



freshproduceconsortium
NEWSLETTER

20 February 2009

In this newsletter:

FSA consumer survey
GLA toughens up standards
New regs on high risk imports
FVO inspections
PSD updates product
withdrawals

**Big issue: ALV pilot – get
involved**



**Your opportunity to take part in
the industry's Oscars**

The Re:refresh Conference and Awards will take place on Thursday 28 May at the London Marriott - a fabulous opportunity to win one of the prestigious Re:refresh Awards presented at our Oscar style awards gala evening.

There's lots of competition for these popular awards so think about your entry and the categories – remember; you can enter more than one.

The deadline for entries is Thursday 9 April.

Entries are free, and forms are available from:
www.refreshawards.com

The overall Produce Trader of the Year will be selected from the winners of the following categories:

- Foodservice Supplier of the Year;
- Wholesaler of the Year;
- Retail Florist of the Year;
- Packer of the Year;
- Importer of the Year.

Other Awards categories are:

- 5 A DAY Supporter of the Year;
- Innovation of the Year;
- Retailer of the Year;
- Marketing Campaign of the Year;
- Young Person of the Year;
- Lifetime Achievement.

The programme for the conference is being finalised and is guaranteed to be full of topical debates, as informative and entertaining as 2008! With the credit crunch in mind we are offering a 'BOG OFF' for 2009! For conference details visit: www.refreshawards.com





Get involved – Pilot Automatic Licence Verification System

There are important changes to be introduced by Defra, RPA and HMRC in May 2009 which should reduce clearance times and paperwork of consignments. The International Trade Single Window, a cross government collaboration between Business Link, HMRC and Defra, is in the late stages of testing the new Automatic Licence Verification System (ALV).

Advance notifications submitted to Defra/RPA on the PEACH system will be received and matched to an import declaration submitted to HMRC on its CHIEF system. If there is an exact match, then a Defra and/or RPA release decision will be passed electronically to HMRC.

When live, the system will speed up the customs clearance of plants, flowers, fruit and vegetables imported into England and Wales from third countries and it will also remove the need for importers or agents to fax PHSI Quarantine Release Certificates or HMI Conformity Certificates to the National Clearance Hub at Salford.

The full launch of ALV is due to be preceded by a pilot starting in April 2009 and the ITSW team is seeking agents or importers who are willing to participate in the pilot.

We are looking to ensure that recent IT issues are addressed before further automation of the system. There are significant opportunities for a more efficient management of imports which will result in further savings to the industry, estimated to be at least £1 million. This will result from a reduced administrative burden to the industry and avoidance of additional costs at the port.

FPC has been actively pursuing these improvements. It's essential that the industry gets involved in the pilot. If you are interested in taking part in the pilot, or

if you would like further details, contact infor@freshproduce.org.uk

FSA consumer survey

FSA's latest quarterly mini survey, which monitors changes in consumer attitudes of key food issues, provides some interesting contrasts in consumer concerns. Some 2,097 UK adults were interviewed in December 2008 for this latest wave of tracking research.

The results show that 60% of respondents feel confident about actions being taken to protect health. There has been a gradual decrease in concerns about food issues, from a peak of 78% in March 2002 and June 2003.

The main food issues of concern were food poisoning, the amount of salt, fat and sugar in food, and food prices.

Consumers are more concerned about food prices than about the use of pesticides. Concern about pesticides has decreased over time, and is now at its lowest level since tracking began. Concern about food miles has remained fairly consistent, although it has decreased between June and December 2008.

For more details visit:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/trackersurvey1208.pdf>

GLA toughens up standards

The Gangmasters Licensing Authority has decided to toughen up the sanctions and standards which it will apply from 6 April 2009. These standards include:

- Increasing the likelihood that a gangmaster who ill-treats workers will have his licence revoked immediately, so that he has to stop trading straight away.



- Disqualifying gangmasters for two years when they are considered to be not fit and proper to hold a licence or have their licence revoked more than once (two strikes and out).
- Widening investigations into the background and track record of those involved in the licensed business to include anyone who influences its management.
- Expanding the test of who is a fit and proper person to be a gangmaster to catch those who try to exercise control without being named on the GLA licence.

There are no new legal requirements. GLA enforcement officers will be carrying out a series of unannounced raids as part on the continuing Operation Ajax.

For a copy of the new Licensing Standards visit:
http://www.gla.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?id=1013491

GLA revokes licence

The GLA has revoked the licence of High Class Recruitment based in Welling after being informed that the manager of the business, Paul Sangster, had left the company, after unsuccessful attempts to contact the remaining director to check if the business was still trading. No appeal was made by High Class Recruitment against the revocation.

The GLA cannot allow a licence to be held when it is clear that no person currently working for the company is permitted to act as a gangmaster. If the business is found to be operating without a licence in the GLA regulated sectors it would face prosecution with penalties of up to ten years imprisonment and an unlimited fine.

An earlier inspection in September found that no records were available to confirm the hours worked and the gangmaster could not produce timesheets when requested. The GLA had demanded that this was rectified immediately and proof of this was provided. It was found that holiday pay had not been paid as no worker had ever requested a day off. The gangmaster immediately issued a letter in Nepalese to encourage workers to book time off and understand their holiday entitlement. Proof was again demanded that this would be paid.

New regulation of imports of high risk products

The draft Regulation 882/2004 includes proposals regarding increased controls at the point of entry for plant products identified as having a known or emerging risk. The proposals relate to pesticide residue concerns in the Dominican Republic, Thailand and Turkey.

Produce which needs to be checked physically could be allowed continue its journey, but would only be allowed to be released for free circulation after favourable laboratory results.

Guidelines are being prepared regarding criteria for the listing of new countries and products. The listing will be revised four times a year.

FVO reports on pesticide controls in Dominican Republic

The Food and Veterinary Office has published a report following a recent inspection in the Dominican Republic on pesticide controls and residues on produce exported to the EU. The report concludes: "There is a very poor control system in place..Many pesticides not authorised for marketing and use in the EU



are regularly used in products for export. The control system does not provide guarantees equivalent to EU standards. There is no analytical capability and therefore residues with toxicological risks in exported products remain highly likely.”

The report is available from:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/act_getPDF.cfm?PDF_ID=6996

FVO inspection for UK

FVO plans to visit the UK for a pesticides inspection visit this year and to carry out a follow up on plant health. The 2009 programme includes:

EU Member States:

Food Hygiene/HACCP: Belgium; Cyprus; Greece; Latvia; Lithuania; Portugal; Slovenia.

Import controls: Belgium; Greece; Finland.

Pesticides: Belgium; Cyprus; Germany; Greece; Portugal; UK.

Import controls plant health: Finland; Greece; Lithuania; Latvia; Portugal; Slovenia.

Third countries:

Pesticides: Turkey; Brazil; Chile; Morocco.

Export controls Plant Health: China; Kenya; South Africa; Zimbabwe.

For details of the 2009 programme of FVO inspections and audits visit:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/inspectprog/inspect_prog_fvo_2009_en.pdf

PSD Updates on product withdrawals

PSD has provided dates for the withdrawal of sodium chlorate products. Professional

products containing sodium chlorate are given approval until 10 May 2010 for storage and use by any person.

Information about the withdrawal of sulphuric acid for plant protection purposes in the EC is available online:
<http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/home.asp>

The final date for use of sulphuric acid for plant protection purposes will be 5 June 2010.

EU Rapid Alert – Update

Information Notification:

Date: 11/02/2009; notified by the UK; ref: 2009.0172 unauthorised substance EPN (0.59 mg/kg – ppm) in yard long beans from Thailand.

Date: 11/02/2009; notified by the UK; ref: 2009.0173 unauthorised substance EPN (0.16 mg/kg – ppm) in yard long beans from Thailand.

Date: 11/02/2009; notified by the UK; ref: 2009.0173 unauthorised substance EPN (0.01 mg/kg – ppm) in yard long beans from Thailand.

Date: 11/02/2009; notified by the UK; ref: 2009.0173 unauthorised substance EPN (0.006 mg/kg – ppm) in yard long beans from Thailand.