In February CFA Director Kaarin Goodburn travelled to San Diego to present CFA at the American Frozen Food Institute’s Food Safety Leadership Conference. In a session entitled ‘Lessons Learned from European and South African Listeriosis Outbreaks’ she spoke to an audience of 150 senior technical and regulatory specialists from US and international companies, universities and FDA. The outbreaks discussed are reminders that listeriosis doesn’t recognise international borders and Kaarin (together with Dr Phil Voysey of Campden BRI) discussed not only underlying issues behind them, but also the impact of these outbreaks on global regulatory policy requirements.

Erika Blickem, Director of Food Safety of major US agribusiness Simplot attended the session and enjoyed Kaarin’s approach to this critical issue: “Your session was my favorite. It is great to have information shared across the world, so we can all get better together.”

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IN THIS ISSUE: CFA International, Biocides, Chlorates, Listeria, Government Guidance

International Biocide Work - Outputs Revealed

Since 2017, CFA Director Kaarin Goodburn has been a member of the Global Food Safety Initiative’s (GFSI) Chemicals in Food Hygiene Technical Working Group (CFA News 48). The Group aims to: ‘ensure consumer protection through the application of sanitisers, disinfectants and cleaning agents from farm to fork, balancing risks and benefits of their use whilst facilitating the global trade of food.’

CFA is pleased to report three important outputs from the Technical Working Group. The first two – Chemicals in Food Hygiene, Vol 1: ‘The optimal usage of cleaning agents, sanitisers and disinfectants to minimise the risk of traces in foods’ and Vol 2: ‘Cleaning agents, sanitizers and disinfectants in food businesses: detection of traces and human risk assessment processes’ – have now been published on GFSI’s website (mygfsi.com). Much of the approach of Vol 1 is derived from CFA/FBIG material, including the minimisation of traces being carried over into food.

The third output comprises a review paper from the subgroup, led by Kaarin, on microbial resistance and biocides. She explains: “The main conclusions were that research referring to resistance did not use biocides in accordance with recommended dilutions and/or contact times, and often used trained, phenotypically adapted microorganisms. There was no evidence of appropriately applied food hygiene biocides being linked with microbial resistance.” This paper has been accepted for publication in the Journal of Food Protection.

US Food Safety Leadership Conference: Listeria Without Frontiers

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More Science Teachers Clamour for CEd Resources at Major Conference

Birmingham University was once again the destination for the Chilled Education team when it returned to the Association for Science Education’s Annual Conference in January.

Colleagues from Greencore, Hain Daniels and Samworth Brothers enthusiastically shared their passion for chilled food with hundreds of teachers, trainee teacher and technicians. The busy stand was once again the focus for everyone keen to use food as a classroom resource.

It was CEd’s second visit to Birmingham and fifth visit to the conference. While numbers attending have stabilised, the team did notice one significant difference. As Chris Roddis of Greencore explains: “I’ve represented CEd at most of the conferences and this year I was pleased to see that the level of interest really has grown. Teachers, and especially student teachers, are genuinely keen to use food in their science lessons. We all felt we were ‘pushing on an open door’. Which can only be good news for the future of food science both as subject and a career.”

Many teachers are already using the CEd resources and shared some very positive feedback. Nadine from the University of Birmingham was glowing in her evaluation: “These are incredible!” she said.

Teachers attending the workshops found themselves making DNA using jelly babies and jelly laces, teaching science.

The workshop introduced a new set of practical lesson ideas entitled ‘Sweet Sustainable Science’. They are specifically designed to bridge the gap between Science and Food Science teaching. Each activity links to the Science National Curriculum, as well as the GCSE specifications in Science and Food Science. They explore subjects ranging from misceability to sustainability in packaging, using food to model science concepts, as well as completing low-cost, low-risk alternatives to more traditional science experiments.

CFA Director Kaarin Goodburn co-presented the workshops with Sam. She put the science into its food production context, which included the forensic approach taken by microbiologists and supply chain managers responsible for food safety. Feedback from the teachers was overwhelmingly positive: “Super session, very engaging with ideas to take back to school that are inexpensive and link to real life.” – just one of the glowing comments.

The possibility of taking the workshops to other locations currently being discussed. The complete workshop is now available as a free downloadable PowerPoint from the CEd website.

Sweet Sustainable Science

CEd has been working with leading science teacher and author Sam Holyman for a number of years and was delighted to co-present with her an exciting hands-on workshop at the ASE conference.

New Opportunities for Chilled Education

CEd team member Charlotte Patrick has been forging exciting links with Northampton’s Moulton College. The college recently opened its Food and Drink Innovation Centre which offers food science, food technology and nutrition diplomas (A’ Level equivalent).

As the courses are in their first year resources are scarce, so the college was happy to accept CEd’s mouth watering array of practical resources and ideas. As Charlotte explains: “They’re already using our MicroTrumps and find them really useful. They really would like as much careers information as we can send to encourage their students about the wide range of careers out there in the sector and the next steps into the food sector.”

And we have another helpful link – senior lecturer Rachel Roy has worked with Samworth Brothers in the past. She is keen to engage further with CEd and its members.”

News in Brief

Glo Germ Kit Spreads the Word – Not the Germ!

Sam Holyman has been using CEd resources in her Superbugs lessons, and reporting on it in the school newsletter. And the Glo Germ kits also had an outing with Charlotte Patrick recently – helping to teach hand washing for a First Aid and Health badge at a Rainbow Park Club.

MicroTrumps Have Many Uses

Food Standards Scotland recently put in an order for CEd’s innovative MicroTrumps cards. A whopping 480 decks were soon heading north to be used by Local Authorities in food safety enforcement and education campaigns.
Sustainable Crops Update

CFA has been advising the UK Government on its positive position on the sourcing of sustainable palm oil (SPO) since 2012. The long-term aim was to move to 100% sustainable sourcing of palm and its derivatives by the end of 2015 (CFA News 47).

The UK chilled food sector historically uses very little palm oil, but CFA members have also consistently supported its sustainable sourcing and are predominantly using Roundtable on SPO (RSPO) supply chain certified SPO. As such, we are delighted to hear of the improvements in the RSPO standard Principles & Criteria (as ratified in November 2018) and the strengthening of the requirements used within the RSPO palm oil supply chain.

In the most recent UK Roundtable on Sourcing SPO’s Annual Communication of Progress report, CFA reported that the chilled food sector has maintained usage of physical supply chain SPO at some 99% total. This is the greatest proportion of SPO usage by the UK food industry. Only small quantities, as constituents of ingredients, remain to be certified. If this has not been possible, suppliers have found alternatives to palm oil or purchased RSPO credits. The limited availability of some derivatives required in insignificant quantities for functionality remains as a problem as the disproportionate cost of pursuing certification is a barrier.

Retail customer commitments to deforestation are also helping to initiate use of other sustainable crops, notably soya. CFA is a participant in the UK Roundtable on Sustainable Soya.

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