

Meat cutting plant and cold store review

What you need to know about the UK review of cutting plants and cold stores being carried out by the Food Standards Agency and Food Standards Scotland.

Purpose of the review

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) are responsible for providing assurance to consumers that all food businesses in the sector are meeting their legal obligations to produce safe, authentic food that satisfies hygiene and welfare standards.

The [review announced on 1 February 2018](#) aims to improve levels of public confidence in the safety and authenticity of UK meat and identify potential improvements in the way the sector is regulated in the wake of non-compliance issues identified at various cutting plants.

PDF

[View Meat Cutting Plant and Cold Store Review Terms of Reference as PDF](#)(Open in a new window) (184.67 KB)

Review report and Board paper

The findings and recommendations from the joint Review of Meat Cutting Plants and Cold Stores were published on Thursday 11 October 2018. The report includes 19 recommendations for industry and regulators and is accompanied by a delivery action plan proposing how changes are to be implemented.

The Boards of the UK's two food regulators held their first joint meeting in Edinburgh on Wednesday 17 October 2018 to discuss UK-wide Review of meat cutting plants and cold stores. Further details of the meeting and a recorded video of the meeting are available on the [FSA's October 2018 board meeting page](#).

Following a discussion welcoming the Review and the stakeholder engagement over the previous six months, each Board fully endorsed the improvements for their respective countries.

England, Northern Ireland and Wales

PDF

[View FSA and FSS Review of Meat Cutting Plants and Cold Stores final report as PDF](#)(Open in a new window) (1.81 MB)

England, Northern Ireland and Wales

PDF

Timelines and progress

The review has been broken up into three phases:

Phase 1 - March to June 2018

Focused on understanding the current position, comparison of arrangements in place for the four countries (Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England) and highlighting emerging areas for improvement. The findings from this were published in an [update paper](#) as part of the FSA's board meeting in June which included the terms of reference.

Phase 2 - June to October 2018

Focused on validating findings from Phase 1 and exploring the implications these have for food businesses. We worked with the sector to identify and assess options for improvement, develop recommendations, and prepare an implementation delivery plan to be presented to FSA and FSS Boards.

As part of the process we issued evidence gathering surveys to local authorities and food businesses to gain further insight and six workshops were held across England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland to jointly develop recommendations for change and consider how to implement them.

Phase 3 - October 2018 onward

Following the publication of the final report, we are considering our response together with FSS and will progress with the agreed implementation of review recommendations.

Project Board and Challenge Group oversight

To help ensure that the work of the review has the required oversight and support an internal and external group have been set up.

The Project Board is made up of senior FSA and FSS staff and was set up to guide and oversee the work of the review. They have provided guidance and recommendations including:

- clarifying the scope and governance of the review
- confirming the review delivery approach and organisation
- confirming funding and considering risks to effective conduct of the review
- agreeing stakeholder engagement and communications approach

The Challenge Group was appointed to provide scrutiny to the work of the review and they have now met three times since April, with a further meeting scheduled in August.

The group members each bring a broad range of high-level experience across a diverse range of public sector roles and they have the ability and authority to challenge the activities being carried out whilst also bringing their outside perspectives and experience.

You can find out more about the membership and the work of the group from the [announcement on the Challenge Group](#).

Stakeholder workshops

Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency held six workshops across the UK with a variety of industry stakeholders to help identify common issues in the meat sector and develop ideas for some potential solutions. Below is a report summarising the feedback produced by the attendees.

England, Northern Ireland and Wales

PDF

[View Meat cutting plant and cold store review Workshop Feedback as PDF](#)(Open in a new window) (2.93 MB)

Contacting the review team

If you have any comments or questions about the review and the issues discussed in this update then please email contact us at CPCS.Review@food.gov.uk