



CFA celebrates 20 years

This year the Chilled Food Association (CFA) celebrates its 20th anniversary. Following a number of food safety incidents in the 1980s, CFA was launched in summer 1989 to represent the chilled food industry and establish standards of excellence. In December 1989, the first edition of CFA's Best Practice Guidelines (CFA Guidelines) and its then unique Accreditation Scheme were launched by the then Minister for Food Safety, Rt Hon David Maclean MP.

Since its formation, CFA has grown from 11 founding members with a combined turnover of around £100m to 24 members and a turnover of about £2500m. It represents many of the leading names in UK chilled food production supplying the retail trade and includes large multinationals and smaller businesses producing a wide variety of chilled products.

The UK chilled food sector is the most advanced in the world. The key CFA membership criterion is adherence to specified standards. CFA members are required to comply with CFA's guidelines, notably "Best Practice Guidelines for the Production of Chilled Foods" together with successful independent audits (either BRC or IFS) and other corroboration of technical competence.

The CFA Guidelines are the basis of the European Chilled Food Federation's operating recommendations for manufacturers and its principles are part of the British Retail Consortium's Global Standard for Food. They represent the gold standard for the chilled food industry and other CFA guidance on specific aspects of chilled food production are also widely acclaimed. The result is that hygiene and safety standards in UK chilled food manufacturers' premises are second to none with a full Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) approach, implementation from farm to fork, segregation, strict temperature controls and full traceability of raw materials.

Milestones in CFA's history include:

1989 – Launch of CFA Guidelines and Accreditation Scheme establishing third party auditing in the UK food manufacturing sector.

1990 – CFA gives evidence to Commons Agriculture Committee on microwave ovens.

1991 – Formation of the European Chilled Food Federation (ECFF) with CFA as a founding member.



EUROPEAN CHILLED FOOD FEDERATION
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1993 – Launch of 2nd edition of CFA Guidelines endorsed by Safeway.

1994 – CFA gives evidence to Ministers opposing relaxation of temperature control regulations requiring certain chilled foods to be stored at or below 5°C.

1995 – CFA becomes independent of the Food and Drink Federation.

1997 – 3rd edition of CFA Guidelines published and endorsed by all major UK supermarkets.

1998 – CFA gives evidence to Commons Agriculture Committee in its Inquiry on the then proposed Food Standards Agency.

2000 – CFA gives evidence to the European Commission on assuring produce safety.

2001 – Food Industry Panels Group established with other associations to identify best practice in the use of composite panels, thereby minimising the risk of factory fires and obtain risk-based insurance cover.

2002 – 1st editions of CFA's Hygienic Design Guidelines, Micro Guidance for Growers and Pesticides Due Diligence published. CFA presented to FSA on chilled food industry traceability systems.

2003 – FIPG Fire Risk Minimisation Guidance published and taken up as basis of preferential insurance solution targeting compliant sites (ISUWA). CFA Secretary General, Kaarin Goodburn, appointed to Defra Sustainable Farming and Food Research Priorities Group.

2004 – IFS Certification accepted as CFA membership criterion. CFA £100k LINK research project on pathogen attachment initiated.

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2005 – CFA secures EU agreement for risk-based policy approach to *Listeria monocytogenes* (Lm) in food. CFA publishes Guidance on the EU Micro Criteria Regulations developed with British Retail Consortium and with FSA input. CFA Guidance on Microbiological Testing and its Interpretation also published.



2006 – 4th edition of CFA Best Practice Guidelines published. CFA successfully lobbies for rejection of an FSA proposal to limit shelf-life of chilled foods from 10 days to 5 days. CFA member chairs Defra FISS Champions Group on Waste with CFA also as a member.

2007 – 2nd edition of CFA Micro Guidance for Growers published with endorsement from the Health Protection Agency, National Farmers Union, British Leafy Salads Association, Horticultural Development Company.

2008 – CFA secures change in FSA advice to consumers to no longer advise re-washing of pre-washed leaf. Kaarin Goodburn awarded the MBE for services to the food industry and appointed to the UN FAO/WHO Leafy Green Vegetables and Herbs Expert Group. CFA plays instrumental role in securing international recognition at the CODEX Committee on Food Hygiene for the EU's regulatory approach on Lm in food. Start of CFA's £750k three year SUSSLE (Sustainable Shelf Life Extension) LINK research programme which is designed to provide data to better understand and explore the extension of the shelf life of chilled foods by using tailored reduced energy heat processes, enhancing quality without compromising safety. The UK Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF) recommends 'universal adoption' of hazard analysis and HACCP principles set out in CFA's Best Practice Guidelines and recognises UK prepared food manufacturing industry's measures to minimise microbiological contamination of foods and their clear differentiation from the approaches of other sectors.

2009 – WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Plan) changes the way domestic food waste is categorised in their calculations. splitting their 'ready meal' category so that waste from 'store bought' ready meals is kept separate from waste from 'take-aways'.

Most recently CFA has agreed Chilled Prepared Food Sector Sustainability Aims whereby CFA will continue to provide leadership on sustainability to the UK chilled prepared food manufacturing sector by encouraging it to minimise its carbon footprint, helping setting performance targets, assisting the development of means of monitoring against them, generating research to support knowledge and playing a leading role in the further development of Government and industry sustainability policy.

CFA's Sustainability Aims are:

1. Achieve a 20% reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2010 compared with 1990 and aspiring to a 30% reduction by 2020 [based on Climate Change Agreement (CCA) sector data].
2. Achieve significant reductions in water use to help reduce stress on water supplies and contribute to meeting the DEFRA Food Industry Sustainability Strategy (FISS) absolute target for the food industry to reduce water use by 20% by 2020 compared with 2007.
3. By 2010 diverting from landfill 70% of food waste to landfill.
4. By 2015 sending zero food waste to landfill.
5. Make a significant contribution to WRAP's work to achieve an absolute reduction in the level of packaging reaching households by 2010 compared with 2005 and provide more advice to consumers on how best to recycle or otherwise recover used packaging.
6. To support ethical sourcing practices incorporating sustainability principles.



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