

Appendix 6: What works to prevent food fraud - exemplar quotes from the interviews

Exemplar quotes from interviews on national strategy

Experience

In terms of what we think the NFCU should do in terms of prevention, so you realise that they have started from a very low base that they've gotten now 80 plus staff in the NFCU which is great, but the vast majority of them are with the criminal policing background and (have) very little food experience.

It probably takes in the region of four to five years of joining the service with no background in in trading standards to even be looking at taking a food qualification. It's (food related experience) not something that we can quickly replace.

Guidance

Having something like that (guidance) which is accessible I think would be really useful to overcome the challenges. I'm not saying the investment in something the size of safer food, Better Business, but something more compact.

It's not very easy to find information on food fraud, but it's also not very easy to find information on food safety.

Prevention versus detection

I would see fraud prevention as being a more proactive approach, whereas fraud detection is more an intelligence-based approach to things in which you may be using techniques such as sampling to uncover issues.

Once you've understood the risk then put a mitigation strategy in around the risk that you can control.

Training

I'm trained to track bacteria and work out hazard analysis and things like that, and I can turn that skill, it's a transferable skill from hazard analysis to vulnerability assessment.

There are some councils who are geared up for it (food fraud) and some who are not, so I would suspect information's coming in, but it's not being acted on and it's to do with a lack of structure. It's a lack of training, a lack of understanding.

So we run this course to just kind of raise awareness of food fraud and it really, genuinely isn't something they've (micro and small businesses) thought about before because they they've always had this mindset that they're buying it and what they buy is what they buy.

Exemplar quotes on opportunities, motivation, supervisory measures, often described as countermeasures in the academic literature and impact

Impact

When we're in a caterer if that fish is cod, or if that fish is haddock, it's not necessarily gonna kill anyone. It's not going to make someone ill depending on whether it's cod or haddock or in a high end caterer, whether it's hand caught scallop or whether it's dredged. So in terms of food fraud, I do think that there's a danger that these things get relegated in terms of their importance, when we're when we're dealing with a business.

But if they're not complying with trading standards legislation, chances are they're not gonna be compliant with EHO regulations as well or health and safety, (or) fire regulations.

Motivation

We talk about it being economically motivated.

Because they've worked hard to get that customer, it's a highly competitive market and they don't want to let that customer down with the delivery because that customer would simply go elsewhere.

But I would say and for the next 12 months when energy costs are pushed up and their margins are getting tighter and tighter and tighter, if they can save some money by buying something at the back door...

Opportunities

If there's an opportunity there to make money on the side, some of them will.

Supervisory measures

One of the best ways of reducing the potential for food fraud is to go around your business and actually look at where all the places physically in the business, where food fraud could take place and how to engineer them out?... So all the incoming points to my factory are sealed off. All the pipes are sealed off properly.

The only thing that I've seen is for the site itself where they have thumbprint recognition to get onto site for some of the medium size sites.

Our systems that we have in place it it's about making sure that we've got very clearly defined processes and procedures and that's backed up with the training.

Exemplar quotes on organisational culture, behaviour, and management integration within FFPs from the interviews

I think it starts at the top because if they're not interested then it's not really going to happen. So, I think if anything that we do begins like that and ethics all starts with our board.

So we send out a horizon scan newsletter every month that goes to the entire business, including the board. And then we also do one every quarter, just update the business where we are, how we're doing, what we're looking at.

At the end of the day, the technical guys don't buy the xxx. You know, the procurement team buys the xxx, you know so. So, if you haven't got those guys engaged and then you haven't got the operational guys engaged, who are actually making it into a product. You know it's not gonna work.

And then this is all about the culture of a business and the fact that, you know, the leaders have to live and breathe the companies' mission statements... a positive attitude to food safety and Food Standards so that people take pride in their work. And that's been much more effective in preventing, you know, individual criminality.

In terms of wider assessment of human factors in food business such as the culture of the business and your sense of the culture of the business, naturally intending to comply or not comply. What sort of cues do you pick up from businesses when you go into them, where you might then reflect on their culture, their degree of willingness to comply, level of food safety education, things like that.

And you know from a fork truck driver in a warehouse to the MD, we're all part of the team. We're all doing a different job. But the big, the big thing for me is we're all in food production.