

FSA Chief Executive highlights the importance of continued engagement with meat industry to address future challenges

She also set out what the FSA is doing to modernise the way it regulates the meat industry, including harnessing new technology and data to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of FSA meat inspection.

Katie was speaking to the Association of Independent Meat Suppliers on Friday (25 April) at the Butchers Hall in Central London. She said:

"The businesses you represent form a vital part of our nation's food supply chain. With the economic challenges being felt across the food system and the dramatic news around international trade that we've seen play out in recent weeks, it feels more important than ever that we work together to support the British meat industry with efficient regulation and keep the public protected.

The speech also addressed the way in which the costs of meat regulation are paid for by businesses. She said:

It's normal in many parts of the economy for the industry to bear the costs of regulation, not the taxpayer. Meat regulation is no different, and that's reflected in the legislation we operate under. However, for many years, we have offered a discount to the industry, which is weighted to provide the greatest proportion of support to the smallest businesses. So, in recent years more than a quarter of the cost of meat regulation has actually been borne by the taxpayer, with the smallest businesses eligible for a discount of up to 90% on their charges.

The Treasury rules say that when you're charging for a service, you should usually recover the costs in full. Where this doesn't happen, ministers must agree the justification. So, with the current discount scheme in its tenth financial year of operation, a new set of ministers, and a zero-based Spending Review requiring the FSA to justify all its funding to the Treasury, we need to look at this again.

Katie emphasised that no decisions has yet been made about the discount and that the FSA will put advice to ministers on this later in the year. Katie concluded her speech saying:

I'm optimistic about what we can achieve together. By embracing modernisation, harnessing new technologies, and strengthening our partnership, we can ensure that the UK meat industry remains world-class.

A full transcript of the Chief Executive's speech can be read [here](#).