



Government Chemist Strategy

2023 – 2026



Department for
Science, Innovation
& Technology

Government Chemist Strategy 2023 – 2026

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Introduction

This strategy document supports the Government Chemist programme specification for the period of 2023 to 2026 and focuses on four strategic aims:

- Protecting consumers in increasingly challenging times
- Supporting business and government across the four nations of the UK
- Collaboratively building a resilient national skills base
- Maximising UK measurement expertise to address global challenges



The Government Chemist

Food for humans and animals must be safe, authentic and properly labelled, the responsibility for which falls to those who make and sell it¹. However, domestic legislation exists to provide government regulatory oversight. In the UK, the defining “Sale of Food and Drugs Act” of 1875 introduced much of modern food regulation, including the role of the Government Chemist.

The current equivalent measure, the Food Safety Act 1990, provides the enabling powers under which all food regulations are made, including those on food labelling. It sets the requirements for food to be safe and that it is of the “nature, substance or quality which consumers would expect”. To this day, the Government Chemist supports consumer protection and provides businesses with a route of scientific appeal as part of the official control system through the Government Chemist Programme, funded by the Department for Science, Innovation & Technology (DSIT).

The Government Chemist has two roles:

- **Statutory function as Referee Analyst**

The Government Chemist is the named referee analyst under several Acts of Parliament (see Appendix 1) and regulations made under those Acts. Independent and impartial referee analysis allows resolution of technical disputes. Disputes predominantly occur in the food and agriculture sectors, between a Local Authority or Port Health Authority (who typically use their Public Analyst laboratory to analyse their sample) and a Food² Business Operator [FBO] (who can choose any laboratory to analyse their sample), in relation to legislation focussed on public protection, consumer choice and value for money.

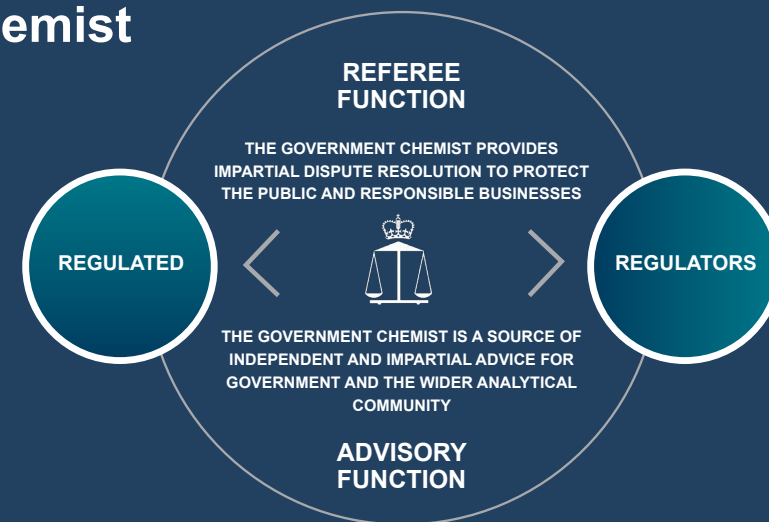
Referee cases can also arise as referrals from UK Government and directly from FBOs who can request a ‘Second Expert Opinion’ from the Government Chemist under the provisions of retained EU Regulation 2017/625³.

- **Advisory function**

A source of independent and impartial advice for both Government and the wider analytical community on the chemical and biological analytical measurement science implications on matters of policy, standards and regulations across the public sector.

The Government Chemist is a source of independent and impartial advice for both UK Government and the wider analytical community. Based on the specialist expertise of the Government Chemist and his team, knowledge gained from the analysis of referee cases and supported by the resources of the National Measurement Laboratory (NML) at LGC, the Government Chemist provides advice on and strategic input into the chemical and biological analytical measurement science implications of national and international policy, standards, and regulations; the advice helps ensure that the measurement requirements are achievable, proportionate and fit for their intended purpose.

Government Chemist



WE RESPOND TO OVER
50 ENQUIRIES
FOR ADVICE EVERY YEAR

WE COMPLETE **10-15 REFEREE CASES** EVERY YEAR AVOIDING MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE AND WITH ASSOCIATED COURT SAVINGS OF APPROXIMATELY £1.5 – 2.25M

WE ENGAGE WITH OVER **200 STAKEHOLDERS** ON A REGULAR BASIS



WE PUBLISH OVER 30 ARTICLES AND PEER-REVIEWED PAPERS ANNUALLY

WE ORGANISE WELL ATTENDED KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION 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

¹ Retained Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002

² Food, hereafter refers to food intended for humans and animal feed

³ Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017

Impact

The impact of the Government Chemist role lies in preventing inadvertent errors in measurement science that could adversely affect consumers, businesses and the criminal justice system.

There are also specific benefits to food businesses through the timely and authoritative resolution of referee cases, which include savings on the cost of impoundment of products/consignments at ports and by local authorities, and reduction in lost revenue resulting from decreased spoilage of fresh goods during impoundment. In addition, food business operators (FBOs) can avoid lost revenue and reputational damage that can arise from any required food recall or high profile court case.

An inaugural qualitative evaluation survey to assess the impact of Government Chemist interventions was undertaken in 2022 to understand the ongoing benefits to both the UK Government and the food industry. The stakeholder impact survey, with over 90 responses, started the process of assessing the full economic, industrial and social impact that the GC has had on a range of organisations over the last 5 years. The recommendations of the impact evaluation were for the Government Chemist to continue to collaborate to undertake knowledge transfer and skills development and to undertake impact assessment to understand the full impact of the Government Chemist. Attendees of the stakeholder workshop also identified the need for the GC to undertake greater advocacy, of both their role and of measurement science with HM Government to raise its profile among a larger number of relevant government departments and ministers.

The top three impact areas of the GC, as perceived by our stakeholders, are: reduced risk to the UK (57%), ensuring consumer safety (42%) and improved staff skills (38%).

Over half of stakeholders (53%) think it would be difficult or very difficult to go elsewhere for the expertise that the GC provides.

Food and feed regulation in the UK is complex due to its broad scope and the requirement to maintain world-leading high standards of safety and authenticity. Potential differences in legislation in the four nations of the UK, issues with the Northern Ireland protocol and potential divergences from EU law, all add further complexity. To stay abreast of developments and help stakeholders do the same, the Government Chemist completes quarterly regulatory updates by undertaking horizon-scanning activities (predominantly UK and EU, on the basis that >80% of the UK food supply comes from these sources⁴), which are published on its [website](#). These updates are accessed regularly and feedback shows that they are considered very useful to stakeholders in the testing and law enforcement communities.

The scientific advice delivered by the Government Chemist Programme, enables the analytical community to tackle complex measurement problems and helps protect consumer's health and choice, and foster innovation. The Government Chemist typically responds to an average of 50-60 requests for advice per year, on a wide range of topics and from a wide selection of stakeholders. In addition, there has been an increasing need for the Government Chemist to provide strategic expert advice on matters of national and international importance.

The Government Chemist, via a team of experts, also provides expert input into a number of high-profile committees (e.g. Hazardous Substances Advisory Committee (HSAC), the Nanomaterials Environment, Health Industry Group (NEHIG), Codex Committee on Methods of Sampling and Analysis (CCMAS), the In Vitro Diagnostics Expert Advisory Group (IVDEAG), the Standards Liaison Group for Advanced Therapies (SLGAT) and Food Analysis National Documentary Standards Committee to mention a few) to influence the development of new legislation, standards and policy so that they are based on sound measurement science and fit for purpose. Government Chemist staff are increasingly taking leadership roles such as the Chair/Convenor or Secretary for CEN Technical Committee 460 (Food Authenticity) Working Groups and the UK Co-Chair of a Codex electronic working group on food fraud.

UK Government (including the devolved administrations) carries out consultations, to obtain input from interested parties and experts, into policy, guidance or legislation prior to enactment. The Government Chemist provides timely input into these consultations, drawing from the team's expertise, and the extended expertise available through the National Measurement Laboratory. For example, Defra's 2021 consultation on the regulation of genetic technologies attracted 6,440 responses, including one from the Government Chemist. This led to the Government Chemist being invited to contribute to the UK POSTnote on genome edited food crops⁵.

The Government Chemist receives enquiries across a broad range of topic areas during a three year programme; some of the topics are given below by way of example.

Allergens

CBD

Manuscript review, articles, interviews, etc

Referee analysis

Aluminium in noodles

Folates / supplements

Nitrofurans / sampling

Legislation

Oils & fats / lipids

Tobacco / e-cigarettes

Authenticity / Identification

Jelly mini-cups choking risk

Alcohol content

Pesticides

Illegal dyes

Irradiation

Nitrogen factors

Sample preparation / aflatoxins

⁴ [United Kingdom Food Security Report 2021 - GOV.UK](#)

⁵ [GC team contributes to UK POSTnote on genome edited food crops - GOV.UK](#)



Preventing miscarriages of justice, protecting consumers and legitimate food businesses

Resolving scientific disputes between UK Regulatory Authorities and Food Businesses prior to costly court hearings has clear benefits to the businesses, local authorities and the criminal justice system. Even marginal alleviation of the number of cases going to trial has benefits for a court system that is especially stretched at the moment.

Court cost savings have been calculated to be approximately £150K per case. The Government Chemist receives an average of 10 cases per year which equates to a saving in the region of £2.25M p.a.



Supporting the regulation of novel foods containing CBD (cannabidiol) to protect consumers & legitimate businesses

To directly support the effective regulation of novel foods containing CBD, the Government Chemist brought interested government departments together, providing, on a timely basis, advice, validated methods of analysis and led the first international interlaboratory study on controlled cannabinoids in food & cosmetic samples, which demonstrated laboratories had the capability to determine CBD. This work was enabled UK Official Laboratories to enforce the regulation of foods containing CBD from 1 April 2021 and Government Chemist data was used as evidence by the Home Office expert committee, the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD), in their recommendations for threshold levels of controlled cannabinoids. The Government Chemist was thanked for this work by the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and the Fire Service.



Collaborating with UK Government to underpin scientific issues related to honey authenticity

Honey is a natural and complex product and analysis can be challenging; there are a number of different methods which can be used to determine authenticity and consequently disputes can arise. Since 2018, the Government Chemist has worked with UK government to improve the scientific evidence base and stakeholder awareness in relation to honey authenticity; the GC is currently leading two expert working groups seeking to develop a protocol for the collection of honey reference samples and a framework for the assessment of authenticity databases.

Strategic Aims 2023-2026

Horizon scanning activities undertaken by the Government Chemist team, the current regulatory framework⁶, government food strategies^{7,8,9,10} and the Government Chemist stakeholder workshop conducted in June 2022¹¹ (see Box 1), have informed the strategic objectives for the 2023- 2026 Government Chemist Programme as:

Box 1: Summary of technical challenges identified by Stakeholders

- » Food authenticity and food fraud prevention
- » Food security
- » Alternative proteins
- » Contaminants in novel foods, packaging and recycled materials
- » Environmental claims/food labelling
- » Gene editing/GMOs
- » Effective use of data
- » Enhanced surveillance
- » New regulation for novel foods
- » Skills – gaps, availability, and training

⁶ [Regulatory approach | Food Standards Agency](#)

⁷ [The FSA strategy for 2022 to 2027 | Food Standards Agency](#)

⁸ [Food Standards Scotland Strategy 2021 - 2026 - Food Standards Scotland - Citizen Space](#)

⁹ [National food strategy for England - GOV.UK](#)

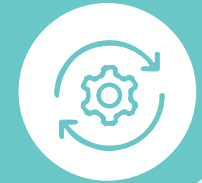
¹⁰ [Government food strategy - GOV.UK](#)

¹¹ [Government Chemist Stakeholder Workshop Report 2022 - GOV.UK](#)

Protecting consumers in increasingly challenging times



Supporting business and government across the four nations of the UK



Collaboratively building a resilient national skills base



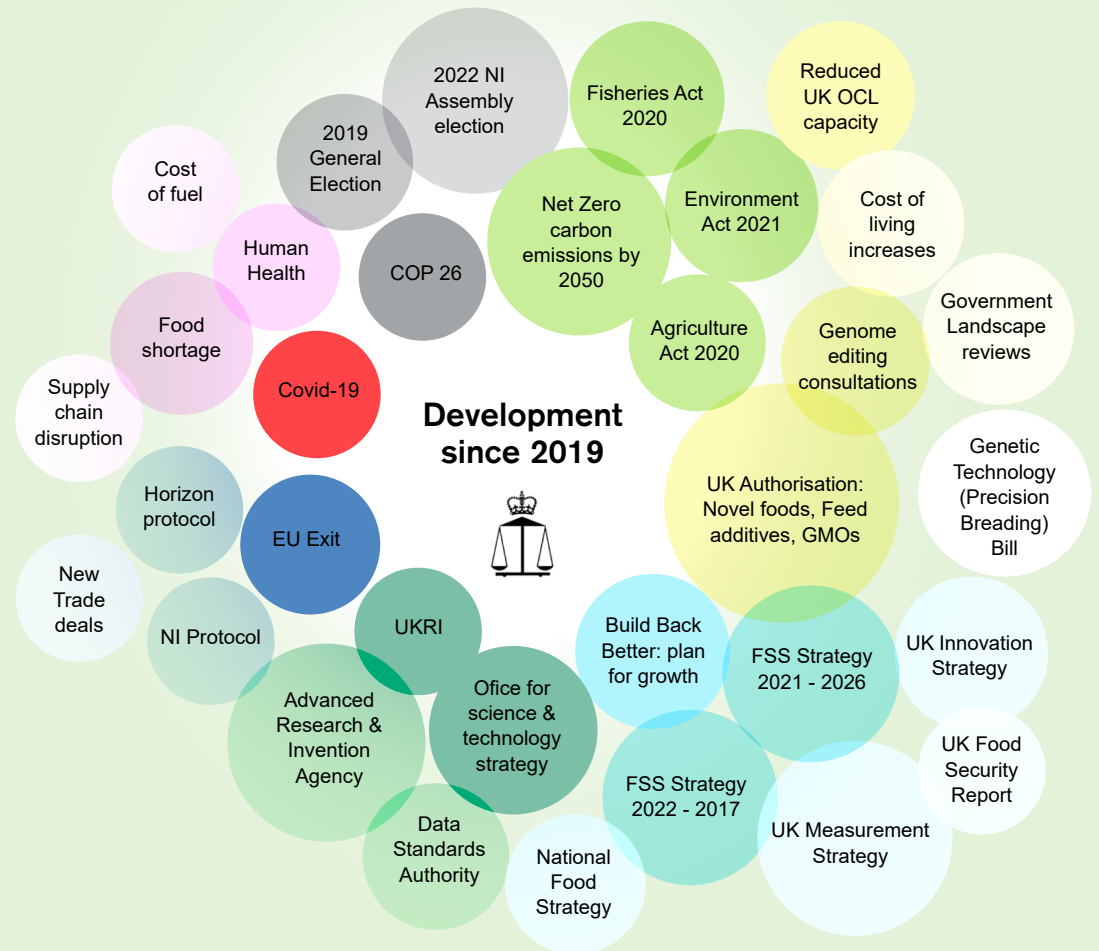
Maximising UK measurement expertise to address global challenges





Protecting consumers in increasingly challenging times

An unprecedented number of significant national and global events have occurred since the previous Government Chemist strategy was developed. The figure below highlights some of these.



Although EU countries continue to be the main source for imports and are therefore essential to the UK's food security, the landscape of UK imports and domestic production is currently in a state of change after EU Exit. The full impact of the UK's new trading relationship with the EU is not yet clear, leaving it difficult to assess whether the risk to the safety and authenticity of UK food imports has been significantly impacted.

The global food supply chain is increasingly interconnected¹², with high reliance on international trade⁵, stocks concentrated in a handful of countries, and cost, in terms of transport and production, at record levels. Reliance on specific countries increases risk, potentially requiring rapid changes in enforcement and labelling requirements in the face of supply shortages from these countries, which was highlighted so starkly by the Ukraine-Russia war¹³.

Despite these significant pressures and the impact of Covid-19, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) concluded that food standards in the UK were largely maintained during 2021¹⁴. The inaugural UK Food Standards report warned, however, of challenges ahead: the number of inspections of food businesses has fallen, the delay in establishing full UK import controls for high-risk food and feed from the EU


has reduced the certainty over prevention of entry of unsafe food into the UK market, and difficulty in regulating increased on-line food sales¹⁵.

Following EU Exit, the operating environment for many UK regulators has already changed significantly¹⁶, and they have taken on new responsibilities, which has resulted in delays in establishing new regulatory requirements or extending deadlines¹⁷. Before the end of 2023, due to the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill 2022¹⁸, Government departments and the devolved administrations will determine which retained EU laws can be allowed to expire, and which need to be preserved and incorporated into domestic law. Divergence from EU regulation has the potential to cause confusion, increase barriers to sharing intelligence and potentially give rise to disputes in international trade.


Consumer demand, high energy costs, the current cost of living crisis and other geopolitical factors are driving changes to the way food is produced, sold and consumed. In addition, climate change will undoubtedly impact negatively on food systems and supply chains if left unchecked, making it increasingly challenging to fulfil the mission of food we can trust. Embedding environmental sustainability considerations into practice will help influence the wider food ecosystem.

The aforementioned factors can reasonably be expected to continue to place additional pressure upon the UK official food and feed control system and therefore, increase the likelihood of additional need for the Government Chemist function.


In these challenging times, the Government Chemist will continue to support UK Government to protect consumers and legitimate food businesses by:

- 


Referee Function

Providing definitive resolution of increasingly complex referee cases in a timely manner, in line with the Government Chemist referee sample submissions policy, through the deployment of scientific and technical expertise and world-class measurement science.
- 

Advisory Function

 - » Working collaboratively with the UK Government to provide measurement science advice on matters of national and international importance
 - » Ensuring an agile advisory function that has the capacity to respond to the increasing numbers and breadth of requests from stakeholders
 - » Continuing to lead and influence the development of national and international standards, policy and regulation to ensure that they are based on sound measurement science.
- 

Horizon Scanning

Monitoring national and international regulatory developments through horizon scanning activities and keeping track of global changes to ensure that new unmitigable risks are not introduced into the global food supply
- 

Knowledge Transfer

Continue to work collaboratively to share findings with all stakeholders, using a number of different formats, ensuring a 'level playing field' and helping to prevent future disputes.

¹² [Global food security: New risks and disruptions | McKinsey](#)

¹³ [FSA and FSS advise consumers on substitution of ingredients in certain food products to avoid food supply disruption | Food Standards Agency](#)

¹⁴ [Inaugural report on UK food standards cautions of challenges ahead | Food Standards Agency](#)

¹⁵ [Emily Miles' stakeholder update - Safer takeaways and the power of online platforms - Food Standards Agency](#)

¹⁶ [The Benefits of Brexit: How the UK is taking advantage of leaving the EU](#)

¹⁷ [Regulating after EU Exit](#)

¹⁸ [The Retained EU Law \(Revocation and Reform\) Bill 2022 - GOV.UK](#)

Supporting businesses and Government across the four nations of the UK

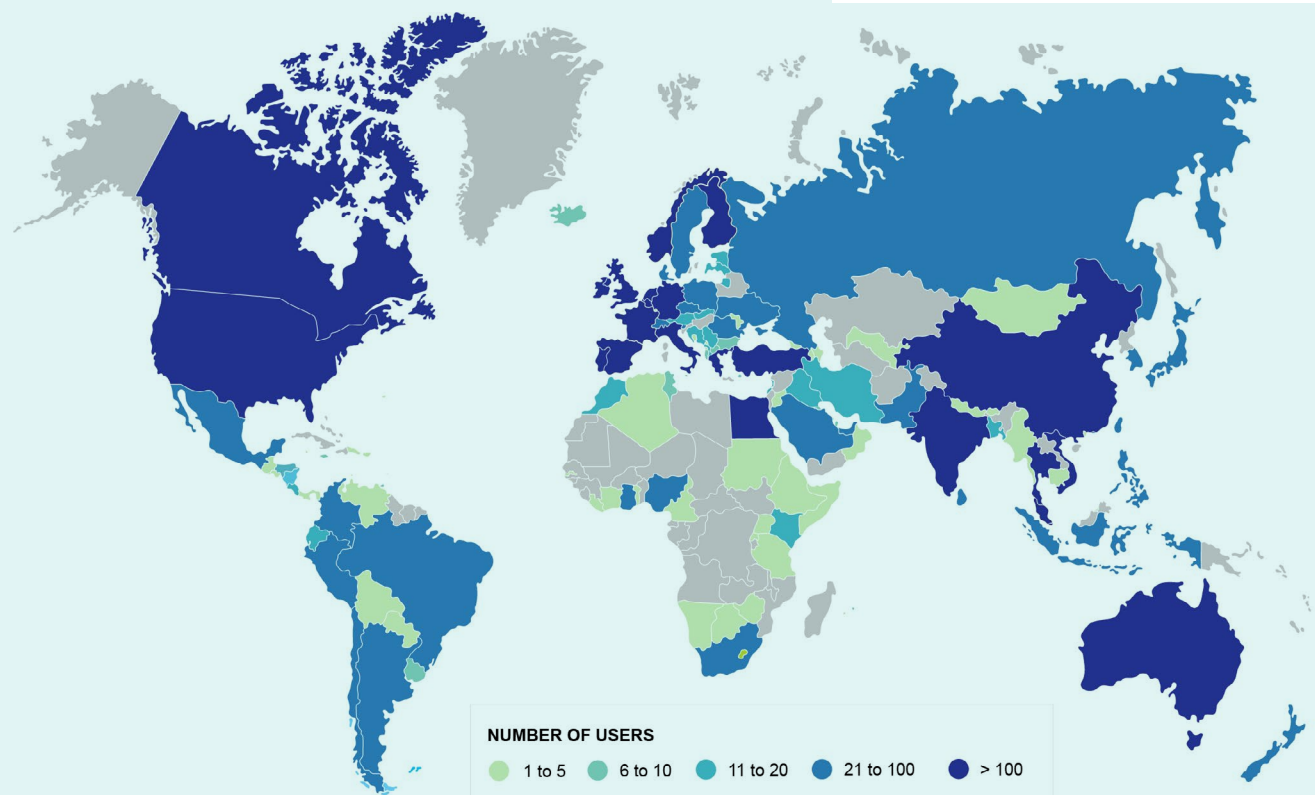
The Government Chemist's will provide world class measurement science to support an innovative and growing UK agrifood sector that trades sustainably on a global basis. This will be achieved through the provision of impartial technical advice as a valued expert resource, as well as application of world-class measurement science through the route of technical appeal for UK Government and industry

We will increase the value of this function, nationally and internationally by:

- Growing the stakeholder base by greater engagement with industrial trade organisations and networks across the four nations of the UK to increase awareness of the Government Chemist role and the benefits of independent and impartial dispute resolution and advice.
- Continuing to forge meaningful dialogue with all stakeholders in areas that link measurement and regulation to minimise the probability of disputes arising.
- Leading, or membership on, additional key government and other relevant groups or committees, emphasising the role of the Government Chemist in providing sound measurement advice.
- Utilising the unique independent position of the Government Chemist to positively influence measurement science-related issues internationally, for the benefit of the UK stakeholders.

- Continue to expand the Food Authenticity Network internationally, to showcase UK leadership on food authenticity and food fraud prevention.
- Continuing to undertake and respond to impact assessments of all Government Chemist interventions to understand and maximise the benefits to government, businesses and consumers.

The Food Authenticity Network is an open access interactive website, which was set-up with Defra funding in 2015 in response to the Elliott Review. Today, it is run as a public-private partnership through the Government Chemist programme and has become the world's premier source of food authenticity methods and food fraud prevention information, helping protect the global food supply. In 2022, over 35,000 unique users from 164 countries accessed the website www.foodauthenticity.global.





Collaboratively building a resilient national skills base

The Government Chemist has a long history of supporting and underpinning the skills base across the UK through dissemination and collaborative training. This is of particular relevance given the current concerns over the capacity and capability of the public enforcement and surveillance system^{19,20,21}.

The Government Chemist will continue to maximise the impact of the capability developed through the programme by efficient and timely dissemination, building on existing initiatives and proactively developing new collaborative opportunities, nationally and internationally, so that the right information is delivered to stakeholders in the most appropriate format.

The important role of the Association of Public Analysts (the APA) Training Officer is fulfilled by a member of the Government Chemist team who liaises with the APA training committee to ensure that their training needs are met, for example the residential component of the Mastership in Chemical Analysis (MChemA) programme. This programme had to be transformed during Covid-19 restrictions, to a series of bespoke web-based seminars, which offered a convenient and efficient mechanism for delivery for both the trainer and trainee. For future cohorts of MChemA students, it is anticipated that a shorter, focused residential course supplemented by evening online seminars will be offered.

The Joint Knowledge Transfer Framework for Food Standards and Food Safety, a cross-

government (BEIS, Defra, FSS & FSA) funded Knowledge Transfer project is also highly valued (see case study). This project was established by the Government Chemist in 2017 with the aim of supporting UK food and feed laboratory measurement capability. All funding partners pool funds annually and select topics for delivery to achieve greater and more strategic impact by transferring practical knowledge from government-funded projects to all relevant stakeholders, contributing to the strengthening of national skills and knowledge.

In addition, in recognition that no single organisation will be equipped with all the necessary expertise, capabilities and experience in all the analytical techniques used in food authenticity testing across all the food commodities, the team worked with Defra to help set up Food Authenticity Centres of Expertise (CoE)²² to address Recommendation 4 of the Elliott Review in relation to having access to resilient sustainable laboratory services²³. The CoEs are signposted on the Food Authenticity Network with their contact details so that they are readily accessible by any stakeholder.

Using the CoE network as a national resource, the Government Chemist, through the Food Authenticity Network, has worked with Defra, FSA & FSS to develop a 'Framework for a Co-ordinated Response from Food Authenticity Centres of Expertise to Food Fraud Incidents / Investigations', which will help support an evidence-based UK response to future food fraud/crime incidents.



¹⁹ Review of Official Laboratories in Feed and Food Enforcement - Phase 1

²⁰ Phase 2: Review of the UK's official food and feed laboratories

²¹ FSA 22-09-06 - Public Analyst Official Laboratory System: Our Approach to Building a Resilient System | Food Standards Agency

²² Food Authenticity Centres of Expertise

²³ Elliott Review (2014)

A key aim of future Government Chemist knowledge transfer activities will be to continue to ensure that the national skills base has the relevant knowledge, capability and resilience to be capable of functioning effectively in the current environment, including the ability to be able to respond to new and emerging issues. The Government Chemist will do this by:

- Disseminating the work of the Government Chemist via scientific peer reviewed publications and articles, presentations at relevant scientific conferences and networking events, as well as developing an ever more effective digital media strategy and identity.
- Continuing the 'Joint Knowledge Transfer Framework for Food Standards and Food Safety' by extending its scope and adapting dissemination formats²⁴ for time-poor analysts, taking a holistic approach to the skills needed for effective food law enforcement. This will include covering specific knowledge gaps as done in the 2020-2023 program through collaboration with acknowledged experts (e.g. global honey supply, precautionary allergen labelling) as well as seeking to address emerging issues.
- Continuing to provide online training events for the scientific community to enhance skills in the food and feed testing sector, given that the food supply chain is global.
- Proactively seeking collaborative opportunities, nationally and internationally, such as the collaboration with the Allergen Bureau²⁵, to promote the work of the Government Chemist to new audiences and provide new training tools.
- Continuing to support the sustainability of the

MChemA by transforming the format of the training provided to meet the evolving needs and working practices of candidates.

- Working collaboratively with government and expert stakeholders, such as the FSA (England, Wales and Northern Ireland), FSS, Defra, NRLs and Food Authenticity CoEs to identify and address skills gaps to help ensure UK laboratories have the necessary knowledge and skills to enable a resilient, effective and agile UK food and feed law enforcement system.

Box 2 Official Laboratories (OLs) capability gaps identified

- GMO testing. No GB OL currently has the ability to test for GMO's, and all analysis is sent to laboratories within the EU
- Limited use of general screening methods for unknowns in food, analysis tends to be targeted, meaning that potential risks could be missed
- Alternative methods to ELISA, for example DNA analysis, for allergens testing to enable confirmatory testing.
- Veterinary residue testing; all analysis sent to laboratories outside the main PA OL system.
- Isotope ratio analysis for meat authenticity
- Geographical analysis
- Pesticide testing
- Food supplements
- Rapid screening approaches for adulteration of herbs and spices
- Food contact material testing

Skills base case study

Public Analyst Official Laboratories (PA OLs) provide a crucial public protection service as they are designated to analyse chemical and compositional food and feed samples, sent by local authorities or Port Health Authorities (PHAs) for enforcement and surveillance purposes. Over the last twenty years, there has been a steady decline in the number of PA OLs leading to concerns over the capacity and capability of the UK food and feed official control system.

The Government Chemist conducted an inaugural survey²⁶ of PA OLs to identify capability gaps and their training requirements. The principal findings of the 2022 survey are shown in Box 2.

The age demographic of Public Analysts was also highlighted and thus, the need to support and fund future Public Analysts.

This data was combined with intelligence from the analysis of Referee samples and a survey of UK PA OLs on GMO capability by the National Reference Laboratory for GMOs in food and feed²⁷ and fed into a paper that was presented to the FSA board in September 2022²⁸, which stated that direct intervention is needed to ensure further decline on PA OLs is prevented and recommended that the UK retains and builds the testing capacity and capability required to undertake routine testing, support incidents and enable research-related analysis. The recommended approach of using targeted intervention by FSA to support Public Analyst Official Laboratories and to deliver a resilient future system was endorsed by the FSA board.

²⁴ [CannLearn app | LGC Standards](#)

²⁵ The Government Chemist has been convening regular meetings with the Allergen Bureau and the FSA to potentially collaborate on delivering micro-learning training on allergen management to stakeholders such as the hospitality sector where staff turnover is high and allergen knowledge is typically low.

²⁶ PA OLs in Scotland had been surveyed in June 2022 and so were excluded from this survey.

²⁷ [LGC as a UK National Reference Laboratory](#)

²⁸ [PA OLs in Scotland had been surveyed in June 2022 and so were excluded from this survey.](#)

Maximising UK measurement expertise to address global challenges

The unprecedented number of global challenges faced by the human race at this time has already been mentioned. The most significant of these is climate change, which will require the embedding of environmental sustainability considerations into practice to positively influence the wider food ecosystem.

In its 'Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener' document, the UK Government set out (in broad terms) how the country will achieve its ambition of achieving net zero emissions by 2050. The responsibility for achieving this aim falls on all Government Departments; the NMS (as part of BEIS) will be instrumental in helping meet this target by supporting the metrology needs of several sectors' transition to net zero. Within the strategy, the UK Government Net Zero Roadmap identifies a number of stated goals to which NMS projects could contribute to enable their successful implementation.

The Government Chemist Programme will maintain its position as an impartial operator in the food and feed sector whilst also extending and growing links with the scientific community, partner organisations and the government departments across the four nations of the UK. This in turn will provide an opportunity to enhance and future proof existing capabilities and maximise collaborative synergies between stakeholders to address global challenges.

We will deliver this by:

- Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) Investing in new technologies and expertise to ensure scientific capabilities are developed to future-proof expert technical provision, able to reflect and deliver priorities identified by Government Chemist horizon scanning and stakeholder consultation (see Box 3) activities, particularly in emerging areas.
- Seek to undertake longer term strategic projects to address global challenges, such as sustainability, where there is a role for measurement science to have an impact.
- Continuing professional development of staff who form the core skill-base to deliver the Government Chemist programme efficiently and to the required high standard, through programmes such as the Institute of Food Science & Technology (IFST) corporate scheme.
- Working ever more closely with partner organisations such as FSA, Defra, FSS, and their Official Control Laboratories, port authorities, trading standards and environmental health officers to support changing surveillance needs whilst maintaining emphasis on dispute avoidance and supporting a unified approach to balance and optimise the health of people, animals and the environment.



- Proactively partner with organisations such as National Food Crime Unit (NFCU), Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit (SFCIU) and Global Alliance on Food Crime (GAFC) to promote UK work on food crime prevention.
- Ensuring key regulatory and analytical developments and knowledge gained during referee analysis continue to be transferred effectively to all relevant parties to address skills gaps and support training and help prevent future disputes.
- Growing and extending the advisory role to address the increased demand, in a strategic and holistic manner, to capitalise on co-location with the National Measurement Laboratory and by benefiting from additional capabilities developed through the NRL functions and leading the Food Authenticity Network.
- Expanding the provision of strategic advice and support by working ever more closely with government departments across the four


nations of the UK, ensuring greater visibility of the Government Chemist role to central government and the devolved administrations to maximise impact and value for money.

Our aim is for the Government Chemist be more widely known, and called upon, as a source of independent expert advice on matters relating to measurement science so that we can make a greater contribution to addressing global challenges.

Conclusion

The 2023 – 2026 Government Chemist strategy sets out a vision for the Government Chemist that is fit for the increasingly challenging world we are living in and will meet its core purpose of supporting consumer protection and providing food businesses with a route of scientific appeal to prevent miscarriages of justice.

This strategy places greater emphasis on plans to enhance cross-government working across the UK infrastructure and internationally, to demonstrate leadership in matters relating to measurement science, in line with stakeholder, technological and regulatory needs, helping to address global challenges.

A hand is shown pointing at a tablet screen. The background is dark with several out-of-focus, warm-toned bokeh lights. The text is overlaid on a teal vertical bar on the left side of the image.

APPENDIX 1 Legislation under which the Government Chemist duties operate

The duties of the Government Chemist as referee analyst are defined in or under:

Food Safety Act 1990

Food Safety (Sampling and Qualifications) Regulations 2013

Food Safety (Sampling and Qualifications) (Scotland) Regulations 2013

Food (Northern Ireland) Order 1989

Food Safety (Northern Ireland) Order 1991

Food Safety (Sampling and Qualifications) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013

Food Safety (Sampling and Qualifications) Regulations (Wales) 2013

Rheoliadau Diogelwch Bwyd (Samplu a Chymwysterau) (Cymru) 2013

Natural Mineral Water, Spring Water and Bottled Drinking Water (England) Regulations 2007

The Natural Mineral Water, Spring Water and Bottled Drinking Water (Scotland) (No. 2) Regulations 2007

The Natural Mineral Water, Spring Water and Bottled Drinking Water Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

The Natural Mineral Water, Spring Water and Bottled Drinking Water (Wales) Regulations 2015

Rheoliadau Dŵr Mwynol Naturiol, Dŵr Ffynnon a Dŵr Yfed wedi'i Botelu (Cymru) 2015

Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (England) Regulations 2012

Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Scotland) Regulations 2012

Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Wales) Regulations 2012

Rheoliadau Deunyddiau ac Eitemau mewn Cysylltiad â Bwyd (Cymru) 2012

Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2012

Agriculture Act 1970

The Animal Feed (Hygiene, Sampling etc. and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2015

The Animal Feed (Hygiene, Sampling etc. and Enforcement) (Wales) Regulations 2016

Rheoliadau Bwyd Anifeiliaid (Hylendid, Samplu etc. a Gorfodi) (Cymru) 2016

The Animal Feed (Hygiene, Sampling etc. and Enforcement) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

Genetically Modified Animal Feed Regulations 2004

Human Medicines Regulations 2012

The Government Chemist is named and has other scientific responsibilities under:

Merchant Shipping Act 1995

Poisons Act 1972

Status & territorial extent of the Government Chemist are understood with reference to:

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Scotland Act 1998 (Cross-Border Public Authorities) (Specification) Order 1999

Administrative Provisions Act (Northern Ireland) 1928



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