



**Paper for information: Government Updates on Nutrition
Related Activities
FSA**

Agenda Item: 6

Please see attached paper for information.

National Diet and Nutrition Survey

- 1) Tendering for the NDNS rolling programme is in progress and a contractor is expected to be in place by the end of March. Pilot work will be carried out in summer 2006, and, if successful, fieldwork for the core rolling programme, covering the whole UK, might be expected to commence around mid-2007. Results would then begin to become available from 2009. A SACN sub-group has been set up to advise on the development of methodology for the rolling programme and members have been involved in appraisal of the proposals.

Low Income Diet and Nutrition Survey

- 2) Fieldwork for the survey of low income/materially deprived consumers (covering both adults and children) has been completed. The report is in preparation and publication is expected in summer 2006.

Salt Work

- 3) The Agency is committed to reducing salt intakes and has agreed, in line with SACN recommendations, a long-term aim to achieve the average salt intake to 6g for adults by 2010.
- 4) The Agency launched a major public health campaign on salt in 2004 with a supporting salt website, which can be found at www.salt.gov.uk. The first phase of the campaign ran in autumn 2004 and resulted in significant increases in awareness and promising changes in claimed behaviour. The second stage of the salt campaign had a very successful launch in October 2005, including parallel activity by the food industry. The two key messages are: you should eat no more than 6g a day and always check the label. The media campaign featured a 'talking food' animation and a range of support materials has also been developed for distribution to health professionals and members of the public.
- 5) The campaign was supported by associated initiatives through non-government organisations: National Federation of Women's Institutes, British Heart Foundation, Blood Pressure Association, Stroke Association, Age Concern, British Dietetic Association and Consensus Action on Salt and Health. Industry stakeholders were involved in parallel activity.
- 6) A full public consultation on targets for categories of foods that contribute to salt intakes was published on 1st August. A total of 74 responses were received from a variety of stakeholders and a number of additional stakeholder meetings were held in January to discuss the responses further for products where technical problems in meeting the targets had been identified. The finalised salt targets, along with the summary of consultation responses and an evaluation of the second phase of the salt campaign, are expected to be published during the week of the SACN meeting. Full details will be published on the Agency's website.
- 7) Fieldwork for a survey of salt intake, assessed by 24-hour urinary sodium analysis, has now been completed. Twenty-four hour urine samples have been collected from around 500 adults aged 19-64 who have previously taken part in

the Health Survey for England. Results are expected in mid-2006 and will provide an interim assessment of progress towards the 6g/day target.

Communications strategy for encouraging behaviour change among teenage girls in 2006 – Sugar Magazine

- 8) Following the success of activity in 2005 targeting teenage girls, we propose to build on this achievement by initiating a second wave of activity - utilising established relationships - to enable the Agency to continue influencing potential behaviour change among this hard-to-reach audience.
- 9) Sugar Magazine continue to be the market leader magazine for this age group, with 300,000 girls buying the magazine monthly, and 20,000 VIP readers. As well as giving the FSA maximum impact for our spend, we are already seeing evidence that other teen magazines are following Sugar's lead and beginning to see healthy eating as viable editorially. This demonstrates a significant shift in attitude compared with 2 years ago, when we first approached such titles and healthy eating advice was rejected as inappropriate for their readership.
- 10) An 8-page mini magazine will be in the March 06 (on shelf 24th Jan 06) and June 06 issues reinforcing healthy eating messages, with ideas and copy developed by Sugar, with approval by the FSA. Copy will utilise results of online (FSA/Sugar) reader survey, as well as healthy eating planner. Like the previous version, this will offer an excellent opportunity to influence teenagers in an appropriate style, with the weight of Sugar behind FSA key messages. A double paged 'body sorted' spread will appear every other month (6 out of 12 issues). The FSA will have half of this health letters page to promote eatwell/nutrition in the form of Q&A. Sugar readers will also send in recipes for analysis, which will appear in the magazine over a year.
- 11) There was also success in raising our messages through activity with soccer 6, celebrity football tournament. The Agency will co-ordinate these two activities to provide mutual support in delivering messages for the target group of teenage girls, by sponsoring the soccer 6 female team in 2006.

School Meals

- 12) The Agency published a consultation package for UK target nutrient specifications for manufactured foods used in school meals on 26 July 2005. A summary of the responses received and the finalised specifications will be published shortly.. These will help caterers meet the school meal standards, developed by the School Meals Review Panel, which were launched for consultation by DfES on 3 October.
- 13) The Agency recently published the reports of three pilot interventions in schools that were carried out to determine the extent to which nutritional standards can be modified to more easily enable healthy choices at secondary school meals.

- 14) Findings from the pilots were fed into the Department for Education and Skills (DFES) led School Meals Review Panel and indicate that it is possible to achieve small changes in nutrient intakes through procurement and preparation practices, such as changing food products to those with a lower fat content and using more vegetables in dishes. The studies highlight the need for target nutrient specifications for processed foods used in schools as these will help caterers identify which foods can help them develop healthier menus.
- 15) Fieldwork for the joint DfES and Food Standards Agency survey of primary school meals is complete. This survey will assess compliance with the current statutory nutritional standards for school lunches, and assess food choices and consumption by primary school pupils by comparison with Caroline Walker Trust Guidelines. The survey will also provide information about catering practices and food provision at lunchtime. The report of the survey is expected to be published in spring 2006.

School Caterers Qualifications

- 16) DfES and the Agency have supported development of an accredited course, a level 1 **vocational qualification "Providing a Healthier School Meals Service"**, which will equip school caterers with the theoretical foundation needed to enable them to prepare healthier meals. The course explains the functions of the major nutrients, the Balance of Good Health and the nutrient composition of foods commonly used in school meals. Hence providing caterers with the theoretical knowledge needed to introduce beneficial changes. The course is now available across the UK and is intended to be delivered over six hours in a one-day training session or a number of shorter sessions. This course will be updated when the statutory standards are amended by DfES.
- 17) Work is now underway to assess school caterer's needs in terms of skills and knowledge that they require. This will feed into the development of suitable qualifications/units, which will enable school catering staff to progress to higher qualifications.

Cook it!

- 18) The Agency has commissioned ContinYou to roll out 'Cook it! - After school Cookery Clubs' across North East England in 100 secondary schools. This will take place within the extended school environment and the main objectives include achieving roll out within the recruited schools; helping schools to secure sustainable schemes; and to maximise the potential for the Agency to consider other opportunities within extended schools. Work started in February 2006.

Update on Signpost Labelling

- 19) The Government's *Choosing Health* White Paper includes a commitment to develop a signposting system that consumers can use at a glance to assess the fat, salt and sugar content of foods and therefore help them make healthier choices.

- 20) A programme of research was carried out in 2004 and 2005 to test the various signposting approaches being considered.^{1,2,3} Reports of this research are available on the Agency's website (<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodlabelling/signposting/>).
- 21) A 3-month public consultation seeking views on proposals for an Agency backed scheme closed on 8 February 2006. The Agency's Board will consider the signposting proposals and the outcome of the consultation exercise at their open meeting on 9 March. It is intended that finalised guidance on an Agency backed signposting scheme will be published following the Board meeting, to allow a phased roll-out to begin later in the year

Update on Nutrient Profiling

- 22) A nutrient profiling model has been developed by the Agency to help support work by Ofcom to help restrict the advertising and promotion of foods which are high in fat, salt and sugar to children and to help promote the consumption of fruit and vegetables. It also fulfils the commitment in chapter 2, para 24 of White Paper, for the Food Standards Agency to develop nutritional criteria to define 'foods high in fat, salt or sugar'.
- 23) At the Agency's open Board meeting on 14 October 2005, the Board agreed that the model was fit for its intended purpose and that it should be recommended to Ofcom. This recommendation was fully supported by Caroline Flint MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Public Health and James Purnell MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Broadcasting. The Board also agreed that the effectiveness of the model should be reviewed one year into its use.
- 24) The model was delivered to Ofcom in December 2005, who are expected to consult early this year on their proposals to restrict the advertising of foods which are high in fat, salt and sugar to children.

Recasting of the current European Legislation on Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula

- 25) The Commission has convened working group meetings to review the European Directive laying down rules regarding the composition, labelling and promotion of infant formula and follow on formula, with a view to submitting an amended text to the relevant Standing Committee by 2006. Negotiations at working group level are being taken forward on behalf of the UK by the Food Standards Agency.

¹ www.food.gov.uk/foodlabelling/signposting/signpostingreport/

² www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/signpostingnavigatorreport.pdf

³ www.food.gov.uk/foodlabelling/signposting/alt

Research

26) New research requirements in the N09 and N14 research programmes were issued earlier this month in the Food Standards Agency's Research Requirements Document 21. The closing date for receipt of proposals is 19 May 2006.

N09 Programme – Food Acceptability and Choice

27) Improved understanding of the physiological and psychological basis upon which consumers make food choices will underpin development of the Agency's nutrition policy in the area of helping consumers choose a healthy diet. N09 research aims to produce practical outputs that can help health professionals, local authorities and other influential groups to encourage dietary change at both individual and population levels.

28) In response to comments from stakeholders, research requirement N09R0003 is deliberately broadly-framed and invites proposals which are timely in terms of current and likely future public policy developments and which: use well-designed, rigorous approaches and appropriate validated methods to test a stated hypothesis for an intervention (e.g. dietary, lifestyle) involving one or more key messages/aims and target audiences.

N14 Programme – Food Choice Inequalities

29) Target nutrient specifications (TNS) have already been developed for certain categories of manufactured foods used in school lunches. In order to inform policy development for wider procurement in publicly funded institutions the Agency wishes to consider the impact of similar procurement practice on food provision in other settings e.g. hospitals, prisons, care homes.

30) Research requirement N140005 invites proposals to: investigate the potential impact of applying the current school lunch TNS to food provided in one or more publicly-funded institutions other than schools. In particular, to examine the potential changes in salt, sugar and saturated fat content of the food and the impacts on diets by looking at the nutritional content of menu provision and / or the nutrient intake of the relevant population groups.

Update FSA Wales

Nutrition Strategy Conferences

- 1) 'Food and Well Being' strategy implementation conferences are again being planned for May and June 2006 in North Wales and South Wales. These conferences will provide an opportunity to update over 300 stakeholders on progress made by FSA Wales and the Assembly in implementing the 'Food and Well Being' action plan and facilitate reflection on delivery of the action plan at the local level. They will also provide a platform for celebrating and disseminating good practice through the presentation of the 2006 AFAL Awards for Food Action Locally.

AFAL Awards for Food Action Locally

- 2) The AFAL awards 2006 were launched on 31 October with entries through completion of a nomination form invited by 31st December 2005. 57 nominations have been received. An independent selection panel will review entries, and the 5 winners and 5 runners-up notified by the end of February 2006.

School Meals Research - exploring factors behind pupil's choices

- 3) Although school meals standards are being met by the majority of schools in Wales, pupils are still failing to make healthy choices. Following on from FSA Wales school meals research in 2003, we have co-funded, together with the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), research on school meals in maintained primary and secondary schools across Wales looking into pupil's food choice and the factors influencing their choice. Methods used included observation, questionnaires, focus group work, triad interviews with pupils, and interviews with head teacher, school meals provider/school cook. A detailed executive summary will be available in February 2006, followed by the final report in March 2006.

Primary Care Practitioner Training

- 4) Following a scoping exercise in 2003 to identify the nutrition education and training undertaken by health and related professional in Wales, primary care practitioners were identified as key partners who have an influence on the dietary health of the population of Wales. A primary care nutrition module has now been developed, and is being piloted with the Welsh Assembly Government in North Wales and South Wales in February/March 2006.

Get Cooking

- 5) The 'Get Cooking' toolkit, designed to teach young people between the ages of 14 and 25 basic cooking skills in a community setting, continues to be used by representatives from the National Federation of Women's Institute for Wales (NFWI Cymru) in the delivery of Assembly funded 'Get Cooking' courses in 7

federation areas of Wales. The NFWI Cymru Get Cooking Steering Committee will be meeting in March 2006 to review progress.

Preliminary evaluation of 'Food and Well being'

- 6) One of the commitments in 'Food and Well Being' is to undertake a preliminary evaluation of the strategy in 2006. Milestone 7 states:

'Initial strategy evaluation results will be available in 2006, including those relating to access and to initiatives to overcome other barriers to healthy eating'

To meet this milestone, FSA Wales has co-opted an advisory group to represent the range of interests in 'Food and Well Being' and steer the evaluation process. As part of this work, an independent external evaluation will be commissioned.