

Food Standards Agency Publication Scheme

**Prepared in accordance with the provisions of
the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000**

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Section 1: Introduction

The Food Standard Agency

1. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is an independent food safety watchdog set up by the Food Standards Act 1999 to protect the public's health and consumer interests in relation to food.

How is the FSA independent?

2. Although the FSA is a Government Department, it works at 'arm's length' from Ministers and is free to publish any advice it issues, whether to Ministers or the public.

How is the FSA structured?

3. The Agency is led by a Board that has been appointed to act in the public interest and not to represent particular sectors. Board members have a wide range of relevant skills and experience. Our UK headquarters are in London, and the Agency also has offices in Aberdeen, Belfast, Cardiff and York.

Who is the FSA accountable to?

4. The Agency is accountable to the Westminster Parliament through Health Ministers, and to their equivalents in the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland for its activities within their areas. Further information is available via links at:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/

What we do

5. As a Government department, independent regulator and consumer protection body, we use the best available evidence and work with:
 - business from farm to fork to help them keep consumers safe
 - local authorities and other food law enforcement bodies to help them take proportionate, timely and resolute action
 - consumers to provide reliable and up to date information to help them make safe and healthy choices about food

Further information about our responsibilities is available at:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/fsafaqs/

Our core principles

6. Our core principles are:
 - putting the consumer first
 - openness and transparency

- science and evidence-based
- acting independently
- enforcing food law fairly

What is the FSA's Strategy to 2015?

7. [The FSA's strategy to 2015](#), developed in consultation with our stakeholders, has been updated to take into account the latest information on food safety risks and reflect recent changes in nutrition responsibilities in the UK. The Agency's strategy is refreshed on an annual basis.
8. During 2010, nutrition policy and labelling in England and Wales were transferred from the FSA to these countries' health departments, with these activities retained by the Agency in Scotland and Northern Ireland.
9. Responsibility for some non-safety-related food labelling and composition policy was moved to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in England. The Agency continues to be responsible for these in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
10. The FSA's incorporation of the [Meat Hygiene Service](#) and the development of our new operations division have, at the same time, strengthened our core remit covering food safety policy and enforcement.

The outcomes the Agency aims to deliver

11. The six outcomes we aim to deliver all relate to our strategic objective which is: safer food for the nation:
 - food produced or sold in the UK is safe to eat
 - imported food is safe to eat
 - consumers have the information and understanding to make informed choices about where and what they eat
 - food producers and caterers give priority to consumer interests in relation to food
 - regulation is effective, risk-based and proportionate, is clear about the responsibilities of food business operators and others, and protects consumers and their interests from fraud and other risks
 - enforcement is effective, consistent, risk-based and proportionate and is focused on improving public health

What are the FSA's values?

12. As an organisation, employer and as individuals we value:
 - honesty, objectivity and integrity
 - striving for continuous improvement, efficiency and effectiveness
 - diversity, cooperation and respect

Advisory Committees

13. The FSA is advised by a number of independent Advisory Committees to help ensure that the Agency's advice to consumers is always based on the best and most recent evidence. Each of these committees is a Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) in its own right separate to the FSA and each has its own publication scheme. Further information about the Advisory Committees and links to their websites are available at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/committees/> .
14. In addition the FSA also shares three public bodies with the Department of Health, and one with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Further information and the Annual Appointments Report can be accessed via:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/annualpublicplan

About the Freedom of Information Act 2000

15. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 came into force on 1 January 2005. It gave a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities, provided exemptions from that right and placed a number of obligations on public authorities. The FSA, with all its offices in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, is one such authority. Any person who makes a request to a public authority for information must be informed whether the public authority holds that information and, subject to exemptions, be provided with it.

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Publication Scheme

16. The FSA, along with every other public authority, has a legal duty under Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 to adopt, maintain and keep under review a scheme for the publication of information that is approved by the Information Commissioner and to publish information in accordance with that scheme.

Model publication scheme 2009

17. From 1 January 2009, all public authorities were required to adopt the model publication scheme developed by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Further information is available on their website: <http://www.ico.gov.uk>

18. The FSA has adopted the model publication scheme. Our core value of openness means that we already publish a large quantity of information. However, for some areas of our work, the model scheme has involved revising and extending the range of material which we publish.

The FSA's publication scheme document

19. This publication scheme document specifies:

- the classes of information which we publish or intend to publish
- the manner in which information is, or is intended to be, published (a link to each type of information on FSA website is provided at the appropriate place in this document)
- whether the material is, or is intended to be, available free of charge or on payment of a fee.

20. The aim of the FSA publication scheme is to bring together in one place details of the many differing types of information that are issued by the Agency in the discharge of its public functions in a clear and structured manner. The scheme categorises the information type and provides details on how to obtain it. The overall benefit to our stakeholders and others is to save time and effort in searching and securing relevant Agency information.

Our copyright policy

21. The information supplied by the Agency continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs and logos) can be also used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.
22. Most documents produced by a government department or agency will be protected by Crown Copyright. Most Crown copyright information can be re-used under the Open Government Licence (OGL) (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/>). For information about the OGL and about re-using Crown Copyright information please see The National Archives website - <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/uk-gov-licensing-framework.htm> .
23. Copyright in other documents may rest with a third party. For information about obtaining permission from a third party see the Intellectual Property Office's website at www.ipo.gov.uk.

Section 2: The FSA Publication Scheme

24. Please note that documents within this publication scheme may, on occasion, be edited where, in the view of the FSA, specific information should not be disclosed on grounds of the exceptions specified in Paragraph 2.7 of the [FSA Code of Practice on Openness](#), and/or the exemptions provided by the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#) or the [Environmental Information Regulations](#) and subject to the restrictions detailed under Section 19 of the [Food Standards Act 1999](#). If a document has been edited, it will be made clear to the user that this is the case.
25. The Publication Scheme below lists the class/type of information, where information in this class is available and whether there is a charge for this information. [Hard copies](#) of information published on the FSA website can be obtained by using the contact details provided in [Note 1](#) (page 19). Please refer to [Note 2](#) (Page 20) on administration costs for hard copies in all instances where a document is detailed as 'free'.

Who we are and what we do

Locations of, and contact details for the FSA

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/contactus/>

Free ¹

Origins & structure of the Agency

- On the FSA website via : <http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/> and http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/profiles/
- A high level structure chart is available at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/toplevelstructure>
- For archive information about the Meat Hygiene Service, which merged with the FSA on 1 April 2010, see the [meat and meat hygiene archive](#).

Free ¹

Roles and responsibilities

- On the FSA website via links at:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/
and <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/toplevelstructure> and via
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/servicestandards/transparencydata/organogrampay/>

Free ¹

Legislation relevant to the Agency's functions

- On the FSA website at the relevant policy area (which is available via the green menu to the left of the Home Page at <http://www.food.gov.uk/> or from the [A-Z Directory](#)) or via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/>

Free ¹

Organisations the FSA is responsible for, those it works in partnership with and those it sponsors

- On the FSA website in the relevant policy area (which is available via the green menu to the left of the Home Page at <http://www.food.gov.uk/> or from the [A-Z Directory](#)) and via links at:
http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/workwithenforcers/localauthorities/#h_2 ; and
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/stakeholderforums/

Free ¹

Details of Board members

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/ourboard/>
- Available by request from the [FSA helpline](#)

Free ^{1,2}

The FSA Chief Executive and Directors

- On the FSA website at:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/profiles/

Free ¹

What we spend and how we spend it

Financial management within the FSA and internal financial regulations

- On the FSA website via links at:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/financemanagement/

Free ¹

Financial statements, budgets and variance reports

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/busreps/annualreport/>

Free ^{1,2}

Capital programme

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/busreps/annualreport/>

Free ^{1,2}

Spending reviews

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/busreps/annualreport/>

Free ^{1,2}

Financial audit reports

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/busreps/annualreport/>

Free ^{1,2}

FSA Board Expenses

- On the FSA Website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/webpage/annrepacc0910> in the [Annual Report and Consolidated Resource Accounts 2009/10](#) where they are listed as “Benefits in Kind”. Further information on the expenses of FSA Directors will be published on our website shortly.

Free ¹

Pay and grading structure

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/jobs/workingagency/workingforfsa/>

Free ¹

Senior staff organogram and pay

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/servicestandards/transparencydata/organoqrampay/>

Free ¹

Procurement

- On the FSA website via:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/procurement/ and from the relevant policy area (which is available via the green menu to the left of the Home Page at <http://www.food.gov.uk/> or from the [A-Z Directory](#)).

Free ¹

Lists of contracts awarded and their value

- On the FSA website via:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/procurement/procontracts

Free ¹

Expenditure over £25k

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/servicestandards/transparencydata/expenditureover25k>
- and on data.gov.uk
<http://data.gov.uk/dataset/financial-transactions-data-food-standards-agency>

Free ¹

Financial statements for projects and events

- On the FSA website at the relevant policy area or region (which is available via the green menu to the left of the Home Page at <http://www.food.gov.uk/> or from the [A-Z Directory](#)).

Free ¹

What are our priorities and how are we doing?

Strategic plans

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/busreps/strategicplan/>

Free ¹

Annual business plan

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/busreps/>

Free ^{1,2}

Annual report

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/busreps/annualreport/>

Free ^{1,2}

Annual Reports on Incidents

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/incidents/monitorprevent/reportsreviews/>

Free ^{1,2}

Science Strategy

- On FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/science/researchpolicy/scistrat>
- From FSA Publications via: <http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/>

Free ¹

Research and Survey programmes

- On FSA website via: <http://www.food.gov.uk/science/research/>

Free ^{1,2}

Internal and external organisation performance reviews

- On the FSA website via:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/copopenbranch/reviewofopenness and
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/historyfsa/deanreview

Free ¹

Meat and meat hygiene licensing, inspection and reporting regimes

- On the FSA website via: <http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat/>

Free ¹

Impact assessments

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/betregs/ria/>

Free ¹

Service standards

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/servicestandards/> and
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat/mhservice/>

Free ¹

Statistics produced in accordance with departmental requirements

- On the FSA website at the relevant policy area (which is available via the green menu to the left of the Home Page at <http://www.food.gov.uk/> or from the [A-Z Directory](#))
and via: <http://www.food.gov.uk/science/> and
<http://www.food.gov.uk/safereating/animaldiseases/bse/facts/>

Free ¹

Ministry of Justice (MoJ) statistics on the handling of Freedom of Information requests by over 40 central government bodies, including the FSA.

- On the FSA website via link to MoJ website at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/servicestandards/foia/>

Free ¹

Food Law Enforcement and Regulation

Food law enforcement

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/guidancenotes/> and
<http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/enforceessential/>

Free¹

Manual for Official Controls

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat/mhservice/manual/>

Free ^{1,2}

Audit reports on slaughterhouses and cutting plants which have been published in response to Freedom of Information requests

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/servicestandards/foia/foirelease/>

Free¹

General food law

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/foodlaw/>
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/foodlaw/foodlawguide/>

Free ¹

General Guidance for Local Authorities

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/workwithenforcers/localauthorities/>

- Available by request from the relevant Policy Division (which is available via the green menu to the left of the Home Page at <http://www.food.gov.uk/> or from the [A-Z Directory](#)).

Free¹

Local Authority Enforcement Reports

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring/auditreports/>

Free^{1,2}

Food Law Enforcement audit scheme

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring/auditscheme/>

Free¹

Audit reports on the Food Law Enforcement Service

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/auditandmonitoring/>

Free¹

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/safereating/hyg/hygieneratings/>

Free¹

How we make decisions

The FSA's decision making process

- On the FSA website via:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/#h_5

Free¹

Major policy proposals and decisions

- On the FSA website at the relevant policy area (which is available via the green menu to the left of the Home Page at <http://www.food.gov.uk/> or from the [A-Z Directory](#)).

Free¹

Background information for Major policy proposals and decisions

- On the FSA website at the relevant policy area (which is available via the green menu to the left of the Home Page at <http://www.food.gov.uk/> or from the [A-Z Directory](#)).

Free¹

Public consultations

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/consultations/>

Free¹

Minutes of senior-level meetings, including Board meetings

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/ourboard/boardmeetings/>
- On the FSA website at the relevant policy area (which is available via the green menu to the left of the Home Page at <http://www.food.gov.uk/> or from the [A-Z Directory](#)).

Free ¹

Reports & papers provided for consideration by the Board

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/ourboard/boardmeetings/>

Free ¹

Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures for conducting departmental business

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/enforcework/frameagree/>
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/concordats.and
<http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2008/jun/code>

Free ¹

Sustainable Development

- On the FSA website via:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/sustainability/

Free ¹

The FSA's regulatory approach

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/betregs/>

Free ¹

Framework Agreement between local enforcement authorities & the FSA

- On the FSA website at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/statementofintent.pdf>
- Available by request from the [FSA help line](#)

Free ^{1,2}

Updates on EU policy and consulting on rapidly developing policy

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/europeleg/euupdates/>

Free ¹

Openness policy

- On the FSA website via:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/copopenbranch/

Free ¹

Freedom of information

- On the FSA website via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/servicestandards/foia/>

Free ¹

Data Protection Policy

- On the FSA website at:
- <http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/servicestandards/charter>
- Free ¹

Complaints procedure

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/servicestandards/fsacomplaintsprocedure>

Free ¹

Race, disability and gender equality policies

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/publication/res200811.pdf>
<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/disabilityequality.pdf> and
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/equality/genderequalityscheme

Free ¹

Policies and procedures for recruiting and employing staff

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/jobs/>

Free ¹

Research procurement policy

- On the FSA website at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/science/researchpolicy/researchfunding/procurementpolicyprinciples/procurementpolicy/>

Free ¹

Charging regimes and policies

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat/mhservice/chargesguide> and
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/guidancenotes/hygguid/fisherychargesregs> Free ¹

Lists and registers

Public registers and registers held as public records

- On the FSA website at the relevant policy area (which is available via the green menu to the left of the Home Page at: <http://www.food.gov.uk/> or from the [A-Z Directory](#)).

Free ¹

Approved red, poultry, and game meat establishments

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat/meatplantsprems/>

Free ¹

Approved milk and dairy establishments

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/farmingfood/milkandairy>

Free ¹

Information Asset Register (IAR)

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/iar/index.htm>

Free ¹

Freedom of Information Disclosure log

- On the FSA internet site via links at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/servicestandards/foia/foirelease/>

Free¹

Register of Board Members' interests

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/ourboard/boardmem/boardmemblogs/>

Free¹

Gifts and Hospitality Register

- Updated information on gifts and hospitality received by the Chief Executive and Directors will be published on the FSA website shortly.
- Some FSA and former MHS information is on the FSA Website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/servicestandards/foia/foirelease/foiaeir2010/fsamhshospitalitygifts0709>

Free ¹

Services we offer

Leaflets, booklets and newsletters

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/>
- or from: foodstandards@ecgroup.co.uk

Tel: 0845 606 0667
Minicom: 0845 606 0678
Fax: 020 8867 3225

Free ^{1,2}

Speeches by the FSA Chief Executive and Chair

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/news/speeches/>

Free ¹

Regulatory responsibilities

- On the FSA website via: <http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/>
- Free ¹

Services for public authorities

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/workwithenforcers/>
- Free ¹

Publications for the food industry.

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/industrypublications/>
- Free ¹

Services for other organisations

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/contactus/>
- Free ¹

Services for members of the public

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/contactus/>
- Free ¹

Information on services for which the FSA is entitled to recover a fee

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/meat/mhservice/chargesguide> and
<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/guidancenotes/hygguid/fisherychargesregs>
- Free ¹

Advice and guidance for the public

- On the FSA website at:
<http://www.eatwell.gov.uk/asksam/keepingfoodsafe/asksamcooking/?lang=en> and at the relevant policy area (which is available via the green menu to the left of the Home Page at <http://www.food.gov.uk/> or from the [A-Z Directory](#)).
- Free ¹

Media releases

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/news/>
- Free ¹

General Guidance for Local Authorities

- On the FSA website via:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/workwithenforcers/localauthorities/>
 - Available by request from the relevant Policy Division (which is available via the green menu to the left of the Home Page at <http://www.food.gov.uk/> or from the [A-Z Directory](#))
- Free ¹

Food Alerts, product withdrawals and recalls

- On the FSA website at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/alerts/>

Free ¹

Guidance to industry

- On FSA website via: <http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/>

Free ¹

¹ Hard copies of information published on the FSA website can be obtained by using the contact details provided in [Note 1](#) (page 19). Please refer to [Note 2](#) (page 20) on administration costs for hard copies in all instances where a document is detailed as 'free'.

² Please note that printed versions of these documents may be priced publications

Obtaining hard copies

Note 1: Contact details / addresses

Requests for hard copies of any of the above information should be made in writing, referring to this publication scheme, by post or email to:

In England:

Food Standards Agency
Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6NH
email: helpline@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

In Scotland:

Food Standards Agency (Scotland)
St Magnus House
6th Floor
25 Guild Street
Aberdeen
AB11 6NJ
email: scotland@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

In Wales:

Food Standards Agency (Wales)
1st Floor
Southgate House
Wood Street
Cardiff
CF10 1EW
email: wales@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

In Northern Ireland:

Food Standards Agency (NI)
10C Clarendon Road
Belfast
BT1 3BW
email: infofsani@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

[A-Z Directory](#)

A comprehensive A-Z of FSA contact details arranged alphabetically by subject work areas can be found on the Agency website by following the link above. If you cannot see the area you need, you can call the Agency's switchboard on 020 7276 8000.

Note 2: Administration costs

Where hard copies of information are requested, we will not normally charge a fee to supply copies of information or advice, unless the request is for a priced publication or data set. However, we reserve the right to make a reasonable charge to cover the costs of transcription, photocopying, packaging and postage, or where a considerable amount of staff time would be needed to identify process and collate information for you. In some cases, there will be separate charging arrangements for the supply of information for commercial use. We will inform you of any charges that might apply before processing your request. You may [complain](#) if you believe the charges we have made to supply information are unfair.

Section 3: Access to information under the scheme

The Agency's Code of Practice on Openness

26. Our general policy stemming from both our core values and Code of Practice on Openness is to be as open and transparent as possible in dealing with all requests for information.
27. If, having searched the scheme, you cannot find what you are looking for, you can make a written request for information under the Agency's Code of Practice on Openness. This request may be handled under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
28. The Agency's Code of Practice on Openness is available at: http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/copopenbranch/ or by contacting the Openness Team at: Food Standards Agency, Correspondence, Openness and Parliamentary Branch, Room 2C Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH, email: openness.team@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk
29. We will treat all requests for information on a fair and equal basis, and without prejudice. Where we are unable to provide the information you request, we will explain why. Where we decide not to release the information you request, we will explain why and give you details of how you can complain against our decision.
30. Applications for information under the Agency's Code of Practice on Openness and the Freedom of Information Act should be made in writing, by post, email or fax. [See [Note 1](#) on page 19 for our contact details.] Please include your name and an address to which we can send the information (this can be an email address) and provide us with as much detail as possible to identify the information sought.
31. Further guidance on how to make a valid Freedom of Information (FOI) request is published on the [Information Commissioner's website](#).
32. Where the information you want is available in a priced publication, we will give you details of the publication and where you may buy it. [For information on administration costs, see [Note 2](#) on page 20]

Section 4: The Information Asset Register (IAR)

33. As part of the Government's commitment to openness and in line with our own Code of Practice on Openness, the Food Standards Agency has created an Information Asset Register (IAR) which gives details of information held by the Agency that has not been formally published and provides access to that information. Details of what information is already available on the Agency's IAR are available on our website at: <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/iar/index.htm> . The Register is updated on a regular basis as details of new unpublished information assets become available. Details of how to obtain copies of the information are given in the summaries on the website. Requests, mentioning the Information Asset Register, can also be emailed to: helpline@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk
34. [Inforoute](#) is the gateway to all UK Government Information Asset Registers. It provides direct access to the Government's IAR which identifies;
- what information the government holds;
 - how useful that information is; and
 - a contact point to whom requests for the underlying information may be made (requests are subject to the Open Government Code and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)).
35. Further information on the role of the IAR can be found on the [OPSI website](#) or requested by post from:
- Information Asset Register
OPSI e-Services Team
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ
e-mail: inforoute@opsi.gov.uk

Section 5: Complaints procedure

36. Even the best organisations will sometimes get things wrong. If you are dissatisfied with something we have done or the way we have done it, please let us know. We will try to resolve any problem quickly, and explain what we have done and why. Hearing from you will help us improve by learning from our mistakes.
37. If you wish to complain, in the first instance, please give details of what you are unhappy with and why to the person you have been dealing with. If you do not have a named contact, you can get in touch with the Agency's Complaints Co-ordinator via the Openness Team at :
- Food Standards Agency, Room 2C Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH, email: openness.team@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk
38. If we cannot deal with your complaint immediately, we will acknowledge it within two working days (please always give us your email or full postal address). We will write to you with a full reply within 20 working days of receiving your complaint. If this is not possible, we will explain why and say when you will get a full reply.
39. If you are not satisfied with our response and would like to take your complaint further, please contact the Complaints Co-ordinator at the address above. They will look at it again and give you a full reply within 20 working days.
40. In accordance with the FSA complaints procedure, if you are not satisfied with the Complaints Co-ordinator's reply then you should write to Tim Smith, Chief Executive, Food Standards Agency, here at Aviation House stating clearly your reasons for doing so.
41. In accordance with the FSA complaints procedure, if you are not satisfied with the Chief Executive's reply then you should ask for your complaint and its handling to be investigated by the UK Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (the Ombudsman). In this event, you should first write to a Member of Parliament (the referring MP does not have to be your local MP) asking that they refer your complaint to the Ombudsman. The telephone number for the House of Commons Information Office, where you can get information on contacting MPs, is 020 7219 4272.

Complaints concerning the handling of FOI/EIR requests

42. If you are not satisfied with the way the Agency has handled your request for information, you should write within two calendar months of the date of this letter to the Openness Team, and ask for an internal review. They will arrange for the Complaints Coordinator to conduct the review. Their address is:

Food Standards Agency, Openness Team, Correspondence, Openness and Parliamentary Branch, Room 2C Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH, email: openness.team@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

43. If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Agency. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or through the website at <http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

Section 6: Your feedback

44. The FSA Publication Scheme is part of our commitment to work in accordance with the Agency's [Statement of General Objectives and Practices](#) (published in line with Section 22 of the Food Standards Act 1999). This states our core values of putting the consumer first, being an independent voice in matters connected with food safety or other interests of consumers in relation to food and that our activities will be open, transparent and clear.
45. This publication scheme fulfils our legal duty under Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We would positively welcome any views and comments on the structure and / or content of the publication scheme itself. This publication scheme will be treated as a 'living' document which we will amend and develop in the light of our experience, as appropriate.
46. When commenting, we would particularly ask you to actively consider the following:
- Did you find the structure and layout of this publication scheme easy to understand and navigate?
 - If you were looking for some specific information, did this publication scheme facilitate that search successfully?
 - If you were browsing, did the scheme help guide your search and make the process easier?
 - Are there any types of information or areas that are not currently covered by the FSA Publication Scheme that you would like to see in the future?
 - Do you have any suggestions or other comments that might make this publication scheme more user-friendly or helpful?
47. Please send your views and comments on this publication scheme to the Openness Team at openness.team@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk stating your name, organisation (if relevant) and contact details. Alternatively, you can write to:
- Food Standards Agency
Openness Team
Correspondence, Openness and Parliamentary Branch
Aviation House (Room 2C)
125 Kingsway
London WC2B 6NH
48. The FSA Publication Scheme Co-ordinator is the Head of the Correspondence, Openness and Parliamentary Branch. Please contact them via the Openness Team as above.
49. The FSA Publication Scheme is maintained by the Openness Team.