provide general information on the procedures required for Irish or EU businesses who intend operating in Ireland. Many of the



topics addressed by the PSC for business operators include health and safety requirements, employment rights, taxation and social security.

For those wishing to start a food business, the website also features a comprehensive section on the steps involved. The FSAI compiled information on the following areas for the PSC:

- Food Retailers
- Food Service Sector
- Cross-Border Catering Service

www.pointofsinglecontact.ie/browse-by-sector/food/

In addition, the FSAI was asked to provide information on the legal requirements for a fitness club in Ireland proposing to sell nutritional supplements and beverages from the premises. The legislation on food supplements falls within the remit of the FSAI for enforcement and any premises intending

to sell supplements must register as a food business and must ensure that the products on the market meet the specific labelling requirements.

See: www.pointofsinglecontact.ie/Browse-by-Sector/Leisure-and-Sport/Opening-a-Fitness-Club.html

The PSC is also part of the European Commission EUGO Network of Points of Single Contact established in each EU country (www.ec.europa.eu/internal_market/eu-go/). Irish businesses can use the EUGO Network as a key information resource when operating in the Single Market. Therefore, any Irish food business may contact the PSC in another MS for advice on marketing their food products in that MS.

More information on the Irish Point of Single Contact is available from:

Irish Point of Single Contact
Internal Market Unit
Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation,
23 Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Email: info@pointofsinglecontact.ie
Tel: 01-6312382

FSAI/Local Authority Regional Meetings

The regional meetings between the FSAI and the Local Authority (LA) veterinary inspectors took place on 14 and 16 October in Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim and Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. These one-day meetings provide an important networking and learning opportunity while enabling LA veterinary inspectors meet with colleagues from other local authorities who are responsible for enforcing the same food safety legislation.

A range of topics were presented and discussed at these meetings. Eoin Ryan, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) presented on the Implementation of Regulation 1099/2009: Protection of Animal Welfare at Time of Slaughter while Sean O'Laoide (LAVs) provided an update on the Certificate of Competence training.

Avril Hobson (DAFM) outlined the use of food additives in meat products and preparations and the EU food additive database. Judith O'Connor (FSAI) spoke about Guidance Note No. 27 on the Enforcement of Commission Regulation (EC) No. 2073/2005 on Microbiological Criteria for Foodstuffs.

Among the updates provided by the FSAI were the work of the Hygiene Package Flexibility Working Group, Official Agency and Premises Inspection database development updates, the EU Commission Audits, reports and recommendations.



Event Round-up

Breakfast Bites

Declaring allergen information on non-prepacked (loose) foods was the topic of our most recent Breakfast Bite on 3 December. Fourteen food allergens which are specified under EU law must be declared on the packaging of prepacked foods. This requirement will be extended from 13 December 2014 to cover all food, i.e. non-prepacked or loose food. This means that food businesses such as restaurants, takeaways, pubs, caterers, hotels etc. that did not have to declare allergen use up to now, will have to do so. It also covers

'distance selling' whereby food is purchased on the internet or over the phone and delivered to the consumer.

Dr Pat O'Mahony, Chief Specialist in Food Technology, FSAI, explained the new Regulations and outlined how the food industry can comply with meeting the new requirements.

'Breakfast Bites' are a series of free, informal breakfast meetings for food businesses. For further information on upcoming sessions, see our website at: www.fsaie.ie.



Antonela Butuc, DHC and Jason O'Regan, Doyle Collection



Nuala Ryan, H&A Marketing and PR Unilever Food Solutions and Deirdre Harding, Anokato Limited



Don Garry, Biocare and Janet Bartlett, Beata Banach and Gregorio Fabbro all from Mitie, Gather & Gather



Attendees at the Breakfast Bite on allergen labelling on non-prepacked food

VTEC Workshop for Artisan Cheese Makers

In November, the FSAI hosted a workshop on verocytotoxigenic *E. coli* (VTEC) and its significance for artisan cheese production.

Dr Valérie Michel, Head of the Dairy Microbiology Laboratory in ACTALIA, an officially recognised agri-food technology institute (ITAI) in France which specialises in food innovation and food safety was an invited speaker at the event. Her laboratory performs microbial analysis, including VTEC detection and VTEC genetic characterisation. She also works on microbial quantitative risk assessment and has extensive knowledge of the importance of hygiene practices at farm level in particular relating to bovine milk production.



Jane Murphy, Cáis; Matthew English-Hayden; Darina Allen, Slow Food Ireland and Kevin Sheridan, Sheridan's Cheese



Raymond Ellard, Director of Consumer Protection, FSAI; Elizabeth Bradley, Carlow Cheese and co-organiser of the event; Dr Valérie Michel, Head of the Dairy Microbiology Laboratory, ACTALIA, France and Dr Lisa O'Connor, Chief Specialist in Food Science, FSAI



Subscribe to our Events

If you would like to receive notification of our upcoming events, you can subscribe to our mailing list at: <http://bit.ly/THbdjZ>



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 FSAI NEWS, we feature a Frequently Asked Question. **This issue's questions are on Importing Food for Personal Use into Ireland**

What Restrictions are there on Imports of Foodstuffs of Animal Origin for Personal Use into Ireland?

Regulation No. 206/2009/EC covers imports of products of animal origin for personal consumption into Ireland (and the rest of the EU). The legislation covers food products imported via personal baggage when travelling, or by post (i.e. ordered by mail, telephone or via the internet).

Strict procedures for the introduction of certain products of animal origin (e.g. meat and milk and their products, fishery products, infant milk and infant food etc.) into the EU are necessary due to the risk of introducing diseases. These procedures do not apply to the movements of animal products between the 28 Member States of the EU, or for animal products coming from Andorra, Liechtenstein, Norway, San Marino, and Switzerland. So, products of animal origin may be imported into Ireland for personal consumption from these countries. As a guideline, quantities should not exceed 10kg.

Personal Imports into Ireland from a Third Country (i.e. outside the EU)

1. Small quantities of meat and milk and their products (other than powdered infant milk, infant food, and special foods or special pet feed required for medical reasons)

You may only bring in or send to the EU personal consignments of meat and milk and their products (other than powdered infant milk, infant food, and special foods or special pet feed required for medical reasons) provided that they come from the Faroe Islands, Greenland, or Iceland, and their weight does not exceed 10kg per person.

2. Powdered infant milk, infant food, and special foods required for medical reasons

You may only bring in or send to the EU personal consignments of powdered infant milk, infant food, and special foods required for medical reasons provided that:

- they come from the Faroe Islands, Greenland, or Iceland, and their combined quantity does not exceed the weight limit of 10kg per person, and that:
 - the product does not require refrigeration before consumption,

- it is a packaged proprietary brand product, and
- the packaging is unbroken unless in current use

- they come from other countries (other than the Faroe Islands, Greenland, or Iceland), and their combined quantity does not exceed the weight limit of 2kg per person, and that:
- the product does not require refrigeration before consumption,
- it is a packaged proprietary brand product, and
- the packaging is unbroken unless in current use.



3. Small quantities of fishery products for personal human consumption

You may only bring in or send to the EU personal consignments of fishery products (including fresh, dried, cooked, cured or smoked fish, and certain shellfish, such as prawns, lobsters, dead mussels and dead oysters) provided that:

- fresh fish are eviscerated,
- the weight of the fishery products does not exceed, per person, 20kg or the weight of one fish, whichever weight is the highest.

These restrictions do not apply to fishery products coming from the Faroe Islands or Iceland.

4. Small quantities of other animal products for personal human consumption

You may only bring in or send to the EU other animal products, such as honey, live oysters, live mussels and snails, provided that:

- they come from the Faroe Islands, Greenland, or Iceland, and that their combined weight does not exceed 10kg per person,
- they come from other countries (other than the Faroe Islands, Greenland, or Iceland) and their combined weight does not exceed 2kg per person.

Please note that you may bring in small quantities of animal products from several of the above four categories provided that they comply with the rules explained in each of the relevant paragraphs.

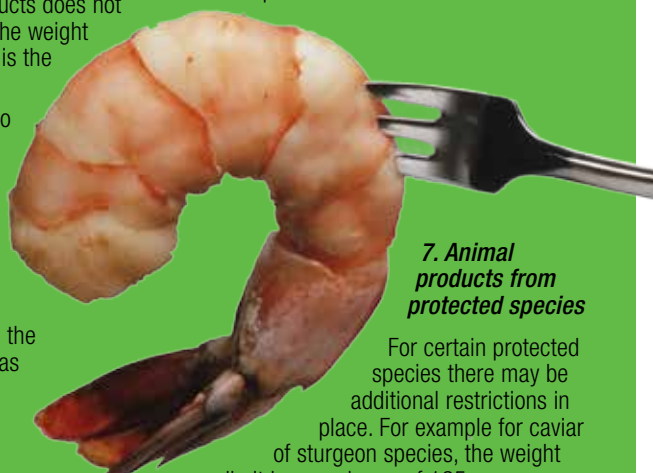
5. Larger quantities of animal products

You may only bring in or send to the EU larger quantities of animal products if they meet the requirements for commercial consignments, which include:

- certification requirements, as laid down in the appropriate official EC veterinary certificate,
- the presentation of the goods, with the correct documentation, to an authorised EU border inspection post for veterinary control, on arrival in the EU.

6. Exempted animal products

- The following products are exempted from the rules explained previously:
- bread, cakes, biscuits, chocolate and confectionery (including sweets) not mixed or filled with meat product,
- food supplements packaged for the final consumer,
- meat extracts and meat concentrates,
- olives stuffed with fish,
- pasta and noodles not mixed or filled with meat product,
- soup stocks and flavourings packaged for the final consumer,
- any other food product not containing any fresh or processed meat or dairy and with less than 50% of processed egg or fishery products.



7. Animal products from protected species

For certain protected species there may be additional restrictions in place. For example for caviar of sturgeon species, the weight limit is a maximum of 125g per person.

All animal products not conforming to these rules must be surrendered on arrival in the EU for official disposal. Failure to declare such items may result in a fine or criminal prosecution.

Inaugural Dean's List Award for Work Placement Student

Ms Gillian Ussher, Work Placement Student with the FSAI 2014/15, was presented with the Inaugural Dean's List Award for 'exceptional academic excellence' in 1st and 2nd year of her BSc in Human Nutrition at University of Ulster. We would like to congratulate Gillian and wish her every success in her future career.



Ms Gillian Ussher

Recent Publications

The following publications were recently produced (or updated) by the FSAI:

- Guidance Note No. 28: Food Allergen Information for Non-prepacked Food in Ireland
- Customer Action Plan (revised)
- Customer Charter (revised)
- Allergen Information for Non-prepacked Food
- Survey on Verification of Compliance with Commission Regulation (EC) No. 2073/2005 (12NS1) (online only)
- Factsheet: Food Information for Consumers at Markets Operated by Country Markets Ltd (online only)

These publications are available on our website at: www.fsai.ie/resources_publications.html



Editor: Edel Smyth

Contributors:
Anne-Marie Boland
Helen Crowley
Pippa Houghton
Maria Meghan
Michelle Riblet
Sharon Williams

Abbey Court
Lower Abbey Street
Dublin 1

Tel: (01) 8171300

newsletter@fsai.ie

www.fsai.ie



www.facebook.com/FSAI

[@FSAIinfo](https://twitter.com/FSAIinfo)

Please subscribe to our mailing list, or update your details, by contacting us at newsletter@fsai.ie.

You can also subscribe to the electronic version of our newsletter online at www.fsai.ie.



'Permission is granted to reproduce information contained herein with appropriate credit'. © 2014