

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2008

ENF/ W/08/038

To: Directors of Public Protection

### **FSA Funding for Food Safety Management System projects**

I refer to my letters of 26<sup>th</sup> October and 13<sup>th</sup> December last year regarding Agency funding for Safer Food Better Business seminars and coaching.

I would firstly like say how pleased I am at the response from Welsh local authorities and what was accomplished within a short period of time. In collaboration with CMi consultants some forty seminars took place followed by approximately 750 coaching visits to individual food businesses.

The work was discussed this week at a meeting of the FSA / LA food safety management steering group and there was a consensus that a great deal of positive help had been given to food businesses. The level of success with each individual business will, of course, be better capable of assessment at subsequent inspections / visits and I shall be pleased to receive any relevant information from local authorities or perhaps collectively through the Food Safety Technical Panel.

Whilst there was some criticism of individual coaches and their approach, which has been relayed to CMi, overall feedback from local authorities has been positive and I am aware that a number are enthusiastic about holding similar events in forthcoming months. I am pleased to say that the Agency is able to offer further funding during this financial year for events designed to improved compliance with the requirement for documented food safety management systems. I anticipate that some of this will be utilised for CMi seminars and coaching visits but it need not be confined to these.

There is scope for individual local authorities to organise their own events, perhaps something specifically designed for those operating ethnic cuisine businesses, though the Agency remains unable to fund the time of local authority officers.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

---

Asiantaeth Safonau Bwyd, 11ed Lawr, Ty Southgate, Wood Street Caerdydd CF10 1EW  
Food Standards Agency, 11th Floor, Southgate House, Wood Street Cardiff CF10 1EW  
Ffôn / Tel: +44 (0)29 2067 8957 Ffacs / Fax: +44 (0)29 2067 8918

E-bost: Rob.Wilkins@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

E-mail: Rob.Wilkins@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk



I recently met with Akmal Hanuk and Lily Power, representatives of the Ethnic Business Support Programme, who have already successfully worked with a number of Welsh local authorities to help ethnic food businesses. Whilst the majority of such work to date has been in relation to Chinese businesses they are able to offer assistance in a number of languages. If you are considering organising an event where you think their services may be useful I would suggest that you contact the Ethnic Business Support Programme on 08000 288211 for further information.

Whilst I am keen that local authorities utilise the funding available I will need to ensure that it is being spent in an appropriate manner and that I am aware of ongoing / planned projects and their cost implications. This will not be an onerous procedure, simply requiring a brief summary of what is planned, the date, and an estimate of costs before sanction. I am aware of CMI's standard charges for seminars and coaching visits if their services are to be utilised.

Due to time constraints towards the end of the last financial year I am aware that not all local authorities were able to contact the relevant food businesses themselves in order to encourage attendance at the seminars, with CMI taking on this role. However, figures supplied by CMI indicate a marked difference in the attendance rates of the targeted businesses where local authorities (four in total) undertook this role. The average attendance was just over 82% in contrast to just under 50% where CMI were the source of the businesses' information about the seminar. I would add that the latter average is composed of widely varying figures from 30% to 75%. It may be that local authorities will have more time to allow for the process of contacting businesses themselves this year and will consider doing so, particularly in relation to those who are posing the greatest difficulties.

I am confident that we can continue to build on what has already been achieved and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Rob Wilkins  
Head of General Enforcement

