



Dear Cotswold Taste Member

Please find below the next instalment of the newsletter from Food from England.

These will be now delivered to you on a fortnightly basis, so please keep an eye on your inbox so you do not miss out on the latest developments and news. We are also planning to have a link so members can access the newsletters from the Cotswold Taste website.

With a deadline looming of 11 August to complete the survey, we would like to draw your attention to the DEFRA Food and Drink Export Promotion SME survey. This is aiming to look at the opportunities and barriers for SMEs to tap into the growing demand for local food. As this is such an important topic, we would urge you to complete the survey and share among your networks.

Also, if you have any opinions on the recently published National Food Strategy you can now send back your feedback.

If your business is struggling with the current HGV driver shortage you may find the forthcoming HMRC webinar on the subject helpful to attend.

If you have any feedback, comments, further questions or would like support from Cotswold Taste please do get in touch.

<https://www.cotswoldtaste.co.uk/>

<https://www.foodfromengland.co.uk/>

**Key points from the 29th July DEFRA SME Forum:**

- The Food Strategy White Paper team welcomed attendees' thoughts on Henry Dimbleby's review of the national food strategy. The government is committed to publishing a white paper in response to Henry's recommendations within 6 months. As such, please send the SME team any additional thoughts on these recommendations and their potential impact on SMEs. The full report can be read here: [National Food Strategy website](#) (further detail is provided below)
- The Domestic Promotion team presented the background to their SME survey. The survey aims to capture the current opportunities and barriers for SMEs to tap into growing demand for local, seasonal, sustainable British food & drink. The survey can be accessed [here](#) and they kindly ask you to share this widely with your SME contacts. The deadline for completing the survey is 11th August 2021. (please see article below for more detail)
- The Covid-19 Policy Unit shared a couple of updates on the latest Covid requirements for food and drink manufacturers. This included information on Daily Contact Testing and the critical workers self-isolation 'reasonable excuse' letter process.
- They were joined by three International Trade Advisors, who demonstrated the wide range of work they do in their respective regions. If your business (or any of your contacts) would like to work with an International Trade Advisor you can do this through your local trade office: [Find your local trade office - great.gov.uk](#).
- The SPS Imports team gave an update on some of the upcoming communications they are planning surrounding imports. These will take place in August and September and can be accessed via the following link. They would be grateful if you could share this link with any contacts who may be affected by these changes. [Webinars for importers of food and drink products from the EU to Great Britain - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- The Northern Ireland Directorate gave an update on the Northern Ireland protocol command paper and how this may affect traders who are moving agri-food goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland.

DEFRA Survey:**Key points about the purpose and scope of this survey:**

- The purpose of this survey is to help us, in Food & Drink Export and Promotion, to understand any barriers and successes SMEs have in tapping in on the growing demand for UK produce on the local/regional/national markets. Behind every activity of our work is the 2019 government manifesto that "We want people, both at home and abroad, to be lining up to buy British."
- Results of this survey will contribute to our understanding of the different F&D SME sectors, including issues and successes that are specific to a type of product or a region.
- They will use their findings to inform and help focus our next cycle of activities, as well as our current work in engaging with retailers, organising ministerial visits to champion and celebrate UK Food & Drink, and working with regional networks. This is a genuine opportunity to contribute!



- Any action resulting directly from the survey will be fed back to the SME forum.

The deadline is the **11th August**. The survey is anonymous, completely voluntary, and should take less than 10 minutes from each participant. No individual data is collected nor kept. DEFRA hope you and your members find the survey easy to navigate and complete.

To complete the survey, please follow this link-
https://defragroup.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0CyRDIA7dWu15I

Further detail on the National Food Strategy

A summary of Henry Dimbleby's recommendations:

1. Escape the junk food cycle and protect the NHS Recommendation

- Recommendation 1: Introduce a Sugar and Salt Reformulation Tax. Use some of the revenue to help get fresh fruit and vegetables to low-income families.
- Recommendation 2: Introduce mandatory reporting for large food companies.
- Recommendation 3: Launch a new "Eat and Learn" initiative for schools.

2. Reduce diet-related inequality

- Recommendation 4: Extend eligibility for free school meals.
- Recommendation 5: Fund the Holiday Activities and Food programme for the next three years.
- Recommendation 6: Expand the Healthy Start scheme.
- Recommendation 7 Trial a "Community Eatwell" programme, supporting those on low incomes to improve their diets.

3. Make the best use of our land

- Recommendation 8: Guarantee the budget for agricultural payments until at least 2029 to help farmers transition to more sustainable land use.
- Recommendation 9: Create a Rural Land Use Framework based on the three compartment model.
- Recommendation 10: Define minimum standards for trade and a mechanism for protecting them.

4. Create a long-term shift in our food culture

- Recommendation 11: Invest £1 billion in innovation to create a better food system.
- Recommendation 12: Create a National Food System Data programme.
- Recommendation 13: Strengthen Government procurement rules to ensure that taxpayer money is spent on healthy and sustainable food.
- Recommendation 14: Set clear targets and bring in legislation for long-term change.



HMRC Webinar on HGV Driver Shortage

DEFRA has recently been engaging with industry on the HGV driver shortage, in order to understand how they can support and ease pressure on our sectors. Through these discussions, they have received some reports that changes to the off-payroll working rules (IR35 regulations) in April 2021 have been a contributing factor to these challenges.

They would therefore like to invite you to join a webinar run by HMRC on IR35 regulations in order to provide an overview of these changes and answer any questions you may have.

The off-payroll working rules changed on 6 April 2021 and are now applied differently. All public authorities and medium and large-sized clients outside of the public sector are now responsible for deciding the employment status for tax of workers (sometimes known as contractors). Read more on the off-payroll reform changes here: [Understanding off-payroll working \(IR35\)](#).

HMRC has been supporting stakeholders to help ensure that they understand the changes to the rules. This webinar on off-payroll (IR35) rules is aimed at medium and large client organisations, agencies affected by the changes, and will cover:

- What the off-payroll working rules are and who they affect
- When an off-payroll worker's employment status for tax needs to be determined
- Statutory obligations of clients and agencies
- How information should flow down the labour supply chain
- How liability can move within the labour supply
- Practical steps to consider when applying the rules
- Q&A session

The event will take place on Thursday 12 August from 10:00 - 11:00. If you would like to attend, please register via Eventbrite here: [Register for the HMRC webinar on off-payroll reform \(IR35\)](#). Please feel free to pass this invitation on to the most relevant person in your organisation – although the session is designed to be accessible, it is on technical tax regulations so they encourage you to share this with whoever is best placed to attend. The workshop will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams. You can access the event from any supported device and can use Microsoft Teams as a guest through your web browser. You will receive the joining link in your Eventbrite ticket once you register. You will need to have Microsoft Teams compatible IT systems to join this event as there is a visual presentation. DEFRA recommend checking compatibility before the workshop – you may need to consider joining from a personal device. HMRC are not able to provide any IT support before or during the event.



Absence tracking survey

Since some businesses are experiencing concerning rates of absence, DEFRA ask that you complete the attached [absence tracking survey](#) and send it to foodsupplyinformation@defra.gov.uk on a daily basis - or whatever frequency is most feasible with your reporting processes. Even if your business is not directly affected, your responses and information are essential for our understanding of how absence is changing over time - they are asking for minimum data returns to reduce the reporting burden on you. Your data will be securely stored and processed by Defra analysts, and treated as commercially sensitive – only anonymous summary outputs will be produced. They are grateful for your cooperation.

Coronavirus response updates

Updated guidance for 'reasonable excuse' exemptions from self-isolation

Self-isolation remains an essential tool in our national efforts to reduce the spread of coronavirus. In the small number of situations where the self-isolation of close contacts would result in serious disruption to critical services, a limited number of named workers may be able to leave self-isolation under specific controls for the purpose of undertaking critical work only./

Please read the updated guidance outlining how to request a 'reasonable excuse' letter. The guidance includes further details about eligibility, the process, and a list of the critical sub-populations that may have a reasonable excuse to leave self-isolation to attend critical work.

The guidance also includes a link to a new online request form for 'reasonable excuse' letters.

If you need more information or have a query about submitting this request form, please email emergencies@defra.gov.uk.

Daily contact testing expands to 2,000 sites across critical sectors

The government has expanded daily contact testing with 1,200 new sites across frontline sectors, helping to avoid disruption to crucial services. Read more [here](#).

UK travel update: government waives quarantine for arrivals fully vaccinated from Europe and USA while also confirming international cruise restart

The latest steps towards reopening international travel make it easier for people vaccinated in Europe or the USA to travel to England. Read more [here](#).

Agri-Food guidance and updates

Removal of VI-1 certification requirements for imported wine

Ministers have [announced their intention](#) to remove VI-1 certification requirements for imported wine.

Domestic food legislation: amendments to rules in England



Defra has published the [Summary of Responses and Government Response](#) on gov.uk for the [Consultation On Changes Required For Certain Domestic Food Legislation In England](#).

Travelling to the EU with food and drink containing meat or dairy, and plants and plant products

DEFRA have created a range of communications assets designed to raise awareness of the rules for carrying food and drink items containing meat or dairy, and plants and plant products when you travel to the EU.

View our [digital partner toolkit](#) which contains printable posters, social media statics and a social media video for you to use. For further detail, please see www.gov.uk/visiteurope

Joint statement on principles for collaboration under the Forest, Agriculture and Commodity Trade (FACT) Dialogue

Following the first ministerial meeting of the Forest, Agriculture and Commodity Trade (FACT) Dialogue, 25 countries have endorsed a [statement](#) committing to working together to protect the world's precious forests while also promoting sustainable trade.