

Government Chemist Conference  
Safe food for tomorrow's world

23-24 June 2021  
Virtual

@NML\_ChemBioGC  
#GCconf2021  
[www.gov.uk/governmentchemist](http://www.gov.uk/governmentchemist)



Government Chemist

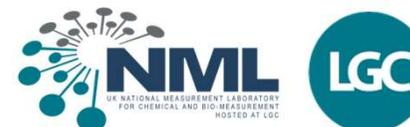
safe  
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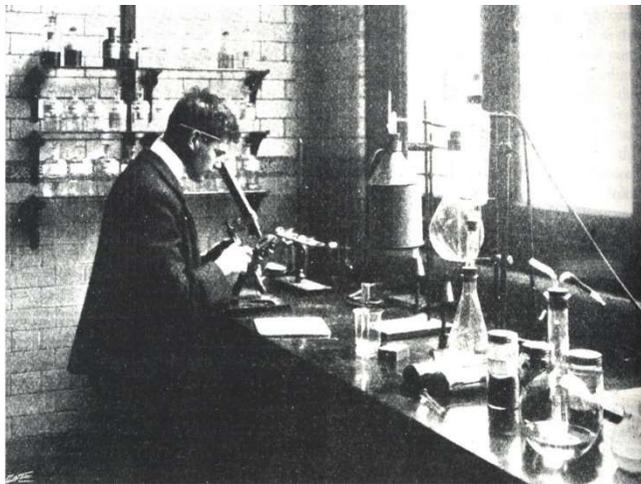
**Julian Braybrook**  
Government Chemist, LGC

**Welcome and  
introduction**

Date: 23 June 2021

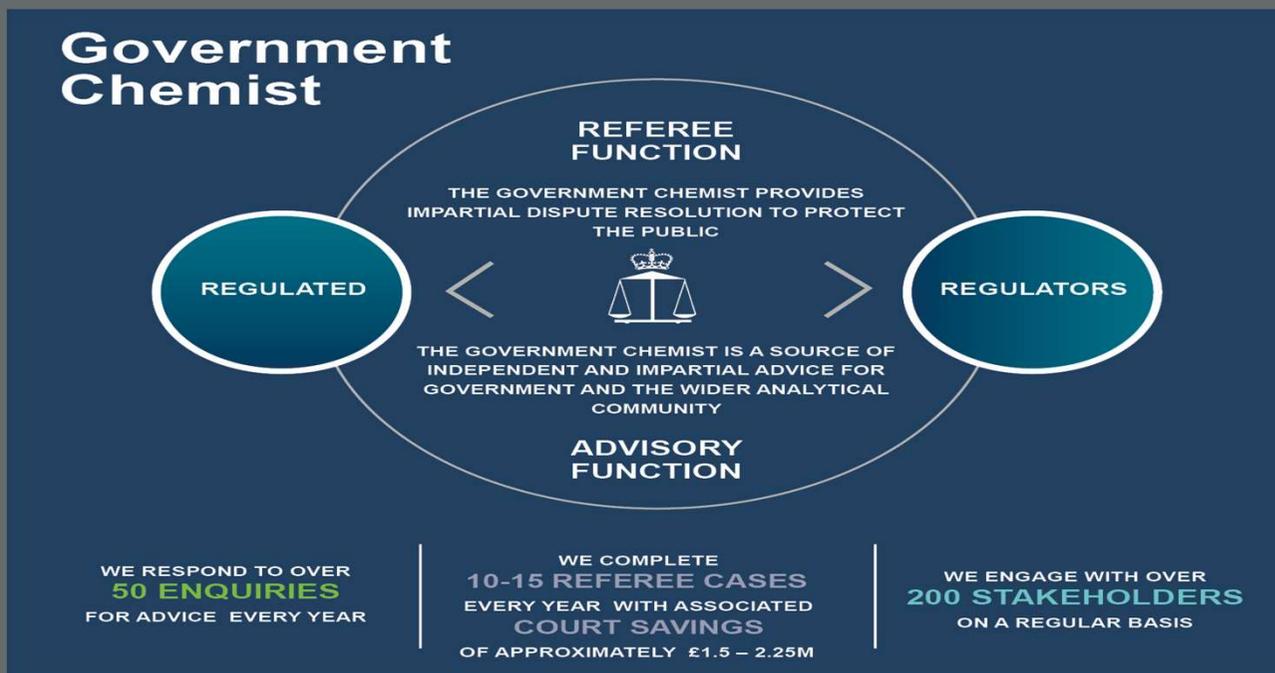


# UK food law and the Government Chemist



- The first Adulteration Act passed by Parliament in 1860, amended 1872 to include appointment of Public Analysts (due to lack of definition of adulteration)
- Parliamentary Select Committee, 1874 proposed a central referee - 'Chemical Officers of Somerset House'
- The Sale of Food and Drugs Act in 1875, amended 1879 and 1899

# The Government Chemist today



# The Government Chemist today



WE PUBLISH OVER 30 ARTICLES AND PEER-REVIEWED PAPERS ANNUALLY

WE ORGANISE WELL ATTENDED ANNUAL TRAINING EVENTS ON TOPICAL ISSUES SUCH AS ALLERGENS AND HONEY ADULTERATION

WE ORGANISE BIENNIAL CONFERENCES ATTRACTING OVER 100 DELEGATES FROM INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT AND ACADEMIA

WE ARE PART OF STANDARD SETTING COMMITTEES AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

WE PROVIDE RESPONSES TO GOVERNMENT CONSULTATIONS BASED ON EXPERT KNOWLEDGE FROM THE WIDER GOVERNMENT CHEMIST TEAM



# Government Chemist Strategy

2020 - 2023



Department for  
Business, Energy  
& Industrial Strategy

FUNDED BY BEIS

# Strategy 2020-2023



**Protecting consumers in a changing world**

An icon depicting three stylized human figures of varying heights, representing a family or a group of people.

**Maximising UK measurement infrastructure to address future challenges**

An icon showing a stylized person next to a location pin, with a dashed line connecting them, symbolizing infrastructure or future challenges.

**Supporting business and government across the UK**

An icon of a gear with two circular arrows around it, representing a cycle or a process.

**Growing collaborative national skills initiatives**

An icon of a glowing lightbulb growing out of a small pot, symbolizing growth, innovation, and collaborative initiatives.

# Operational update



- **Maintained statutory referee analysis provision**
- **Laboratory teams operating a shift-based work pattern**
  - Reduced capacity
- **Desk-based staff continuing to work mainly from home**
- **Paul Hancock appointed as Referee Analyst on the 'retirement' of Michael Walker**
- **Projects and Mini-projects, including**
  - Allergens
  - Gene-edited products
  - Cannabidiol (CBD)
- **GC was sought to act again as Authorised Analyst under the Hydrocarbon Oil Duties Act, 1979**
- **Government Chemist on 'Moonshot project' oversight panel**
  - Advising pilot study for COVID-19 mass spectrometry diagnostic test translation from academia to clinical laboratory

# Knowledge exchange and training



- GC Annual Review 2019 published; GC Annual Review 2020 with Ministers for approval
- Quarterly webinar series of Joint KT Framework for Food Standards and Food Safety Analysis
- MChemA residential course conversion to online platform
- Contributed to POST Parliamentary Report on Food Fraud
- COVID-19 food fraud mitigation resource created under the Food Authenticity Network
- Co-presented formal launch of iKANN (International Knowledge Application Network Hub in Nutrition)



**Government Chemist Review 2019**

**UK Parliament POST** **POSTNOTE** Number 624

### Food Fraud



**Overview**

- Food fraud includes intentional adulteration and mislabelling of food for financial gain.
- It has a financial and reputational impact on businesses and may pose a health risk to consumers.
- Responsibility for preventing food fraud is spread between industry, local authorities, and government departments and agencies.
- Strategies to prevent food fraud include scientific analysis to test food authenticity, supply chain risk assessment and data-led strategies such as intelligence gathering.
- EU exit may affect UK access to food fraud intelligence networks.

**Evidence suggests that food fraud continues to be an issue in the global food supply chain. This POSTnote provides an overview of food fraud, including its drivers and impacts. It discusses methods for food authenticity testing, broader strategies to prevent food fraud and potential impacts of EU exit.**

**Background**

A 2017 survey by the Food Standards Agency found that consumers have confidence in the UK food system and perceive it to be safe.<sup>1,2</sup> However, it is still vulnerable to fraud.<sup>1</sup> Food fraud includes intentional adulteration or mislabelling of food for financial gain.<sup>3</sup> Although it is difficult to quantify the impact of food fraud,<sup>4,5</sup> estimates of the annual global trade in

investigate food crime,<sup>6</sup> and the establishment of the Food Industry Intelligence Network (FIIN) in 2015.<sup>6,7</sup> Despite these moves, some stakeholders have suggested that the FICU has insufficient powers and that more resources are needed for local authorities.<sup>8,9</sup> There are also concerns that EU exit could make the UK vulnerable to future food fraud incidents.<sup>20-23</sup>