

FSA publishes its Annual Report and Accounts for 2017/18

In her foreword to the accounts, FSA Chairman, Heather Hancock talks about the importance of the Agency's modernisation agenda, particularly in the light of EU Exit. She writes:

'When the UK leaves the EU in March next year, we will continue to protect public health and consumers' wider interests in relation to food.

'More than 90% of food law in the UK comes from the EU, and our current system is heavily reliant on EU institutions and decisions. It is vital that from day one we have an equivalent regulatory regime in place, a regime which is robust and effective, and led by an effective regulator.'

She also stresses the importance of the Agency's programme to change food regulation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, commenting that the modernisation plans will 'ensure that local authorities have more information about the food businesses in their area' and that the FSA will for the first time be able to develop a unified view of food business and local authority performance, across the three countries.

Heather Hancock also spells out the importance of businesses sharing their hygiene and standards data with local authorities:

'We want to channel to local authorities the data that many food businesses generate from independent assurance and accreditation schemes. That will mean local authority officers can make more informed judgments about the nature, frequency and intensity of official controls for that business. The greater the transparency is about ongoing business performance, and the more information and insight the food industry shares with us, the better we will all protect the public and build confidence in food.'

In his statement, our Chief Executive, Jason Feeney highlights the ongoing success of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. He writes:

'Other achievements include the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme and the continued rise in standards. More than 95% of food businesses in England, Wales and Northern Ireland now have a 'Generally satisfactory' rating or higher (3 or above) and 68% have a hygiene rating of 5 ("Very good"). We believe mandatory display of FHRS drives up food safety compliance and therefore provides better public health protection.'

And he also talks about mandatory CCTV in abattoirs. He says:

'We maintain a "zero-tolerance" approach on animal welfare breaches and agreed with industry a voluntary protocol to allow Official Veterinarians access to CCTV at slaughterhouses to provide verification of animal welfare standards. We welcome

new legislation which means by November 2018 all slaughterhouses in England must have CCTV installed to help food business owners safeguard animal welfare.'

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