

## CFA goes back to the classroom

CFA is responding to industry concerns over the sector's lack of new recruits with a unique initiative aimed at inspiring and educating chilled food scientists and technologists of the future.

With one in four technical posts projected to be left unfilled the situation has been described as "critical" by CFA. 'Chilled Education' addresses the issue at source – in the classroom with a set of teaching materials and other resources developed by teachers and CFA industry specialists. It aims to increase understanding about the range of career opportunities in the chilled food industry and motivate potential new entrants to get involved.



The resources at [www.chillededucation.org](http://www.chillededucation.org) are designed for members to use with children aged 5 to 16 (Key stages 1-4). They cover all aspects of the chilled food industry from new product development to labelling and hygiene. The site also carries careers information, interviews with recent graduates working for CFA member companies and details of food science and technology-related degree courses in the UK.

### Meeting a government agenda

Through 'Chilled Education' CFA aims to reach over 10,000 five to sixteen year olds at more than 200 UK schools over the next 12 months, promoting a joined up message about the food supply chain. The Department for the Environment, Food and Agriculture (Defra) has welcomed this as contributing to the Food Supply Chain Skills Action Plan. CFA believes that 'Chilled Education' will play a significant role in meeting the Plan's targets.

### Members get involved

CFA is keen to get its members out into the classroom to use their industry experience to

bring the subject to life and show youngsters how dynamic, relevant and interesting chilled food is.

## Chilled Education

The Chilled Education lesson plans for CFA members have been developed by CFA food science professionals in partnership with education consultancy, InspireEducation. They are designed to be delivered by CFA members and STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Maths) Ambassadors working in the industry.

A range of resources specifically for members include lesson plans, guidance on working with schools and how to deliver lessons (including safeguards) and information on the STEM Ambassador programme. There are 28,000 STEM Ambassadors in the UK who are volunteers from industry who work with young people to inspire interest in their subject and its application to the 'real world'.

Anyone visiting the website will also be able to find out more about courses, careers and training. Sample job descriptions give a real insight into the variety of roles available while food science course details show a route into the industry. Useful links take visitors to other sources of information including CFA members' own recruitment websites.

### Chilled Education for Teachers

A complementary set of lesson plans and resources at [www.data.org.uk/cfa](http://www.data.org.uk/cfa) has been developed by CFA in partnership with the Design and Technology Association (the professional association representing those involved in D&T education and associated subject areas). The Association's network of 6,000 D&T teachers will be encouraged to take the lessons out into classrooms across the UK.

### All Systems Glo!



CFA members and teachers will also be able to use a range of free resources to make the lessons lively and informative. CFA is providing 500 innovative Glo-Germ kits, which memorably show the importance of proper hand washing, guaranteed to provoke interest amongst children and adults of all ages as well as 10,000 fridge thermometers and hundreds of careers leaflets.

## 'Chilled Education' welcomed

Professor Jack Pearce of the Institute of Food Science & Technology (IFST) supports and endorses 'Chilled Education' saying: "It is not generally recognised that the food and drink industry is the largest sector of manufacturing activity in the UK. It employs up to 400,000 workers, equating to 16 per cent of the total manufacturing workforce, of those 60,000 are employed in the UK chilled food industry by some 25 companies, supplying a UK retail market of over £9bn.

"Hence the strong demand for well-educated and trained professionals who have a wide range of roles across the industry. These resources will be of value to both science and careers teachers, students and parents. It clearly meets an identified need and will make a valuable contribution."

While the Food Standards Agency's Bob Martin said "We welcome the launch as a resource that can help people to understand what is involved in making chilled foods safely, as well as providing useful information about key food safety subjects."

Other supporting organisations include the D&T Association, the National STEM Centre, the STEM Ambassadors network, the Science Council and the Association for Science Education (ASE).

## Summer School

'Chilled Education' is part of a wider CFA initiative to boost industry recruitment. Earlier this year CFA sponsored 5 students to attend the University of Nottingham Food Science Summer School designed to highlight the food industry as a career choice and assist students in choosing appropriate 'A' levels. The students (3 girls and 2 boys) were selected by the University from applications received around the country.



Feedback received from students included:

- really fun and interesting
- very engaging and made me think and consider my career options
- I enjoyed learning about all the processes needed to be carried out before manufacturing a product.

## New CFA Chairman



Alison Robertson, Technical Director of Daniels Chilled Foods Ltd, producers of soups and sauces under the New Covent Garden Soup brand, ready meals and fruit juices, has been elected as the new Chairman of CFA. Alison has extensive experience in the chilled food industry and has been a member of CFA's Executive Committee since 2002. She is to be one of CFA's first STEM Ambassadors.

## CFA sets record straight on sustainability

CFA has made a robust response to criticisms about chilled prepared foods in relation to waste, packaging and distribution following comments made on an article in the 22nd July edition of FoodManufacture.com.

Criticisms that chilled prepared foods were "incredibly wasteful" were countered by Kaarin Goodburn, CFA's Secretary General. She pointed out that:

- broad comparisons between chilled, frozen and ambient foods are spurious as many foods do not exist in all three categories
- according to Climate Change Agreement data used by the Department of Energy and Climate Change the chilled food sector has reduced its carbon intensity by more than 22% since 1999
- chilled food manufacturing waste volumes are small and declining - CFA data shows a 40% reduction in waste/tonne of food in the past three years, with nearly 85% of members' food waste diverted away from landfill
- the highest rates of consumer food wastage are in bakery products, not fresh or chilled prepared foods
- packaging and distribution in the sector is efficient and cost effective.

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