

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE WELSH FOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Executive Summary

1. The attached report provides an update on issues emanating from the Welsh Food Advisory Committee.
2. The Board is invited to **note** the report by the Chair of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee. **No action** is required.

Food Standards Agency Wales

Contact:

Joy Whinney Tel: 029 2067 8903
Email: joy.whinney@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Helen George Tel 029 20678907
Email: helen.george@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE WELSH FOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE**Advisory Committee Meetings**

1. The Welsh Food Advisory Committee held a closed meeting on 6 November in Cardiff. Part of the meeting was devoted to a briefing session on fungal toxins delivered by Dr Wendy Matthews, from the Agency's Chemical Safety Division. This featured background on the origins of fungal toxins in particular mycotoxins (aflatoxins, ochratoxin, patulin and fusarium) and how these occur; the foods that are most at risk and how these toxins affect human health. Information was also provided on action being taken within the EU and UK to protect against high levels of these toxins being present in food.
2. In preparation for forthcoming Board discussions, the Committee also received a presentation which updated it on progress on the National Diet and Nutrition Survey rolling programme (NDNS). The Committee commented that the data from the survey on food consumption and nutritional status would be critical to underpinning the wide range of the Agency's work to protect consumer safety and promote healthy diets and expressed support for an expansion of the NDNS sample for Wales in order to provide more accurate data on the Welsh population.
3. The open meeting, which followed the next day, was held in Brangwyn Hall in Swansea. This was an open business meeting, which also primarily focussed on issues to be addressed in forthcoming Board discussions.
4. On Food Law Enforcement, the Committee considered a paper which put in context four policy reviews currently being undertaken by the Agency to introduce a new approach to food law enforcement with Local Authorities (LAs). WFAC broadly supported the move towards a new approach which would allow resources to be focussed where most needed. The Committee noted that a revised Code of Practice would, in Wales, have be enacted by regulation by the Welsh Assembly and that any perception of a dilution of the current enforcement regime would attract close scrutiny. Additionally, the Committee highlighted that there could be problems over differences in the date of implementation of any new Code in different parts of the UK, which could be a major issue for business chains if different premises within a chain were subject to different legal requirements. This may also impact on the timing of the other reviews
5. The Committee considered a paper which addressed the application of the Agency's policy on sustainable development to date, and the effect of sustainable assessments on the Agency's policies advice and other activities. In discussing the paper the Committee noted that the impact of policy could differ across UK

countries (and indeed within countries). Wherever possible future assessments ought reflect this.

6. In preparation for forthcoming Board discussions on openness, the Committee considered a scoping paper for the openness review that was agreed by the Board on 21 September. WFAC suggested that a key issue for the review should be the extent to which openness is inversely proportional to FSA responsibilities, acknowledging (as our code of practice on openness currently does) that the FSA needs time and space for internal discussion and consideration.
7. The next meeting of the Committee will be a closed session in Cardiff on 4 January where the Committee will receive a briefing on Nutritional Genomics and a presentation from the Food Task Force.

Forward Look

8. Please note that items listed are provisional, and are therefore subject to change.

Date	Venue	Agenda Items
4 January 2007	Closed business meeting, Cardiff	Covering issues for January and February Board meeting. To include: Presentation from the Food Fraud Task Force Presentation on Nutritional Genomics
7/8 March 2007	Closed business meeting, North Wales	Preparation for forthcoming Board discussions
9/10 May 2007	Closed meeting, Cardiff	Preparation for forthcoming Board discussions

Other Activities

9. The Acting WFAC Chairman will make a presentation at the Welsh Consumer Council Conference which will be held on 25 January 2007 in N Wales.