



Food Safety Act 1990

1990 CHAPTER 16

PART II

MAIN PROVISIONS

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** Pts. I-III (ss. 1-39): functions transferred (10.1.1992) by [S.I. 1991/2913](#), art. 8, [Sch. 2](#)
Pts. I-III (ss. 1-39): certain functions transferred (7.8.1991) by [S.I. 1991/1773](#), art. 8(1)(3), [Sch. 2](#)
- C2** Pts. I-III (ss. 1-39) applied (with modifications) (7.8.1991) by [S.I. 1991/1773](#), art. 8(2)(3), [Sch. 2](#)

Food safety

7 Rendering food injurious to health.

- (1) Any person who renders any food injurious to health by means of any of the following operations, namely—
- adding any article or substance to the food;
 - using any article or substance as an ingredient in the preparation of the food;
 - abstracting any constituent from the food; and
 - subjecting the food to any other process or treatment,
- with intent that it shall be sold for human consumption, shall be guilty of an offence.
- (2) In determining for the purposes of this section and section 8(2) below whether any food is injurious to health, regard shall be had—
- not only to the probable effect of that food on the health of a person consuming it; but
 - also to the probable cumulative effect of food of substantially the same composition on the health of a person consuming it in ordinary quantities.
- (3) In this Part “injury”, in relation to health, includes any impairment, whether permanent or temporary, and “injurious to health” shall be construed accordingly.

Status: Point in time view as at 18/02/1991.

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8 Selling food not complying with food safety requirements.

- (1) Any person who—
- (a) sells for human consumption, or offers, exposes or advertises for sale for such consumption, or has in his possession for the purpose of such sale or of preparation for such sale; or
 - (b) deposits with, or consigns to, any other person for the purpose of such sale or of preparation for such sale,
- any food which fails to comply with food safety requirements shall be guilty of an offence.
- (2) For the purposes of this Part food fails to comply with food safety requirements if—
- (a) it has been rendered injurious to health by means of any of the operations mentioned in section 7(1) above;
 - (b) it is unfit for human consumption; or
 - (c) it is so contaminated (whether by extraneous matter or otherwise) that it would not be reasonable to expect it to be used for human consumption in that state;
- and references to such requirements or to food complying with such requirements shall be construed accordingly.
- (3) Where any food which fails to comply with food safety requirements is part of a batch, lot or consignment of food of the same class or description, it shall be presumed for the purposes of this section and section 9 below, until the contrary is proved, that all of the food in that batch, lot or consignment fails to comply with those requirements.
- (4) For the purposes of this Part, any part of, or product derived wholly or partly from, an animal—
- (a) which has been slaughtered in a knacker’s yard, or of which the carcass has been brought into a knacker’s yard; or
 - (b) in Scotland, which has been slaughtered otherwise than in a slaughterhouse, shall be deemed to be unfit for human consumption.
- (5) In subsection (4) above, in its application to Scotland, “animal” means any description of cattle, sheep, goat, swine, horse, ass or mule; and paragraph (b) of that subsection shall not apply where accident, illness or emergency affecting the animal in question required it to be slaughtered as mentioned in that paragraph.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C3** S. 8(2) applied (with modifications) (17.11.1997) by S.I. 1997/2537, **reg. 9(2)**
- C4** S. 8(3) applied: (9.4.1992) by S.I. 1992/496, **reg. 7(2)**; (31.12.1992) by S.I. 1992/3236, **reg. 11(2)**
S. 8(3) applied (14.7.1993) by S.I. 1993/1520, **reg. 2(3)**
S. 8(3) applied (1.4.1994) by S.I. 1994/743, **reg. 8(2)**
S. 8(3) applied: (9.5.1995) by S.I. 1995/1086, **reg. 20(3)**; (15.6.1995) by S.I. 1995/1372, **reg. 20(3)**
S. 8(3) applied: (S.) (1.1.2003) by S.S.I. 2002/523, **reg. 5(2)**; (W.) (9.1.2003) by S.I. 2002/3157, **reg. 5(2)**; (E.) (13.1.2003) by S.I. 2002/3169, **reg. 5(2)**
- C5** S. 8(3) applied (with modifications) (17.11.1997) by S.I. 1997/2537, **reg. 9(3)**

9 Inspection and seizure of suspected food.

- (1) An authorised officer of a food authority may at all reasonable times inspect any food intended for human consumption which—

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- (a) has been sold or is offered or exposed for sale; or
 - (b) is in the possession of, or has been deposited with or consigned to, any person for the purpose of sale or of preparation for sale;and subsections (3) to (9) below shall apply where, on such an inspection, it appears to the authorised officer that any food fails to comply with food safety requirements.
- (2) The following provisions shall also apply where, otherwise than on such an inspection, it appears to an authorised officer of a food authority that any food is likely to cause food poisoning or any disease communicable to human beings.
- (3) The authorised officer may either—
 - (a) give notice to the person in charge of the food that, until the notice is withdrawn, the food or any specified portion of it—
 - (i) is not to be used for human consumption; and
 - (ii) either is not to be removed or is not to be removed except to some place specified in the notice; or
 - (b) seize the food and remove it in order to have it dealt with by a justice of the peace;and any person who knowingly contravenes the requirements of a notice under paragraph (a) above shall be guilty of an offence.
- (4) Where the authorised officer exercises the powers conferred by subsection (3)(a) above, he shall, as soon as is reasonably practicable and in any event within 21 days, determine whether or not he is satisfied that the food complies with food safety requirements and—
 - (a) if he is so satisfied, shall forthwith withdraw the notice;
 - (b) if he is not so satisfied, shall seize the food and remove it in order to have it dealt with by a justice of the peace.
- (5) Where an authorised officer exercises the powers conferred by subsection (3)(b) or (4)(b) above, he shall inform the person in charge of the food of his intention to have it dealt with by a justice of the peace and—
 - (a) any person who under section 7 or 8 above might be liable to a prosecution in respect of the food shall, if he attends before the justice of the peace by whom the food falls to be dealt with, be entitled to be heard and to call witnesses; and
 - (b) that justice of the peace may, but need not, be a member of the court before which any person is charged with an offence under that section in relation to that food.
- (6) If it appears to a justice of the peace, on the basis of such evidence as he considers appropriate in the circumstances, that any food falling to be dealt with by him under this section fails to comply with food safety requirements, he shall condemn the food and order—
 - (a) the food to be destroyed or to be so disposed of as to prevent it from being used for human consumption; and
 - (b) any expenses reasonably incurred in connection with the destruction or disposal to be defrayed by the owner of the food.
- (7) If a notice under subsection (3)(a) above is withdrawn, or the justice of the peace by whom any food falls to be dealt with under this section refuses to condemn it, the food authority shall compensate the owner of the food for any depreciation in its value resulting from the action taken by the authorised officer.

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- (8) Any disputed question as to the right to or the amount of any compensation payable under subsection (7) above shall be determined by arbitration.
- (9) In the application of this section to Scotland—
- (a) any reference to a justice of the peace includes a reference to the sheriff and to a magistrate;
 - (b) paragraph (b) of subsection (5) above shall not apply;
 - (c) any order made under subsection (6) above shall be sufficient evidence in any proceedings under this Act of the failure of the food in question to comply with food safety requirements; and
 - (d) the reference in subsection (8) above to determination by arbitration shall be construed as a reference to determination by a single arbiter appointed, failing agreement between the parties, by the sheriff.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C6** S. 9 extended (with modifications) (8.1.1992) by S.I. 1991/2843, **reg. 22(2)**
- C7** S. 9 applied: (9.4.1992) by S.I. 1992/496, **reg. 7(3)**; (31.12.1992) by S.I. 1992/3236, **reg. 11(3)**
S. 9 applied (14.7.1993) by S.I. 1993/1520, **reg. 2(4)**
S. 9 applied: (1.4.1994) by S.I. 1994/743, **reg. 8(3)**; (3.10.1994) by S.I. 1994/2328, **reg. 11(c)**
S. 9 applied: (9.5.1995) by S.I. 1995/1086, **reg. 20(4)**; (15.6.1995) by S.I. 1995/1372, **reg. 20(4)**
S. 9 applied: (S.) (1.1.2003) by S.S.I. 2002/523, **reg. 5(3)**; (W.) (9.1.2003) by S.I. 2002/3157, **reg. 5(3)**; (E.) (13.1.2003) by S.I. 2002/3169, **reg. 5(3)**
- C8** S. 9 applied (with modifications): (20.9.1995) by S.I. 1995/2148, **reg. 17**; (1.1.1996) by S.I. 1995/3205, **reg. 14**
S. 9 applied (with modifications): (5.7.1996) by S.I. 1996/1743, **reg. 5** (which S.I. was revoked (1.9.1996) by S.I. 1996/2097, **reg. 8**); (1.9.1996) by S.I. 1996/2097, **reg. 6**
S. 9 applied (with modifications): (11.8.1997) by: S.I. 1997/1729, **reg. 34(2)**; S.I. 1997/1729, **reg. 34(3)**; (16.12.1997) by S.I. 1997/2959, **reg. 11**; (1.1.1998) by S.I. 1997/2965, **reg. 30** (with reg. 32)
S. 9 applied (with modifications): (S.) (20.8.1999) by S.S.I. 1999/32, **art. 5(1)** and S.S.I. 1999/33, **art. 5(1)**; (S.) (17.12.1999) by S.S.I. 1999/186, **art. 9**; (5.6.1999) by S.I. 1999/1542, **art. 4(1)** and S.I. 1999/1543, **art. 4(1)**; (21.7.1999) by S.I. 1999/2025, **art. 5(1)** and S.I. 1999/2026, **art. 5(1)**; (S.) (29.7.1999) by S.S.I. 1999/15, **reg. 5**; (18.8.1999) by S.I. 1999/2332, **art. 5(1)** and S.I. 1999/2333, **art. 5(1)**; (12.10.1999) by S.I. 1999/2798, **art. 5(1)** and S.I. 1999/2799, **art. 5(1)**; (23.12.1999) by S.I. 1999/3421, **art. 5(1)** and S.I. 1999/3422, **art. 5(1)**
S. 9 applied (with modifications): (S.) (17.2.2000) by S.S.I. 2000/15, **art. 5(1)** and S.S.I. 2000/16, **art. 5(1)**; (E.W.) (8.3.2000) by S.I. 2000/587, **art. 5(1)** and S.I. 2000/588, **art. 5(1)**
S. 9 applied (with modifications): (E.) (2.2.2002) by S.I. 2002/183, **reg. 6(2)(3)** (which S.I. was revoked (20.6.2002) by S.I. 2002/1614, **reg. 6**); (W.) (2.2.2002) by S.I. 2002/203, **reg. 6(2)(3)** (which S.I. was revoked (12.7.2002) by S.I. 2002/1798, **reg. 6**); (S.) (2.2.2002) by S.S.I. 2002/36, **reg. 6(2)(3)** (which S.S.I. was revoked (24.6.2002) by S.S.I. 2002/300, **reg. 6**); (E.) (16.2.2002) by S.I. 2002/334, **art. 5(2)(3)**; (S.) (16.2.2002) by S.S.I. 2002/64, **art. 5(2)(3)**; (W.) (23.2.2002) by S.I. 2002/402, **art. 5(2)(3)**; (E.) (23.3.2002) by S.I. 2002/773, **reg. 5(2)(3)** (which S.I. was revoked (13.9.2002) by S.I. 2002/2351, **reg. 7**); (E.) (23.3.2002) by S.I. 2002/774, **reg. 5(2)(3)** (which S.I. was revoked (13.9.2002) by S.I. 2002/2350, **reg. 7**); (S.) (25.3.2002 at 1700 hours) by S.S.I. 2002/148, **regs. 1(1), 5(2)(3)** (which S.S.I. was revoked by S.S.I. 2002/424, **reg. 7**); (S.) (25.3.2002 at 1700 hours) by S.S.I. 2002/149, **regs. 1(1), 5(2)(3)** (which S.S.I. was revoked by S.S.I. 2002/425, **reg. 7**); (W.) (26.3.2002) by S.I. 2002/820, **reg. 5(2)(3)** (which S.I. was revoked (9.9.2002) by S.I. 2002/2295, **reg. 7**); (W.) (26.3.2002) by S.I. 2002/821, **reg. 5(2)(3)** (which S.I. was revoked (9.9.2002) by S.I. 2002/2296, **reg. 7**); (E.) (4.4.2002) by S.I. 2002/931, **reg. 5(2)(3)**; (W.) (16.4.2002) by S.I. 2002/1090, **reg. 5(2)(3)**; (E.) (19.4.2002) by S.I. 2002/843, **reg. 77(1)(a)(3)**; (W.) (27.5.2002) by S.I. 2002/1416, **reg. 77(1)(a)(3)**; (E.) (18.6.2002) by S.I. 2002/890, **reg. 7(2)-(4)**; (S.) (19.6.2002) by S.S.I. 2002/255, **reg. 76(1)(a)(3)**;

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- (E.) (20.6.2002) by S.I. 2002/1614, **reg. 5(2)(3)**; (S.) (24.6.2002) by S.S.I. 2002/300, **reg. 5(2)(3)**; (S.) (1.7.2002) by S.S.I. 2002/267, **reg. 7(2)-(4)**; (W.) (12.7.2002) by S.I. 2002/1798, **reg. 5(2)(3)**; (W.) (2.8.2002) by S.I. 2002/1886, **reg. 7(2)-(4)**
- C9** S. 9(2)-(9) applied (with modifications) (21.5.1998) by S.I. 1998/1277, **art. 4(1)(a)(2)**

10 Improvement notices.

- (1) If an authorised officer of an enforcement authority has reasonable grounds for believing that the proprietor of a food business is failing to comply with any regulations to which this section applies, he may, by a notice served on that proprietor (in this Act referred to as an “improvement notice”)—
- state the officer’s grounds for believing that the proprietor is failing to comply with the regulations;
 - specify the matters which constitute the proprietor’s failure so to comply;
 - specify the measures which, in the officer’s opinion, the proprietor must take in order to secure compliance; and
 - require the proprietor to take those measures, or measures which are at least equivalent to them, within such period (not being less than 14 days) as may be specified in the notice.
- (2) Any person who fails to comply with an improvement notice shall be guilty of an offence.
- (3) This section and section 11 below apply to any regulations under this Part which make provision—
- for requiring, prohibiting or regulating the use of any process or treatment in the preparation of food; or
 - for securing the observance of hygienic conditions and practices in connection with the carrying out of commercial operations with respect to food or food sources.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C10** S. 10 applied (3.10.1994) by S.I. 1994/2328, **reg. 11(c)**

11 Prohibition orders.

- (1) If—
- the proprietor of a food business is convicted of an offence under any regulations to which this section applies; and
 - the court by or before which he is so convicted is satisfied that the health risk condition is fulfilled with respect to that business,
- the court shall by an order impose the appropriate prohibition.
- (2) The health risk condition is fulfilled with respect to any food business if any of the following involves risk of injury to health, namely—
- the use for the purposes of the business of any process or treatment;
 - the construction of any premises used for the purposes of the business, or the use for those purposes of any equipment; and

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- (c) the state or condition of any premises or equipment used for the purposes of the business.
- (3) The appropriate prohibition is—
- (a) in a case falling within paragraph (a) of subsection (2) above, a prohibition on the use of the process or treatment for the purposes of the business;
 - (b) in a case falling within paragraph (b) of that subsection, a prohibition on the use of the premises or equipment for the purposes of the business or any other food business of the same class or description;
 - (c) in a case falling within paragraph (c) of that subsection, a prohibition on the use of the premises or equipment for the purposes of any food business.
- (4) If—
- (a) the proprietor of a food business is convicted of an offence under any regulations to which this section applies by virtue of section 10(3)(b) above; and
 - (b) the court by or before which he is so convicted thinks it proper to do so in all the circumstances of the case,
- the court may, by an order, impose a prohibition on the proprietor participating in the management of any food business, or any food business of a class or description specified in the order.
- (5) As soon as practicable after the making of an order under subsection (1) or (4) above (in this Act referred to as a “prohibition order”), the enforcement authority shall—
- (a) serve a copy of the order on the proprietor of the business; and
 - (b) in the case of an order under subsection (1) above, affix a copy of the order in a conspicuous position on such premises used for the purposes of the business as they consider appropriate;
- and any person who knowingly contravenes such an order shall be guilty of an offence.
- (6) A prohibition order shall cease to have effect—
- (a) in the case of an order under subsection (1) above, on the issue by the enforcement authority of a certificate to the effect that they are satisfied that the proprietor has taken sufficient measures to secure that the health risk condition is no longer fulfilled with respect to the business;
 - (b) in the case of an order under subsection (4) above, on the giving by the court of a direction to that effect.
- (7) The enforcement authority shall issue a certificate under paragraph (a) of subsection (6) above within three days of their being satisfied as mentioned in that paragraph; and on an application by the proprietor for such a certificate, the authority shall—
- (a) determine, as soon as is reasonably practicable and in any event within 14 days, whether or not they are so satisfied; and
 - (b) if they determine that they are not so satisfied, give notice to the proprietor of the reasons for that determination.
- (8) The court shall give a direction under subsection (6)(b) above if, on an application by the proprietor, the court thinks it proper to do so having regard to all the circumstances of the case, including in particular the conduct of the proprietor since the making of the order; but no such application shall be entertained if it is made—
- (a) within six months after the making of the prohibition order; or

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- (b) within three months after the making by the proprietor of a previous application for such a direction.
- (9) Where a magistrates' court or, in Scotland, the sheriff makes an order under section 12(2) below with respect to any food business, subsection (1) above shall apply as if the proprietor of the business had been convicted by the court or sheriff of an offence under regulations to which this section applies.
- (10) Subsection (4) above shall apply in relation to a manager of a food business as it applies in relation to the proprietor of such a business; and any reference in subsection (5) or (8) above to the proprietor of the business, or to the proprietor, shall be construed accordingly.
- (11) In subsection (10) above "manager", in relation to a food business, means any person who is entrusted by the proprietor with the day to day running of the business, or any part of the business.

12 Emergency prohibition notices and orders.

- (1) If an authorised officer of an enforcement authority is satisfied that the health risk condition is fulfilled with respect to any food business, he may, by a notice served on the proprietor of the business (in this Act referred to as an "emergency prohibition notice"), impose the appropriate prohibition.
- (2) If a magistrates' court or, in Scotland, the sheriff is satisfied, on the application of such an officer, that the health risk condition is fulfilled with respect to any food business, the court or sheriff shall, by an order (in this Act referred to as an "emergency prohibition order"), impose the appropriate prohibition.
- (3) Such an officer shall not apply for an emergency prohibition order unless, at least one day before the date of the application, he has served notice on the proprietor of the business of his intention to apply for the order.
- (4) Subsections (2) and (3) of section 11 above shall apply for the purposes of this section as they apply for the purposes of that section, but as if the reference in subsection (2) to risk of injury to health were a reference to imminent risk of such injury.
- (5) As soon as practicable after the service of an emergency prohibition notice, the enforcement authority shall affix a copy of the notice in a conspicuous position on such premises used for the purposes of the business as they consider appropriate; and any person who knowingly contravenes such a notice shall be guilty of an offence.
- (6) As soon as practicable after the making of an emergency prohibition order, the enforcement authority shall—
 - (a) serve a copy of the order on the proprietor of the business; and
 - (b) affix a copy of the order in a conspicuous position on such premises used for the purposes of that business as they consider appropriate;and any person who knowingly contravenes such an order shall be guilty of an offence.
- (7) An emergency prohibition notice shall cease to have effect—
 - (a) if no application for an emergency prohibition order is made within the period of three days beginning with the service of the notice, at the end of that period;
 - (b) if such an application is so made, on the determination or abandonment of the application.

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- (8) An emergency prohibition notice or emergency prohibition order shall cease to have effect on the issue by the enforcement authority of a certificate to the effect that they are satisfied that the proprietor has taken sufficient measures to secure that the health risk condition is no longer fulfilled with respect to the business.
- (9) The enforcement authority shall issue a certificate under subsection (8) above within three days of their being satisfied as mentioned in that subsection; and on an application by the proprietor for such a certificate, the authority shall—
 - (a) determine, as soon as is reasonably practicable and in any event within 14 days, whether or not they are so satisfied; and
 - (b) if they determine that they are not so satisfied, give notice to the proprietor of the reasons for that determination.
- (10) Where an emergency prohibition notice is served on the proprietor of a business, the enforcement authority shall compensate him in respect of any loss suffered by reason of his complying with the notice unless—
 - (a) an application for an emergency prohibition order is made within the period of three days beginning with the service of the notice; and
 - (b) the court declares itself satisfied, on the hearing of the application, that the health risk condition was fulfilled with respect to the business at the time when the notice was served;

and any disputed question as to the right to or the amount of any compensation payable under this subsection shall be determined by arbitration or, in Scotland, by a single arbiter appointed, failing agreement between the parties, by the sheriff.

13 Emergency control orders.

- (1) If it appears to the Minister that the carrying out of commercial operations with respect to food, food sources or contact materials of any class or description involves or may involve imminent risk of injury to health, he may, by an order (in this Act referred to as an “emergency control order”), prohibit the carrying out of such operations with respect to food, food sources or contact materials of that class or description.
- (2) Any person who knowingly contravenes an emergency control order shall be guilty of an offence.
- (3) The Minister may consent, either unconditionally or subject to any condition that he considers appropriate, to the doing in a particular case of anything prohibited by an emergency control order.
- (4) It shall be a defence for a person charged with an offence under subsection (2) above to show—
 - (a) that consent had been given under subsection (3) above to the contravention of the emergency control order; and
 - (b) that any condition subject to which that consent was given was complied with.
- (5) The Minister—
 - (a) may give such directions as appear to him to be necessary or expedient for the purpose of preventing the carrying out of commercial operations with respect to any food, food sources or contact materials which he believes, on reasonable grounds, to be food, food sources or contact materials to which an emergency control order applies; and

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- (b) may do anything which appears to him to be necessary or expedient for that purpose.
- (6) Any person who fails to comply with a direction under this section shall be guilty of an offence.
- (7) If the Minister does anything by virtue of this section in consequence of any person failing to comply with an emergency control order or a direction under this section, the Minister may recover from that person any expenses reasonably incurred by him under this section.

Consumer protection

14 Selling food not of the nature or substance or quality demanded.

- (1) Any person who sells to the purchaser's prejudice any food which is not of the nature or substance or quality demanded by the purchaser shall be guilty of an offence.
- (2) In subsection (1) above the reference to sale shall be construed as a reference to sale for human consumption; and in proceedings under that subsection it shall not be a defence that the purchaser was not prejudiced because he bought for analysis or examination.

15 Falsely describing or presenting food.

- (1) Any person who gives with any food sold by him, or displays with any food offered or exposed by him for sale or in his possession for the purpose of sale, a label, whether or not attached to or printed on the wrapper or container, which—
 - (a) falsely describes the food; or
 - (b) is likely to mislead as to the nature or substance or quality of the food,shall be guilty of an offence.
- (2) Any person who publishes, or is a party to the publication of, an advertisement (not being such a label given or displayed by him as mentioned in subsection (1) above) which—
 - (a) falsely describes any food; or
 - (b) is likely to mislead as to the nature or substance or quality of any food,shall be guilty of an offence.
- (3) Any person who sells, or offers or exposes for sale, or has in his possession for the purpose of sale, any food the presentation of which is likely to mislead as to the nature or substance or quality of the food shall be guilty of an offence.
- (4) In proceedings for an offence under subsection (1) or (2) above, the fact that a label or advertisement in respect of which the offence is alleged to have been committed contained an accurate statement of the composition of the food shall not preclude the court from finding that the offence was committed.
- (5) In this section references to sale shall be construed as references to sale for human consumption.

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Changes to legislation: Food Safety Act 1990, Part II is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 08 September 2023. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

Regulations

16 Food safety and consumer protection.

- (1) The Ministers may by regulations make—
 - (a) provision for requiring, prohibiting or regulating the presence in food or food sources of any specified substance, or any substance of any specified class, and generally for regulating the composition of food;
 - (b) provision for securing that food is fit for human consumption and meets such microbiological standards (whether going to the fitness of the food or otherwise) as may be specified by or under the regulations;
 - (c) provision for requiring, prohibiting or regulating the use of any process or treatment in the preparation of food;
 - (d) provision for securing the observance of hygienic conditions and practices in connection with the carrying out of commercial operations with respect to food or food sources;
 - (e) provision for imposing requirements or prohibitions as to, or otherwise regulating, the labelling, marking, presenting or advertising of food, and the descriptions which may be applied to food; and
 - (f) such other provision with respect to food or food sources, including in particular provision for prohibiting or regulating the carrying out of commercial operations with respect to food or food sources, as appears to them to be necessary or expedient—
 - (i) for the purpose of securing that food complies with food safety requirements or in the interests of the public health; or
 - (ii) for the purpose of protecting or promoting the interests of consumers.
- (2) The Ministers may also by regulations make provision—
 - (a) for securing the observance of hygienic conditions and practices in connection with the carrying out of commercial operations with respect to contact materials which are intended to come into contact with food intended for human consumption;
 - (b) for imposing requirements or prohibitions as to, or otherwise regulating, the labelling, marking or advertising of such materials, and the descriptions which may be applied to them; and
 - (c) otherwise for prohibiting or regulating the carrying out of commercial operations with respect to such materials.
- (3) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1) above, regulations under that subsection may make any such provision as is mentioned in Schedule 1 to this Act.
- (4) In making regulations under subsection (1) above, the Ministers shall have regard to the desirability of restricting, so far as practicable, the use of substances of no nutritional value as foods or as ingredients of foods.
- (5) In subsection (1) above and Schedule 1 to this Act, unless the context otherwise requires—
 - (a) references to food shall be construed as references to food intended for sale for human consumption; and
 - (b) references to food sources shall be construed as references to food sources from which such food is intended to be derived.

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17 Enforcement of Community provisions. **E+W**

- (1) The Ministers may by regulations make such provision with respect to food, food sources or contact materials, including in particular provision for prohibiting or regulating the carrying out of commercial operations with respect to food, food sources or contact materials, as appears to them to be called for by any Community obligation.
- (2) As respects any directly applicable Community provision which relates to food, food sources or contact materials and for which, in their opinion, it is appropriate to provide under this Act, the Ministers may by regulations—
 - (a) make such provision as they consider necessary or expedient for the purpose of securing that the Community provision is administered, executed and enforced under this Act; and
 - (b) apply such of the provisions of this Act as may be specified in the regulations in relation to the Community provision with such modifications, if any, as may be so specified.
- (3) In subsections (1) and (2) above references to food or food sources shall be construed in accordance with section 16(5) above.

Extent Information

- E1** S. 17: This version of this provision extends to England and Wales only; a separate version has been created for Scotland only.

17 Enforcement of Community provisions. **S**

- (1) The Ministers may by regulations make such provision with respect to food, food sources or contact materials, including in particular provision for prohibiting or regulating the carrying out of commercial operations with respect to food, food sources or contact materials, as appears to them to be called for by any Community obligation.
- (2) As respects any directly applicable Community provision which relates to food, food sources or contact materials and for which, in their opinion, it is appropriate to provide under this Act, the Ministers may by regulations—
 - (a) make such provision as they consider necessary or expedient for the purpose of securing that the Community provision is administered, executed and enforced under this Act; and
 - (b) apply such of the provisions of this Act as may be specified in the regulations in relation to the Community provision with such modifications, if any, as may be so specified.
- (3) In subsections (1) and (2) above references to food or food sources shall be construed in accordance with section 16(5) above.

18 Special provisions for particular foods etc.

- (1) The Ministers may by regulations make provision—
 - (a) for prohibiting the carrying out of commercial operations with respect to novel foods, or food sources from which such foods are intended to be derived, of any class specified in the regulations;

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- (b) for prohibiting the carrying out of such operations with respect to genetically modified food sources, or foods derived from such food sources, of any class so specified; or
 - (c) for prohibiting the importation of any food of a class so specified,
- and (in each case) for excluding from the prohibition any food or food source which is of a description specified by or under the regulations and, in the case of a prohibition on importation, is imported at an authorised place of entry.
- (2) The Ministers may also by regulations—
- (a) prescribe, in relation to milk of any description, such a designation (in this subsection referred to as a “special designation”) as the Ministers consider appropriate;
 - (b) provide for the issue by enforcement authorities of licences to producers and sellers of milk authorising the use of a special designation; and
 - (c) prohibit, without the use of a special designation, all sales of milk for human consumption, other than sales made with the Minister’s consent.
- (3) In this section—
- “authorised place of entry” means any port, aerodrome or other place of entry authorised by or under the regulations and, in relation to food in a particular consignment, includes any place of entry so authorised for the importation of that consignment;
 - “description”, in relation to food, includes any description of its origin or of the manner in which it is packed;
 - “novel food” means any food which has not previously been used for human consumption in Great Britain, or has been so used only to a very limited extent.
- (4) For the purposes of this section a food source is genetically modified if any of the genes or other genetic material in the food source—
- (a) has been modified by means of an artificial technique; or
 - (b) is inherited or otherwise derived, through any number of replications, from genetic material which was so modified;
- and in this subsection “artificial technique” does not include any technique which involves no more than, or no more than the assistance of, naturally occurring processes of reproduction (including selective breeding techniques *orin vitro* fertilisation).

19 Registration and licensing of food premises.

- (1) The Ministers may by regulations make provision—
- (a) for the registration by enforcement authorities of premises used or proposed to be used for the purposes of a food business, and for prohibiting the use for those purposes of any premises which are not registered in accordance with the regulations; or
 - (b) subject to subsection (2) below, for the issue by such authorities of licences in respect of the use of premises for the purposes of a food business, and for prohibiting the use for those purposes of any premises except in accordance with a licence issued under the regulations.
- (2) The Ministers shall exercise the power conferred by subsection (1)(b) above only where it appears to them to be necessary or expedient to do so—

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- (a) for the purpose of securing that food complies with food safety requirements or in the interests of the public health; or
- (b) for the purpose of protecting or promoting the interests of consumers.

Defences etc.

20 Offences due to fault of another person.

Where the commission by any person of an offence under any of the preceding provisions of this Part is due to an act or default of some other person, that other person shall be guilty of the offence; and a person may be charged with and convicted of the offence by virtue of this section whether or not proceedings are taken against the first-mentioned person.

21 Defence of due diligence.

- (1) In any proceedings for an offence under any of the preceding provisions of this Part (in this section referred to as “the relevant provision”), it shall, subject to subsection (5) below, be a defence for the person charged to prove that he took all reasonable precautions and exercised all due diligence to avoid the commission of the offence by himself or by a person under his control.
- (2) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1) above, a person charged with an offence under section 8, 14 or 15 above who neither—
 - (a) prepared the food in respect of which the offence is alleged to have been committed; nor
 - (b) imported it into Great Britain,shall be taken to have established the defence provided by that subsection if he satisfies the requirements of subsection (3) or (4) below.
- (3) A person satisfies the requirements of this subsection if he proves—
 - (a) that the commission of the offence was due to an act or default of another person who was not under his control, or to reliance on information supplied by such a person;
 - (b) that he carried out all such checks of the food in question as were reasonable in all the circumstances, or that it was reasonable in all the circumstances for him to rely on checks carried out by the person who supplied the food to him; and
 - (c) that he did not know and had no reason to suspect at the time of the commission of the alleged offence that his act or omission would amount to an offence under the relevant provision.
- (4) A person satisfies the requirements of this subsection if he proves—
 - (a) that the commission of the offence was due to an act or default of another person who was not under his control, or to reliance on information supplied by such a person;
 - (b) that the sale or intended sale of which the alleged offence consisted was not a sale or intended sale under his name or mark; and
 - (c) that he did not know, and could not reasonably have been expected to know, at the time of the commission of the alleged offence that his act or omission would amount to an offence under the relevant provision.

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- (5) If in any case the defence provided by subsection (1) above involves the allegation that the commission of the offence was due to an act or default of another person, or to reliance on information supplied by another person, the person charged shall not, without leave of the court, be entitled to rely on that defence unless—
- (a) at least seven clear days before the hearing; and
 - (b) where he has previously appeared before a court in connection with the alleged offence, within one month of his first such appearance,
- he has served on the prosecutor a notice in writing giving such information identifying or assisting in the identification of that other person as was then in his possession.
- (6) In subsection (5) above any reference to appearing before a court shall be construed as including a reference to being brought before a court.

22 Defence of publication in the course of business.

In proceedings for an offence under any of the preceding provisions of this Part consisting of the advertisement for sale of any food, it shall be a defence for the person charged to prove—

- (a) that he is a person whose business it is to publish or arrange for the publication of advertisements; and
- (b) that he received the advertisement in the ordinary course of business and did not know and had no reason to suspect that its publication would amount to an offence under that provision.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C11** S. 22 applied: (13.9.1992) by S.I. 1992/1971, **reg. 9(e)**; (14.9.1992) by S.I. 1992/1978, **reg. 7(e)**
S. 22 applied (14.7.1993) by S.I. 1993/1520, **reg. 2(2)(e)**
- C12** S. 22 applied (with modifications): (1.1.1996) by S.I. 1995/3116, **reg. 8**; (1.1.1996) by S.I. 1995/3123, **reg. 9(e)** and S.I. 1995/3124, **reg. 11(e)**; (1.1.1996) by S.I. 1995/3187, **reg. 9**; (1.1.1996) by S.I. 1995/3202, **reg. 11**
S. 22 applied (with modifications) (1.7.1996) by S.I. 1996/1499, **reg. 48**
S. 22 applied (with modifications): (11.8.1997) by S.I. 1997/1729, **reg. 34(1)(e)**; (31.3.1999) by S.I. 1997/2042, **reg. 9** and S.I. 1997/2182, **reg. 9**
S. 22 applied (with modifications) (19.2.1998) by S.I. 1998/141, **reg. 10(e)**
S. 22 applied (with modifications): (19.3.1999) by S.I. 1996/1499, **reg. 48** (as substituted by S.I. 1999/747, **reg. 11**); (30.6.1999) by S.I. 1999/1540, **reg. 19(1)(e)**; (1.10.1999) by S.I. 1999/2457, **reg. 8(1)**; (1.10.1999) by S.S.I. 1999/34, **reg. 8(1)**
S. 22 applied (with modifications): (E.) (1.11.2001) by S.I. 2000/845, **reg. 7(e)**; (W.) (1.11.2001) by S.I. 2000/1866, **reg. 7(e)**; (S.) (1.11.2001) by S.S.I. 2000/130, **reg. 7(e)**; (E.) (15.1.2001) by S.I. 2000/3323, **reg. 10(e)**
S. 22 applied (with modifications): (S.) (17.3.2001) by S.S.I. 2001/38, **reg. 10**; (W.) (1.5.2001) by S.I. 2001/1361, **reg. 8(1)** and S.I. 2001/1440, **reg. 10(e)**
S. 22 applied (with modifications): (E.W.) (8.3.2002) by S.I. 2002/333, **reg. 6(e)**; (S.) (8.3.2002) by S.S.I. 2002/50, **reg. 6(e)**; (E.) (5.8.2002 for certain purposes and otherwise 1.4.2004) by S.I. 2002/1817, **regs. 1(2)(3), 9(e)**; (S.) (23.9.2002 for certain purposes and otherwise 1.4.2004) by S.S.I. 2002/397, **regs. 1(2)(3), 8(e)**; (W.) (31.12.2002 for certain purposes and otherwise 1.4.2004) by S.I. 2002/2939, **regs. 1(2)(3), 9(e)**; (S.) (1.1.2003) by S.S.I. 2002/523, **reg. 5(1)(e)**; (W.) (9.1.2003) by S.I. 2002/3157, **reg. 5(1)(e)**; (E.) (13.1.2003) by S.I. 2002/3169, **reg. 5(1)(e)**

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Miscellaneous and supplemental

23 Provision of food hygiene training.

- (1) A food authority may provide, whether within or outside their area, training courses in food hygiene for persons who are or intend to become involved in food businesses, whether as proprietors or employees or otherwise.
- (2) A food authority may contribute towards the expenses incurred under this section by any other such authority, or towards expenses incurred by any other person in providing, such courses as are mentioned in subsection (1) above.

24 Provision of facilities for cleansing shellfish.

- (1) A food authority may provide, whether within or outside their area, tanks or other apparatus for cleansing shellfish.
- (2) A food authority may contribute towards the expenses incurred under this section by any other such authority, or towards expenses incurred by any other person in providing, and making available to the public, tanks or other apparatus for cleansing shellfish.
- (3) Nothing in this section authorises the establishment of any tank or other apparatus, or the execution of any other work, on, over or under tidal lands below high-water mark of ordinary spring tides, except in accordance with such plans and sections, and subject to such restrictions and conditions as may before the work is commenced be approved by the Secretary of State.
- (4) In this section “cleansing”, in relation to shellfish, includes subjecting them to any germicidal treatment.

25 Orders for facilitating the exercise of functions.

- (1) For the purpose of facilitating the exercise of their functions under this Part, the Ministers may by order require every person who at the date of the order, or at any subsequent time, carries on a business of a specified class or description (in this section referred to as a “relevant business”)—
 - (a) to afford to persons specified in the order such facilities for the taking of samples of any food, substance or contact material to which subsection (2) below applies; or
 - (b) to furnish to persons so specified such information concerning any such food, substance or contact material,as (in each case) is specified in the order and is reasonably required by such persons.
- (2) This subsection applies to—
 - (a) any food of a class specified in the order which is sold or intended to be sold in the course of a relevant business for human consumption;
 - (b) any substance of a class so specified which is sold in the course of such a business for use in the preparation of food for human consumption, or is used for that purpose in the course of such a business; and
 - (c) any contact material of a class so specified which is sold in the course of such a business and is intended to come into contact with food intended for human consumption.

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- (3) No information relating to any individual business which is obtained by means of an order under subsection (1) above shall, without the previous consent in writing of the person carrying on the business, be disclosed except—
- (a) in accordance with directions of the Minister, so far as may be necessary for the purposes of this Act or of any corresponding enactment in force in Northern Ireland, or for the purpose of complying with any Community obligation; or
 - (b) for the purposes of any proceedings for an offence against the order or any report of those proceedings;
- and any person who discloses any such information in contravention of this subsection shall be guilty of an offence.
- (4) In subsection (3) above the reference to a disclosure being necessary for the purposes of this Act includes a reference to it being necessary—
- (a) for the purpose of securing that food complies with food safety requirements or in the interests of the public health; or
 - (b) for the purpose of protecting or promoting the interests of consumers;
- and the reference to a disclosure being necessary for the purposes of any corresponding enactment in force in Northern Ireland shall be construed accordingly.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C13 S. 25 applied (with modifications) (21.12.1999) by S.I. 1997/1335, **reg. 6(2)** (as substituted by S.I. 1999/3182, **reg. 2**)

26 Regulations and orders: supplementary provisions.

- (1) Regulations under this Part may—
- (a) make provision for prohibiting or regulating the carrying out of commercial operations with respect to any food, food source or contact material—
 - (i) which fails to comply with the regulations; or
 - (ii) in relation to which an offence against the regulations has been committed, or would have been committed if any relevant act or omission had taken place in Great Britain; and
 - (b) without prejudice to the generality of section 9 above, provide that any food which, in accordance with the regulations, is certified as being such food as is mentioned in paragraph (a) above may be treated for the purposes of that section as failing to comply with food safety requirements.
- (2) Regulations under this Part may also—
- (a) require persons carrying on any activity to which the regulations apply to keep and produce records and provide returns;
 - (b) prescribe the particulars to be entered on any register required to be kept in accordance with the regulations;
 - (c) require any such register to be open to inspection by the public at all reasonable times and, subject to that, authorise it to be kept by means of a computer;

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- (d) prescribe the periods for which and the conditions subject to which licences may be issued, and provide for the subsequent alteration of conditions and for the cancellation, suspension or revocation of licences;
 - (e) provide for an appeal to a magistrates' court or, in Scotland, to the sheriff, or to a tribunal constituted in accordance with the regulations, against any decision of an enforcement authority, or of an authorised officer of such an authority; and
 - (f) provide, as respects any appeal to such a tribunal, for the procedure on the appeal (including costs) and for any appeal against the tribunal's decision.
- (3) Regulations under this Part or an order under section 25 above may—
- (a) provide that an offence under the regulations or order shall be triable in such way as may be there specified; and
 - (b) include provisions under which a person guilty of such an offence shall be liable to such penalties (not exceeding those which may be imposed in respect of offences under this Act) as may be specified in the regulations or order.

Status:

Point in time view as at 18/02/1991.

Changes to legislation:

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