



2019

Annual Report

Contributing to public health and wellbeing by
promoting food safety and healthy eating on
the island of Ireland

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safefood targeted relevant knowledge gaps by prioritising its research through a structured programme of horizon scanning.

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safefood networks formed dynamic and rewarding environments for the exchange of information for mutual benefit to stakeholders.

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Chief Executive's Statement

In a year that celebrates the 20th anniversary of **safefood** and our role promoting food safety and healthy eating on the island of Ireland, what stands out is our ability to continue the important work of partnership and cooperation on an all-island basis.

We continue to deliver high-quality, relevant research projects. These enhance our understanding of the food environment while also guiding our public-facing communications and informing policy development. In addition, our research contributes to improving the wider knowledge base. Of the multiple commissioned and published research projects this year, three examples illustrate our approach; our report into the cost of a Healthy Food Basket identified what is needed to meet the physical, psychological and social needs at a minimum but acceptable level, a level at which no one should be expected to live below. Our research into energy drinks revealed the impact of the sugar levy on the sugar content and portion size of these products. And our upcoming research project into food safety risks and prepared convenience foods will explore an area that is experiencing rapid growth & popularity among the public. I look forward to the many outputs from these upcoming projects in the years ahead.

Partnership and co-operation continue to be at the heart of our professional networks. The **safefood** Knowledge Network goes from strength to strength and represents a rewarding environment for knowledge-exchange and the mutual support offered to members. This year, we welcomed more than 800 food professionals and 112 small food businesses to 23 Network-hosted events. We aim to build on this over the next three years by further enhancing collaboration and partnership between professionals working in the area of food safety on the island of Ireland. This year also represented the first year of our fourth, three-year Community Food Initiative programme. We were delighted to welcome fourteen new community projects to the programme and we look forward to supporting them in developing skills and knowledge that will positively influence the eating habits and food skills among families and individuals living in low-income areas. Our Food Poverty Network in partnership with the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland is an important focal point for those working in tackling food poverty and prioritises advocacy, information exchange and evidence-building. Our Obesity Action Forum continues to welcome leading public health speakers from the island and around the world to its bi-annual workshops in Belfast and Dublin offering a dynamic forum for debate.

From the early years of education right through to post-primary level, our trusted education resources are positively received and always practical. This year saw the launch of 'Rufus', our Handwashing Hero who teaches under 5s about the importance of good handwashing habits. Through storybook, song and washable sink poster, this resource was distributed to more than 3,500 early years educators on the island. 2019 also saw the launch of new digital education resource 'Tastebuds'. Aimed at children aged between eight and 11, this interactive teaching resource helps children learn about the importance of a healthy balanced diet.

Our advertising and marketing campaigns continue to innovate and engage the public. Our 'Transform your Trolley' campaign coincided with our sponsorship of RTE's Operation Transformation and was developed to help shoppers make healthier choices amidst constant unhealthy food promotions. Colleagues from our Nutrition Directorate were also available during each live show to answer viewer's questions on healthy eating. For the third year of our five-year 'START' campaign that encourages families to take the first step towards a healthier lifestyle, the emphasis was on tackling treat foods, a behaviour that parents themselves acknowledged as being very challenging. The campaign was informed by a **safefood** research project on why parents give treat foods to children as well as behavioural change theory with a focus on motivating parents to say no to treats.

December is the busiest month of the year on our website. For our annual Christmas food safety campaign, improving the visibility and extending the reach of our food safety advice led to more than 110,000 people visiting our website between Christmas Eve and Christmas Day to find advice on preparing and cooking turkey. This year also saw the launch of our new Podcast and Webinar series which brings our advice and expertise to new audiences.

The work of our Corporate Operations Directorate spans accounting, finance, HR, procurement, IT, legal governance and audit. In 2019, this work also included new GDPR requirements. This unseen but critical work ensures the organisation is always working effectively and efficiently and helps us to deliver on our business goals and strategy.

What is certain about upcoming Brexit negotiations is a period of uncertainty and the potential to negatively impact upon food supply, food safety and trade on the island of Ireland. As an agency born out of North/South co-operation and partnership, **safefood** will face challenging times ahead. But the value of a partnership approach in tackling shared issues will always remain at the heart of what we do. On behalf of the **safefood** Advisory Board and all my colleagues, I would like to thank all those stakeholders, agencies and organisations who work with us and I look forward to future opportunities together.





joined the worldwide conversation on social media

Since then *safefood* has clocked up

66,000 likes on Facebook
 4.5 mil views on YouTube
 + 15,700 followers

2003

It's in your hands food safety campaign

2005

reduce treats campaign

safefood launches *safefood* for life education resource

580 researchers have worked on *safefood* funded projects



2010

safefood formed



2007

Superfoods campaign

2008

The All-island obesity action forum and All-island food poverty network were founded

2009

Don't take risks food safety campaign

2011

safefood
BEGAN
10
YEARS
of sponsoring



Committed to working in partnership across the island of Ireland



Stop the spread
healthy eating
campaign



let's focus on obesity nutrition campaign

safefood's sponsorship has helped transform communities

2013

Chefbot
joined
the team



Turkey cooking calculator launched

2014



Eatright.eu was launched - the first all-island food skills website for trainers working with Early School Leavers

Over **36,500** students have completed safefood for life, gaining a certificate in basic food hygiene



2015

Listen to the voice of food safety campaign



safefood launched it's 1st online research portofolio

2017



Rufus the messy monster handwashing campaign



safefood launched MediaWise education resource



Our Research



safefood's promotion of food safety, nutrition and healthy eating is targeted at the whole food chain and, consequently, so is our research. One of **safefood's** primary functions is to 'bring about general acceptance that responsibility for the provision of safe food is shared among producers, processors and distributors at all levels, caterers and the general public'. To this effect, **safefood** considers the entire food chain in its outlook on research and ensures that our research programme is linked to and supports our primary functions.

This research is used to build the evidence base for developing communications that are supported by science that is clear, authoritative, relevant and independent, including **safefood's** public awareness campaigns. Such scientific work also enhances our understanding of the potential hazards in the production of food and the measures needed to minimise or eliminate these hazards.

Working with key stakeholders in research and other institutions, **safefood** has fostered all-island working relationships and enhanced partnerships between research institutions across the island of Ireland (IOI).

Research Projects Overview

The following research projects were completed in 2019

Assessment of the safety of sous vide cooking at lower temperatures

This project was conducted by QIB Extra, Norwich, United Kingdom and completed in July 2019. The project was co-funded by **safefood** and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

What's on offer? Food for our kids in social spaces

This project was conducted by University College Dublin and completed in October 2019.

The following research projects were commissioned in 2019

Prepared convenience foods and associated food safety risks

This project is being conducted by Queen's University Belfast. The duration of the project was 18 months from December 2019 to May 2021.

Portion control tools - do they work in practice?

This project is being conducted by Ulster University. The duration of the project will be 15 months.

Assessment of the use of meat thermometers by consumers on the island of Ireland

This project is being conducted by Ulster University. The duration of the project will be 15 months.

Use of antimicrobials in animal health on the island of Ireland: knowledge, attitudes and behaviour.

This project is being conducted by Teagasc. The duration of the project will be 27 months.

Socioeconomic cost of food hypersensitivity on the island of Ireland

This project is being conducted by Dublin Institute of Technology. The duration of the project will be 25 months.

A compendium of food chain statistics for the island of Ireland

This project is being conducted by Ipsos Mori Belfast. The duration of the project will be 10 months.

Food safety advice for vulnerable patients/residents in healthcare settings on the island of Ireland

This project is being conducted by Ulster University. The duration of the project will be 26 months from September 2019 to October 2021.

Food supplements – exploring our reasons for taking them

This project is being conducted by Ulster University. The duration of the project will be 17 months.

Public acceptability of policies to address obesity

This project is being conducted by University College Dublin and the duration of the project will be 18 months.

Exploring the world of food – the perspective of families with children

This project will be conducted by National University of Ireland Galway and the duration of the project will be 18 months.

Prepared convenience foods and associated food safety risks

This project is being conducted by Queen's University Belfast and the duration of the project will be 23 months.

Publications

10 research reports were published by **safefood** in 2019, covering food safety and healthy eating.

What's on offer? The types of food and drink on price promotion in retail outlets in the Republic of Ireland

This report detailed the results of research commissioned by **safefood** to provide an overview of the types of foods on price promotion in a sample of retail outlets in the Republic of Ireland. Thirty-five per cent of food promotions were from the top shelf of the food pyramid (foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt) indicating an over representation of these foods by retailers. It was clear that promotions are considered and accepted by consumers to be a part of the shopping experience and indeed are a key influence on purchasing behaviour. However, the profit and health agendas of retailers and public health representatives remain at odds in terms of consistency between policy and practice.

What's on your child's plate?

This research report documented insights into how and why parents estimate portion sizes and the proportion of different foods given at meal-time in the home and school compared to the recommended dietary guidelines. This research project informed the **safefood** public health campaign 'Start'.

Vulnerability management initiatives

The food chain on the island of Ireland (IOI) is now part of a much larger and more complex interconnected global food chain. In recent years, a number of high-profile events such as the 2013 horsemeat scandal have called into question the resilience of the food supply chain to withstand the impact of economically motivated adulteration or ideologically motivated attacks. This report highlighted the findings of an investigation into the perspectives and practices of key food chain stakeholders on the IOI vis-a-vis such challenges.

What is the cost of a healthy food basket in Northern Ireland in 2018?

This research identified what is needed to meet physical, psychological and social needs at a minimum but acceptable level. It is not a poverty standard and represents a minimum level that people should be able to spend on food, which people have agreed nobody should be expected to live below.

This report presented the cost of the minimum essential food basket for four household types, adjusted to reflect food costs in 2018. The baskets, first established for 2014 and 2016, are adjusted to 2018 prices using the appropriate Consumer Price Index (CPI (COICOP four-digit level)) classification, as published by the Office for National Statistics.

What is the cost of a healthy food basket in the Republic of Ireland in 2018?

This study was the third in the series to determine the cost of a "minimum essential food basket" for six household types across urban and rural Ireland. The study covered a two-year timespan, from 2016 to 2018.

The research placed an emphasis on "needs, not wants", and produced comprehensive, transparent, itemised lists (of over 2,000 items, goods and services) detailing what was required to meet minimum needs and enable an acceptable minimum standard of living. A minimum essential standard of living (MESL) is not a poverty standard but is a level at which no one should be expected to live below.



A survey of energy drinks on the island of Ireland

The purpose of this research was to survey the sugar and caffeine content of energy drink products available on the market on the island of Ireland during a one-week period in 2019 and to compare this with data gathered in 2015. The work informed the Department of Health in both jurisdictions on the impact of the sugar levy on the sugar content and serving sizes of energy drinks on the market.

Why do adults give food treats to children?

This research report mapped out why adults provide treat foods to children on the island of Ireland. This report provided an overview of the main findings and presented recommendations as to how positive treat food giving behaviours can be promoted. The outcomes of this project informed the **safefood** public health campaign, 'Start'.

A survey of high-protein snack foods

High-protein diets have become increasingly popular on the island of Ireland. Consumers report high-protein diets as being beneficial for sustaining a healthy lifestyle, ensuring adequate protein intakes, enhancing muscle function, supporting bone health, managing weight, increasing energy and contributing to the satisfaction of hunger, all of which may explain the increasing popularity of high-protein diets. Given that people are consuming these products for health and nutrition reasons it is important to investigate the benefits of consuming extra dietary protein.



This research report investigated the protein intakes of adults on the island of Ireland, asked consumers' their views of high-protein bars, surveyed a sample of snack food products labelled "high protein" that are sold on the island of Ireland and review their nutritional content, and conducted a literature review to identify the health outcomes associated with high-protein diet

Do nutrition and health claims on food packaging impact on consumers' choice?

Food labels contain many facts that can be used by consumers to make informed choices. In addition, food labels can include information that is not required by law, such as marketing terms; food production details; serving suggestions; vegetarian or vegan labelling; and "front-of-pack" nutrition labelling or nutrition and health claims. In order to promote healthy eating and guide consumers on using labelling information it is important to be aware of the current knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of adults on the island of Ireland regarding nutrition and health claims. This research was commissioned to explore the impact of nutrition and health claims on consumers' perceptions and portion size selection.

Cutting out gluten

As the gluten-free diet has increased in popularity amongst consumers, the market for gluten-free products has also expanded. This report set out to assess the nutritional contribution to the diet of consumers on the island of Ireland of foods that typically contain gluten. It also surveys the nutritional profile of gluten-free snack foods found in supermarkets. Research was also carried out to assess consumers' perceptions of gluten-free products and diets, and their reasons for choosing gluten-free products.

The results will provide an increased awareness of the nutritional issues associated with the gluten-free diet for "lifestyle consumers" – i.e., those consumers who do not need to avoid gluten for medical reasons.

Publications

Three publications were published for consumers and businesses in 2019.

101 Square meals

101 square meals, first published in 1998, underwent an extensive review and update in 2019 in terms of design and dietary information to bring the recipes up-to-date. The popular resource produced in conjunction with the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) contains basic healthy, nutritious meals that are easy on your purse.

Food allergy and intolerance guidance for the catering industry

A guidance booklet titled Food allergy and intolerance: guidance for the catering industry was published in 2019. The booklet sets out what people working in this industry need to know about allergy and intolerance risks and how to serve customers who must avouch certain foods and helps caterers to meet their legal obligations on this matter. **safefood** and the Environmental Health Service are working together to distribute the booklet throughout the catering/food service sector.



Protect yourself from food poisoning – food safety made easy

An information leaflet for consumers and Small Medium Enterprises was produced demonstrating how food safety can easily be built into our daily lives by following the 4C's – cross contamination, cleaning, cooking and chilling.

Publication Re-prints

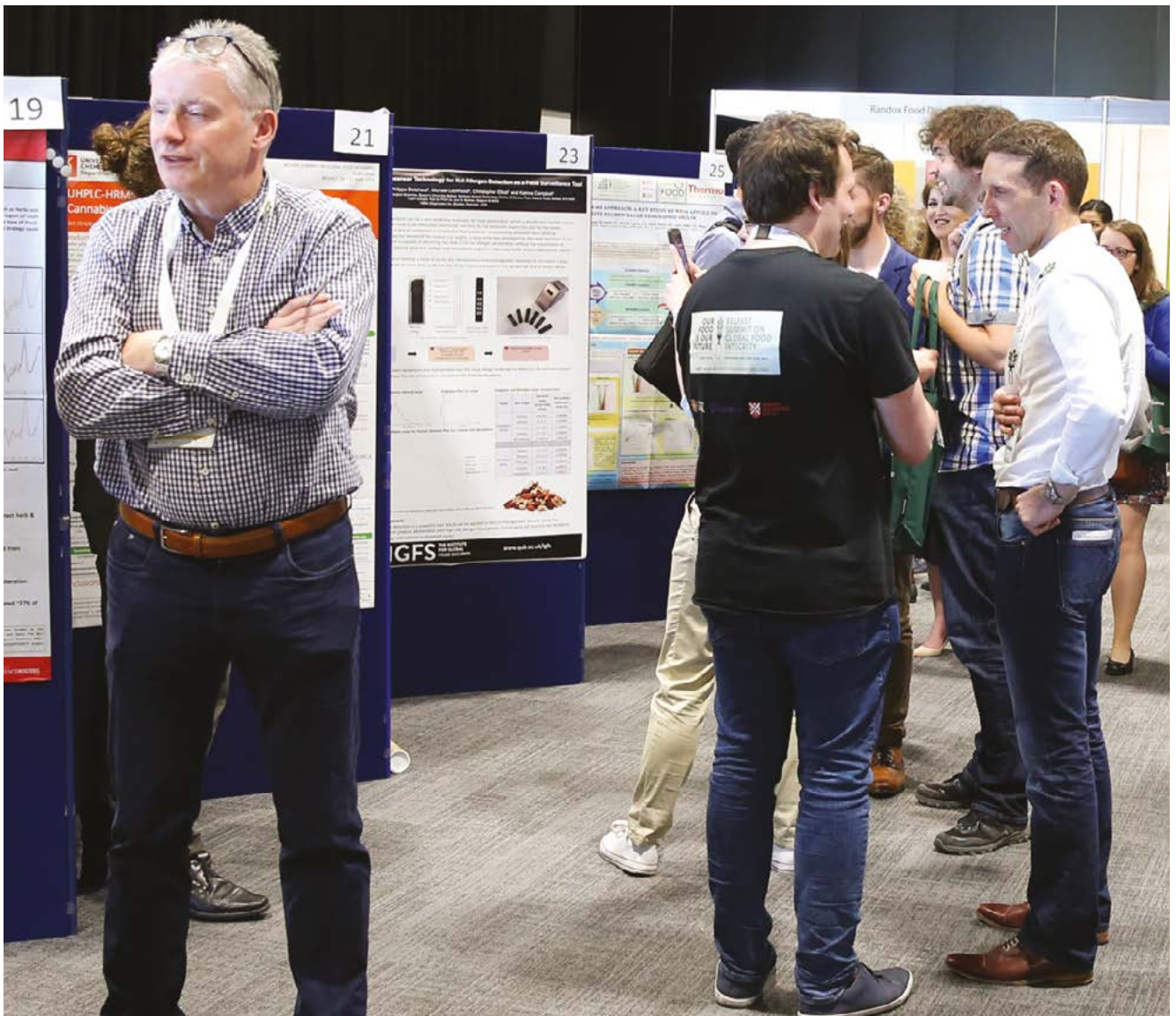
safefood re-printed the following popular resources in 2019;

- How to prepare your baby's bottle
- Sugar content of cereals poster
- Sugar content of yoghurt poster
- Health lunchboxes leaflet
- 5-day meal planner
- Sugar content of energy drinks.





Our Networks



safefood's unique north/south position promotes cooperation linkages with stakeholders working in the food sector, public health and health promotion to strengthen the integrity of the food chain and improve public health.

safefood has, as part of its legislative remit, an obligation to promote awareness of food safety issues amongst professionals with an interest in, or responsibility for food safety including the food industry.

Knowledge Network

The Knowledge Network aims to form a dynamic and rewarding environment for the exchange of food safety information for mutual benefit of its members. It aims to bring together those involved in knowledge creation and application and policy development to support and enhance food safety. The Knowledge Network has created and augmented linkages across the island of Ireland between food safety professionals throughout the whole food chain since 2011.

safefood's objectives for the Knowledge Network over the next three years 2019 – 2022 are:

- To raise awareness and provide opportunities for the sharing and learning of best practice food safety knowledge on the island of Ireland
- To further develop multi-disciplinary and cross-jurisdictional working relationships between food safety professionals
- To provide a reliable source of expertise for **safefood** with a view to exploring existing concerns, identifying emerging issues in food safety and enhancing the in-house evidence base
- To promote cooperation, collaboration and synergies between professionals in the food safety arena throughout the island of Ireland

Knowledge Network in 2019

Substantial growth in members in 2019, with 250 new members

Total of 3,259 members at the end of 2019.

23 Knowledge Network events were held in 2019, engaging with approximately 800 people and 112 Small Food Businesses on the island of Ireland

Membership included a number of sectors, such as Public Health (e.g. Medical/Surveillance/Regulatory Agencies), Laboratory Services, Feed/Food Production and Processing, Academic/Research, Consultancy and Training, Environmental Health, Retail and Catering, Veterinary Health and sales and marketing.

622 news posts uploaded to the Knowledge Network site, with over 2,332 visits to the Knowledge Network Membership page.

16 editions of Network News and 3 editions of The Food Chain magazine were published.



Appointment of a new Expert Group to the Knowledge Network

safefood uses an expert model of harnessing the best food safety expertise on the island of Ireland to advise on the Knowledge Network's operations. Ten 'experts' from across the food chain working in the following areas; microbiology, business, research, Industry, small food business support, service and catering, environmental health, food hypersensitivity and more were appointed to the new 'Expert Group'. The group held their first meeting in October, which focused on the identification of key target audiences and their associated food safety needs. The second Expert Group meeting was held in early December.

Knowledge Network working with SME's

There are upwards of 30,000 businesses producing food across the island of Ireland with approximately 80% of those being small food producers. This sector is difficult to reach with many of them having limited opportunities to acquire insightful food safety guidance and education as they are dispersed geographically, not organised in a meaningful way, and aware that food safety is but one of many key issues that are crucial to continued business success. In understanding these difficulties, **safefood** aims to deliver its resources in practical way to ease the burden on SMEs. **safefood** regularly hosts workshops and webinars on a local and regional basis.

Webinars and podcasts

In 2019, **safefood** introduced podcasts insights and advice to bring to our members from leading experts on food safety. Topics covered included:

- Choosing and using hygiene cleaning products and the differences between cleaning, sanitising and disinfection.
- The importance of packaging in food safety.
- Managing food allergens and labelling.

Four webinars took place in 2019. There was a combined total of 155 attendees from various sectors across the food industry from SMEs, large food businesses, EHOs and academia.

Due diligence response and other legal aspects of catering for food allergens - presented by Maree Gallagher, a solicitor with Covington & Burling who has over 20 years of experience working with companies to bring their products to market. The purpose of the webinar was to inform food business operators and caterers in particular about their legal obligations in relation to food allergens and to give them some guidance and advice on how to comply with the law and minimise the risk to their customers and to their business.

Consumer preference for poultry decontamination methods on the island of Ireland (IoI) - presented by Ting Lu & Dr Amalia Scannell of UCD. The purpose of this webinar was to outline consumer perceptions of meat processing methods for reduction of *Campylobacter* on poultry on the IOI, which was based on **safefood** commissioned research.

Managing vulnerabilities in the food system to prevent intentional acts of harm - presented by Dr Seamus O'Reilly of UCC, this webinar drew on recent research funded by **safefood** and addressed challenges arising from perceived vulnerabilities in food supply chains due to intentional acts such as fraud or intentional contamination.

EFSA Simplified Food Safety Management Systems - presented by Dr Declan Bolton the webinar was based on published opinions by EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) in regard to generic risk analysis for a range of food SMEs. These opinions aim to simplify HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) for small food businesses across the European Union and focus on requirements for small food SMEs for the first time. The new food safety management system will provide a simpler, more user-friendly, but equally effective hazard analysis methodology/approach.



Speakers at a Knowledge Network event

Workshops and seminars

Shelf-life training workshops

In conjunction with the Environmental Health Service Northern Ireland, **safefood**'s Knowledge Network offered four training workshops in Northern Ireland to assist food business operators' understanding of the various factors that can influence the shelf-life of a product they produce and how to validate a product's shelf-life for sale. Overall, 75 participants attended from industry backgrounds.

Transition to ISO17025: 2017 workshops

ISO 17025:2017 is an international standard aimed at improving and maintaining a laboratory's quality system. The Knowledge Network ran four one-day training workshops across the island of Ireland for staff working in food testing laboratories to provide a good understanding of the standard.

Food safety risks and challenges in the produce sector

The Knowledge Network hosted a seminar on the microbiological food safety risks and challenges relating to fresh and frozen produce. The seminar was aimed at those working in the sector, as well as researchers, regulators, and public health professionals, with speakers from the island of Ireland, Great Britain and the United States of America. More than 60 participants attended the seminar which covered topics such as VTEC in fresh produce, *Listeria*, Viruses in the food industry and Cyclospora outbreaks in fresh produce.

Food labelling & consumer trust

A **safefood** seminar on food labelling and consumer trust was held in partnership with The Institute for Global Food Security, Queen's University Belfast. The seminar was designed for those working in the food industry, regulatory agencies and public health, with speakers from industry, academia, and the legal sector. Topics discussed included industry perspectives on clean labelling industry; consumer trends and labelling requirements; legal aspects of food labelling, including allergens; the application of behavioural science to study how consumers use and understand information; and new food processing technologies.



safefood's Dr James McIntosh with speakers at the food safety workshop

Food safety: helping you to get it right workshop

Six regional workshops were held specifically for SME food businesses providing practical advice on how to produce and handle food safely. Brining together 118 businesses the workshops covered training on areas such as:

- Food allergens in a nutshell
- Food labelling: what you need to know
- The role of packaging in food safety
- Food hygiene essentials: a clean regime
- Controlling food-poisoning bacteria.

Food safety skills fund

The food safety skills fund enables members of the Knowledge Network to enhance their skills, broaden their expertise and create linkages between those involved in food safety on the island of Ireland. Members can visit other laboratories, attend conferences, centres of excellence

and other training events that are food safety related. **safefood** strongly promotes cross-border and cross sectoral exchanges and visits.

In 2019 there were a total of 12 successful applicants of which 8 were from the ROI and 4 from the NI. The successful applicants attended workshops and conferences across the island of Ireland, as well as within Europe such as The Netherlands, Germany, Prague & Turkey and further abroad to Japan.

The successful applicants represented organisations such

as State Laboratories, Research & Academia and they types of events and workshops were as follows:-

- Joint EFSA/BfR International Conference on Uncertainty in Risk Analysis
- Food Allergy Prosecution – A Mock Trial
- 1st World Congress on Food Safety & Security
- Campylobacter, Helicobacter and Related Organisms Conference
- Labware Customer Education Conference
- DIOXIN2019
- 9th International Symposium on Recent Advances in Food Analysis
- Micro and Nano Sensors PhD Summer school

All the attendees provided reports to **safefood** on their activities and learnings, which were then published on the Knowledge Network website. Attendees also disseminated learnings to their colleagues.





Speakers at the food allergy conference

Knowledge Network providing allergy training

In 2019, **safefood** focussed on assisting food businesses in meeting their obligations in terms of food allergen control and protecting the health and wellbeing of their food hypersensitive customers. We worked with both the Coeliac Society of Ireland and Gluten Free Ireland in the development and dissemination of resources to assist caterers in controlling the gluten content of the foods they sell. Gluten is one of the most difficult allergens to control, yet undoubtedly the most popular 'free-from' request that caterers get. The resources consisted of a series of mobile-friendly PDFs and instructional videos that are freely available to download.

The food safety training workshops for small and medium sized food businesses continued in 2019 with

workshops in Cork, Killarney, Dublin, Belfast, Sligo and Ballinasloe. These addressed the issue of food allergen management, which continued to register as one of the most popular topics for our SME audiences. We augmented this element of the workshop with a presentation on labelling, including allergen labelling, given by a guest speaker from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

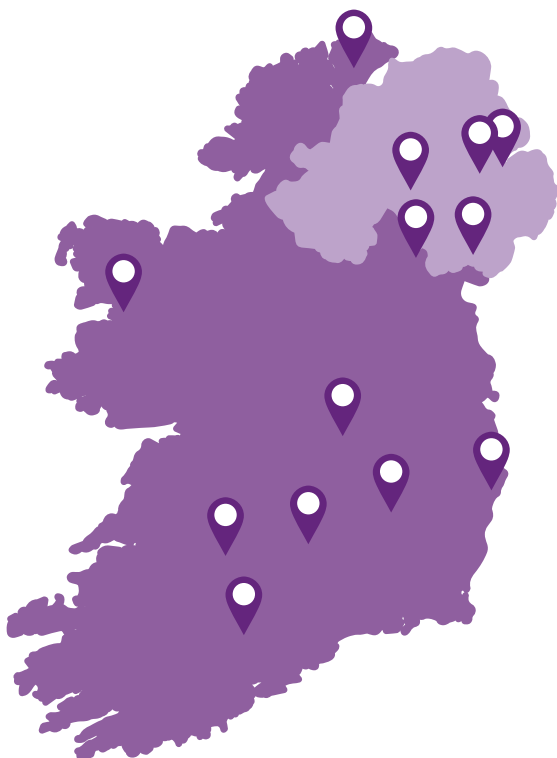
Following the success of the allergen masterclasses for Catering & Hospitality students at the colleges of Further and Higher Education in Northern Ireland during 2018, it was decided to roll these out to the various Catering & Hospitality courses in similar institutes and colleges in the Republic of Ireland. The purpose of the masterclasses was to highlight the importance of food allergen control to students destined for careers in the hospitality sector. A total of six masterclasses were delivered in association with the

Food Safety Authority of Ireland and the Environmental Health Service of the Health Services Executive (HSE). These were delivered to over 350 students and staff in the Institutes of Technology Galway-Mayo, Cork, Tallaght and Limerick, Kinsale College, St Angela's College, and Drogheda Institute of Further Education.

The close of 2019 saw a partnership between **safefood** and the Institute of Global Food Security at Queen's University Belfast to deliver a one-day conference on food allergy. The event entitled *Food Allergy: Human, Analytical & Regulatory Implications* took place in Riddel Hall, Queen's University Belfast on 21 October and attracted over 100 delegates from the food industry, government, academia as well as the health and private sectors. A programme of local and international experts presented the delegates with up-to-date information on different aspects of food allergen risk assessment.

Community Food Initiative

safefood's Community Food Initiatives Programme (CFIs) aims to positively influence the eating habits of families with children in low-income communities by focusing on the skills and knowledge around food and healthy eating, healthier shopping and enhanced cooking skills. All of these are tangible, transferable skills that can benefit an entire community. The CFI model demonstrates how collaborating with communities can influence healthier food choices and learning lifelong skills. Funding of the Community Food Initiatives (CFI's) on the island of Ireland began in 2010, using a community-led approach has helped over 40,000 people by offering real and practical help in local communities by funding 30 organisations.



In 2019 safefood completed the evaluation of the 2016-2018 programme

safefood funded 13 projects from 2016-18. As well as increasing awareness and knowledge of healthy eating, these projects promoted enhanced food skills including: healthy shopping, improved meal-planning and budgeting. All of these are tangible, transferable skills that can benefit an entire community.

The initiatives progressed in an informed and positive direction. Strengths such as the adoption of a community development approach and the cooperation with other organisations/stakeholders proved to be the right strategy to adopt.

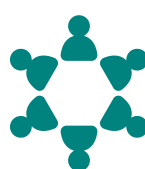
safefood introduced important new features to the initiative that increased its reach, perceived impact and long-term sustainability. The new topics introduced to the programme were facilitating the learning of new skills that would benefit not only the participants, but also their families and their communities, for example, improving cooking skills or promoting healthy choices when shopping. The focus on the development of participants' food skills has proven to be a clearly justified and effective decision. This is evident in the feedback provided by safefood, the participants, the CFI leaders and the programme manager.



119 → **2,016**
small projects delivered participants



82 → **4,051**
community wide networking events families



191 → **368**
steering group/learning network meetings stakeholders

363 promotional activities undertaken by the CFIs

Community food initiative in 2019

2019 was the first year of the fourth 3-year programme of CFI projects (2019-2021). Fourteen community organisations were recruited to the new term, 9 in the Republic of Ireland and 5 in Northern Ireland to deliver the CFI programme. The CFI is administered at a local level by SECAD Partnership CLG.

The focus of the CFI programme in 2019 – 2021 is families with children up to the age of 12 years. Support will be provided on developing skills and knowledge that positively influence the eating habits and basic food skills among families/ individuals in low income areas. Each local Community Food Initiative will implement the following six themes:

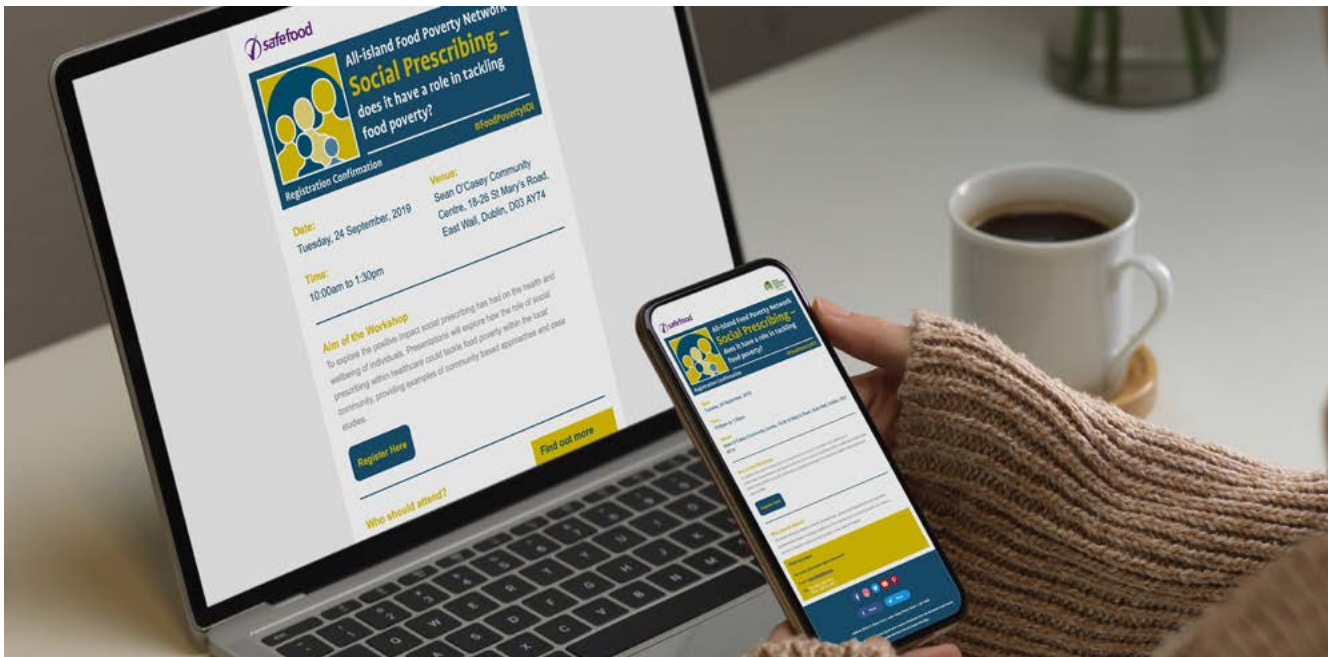
1. Supporting community awareness/knowledge of healthy eating
2. Cooking skills
3. Food safety and hygiene
4. Healthy shopping
5. Preventing food wastage through budgeting and food/ meal planning skills
6. Improving the availability and access to safe & healthy food in the community, complementing existing structures offering healthy options: community cafés, street parties etc.)



Pictured (front) are Ray Dolan, CEO, **safefood**, Toni McCaul, Programme & Strategic Relationships Manager, SECAD Partnership CLG and representatives of the Community Food Initiatives Programme 2019-2021

The full list of recipients of the Community Food Initiatives (CFIs) funding 2019-21 are:

- Bogside & Brandywell Initiative; (Derry)
- New Lodge Duncairn Community Health Partnership; (Belfast)
- North Antrim Community Network; (Ballymena)
- The Resurgam Trust; (Lisburn)
- County Armagh Community Development (Armagh)
- Ballyhoura Development CLG; (Charleville)
- Carlow County Development Partnership; (Bagenalstown)
- Co Wicklow Community Partnership; (Arklow)
- Dublin North West Area Partnership; (Finglas)
- Galway City Partnership; (Galway)
- Inishowen Development Partnership; (Inishowen)
- IRD Duhallow CLG; (Newmarket, Co Cork)
- Offaly Local Development Company; (Tullamore)
- South Tipperary Development; (Cahir)



All-island Food Poverty Network

Food poverty, defined as the inability to access a nutritionally adequate diet, is a significant issue for many people on the island of Ireland.

Although the cost of healthy food is a major factor, the inability to access a healthy diet is a complex issue that incorporates education, transport, literacy, culture and environmental planning. Food poverty is yet another outcome of broader determinants of health.

In partnership with the FSA NI, **safefood** has been supporting a co-ordinated and strategic approach to tackling food poverty on the island of Ireland since 2009, promoting cross-border collaboration and sharing of knowledge and experience. The network works with representatives from Government departments and agencies, academia and NGOs.

The network prioritises the following activities:

Advocacy and communication

Provide support, deliberation and partnership, when appropriate, among network members in advocating for food poverty at a range of levels from policy to practice.

Evidence

Discuss existing/new data and gaps in the evidence base on food poverty on the island of Ireland at each meeting, build consensus and identify potential opportunities for addressing the information gaps.

Resources

Share information on new/existing programmes and resources among members

The Food Poverty Network officially met three times in 2019, with splinter groups meeting at other times during the year.

The 5th annual conference of the network took place on the 24th of September in Dublin. The event explored the positive impact that social prescribing has had on individual health and wellbeing. Presentations highlighted how the role of social prescribing within healthcare could be extended to tackle food poverty within the local community. The event also included examples of community-based approaches and case studies and how food in the community could support social prescribing.

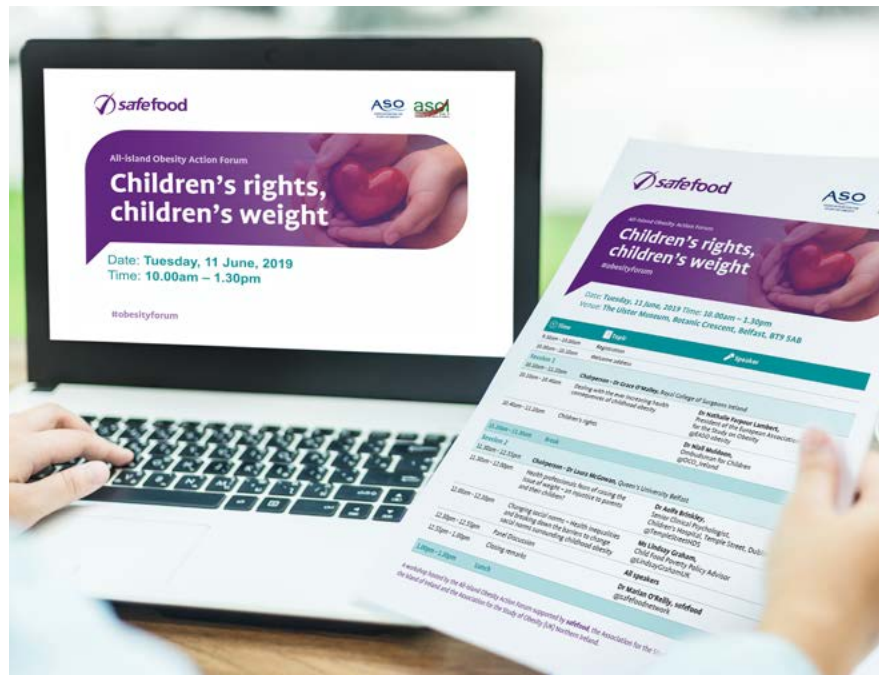
The Food Poverty network is supported by the publication of a bi-annual newsletter, 'All-island Food Poverty Network news'. Launched for the first time in 2017, this newsletter promotes the sharing of information and the exchange of best practice, whilst providing an overview of current research, news coverage, events and reports in the area of obesity. The two 2019 editions were published to over 200 subscribers.

All-island Obesity Action Forum

Established in December 2008 and officially launched in April 2009 to support the implementation of obesity policies across the island of Ireland, the forum brings together a range of stakeholders from 31 organisations. Members come from the areas of food and physical activity. By facilitating the exchange of best practice and by promoting networking and collaboration, the forum provides an ideal platform for partnership and cohesive working on the island of Ireland.

The forum is supported by the publication of an e-bulletin, ‘All-island obesity news’, which promotes the sharing of information and the exchange of best practice, whilst providing an overview of current research, news coverage, events and reports in the area of obesity. Eleven editions of All-island Obesity News were published in 2019 to over 500 subscribers.

As part of its work, the forum holds bi-annual workshops. The topic for the first All-island Obesity action forum workshop of 2019 was titled *children’s rights, children’s weight*. The workshop explored our children’s basic right to health, specifically in the prevention of obesity and its lifelong health and wellbeing complications. A rights-based approach emphasises our fundamental entitlement to a healthy diet and a health promoting society.



Speakers included Dr Nathalie Farpour Lambert, President of the European Association for the Study on Obesity, Dr Niall Muldoon, Ombudsman for Children, Dr Aoife Brinkley, Senior Clinical Psychologist, Children’s Hospital, Temple Street, Dublin and Ms Lindsay Graham, Child Food Poverty Policy Advisor. Dr Nathalie Farpour Lambert gave the opening address, introducing the ever-increasing health consequences of childhood obesity. Dr Muldoon set the scene on the rights of the child to a safe, healthy diet and physical activity. Dr Brinkley highlighted the concerns of health professionals in raising the issue of childhood obesity with children and parents. And lastly, Dr Graham explored health inequalities and the breaking down of barriers to changing social norms around childhood obesity.

The second workshop of the year focused on nutritional labelling and its role in supporting healthier food choices. Dr Rachel Crockett from the University of Stirling presented results for the recent Cochrane Systematic Review on nutritional labelling. Dr Crockett discussed how this could be effective if used with a range of other population interventions.

Dr Inez Baily from the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) explored Irish health literacy policy and practice and showed practical tools that can be used to support people with literacy/numeracy needs. Dr Mary Flynn from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland discussed how food labelling can be used to make healthier choices. Dr Michel Chauillac from the Ministry of Solidarities and Health France shared insights from their new front-of-pack labelling system: Nutri-Score.

Partnership Working

Working in partnership is at the heart of safefood's role as a North/South body. Whether in our communication campaigns, scientific research or professional networks, our partnership approach brings many positive connections and long-lasting relationships on the island of Ireland.

Minimum nutritional standards in health and social care in Northern Ireland

The Minimum nutritional standards for catering in health and social care in Northern Ireland were published in 2017 by **safefood**, the Public Health Agency and the Food Standards Agency. These standards have been supporting people working in health service catering businesses who want to offer consumers a choice of affordable, healthy and sustainable food. The standards are currently being reviewed and will be published

in 2020. A poster entitled: Minimum nutritional standards for catering in health and social care, for staff and visitors was presented at the European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians (EFAD) conference. The work on these standards also selected for an oral presentation at the Joint Public Health Annual Conference.

safefood as a North/South body brought expertise from this project and shared this information with the Health Service Executive. The Healthy Eating Active Living Programme of the HSE with **safefood** has developed the Nutrition Standards for food and beverage provision in the Republic of Ireland. These standards were published in 2019 in the Republic of Ireland.

safefood was also a member of the Policy Development Group that updated the HSE Vending Policy. This policy and the research undertaken during the review process, was shared with colleagues in Northern Ireland and shaped vending contracts for Health and Social Care settings in NI.

safefood, in partnership with Department of Health and the HSE supported the Department of Social Protection with the development of Nutrition Standards for hot school meals (primary schools). These standards are in line with the Nutrition Standards for School Meals published by Healthy Ireland in 2017, a joint project with **safefood** and HSE.

safefood continues to support the Food in Schools Forum in Northern Ireland that oversees the implementation of the Nutritional Standards for school food and other drinks in schools. In addition, **safefood** continues to support the regional Food in Schools Co-ordinator, who leads on this work. **safefood** is also a member of the technical sub-group that reviewed the standards in 2019. The sub-group produced several recommendations for the Education Authority to consider and to include in a consultation in January 2020 with a view to implementing the Standards in September 2020 - this is policy in Northern Ireland.





Supporting Policy

safefood is a member of Obesity policy groups in ROI and NI

ROI

safefood participated in the Obesity Prevention Implementation Oversight group, a cross-governmental group that oversees the implementation of the Obesity Policy, Healthy Weight for Ireland (2016). Two working groups report into this group and **safefood** is involved in these

Reformulation Subgroup – this group drafted a roadmap for food reformulation in ROI, which went out for consultation to key stakeholders including the food industry. The roadmap set out targets for reduction in calories, portion sizes, fat, sugar and salt in foods on the market over a 4-year period.

Healthy Eating Group – this- Cross sectoral group worked in the development of healthy eating guidelines for 1-5y olds and identified areas of collaboration.

NI

safefood contributed to two meetings of the Obesity Prevention Steering group and three meetings of the Regional Obesity Prevention Group. The former group oversee the progress of NI's Obesity strategy, Fitter Futures for All (2012), and the other group progresses the implementation of the non-governmental actions in the strategy.

Our Events



The success of our professional and public-facing events reflects our approach to sharing knowledge, building relationships and offering practical advice.

Balmoral Show

2019 saw 17 years of **safefood** exhibiting at the Balmoral Show. **safefood** presented both the START campaign and the Rufus handwashing campaign. The aim of the stand is to raise awareness of the two public health campaigns and build engagement with the target audience. During the four-day event approximately 3,000 to 5,000 people visited the stand

The Start campaign stand consisted of:

- A giant snake and ladders game, which highlighted the six core practical messages to achieve a healthier lifestyle for your family.
- A four-sided engagement wall, which included a sugary drinks quiz, healthy eating quiz, physical activity challenge and a pledge wall.

To promote our Rufus handwashing campaign, a full size Rufus mascot came to the show each day to do a walk about and engage families in around the petting farm and food court area. The main propose was to promote Rufus' five steps to proper handwashing.



Ploughing Championship

safefood and the HSE presented the Start interactive stand at the Ploughing Championships. The stands prominent position within Healthy Ireland's health and wellbeing marquee ensured the stand was extremely busy, and elicited high levels of engagement with the target audience. The team used the

activities to communicate the Start campaign messages to all family members from parents, children and grandparents. People were surprised by the health messages made in each activity and loved to learn how easy it is to START changing bad habits moving to a healthier lifestyle

A central stage provided the perfect setting for a START healthy eating quiz introduced by Karl Henry and for a special Rufus storybook reading with RTE Junior presenter, Clara Murray, in partnership with the Library Service.

GAA Family Day

GAA supporters attending the Dublin-Mayo semi-final were invited to visit the Start interactive stand housed in the family zone outside the Cusack Stand. Families could visit it with the kids to play the giant snakes & ladders game before the match take home some healthy eating tips to improve their own sporting performance.

Healthfest

Healthfest, which has been running for four years, is a fun-filled and informative event featuring some of the ROI's top experts in the health arena. The event, for Transition year students, encourages healthy habits for students now and in their future. The aim of the event was to provide students with the opportunity to learn all about the benefits of healthy eating, physical exercise and the importance of looking after their mental health. The **safefood** stand called Lifting the lid on Energy Drinks educated students on the high sugar and caffeine content of the products. The exam survival guide, with ideas and tips on food, snacks, drinks and sleep was also distributed.

Professional Events

Federation of European Nutritional Societies (FENS). **safefood** hosted a workshop at the FENS conference hosted in Dublin in October 2020. The workshop looked at 'Credible Nutrition Information for the General Public'. Speakers included Dr Robert O'Connor (Head of Research, Irish Cancer Society), Ms Eileen O'Sullivan (Cancer Patient Advocate), Mr Philip Boucher-Hayes (TV broadcaster and journalist) and Dr Gabriel Scally (Soil Association)



Events calendar

Consumer events

Operation Transformation activation

26 January Limerick, 2 Feb Letterkenny

Operations Transformation 5 KM run

23 February, Dublin

Balmoral show

15-18 May, Belfast

GAA START activation

10 August, Dublin

Ploughing championship

17-19 September, Carlow

Listeria awareness week

18 November

Education events

Irish primary principals Network

24-25 January, Dublin

Healthfest

31 January, Dublin

safefood's stand focused on energy drinks

INTO annual congress

22-23 April

safefood's stand promoted Mediawise

Association of teachers of home economics

November

European literacy week

30 March - 5 April

safefood promoted MediaWise

British Dental Association (BDA) educational event

Professional networks

Launch of the CFI programme 2019-2022

21 March, Dublin

Launch of The minimum nutrition standards for catering health and care facilities in ROI

February

All-island obesity action forum: Children's rights, children's weight

11 June, Belfast

safefood's stand promoted Mediawise

All-island food poverty conference: social prescribing - does it have a role in tackling food poverty?

24 September, Dublin

GAA health club co-ordinators event

8 October, Dublin

All-island obesity action forum: What is the future for nutritional labelling?

12 November, Dublin

European Public health nutrition alliance annual meeting

Hosted by safefood

Training and workshops

Due diligence and legal aspects of catering for food allergens webinar

29 January

To inform business operators and caterers about the legal obligations in relation to food allergens.

Forum and expo for speciality food producers

4 February, Cork

Consumer preference for poultry decontamination methods on the IOI webinar

7 February

Managing vulnerabilities in the food system to prevent international acts of harm webinar

6 March

Shelf-life training

11 March Antrim, 12 March Newtownabbey, 13 March Cookstown, 14 March Newcastle.

Workshops to help business operators understand factors that influence shelf-life of food products.

EFSA simplified food safety management systems webinar

27 March

Training and workshops

Laboratory Training

7 March Belfast, 26 March Cork, 27 March Galway, 28 March Dublin.

Workshops to provide training to laboratories on ISO 17025

Food safety – helping you get it right

22 May Cork, 23 May Killarney, 4 Sept Dublin, 5 Sept Newtownabbey, 17 Sept Sligo, 18 Sept Ballinasloe.

Workshops for SME's

What advice does the public believe? – challenges for researchers, policy makers and practitioners

12 October, Dublin

Allergen masterclasses

Seminars

Junior cycle science teacher's seminar

14 September, Cork

Food safety risks and challenges in the produce sector

5 November, Dublin

National and International conferences

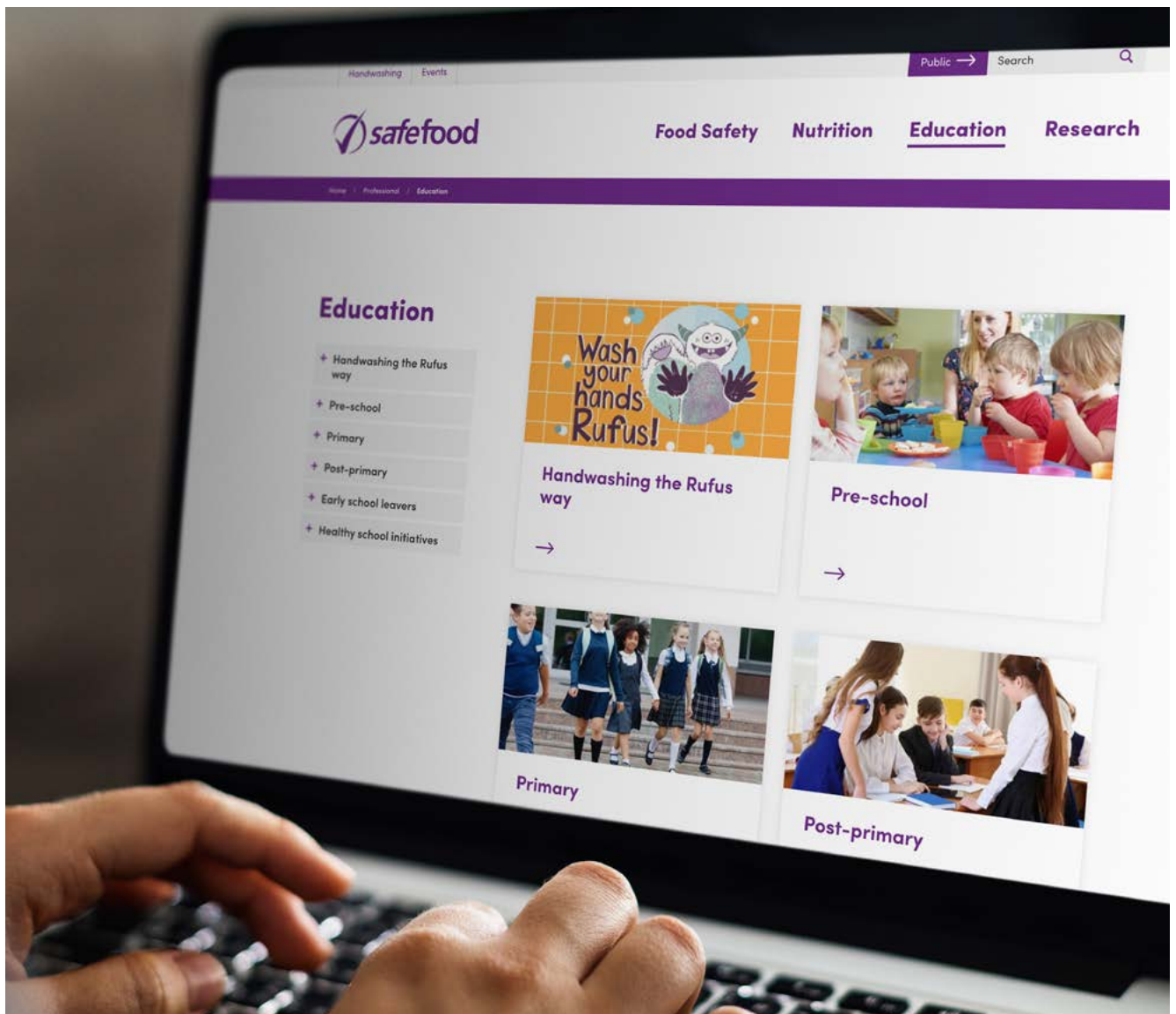
Food allergy – human analytical and regulatory implications

21 October

Food labelling and consumer trust

5 December, Belfast

Education

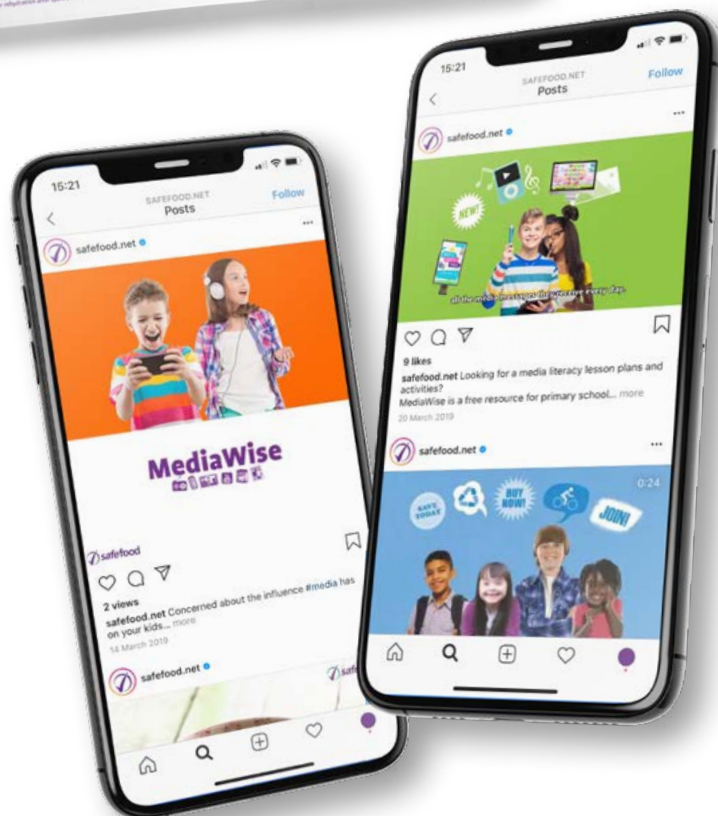


With the changes in our food supply chain and lifestyles, it is important that young people are educated on the importance of food safety, food hygiene and nutrition. **safefood** recognises that teachers play a vital role in developing the habits of young people that can last a lifetime.



Tastebuds

2019 saw **safefood** launch a new digital education resource, Tastebuds, aimed at 8-11 year-old students. The fun interactive resource includes two sessions, food for life and healthy choices, which help children enjoy learning about the importance of a healthy, balanced diet. The Food for Life session aims to help children make healthier choices by learning more about the different types of food their body needs to help them grow, learn and have fun. In Healthy Choices children learn that meals can have foods from different parts of the Food Pyramid. It aims to help them think about the different types of food they eat and how they can make healthier choices.



European Media Literacy Week

safefood took part in the first ever European media literacy week held in April. The European Media Literacy Week is an initiative by the European Commission to underline the societal importance of media literacy and

promote media literacy initiatives and projects across the EU. With this in mind **safefood's** media literacy resource, MediaWise, was a perfect fit for this initiative. Mediawise aims to equip primary school children with

the life skill they need to navigate the rapidly changing media forms at their disposal. MediaWise was launched in the ROI in 2017 and work has been ongoing through 2019 to launch MediaWise in NI in 2020.

Our Campaigns



Our key messages of food safety, food hygiene and nutrition are communicated using a combination of advertising, public relations, direct marketing, digital and social media, events, publications, sponsorship and the **safefood** website.

Childhood Obesity

The START campaign, a five-year public health awareness campaign from **safefood**, the HSE and Healthy Ireland, aired in May and October 2019. The overarching aim of the campaign was to encourage families to take the first step towards a healthier lifestyle for their children by supporting them to achieve one daily win, and to persist with the changes, no matter how difficult they become.

The May phase of START was based on the research project What's on your child's plate? Which looked into the food portion sizes and the proportion of different food groups eaten by children on the island of Ireland. The research revealed that foods like biscuits, crisps, chocolate and sweets are the second-most consumed food group by children. Almost 25% of all meals now include food and drinks high in fat, salt and sugar that are not recommended as part of a healthy diet. The research also found that 29% of children's afternoon and evening snacks are foods high in fat, sugar and salt.

These types of food should ideally be considered treats and consumed 1-2 times a week. With this in mind, the campaign focused on reducing treat foods and increasing healthier snacks using radio and digital



advertising. A START interactive consumer stand was created, which was used at various events such as the Balmoral Show, the Ploughing Championship, and GAA events, to spread the message of the campaign.

The aim of the October phase of the campaign was to build on the message to reduce treat foods. **safefood** based this phase of the campaign on the research project 'why do adults give food to children'. The October phase delved into why adults were offering their children these types of food.

The research found that parents gave children food treats for a variety of

reasons; these include to reward good behaviour (42%), because children asked for them (42%) or to make children feel better (29%). Parents involved in the research also found treats unavoidable – from being a consistent part of celebrations and occasions, to post-activity snacking, to being ever-present while supermarket shopping.

The latter phase of START in 2019 acknowledged the difficulty parents faced in going against the norm to protect their children and say no to treats. The concept 'It takes a hero to be the bad guy' was created for this phase. Parents need strength and encouragement from everyone to say 'no' – from friends, family, grandparents and child-minders, to health professionals and wider society. The campaign focused on the critical moment when a child asked for a treat and how a parent needed to take a brave stand of saying no in an effort to cut down on treats, ultimately doing the best for their child.

Tips for reducing treats, support and practical tools including videos and advice were available on the START website.



Handwashing

safefood turned to a big, friendly, furry monster to launch the latest phase of its Handwashing programme, which aimed to help make learning about good handwashing habits fun for under 5 year olds and help keep bacteria like E.coli from spreading. Person-to-person spread remains one of the most common transmission routes for E.coli infections.

“Rufus the Handwashing Hero” was the star of a new free educational resource pack featuring a storybook, sink poster and sticker set. Developed by safefood with the support of Early Childhood Ireland in the ROI and Early Years in NI, the pack has been received by approximately 4,500 childcare providers.

Handwashing is one of the most important life skills we can teach children from a young age. ‘Rufus’ is a fun, friendly character with a big personality that safefood created to teach kids about handwashing. Providing childcare and education professionals with our storybook, catchy song and our easy-to-remember five steps of handwashing – Wet; Soap; Rub; Rinse and Dry as part of our pre-school pack is a great way to reinforce the handwashing message.

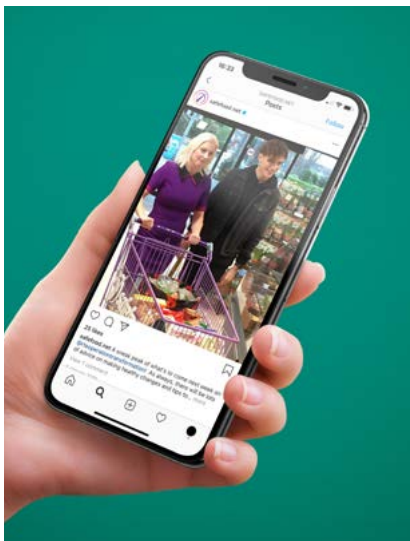


Operation Transformation

safefood sponsored the 12th series of RTE's Operation Transformation, which aired in January 2019. In support of the show, **safefood** created the 'transform your trolley' campaign to help shoppers make healthier choices amidst constant promotions.

A **safefood** commissioned research project titled The balance of food on price promotion, which supported transform your trolley, found that more than a third of products on special offer in supermarkets are high in fat, sugar and salt. The campaign aimed to encourage people to re-balance their food shopping habits and transform their trolleys into healthier ones by providing practical tips like making a list, being more aware of products on price promotions and having a plan for your meals & snacks.

safefood's nutrition team were available during the show to answer viewers healthy eating and nutrition questions on a live chat, "Ask the Expert", on **safefood**'s Facebook Messenger.



safefood's Dr Gary Kearney launching the Christmas campaign.

Food Safety Christmas Campaign

For the month of December **safefood** were once again at hand to take the stress out of Christmas for those preparing the family dinner, especially for the one quarter of people on the island of Ireland claiming to be cooking Christmas dinner for the first time. The turkey remains the most popular centre piece on the Christmas dinner table on the island but many cooks do not know how to safely handle it. **safefood** research showed 43% of people still wash a turkey prior to cooking it. Washing poultry and fowl spreads food poisoning germs around kitchen surfaces and nearby ready-to-eat foods. According to research that is not the only food safety mistake

people make over the festive period. Fifty eight per cent of respondents were happy to leave the remains of their cooked turkey out of the fridge overnight, mistakenly believing it to be a safe storage method. Eighty five percent of respondents said they would be eating leftover turkey for four days or more, not knowing that leftovers should not be consumed after three days provided they have been stored properly. **safefood** addressed the misconceptions around providing a safe Christmas dinner through PR, the **safefood** website was stuffed with lots of useful resources including a turkey cooking calculator, how-to videos and tasty recipes. Any last minute questions on Christmas day itself could be answered by the **safefood** Chefbot.

Corporate Operations



The services provided span the areas of accounting and finance, procurement, human resources, information technology, legal governance and audit and most recently GDPR all contributing to facilitate the efficient and effective delivery of **safefood**'s business goals and strategy.

Advisory Board

Seven meetings of the Advisory Board were held through the year, four in Dublin, one in Newry, one in Limerick and one in Belfast. In addition to in-house presentations and briefings from **safefood** staff, several guest speakers were invited to present to the Board on such topics as sustainability and research. Attendance details, as well as fees paid to members of the Advisory Board are included on page 33. In December 2019, three members of the Board retired in line with their terms of appointment. From December 2019, four vacancies exist on the Advisory Board and **safefood** awaits the North South Ministerial Council's appointments to fill these vacancies.

Ms Helen O'Donnell	6
Mr Paul Gibbons	6
Mr Brendan Kehoe	7
Mr Alan McGrath	5
Prof Dolores O'Riordan	2
Dr Mary Upton	6
Mr Mervyn Oswald	6
Ms Margaret Jeffares	6
Dr Eddie Rooney	7
Mr Stephen Mountray	4
Ms Wendy McIntosh	7

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit & Risk Committee is comprised of two members of the Advisory Board and two external members, one of whom chairs the committee. Both external members of the committee have wide relevant professional experience. During 2019, the Audit & Risk Committee met four times. The external Chairperson, Ms Margaret Campbell, stepped down in March 2019 and Mr Alan Myles was appointed to fill the position of Chairperson. A new external member was appointed in March, Ms Mairead Ní Cheadagain.

The Audit & Risk Committee engages external professional auditors to conduct a programme of internal audits and reviews the risk register at each meeting for completeness and to ensure that all appropriate steps to control and mitigate risks are in place. **safefood**'s External Audit is carried out jointly by the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Northern Ireland Audit Office. The Audit & Risk Committee has an independent role in the provision of assurance to the CEO as accounting officer and the Advisory Board on internal control, risk management, and audit and assurance matters as part of the systematic review of **safefood**'s internal controls and governance procedures.

Audit & Risk Committee membership and attendance for 2019 and 2018

Number of meetings	4
Ms Margaret Campbell (Chairperson to 21 March 2019)	1
Mr Alan Myles (Chairperson from 21 March 2019)	3
Mr Paul Gibbons	4
Dr Eddie Rooney	4
Ms Mairead Ní Cheadagain	3

Human Rights & Equality

safefood is required to comply with Equality and Human Rights legislation in both jurisdictions. During 2019, **safefood** closely monitored its progress towards delivering the commitments set out in its Disability Action Plan 2016- 2020. Regular training is provided to all staff to encourage awareness of disability and equality issues and this training is incorporated into the staff induction process. The Annual Report on Equality (which is published on **safefood**'s website) and the Disability Action Plan were submitted on a timely basis to the Equality Commission (NI). **safefood**'s recruitment programme actively encourages people with disabilities to apply for roles.

Advisory Committee

safefood is assisted by an Advisory Committee of experts with a broad range of professional expertise, experience and backgrounds. Membership of the Committee is voluntary and the overarching role of the members is the provision of technical advice and guidance to assist **safefood** in setting strategy and successfully delivering on the elements of its three-year Corporate and annual Business Plans. The Advisory Committee complements **safefood**'s Advisory Board and both structures are appointed by the North South Ministerial Council.

The Committee met once in 2019. All members of the Committee retired in 2019 in line with their terms of appointment and, at the end of 2019, **safefood** awaited the North South Ministerial Council's appointments to fill these vacancies.

Protected Disclosure

Section 22 of the Protected Disclosure Act 2014 requires the publication of a report each year relating to the number of protected disclosures made in the preceding year and also for the publication of information with regard to any actions taken in response to protected disclosures made.

No protected disclosures were received by **safefood** in the reporting period up to 31 December 2019.

Corporate Plan 2020-2022 and Business Plan 2020

The Corporate Plan and Business Plan were submitted to both sponsor departments in 2019.

Declaration of interests

Members of the Advisory Board complete a Declaration of Interests annually. A Register of Interests is maintained and is available on request.

safefood engagements with key stakeholders

safefood participated in two events organised by the Joint Secretariat of the North South Ministerial Council. The first event was a meeting of Chief Executive Officers from all North South Bodies and the second event took place in Armagh to mark the 20th Anniversary of the establishment of the North South Bodies

safefood also participated in two meetings of a research forum in the Queens University Belfast to discuss the new governance arrangements for Northern Ireland set out in the Protocol for NI contained in the Withdrawal Agreement governing the UK's departure from the EU.

Remuneration Report

For the year ended 31 December 2019

The North/South Implementation Bodies Annual Reports and Accounts Guidance, issued jointly by the Department of Finance (DOF) in the North and the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform (DPER) in the South, requires the disclosure of the remuneration and pension entitlements of certain senior staff members. Based on the Board's assessment that making those disclosures would be a breach of data protection legislation, **safefood** has not made those disclosures.

Remuneration Policy

safefood's remuneration policy is to mirror the Public Sector salaries and terms and conditions for all staff. The appropriate pay scales for each grade contain a number of pay points from minima to maxima, allowing progression towards the maxima.

Bonuses and Benefits in Kind

It is not the policy of **safefood** to make any bonus payments to members of the key management team or staff. No bonus payments were made in 2019 or 2018.

In recognition of the 20 year anniversary of **safefood** a voucher in the amount of €250 was awarded to 28 permanent members of staff. There were no other benefits in kind provided to key management or staff in 2019 or 2018.

Salary Bands

The number of employees at the end of the year whose emoluments (including pension contributions) fell within the following bands (this represents the annual emoluments) are:-

	2019	2018
€20,000 – €30,000	3	2
€30,001 – €40,000	5	5
€40,001 – €50,000	3	5
€50,001 – €60,000	8	8
€60,001 – €70,000	2	2
€70,001 – €80,000	3	3
€80,001 – €90,000	2	4
€90,001 – €100,000	1	0
€100,001 – €110,000	2	1
€110,001 – €120,000	1	1

Service Contracts

All senior management and key appointments are made in accordance with **safefood's** recruitment policy which requires the appointment to be on the basis of suitability and competence. All staff receive a contract of employment on appointment, which details their terms and conditions. Termination payments are in accordance with these terms and conditions. During 2019 there were no termination, compensation or severance payments made.

Key Management Team Remuneration

The remuneration and pension entitlements of the Chief Executive Officer are set out in note 3 (c) of the Financial Statements.

The Key Management Team consists of the Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Corporate Operations, the Director of Marketing and Communications, the Director of Food Science and the Director of Human Health and Nutrition. The total remuneration paid to the Key Management Team in 2019 amounted to €446,727 (GBP£392,124), 2018 €463,148 (GBP£408,751).

Pension Arrangements

All staff and management are members of the North/South Pension Scheme which was established by the North/South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited with effect from 29 April 2005. It is a defined benefit pension scheme which is funded annually on a pay as you go basis from monies provided by the UK and Irish Exchequers.

Funding is provided to the Body by the Department of Health in the South and the Department of Health in the North. The scheme is administered by an external administrator.

Fair Pay Disclosure

safefood is required to disclose the median remuneration of its staff. This is based on annualised full time equivalent remuneration of all staff as at 31st December 2019. It is also required to disclose the range of staff remuneration and the ratio between the median staff remuneration and the mid-point of the banded remuneration of the highest paid director.

	2019 €	2018 €	2019 GBP £	2018 GBP £
Midpoint of band of highest paid director	113,998	112,608	100,064	99,625
Median remuneration of staff	54,730	53,809	48,040	47,605
Ratio	2.08	2.09	2.08	2.03
Range of staff remuneration	€24,875 to €113,998	€29,634 to €112,608	£21,836 to £100,064	£26,217 to £99,625

The remuneration of the highest paid director in 2019 was €113,998 (GBP£100,064), 2018: €112,608 (GBP£99,625). This was 2.08, 2018:2.09 times the median salary of the workforce which in 2019 was €54,730 (GBP£48,040), 2018: €53,809 (GBP£47,605).

Total remuneration includes salary. It does not include employer pension contribution and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

Advisory Board Fees

	2019 €	2018 €	2019 GBP£	2018 GBP£	2019 Meetings Attended	2018 Meetings Attended
Helen O'Donnell	11,970	11,970	10,507	10,590	6	7
Paul Gibbons	-	-	-	-	6	7
Brendan Kehoe	7,695	7,695	6,754	6,808	7	7
Alan McGrath	7,695	7,695	6,754	6,808	5	6
Mary Upton	7,695	7,695	6,754	6,808	6	7
Mervyn Oswald	5,964	5,917	5,235	5,235	6	5
Margaret Jeffares	7,302	7,695	6,409	6,808	6	5
Dolores O'Riordan	-	-	-	-	2	2
Edmond Rooney	5,964	5,917	5,235	5,235	7	7
Wendy McIntosh	5,964	5,917	5,235	5,235	7	6
Stephen Moutray	5,964	5,917	5,235	5,235	4	6

7 meetings of the Advisory Board were held in 2019 (2018: 7). Mr. Paul Gibbons and Prof Dolores O' Riordan do not receive board fees due to the "One Person One Salary" principle. The total amount of fees paid to Advisory Board members in 2019 was €66,277/GBP£58,176 (2018 €66,368/GBP£58,716) and the National Insurance Contribution in 2019 was €0/£0 (2018 €0/£0). The total amount of fees due at 31st December 2019 was nil and the amounts due at 31st December 2018 was nil. No Benefits in Kind were provided to Senior Management or Advisory Board Members. A total of €9,292/GBP£8,156 (2018 €10,844/GBP£9,594) was claimed by Advisory Board Members to cover travel and subsistence expenses. This amount is included in travel and subsistence disclosed in note 4.

2019 Accounts



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Foreword to the Accounts

1. Format

These Accounts are prepared in a form directed by the Department of Health (Northern Ireland) and the Department of Health (Republic of Ireland) with the approval of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Republic of Ireland) and the Department of Finance (Northern Ireland), and in accordance with the financial arrangements of Part 7 of Annex 2 to the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999 and the North-South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999.

2. Background Information

The Food Safety Promotion Board (An Bord um Chur Chun Cinn Sábháilteachta Bia) is an Implementation Body established under the Belfast Agreement on the 2nd December 1999. The Board’s governing legislation is the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999 and the North-South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999.

The governing legislation confers the following specific functions:-

- Promotion of food safety
- Research into food safety
- Communication of food alerts
- Surveillance of foodborne disease
- Promotion of scientific co-operation and laboratory linkages
- Development of cost effective facilities for specialised laboratory testing

In addition to the above, the Board has a general remit to act as an independent source of scientific advice.

The Food Safety Promotion Board operates under the brand name ‘**safefood**’.

Governance

The functions of the Board are discharged by the Chief Executive who reports to the North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC). The Chief Executive is assisted by an Advisory Board and a Scientific Advisory Committee. The members of the Advisory Board for 2019 were:

Advisory Board 2019

- Ms. Helen O Donnell (Chairperson)

- Mr. Paul Gibbons (Vice-Chairperson)
Retired 12th December

- Mr. Brendan Kehoe

- Mr. Alan McGrath

- Dr. Mary Upton

- Mr. Mervyn Oswald

- Ms. Margaret Jeffares (Retired 12th December)

- Prof. Dolores O Riordan (Retired 12th December)

- Dr. Edmond Rooney

- Ms. Wendy McIntosh

- Mr. Stephen Moutray

Three members of the Advisory Board retired during 2019, in line with their terms of office. Under the British-Irish Agreement Act, 1999, the NSMC is responsible for appointing members to the Advisory Board and **safefood** awaits these appointments.

Advisory Committee 2019

The **safefood** Advisory Committee comprises 12 members drawn from a broad range of expertise and disciplines available in both jurisdictions and advises on food sciences, the agri-food chain, public health nutrition, education, consumer behaviour, communications and community and voluntary matters.

The remaining seven members of the Advisory Committee retired during 2019, in line with their terms of office. Under the British-Irish Agreement Act, 1999, the NSMC is responsible for appointing members to the Advisory Committee and **safefood** awaits these appointments.

4. Financial Results

The results of the Food Safety Promotion Board are set out in detail on page 53. During 2019, the Food Safety Promotion Board incurred expenditure of €8,443,181 (£7,411,699) and received income of €8,633,549 (£7,578,798) resulting in a surplus for the year of €190,368 (£167,099). Comparatively, during 2018, the Food Safety Promotion Board incurred expenditure of €8,439,541 (GBP£7,466,546) and received income of €8,615,920 (GBP£7,622,590) resulting in a surplus for that year of €176,379 (GBP£156,044).

Foreword to the Accounts (continued)

5. Post Balance Sheet Events

There were no events between the reporting date and the date of approval of these financial statements for issue that require adjustment to the financial statements.

The Board recognises that the Covid-19 pandemic is a significant event which has occurred since the reporting date. The Board is taking the situation seriously and is monitoring the situation on an ongoing basis. The business continues to operate with measures in place to protect staff and **safefood's** stakeholders. The majority of staff are working remotely and operations and activities are being maintained while adjusting to the different way in which the business is being delivered.

6. Charitable Donations

No charitable donations were received or made during the year.

7. Policies

Disabled Employees

The Board complies with the requirements of Part 5 of the Disabilities Act 2005 in supporting the employment of people with disabilities and continues to be committed to a policy of equal opportunity and welcomes applications from suitably qualified applicants irrespective of disability. A disability action plan was issued in 2011 to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage their participation in public life.

Equality

The Board's approved Equality Scheme was issued in September 2011 and **safefood** is engaged in an ongoing review process.

Provision of Information to and Consulting with Employees

An Employee Partnership Forum was in place throughout 2019 as a mechanism for consultation with employees.

Prompt Payment Policy and its performance

The Board is committed to the prompt payments for goods and services received, in accordance with the Irish Prompt Payments of Accounts Act, 1997 as amended by the European Communities (Late Payments in Commercial Transactions) Regulations 2013 and the UK Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, as amended by the Late Payment of Commercial Debts Regulations 2002. Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of receipt of the goods or services, or on presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand whichever is later. In 2019 99% (2018 99%) of all invoices were settled within 30 days.

Health & Safety Policy

The Board maintains a Health and Safety policy, circulated to all employees. The policy reflects legal requirements to maintain a high standard throughout the organisation.

8. Future Development

The Board's Corporate Strategy for the years 2017 – 2019 has been developed and is currently awaiting approval. The FSPB Business Plan for 2019 was not approved by the North / South Ministerial Council, as this body was not operational during 2019. However, the funding departments put in place alternative arrangements to enable **safefood** to continue in operation.

This Strategy outlines the Board's mission, vision and core values and how the Board will implement each of its functions over the 3 year period. The strategy is re-assessed annually in the context of an annual business plan.

The budgeted expenditure for 2020 is €7,480,000 (£6,732,000).

The decision by the United Kingdom to leave the European Union poses a threat to the operation of **safefood**. It is as yet unclear as to what the extent of this impact may be.

Statement of Food Safety Promotion Board's and Accountable Person's Responsibilities

The Department of Health (ROI) and the Department of Health (NI) have directed the Food Safety Promotion Board to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year ended 31 December in the form and on the basis set out in the accounts direction at the appendix to these Accounts. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the Body's state of affairs at the year-end and of its income and expenditure, changes in equity, and cash flows for the calendar year.

In preparing the accounts the Body is required to:

- Observe the accounts direction issued by the Department of Health (ROI) and the Department of Health (NI), including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- Make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts;
- Prepare the Accounts on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Body will continue in operation..

Chief Executive's Responsibilities

The Chief Executive's responsibilities as the Accountable Person for the Food Safety Promotion Board, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances and for the keeping of records, are set out in the Financial Memorandum of the Body.



Raymond Dolan

Chief Executive Officer

Date: 18/12/2020

Statement on Internal Control / Governance Statement

1. Scope of Responsibility

As Accountable Person, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the Food Safety Promotion Board's policies, aims and objectives, while safeguarding the public funds and Departmental assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI) and Public Finance Procedures.

The precise accountability and reporting structure is defined in the Board's Financial Memorandum, which outlines the review and monitoring role of the joint sponsor Departments (Department of Health (NI) and Department of Health (ROI)). In addition, as Chief Executive Officer, I am accountable to the respective public accounts committees in both jurisdictions.

2. The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims, and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based

on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Board policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively, and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in The Food Safety Promotion Board for the year ended 31 December 2019 and up to the date of approval of the Annual Report and Accounts, and accords with the Finance Departments' guidance.

3. Capacity to Handle Risk

The Senior Management Team is responsible for applying and overseeing the risk management process under my guidance to ensure the process is working as intended. In addition to reviewing the overall risk framework, all recommendations received from both the internal and external auditors are reviewed, with controls being enhanced or introduced as necessary.

All staff are expected to work within established policies on risk and internal control, and are trained appropriately.

4. The Risk and Control Framework

The Board has developed a risk register and risk assessment matrix. Risk is identified at both the inherent and control level at the time of the development of business plans and strategies. The Board has developed a framework of regular management information, variance review, and administrative and control procedures (including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability).

It also includes:

- Comprehensive Budgeting systems with the annual budget approved by the Chief Executive Officer;
- Procedures to review and agree the Budgets with the Senior Management Team;
- The preparation of regular financial reports as a basis for reviewing and monitoring progress.

In 2019, the review of the risk and control framework was aided by the comments of both the Internal and External Auditors and the Audit and Risk Committee.

5. Review of Effectiveness

As accountable person, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the executive managers who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports. A plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

The following activities supported the effectiveness review:

- The Annual Budget, approved by the Sponsoring Departments, was reviewed monthly by the Senior Management Team, particularly any variances from planned activity;
- The framework for risk management was kept under continuing review and the risk register was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee.

A review of the effectiveness of Internal Financial Controls in place during the 2019 financial year was undertaken in December 2019 by the Internal Auditors and reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee. On the basis of their report, I am assured that overall strong systems and controls are in place to mitigate key identified risks. The audit report found substantial compliance with established systems and internal financial controls. No high risk findings that may result in a material financial loss or operational disruption were discovered and apart from three issues, deemed of low weakness, it was found that the controls tested were operating effectively during the year ended 31 December 2019 and that significant assurance can be placed on the Internal Financial Control Framework. In addition an independent audit of the privacy programme at **safefood** was undertaken during October 2019. The audit was carried out as an internal audit with the aim of assessing the privacy programme at **safefood** and creating a project to close any gaps identified as part of the audit. The audit assessed

4 categories being Governance, Accountability, Transparency and Data Transfer Management. The audit concluded that significant effort had been put into the privacy programme in **safefood** and that an increased focus on accountability and transparency would bring the programme beyond compliance towards a culture of privacy by design within **safefood**. A programme has been put in place to implement the recommendations.



Raymond Dolan

Chief Executive Officer

Date: 18/12/2020

Food Safety Promotion Board

The certificate of the comptrollers and auditors general to the northern ireland assembly and houses of the oireachtas.

Opinion on the accounts

We certify that we have audited the accounts of the Food Safety Promotion Board (the Body) for the year ended 31 December 2019 pursuant to the provisions of the North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 and the British/Irish Agreement Act 1999 which require us to audit and certify, in co-operation, the accounts presented to us by the Body. The accounts comprise:

- the statement of income and expenditure;
- the statement of comprehensive income;
- the statement of financial position;
- the statement of cash flows; and,
- the statement of changes in equity; and
- the related notes including significant accounting policies.

These accounts have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them.

In our opinion, the accounts:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Body's affairs as at 31 December 2019 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the accounts direction in the appendix to the accounts.

Opinion on regularity

In our opinion, the expenditure and income recorded in the accounts have in all material respects been applied to the purposes intended by the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Houses of the Oireachtas and the financial transactions reported in the accounts conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis of opinions

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the responsibilities of the auditors section of this certificate. We are independent of the Body in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2016 and of the Code of Ethics issued by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions and have fulfilled our ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinions.

Information other than the accounts

The Body has presented certain other information together with the accounts. This comprises the annual report, the foreword to the accounts, the statement on the system of internal control/governance statement and the remuneration report. Our opinion on the accounts does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the accounts, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the accounts or our knowledge obtained during the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which we report if, in our opinion:

- we have not received all the information and explanations we required for our audit, or
- the accounting records were not sufficient to permit the accounts to be readily and properly audited, or
- the accounts are not in agreement with the accounting records, or the statement on the system of internal control/governance statement does not reflect compliance with applicable guidance on corporate governance.

Responsibilities of the Body and the Accounting Officer for the accounts

As explained more fully in the statement of responsibilities, the Body is responsible for the preparation of the accounts on the basis of the accounts direction included in the appendix to the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. The Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, is responsible for the propriety and regularity in relation to the use of public funds.

Responsibilities of the Auditors

Our responsibility is to audit the accounts in accordance with the provisions of the North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 and the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999 and to report thereon to the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Houses of the Oireachtas.

Our objective in carrying out the audit is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these accounts.

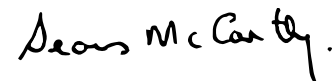
As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. In doing so:

- We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the accounts whether due to fraud or error; design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks; and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- We obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal controls.
- We evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures.
- We conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, on whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Body's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our report to the related disclosures in the accounts or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Body to cease to continue as a going concern.
- We evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the accounts, including the disclosures, and whether the accounts represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

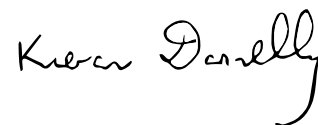
We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the

planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

In addition, we are required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that expenditure and income recorded in the financial accounts have been applied to the purposes intended by the Northern Ireland Assembly and Houses of the Oireachtas and that the financial transactions recorded in the accounts conform to the authorities which govern them.



Seamus McCarthy
 Comptroller and Auditor General,
 Ireland
 3A Mayor Street Upper
 Dublin 1, Ireland, DO1 PF72
 21 December 2020



Kieran J Donnelly
 Comptroller and Auditor General
 for Northern Ireland
 Northern Ireland Audit Office
 106 University Street
 Belfast, BT7 1EU
 21 December 2020

Statement of income and expenditure

for the year ended 31 December 2019

	Notes	2019 €	2018 €	2019 £	2018 £
Income					
Revenue Grant from Departments	2(a)	7,746,826	7,522,463	6,799,931	6,655,198
Capital Grant Release	9	<u>129,723</u>	<u>129,457</u>	<u>113,867</u>	<u>114,532</u>
Other Income	2(b)	7,876,549	7,651,920	6,913,798	6,769,730
		<u>757,000</u>	<u>964,000</u>	<u>665,000</u>	<u>852,860</u>
Total Income		8,633,549	8,615,920	7,578,798	7,622,590
Expenditure					
Staff Costs	3(b)	2,910,063	2,962,958	2,554,894	2,621,359
Board Fees		66,277	66,368	58,176	58,716
Depreciation	6	129,723	129,457	113,867	114,532
Research Programme Expenditure	5	971,209	1,168,400	852,498	1,033,695
Promotion Activities	12	3,057,536	2,756,493	2,683,813	2,438,697
Other Operating Costs	4	<u>1,308,373</u>	<u>1,355,865</u>	<u>1,148,451</u>	<u>1,199,547</u>
Total Expenditure		8,443,181	8,439,541	7,411,699	7,466,546
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		190,368	176,379	167,099	156,044
Amount transferred to General Reserve	13	<u>190,368</u>	<u>176,379</u>	<u>167,099</u>	<u>156,044</u>

All amounts above relate to continuing activities.

The notes on pages 58 to 73 form part of these accounts, together with Appendix 1 on page 74.



Raymond Dolan

Chief Executive Officer

Date: 18/12/2020

Statement of comprehensive income

for the year ended 31 December 2019

	Notes	2019 €	2018 €	2019 £	2018 £
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period		190,368	176,379	167,099	156,044
Actuarial gain/(loss) on pension liabilities	17(b)	(2,316,000)	1,022,000	(2,033,000)	904,174
Adjustment to deferred pension funding		2,316,000	(1,022,000)	2,033,000	(904,174)
Total recognised gain/(loss) for the period		<u>190,368</u>	<u>176,379</u>	<u>167,099</u>	<u>156,044</u>

The notes on pages 58 to 73 form part of these accounts, together with Appendix 1 on page 74.



Raymond Dolan

Chief Executive Officer

Date: 18/12/2020

Statement of financial position

as at 31 December 2019

	Notes	2019 €	2018 €	2019 £	2018 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Assets	6	616,651	718,854	524,647	643,036
Current Assets					
Receivables	7	255,813	315,560	217,646	282,278
Cash and cash equivalents		800,036	598,903	680,671	535,737
Current Liabilities					
Payables- amount falling due within one year	8	(511,424)	(560,406)	(435,120)	(501,300)
Net Current Assets		544,425	354,057	463,197	316,715
Total Assets less Current Liabilities before Pensions		1,161,076	1,072,911	987,844	959,751
Deferred Pension Funding	17(d)	16,225,000	13,152,000	13,804,000	11,764,859
Pension Liabilities	17(b)	(16,225,000)	(13,152,000)	(13,804,000)	(11,764,859)
Net Assets		1,161,076	1,072,911	987,844	959,751
Financed By: Capital & Reserves					
General Reserve	13	544,425	354,057	463,197	316,715
Capital Grant Reserve	9	616,651	718,854	524,647	643,036
		1,161,076	1,072,911	987,844	959,751

The notes on pages 58 to 73 form part of these accounts, together with Appendix 1 on page 74.



Raymond Dolan

Chief Executive Officer

Date: 18/12/2020

Statement of cash flows

for the year ended 31 December 2019

	Notes	2019 €	2018 €	2019 £	2018 £
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	10	201,133	(165,111)	144,934	(142,119)
Capital expenditure & financial investment					
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets	6	(27,520)	(76,914)	(24,156)	(68,047)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) before financing		173,613	(242,025)	120,778	(210,166)
Financing					
Capital Funding Received		27,520	76,914	24,156	68,047
Increase/(decrease) in cash/bank balances	11	201,133	(165,111)	144,934	(142,119)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		598,903	764,014	535,737	677,856
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		800,036	598,903	680,671	535,737

The notes on pages 58 to 73 form part of these accounts, together with Appendix 1 on page 74.



Raymond Dolan

Chief Executive Officer

Date: 18/12/2020

Statement of changes in equity

for the year ended 31 December 2019

	Notes	2019 €	2018 €	2019 £	2018 £
General Reserve					
Balance at 1 January	13	354,057	177,678	316,715	157,641
Surplus/(Deficit)	13	190,368	176,379	167,099	156,044
Actuarial Gain / (Loss)	17 (b)	(2,316,000)	1,022,000	(2,033,000)	904,174
Deferred Pension Funding		2,316,000	(1,022,000)	2,033,000	(904,174)
Currency Translation Adjustment	13			(20,617)	3,030
Balance at 31 December		<u>544,425</u>	<u>354,057</u>	<u>463,197</u>	<u>316,715</u>
Capital Reserve					
Balance at 1 January	9	718,854	771,397	643,036	684,407
Capital Grants	9	27,520	76,914	24,156	68,047
Amortisation	9	(129,723)	(129,457)	(113,867)	(114,532)
Currency Translation Adjustment	9			(28,678)	5,114
Balance at 31 December		<u>616,651</u>	<u>718,854</u>	<u>524,647</u>	<u>643,036</u>
Total Equity at Year End		<u>1,161,076</u>	<u>1,072,911</u>	<u>987,844</u>	<u>959,751</u>

The notes on pages 58 to 73 form part of these accounts, together with Appendix 1 on page 74.



Raymond Dolan

Chief Executive Officer

Date: 18/12/2020

Notes to the accounts

1. Accounting Policies

1.1 Accounting Convention

The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention.

Without limiting the information given, the Financial Statements are prepared on an accruals basis and comply with the accounting and disclosure requirements issued by the Department of Finance and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

1.2 Income

Income represents revenue grants receivable from the Department of Health (ROI) and the Department of Health (NI).

1.3 Fixed Assets

- a) Tangible Fixed assets are included at historic cost to the Food Safety Promotion Board.
- b) Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost over their useful lives.

The methods adopted and the rates used per annum are as follows:

Office Equipment

15% Straight Line

Computer Equipment

33.3% Straight Line

Property & Fitout Costs

4% Straight Line

Fixtures & Fittings

10% Straight Line

- c) Depreciation is charged in the year of acquisition but not in the year of disposal.
- d) Fixed Assets are capitalised once they exceed €650 (£571).

1.4 Value Added Tax

The Food Safety Promotion Board is not in a position to reclaim VAT and VAT is included as expenditure or in the capital value of Fixed Assets.

1.5 Retirement Benefits

The Food Safety Promotion Board has adopted FRS 102 in relation to accounting for retirement benefits.

The North/South Pension Scheme was established by the North/South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited with effect from 29 April 2005. It is a defined benefit pension scheme which is funded annually on a pay as you go basis from monies provided by the UK and Irish Exchequers. Funding is provided to the Body by the Department of Health in the South and the Department of Health in the North. The scheme is administered by an external administrator.

Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 covers retirement benefits. The liability at 31 December 2019 has been included in the financial statements and a disclosure note has been included (Note 17) detailing the actuarial review calculations, which were carried out by Deloitte Total Reward and Benefits Limited using the projected unit method. This includes the results of the calculations of the pension liabilities and costs of employees (and ex-employees) of the Food Safety Promotion Board for the purposes of the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2019 and comparative figures for 2018.

Retirement Benefit costs reflect retirement benefits earned by employees in the period. An amount corresponding to the retirement benefit charge is recognised as income to the extent that it is recoverable, and offset by grants received in the year to discharge retirement benefit payments. Retirement Benefit liabilities represent the present value of future retirement benefit payments earned by staff to date. Deferred retirement benefit funding represents a corresponding asset, being resources to be made available in future periods from the UK and Irish Exchequers in the manner described above.

Actuarial gains and losses arising from changes in actuarial assumptions and from experience surpluses and deficits are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income. From 2012, the current retirement benefit service cost is recognised gross of members' contributions. Treatment in prior years had been to recognise the members' contributions separately within the retirement benefits note.

1.6 Research Programme Expenditure

Research Contract costs included in the Income and Expenditure Account are based on expenditure due and payable in the year on foot of approved research contracts.

1.7 Capital Grant Reserve

The Capital Grant Reserve Account represents the unamortised value of income used for capital purposes.

1.8 Reporting Currency

The transactions and balances of the Board are reported in both Euro and Sterling. The working currency of the Board is Euro and transactions are recorded in that currency. Transactions in other currencies are recorded in euro at the exchange rate ruling at the date of the transactions and sourced from ECB Reference Rates. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in Sterling are translated into Euro at the rates of exchange prevailing at the Balance Sheet date (0.85080). Realised gains and losses are taken to the Income and Expenditure Account.

At year-end the financial statements are translated into Sterling. The Income and Expenditure Account is translated using the average exchange rate for the year (2019 – 0.87777, 2018 - 0.88471) while the Balance Sheet is translated using the closing exchange rate (2019 – 0.85080, 2018 – 0.89453). Currency adjustments arising from this translation of the financial statements are reflected in Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities (Note 10), Capital Grant Reserve (Note 9), and General Reserve (Note 13).

1.9 Statement of Compliance

The financial statements of **safefood** for the year ended 31 December 2019 have been prepared in accordance with FRS102, the financial reporting standards applicable in the UK and Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), as promulgated by Chartered Accountants Ireland and, except where indicated, are in compliance with the requirements of the North/South Implementation Bodies Annual Reports and Accounts Guidance issued by the Department of Finance (NI) and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (ROI).

Notes to the accounts (continued)

2. a) Grants from the Departments

Financial Period 1st January, 2019 to 31st December, 2019

Note	DOH (ROI) €	DOH(NI) €	TOTAL €	DOH (ROI) £	DOH(NI) £	TOTAL £
Revenue Grant	5,362,840	2,383,986	7,746,826	4,707,340	2,092,591	6,799,931
Capital Account	9 18,989	8,531	27,520	16,668	7,488	24,156
	<u>5,381,829</u>	<u>2,392,517</u>	<u>7,774,346</u>	<u>4,724,008</u>	<u>2,100,079</u>	<u>6,824,087</u>

Financial Period 1st January, 2018 to 31st December, 2018

Note	DOH (ROI) €	DOH(NI) €	TOTAL €	DOH (ROI) £	DOH(NI) £	TOTAL £
Revenue Grant	5,272,670	2,249,793	7,522,463	4,664,784	1,990,414	6,655,198
Capital Account	9 53,840	23,074	76,914	47,633	20,414	68,047
	<u>5,326,510</u>	<u>2,272,867</u>	<u>7,599,377</u>	<u>4,712,417</u>	<u>2,010,828</u>	<u>6,723,245</u>

The Food Safety Promotion Board receives grants from the Department of Health (DOH (ROI)) and the Department of Health (DOH (NI)). The respective contributions are DOH (ROI) 69% (2018 70%), and DOH (NI) 31% (2018 30%).

The grants awarded are recorded at a business plan exchange rate for budgeting purposes and at the actual application date exchange rate for the financial statements. In 2019 the budget was €7,480,000 excluding pensions and €7,665,698 including pensions based on an exchange rate of €1 to £0.90. The average exchange rate over the period was €1 to £0.87777, as a result the grant recognised including pensions was €7,774,346 - a foreign exchange gain on grant conversion of €108,648.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

2. b) Other Income

	Notes	2019 €	2018 €	2019 £	2018 £
Net deferred funding for pensions	17 (c)	757,000	964,000	665,000	852,860
		<u>757,000</u>	<u>964,000</u>	<u>665,000</u>	<u>852,860</u>

3. Staff Costs

a) The average number of staff (including agency staff) was:

Directorates	2019	2018
Senior Management	5	5
Corporate Operations	9	10
Food Science	5	5
Human Health & Nutrition	4	4
Marketing & Communications	8	7
Total	31	31

b) The costs incurred in respect of these staff were:

	2019 €	2018 €	2019 £	2018 £
Salary Costs	1,772,905	1,730,825	1,556,203	1,531,279
Employer PRSI	167,713	162,474	147,213	143,742
Agency Staff	26,747	0	23,478	0
Pension Costs:				
Current Pension Service Costs	942,698	1,069,659	828,000	946,338
	<u>2,910,063</u>	<u>2,962,958</u>	<u>2,554,894</u>	<u>2,621,359</u>

During the year, €45,332/£39,791 (2018 €88,948/£78,693) of additional superannuation contributions, under Part 4 of the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017, were deducted and paid over to the Department of Health.

Notes to the accounts (continued)

c) The following information is provided in respect of the Senior Management Team:-

	Emoluments €	Emoluments £	Real Increase/ (Decrease) in Pension Earned €	Real Increase/ (Decrease) in Pension Earned £	Value of Accrued Pension at year-end €	Value of Accrued Pension at year-end £	Age (years)
Mr Raymond Dolan (CEO)	113,998	100,064	0 – 2,500	0 - 2,194	55,000- 57,500	46,794 – 48,921	64

The North/South Implementation Bodies Annual Reports and Accounts Guidance, requires the disclosure of the remuneration and pension entitlements of certain senior staff members. In view of Data Protection legislation, the Board has not made these disclosures as this could result in a data protection breach. Dr Gary Kearney (Director, Food Science), Dr Cliodhna Foley-Nolan/Dr Catherine Conlon (Director, Human Health and Nutrition), Ms Patricia Fitzgerald (Director, Corporate Operations) and Dr Aileen McGloin (Director, Marketing and Communications) withheld consent to disclose the above information. All emoluments are in line with standard public sector emoluments for their grades. The total remuneration paid to the key management team in 2019 amounted to €446,727/£392,124 (2018 €463,148/£409,752).

4. Other Operating Costs

	2019	2018	2019	2018
	€	€	£	£
Rent & Electricity*	601,031	597,266	527,567	528,407
Printing, Reports & Literature	9,645	2,178	8,466	1,927
Travel & Subsistence**	191,259	192,053	167,881	169,911
Computer Support	106,835	107,339	93,777	94,964
Telephone	41,512	43,600	36,438	38,573
Postage & Stationery	18,368	18,262	16,123	16,157
Meeting Costs ***	11,299	9,279	9,918	8,209
Office Expenses ***	56,399	48,053	49,505	42,513
Currency Variance	(29,588)	30,979	(25,971)	27,407
Recruitment Expenses	16,543	23,718	14,521	20,984
Training	47,133	38,097	41,372	33,705
Insurance	17,631	18,008	15,476	15,932
Subscriptions	15,698	13,631	13,779	12,059
Auditors' Remuneration	19,100	18,000	16,765	15,925
Legal & Professional Fees	44,957	58,737	39,462	51,965
Cleaning & Catering	24,841	25,597	21,805	22,646
Maintenance & Repairs	103,468	84,872	90,821	75,087
Bank Charges	2,023	2,174	1,776	1,923
Records Management	10,219	24,022	8,970	21,253
	<u>1,308,373</u>	<u>1,355,865</u>	<u>1,148,451</u>	<u>1,199,547</u>

*The Board entered into an agreement in 2016 to lease a portion of the ground floor of the Cork Office to the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland (OPW) for a period of 10 years. The annual rent for this lease is €76,667 per annum, payable in quarterly instalments.

**The costs incurred for Foreign Travel in 2019 amounted to €8,037/£7,055 (2018 €22,404/£19,821).

***The hospitality element of costs in 2019 was €7,625/£6,693 (2018 €4,795/£4,242).

5. Research Programme Expenditure

	2019	2018	2019	2018
	€	€	£	£
Food Science	324,825	443,849	285,122	392,678
Human Health & Nutrition	319,095	445,042	280,092	393,733
Research Placement Projects	99,015	63,404	86,912	56,094
Community Food Initiatives	228,274	216,105	200,372	191,190
	<u>971,209</u>	<u>1,168,400</u>	<u>852,498</u>	<u>1,033,695</u>

6. Fixed Assets

	Office Equipment €	Property & Fitout Cost €	Fixtures & Fittings €	Computer Equipment & Software €	Total €
Cost or Valuation					
At 1st January 2019	393,873	1,811,949	311,973	731,058	3,248,853
Additions	0	0	24,732	2,788	27,520
Disposals	(160,836)	0	0	(222,342)	(383,178)
At 31st December 2019	<u>233,037</u>	<u>1,811,949</u>	<u>336,705</u>	<u>511,504</u>	<u>2,893,195</u>
Depreciation					
At 1st January 2019	387,440	1,238,205	241,811	662,543	2,529,999
Provision for the year	2,134	70,758	13,032	43,799	129,723
Disposals	(160,836)	0	0	(222,342)	(383,178)
At 31st December 2019	<u>228,738</u>	<u>1,308,963</u>	<u>254,843</u>	<u>484,000</u>	<u>2,276,544</u>
NBV at 31st December 2019	4,299	502,986	81,862	27,504	616,651
NBV at 31st December 2018	6,433	573,744	70,162	68,515	718,854

	Office Equipment £	Property & Fitout Cost £	Fixtures & Fittings £	Computer Equipment & Software £	Total £
Cost or Valuation					
At 1st January 2019	352,331	1,620,843	279,069	653,953	2,906,196
Exchange Adjustment	(12,886)	(79,237)	(14,309)	(26,048)	(132,480)
Additions	0	0	21,709	2,447	24,156
Disposals	(141,177)	0	0	(195,165)	(336,342)
At 31st December 2019	<u>198,268</u>	<u>1,541,606</u>	<u>286,469</u>	<u>435,187</u>	<u>2,461,530</u>
Depreciation					
At 1st January 2019	346,577	1,107,612	216,307	592,664	2,263,160
Exchange Adjustment	(12,663)	(56,056)	(10,925)	(24,158)	(103,802)
Provision for the year	1,873	62,109	11,439	38,446	113,867
Disposals	(141,177)	0	0	(195,165)	(336,342)
At 31st December 2019	<u>194,610</u>	<u>1,113,665</u>	<u>216,821</u>	<u>411,787</u>	<u>1,936,883</u>
NBV at 31st December 2019	3,658	427,941	69,648	23,400	524,647
NBV at 31st December 2018	5,754	513,231	62,762	61,289	643,036

7. Receivables

	2019 €	2018 €	2019 £	2018 £
Receivables	55,664	125,536	47,359	112,296
Prepayments & Accrued Income	200,149	190,024	170,287	169,982
	<u>255.813</u>	<u>315.560</u>	<u>217.646</u>	<u>282.278</u>

8. Payables (amounts falling due within one year)

	2019 €	2018 €	2019 £	2018 £
Payables & Accruals	511,424	560,406	435,120	501,300

9. Capital Grant Reserve

	2019 €	2018 €	2019 £	2018 £
Opening Balance	718,854	771,397	643,036	684,407
Capital Additions	27,520	76,914	24,156	68,047
Capital Disposals – Cost	(383,178)	0	(336,342)	0
Capital Disposals - Depreciation	383,178	0	336,342	0
Currency Translation Adjustment	-	-	(28,678)	5,114
Less amount released to I&E A/C *	(129,723)	(129,457)	(113,867)	(114,532)
	<u>616.651</u>	<u>718.854</u>	<u>524.647</u>	<u>643.036</u>

*Amount released to I&E	2019 €	2018 €	2019 £	2018 £
Amortised in line with depreciation	(129,723)	(129,457)	(113,867)	(114,532)
	<u>(129.723)</u>	<u>(129.457)</u>	<u>(113.867)</u>	<u>(114.532)</u>

10. Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Operating Activities

	2019 €	2018 €	2019 £	2018 £
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period	190,368	176,379	167,099	156,044
Transfer from Capital Grant Reserve	(129,723)	(129,457)	(113,867)	(114,532)
Depreciation Charges	129,723	129,457	113,867	114,532
(Increase)/Decrease in Debtors	59,747	(242,890)	64,632	(217,803)
Increase/(Decrease) in Creditors	(48,982)	(98,600)	(66,180)	(83,390)
Currency Translation Adjustment			(20,617)	3,030
	<u>201,133</u>	<u>(165,111)</u>	<u>144,934</u>	<u>(142,119)</u>

The currency translation adjustment reflects the amount of the movement in the value of current assets and liabilities which is attributable to the change in exchange rates over the year.

11. Analysis of the balances of cash as shown in the Balance Sheet

	At 01.01.19 €	Cashflow €	At 31.12.19 €
Euro Account	318,116	(43,661)	274,455
Sterling Account	289,408	228,939	518,347
Deposit Account	52	0	52
Petty Cash	1,053	(603)	450
Credit Cards	(9,726)	16,458	6,732
Total	<u>598,903</u>	<u>201,133</u>	<u>800,036</u>

12. Promotion Activities

	2019	2018	2019	2018
	€	€	£	£
Media Costs	2,027,991	1,875,651	1,780,110	1,659,407
Marketing Costs	514,859	273,356	451,928	241,841
Events	95,766	77,161	84,060	68,265
Publications	52,686	19,655	46,246	17,389
Project & Conference Sponsorship	236,381	338,850	207,488	299,784
Educational Development	119,282	158,079	104,702	139,854
Helpline Activities	10,571	13,741	9,279	12,157
	<u>3,057,536</u>	<u>2,756,493</u>	<u>2,683,813</u>	<u>2,438,697</u>

13. General Reserve

	2019	2018	2019	2018
	€	€	£	£
Opening Balance	354,057	177,678	316,715	157,641
Surplus/(Deficit)	190,368	176,379	167,099	156,044
Currency Translation Adjustment	-	-	(20,617)	3,030
Closing Balance	<u>544,425</u>	<u>354,057</u>	<u>463,197</u>	<u>316,715</u>

14. Related Party Transactions

The Food Safety Promotion Board is a cross border implementation body sponsored by the Department of Health (ROI) and the Department of Health (NI) which are regarded as related parties. During the year, The Food Safety Promotion Board was principally funded by these departments and had various transactions with them. No Board member, key manager or other related party has undertaken any material transactions with the Food Safety Promotion Board during the year.

15. Future Capital Expenditure

The Food Safety Promotion Board had no capital commitments at 31 December 2019.

16. Leases / Commitments

a) Operating Leases

The Board has annual lease commitments in respect of operating leases on properties where the lease terms expire as follows:

	31.12.19	31.12.18	31.12.19	31.12.18
	€	€	£	£
Within 1 Year	-	-	-	-
Between 2 and 5 Years	190,000	190,000	161,652	169,961
More than 5 Years	293,333	293,333	249,568	262,395
	<u>483,333</u>	<u>483,333</u>	<u>411,220</u>	<u>432,356</u>

The Board entered into an agreement in 2016 to lease a portion of the ground floor of the Cork Office to the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland (OPW) for a period of 10 years. The annual rent for this lease is €76,667 per annum, payable in quarterly instalments.

The overall annual rent payable in respect of leased premises is broken down as follows:

Rents payable / (receivable)

Location	Expiry Date	31.12.19	31.12.18	31.12.19	31.12.18
		€	€	£	£
Cork	2026	370,000	370,000	314,796	330,976
Cork Sub Lease	2026	(76,667)	(76,667)	(65,228)	(68,581)
Dublin	2021	190,000	190,000	161,652	169,961
Total Annual Costs (Net)		<u>483,333</u>	<u>483,333</u>	<u>411,220</u>	<u>432,356</u>

The total future minimum lease commitment is broken down as follows:

Future Minimum Lease Commitments

Location	Expiry Date	31.12.19	31.12.18	31.12.19	31.12.18
		€	€	£	£
Cork	2026	2,497,500	2,867,500	2,124,873	2,565,065
Cork Sub Lease	2026	(472,729)	(549,396)	(402,198)	(491,451)
Dublin	2021	380,000	570,000	323,304	509,882
Total Future Lease Commitment (Net)		<u>2,404,771</u>	<u>2,888,104</u>	<u>2,045,979</u>	<u>2,583,496</u>

b) Other Commitments

The Board has other commitments in respect of approved research contracts at 31 December 2019 in the amount of €1,126,400/£958,341 (2018 €717,198/£641,555).

17. Retirement Benefits

The retirement benefit scheme consists of a number of sections with different benefit structures. The main sections are:

The Core Final Salary section- this is a final salary pension arrangement with benefits modelled on the Classic section of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in Northern Ireland. The scheme provides a retirement benefit (eightieths per year of service), a gratuity or lump sum (three-eighths per year of service) and spouse's and children's pensions. Normal Retirement Age is a member's 60th birthday. Retirement Benefits in payment (and deferment) increase in line with general price inflation.

The Core Alpha section -this is a career averaged revalued earnings retirement benefit arrangement or 'CARE' scheme with benefits modelled on the alpha section of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme in Northern Ireland. The scheme provides a retirement benefit based on a percentage (2.32%) of pensionable pay for each year of active membership (the retirement benefit is increased at the start of each scheme year in line with general price inflation) and spouses's and children's pensions. Normal Retirement Age is a member's State Pension Age in the relevant jurisdiction which is currently 67, 68 or between 67 and 68 in the UK and 68 in Ireland. Retirement Benefits in payment (and deferment) increase in line with general price inflation.

Benefits accumulated for service up to 31 March 2015 remain payable at retirement on a final salary basis. Therefore most core section members have benefits in both the Final Salary and alpha section and new entrants who join the Scheme after 1 April 2015 will in most cases, become members of the Core alpha section.

Reserved Rights Section -all Southern Core Members were given the option to change to a category of membership based on the Superannuation Scheme for Established Civil Servants (which is the Irish Civil Servants Scheme). The options exercise was completed on 31 March 2015 and 14 of the employees opted to change category of membership.

The retirement benefit valuation at 31 December 2019 is based on FRS102 convention and has been carried out by a qualified independent actuary. The results this year have been prepared by carrying out a full valuation of the scheme's liabilities incorporating market conditions and scheme data at 31 December 2019. The principal assumptions used to calculate scheme liabilities are:

a) Principal actuarial assumptions used for the calculations

	2019	2018
Discount rate (Republic of Ireland)	1.30%	2.15%
Discount rate (Northern Ireland)	2.10%	2.75%
Inflation rate (Republic of Ireland)	1.15%	1.40%
Inflation rate (Northern Ireland)	2.00%	2.15%
Rate of increase in salary (Republic of Ireland)	2.00%	2.15%
Rate of increase in salary (Northern Ireland)	2.00%	2.15%
Rate of increase in pensions (Republic of Ireland):		
Core members	1.15%	1.40%
All other members	2.00%	2.15%
Rate of increase in pensions (Northern Ireland)	2.00%	2.15%
Year-end exchange rate (Sterling : Euros)	1.18	1.12
Mid-year exchange rate (Sterling : Euros)	1.14	1.13
Average expected future life at age 65 for		
Male currently aged 65	22.0yrs	21.9yrs
Female currently aged 65	23.9yrs	23.8yrs
Male currently aged 45	23.4yrs	23.3yrs
Female currently aged 45	25.4yrs	25.4yrs

b) Movement in Net Pension Liability during the financial year

	2019	2018	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000	£'000	£'000
(Deficit) in the pension liability at 1st January	(13,152)	(13,210)	(11,765)	(11,720)
Retirement Benefits paid during the year	186	106	163	93
Current service cost	(662)	(785)	(581)	(694)
Past service credit	0	0	0	0
Net transfers out of/(in to) the scheme	7	0	6	0
Other finance income/(charge)	(288)	(285)	(253)	(252)
Actuarial gain/(loss)	(2,316)	1,022	(2,033)	904
Exchange differences – £ comparisons			659	(96)
(Deficit) in the pension liability at 31 Dec	<u>(16,225)</u>	<u>(13,152)</u>	<u>(13,804)</u>	<u>(11,765)</u>

Analysis of the movement in (deficit) in the Plan during the period is as follows

	2019	2018	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000	£'000	£'000
Experience gain/(loss)	38	(311)	33	(275)
Gain/(loss) due to currency movements	0	0	0	0
Gain/(loss) on change of financial assumptions	(2,354)	1,333	(2,066)	1,179
Actuarial gain/(loss)	<u>(2,316)</u>	<u>1,022</u>	<u>(2,033)</u>	<u>904</u>

The main element of the actuarial loss relates to the change in actuarial assumptions which have increased the value placed on the liabilities.

c) Income and Expenditure Account analysis for the financial year

Analysis of the net deferred funding for retirement benefit is as follows:

	2019	2018	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000	£'000	£'000
Current service cost	662	785	581	694
Other finance cost	288	285	253	252
Retirement Benefits paid during the year	(186)	(106)	(163)	(93)
Net transfers (out of)/in to the scheme	(7)	0	(6)	0
	<u>757</u>	<u>964</u>	<u>665</u>	<u>853</u>

Analysis of the current retirement benefit service costs is as follows:

	2019	2018	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000	£'000	£'000
Current service cost	662	785	581	694
Other finance cost	288	285	253	252
	<u>950</u>	<u>1,070</u>	<u>834</u>	<u>946</u>

d) Deferred Retirement Benefit Funding

In accordance with accounting practice for non-commercial State sponsored bodies in the Republic of Ireland, the Food Safety Promotion Board recognises an asset representing resources to be made available by the UK and Irish Exchequers for the unfunded deferred liability for retirement benefits on the basis of a number of past events. These events include the statutory backing for the superannuation schemes, and the policy and practice in relation to funding public service retirement benefits in both jurisdictions including the annual estimates process.

While there is no formal agreement and therefore no guarantee regarding these specific amounts with the funding bodies, the Food Safety Promotion Board has no evidence that this funding policy will not continue to meet this amount in accordance with current practice. This treatment is inconsistent with accounting practice for UK Non-Departmental Bodies, where, due to absence of a formal guarantee, a funding liability is not recognised until the commitment falls due.

The deferred funding asset for retirement benefits as at 31 December 2019 amounted to €16.225m/£13.804m (2018: €13.152m/£11.765m).

	2019 €'000	2018 €'000	2019 £'000	2018 £'000
Opening Balance at 1 January	13,152	13,210	11,765	11,720
Increase/(decrease) in Deferred Pension Funding	3,073	(58)	2,039	45
Balance at 31 December	<u>16,225</u>	<u>13,152</u>	<u>13,804</u>	<u>11,765</u>

e) History of Defined Benefit Liabilities

	2019 €'000	2018 €'000	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
(Deficit) as at 31 December	(16,225)	(13,152)	(13,210)	(13,559)
Experience adjustment on liabilities Including exchange rate effect gain/(loss)	38	(311)	650	(71)
Percentage of Scheme Liabilities	0.2%	2.4 %	4.9%	0.5%

	2019 £'000	2018 £'000	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
(Deficit) as at 31 December	(13,804)	(11,765)	(11,720)	(11,609)
Experience adjustment on liabilities Including exchange rate effect gain/(loss)	33	(275)	570	(61)
Percentage of Scheme Liabilities	0.2%	2.4%	4.9%	0.5%

f) Sensitivity analysis

Change in the value of liabilities	(€'000s)
Discount rate + 0.5%	(1,900)
Inflation + 0.5%	2,100
Mortality (1 year younger)	500

18. Contingent Liabilities

Two employment tribunal cases in the cases of McCloud and Sargent were brought against the UK Government in relation to possible discrimination in the implementation of transitional protection following changes made to public service pension scheme legislation in the UK in 2015.

In December 2018, the Court of Appeal ruled that the transitional protections gave rise to unlawful discrimination on the basis of age. The UK Government requested leave to appeal this decision to the Supreme Court, however the request was denied on 27 June 2019.

The Department of Finance (Northern Ireland) continues to liaise with UK treasury for proposals to address age discrimination in the wider public service schemes as a consequence of the McCloud ruling. Further, the rectification process is expected to be long and time consuming and will need to address fairly the issue of pension accruals since 2015 and where individuals may have been better off in new schemes. In this regard, certain staff of **safefood**, who are scheme members of the North South Pensions Scheme, may need to be compensated for any discrimination suffered as a result of transitional protection.

Quantifying the impact of the judgement at this stage is difficult as it will depend on the compensation awarded, members' full salary increases, length of service and retirement age and whether (and when) members withdraw from active service. The terms of any possible settlement will require further consideration which will need approval by both the Department of Finance (Northern Ireland) and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (Ireland).

On this basis no provision has been made in the accounts for the McCloud/Sargent judgement.

The North South Pension Scheme actuary estimates that any compensation payable by **safefood** will be up to €250,000.

Separately, submissions have been made to the Workplace Relations Commission in relation to pension contributions payable by certain members of staff. The cases have yet to be considered by the Commission and, as such, no provision has been included in the financial statements.

19. Date of Authorisation for issue

The Accountable Person (CEO) authorised the issue of these financial statements on 18/12/2020

Appendix 1**Accounts direction****Food safety promotion board**

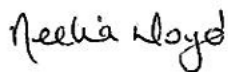
Accounts direction given by the Northern Department of Health and the Southern Department of Health, with the approval of the finance departments North and South, in accordance with the North/South Co-Operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 and the Southern British-Irish Agreement Act 1999.

The annual accounts shall give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year, and the state of affairs as at the year end. Subject to this requirement, the Body shall prepare accounts for the financial year ended 31 December 2018 and subsequent financial years in accordance with:

- a) the North/South Implementation Bodies Annual Reports and Account Guidance;
 - b) other guidance which Finance Departments may issue from time to time in respect of accounts which are required to give a true and fair view; and
 - c) any other specific disclosures required by Sponsor Departments,
- except where agreed otherwise with Finance Departments, in which case the exception shall be described in the notes to the accounts.

Signed by the authority of the

Department of Health (NI)



Dated
1 October 2019

Department of Health (S)



Dated
30 October 2019



For information search

safefood 



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