

IN THIS ISSUE: Chlorates, Listeria Review, Sustainability, Market Data, Chilled Education



Hygiene operative in a manufacturing plant.

Image courtesy of Ozo Innovations

Chlorate Proposals

As reported in *CFA News 51*, the European Commission's (EC) proposed Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) of chlorate in food materials were rejected by international consultees earlier this year.

Disappointingly, EC lawyers have so far rejected the argument that traces of chlorate and hygiene biocides should be categorised as contaminants and not Plant Protection Products. However, more positively, the EC has made revised proposals recognising that chlorate traces arise from the use of hygiene biocides, that food hygiene must not be compromised and proposes that processed foods would be exempt from commodity MRLs. All of which were raised as issues in the CFA-led submissions to the consultation.

The revised proposals had an indicative vote at the EU SCOPAFF (Standing Committee on Plants Animals Feed and Food) on 27 September, and are expected to be voted on formally in November.

Final proposals for chlorate limits in drinking water have not yet been agreed by the European Parliament (EP). The new EP is expected to pursue this in its forthcoming sessions.

UK and Spanish Listeria outbreaks

This summer's outbreak of *Listeria monocytogenes* (Lm) in the UK that arose from hospital-catered sandwiches, and tragically led to six deaths, could have been avoided had there been full compliance with guidance set out by CFA and Food Standards Agency. CFA was a member of FSA's *Listeria* Management Programme 2010-2015 which developed guidance on minimising risk of Lm specifically for the care settings (hospitals and care homes) sector and their supply base. That guidance was issued by FSA in 2016. A separate ongoing major fatal listeriosis outbreak linked to meat products in Spain this summer is indicative of the need for best practice compliance internationally.

Kaarin Goodburn, CFA Director, is frustrated by the lack of progress: "This year marks 30 years since CFA established its good hygienic and manufacturing practices for the production of chilled foods, which are supported by a raft of guidance and information for businesses to assure food safety. European Chilled Food Federation guidelines were first issued in 1996, mirroring those of CFA. It's unconscionable that the

same best practices are not as a matter of course applied to all chilled prepared food, irrespective of who will be eating it, and in which country. There must be full accountability, including in the care settings sector, to help ensure compliance with best practice and so help avoid further tragedies."

The Association is currently contributing its expertise to an industry review of sandwich industry and care setting supply standards. Its aim is to ensure that the due diligence systems required match those demanded by major multiples. The outcomes of the review are expected this autumn. It is also ready and happy to contribute to the Government's own review of hospital catering.

CFA hopes that enforcement – both government and commercial – pays due heed to its and other parties' relevant guidance to help protect all consumers, and that all manufacturers seek to join relevant trade associations demanding evidence of compliance with specified standards.

ACMSF Review of FSA Vacuum Packing/MAP Guidance Secured

CFA in 2016 brought together a group of trade associations and the Institute of Food Research (now Quadram Institute Bioscience, QIB) to comment on the FSA's proposed amendment of its guidance on the '10 day rule' (*CFA News 46*). FSA issued revised guidance in 2017 and, although reflecting a number of points made by the consortium, unfortunately still compromises food safety by the required laboratory approach, does not reflect FSA's own 2005-commissioned risk assessment of chilled foods including fresh meat, nor recent peer-reviewed research such as CFA's spore quantification work in the SUSSLE project. In the last 18 months an international group of organisations led by CFA (*CFA News 50*) established shelf life guidance, and an updated fresh meat risk assessment has been published. Following CFA and QIB concerted lobbying ACMSF has now started a review of the science behind FSA's guidance. CFA looks forward to contributing to the review.

Chilled Education UPDATE



A Magnificent Seventh Big Bang East Midlands

The CEEd team enjoyed its Big Bang East Midlands debut in 2013 and each year makes contact with more and more keen young scientists. Organisers report an attendance of more than 4,000 in 2019 – almost double that of last year.

While cyclists zoomed around the velodrome at Derby Arena, colleagues from Greencore, Hain Daniels and Moy Park chatted with students about food science. As usual the handwashing test proved popular and Nanobugs temporary

tattoos prompted some interesting conversations. The resources, along with FREE tailor-made downloadable lesson plans linked to the food and science curricula at KS 1-4, are available from the CEEd website www.chillededucation.org



Sue Evans of Hain Daniels gives out Nanobugs temporary tattoos at Big Bang Fair East Midlands.



Megan Afford of Moy Park explains why food science is not catering.



Heather Cooper of Greencore tests handwashing.

Above: Manning the CEEd stand at Big Bang East Midlands were (from left to right) Heather Cooper & Toby Hattersley (Greencore) Charlotte Patrick (CFA), Atif Alam, Megan Afford, Nicola Hayward & Stephen Pym (Moy Park).

New ambassadors sharing experiences



New chilled ambassador colleagues (from left to right) Atif Alam, Megan Afford and Stephen Pym from Moy Park joined Greencore's Catherine Fenwick and Toby Hattersley on the Big Bang Fair stand. They all enjoyed telling students about food science, sharing their experience and enthusiasm to inspire everyone who came to the stand. Their career stories can also be found on the Chilled Education website.

Twilight Sessions Launched



CEd's partnership with Northampton's Moulton College continued with a twilight session on 8 October 2019, with Kaarin Goodburn and colleagues talking to teachers about careers in the food sector and demonstrating CEEd's free lesson plans. Teachers interested in organising a session are invited to get in touch by emailing teachingresources@chillededucation.org. If CEEd colleagues are near the school they will do their best to help.

Moulton College's Food Technology Lecturer Rachel Roy (left) thanked CFA Director Kaarin

Goodburn for CFA's "time and inspiration".

The twilight sessions are the latest in a series of events with the college (see *CFA News 51*). CFA's partnership is already helping the college to forge exciting new links with industry, including a visit by Rachel Roy and colleague to Greencore. After the event Rachel said: "Thank you for the connection with Greencore, Steve and I visited them last Friday, which was very successful!! We are looking forward to building strong links with them. Thank you for all these contacts, very much appreciated."

Know your Placements

One recurring piece of advice CEEd gives to people looking for a career in chilled is grab any work experience you're offered. A placement gets a student into the workplace – learning about the job, applying their knowledge and gaining wider life skills. They are also perfect for nurturing contacts for future employment opportunities. The stories of graduates who've experienced the benefits of a placement can be seen on the CEEd website www.chillededucation.org/food-teacher-case-studies

Universities such as Reading regularly approach CFA member companies seeking work placements. CFA can also help students find placements, visit the careers pages on our website for details. chillededucation.org/entry-schemes/

Love Food, Hate Waste

Food waste is always a good discussion topic in the classroom. Waste reduction charity WRAP's Love Food Hate Waste #SpoiledRotten campaign encourages everyone to only buy what's needed and eat what's bought. It's also focussing on storing food correctly – which for chilled means at 0-5°C. CEEd's simple to use fridge thermometers (available from www.chillededucation.org/resources) are great for lessons and also take the important message home. There is useful information and ways to get involved at: lovefoodhatewaste.com

News in Brief



ASE workshop in January 2019.

Looking ahead

ASE Annual conference University of Reading 9-11 January 2020. CEEd will be reprising its Sweet Sustainable Science lesson ideas workshops (10 January). Described by one participant this year as "mindblowing".

5.5 million meals from CFA members redistributed in 2018, plus more energy saved

In 2018 CFA members produced more than 2.5million tonnes of chilled prepared foods. Yet, despite this massive output, members several years ago met a key sustainability aim – to reduce to zero the amount of food waste sent to landfill from manufacturing sites.

Kaarin Goodburn explains the background: “Food waste arising from chilled food production sites has not, for several years, been landfilled. It is used to generate energy (e.g. Anaerobic Digestion), is composted to be applied to land for growing, redistributed, or for animal feed. We also work with Company Shop and other food redistribution organisations and charities, sending them almost 2,500 tonnes of food in 2018, which is equivalent to more than five million meals.”

The positive news follows the chilled industry’s continuing success in reducing its energy usage in terms of CO₂ equivalents

(CO₂e) per tonne of food (ie a relative measure). A 27.3% reduction since 2008 means that CFA members are well on track to meet their climate change agreement target of 30% reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2020 compared with 1990, aspiring to a 40% reduction by 2023.

CFA is a signatory to C2025, is a UK Food Waste Reduction Roadmap Early Adopter and played a key role in the development of the Roadmap’s data collection proforma, and a UK Plastics Pact signatory. CFA’s sustainability aims can be found on the CFA website: www.chilledfood.org/sustainability



Call for health & safety case studies for conference



A busy production line.

CFA is planning a national Health & Safety conference to be held next March on Musculo-Skeletal Disorder minimisation in industry. The ‘Better Backs – Better Business’ event (Manual Handling Solutions in the Food & Drink Industry) is aimed at large and small companies and is being run with the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health’s Food and Drink Industries Group. Topics to be covered include mechanical handling, fitness and wellbeing, dealing with acute pain and production line design. Businesses are currently being invited to share their good ideas and pragmatic solutions as case studies to highlight practical ways to reduce risk in the workplace.

A template for the case studies can be downloaded from the CFA website www.chilledfood.org/health-safety The closing date for submissions is 31 October 2019.

WRAP campaigns

CFA has been working with sustainability charity WRAP since its inception in 2000 and was a founding signatory to WRAP’s Courtauld Commitment. This is a voluntary agreement designed to reduce waste across the UK grocery sector.

The partnership continues this year with CFA supporting the Spoiled Rotten campaign (#spoiledrotten). WRAP is targeting 18-34 years old, couples, young families and students, encouraging them to buy only what they need, eat what you buy and, most importantly for CFA, store food properly.

This follows on from last autumn’s #chillthefridgeout campaign focussing on correct fridge temperatures to reduce food waste. CFA is also supporting it through its work with teachers. To further support WRAP’s campaign the CFA website now hosts a Recycling Locator button. The app directs users to the correct place in their locality to recycle materials ranging from food and packaging waste to non-food waste. www.chilledfood.org/sustainability-2



Chilled sales continue to rise

CFA has released its latest market data (chilledfood.org/our-market/) and it’s good news again for the sector. According to global market research company Kantar TNS total sales of chilled continue to rise, in 2018 the total value was £13,192m (up by 1.7% from £12,969m in 2017).

The popularity of chilled vegetarian options led to a 19.5% increase while mixed tray salads also saw a significant increase of 23.8%. Other chilled healthy options such as prepared fruit enjoyed a boost – up by 8.6%. However chilled cakes and chilled desserts suffered a small drop in sales – down by 2.5% and 1.5% respectively. And stats reveal that the appetite for major multiples’ retail wraps appears to be waning, they were down by 6.9% but the same cannot be said for sandwiches where sales were up by 5.3%.

Dr Clive Woolley Group Technical Director at Oscar Mayer and CFA Chair explains: “More and more people are seeking alternative food options – whether they are health, ethical or lifestyle-related. The chilled food sector is again proving we can help consumers satisfy their needs and demands. We’re delighted to be able to produce exciting, innovative and tasty food that fits our increasingly busy lives.”

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