

Our world-class services
ensure FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY



Over 100 laboratories in 26 countries



November 2020

MARKET NEWS



Hotline: 400-645-8088

Email: sales.china@mxns.cn

www.merieuxnutrisciences.com

www.merieuxnutrisciences.com.cn



CONTENTS

FOCUS ON CHINA	1
Cold-chain food focus of virus prevention	1
Food safety prioritized to end pandemic	2
22 foreign food importers lose spots on registry after virus contamination	4
Beijing launches new platform to trace imported cold-chain products	5
INTERNATIONAL NEWS	5
FDA Issues Draft Guidance for Industry on Voluntary Disclosure of Sesame When Added as Flavoring or Spice	5
EPA gives dicamba five more years with additional restrictions	6
EU toughens rules for sesame seeds from India	8
FAO to develop new food safety strategy	9
UK public want imports to meet domestic standards	10
Clarity urged for post Brexit food safety policies	11
FDA policy change on retail lists takes final step	13
FDA joins with groups in another study about the contamination of leafy greens	14
Food law under review in Australia, New Zealand is first in decades	15
SAFETY ALERTS	16
ENTERPRISE NEWS	17
USDA survey finds fast-growing organic food sales at nearly \$10 billion	17
Beyond Meat introduces ‘Beyond Pork’ for Chinese market	18
UK public ready to pay to avoid hormones in beef and chlorinated chicken	19
Salmonella test spurs recall of shell eggs in Canada	21
MARKET NEWS - REPLY	21

Focus on China



Cold-chain food focus of virus prevention



China's customs agency has stepped up efforts to prevent the novel coronavirus from being imported via cold-chain food with actions including broader communication with authorities in more than 100 countries, following a recent increase in cases of the virus entering the country on imported cold-chain food.

The General Administration of Customs said it has been in touch with authorities in all 109 countries that export cold-chain food to China and has demanded they urge food exporters to strictly follow sanitation guidelines and prevent coronavirus contamination

of food and packaging bound for China.

The administration said it has also suspended imports of goods from all enterprises that have reported cluster infections among their employees. By Wednesday, 99 such companies from 20 countries had suspended exports to China, it said.

The administration has also intensified risk-monitoring of imported cold-chain food and increased sampling tests of higher-risk foods such as seafood. Intensified efforts will continue, including extensive sterilization of imported cold-chain food, to minimize risks of outbreaks of COVID-19 due to importation of the virus, the administration said.

Detection of the novel coronavirus, which causes COVID-19, on imported cold-chain food or its packaging has been reported in more places across China recently, prompting authorities to issue alerts about the need to handle such food properly to minimize the chances of infection. While the epidemic has been brought well under control domestically, importation of the virus poses a major risk.

In Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi province, two cold-storage facilities were sealed on Sunday after a package of pork imported from Argentina tested positive for the novel coronavirus. Eighteen people linked with the case have been put under quarantine for medical observation and have all tested negative for the virus, city authorities said.

Novel coronavirus has also been detected on imported cold-chain food or its packaging in some other places in the past few days, including Jinan, Shandong province, Wuhan, Hubei province, and Quanzhou, Fujian province.

Wu Zunyou, chief epidemiologist at the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, said in a report by China Central Television on Sunday that a major reason that contaminated imported cold-chain food is being detected in more places across China is the worsening pandemic overseas, which has increased the chances of importing cold-chain food contaminated with the virus.

Another reason is falling temperatures in the northern hemisphere that have helped the virus survive longer. Meanwhile, local authorities across China have intensified monitoring of cold-chain food, resulting in timely identification of contaminated goods, he said.

Contaminated imported cold-chain food was suspected to be the cause of a COVID-19 outbreak in Beijing in June, as the virus was detected on cutting boards in a local wholesale market that had been used to process imported salmon. No locally transmitted COVID-19 cases had been reported in the city for nearly two months before the outbreak.

In October, researchers from the China CDC isolated live novel coronavirus for the first time from a package containing imported cod while tracing a COVID-19 outbreak in Qingdao, Shandong province. The discovery confirmed that contact with packaging contaminated with the novel coronavirus can cause infection.

Food safety prioritized to end pandemic

China, which is committed to ensuring food safety, has redoubled its efforts to bring safe and healthy food to dining tables across the country amid the global COVID-19 outbreak. To that end, the country has been rolling out measures to improve supervision of imported and home-produced food.

As COVID-19 continues to spread globally, cluster outbreaks have been reported in a number of food-processing enterprises overseas, bringing cold chain products under close scrutiny by Chinese authorities.

In a move to prevent possible virus transmission via imported food, the customs authority in July halted imports from three shrimp producers in Ecuador.

The authority ordered frozen products from the companies to be returned or destroyed

after samples from the inner wall of a container and the products' outer packaging tested positive for the virus.

Though the test results didn't mean the virus could infect people via food, they exposed loopholes in the companies' food safety regulations, said Bi Kexin, head of the Import and Export Food Safety Bureau at the General Administration of Customs.

Li Ning, a researcher with the China National Center for Food Safety Risk Assessment, said food has a low transmission risk, but there was a possibility of transmission if the processing environment was contaminated or workers were infected.

Regarding food safety as an important task for the country and authorities at all levels, the government has called for the strongest measures, the most rigorous standards, the strictest supervision, the severest punishments for violators and the most effective system of accountability.

Faced with a rising number of COVID-19 cases globally, the task of ensuring farm-to-fork food safety entails comprehensive containment measures.

As a result, China has been stepping up efforts to keep a close eye on imported food and food-related industries at home.



Inspections intensified

To cut off overseas virus transmission channels, China has intensified inspection and testing of imported food in the cold chain.

As of Sept 15, the General Administration of Customs had

suspended imports from 56 cold chain food companies overseas.

Mechanisms to facilitate coordination and information sharing have also been put in place, while food retailers have been ordered to take steps as soon as a problem is spotted.

"Whether it is imported or home-produced, food sold in the domestic market should be strictly supervised according to the law," said Dang Qianying, an official with the State Administration for Market Regulation.

Meanwhile, Li Xingqian, director of the Foreign Trade Department at the Ministry of Commerce, said China's inspection of imported food is in line with international standards and regulations.

He stressed that food businesses should observe all new guidelines issued by the World Health Organization and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

The steps are aimed at protecting people's health, Li Xingqian said, adding that the cluster of COVID-19 cases in Beijing in June sparked concerns over the risk of the virus being transmitted by imported refrigerated food.

Despite stricter food supervision and inspection, China will remain committed to expanding imports, and promoting agricultural trade has always been an integral part of the country's opening-up policy, Li Xingqian said.

Official data show that food and agricultural imports have grown rapidly this year, despite disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. During the January to May period, imports of agricultural products rose 9 percent year-on-year, 17 percentage points higher than the country's total imports during the same period.

Bi, from the import and export food safety bureau, said China welcomes safe, quality food from all over the world, and stands ready to undertake in-depth cooperation with

other countries to promote food safety and the healthy development of the global food trade.



Reducing risks

As food safety supervision concerns every member of China's population of 1.4 billion and people's health and lives, authorities at all levels have prioritized food safety in public health and are urging greater efforts to reduce all risks.

In response to COVID-19, the country has banned the illegal trade in wildlife and the consumption of such animals, and has tightened supervision of the food industry, covering employees, the environment and logistics. In July, authorities announced the gradual closure of all live poultry markets.

People in the food industry are the focus of antivirus efforts. In the wake of the June

outbreak at the Xinfadi wholesale market in Beijing, authorities started large-scale nucleic acid testing of workers in farmers' markets and the catering and delivery industries to stem virus transmission via food-related business activities.

Given that food delivery workers tend to be exposed to people frequently and therefore face higher health risks, the country has specifically issued antivirus guidelines ordering workers to maintain social distancing of at least 1 meter, use contactless delivery and place different foods in separate areas.

Supervision of the food market has been intensified across the country, especially in places with large populations.

COVID-19 prevention inspections have been conducted in the southern province of Guangdong, an economic powerhouse, covering local farmers' markets, supermarkets and retail and wholesale markets for aquatic products.

Cold chain food logistics have also come under the spotlight. To regulate the sector, China has implemented a national regulation outlining compulsory requirements for all links in cold chain food, including production, processing, transportation and sales.

Greater supervision

While employing the toughest measures to prevent food safety issues at source, supervise all links and control risks, China in 2016 pledged to establish a more unified, authoritative supervision system.

Last year, the country issued a guideline that aimed to tighten food safety supervision "from farmland to the dining table" and further build up capacities to ensure whole-chain food safety and quality.

According to the guideline, the country will establish a preliminary food safety supervision system based on risk control and supply management that will be capable

of basically bringing major food risks under control.

It will also raise food safety conditions to a level commensurate with the goal of finishing the task of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects by the end of the year.

22 foreign food importers lose spots on registry after virus contamination



China has paused or revoked the registry of 22 foreign food importers whose supplies were found to have been contaminated by novel coronavirus, an official said Thursday.

It came after the Central Administration of Customs recently carried out a sample inspection of imported frozen food supplies from 140 enterprises in 50 countries as part of a broader effort to prevent imported infections during autumn and winter, said Bi

Kexin, head of the administration's food safety department.

As of Wednesday, the administration also has suspended imports from 99 companies in 20 countries that have seen cluster infections among employees, he said at a news conference held by the State Council Information Office in Beijing.

China had tested 873,475 food samples by the end of Wednesday, of which 13 tested positive for the virus, Bi said.

The administration has urged companies to strictly observe guidelines set by the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization to prevent virus-related contamination from production and processing to storage and transportation, as well as rules issued by China's health authorities, he said.

The central government on Sunday released a guideline on disinfection of frozen supplies, after a worker at a port in Tianjin tested positive for the virus.

Beijing launches new platform to trace imported cold-chain products

Starting from Sunday, all producers and marketers of imported frozen meat and aquatic products in Beijing are required to upload sources, distribution points and other data of those products to an online platform, in order to strengthen the supervision of imported cold-chain foods amid the global COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the municipal administration for market regulation and the municipal commerce bureau, the involved companies are required to register on the platform.

All the imported cold-chain products in the market should be labeled with corresponding tracing codes generated by the platform.

Customers can use WeChat or Alipay mini-programs on their phones to scan the tracing codes on product packages or freezers in markets, obtain the quality safety information

and trace data for the imported frozen meat and aquatic products they are about to buy.

Food companies should not purchase, sell or process products without archiving tracing data on the platform, said the authority.

Relevant government departments in Beijing will step up supervision and inspection work. The ones that fail to upload the information will be asked to take down their products from the shelves.

International News

FDA Issues Draft Guidance for Industry on Voluntary Disclosure of Sesame When Added as Flavoring or Spice

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration today issued a draft guidance for voluntary sesame labeling to encourage manufacturers to clearly declare sesame in the ingredient list, when it is used as a “flavoring” or “spice” or when the common or usual name (such as tahini) does not specify sesame. This voluntary labeling guidance to industry aims to help consumers who are allergic or sensitive to sesame to avoid these products.

Sesame has been identified as a food allergen that can cause reactions such as hives, vomiting, wheezing, and anaphylaxis. Sesame is not one of the eight major food allergens required by the 2004 Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA) to be included in specific allergen labeling, but in most cases, it does have to appear in the ingredient statement. An exception is when sesame is part of a flavoring or spice. In those cases, it may be declared as simply “spice” or “flavor” on the label without requiring “sesame” to be

included, so its presence may not be obvious to consumers. The FDA is recommending that manufacturers voluntarily declare sesame following the spice or flavor, such as, “spice (sesame)” or “flavor (sesame).” FDA is also recommending if a term is used for a food that is or contains sesame, such as tahini, sesame should be voluntarily included in parentheses following the ingredient.

On October 30, 2018, FDA issued a notice requesting data and information on the prevalence and severity of sesame allergies in the United States and the prevalence of sesame-containing food in the United States that are not required to disclose sesame as an ingredient. Data and information received in response to the notice indicated that the reported prevalence of sesame allergies in the U.S. population appears to have increased, that sesame causes a relatively high frequency of severe allergic adverse events, and that allergic reactions to sesame may occur from products with undeclared sesame ingredients.

The FDA does not have the authority to amend the eight major food allergens established by FALCPA; however, it has the authority under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to require labeling for other food allergens not covered by the requirements in FALCPA. The FDA continues to assess allergens of public health importance, including potential science-based options to empower consumers with information about these allergens.

Comments on the draft voluntary sesame labeling guidance should be submitted within 60 days after publication in the Federal Register.

EPA gives dicamba five more years with additional restrictions



Dicamba, the broad-spectrum herbicide first registered for farm use in 1967, will be back for the 2021 growing season under new label restrictions from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

This past spring, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit did an immediate withdrawal of the registrations of three dicamba herbicide brands. Soybean and cotton farmers who hadn’t already bought enough herbicide to control weeds through this past summer were left hanging.

This week, EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler responded to the Court’s ban on dicamba use from summer. The new EPA plan allows a five-year registration for dicamba for use on soybean and cotton fields to control weeds.

Additional restrictions including application cut-off dates, downwind buffers, and others are included in the EPA plan that intended to run through the 2025

growing season. Wheeler said the plan gives “certainty to growers as they make purchasing decisions.”

“State department of agriculture leaders respect the decision made by EPA, as NASDA members depend on EPA’s high-quality science-based risk assessment to steward healthy farms and healthy communities,” said Barb Glenn, who heads the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA).

Earlier this month, NASDA and the Association of American Pesticide Control Officials sent a letter to EPA’s Wheeler expressing nationwide state pesticide regulators’ unanimous support for EPA’s rigorous, science-based approach to evaluating pesticide products. In the letter, NASDA urged EPA to consider the approaching growing season in its timeline for reviewing the formulations. NASDA members advise farmers to only apply pesticides according to their label instructions.

“The timely decision provides farmers with information to make purchasing choices for next spring, a valuable measure of certainty during this unprecedented year,” she added. “To effectively prepare for the 2021 growing season, NASDA members will engage with farmers to acutely understand the decision’s impacts and work closely with EPA to co-regulate pesticide use.”

The American Soybean Association (ASA) also issued a statement saying: “Dicamba is an important choice for growers to have available to help manage damaging weeds.” ASA said it “is reviewing the new registration to have a comprehensive understanding of its impact on U.S. soybean production.”

ASA President Bill Gordon, a soybean farmer from Worthington, MN, said dicamba “is one of many tools integral to the success of soy growers who face different crop production challenges throughout a diverse growing region

spanning 30-plus states.

“We rely in great part on EPA support for the continued success of our industry, from measures encouraging biodiesel market expansion to these types of decisions regarding safe and effective use of crop protection tools,” Gordon continued. “We thank EPA today for the many steps and time invested in coming to this decision to reregister a product relied upon by many soy growers.”

The economic damage that would result if dicamba herbicides were not available “would be tremendous,” according to the National Cotton Council’s Kent Fountain, a Georgia cotton producer. He says it is a “critical crop protection product for cotton producers.”

Cotton growers predicted a 50 percent yield loss in fields with resistant pigweed without dicamba.

The issues of “drift damage” to close-by organic fields and whether dicamba is “safe enough” aren’t going away.

“Rather than evaluating the significant costs of dicamba drift as the 9th Circuit told them the law required, EPA rushed re-approval as a political prop just before the election, sentencing farmers and the environment to another five years of unacceptable damage,” said George Kimbrell, Legal Director at the Center for Food Safety (CFS).

“Center for Food Safety will most certainly challenge these unlawful approvals,” Kimbrell promised.

Dicamba, according to recent estimates, was used on 41 percent of soybean acreage and 71 percent of cotton acreage. The estimates are based on the purchase of dicamba-tolerant seeds. Growers use dicamba brands to reduce

weed control costs.

EU toughens rules for sesame seeds from India



The European Commission has strengthened checks on sesame seeds from India as recalls due to pesticide residue contamination continue.

The move was prompted by food safety incidents notified through the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) portal and information from official controls by member states on the seeds from India.

An alert was first raised by Belgium in early September and now includes more than 50 notifications from France, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Italy, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Austria, Norway, and Sweden.

Contaminated seeds have also been sent to Andorra, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom.

High-level contamination

In September, very high levels of ethylene oxide were notified through RASFF in certain batches of sesame seeds originating in or sent from India and having

entered the EU. Those results exceed more than 1,000 times the maximum residue limit (MRL) of 0.05 milligrams per kilogram for ethylene oxide set by regulation. Ethylene oxide is also not approved as an active substance for use in plant protection products.

Such contamination constitutes a serious risk to human health as it is classed as a mutagen, a carcinogen, and a reproductive toxicant, according to the Commission. Ethylene oxide is not an acute health hazard but can be harmful if continually ingested over time. Experts at the NVWA are investigating how much-contaminated sesame seed you have to eat before there are issues and results are expected shortly.

Ethylene oxide was used to inhibit the growth of Salmonella during the storage of sesame seeds in India.

Several batches of sesame seeds from five producers in India were contaminated with ethylene oxide above the MRL, according to the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA).

Contaminated sesame products have been used in a range of products including cereals, salads, chocolate, biscuits, bread, crackers, sesame oil, bagels, and Asian dishes.

Increased border checks

The official certificate which accompanies all consignments of sesame seeds from India should also state the products have been sampled and analyzed for residues of pesticides to be monitored in/on products of plant origin, and that results show compliance with EU legislation on maximum residue levels of pesticides. The results of sampling and analysis should be attached to the certificate.

The frequency of physical and identity checks for pesticide residues on sesame seeds from India at the EU borders should be set at 50 percent for the time being. They are already on the list of products subject to extra checks due to Salmonella.

Consignments of sesame seeds from India that left the country of origin or the place of dispatch before the regulation became applicable this week are not subject to the enhanced rules.

Mattilsynet (Norwegian Food Safety Authority) has instructed companies with products containing sesame seeds that have been proven to contain ethylene oxide to destroy items by incineration as they cannot be used for food, feed, or fertilizer.

FAO to develop new food safety strategy



The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is to develop

a new food safety strategy.

The Committee on Agriculture (COAG), held virtually from Sept. 28 to Oct. 2, 2020, agreed to support the development of the strategy. A previous session backed FAO's food safety plan in 2014. The COAG has more than 100 member nations and meets every two years. It provides overall policy and regulatory guidance on issues including food safety.

The aim is to submit the updated document at the next meeting of the committee in 2022 for consideration and endorsement. Direction may be influenced by the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit.

Such a strategy would serve as international guidance, policy, and advocacy platform for decision-makers that can be used to encourage increased investments and integration of food safety into the development of sustainable food systems, food security and nutrition policies, and agriculture development strategies.

Align with WHO and Codex work

The Executive Board of the World Health Organization (WHO) in February 2020 adopted the resolution "Accelerating efforts on food safety" calling for an update of the WHO global strategy for food safety which is also planned for 2022.

Speakers during the COAG discussion online encouraged FAO to ensure alignment of the strategy with the work of WHO and Codex.

The COAG recognized the connection between food safety and food security and the role of the former towards FAO's support of sustainable and inclusive agricultural and food systems. It encouraged FAO to include an approach that

assists countries in the implementation of current tools that exist to strengthen national food control systems.

Experts also recognized that no single group can solve all food safety challenges and told FAO and WHO to use partnerships to create multi-sector and multi-disciplinary problem-solving.

A changing food system

In a rationale for the strategy, it was noted how changes in food systems require a need to rethink the place of food safety in sustainable development.

“The relevance of food safety to society, economic development, and sustainable food systems need to be better understood and promoted. A new food safety strategy should further address One Health issues, such as antimicrobial resistance, emerging zoonotic diseases, climate change, agricultural intensification, new technologies, innovation, food fraud, digitalization of food systems, and circular economies. The COVID-19 pandemic also demonstrates the increased relevance of food safety in emergency food assistance and humanitarian food aid.”

The revised approach will provide advice on managing unforeseen global challenges and crises that may affect the food supply. Developing such a strategy will help ensure food safety considerations are built in from scientific, regulatory, and capacity development perspectives.

There is also an environmental impact to consider as food loss and waste include the destruction of unsafe food that has been recalled or confiscated and fraudulent products.

Globalization, new digitalized distribution channels, e-commerce, and informal

markets can all disrupt food safety if not managed carefully, according to FAO. The role of social media also needs to be considered as part of the strategy.

“Digitalization may facilitate international food trade with faster, more cost-efficient electronic certifications, increased food safety and traceability, and reduced vulnerability to food fraud. E-commerce, while potentially promising opportunities to low-income countries and smaller businesses, may result in new food safety problems if specific and new approaches for food safety checks will not be enacted by food control competent authorities.”

UK public want imports to meet domestic standards



Two-thirds of people in the United Kingdom want future meat and dairy imports to be up to the same standards as those produced domestically, a survey has found.

The Yonder poll, commissioned by Eating Better, the Food Ethics Council, and Hubbub, interviewed 2,095 people in the UK in September.

A quarter believed the UK should not bring in any meat and dairy and only 3 percent of respondents said it should import such products regardless of quality.

More than three-quarters of those surveyed agreed that the government should assess future trade deals for their impact on human health and the environment.

Dan Crossley, executive director of the Food Ethics Council, said the survey

shows a majority want the government to ensure food imports are of high quality.

Simon Billing, executive director of Eating Better, said people care about where their meat comes from and under what conditions it's produced.

“In the face of climate and ecological emergencies, leaving the EU should be the opportunity for the UK to raise its game, and at the very least not see our farmers undermined by imports of lower standards.”

Increased oversight of trade deals

The UK government recently gave the Trade and Agriculture Commission (TAC) a more active role in scrutinizing trade deals. The body was initially launched for six months in July but will now be around for at least the next three years.

It will produce a report on the impact on animal welfare and agriculture of each free trade deal the government signs after the EU transition period ends in January 2021. Politicians will have 21 days to debate and vote on the findings before deals are approved by parliament.

George Eustice, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, said: “By putting the Trade and Agriculture Commission on a statutory footing, we are ensuring that the voices of our farmers, as well as those of consumers and key environmental and animal welfare groups, continue to be heard while we are in the process of scrutinizing future trade deals.”

Tim Smith, chair of the TAC, said: “From a standing start in July the Trade and Agriculture Commission has been able to cover a huge amount of ground and I know that it will play a key role in establishing independent scrutiny of Britain's new trade deals.”

National Farmers Union president, Minette Batters, said the commitment to primary legislation on food standards, in the Agriculture Bill and Trade Bill, is what it has been wanting.

“This decision means everyone who cares about our trading relationships with the rest of the world ... will see independent expert advice from the Trade and Agriculture Commission on future trade deals before they are ratified.”

Sue Davies, head of Consumer Protection and Food Policy at consumer watchdog Which? said it was a positive step that could help build trust in the government's approach to negotiations with other countries.

“However, if the Trade and Agriculture Commission is to be put on a statutory footing, its membership must change so that the needs and concerns of millions of consumers who will ultimately judge the success of new trade deals are properly represented.”

Also this week, the House of Commons again voted against a House of Lords amendment to the Agriculture Bill on ensuring imported food met equivalent standards to those followed by UK producers.

Clarity urged for post Brexit food safety policies

Members of a parliamentary committee have called for greater clarity about food safety after the United Kingdom leaves the European Union.

The House of Lords Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee is looking at how the Food and Feed Safety and Hygiene (FFSH) framework will work alongside the UK Internal Market Bill, which is a proposal to ensure goods can move freely in the countries of the UK.

Baroness Kay Andrews, chair of the committee and a Labour peer, has again

written to Emily Miles, chief executive of the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The first letter was in mid-October with the FSA reply in early November.

The FSA has not provided sufficient clarity around the UK Internal Market Bill, according to the committee.

“As your letter makes clear, risk decisions are the responsibility of health ministers in each administration, who may choose to agree divergent approaches and as such have different safety standards. The ability for businesses to circumvent agreed differences in national rules appears to fundamentally undermine the framework,” said Andrews.



Questions for the FSA

Market access principles in the Internal Market Bill will mean that products placed on the market of only one country could now legally be sold into others in the UK. The FSA said this is not expected to pose a food safety risk because action taken locally should ensure such items are safe.

The committee also asked for greater precision on the dispute settlement

process to deal with issues of divergence; suggested ways to resolve disputes relating to the Northern Ireland Protocol and the timetable for parliamentary scrutiny of the framework.

Common Frameworks help governments agree on regulatory consistency for policy areas where returning EU powers have been devolved to Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish governments. The FFSH framework is intended to be agreed and signed by ministers by the end of the transition period on Dec. 31 this year. The aim is to maintain similar approaches to food and feed safety and hygiene policy, unless there is an evidence-based, public health need for them to be different.

Scotland’s ban on raw milk falls under an existing arrangement and would not be affected by the Internal Market Bill. However, if another country wished to later introduce a ban on raw drinking milk it is not clear how this would work. In the rest of the UK, raw milk sales are permitted.

It is still not known if the UK will have full access to the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) as terms are still being discussed in the ongoing UK-EU negotiations.

Stakeholder engagement by the FSA on framework proposals in early October involved the Food and Drink Federation, British Retail Consortium, consumer group Which?, National Farmers Union Scotland and others.

Devolved nations issues

The Internal Market Bill, which is currently being debated in the House of Lords, has already met criticism from Scotland and Wales. An example of how it could work is if Welsh Parliament legislation prohibits the sale of genetically modified (GM) food in Wales, while there is no such prohibition in England, the principle

of mutual recognition would mean that it would be lawful for producers in England to sell GM food in Wales, despite the Welsh Parliament ruling.

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) expressed concerns over the potential adverse impact the bill could have on consumers' food interests.

Ross Finnie, FSS chair, said it would impact the agency's ability to ensure transparency in food safety and standards.

“The bill needs to do more to advance the protection of consumers. Cost reduction is not the sole determinant when it comes to public health protection as lessons from previous major food incidents demonstrate. Further, if consumer interest is defined solely by cost then inevitably it will drive down standards, because lower standards are less costly,” he said.

“At no point has legislative underpinning been identified as necessary, particularly as there has been no evidence to demonstrate ways in which bodies such as FSS are currently unable to protect consumers in relation to food.”

FDA policy change on retail lists takes final step



The FDA is out with “final guidance” for industry and agency staff for the release of retailers that receive recalled foods so they might be more easily identified by consumers.

Current FDA policy prohibits the release of such retailer lists to protect the disclosure of

“confidential” business ties. USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) routinely releases retail lists and has done so since 2007 when Dr. Richard Raymond was Under Secretary for Food Safety during the Bush Administration.

FDA Friday announced the availability of final guidance entitled “Public Availability of Lists of Retail Consignees to Effectuate Certain Human and Animal Food Recalls; Guidance for Industry and FDA Staff.”

FDA says it intends to focus on recalls where there is a reasonable probability that the use of, or exposure to, the food will cause serious adverse health consequences or death to humans or animals (Class I recalls),

FDA may also publicize retail consignee lists for other food recalls as described in the guidance. FDA says it’s goal is to publicize retail consignee lists for these food recalls where providing this additional information will be of the most use to consumers to help them identify recalled food and to determine whether that food is in their possession as effectively and quickly as possible.

The guidance for industry and FDA staff describes how and when FDA intends to collect, compile, and publicize lists of retail consignees that may have received recalled foods. FDA’s goal is to publicize retail consignee lists for these food recalls, especially those that are likely to be classified as Class I recalls, providing this additional information will be of the most useful to consumers to help them identify recalled food and to determine whether that food is in their possession as effectively and quickly as possible.

In the Federal Register of September 27, 2018 (83 FR 48825), FDA announced a draft guidance for industry and FDA staff entitled “Public Availability of Lists of Retail Consignees to Effectuate Certain Human and Animal Food Recalls” and gave interested parties an opportunity to submit comments by November 26,

2018, for us to consider before beginning work on the final version of the guidance.

FDA reviewed comments received and, where appropriate, made changes to the guidance based on these comments. The changes include a change to footnote seven of the guidance regarding restaurants, a statement that FDA intends to update the retail consignee lists as the information available to FDA develops, the removal of an example of food that may fit the criteria described in the guidance, and other non-substantive edits.

The guidance announced in this notice finalizes the draft guidance dated September 2018.

This guidance is being issued consistent with FDA's good guidance practices regulation (21 CFR 10.115). This guidance represents FDA's current thinking regarding publicizing lists of retail consignees to effectuate certain food recalls.

FDA joins with groups in another study about the contamination of leafy greens



On the heels on multiple outbreaks this past year and currently amid three mystery outbreaks, the FDA along with growers, researchers and other entities in California have announced a multi-year study to enhance food safety through better understanding of human pathogens in the environment.

Participants include the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), the University of California-Davis, Western Center for Food Safety (WCFS), and agricultural stakeholders in the Central Coast of California.

“The launch of this study follows a series of E. coli O157:H7 outbreaks in recent years linked to California’s lettuce production regions, particularly the most recent three outbreaks in the fall of 2019 which collectively resulted in 188 people falling ill,” according to the FDA’s announcement.

“In response, FDA launched an investigation, the findings of which are outlined in a report released in May 2020. The FDA also published a Leafy Green STEC Action Plan to address issues associated with leafy green Shiga toxin-producing E. coli (STEC) contamination. This new longitudinal study is included in the action plan, as well as the continuation of a similar study being conducting in the Yuma, Arizona growing region.”

Officials with FDA say a vital part of the Leafy Green STEC Action Plan is the need to address knowledge gaps in order to advance prevention. Thus, the multi-year study will examine how pathogens survive and move through the environment and possibly contaminate produce.

Researchers will include water quality, food safety, and agricultural experts from the Western Center for Food Safety, representatives from various agriculture industries, and members of the leafy greens industry.

Research teams will be collecting and examining samples from the environment

including adjacent land, well and surface waters, soil inputs that include compost, and dust and animal fecal samples.

The California Central Coast region grows a significant portion of the nation's leafy greens. The findings from this study will contribute new knowledge on how various environmental factors may influence bacterial persistence and distribution in this region, and how those factors may impact the risk of leafy greens becoming contaminated.

Food law under review in Australia, New Zealand is first in decades



A review of food regulations in Australia and New Zealand is in progress to prepare for the future. The reform includes amending parts of the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991 for the first time in almost 30 years.

New Zealand and Australia have a shared regulatory system that sees joint development of food composition and labelling policy and standards.

In November 2019, the Australia New Zealand Ministerial Forum on Food Regulation endorsed a plan to reform the bi-national food regulation system.

Public comment period

A scoping paper is open for public comment in New Zealand and Australia until Nov. 16. It seeks views on issues and tensions within the regulatory system and ideas for possible modifications.

The review will also examine the associated operations and responsibilities of Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ). In recent years, FSANZ's operating budget has declined in real terms.

The Australian Government's Department of Health is leading the work with New Zealand's Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). It has been running since July 2020 with stakeholders saying the Australia-New Zealand food regulatory system can be improved in relation to responsiveness, flexibility and timeliness but it is not broken.

The first reform idea is defining public health and safety in legislation to include long-term health and nutrition as objectives. The second is recognizing trade as a core goal and reframing consumer choice as a factor for FSANZ.

Amendment plans

Two reform ideas were identified for FSANZ's functions. Additional areas could include a role in emerging issues such as food fraud and food crime and coordinating food safety research.

Two ideas were put forward to support more strategic reviews of food standards. This includes removing exemptions that currently exist in the FSANZ Act on food standards so they could be subject to regular checks and additional

resources to do more reviews.

Two suggestions have been identified to address issues relating to legal processes such as reframing legislation to support more risk-based processes and redefining decision-making arrangements.

Three reform proposals relating to new pathways to amend food standards were identified. One is to enhance FSANZ's ability to adopt or accept risk assessments from overseas. Another is to enable FSANZ to adopt or incorporate international standards and the third would enable industry to bring new food products to market in Australia and New Zealand quicker. It will also shift oversight toward post-approval monitoring and quality assurance.

Three ideas have been identified that could help consistency in interpretation of food standards by the jurisdictions. The first is giving FSANZ resources to provide guidance about food standards within its current legislative remit. Next is new legislative power to provide binding interpretive advice about standards to jurisdictions and industry. The final point is providing the agency with limited enforcement powers to enforce compliance with food standards.

Feedback will inform a shortlist of reform opportunities that will be further researched and subject to a cost-benefit analysis. Findings will be collated and further consultation will take place before any legislative changes.

Safety Alerts

Date	Brand Name(s)	Product Description	Product Type	Recall Reason Description	Company Name
11/23/2020	Whole Foods Market	Popcorn chicken with sweet chili sauce	Food & Beverages	Undeclared shellfish (shrimp)	Whole Foods Market
11/21/2020	Dole and Wild Harvest	Organic Romaine Hearts	Food & Beverages, Foodborne Illness, Produce	Potential for Pathogenic non-O157 E. coli	Dole Fresh Vegetables Inc.
11/17/2020	Fresh Express	Fresh Express Kit Caesar Supreme	Food & Beverages, Foodborne Illness	Escherichia coli STEC 026 bacteria	Fresh Express
11/13/2020	Albright's	Raw Dog Food Chicken Recipe for Dogs	Animal & Veterinary, Foodborne Illness, Pet Food, Food & Beverages, Foodborne Illness, Pet Food	Potential to be contaminated with Salmonella	Albright's Raw Dog Food
11/12/2020	Aldi Southern Grove	On the Go Sweet & Salty Trail	Food & Beverages, Allergens, Snack	Undeclared Almonds	Kanan Enterprises

		Mix	Food Item		
11/06/2020	Tanimura & Antle	Single head romaine lettuce	Food & Beverages	Possible contamination with E. Coli 0157:H7	Tanimura & Antle Inc.
11/02/2020	Natural Grocers	Organic Whole Elder Berries	Food & Beverages, Foodborne Illness, Fruit/Fruit Product	Salmonella	Vitamin Cottage Natural Food Markets, Inc.
10/30/2020	Homestead Creamery	Lemonade half gallon	Food & Beverages	Potential for residual chlorine from the sanitizing process	Homestead Creamery
10/29/2020	J&O	Mixed Veggie Cup with Dip	Food & Beverages	Undeclared egg	Russ Davis Wholesale
10/28/2020	Whole Foods Market	Macaroni and Cheese products	Food & Beverages	Undeclared egg	Whole Foods Market

Enterprise News

USDA survey finds fast-growing organic food sales at nearly \$10 billion



USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) has released the results of the 2019 Organic Survey.

It reports total sales of \$9.93 billion in organic products, an increase of \$2.37 billion, or 31 percent, from 2016.

There were 16,585 certified organic farms, a 17 percent increase from 2016, which accounted for 5.5 million certified acres, an increase of 9 percent over 2016.

California continued to lead the nation in certified organic sales with \$3.60 billion, which is 36 percent of the U.S. total and four times that of any other state. California also led all states with 3,012 certified farms and 965,257 certified acres.

Washington (\$886 million), Pennsylvania (\$742 million), Oregon (\$454 million), and Texas (\$424 million), round out the top five states for the value of organic sales.

“The results of the 2019 Organic Survey show the continued growth of organic production in the United States,” said NASS Administrator Hubert Hamer.

“These comprehensive and essential, national- and state-level data are valuable to the organic industry as well as agri-business infrastructure and programs that support the sector.”

The top sectors and commodities in 2019 were:

Livestock and poultry products: \$2.48 billion, up 12 percent

Milk: \$1.59 billion, up 14 percent

Vegetables: \$2.08 billion, up 27 percent

Lettuce: \$400 million, up 44 percent

Fruits, tree nuts, and berries: \$2.02 billion, up 44 percent

Apples: \$475 million, up 45 percent

Livestock and Poultry: \$1.66 billion, up 44 percent

Broiler chickens: \$1.12 billion, up 49 percent

Field Crops: \$1.18 billion, up 55 percent

Corn for grain: \$278 million, up 70 percent

Other top organic commodities with the greatest gains in the value of sales from 2016 were spinach (52 percent), grapes (52 percent), cultivated blueberries (104 percent), raspberries (197 percent), and turkeys (68 percent).

Marketing practices in the certified organic farming sector showed that \$2.04 billion in organic products were sold directly to retail markets, institutions, and local/regional food hubs. Another \$300 million in organic products were sold directly to consumers at farmers’ markets, on-farm stores and stands, roadside stands or stores, u-pick, community-supported agriculture farms, and online

markets. Value-added products such as jam, wine, cheese, and meat, accounted for \$727 million.

The survey also asked producers about plans for future production. Twenty-nine percent of farms plan to increase their level of organic production. More than 1,800 certified organic farms have 255,000 additional acres in the three-year transition period required for land to become certified as organic. An additional 710 farms not currently certified reported 61,000 acres of land transitioning to organic production.

The 2019 Organic Survey, a 2017 Census of Agriculture special study, is a census of all known U.S. farms and ranches with certified organic production in 2019, as well as those transitioning into organic production.

Producers must meet the standards set out by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service’s National Organic Program and be certified compliant by an approved agent of the program.

Beyond Meat introduces ‘Beyond Pork’ for Chinese market



Los Angeles-based Beyond Meat’s expansion to the People’s Republic of China announced in early September, is already taking shape with a new product roll-out for the Chinese market.

From Shanghai, Beyond Meat officials said their newest product produced in

China is trademarked as “Beyond Pork.”

The company said the plant-based minced pork is Beyond Meat’s latest cutting edge innovation, and its first product developed specifically for the Chinese market. Through Nov. 24, five popular Shanghai restaurants are featuring the new offering in ground pork dishes.

Beyond Meat’s statement said Beyond Pork is “designed to deliver the sumptuous taste, juicy texture and culinary versatility similar to traditional minced pork,” Beyond Pork was created specifically for the Chinese market and is the next step forward in Beyond Meat’s commitment to creating high-quality products that meet consumers’ demand for delicious, nutritious and sustainable protein.

“We’re excited to launch Beyond Pork in China, marking a milestone for Beyond Meat as we are not only launching an entirely new product innovation, but our first plant-based meat product created specifically for the Chinese market,” said Candy Chan, China general manager for Beyond Meat.

“With Beyond Pork, Beyond Meat is providing even more delicious options for consumers to continue to eat their favorite dishes while enjoying the added nutritional and environmental benefits of plant-based meat. Beyond Pork’s exclusive debut in China furthers Beyond Meat’s commitment to this important market and its vision for plant-based meat to continue winning the hearts — and mouths — of Chinese consumers.”

The company statement said minced pork is featured in many Chinese dishes, making China the perfect place for Beyond Pork to show off its potential. From dumplings and mapo tofu to zhajiang noodles and lion’s head meatballs, Beyond Pork delivers the meaty taste and texture that Chinese consumers crave but

with about 50 percent less saturated and total fat. Made from simple plant-based ingredients, like rice and soybeans, Beyond Pork offers a source of protein with 18.5g per 100g serving and has no antibiotics or hormones.

To celebrate the launch of Beyond Pork, Beyond Meat is partnering with five popular restaurants in Shanghai, one of China’s food capitals. The roster of partner restaurants features some of the hottest names in Shanghai’s food scene, including Egg, Moménti, RAC, Solo X, and Tun Wang.

“I was very impressed the first time I tried Beyond Pork; I even thought the chef must have actually used traditional animal pork mince by mistake. I think our fans are going to be very impressed when they try it — I bet they won’t even be able to tell the difference either,” said Simon Briens, co-founder of RAC restaurant.

UK public ready to pay to avoid hormones in beef and chlorinated chicken

A number of UK consumers could be willing to pay more to avoid food made using production methods common in the United States but banned in Europe.

Research from the School of Economics at the University of Kent, the University of Reading and IHS Markit, found that UK consumers highly value production that follows food safety standards set by the EU as well as UK produced food.

Willingness - to - pay estimates indicate that positive values for food safety are frequently greater than the negative values placed on prohibited food production methods, according to the study published in the Journal of Agricultural Economics.

Researchers examined consumer preferences for four food types made using

production technologies currently not authorized in the UK. They are hormone implants in beef; Ractopamine in pig feed; chlorine washed chicken; and Atrazine pesticide in corn production.



Price reductions

Four food products were used to judge consumer attitudes: 500-grams of chicken breast, 250-grams of beef sirloin steak, 1-kilogram of pork loin joint and a 2 pack of corn on the cob. Attributes used included price, country of origin, organic status, food standards and quality assurance. In total, 1,600 survey responses were collected online between December 2018 and January 2019.

For chicken the negative willingness to pay suggests a price reduction of 26 percent, for beef it is 36 percent and for pork it is nearly 60 percent. These reductions are larger than estimates used in models on the economic benefits from removing existing trade restrictions between the U.S. and EU.

In terms of willingness to pay estimates, the RSPCA quality assurance attribute is very highly valued along with the Red Tractor label and EU food safety. A high value is also placed on UK production compared to that from the EU or non - EU.

Researchers produced willingness to pay results for the three types of meat using a common per unit measure. Results indicate that, per 100 grams, the largest negative estimate is for hormone implants in beef, followed by hormone in pork and chlorine washed chicken.

The work found that while people on average do not like chlorine washed chicken, with some hating it, about 40 percent are positive about it. Findings come as the UK is in post-Brexit agricultural trade negotiations with countries including the U.S. and Europe.

More than a third of respondents think EU exit will have a negative effect on food while a quarter said it would have a positive effect. Forty percent think it will be neutral or do not know.

Professor Iain Fraser, Professor of Agri-Environmental Economics at Kent's School of Economics, said findings are a strong indicator of the expectations placed on food production by UK consumers.

“Methods of food production that fall short in terms of animal welfare draw a negative response from UK consumers, whilst in contrast the presence of EU food safety standards on packaging results in a positive response from consumers.”

Public view on food standards and trade deals

Meanwhile, the consumer watchdog group Which? has identified food standards

as one area the public believes should be a priority when the UK government negotiates trade deals.

During August and September, Which? and research firm Hopkins van Mil, ran dialogues with almost 100 consumers in five locations across the UK.

Participants expressed concern that allowing cheaper imports produced to lower standards could exacerbate existing inequalities and lead to a two-tier system where food produced to higher standards was only available to wealthier consumers.

However, others welcomed wider choice offered by importing food of lower standards providing it is informed by clear labelling and offers something new such as lower prices. The fact that food in restaurants and cafes wouldn't be labelled and the customer wouldn't know if they were eating hormone treated beef, for example, was also raised as an issue.

There was a strongly held view that the UK should not accept food from the U.S. that was produced using methods currently banned. Some participants feared that if trade deals allowed imports of products made to lower standards, they would have to spend more time working out what to avoid buying. Others wanted to emphasize that different may not mean lower standards.

Salmonella test spurs recall of shell eggs in Canada

Following federal testing, Les Œufs Richard Eggs Inc. is recalling an unrevealed amount of shell eggs because of possible contamination with Salmonella.

The company reports distributing the implicated eggs to retailers in Quebec, Canada, according to a recall notice posted by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. The agency does not generally provide any details about the volume of

food subject to any recalls.

There is concern that consumers may have some of the recalled eggs in their homes because the best-by dates run through the end of this year and into January 2021.

“Consumers should not consume and distributors, retailers and food service establishments such as hotels, restaurants, cafeterias, hospitals, and nursing homes should not serve, sell, or use the recalled products,” according to the recall notice.

“This recall was triggered by test results. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is conducting a food safety investigation, which may lead to the recall of other products. If other high-risk products are recalled.”

As of the posting of the recall notice, government officials had not received any reports of confirmed illnesses related to the recalled eggs.

MARKET NEWS - REPLY

If you have any views or comments on the articles in the marketing news please feel free to contact us on the following email address: sales.china@mxns.cn