



FOOD
STANDARDS
AGENCY

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Food Standards Agency
news

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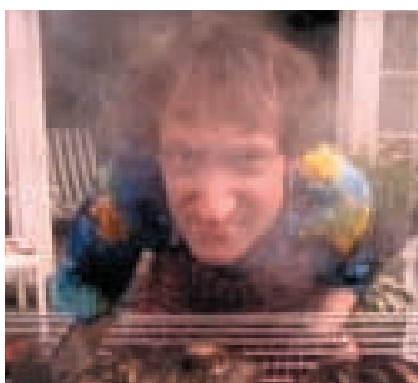
New advice on the safety of vitamins and minerals

The FSA is warning that some vitamins and minerals could have harmful effects if taken in too high a dose **p2**

Live webcast of FSA Board

The FSA Board meeting in Londonderry on 12 June will be viewable live at: www.food.gov.uk The agenda includes the SACN report on salt and health; Implementation of the Agency's foodborne disease strategy; and Progress on minimising pesticide residues in food

Gold award for Agency advert



The Agency has won an international award for one of its filler TV ads **p3**

FSA Contact Directory

Pin up our four-page pull-out directory to ensure your work with the Agency keeps up to speed. Topics covered range from acrylamide to zoonoses

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If there's a topic you would like to see covered in FSA News, email the Editor at: frank.chalmers@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Call for public sector to cut salt levels in food

The Food Standards Agency and Department of Health have urged all bodies responsible for public sector catering, and their suppliers, to reduce the amount of salt used in their food production and in supplies of processed foods.

Those with a particular responsibility for feeding children and older people have been asked to take into account advice on salt intake levels issued by the Agency on 15 May, including new maximum salt levels for children.

FSA Chair Sir John Krebs and Minister for Public Health Hazel Blears have written to public sector bodies, including social services, local education authorities, the NHS and HM Prison Services.

The Agency also held a consultation meeting with health and consumer organisations on 29 May to discuss the best way forward for reducing salt intake across the population.

The Agency's advice on salt levels is based on a new report by the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN).

Recommendations are made on the maximum levels of salt that should be consumed each day by children, according to their age (see table below).

The SACN report confirms previous advice that reducing current salt consumption by one-third for adults, from about 9 grams/day to 6 grams/day, would have significant public health benefits by reducing average population blood pressure levels. It would also result in a reduction of heart disease and stroke for the UK population as a whole.

About three-quarters of the salt we eat is from processed food, so it is important for parents to check the salt content on food

labels when buying for their children.

Agency Chair Sir John Krebs said: 'There are important health benefits from reducing salt intake, and we have set new guidelines for children's salt intake on the basis of the best scientific evidence.'

Chief Medical Officer Sir Liam Donaldson welcomed the SACN report



Chief Medical Officer Sir Liam Donaldson: Industry has a vital role to play in helping to reduce salt in the diet

and added: 'Industry also has a vital role to play in helping to reduce the salt content of the diet, particularly in foods popular with children. It is only through our combined efforts that we can reduce society's burden of heart disease and stroke.'

Industry urged to reduce salt, see over

Further information

The SACN report is in full at: www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/saltandhealth0503.pdf

For more facts on salt and health go to: www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/salthealthfactfile

New targets for salt intake for children

Age	Target intake grams/day	Estimated intake - male	Estimated intake - female
0-6 months	Less than 1	Breast milk will provide all the sodium necessary	
7-12 months	1	0.8	
1-3 years	2	1.4	
4-6 years	3	5.3	4.7
7-10 years	5	6.1	5.5
11-14 years	6	6.9	5.8

Nutrition

Food manufacturers urged to cut salt in processed foods

The FSA and UK Health Departments have been in discussion with the food industry to try to ensure that steps are set out towards achieving targets in reducing levels of salt in all processed foods.

About 75% of salt intake is from processed foods, including bread and cereals. Food labels should include information about the amount of salt.

The bread industry has already set an example by reducing the amount of salt in its loaves. A 2001 survey found that levels of sodium in bread had been reduced by up to 21% in three years – and 95% of the sodium found in bread comes from salt.

The findings show that the average reduction in salt intake through bread is the equivalent of 13 level teaspoons of salt per person per year.

The Agency has said that proposals on salt reduction from the Food and Drink Federation are a welcome start. However, more action in sectors other than the bread industry is needed. The Agency will be holding meetings with stakeholders to discuss salt reduction initiatives.

Agency Chair Sir John Krebs said: 'While consumers can add less salt at the table and in cooking, they cannot change the amounts of salt in processed foods, which make up, by far, the highest proportion of our salt intake.'

'This is the responsibility of the food industry. We are urging all food manufacturers and retailers to set targets for reductions in levels of salt in all processed foods.'

High intakes of salt have been linked to a higher than average blood pressure, which may lead to a higher risk of heart disease or a stroke.

Further information

For more on the determination of sodium levels in bread go to: www.food.gov.uk/science/surveillance/fsis-2001/19bread1

Details on the drop in salt in bread are at: www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/saltinbread



Nutrition

Advice issued on safety of high doses of vitamins and minerals

Advice that some vitamins and minerals could have possible harmful effects if taken in too high doses has been published by the Food Standards Agency.

The Agency is advising people not to take the mineral chromium picolinate and has consulted on a proposal to ban the use of this form of chromium in the manufacture of food supplements because there is a chance that it could cause cancer.

Having 10 mg or less a day of chromium in other forms from food and supplements is unlikely to cause any harm.

Some substances may have irreversible harmful effects if taken for long periods at the highest supplemental doses. These include beta-carotene (especially for smokers and people who have been exposed to asbestos), nicotinic acid, zinc, manganese (especially for older people) and phosphorus.

Levels of vitamin C above 1000 mg a day could cause abdominal pain and diarrhoea. Similarly, high intakes of calcium (above 1500 mg a day) and iron (above 17 mg a day) may result in similar symptoms in some people. However, these symptoms should disappear once people stop taking the supplements.

The Agency is also re-emphasising its advice that people should not take more than 10 mg a day of vitamin B6 from food supplements unless acting on medical advice.

Taking large amounts for a long time can lead to a loss of feeling in the arms and legs. Generally these symptoms are reversible but in a few cases the effect has been irreversible.

The Agency issued its advice following the publication of the report of the Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals (EVM), an independent expert advisory committee that has made recommendations on 31 vitamins and minerals.

The EVM has assessed the available evidence on safety, in response to concern over possible risks of taking high doses of vitamins and minerals.

Getting the balance right

FSA Chair Sir John Krebs said: 'While in most cases you can get all the nutrients you need from a balanced diet, many people choose to take supplements.'

'But taking some high dose supplements over a long period of time could be harmful. We are using an extremely thorough independent expert review of the scientific evidence on the safety of vitamins and minerals as the basis for new advice to help consumers make informed choices.'

'In addition, the Board of the Food Standards Agency will be considering what further action we would wish the supplements industry to take.' (see also *FSA Board news*, page 10).

Research

How the Agency's advice was produced

The Food Standards Agency's new advice on the safety of vitamins and minerals has been developed from the findings of the Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals (EVM), an independent expert advisory committee.

EVM looked at the safety of vitamins and minerals used in food supplements or added to foods (known as fortified foods).

The process involved an assessment of more than 10,000 pieces of evidence on any harmful effects associated with each vitamin and mineral including an examination of international research.

A comprehensive report has been produced detailing all the EVM findings

together with details of all the evidence considered. These findings form the basis of the Food Standards Agency's safety advice.

Further information

The EVM report *Safe Upper Levels for Vitamins and Minerals* can be read in full in pdf form at:

www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/vitmin2003.pdf A copy can also be obtained for £19.95, quoting ISBN 1-904026-11-7, by contacting: Food Standards Agency Publications: tel 0845 606 0667; email: foodstandards@eclogistics.co.uk

Labelling

European Commission to consider tightening laws following Agency's work on water in chicken

Following surveys by the Food Standards Agency on the adding of water with proteins derived from pork and beef to chicken, the European Commission is to publish proposals to tighten the labelling laws on these products.

The Agency has been leading efforts in Europe to expose and clamp down on the mislabelling of chicken products, through enforcement action both in the UK and in co-ordination with authorities in Holland, where the practice is most common. The Dutch authorities have taken action against several companies identified by the FSA.

The Agency is proposing that if a chicken product contains an ingredient from any other animal this would have to be declared and displayed prominently in the product's name.

For example, a chicken product containing hydrolysed protein derived from pork would have to be prominently labelled as 'chicken product containing pork' or 'chicken product with pork ingredients'.

The proposal will also tighten the current requirements for labelling of water in chicken. The FSA wants the use of added water to be declared more prominently.

Water and hydrolysed animal proteins are added to chicken to bulk up the product, which is then sold on largely to the catering industry. It isn't illegal to add water or animal proteins to chicken if the product is accurately labelled.

However, Agency surveys have found that many chicken products supplied to UK restaurants and takeaways aren't accurately labelled.

The presence of undeclared pork and beef proteins in chicken has caused great concern, especially among some religious groups. There have been two surveys on this issue in the UK (December 2001 and March 2003) and two surveys in Ireland (Food Standards Authority Ireland May 2002 and March 2003).

Of 130 samples in total, 65 claimed to have more meat than was the case, 20 contained pork DNA, seven contained beef DNA and four contained both pork and beef DNA. The FSA survey in March 2003 was for enforcement purposes. The 20 local authorities that took part are considering formal enforcement action against the relevant companies.

In a related development, Dutch authorities report that they have taken formal enforcement action against five companies processing chicken products in the Netherlands, which is the centre of this industry.

Four of these companies were targeted after their activities were highlighted by the Agency's work in the UK.

This is a labelling issue, which does not raise any new safety concerns. In response to queries about any risks in relation to BSE, the Agency has identified the source of the beef protein added to the chicken as collagen from hide, and the European Scientific Steering Committee concluded that the parts of the hide used for the production of collagen don't present a risk of BSE, provided contamination is avoided.

All beef is subject to European-wide BSE controls. Therefore, provided these controls have been applied, any traces of beef that may be in other products wouldn't raise any new food safety concerns.

The FSA has always made it clear that it would look into any new evidence that will help it crack down on these scams.

Further information

The Water in Chicken Survey March 2003 is available at: www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/waterchicken0303

The Water in Chicken Survey of December 2001 can be found at: www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/chickwater

Safer eating

Gold award for Agency information advertisement

The Food Standards Agency's Food Hygiene Campaign won a Gold Camera Award in the US International Film and Video Festival for its TV filler advertisement *More Time*.

The Agency ad, which was competing against a strong field of 1500 entries from 28 countries, offers straight-forward, practical advice on food safety when cooking meat on a barbecue.



Give it just...



a little more...



time, just a little...



more time...

Further information

More on the Agency's Summer Eating Campaign is available at: www.food.gov.uk/hygcampaign/summer_eating/



Unadulterated chicken, left, and chicken with water, right

Food additives

Survey shows 98% compliance with regulations covering artificial colours in soft drinks

A Food Standards Agency survey of artificial colourings in soft drinks reveals that although 98% of the soft drinks tested did not contain any artificial colourings above the permitted limit, four had more than the maximum permitted level for individual artificial colours. Four also contained an artificial food colouring that was not listed on the ingredients label.

The maximum permitted level for individual artificial colours is set at 50 milligrams per litre (mg/l). The combined maximum total of artificial colourings permitted in a soft drink is 100 mg/l and none of the soft drinks tested in the survey exceeded this level.

Survey details

A total of 201 soft drinks containing artificial colourings were tested. Mace 'Iron Brew' and '330+ Iron Brew' made by Villa Soft Drinks, and Budgens 'Active', contained high levels of Sunset Yellow FCF (E110). 'Chubby Red' made by Spanish company Snaya Kids S.L, had high levels of Carmoisine (E122).

The levels of Sunset Yellow FCF (E110) and Carmoisine (E122) found by the survey to be over the legal limit are not considered to be of concern to health.

The four soft drinks that contained an

artificial food colouring not listed on the ingredients label were Supervalu 'Red Lemonade' and DG Jamaica 'Strawberry Soda', which both contained a small amount of Quinoline Yellow (E104); Bigga 'Grape', which contained Carmoisine (E122), and 'Chubby Blue' made by Snaya Kids S.L, which contained a small amount of the artificial colouring Green S (E142).

Agency action

The FSA has taken action together with the relevant local authorities to address these findings, and has received assurances from Budgens and Villa Soft Drinks that they have taken urgent measures to ensure colours are below the permitted legal limit.

Supervalu, Bigga and DG Jamaica have



also acted immediately to ensure that the ingredient labels on their soft drinks show all the colourings used in the product.

Snaya Kids S.L, the manufacturer of both 'Chubby Red' and 'Chubby Blue' is based in Spain and enforcement action is being taken forward by the Spanish Ministry of Health and the Spanish regional authority of Murcia.

Rhodri Evans, Head of the Food Standards Agency additives branch, said: 'The results of this survey show that the vast majority of soft drink manufacturers are acting responsibly to make sure that levels of individual artificial colourings in their products are not above permitted limits, and that all ingredients are correctly labelled.'

'The Agency will continue to monitor the use of artificial colourings and labels of soft drinks, and work closely with local authorities to ensure that manufacturers comply fully with additive and labelling regulations.'

Further information

For answers to some common questions go to: www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/faq/coloursurvey_faq/ The full survey is at: www.food.gov.uk/science/surveillance/fsis-2003/fsiscoloursinsoftdrinks

Food additives

Undiluted advice on sweetened drinks

The Food Standards Agency is advising parents to give young children no more than three beakers (180ml each) a day of dilutable soft drinks, or squashes, containing the sweetener cyclamate.

This is a precautionary measure because drinking more than this amount could lead to children aged 1 to 4 taking in more than the cyclamate Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI), a safety level recommended by independent scientific experts.

The Agency is also recommending that when preparing dilutable soft drinks containing cyclamate, also known as E952, for young children, parents should dilute them more than they would for an adult. Products containing cyclamate are required by law to be labelled 'with

sweetener' or 'with sugar and sweeteners' and include the names cyclamate, cyclamic acid or E952 in the list of ingredients.

The Agency is pressing the European Commission, other Member States and soft drinks manufacturers to reduce the maximum permitted level of cyclamate used in all soft drinks. This will ensure that even young children who drink large amounts of dilutable soft drinks will not exceed the ADI for cyclamate.

Results of an Agency survey of soft drinks consumed by young children showed that they drink three times as many dilutable soft drinks a day as other types of soft drink containing additives, such as carbonated drinks.

The survey and subsequent calculations

by the Agency indicate that, even though manufacturers have not exceeded the maximum permitted level of cyclamate in their soft drink formulation, when drinking large amounts (five or more beakers) of squash containing cyclamate per day, young children could be consuming up to twice the ADI for this sweetener. When drinking average amounts (one or two beakers), young children will be below the ADI for cyclamate.

Further information

See the full survey at: www.food.gov.uk/science/surveillance/fsis-2003/fsis-2003/36softdrink For answers to common questions go to: www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/faq/intense_sweeteners/

Food Standards Agency: an A to Z of who to contact

This A to Z of names and numbers lists the people in the Food Standards Agency across the UK by subject who can help if you have a query. The contacts listed might not be able to answer every question, but they should be able to put you in touch with someone who can. If you can't see the one you need, please call the Agency's switchboard on **020 7276 8000**.

Acrylamide

Karen Goonan **020 7276 8714**

Alcoholic drinks

Policy and legislation on labelling and ingredient listing:

Andrew Stephenson **020 7276 8147**

Composition and technology related to wine, spirits and other alcoholic drinks:

Mary Clarke **020 7276 8139**

Allergies and Food Intolerance

First point of contact for all food allergy enquiries:

Dr Theresa Ekong **020 7276 8516**

Animal By-Products

Donatella Howe **020 7276 8357**

Animal Feed

Joseph Nicholas **020 7276 8462**

Assurance Schemes

General enquiries:

Andrew Stephenson **020 7276 8147**

Beef Assurance Scheme:

Nicola Byrnes **020 7276 8385**

Baby Foods

Policy on baby foods, including infant and follow-on formula and weaning foods:

Akki Khan **020 7276 8143**

Board Secretariat

Sue Johns **020 7276 8243**

Bottled Waters: Regulation, Composition and Technical Standards

Technology and legislation for bottled waters (natural mineral, spring and bottled drinking):

Mary Clarke **020 7276 8139**

BSE

General enquiries: Sheri Yusuf **020 7276 8333**

Butchers' Licensing

Colin Clifford **020 7276 8974**

Julian Ciepluch **020 7276 8973**

Caffeine/Quinine

Andrew Stephenson **020 7276 8147**

Catering Establishments

Improving information in catering establishments and for loose foods:

Andrew Stephenson **020 7276 8147**

Codex Alimentarius

See 'International organisations'

Complaints

FSA complaints co-ordinator:

Barbara Richards **020 7276 8610**

Consultations

Consultation co-ordinator:

Asif Chowdhury **020 7276 8632**

Consumer Issues

Consumer policy: Consumer consultation and representation; liaison with consumer organisations; Consumer Committee

Jacqui Webster **020 7276 8179**

Consumer Attitudes Survey:

Julie Sheppard **020 7276 8818**

Date Marking

Policy on 'best before' and 'use by' dates:

Andrew Stephenson **020 7276 8147**

Dietetic Foods

Akki Khan **020 7276 8143**

Dioxins and PCBs

Dioxins and other persistent organic chemical contaminants in food:

Barbara Gallani **020 7276 8727**

Economics Advice

Derrick Jones **020 7276 8611**

Duncan Overfield **020 7276 8659**

Eggs and Egg Products

Policy responsibility for both EC and domestic legislation relating to the hygiene of egg products:

Julian Ciepluch **020 7276 8973**

Compositional/labelling issues:

Mary Clarke **020 7276 8139**

Emergencies

Environmental contamination incidents related to food safety:

Business hours:

Mandy Jumnoodo **020 7276 8737**

Out of hours: **020 7270 8960**

Endocrine Disrupters

Caroline Tahourdin **020 7276 8520**

EU

EU Co-ordination and strategy:

Simon Renn **020 7276 8161**

Fats and Oils

Compositional/labelling issues; includes spreadable fats:

Mary Clarke **020 7276 8139**

Fish and Shellfish - Hygiene

Claire Boville **020 7276 8968**

Hygiene policy: Mike Glavin **020 7276 8944**

Research & development:

Karen Powell **020 7276 8794**

General enquiries:

Jennifer Reynolds **020 7276 8954**

Food Additives

Sweeteners, flavourings and enzymes:

Steve Knight **020 7276 8583**

Miscellaneous additives, colours, mineral

hydrocarbons and extraction solvents:

Benedict Duncan **020 7276 8560**

Food Contact Materials

Chemical migration into food from packaging and other materials and articles in contact with food: Nasreen Shah **020 7276 8553**

Food for Particular Nutritional Uses (PARNUTS)

Akki Khan **020 7276 8143**

Food Hazard Management Team

Technical support for Local Authorities; operates Food Hazard Warning System; UK competent authority for Rapid Alert System For Food (RASFF)

Sinead Gallagher **020 7276 8448**

Food Hygiene Campaign

Implementation of strategy to reduce food poisoning:

Lucy Foster **020 7276 8945**

Food Irradiation

Carl Blackburn **020 7276 8744**

Food Law Guide

Rusty Odihiri **020 7276 8830**

Food Law Policy: EU and UK

Overview of Food Safety Act and General EU food law regulation:

Tony Flower **020 7276 8137**

Food Supplements

Policy and legislation on dietary supplements sold as food:

Akki Khan **020 7276 8143**

Fortified Foods

Akki Khan **020 7276 8143**

Fruit Juices

Regulation, composition and technical standards:

Mary Clarke **020 7276 8139**

Genetic Modification

Labelling legislation:

Adekunle Adeoye **020 7276 8568**

Safety: Azuka Aghadiuno **020 7276 8593**

HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points)

Agency implementation strategy:

Stephen Airey **020 7276 8118**

HACCP in slaughterhouses, cutting plants and cold stores:

Joanna Fullick **020 7276 8304**

Health Claims

Policy on criteria used in relation to health claims:

Akki Khan **020 7276 8143**

Health Marks

Dairy – Approved UK dairy establishments:

Ifzal Khan **020 7276 8987**

Egg products: Julian Ciepluch **020 7276 8973**

Fishery products and shellfish:

Henrietta Gbormittah **020 7276 8458**

Meat products/minced meat and meat

preparations:

Julian Ciepluch **020 7276 8973**

Herbal Products

Julia Young **020 7276 8580**

Hygiene: Legislation

Consolidation and simplification of food hygiene directives:

Catherine Bowles **020 7276 8952**

Dairy products: Ifzal Khan **020 7276 8987**

Egg and egg products:

Michael Talbot **020 7276 8930**

General food hygiene and temperature control:

Julian Ciepluch **020 7276 8973**,

Colin Clifford **020 7276 8973**

Meat (hygiene) – See below

Meat products/minced meat and meat

preparations – Health marking/approvals:

Angela Bull **020 7276 8384**

Meat products/minced meat and meat

preparations – Policy enquiries:

Angela Bull **020 7276 8384**

Imported Food Regulations: Not of Animal Origin

Imported food from third countries not of animal origin:

Mary Heaton **020 7276 8457**

Incidents Response Team

Initial point of contact for chemical, nuclear and biological contamination incidents:

Mandy Jumnoodo **020 7276 8737**

Out of hours 24hr contact: **020 7270 8960**

Inorganic Contaminants (Heavy Metals)

Sarah Jayne Rowles **020 7276 8731**

Inter-departmental Affairs

Co-ordination and liaison on cross-departmental and governmental issues:

Ike Damon **020 7276 8633**

Food Standards Agency: an A to Z of who to contact

International Organisations (FSA contacts)

Codex Alimentarius – General co-ordination:
Simon Renn **020 7276 8161**

Labelling (Legislation)

Food – Policy and legislation; presentation and advertising; allergen and origin labelling; ingredient listing for alcoholic drinks; lot marking, QUID:

Andrew Stephenson **020 7276 8147**

Nutrition – Policy on nutritional labelling, claims & dietetic foods:
Akki Khan **020 7276 8143**

Library & Information Service (LIS)

Books, periodicals, newspapers, language materials, legislation. General research, online scientific searching, inter-library loans, translations, abstracting, press cuttings, copyright advice, internet training:
Enquiry Desk: **020 7276 8181/8182**

Local Authorities

Audit of food law enforcement services:
Julian Blackburn **020 7276 8430**

Code of practice, qualifications and training for local authority food law enforcement officers:

Bob Pilling **020 7276 8436**

Enforcement (policy issues) – including Framework Agreement, Enforcement Liaison Group and Official Feed and Food Control proposal:

Catriona Stewart **020 7276 8498**

Food enforcement monitoring – Monitoring, analysis, development of performance indicators, benchmarking information:

Imrana Iqbal **020 7276 8419**

Food Hazard Warning:

David Yard **020 7276 8441**

Technical advice on food hygiene enforcement:

Rob Griffin **020 7276 8443**

Technical advice on food standards enforcement:

John Barnes **020 7276 8416**

Marketing Standards

Andrew Stephenson **020 7276 8147**

Marketing Terms (Fresh etc)

Andrew Stephenson **020 7276 8147**

Meat

Implementation of meat definition:
Mark Browne **020 7276 8152**

Meat Hygiene Advisory Committee (MHAC)

Takes strategic oversight of the MHS and considers, reviews and advises the Board on the direction of meat hygiene policy (including BSE):

Rosalind Glover (Secretariat) **020 7276 8320**

Meat Hygiene Appeals Tribunal

Considers appeals against licensing decisions made under meat hygiene and inspection regulations: Nicola Byrnes **020 7276 8385**

Meat (Hygiene Legislation)

Poultry meat, farmed game bird, rabbit meat:
Donatella Howe **020 7276 8357**

Licensing of meat plants:

Richard Jones **020 7276 8365**

Proposals on the modernisation of legislation, including HACCP, meat inspection and other controls: Joanna Fullick **020 7276 8304**

Red meat: John Furzer **020 7276 8347**

Game Meat (excluding farmed game bird meat):

Vanessa Charles **020 7276 8386**

Meat products/minced meat and meat preparations – Health marking/approvals:

Angela Bull **020 7276 8384**

Meat products/minced meat and meat preparations – policy enquiries:

Angela Bull **020 7276 8384**

Meat Hygiene Policy Forum (MHPF)

Discusses issues arising from current and proposed meat hygiene policy; contributes to future policy development:

Rosalind Glover (Secretariat) **020 7276 8320**

Meat Hygiene Service

Performance targets:

Sharon Ubhi **020 7276 8351**

Inspection charges: John Furzer **020 7276 8347**

MHS Clean Livestock Policy Issues:

Sharon Ubhi **020 7276 8351**

Meat Imports

Public health aspects of policy on imported meat, other than controls at Border Inspection Posts, which are the responsibility of Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs: Kenny Odukoya **020 7276 8326**

Meat Science and Strategy Division

Responsible for improving public health protection through the modernisation of meat hygiene control: Peter Hewson **020 7276 8344**

Medical Foods

Policy of foods for special medical purposes:
Akki Khan **020 7276 8143**

Methods of Analysis and Sampling/Analytical Data Quality

Roger Wood **01603 255 231**

Andrew Damant **020 7276 8757**

Microbiological Food Safety

Antibiotic/antimicrobial resistance:

Paul Cook **020 7276 8950**

Foodborne illness/disease:

Adam Hardgrave **020 7276 8993**

General Enquiries: Pam Robinson **020 7276 8965/Daniel Diaz-Fiunte 020 7276 8956**

Research: Helen Prangley **020 7276 8793**

Surveys/Surveillance:

Florence Opesan **020 7276 8960**

Zoonoses (including Campylobacter and Salmonella in poultry):

Ian Smith **020 7276 8975**

Milk and Milk Products (Compositional Aspects)

Compositional/labelling issues:
Mary Clarke **020 7276 8139**

Mycotoxins (e.g. Aflatoxins)

Advice on toxins produced by certain moulds that grow on foodstuffs:
Mark Toal **020 7276 8712**

Nitrates in Vegetables

Mark Toal **020 7276 8712**

Novel Foods (Policy & Labelling)

Adekunle Adeoye **020 7276 8568**

Nutrition

Claims and labelling:

Akki Khan **020 7276 8143**

Dietary surveys (food and nutrient intake) – Information from National Food Survey and National Dietary and Nutrition Surveys:

Tamara Beckett **020 7276 8918**

Food composition (nutrients) – Nutrient content of food; McCance and Widdowson's

Composition of Foods series:

Katie Dick **020 7276 8927**

Nutrition research:

Rachel Elsom **020 7276 8921**

Policy and advice: Leon Simms **020 7276 8934**

Off Label Information

Andrew Stephenson **0207 7276 8147**

Organic Food

General enquiries:

Andrew Stephenson **020 7276 8147**

Nutritional content:

Gillian Swan **020 7276 8912**

Parliamentary and Ministerial Correspondence Unit

Parliamentary business; co-ordination of replies to Ministerial correspondence and distribution of Treat Official correspondence; honours, appointments and management of cabinet documents:

Alison Asquith **020 7276 8637**

Pesticides (Food Safety Aspects)

Authorisation and monitoring, residues in food:
Simon Tudor **020 7276 8552**

Phytoestrogen Research

Examines risks and benefits of phytoestrogenic chemicals produced by plants:

Tom Barlow **020 7276 8519**

Press Office

020 7276 8888

Process Contaminants

Toxic chemicals formed from components of food during processing

eg 3-MCPD: Karen Goonan **020 7276 8714**

Promotion of Foods to Children

Akki Khan **020 7276 8143**

Radioactivity in Food

Advice: Victoria Campbell **020 7276 8777**

Irradiation: See 'Food irradiation'

Research (Agency's portfolio)

Co-ordinates FSA's research activities; liaison with other Departments and funding bodies; publicises FSA's research portfolio:

Alisdair Wotherspoon **020 7276 8786**

EU framework programme 6:

Patrick Miller **020 7276 8277**

Risk Assessment (Research)

Caroline Tahourdin **020 7276 8520**

Slimming Foods

Akki Khan **020 7276 8143**

Statistics and Survey Techniques

John Pascoe **020 7276 8607**

Cliff Gay **020 7276 8657**

Toxicity of Chemicals in Food

Diane Benford **020 7276 8510**

Toxicology (Research)

Caroline Tahourdin **020 7276 8520**

Traceability

Liz Stockdale **020 7276 8475**

Veterinary General Matters

Jeremy Jones **020 7276 8382**

Veterinary Medicines (Food Safety Aspects)

Authorisation and monitoring, residues in food:
Simon Tudor **020 7276 8552**

Veterinary Public Health Operations Division

Licenses meat plants, designates Official

Veterinary Surgeons, audits the Meat

Hygiene Service:

Anthony Greenleaves **020 7276 8343**

Voluntary Labelling

Andrew Stephenson **020 7276 8147**

Waste Food Task Force

Donatella Howe **020 7276 8357**

Waste Issues

General enquiries relating to the implications of waste materials and emissions on food safety:

Alison Spalding **020 7276 8460**

Working Party on Chemical Contaminants in Food

Issues concerning the presence of toxic

chemicals in food:

John Caseley (Secretariat) **020 7276 8799**

Working Party on Food Authenticity

Co-ordinates work on food authenticity

surveillance and authenticity method

development: Andrew Chandiramani

(Secretariat) **020 7276 8154**

FSA Scotland

Switchboard 01224 285 100

Animal feed

Maria Allsop 01224 285 163
Carolyn Ferguson 01224 285 145

BSE Controls

Mark Scott 01224 285 144

Business Management Unit

Sandy McDougall 01224 285 147

Chemical Contaminants

Karen Knowles 01224 285 162

Diet & Nutrition Forum

Claire Moni (Secretariat) 01224 285 158

Emergency Planning

Will Munroe 01224 285 161

European Legislation

Carolyn Ferguson 01224 285 145
Martin Reid 01224 285 134

Fish, Shellfish and Scallop Advisory Committee

Martin Reid 01224 285 134
Chester Wood 01224 285 138

Food Advisory Committee

Ailsa McLean (Committee Secretary)
01224 285 123
Jane Ferries (Committee Administrator)
01224 285 104

Food Standards, Composition and Labelling

Steve Hardie 01224 285 154

General Food Hygiene and Temperature Control

David Roy 01224 285 164

HACCP Strategy and Licensing

Pauline Wilkinson 01224 285 140
Marie Krout 01224 285 187

Local Authority Audit

Marion McArthur 01224 285 122

Local Authorities (Enforcement)

Bill Adamson 01224 285 196

Hygiene Regulations/Meat Hygiene Service

Stephen Hendry 01224 285 191

Milk, Eggs and Bottled water

Christine Green 01224 285 139

Novel Foods (including Genetic Modification)

Elspeth MacDonald 01224 285 160

Powers of Entry

David Roy 01224 285 164

Press Office

Steve Sinclair 01224 285 120
Louise Bissett 01224 285 127

Radiological Safety

Will Munroe 01224 285 161

Scientific Advice, Research and Surveillance

Anna Whyte 01224 285 119

FSA Wales

Switchboard 029 2067 8999

Animal By-Products

Leigh Donovan 029 2067 8952

Animal Feed

Leigh Donovan 029 2067 8952
Alison Ward 029 2067 8906

Bottled Water

Adrian Preece 029 2067 8909

BSE

Owen Davies 029 2067 8908
Mike Pender 029 2067 8904

Butchers Licensing

Jane Davies 029 2067 8901
Rob Wilkins 029 2067 8957

Consumer Issues

Phil Morgan 029 2067 8913
Hilary Neathey 029 2067 8911

Dairy Hygiene

Owen Davies 029 2067 8908

EU Food Hygiene Proposals

Helen George 029 2067 8907
Meat: Leigh Donovan 029 2067 8952

Fish and Shellfish

Jane Davies 029 2067 8901

Food Chain Emergencies

Keith Blake 029 2067 8902

Food and Environmental Protection Act

Adrian Preece 029 2067 8909

Food Hazards

Jane Davies 029 2067 8901

Food Safety Policy (including Microbiological Safety and Contaminants)

Phil Morgan 029 2067 8913

Genetic Modification

Phil Morgan 029 2067 8913
Hilary Neathey 029 2067 8911

HACCP

Keith Blake 029 2067 8902
In licensed premises:
Leigh Donovan 029 2067 8952

Imports

Rob Wilkins 029 2067 8957

Labelling

Phil Morgan 029 2067 8913
Hilary Neathey 029 2067 8911

Licensed Meat Premises

Leigh Donovan 029 2067 8952

Local Authority

Enforcement, liaison and monitoring, approved premises:

Jane Davies 029 2067 8901
Rob Wilkins 029 2067 8957

Meat Hygiene

Leigh Donovan 029 2067 8952

Nutrition Policy

Phil Morgan 029 2067 8913

Nutrition Strategy for Wales

Hilary Neathey (Secretariat) 029 2067 8911
Lorna Thompson 029 2067 8953

Press Office

029 2067 8915

Radiological Safety (including Chernobyl Monitoring)

Keith Blake 029 2067 8902

Unfit Meat

Jane Davies 029 2067 8901
Rob Wilkins 029 2067 8957

Welsh Food Advisory Committee

Helen George 029 2067 8907

Welsh Language Liaison Officer

Alwyn Williams 029 2067 8905

FSA Northern Ireland

Switchboard 02890 41 7700/7701

Animal By-Products

Jim Ross 02890 41 7704
Legislation: Danny Higgins 02890 41 7704

Animal Diseases and Animal Feed

Kirsten Dunbar 02890 41 7717

Baby Food

Maria Jennings 02890 41 7714
Legislation: Danny Higgins 02890 41 7704

Bottled Water

Maria Jennings 02890 41 7714
Danny Higgins 02890 41 7704

BSE

Kirsten Dunbar 02890 41 7717
Specified risk material (SRM):
Jim Ross 02890 41 7710
Danny Higgins 02890 41 7704

Butchers' Licensing

Trevor Williamson 02890 41 7713

District Councils – Auditing & Monitoring

Michael Jackson 02890 41 7709

EU Hygiene Consolidation

Maria Jennings 02890 41 7714
Michael Jackson 02890 41 7709

Foodborne Disease

Trevor Williamson 02890 41 7713

Food Hazard/incidents

Trevor Williamson 02890 41 7713
Michael Jackson 02890 41 7709

Food Hygiene

General Regulations – District Councils: Trevor Williamson 02890 41 7713
Danny Higgins 02890 41 7704
Poultry: Jim Ross 02890 41 7710
Red meat: Jim Ross 02890 41 7710
Shellfish, Fish, Eggs & Milk:
Maria Jennings 02890 41 7714

Food Labelling: Environmental Health Aspects

Maria Jennings 02890 41 7714

FSA Surveys

Maria Jennings 02890 41 7714

Gelatine

Maria Jennings 02890 41 7714

Hazard Analysis – Environmental Health

Trevor Williamson 02890 41 7713

Hazard Analysis – Red Meat & Poultry

Jim Ross 02890 41 7710

Illegal Imports and Port Health

Maria Jennings 02890 41 7714
Kirsten Dunbar 02890 41 7717

Imported Foods

Maria Jennings 02890 41 7714

Infectious Disease Control

Trevor Williamson 02890 41 7713

Legislation

Animal feedingstuffs, imported foods, milk & milk hygiene, poultry meat:
Olivia Gilchrist 02890 41 7706

Meat Hygiene and Licensed Meat Plants

Jim Ross 02890 41 7710

Northern Ireland Advisory Committee

Neal Meharry 02890 41 7702

Novel Foods

Danny Higgins 02890 41 7704

Press Enquiries

02890 52 0636

Radiological Safety

Maria Jennings 02890 41 7714

Shellfish Closures

Maria Jennings 02890 41 7714

Shellfish, Fish, Meat and Dairy Products: Environmental Health Aspects

Maria Jennings 02890 41 7714

Training for Enforcement Officers

Michael Jackson 02890 41 7709

Food Standards Agency: an A to Z of who to contact

Independent Scientific Advisory Committees

Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingsuffs
Karen Dell (Secretariat) 020 7276 8468

Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food
Claire Wilkes (Secretariat) 020 7276 8947

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes
Azuka Aghadiuno (Secretariat) 020 7276 8593

Advisory Committee on Research
Andrew Dunn (Secretariat) 020 7276 8785

Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment
Khandu Mistry (Secretariat) 020 7972 5020

Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment
Khandu Mistry (Secretariat) 020 7972 5020

Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment
Keith Butler (Secretariat) 020 7276 8522

Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals
Jillian Pitt (Secretariat) 020 7276 8938

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition
Angela Inwood (Secretariat) 020 7276 8924

Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee
Dr Irene Hill (Secretariat) 020 7276 8324

Meat Hygiene Service

General Enquiry Point 01904 455 501

Chief Executive
Chris Lawson 01904 455 500

Communications and Press Enquiries
Richard Billing 01904 455 443

Granting of Authorisations for Entry to Premises by MHS Staff 01904 455 628

Health & Safety at Work
Andrew Love 01904 455 497

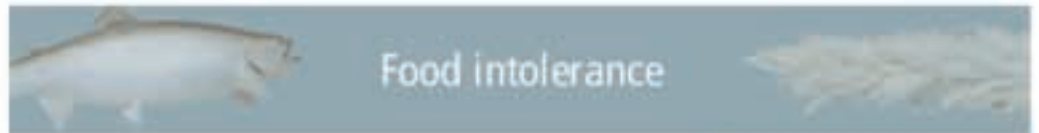
Operations Manual
Lewis Grant 01904 455 627

OVS (Official Veterinary Surgeon) Tender Project 01904 455 971

Slaughterers' Licenses
01904 455 450

SLA Unit
Colin Pearson (Manager) 01904 455 078

Check out the Food Standards Agency website at: www.food.gov.uk for up-to-the-minute coverage of all food safety issues



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At your service with expert advice

Our website is updated daily. Sign up for regular email updates of Agency news, including information about science, research and enforcement, and the latest food hazard warnings, by going to www.food.gov.uk/subscribe/



Consulting industry and consumers

Your views are important to us, which is why we issue regular consultations across all four UK countries on a host of food-related and regulatory topics. To view the latest ones, including details of formal responses to consultations, check out www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/Consultations/



Opening our diary

We organise and take part in a range of events, conferences and debates across the country, including our Board meetings, which you are invited to attend. These events give us a chance to tell you about our work – and give you an opportunity to tell us your views. Find out what's happening when by going to www.food.gov.uk/news/comingup/



Text message alerts

Get details of Food Hazard Warnings direct to your mobile phone every time they're issued. To sign up to this free service, simply send the text message 'FSA' to the number 07866428260.

Search site

Advanced search

FOOD DIRECTORY A-Z

Food Poll

Have you been diagnosed with a food intolerance?

- Yes
 No

[VOTE](#) [VIEW RESULTS](#)

[PAST POLLS](#)

A - Vitamins and minerals - A to Z

Ask an expert...

How can I make sure my vegetarian daughter eats healthily?

Answer...



Northern Ireland

Eat Safe award to be launched in Northern Ireland

Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland (FSANI) is about to launch Eat Safe, a new award scheme, to help consumers spot a spotless catering establishment – for breakfast, lunch or dinner.

All of Northern Ireland's 26 local councils have given their backing to Eat Safe, and consumer and trade organisations have come on board to ensure a co-ordinated roll-out of the scheme across the province.

The new Award will be open to any establishment where the public can buy and consume food on the premises. But, with strict criteria in place, it is estimated that fewer than 5% of Northern Ireland's restaurants will achieve the award in its first year.

'We are not planning to reward businesses for merely meeting their legal obligations to their customers,' said FSANI Director Morris McAllister.



'They will have to go the extra mile to be entitled to display the Eat Safe logo.'

FSANI worked closely with the General Consumer Council, catering trade and environmental health representatives to devise the scheme.

Barney Heywood, secretary of the Northern Ireland Chief Environmental Health Officers' Group (CEHOG), said that the award will be good for consumer peace of mind and will also assist

environmental health officers in enforcing regulations.

'This is a great incentive for caterers to strive for higher standards of food safety and hygiene. Consumers want to be confident in the food they eat, and the Eat

Safe award will be a readily recognisable symbol across Northern Ireland.'

Further information

Contact Deirdre Ni Chleirigh at Morrow Communications, tel: 028 9039 3873.

Scotland

Guidance on the investigation and control of outbreaks of foodborne disease in Scotland

A revision of the guidelines on the investigation and control of outbreaks of foodborne disease in Scotland has been agreed by the Scottish Executive Health Department and Food Standards Agency Scotland.

Part of the remit of the revision was to consider: the roles and responsibilities of FSA Scotland and other national organisations, especially the Scottish Centre for Infection and Environmental Health; the definition of a 'National Outbreak'; the development of a protocol for food and environmental investigations; and the support mechanisms for local authorities.

Those involved in the investigation and control of outbreaks of foodborne disease were consulted and a small working group set up to advise on the revision process.

The group met on four occasions between April and November 2001, and the draft revision was distributed for

comments in July and August. The working group recognised the need for guidance on general outbreaks and outbreaks of water, borne disease, and separate groups have been commissioned to develop specific guidelines in these areas.

The new guidelines are recommended to all those involved in the investigation and control of outbreaks of foodborne disease in Scotland. Regular training and exercising of the guidelines are important to develop expertise and establish the necessary team-working arrangements. Local plans should be revised regularly in light of the revised guidelines, recognising the role of the FSA and the need for co-ordinated approaches.

Further information

The guidance on the investigation and control of outbreaks of foodborne disease in Scotland can be read at: www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/foodbornediseasescot.pdf

New food intolerance section launched on Agency website

Comprehensive information on food intolerance, including food allergy, is now available in a new section of the Agency's website. Information is provided on 24 different types of food intolerance, ranging from peanut and coconut allergy to lactose intolerance and coeliac disease. The new section also looks at why people get food allergies, at some of the less well-known aspects of food allergy, and at the Agency's work on food intolerance. Answers are provided to some frequently asked questions on intolerance.

Further information

The Agency's information on intolerance and allergies can be found at: www.food.gov.uk/healthiereating/allergyintol

Future dates for Scottish Food Advisory Committee

The dates of Scottish Food Advisory Committee (SFAC) meetings for 2003 are:

- 31 July - Stornoway. Venue - Town Hall
- 2 October - Stirling. Venue - T.B.C.
- 20 November - Aberdeen. Venue - T.B.C.

Further information

To attend, contact Jane Ferries, tel: 01224 285104; email: jane.ferries@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk Information on each meeting will be published nearer the time on the Agency website at: www.food.gov.uk/scotland/advisorycommittee/

Final report of Citizens' Jury on GM now available

A detailed report of the Citizens' Jury on GM Food, which was carried out for the Agency by Opinion Leader Research (OLR), has now been presented to the Agency by OLR. The report, which is published on the Agency's website, has been cleared by all the witnesses and jury members who participated. The 15 jurors who took part considered the topic: 'Should GM food be available to buy in the UK?', and questioned witnesses representing the entire spectrum of views on GM food.

Further information

For more on the Agency's work on GM, and to access the final report go to: www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/citizensjuryfinalreport

A favourable diagnosis

You might expect that Sati Ariyanayagam, a doctor with an interest in research, would regard his science education as the main strength he brings to the FSA Board. But, perhaps surprisingly, he feels that being a family man with a strong consumer perspective is his main asset.

He says his strength is being able to 'look at the work at the Board from the common man's interest, as a family person, with two growing children. It's the public protection and the public interest that's closest to my heart and those are the areas in which I've been involved in other settings as well.'

Dr Ariyanayagam combines his work as a consultant physician and Chair of the Senior Medical Staff Committee at Oldchurch Hospital in Essex with a number of roles on professional and public bodies. He has also served on the Committee on Toxicity and the Advisory Committee on Research, so was familiar with the scientific work of the Agency before he joined the Board in March.

However, he feels it's not important for Board members to understand all the science that the Agency is involved in, but to ask the right questions. 'What is more relevant is the ability to address Joe Bloggs' anxieties and questions.'

The main elements he brings from other committee work is knowing the importance of the need to be open and to

engage with the public, he says.

But he's impressed with the Agency's approach. 'It is unusual in that it does not necessarily stop at strategic decision making. How the strategy is translated into operational day-to-day functioning is where the gap lies in many organisations. But here the gap is being filled.

'The FSA is trying to reach out to people and is willing to listen and is also able to put up its hands and say "well, we got it wrong". And that is one huge plus point for the FSA in terms of winning public confidence.'

He also knows that how the action is perceived can be as important as what action is taken. With GM, he notes, the Agency has been criticised for the stand it's taken and the way it's conducted the debate. 'There are individuals and groups who believe that the FSA is somewhat biased in the way it presents the information. I disagree with them but [the fact that some people take this view means] further work has got to be done.'

Dr Ariyanayagam is also particularly interested in enforcement issues and labelling, combining his and the Agency's focus on consumer protection with being open and giving the public choice.

'The FSA has had enormous input to countering possible fraud, particularly in its attempt to ensure that the consumer is informed when it comes to food



Dr Sati Ariyanayagam

labelling, and also policing activities.'

His focus, however, is wider than the UK, and even Europe. 'Protecting the public in this part of the world, particularly in relation to imported food, is mainly done through enforcement. But I think it's much better to prevent any kind of adulterated meat, or whatever, reaching us by ensuring that the point of export outside the developed world is educated.

'In other words, I'm talking about extending our knowledge base and our experience in protecting the public on a global scale to the developing world, so that they learn from our experience and they can legislate for themselves.

'If we can communicate, network, educate and provide opportunities for them, the final objective of protecting the public both here and there becomes a reality.'

Board news

FSA Open Board meeting held in Cardiff

The Food Standards Agency Open Board meeting, held on 8 May in Cardiff, considered three main papers: Implications of the report of the Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals (EVM); a Committee on Toxicity (COT) report on phytoestrogens and health; and FSA work on consumer attitudes to GM food.

The FSA Board welcomed the EVM report (*see page 2*) and that consumer advice on possible risks associated with some high-dose products, which had been published on the Agency website. It agreed that the Agency should carry forward its work to ensure correct advice is available on vitamin and mineral intake for children.

The Board also welcomed the COT report, *Phytoestrogens and Health*, which looked at the possible risks and benefits to health of dietary phytoestrogens.

The Board noted that the Agency's executive had written to the Department of Health about a review of their advice on soya-based infant formula feeding.

The third paper outlined the FSA's remit in relation to GM food and drew together information on consumer attitudes to GM food obtained from work carried out by the Agency since April 2000.

The Board commented on the outcome of the Agency's activities and the main conclusions arising from the work and

considered advice outlined by the Agency's Consumer Committee on the Agency's approach. It agreed that it would have been desirable to have consulted the Consumer Committee before embarking on the most recent round of qualitative work. A 'lessons learnt' report will be made available to a future meeting.

The next Open Board meeting will be held in Derry City on 12 June.

Further information:

A full report of the FSA's May Open Board meeting is available at:

www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/openboardnewsmay2003

Final reports of completed research projects

Copies of the following final research reports have been placed in the Agency's Library & Information Service (LIS). The reports may be viewed at the LIS, or a copy obtained for a handling fee of £10 (individuals) and £15 (institutions), which includes p&cp (make cheques payable to the Food Standards Agency).

Further information

Contact Dr John Dixon, Assistant Librarian, Food Standards Agency, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH, tel: 020 7276 8060.

For technical information please get in touch with the contacts shown below.

Project
S02013

Title

Measurement of chemical contaminants in shellfish from Scottish Waters

Division
FSA Scotland Professional Unit

In support of surveillance requirements mussels (*Mytilus edulis*), scallops (*Pecten maximus*) and oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*), sampled on two occasions during 2002 from a number of production areas, were analysed to determine the tissue concentration of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH), trace metal (TM), chlorobiphenyl (CB) and organochlorine pesticide (OCP) residues. One sample out of all the shellfish contained PHs at a concentration, and relevant distribution, such that the product was at risk of being tainted. In all samples of shellfish taken for mercury and cadmium concentrations the levels were below the EC Regulation 466/2002 maximum values. For lead concentrations, one mussel sample taken was greater than the EC Regulation 466/2002 maximum limit.

Further information

Contact Neil Leitch, tel: 01224 285194; email: neil.leitch@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Project
R02015

Title

The Radiological Significance of Farmed Fish

Division
Radiological Protection and Research Management

The objectives of this study were to evaluate radiation doses to man from the

consumption of farmed fish raised on fishmeal-based feeds and to derive radionuclide transfer factors for the fish food to fish pathway. Atlantic salmon and rainbow trout were chosen from a representative cross-section of 11 UK fish farms. Farmed fish were found to contain low levels of radioactivity with many gamma radionuclides undetectable. Most of the samples had concentrations of ¹⁴C, ²¹⁰Pb and ²¹⁰Po at what may be considered natural levels. As a consequence, estimated doses to high-rate consumers of farmed fish were also low, ranging from 0.017 mSv y⁻¹ for adults to 0.038 mSv y⁻¹ for one-year-old infants. Concentration ratios for radionuclides in farmed fish and fish feed were used to make observations about radionuclide transfer. The results suggest that some bioaccumulation from fish feed to farmed fish may be taking place for ¹³⁷Cs, but not for ¹⁴C. For ⁹⁹Tc, ²¹⁰Pb and ²¹⁰Po, there would appear to be depletion rather than bioaccumulation. Further work would be necessary to explain these observations.

Further information

Contact Darren A Cutts, tel: 020 7276 8728; email: darren.cutts@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Project
C04019

Title

Survey of apple juice and apple based products for patulin and Alternaria toxins

Division
Chemical Contaminants and Animal Feed

This report describes a survey carried out to provide up-to-date information on the levels of patulin in apple juice and apple products sampled from retail outlets to ensure that levels are below proposed EU limits. Patulin is produced naturally by certain moulds that may grow on apples and high levels of exposure could cause a range of damaging effects in humans, therefore levels in food should be kept as low as practically possible. This survey also included analysis for alternariol toxins, as they may have similar effects to patulin. Three hundred samples of apple products representative of the types of products available to consumers were purchased (including apple based products and products for infants/young children, apple/mixed/pressed juices) from around the country including large and small retailers. Only three samples (all pressed apple juice) were found to be above the proposed patulin EU limit of 50 micrograms/d, the brand owners were contacted and the affected batches withdrawn voluntarily. Alternariol toxins were found at low levels in only two samples (one fruit juice, one fruit concen-

trate) and no further actions were deemed necessary. The FSA is not advising against consumption of apple juice or other products containing apple but is continuing to monitor these mycotoxins to ensure that consumer health is not put at unnecessary risk.

Further information

Contact Mark Toal, tel: 020 7276 8715; email: mark.toal@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Project
A03028 (FS2256)

Title

Investigation into the migration of metals and coating materials from kitchenware products

Division

Chemical Safety and Toxicology

This project has identified the potential migrants present in 26 non-stick coated kitchenware products intended for food contact applications. The levels of these substances in the coatings and in food simulants exposed to these products were generally low. Work was also carried out to confirm the applicability of previous recommendations for testing metal release from kitchenware products. These were proposed in a recently published project report A03007.

Further information

Contact Karen Barnes, tel: 020 7276 8541; email: karen.barnes@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Project
A03018 (FS2247)

Title

Investigation into the effects of the freeze-thaw cycle on chemical migration from packaging into foods

Division

Chemical Safety and Toxicology

The aim of this project was to test whether temperature gradients experienced during the lifetime of a frozen food pack, and especially during the freeze-thaw cycle, affect the migration of substances from the pack to the food. Migration from two packaging materials typically used for frozen foods – cardboard and polyethylene – was studied. No evidence was found for any effect of the freeze-thaw cycle. The results support other evidence that standard protocols using short-duration contact with simulants, at 5°C, are appropriate for testing migration from both chilled and frozen foods.

Further information

Contact Karen Barnes, tel: 020 7276 8541; email: karen.barnes@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

New code of practice aims to strengthen research quality



Scientific contractors working for the Food Standards Agency will in future be asked to sign up to a code of practice designed to help ensure publicly funded research is of the highest standard.

The new Joint Code of Practice for Research was launched on 8 May by the Agency in partnership with Defra, the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council and the Natural Environment Research Council.

The Agency bases its policies and advice on the best scientific evidence available and public confidence in the evidence is essential.

The new code will focus on the way research is undertaken and strengthen the quality assurance the Agency already has in place, to ensure that the Government, public and research organisations have complete confidence in the results of the Agency's research.

'The Food Standards Agency aims to base its decisions on the very best evidence available,' said Dr Jon Bell, Chief Executive of the Food Standards Agency. 'The Code will strengthen the quality assurance we already have in place and ensure that the science underpinning our policies is always of the highest standard.'

Implementation of the code will start with applications arising from the latest call for research proposals, also issued on May 8 (see story below).

In addition, a copy of the new code, together with an explanatory letter has been issued to all current Agency contractors.

Over the next year, the Agency will work with them to raise awareness of the code and encourage its wider implementation. From June 2004, all contractors applying for funding will be expected to comply with the code.

In the longer term, it is envisaged that most Agency contractors will have systems in place that have been independently audited against appropriate, internationally recognised standards on quality.

Further information

Contact Alisdair Wotherspoon, Research Co-ordination Unit, tel 020 7276 8786; email: alisdair.wotherspoon@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk For more on the code of practice see: www.food.gov.uk/science/research/comresearch/qacopres/ To find out about the latest research requirements go to: [www.food.gov.uk/science/research/rrd/](http://www.food.gov.uk/science/research/comresearch/rrd/)

Agency aims to commission new research

The Food Standards Agency's Research Requirements Issue 11 (RRD11) was published on 8 May 2003 and is available on the Agency's website.

It describes the Agency's need for new research and survey work from programme areas that are designed to facilitate the formulation of policy. The Agency is currently looking to commission research projects in a number of areas including:

- monitoring of radioactivity in the food chain;

- food intolerance;
- toxicology and exposure of mixtures of pesticides and similar substances;
- health effects of phytoestrogens in the diet.

Further information

Contact Robert Martin, tel: 020 7276 8761; email: robert.martin@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk or go directly to the document at: www.food.gov.uk/science/research/comresearch/rrd/

School meals research project

The FSA and the Department for Education and Skills have commissioned research to assess whether food provided at school lunches in maintained secondary schools in England complies with statutory nutritional standards and associated guidance.

The research will also aim to assess whether the food consumed by the children meets nutritional guidelines and to gather other relevant information.

The study will have three main aims. Part one will assess whether the food provided by the school or caterer meets the statutory nutritional standards, set out in the regulations and associated guidance, for all children throughout the service period. Part two will assess whether the food provided meets the Expert Working Group's Nutritional Guidelines for School Meals. Part three will identify the food consumption and nutrient intakes of the secondary school children from school meals compared to the guidelines set out in the Expert Working Group's report.

The survey will also provide information about school meal uptake (free and paid for), at school level and the nature of the contract with the school or caterer (if applicable). A report of the project should be available in Spring 2004.

Further information

Contact: Michele Weatherburn, Department for Education & Skills, tel: 020 7925 5953; email: michele.weatherburn@dfes.gsi.gov.uk or Katie Dick, Food Standards Agency, tel: 020 7276 8927; email: katie.dick@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

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