

FSA announces £1.4 million funding for launch of new innovation hub

The funding will further enable the FSA to support the [action plan published by the Chancellor](#) on 17 March, empowering it to build capability and capacity to better regulate these new and innovative technologies.

Precision fermented foods, which use an advanced form of traditional fermentation, will be the focus of the new funding. This technique uses new technology to create specific ingredients, including proteins, sugars and fats.

The new hub will protect consumers by making sure these new foods are safe before they can be sold, as well as giving greater clarity on regulatory requirements to innovators and investors. It will align with RIO's broader work to ensure regulation supports and keeps pace with cutting-edge innovation. The hub will bring together the FSA's existing work on novel foods and food created through genetic technology, alongside the recently launched sandbox for cell-cultivated products.

Specifically, the funding will enable the FSA to:

- Boost our scientific capacity to risk assess these innovative products
- Provide greater regulatory clarity to industry on how to gain market authorisation in Great Britain alongside Food Standards Scotland, including through a new business-focused guidance hub
- Support wider innovation in food through enhanced regulatory capacity on the most innovative products.

Professor Susan Jebb, Chair of the FSA, said:

“We’re pleased to secure this additional funding to make the risk assessment of innovative products swifter, without compromising on food safety.

There is growing interest in the potential of new technologies to increase the UK's food security and provide affordable, healthy, and sustainable food.

This important new project will give innovators greater support in navigating the regulations under which we assess if food is safe, making the system more efficient and enabling safe products to come to the market more quickly.

The public can remain confident that the foods they choose are safe and the UK economy can benefit from business investment, so as a nation we will be able to take early advantage of the potential these technologies offer.”

Science Minister, Lord Vallance said:

“Breakthroughs in precision fermentation have the potential to grow our economy and improve food security by reducing reliance on imports, and the Regulatory

Innovation Office will help to bring innovations like these to market safely and efficiently.

We're streamlining regulation to get safe, innovative products onto shelves faster, while maintaining high standards and strengthening the UK's position in food technology - in turn supporting the Government's Plan for Change."

This new project was discussed during the FSA's latest [Board meeting](#) on 26 March as part of a series of initiatives the FSA is working on to help drive growth and investment while maintaining high safety and standards in the UK's food sector.

The Board heard how this new project sits alongside the FSA's other commitments included in the [Government action plan](#). These include:

- Supporting UK businesses in meeting EU regulatory requirements for food grade recycled plastic, by taking on a new role as the competent authority??
- Establishing a regulatory sandbox for [cell cultivated products](#) (CCPs). The FSA will provide industry with clarity on safety and legal requirements to enable these products to be considered for sale
- Rolling out a new approach to food standards inspections across all local authorities in England and consulting on new approaches to food hygiene controls??
- Growing our support for trade by working with Defra on six international audits of UK standards, helping UK food exporters to access new markets and continue to trade in existing markets.