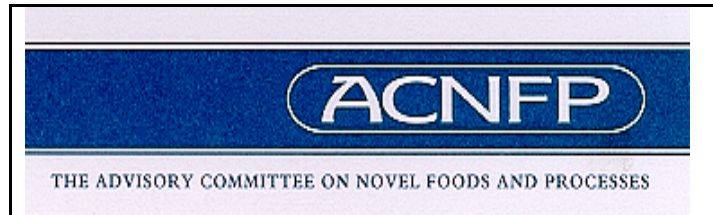


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# FOIA PUBLICATION SCHEME

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

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## **Section 1: Introduction**

### **The Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)**

1. The ACNFP is an independent body of experts formed in 1988 to assess the safety of novel foods and processes used in food production.
2. The ACNFP evaluates applications for approval of novel foods under the EC Novel Foods Regulation (258/97), which came into force on 15 May 1997. Prior to the introduction of the Regulation, it provided the safety assessment to enable new products to be marketed under the Government's voluntary scheme and these remain subject to the 1990 Food Safety Act.
3. The ACNFP's terms of reference are:  
*'To advise the central authorities responsible in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland respectively on any matters relating to novel foods and food processes including food irradiation, having regard where appropriate to the views of relevant expert bodies.'*
4. In practice this means that the ACNFP advises on all aspects of novel foods, including the safety of novel foods and processes, and consults with other expert committees where necessary, before making its recommendations to the Board of the Food Standards Agency.
5. The ACNFP is made up of independent experts appointed by the Board of the Food Standards Agency in consultation with Health Ministers, to cover a broad spectrum of relevant eminent scientific expertise and knowledge, in order that issues can be examined thoroughly and individual applications considered on their merits.
6. At present the Committee consists of 15 Members and a Chairman, and covers areas of expertise including genetic modification, nutrition, microbiology, toxicology and food technology. Three of the Members are lay representatives, two consumer representatives who provide valuable insights into consumer concerns and an ethicist who advises on ethical issues relating to novel foods and processes, including genetically modified foods.

## About the Freedom of Information Act 2000

7. The **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000** received Royal Assent on 30 November 2000. The Act will not be fully in force until 2005. It will give a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities, provide exemptions from that right and place a number of obligations on public authorities. The ACNFP, is one such authority. When the Act is fully in force, any person who makes a request to a public authority for information must be informed whether the public authority holds that information and, subject to exemptions, be supplied with that information. This individual right of access to information will be brought into force in January 2005.
8. From November 2002, the Act will require the Committee to have in place its **publication scheme**, which is a guide to the Committee's publications and policy. It is intended to provide a framework for you to obtain direct access to these published documents.

## What the publication scheme is for

9. The ACNFP, along with every other public authority from November 2002, has a legal duty under Section 19 of the FOIA 2000 to:
  - adopt and maintain a scheme which relates to the publication of information by the authority and to have that scheme approved by the Information Commissioner;
  - publish information in accordance with that scheme; and
  - review the scheme from time to time.
10. The publication scheme specifies:
  - the classes of information which the public authority publishes (or intends to publish);
  - the manner in which information in each class is, (or is intended to be), published and;
  - whether the material is (or is intended to be) available free of charge or on payment of a fee.
11. The aim of the ACNFP publication scheme is to bring together in one place the many differing types of information that are issued by the Committee in the discharge of its public functions in a clear and structured manner. The scheme will categorise the information type and provide details on how to obtain it. The overall benefit to our stakeholders and others is to save time and effort in searching and securing relevant Committee information.

## Our copyright policy

12. The Committee reports to the Food Standards Agency which is a non-ministerial government department and as such our information is subject to Crown copyright protection administered by Her Majesty's Stationery Office. The Agency authorises you to make one free copy, by downloading to printer or to electronic, magnetic or optical storage media, of any items featured in our publication scheme for the purposes of private research, study and / or reference. If you wish to re-use or reproduce any of our publications for any other use, for example commercially or for circulation for education or other purposes, you will in most cases need to apply for a copyright licence to do this. Applications for a copyright licence are available from Her Majesty's Stationery Office Copyright Unit, St Clements House, 2-16 Colegate, Norwich NR3 1BQ (Fax: 01603 723 000) or email [copyright@hmsso.gov.uk](mailto:copyright@hmsso.gov.uk)
13. Where we hold documents or material belonging to or shared with another copyright holder, we will, if possible, give you their contact details or a hyper-link to their website to assist you in accessing the document or material.
14. For HMSO Guidance Notes on a range of copyright issues, see the HMSO website at <http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/guides.htm>. If you are still unsure as to whether copyright restrictions apply to a particular document located within our publication scheme, you can contact:

*Mrs Rita Lister (Librarian)  
Food Standards Agency  
Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6NH*

*Tel: 020 7276 8065  
Fax: 020 7276 8069*

*Email: [rita.lister@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:rita.lister@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)*

## **Section 2: The ACNFP Publication Scheme**

Please note that documents within this publication scheme may, on occasion, be edited where, in the view of the ACNFP Secretariat, specific information should not be disclosed on the grounds of exceptions specified in the **ACNFP's Openness Policy** and subject to restrictions detailed under section 19 of the **Food Standards Act 1999**. If a document has been edited, it will be made clear to the user that this is the case.

All information on the FSA website regarding the Committee, can be found by going through the committee homepage at: [www.food.gov.uk/science/ouradvisors/novelfood/](http://www.food.gov.uk/science/ouradvisors/novelfood/)

<b>CLASS OF INFORMATION</b>	<b>WHERE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>COST</b>
<b><i>ACNFP Agenda's</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On FSA Website</li> <li>• On request to ACNFP Secretariat</li> </ul>	Free*
<b><i>ACNFP Meeting Cover Papers</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On FSA Website</li> <li>• On request to ACNFP Secretariat</li> </ul>	Free
<b><i>ACNFP Minutes</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On FSA Website</li> <li>• On request to ACNFP Secretariat</li> </ul>	Free
<b><i>ACNFP Annual Reports</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On FSA Website</li> <li>• On request to ACNFP Secretariat</li> <li>• FSA Library</li> </ul>	Free
<b><i>Code of Conduct for Members of ACNFP</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On FSA Website</li> <li>• On request to ACNFP Secretariat</li> </ul>	Free
<b><i>Table of Members Interests</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On FSA Website</li> <li>• In annual reports</li> <li>• On request to ACNFP Secretariat</li> </ul>	Free
<b><i>Applications submitted to the ACNFP for approval of Novel Food or Process after December 1999</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On FSA website</li> </ul>	Free
<b><i>ACNFP Corporate Brochure &amp; Factsheets</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On request to ACNFP Secretariat</li> </ul>	Free
<b><i>ACNFP Guidelines on the conduct of Taste Trials involving novel foods or foods produced by novel processes</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On request to ACNFP Secretariat</li> <li>• On FSA website</li> </ul>	Free
<b><i>ACNFP Guidelines on the use of Human Studies in the pre-market safety assessment of Novel foods</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On request to ACNFP Secretariat</li> <li>• On FSA website</li> </ul>	Free

\* Please refer to Note 2 (Page 7) in all instances.

**NOTE 1: Contact details / addresses**

**Committee Secretariat:** *You should in the first instance contact **Mr Adam Hardgrave** at:*

*ACNFP Secretariat  
Room 515B  
Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6NH*

*Tel: 020 7276 8595  
Fax: 020 7276 8564  
Email: [acnfp@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:acnfp@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)*

**FSA Library:** *You should in the first instance contact **Mrs Rita Lister** at the following address:*

*Food Standards Agency Library  
Ground Floor  
Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6NH*

*Tel: 020 7276 8065  
Fax: 020 7276 8069  
Email: [rita.lister@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:rita.lister@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)*

**NOTE 2: Administration costs**

*We will not normally charge a fee to supply copies of information or advice, unless the request is for a priced publication or data set. However, we reserve the right to make a reasonable charge to cover the costs of transcription, photocopying, packaging and postage, or where a considerable amount of staff time would be needed to identify, process and collate information for you. In some cases, there will be separate charging arrangements for the supply of information for commercial use. We will inform you of any charges that might apply before processing your request.*

## **Section 3: Access to information under the scheme**

15. The ACNFP's general policy stemming from its Code of Practice on Openness is to be as open and transparent as possible in dealing with all requests for information.
16. If having searched the scheme you cannot find what you are looking for, you can make a written request for information under the Food Standards Agency's Code of Practice on Openness.
17. A copy of the Agency's Code of Practice on Openness [HOTLINK] is available from this publication scheme or by contacting -

*Miss Christine Reynolds  
Food Standards Agency  
Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6NH*

*Tel: 020 7276 8628  
Fax: 020 7276 8004*

*Email: [christine.reynolds@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:christine.reynolds@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)*

18. We will treat all requests for information on a fair and equal basis, and without prejudice. Where we are unable to provide the information you request, we will explain why. Where we decide not to release the information you request, we will explain why and give you details of how you can complain against our decision.
19. Applications for information under the Agency's Code of Practice on Openness should be made in writing, by post or fax, and should provide us with as much detail as possible to identify the information sought:

**In England, to:**  
Food Standards Agency  
Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6NH  
Fax: 020 7276 8833

**In Wales, to:**  
Food Standards Agency (Wales)  
1st Floor  
Southgate House  
Wood Street  
Cardiff CF10 1EW  
Fax: 029 2067 8918/8919



**In Scotland, to:**

Food Standards Agency (Scotland)  
St Magnus House  
6th Floor  
25 Guild Street  
Aberdeen AB11 6NJ  
Fax: 01224 285167

**In Northern Ireland, to:**

Food Standards Agency (NI)  
10C Clarendon Road  
Belfast BT1 3BW  
Fax: 028 9041 7726

20. We will not normally charge a fee to supply copies of information or advice, unless the request is for a priced publication or data set. However, we reserve the right to make a reasonable charge to cover the costs of transcription, photocopying, packaging and postage, or where a considerable amount of staff time would be needed to identify, process and collate information for you. In some cases, there will be separate charging arrangements for the supply of information for commercial use. We will inform you of any charges that might apply before processing your request.
21. Where the information you want is available in a priced publication, we will give you details of the publication and where you may buy it.
22. If you are not satisfied with the reasons we have given you have the right to complain. You may also complain if you believe the charges we have made to supply information are unfair.

## **Section 4: The Information Asset Register (IAR)**

23. As part of the Government's commitment to openness and in line with our own Code of Practice on Openness, the ACNFP has provided details of its publications to the FSA Information Asset Register (IAR). The IAR details Government information assets that can be re-used under licence. It focuses primarily on **unpublished** data holdings and thus provides a guide to facilitate ease of access to unpublished information resources held by the FSA.
24. The inforoute search engine is the gateway to information held by UK Government bodies for anyone with web access. It provides direct access to the Government's IAR which identifies;
- what information the government holds;
  - how useful that information is; and
  - importantly, a contact point to whom requests for the underlying information may be made (requests would be subject to the Open Government Code and, in future, the FOI Act).
25. Further information on the IAR is available on the HMSO website at [www.inforoute.hmso.gov.uk](http://www.inforoute.hmso.gov.uk) or from;

*Information Asset Register  
e-services Division  
HMSO  
7 St James's Square  
London SW1Y 4JU*

*Tel: 020 7276 5202  
Fax: 020 7276 5207*

## **Section 5: Complaints procedure**

26. Even the best organisations will sometimes get things wrong. If you are dissatisfied with something we have done or the way we have done it, please let us know. We will try to resolve any problem quickly, and explain what we have done and why. Hearing from you will help us improve by learning from our mistakes.
27. As the Committee reports to the FSA, if you wish to complain, in the first instance, please give details of what you are unhappy with and why to the person you have been dealing with.

If you do not have a named contact, you can get in touch with the **Agency's Complaints Co-ordinator**:

*Miss Barbara Richards  
(Head of Corporate Secretariat & Consumer Issues Division)*

*Food Standards Agency  
Aviation House (Room 612c)  
125 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6NH  
Tel: 020 7276 8610  
Fax: 020 7276 8004*

*Email: [barbara.richards@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:barbara.richards@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)*

28. If we cannot deal with your complaint immediately, we will acknowledge it within two working days (please always give us your full postal address). We will write to you with a full reply within 20 working days of receiving your complaint. If this is not possible, we will explain why and say when you will get a full reply.
29. If you are not satisfied with our response and would like to take your complaint further, please contact the Complaints Co-ordinator at the address above. We will look at it again and give you a full reply within 20 working days.
30. If you are still unhappy, you can then ask the Complaints Co-ordinator to refer your complaint to the Chief Executive of the Food Standards Agency, Mr Geoffrey Podger.
31. If you remain dissatisfied with the way the Agency has acted, you may then ask for your complaint and its handling to be investigated by the UK Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (the Ombudsman). You should write to a Member of Parliament to ask them to refer your complaint to the Ombudsman. The telephone number for the House of Commons Information Office, where you can get information on contacting an MP, is 020 7219 4272.

32. This complaints procedure applies across the Food Standards Agency – to its headquarters in London, Executives in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and to the ACNFP.
33. After November 2002, when the Publication Scheme requirement in the FOIA comes into force, you will also be able to complain direct to the Information Commissioner if you feel we have not complied with our obligations under that requirement. Further details are available at [www.dataprotection.gov.uk](http://www.dataprotection.gov.uk).
34. If you prefer, you may alternatively contact the Information Commissioner direct at:

*The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire SK9 5AF*

*Information Line: 01625 545745  
Switchboard: 01625 545700  
Fax: 01625 524510  
Email: [mail@dataprotection.gov.uk](mailto:mail@dataprotection.gov.uk)*

## **Section 6: Your feedback**

35. The ACNFP's Publication scheme along with the FSA Publication Scheme is part of the FSA's commitment to work in accordance with the Agency's **Statement of General Objectives and Practices** (published in line with Section 22 of the Food Standards Act 1999). This states our core values of putting the consumer first, being an independent voice in matters connected with food safety or other interests of consumers in relation to food and that our activities will be open, transparent and clear.

36. This scheme fulfils our legal duty under Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We would positively welcome any views and comments on the structure and / or content of the scheme itself. This scheme will be treated as a 'living' document, which we will amend and develop in the light of our experience, as appropriate.

37. When commenting, we would particularly ask you to actively consider the following;

- did you find the structure and layout of this scheme easy to understand and navigate?
- were you looking for some specific information?
- did this scheme facilitate that search successfully?
- if you were browsing, did the scheme help guide your search and make the process easier?
- are there any types of information or areas that are not currently covered by the FSA Scheme that you would like to see in the future?
- do you have any suggestions or other comments that might make this scheme more user-friendly or helpful?

38. Please send your views and comments on this scheme to [acnfp@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:acnfp@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk) stating your name, organisation (if relevant) and contact details. Alternatively, you can write to;

*ACNFP Secretariat  
FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY  
Room 515B  
Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6NH*

*Tel: 020 7276 8595  
Fax: 020 7276 8564*

39. The ACNFP Publication Scheme Co-ordinator is Dr Sandy Lawrie, Secretary to the ACNFP.

40. The ACNFP Publication Scheme will be maintained by Mr Adam Hardgrave within the ACNFP Secretariat.