

HM Government

## Review into the Integrity and Assurance of Food Supply Networks

# Note of visit to Cranswick Preston and Lazenby's with Sainsbury's

**Date:** 1 November 2013

**Attendees:**

Chris Aldersley – Managing director, fresh pork – Cranswick Country Foods

Andrew Caines – Group Technical Director – Cranswick Country Foods

Marcus Hoggarth - Sainsbury's Account Director – Cranswick Country Foods

Nick Hughes - Review into the Integrity and Assurance of Food Supply Networks

Rebecca Kenner – Review into the Integrity and Assurance of Food Supply Networks

Alec Kyriakides – Head of Product Quality, Safety & Supplier Performance – Sainsbury's

Sue Lockhart – Head of Agriculture – Sainsbury's

Mike Steel - Subject Matter Expert – Review into the Integrity and Assurance of Food Supply Networks

Michael Totten – Product Technical Manager – Sainsbury's

## 1. Sainsbury's presentation

Sainsbury's was founded in 1869. It currently serves around 23 million customers each week and is committed to providing healthy, fresh, tasty food. Every business decision that Sainsbury's makes is guided by the question 'what would the most trusted retailer do'?

Sainsbury's said choosing the right supplier is vital to achieving a high level of supply chain integrity. All of Sainsbury's suppliers have to meet third party certification standards and on top of that Sainsbury's own brand standards. Even after the supplier approval process is complete there is a detailed development and approval process to go through before any new product can be launched.

Sainsbury's suppliers are visited by technologists on both an announced and unannounced basis to check that product specifications and quality standards are being met. The aim is to try to prevent any non conformances / defects before the product reaches the customer. Sainsbury's also has a sophisticated customer complaints capture process which can pick up trends in complaints within a day of the complaint being made.

The vast majority of Sainsbury's meat is sourced from the UK. It has producer groups for key commodities including beef, broilers, liquid milk, lamb, pork and wheat. As an

example, the pork group is made up of around 70 farms. These farms are represented by a steering group made up of members representing a broad geographical spread. In order to supply Sainsbury's producers must be audited against the Red Tractor assurance standard or an equivalent overseas standard. Sainsbury's said it has had a sourcing standard for many years, which it is always looking to progress. It is also constantly looking at the number of touch points within the supply chain and seeing where the complexity and risk can be reduced. Sainsbury's supplier relationships are governed by the Groceries Supply Code of Practice and its aim is to collaborate with suppliers rather than dictate to them, trying to strike a balance between exercising control and allowing suppliers the flexibility to do what they think is right.

Sainsbury's said most issues around product integrity occur upstream in the supply chain as most assurance schemes look at the mid-processing stage. The view was expressed that if those involved in the food supply chain were in the habit of sharing insight more effectively there is a chance that issues of product integrity – such as the horsemeat adulteration – would have been picked up earlier. It was agreed that there could be a fear of sharing information on potentially fraudulent activity driven by the prospect of that information ending up in the public domain.

Sainsbury's said it maintained a major programme of analytical assurance through product testing, which includes meat speciation, PCR and isotope testing. It tests products on a risk basis and specifies the testing on all products by its suppliers which is usually conducted on the finished product with additional raw material and in process testing. Sainsbury's is introducing a test on every single SKU at least once a year for integrity of the product. It said the knowledge of this thorough sampling programme de-incentivises people from trying to introduce inauthentic materials into its supply chain.

## **2. Cranswick presentation**

Cranswick processes 27,000 pigs each week at its Preston site which is its biggest plant in the UK. The plant has received a £25m investment over the past five years and is now one of the most modern abattoirs in Europe. It slaughters pigs five days a week and packs pork seven days a week. Most pigs are sourced from within a 50 mile radius of the plant.

Ten FSA officials are on site permanently while trained welfare officers work in the layerage. The site is regularly audited – Cranswick noted that in a four month period across 12 sites it was audited 110 times for standards of traceability, product integrity, animal welfare etc. Cranswick said it is beginning to explore more opportunities for backward integration and has recently completed the purchase of Wayland Farms, the third biggest pig farmer in the UK.

## **3. Lazenby's presentation**

The Lazenby's plant opened in 2005 and was extended in 2010. It produces up to 70 different SKUs each day, primarily sausages but also burgers and other meat products. Orders are received daily at 6am and dispatched by 8pm. The plant is operational seven days a week and its busiest days are Wednesdays and Thursdays. There are approximately 500 staff working on site with the number rising to 1000 at Christmas.

Lazenby's produces around 200 tonnes of premium sausage per week on 19 lines. On average it runs around 10 lines each day for Sainsbury's fresh meat products. Speciation and allergen control take priority over everything else with different species and allergens clearly segregated to avoid cross-contamination. The plant is accredited to BRC Grade 'A'

technical status and specific products are also assured under schemes from the Soil Association, Red Tractor, BMPA and Freedom Foods.

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