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For feed and food law enforcement, and port health authorities in England

Update on the status of edible insects on the UK market

Summary: Update on the status of insects on the UK market following the end of the transition period under the retained Regulation (EU) 2015/2283.

Dear colleague,

Following our message on [20th January 2020](#) updating on the status of insects following the end of the transitional period set out in regulations; we would like to provide you with a further update.

Background

Under retained [regulations \(EU 2015/2283\)](#), all insects are considered to be novel foods unless they are one of a very limited number of species that have been commonly consumed within the EU prior to 1997. We are only aware of one insect – the German cheese mite – with a history of consumption prior to 1997. Therefore, an authorisation is needed for all other insects.

In 2018, when the regulations were brought in, transitional measures were put in place under Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 to give businesses time to comply with the requirements of the regulation. This allowed Food Business Operators (FBOs) who requested authorisation for insects under the Novel Foods Regulations by 1 January 2019 to continue to place their products on the market while the scientific assessment was ongoing. These transitional measures ended on 2 January 2020.

FBOs currently placing insects (excluding the German cheese mite) on the GB market are not in compliance with novel food regulations (Retained Reg 2015/2283).

Current position in GB

Whilst Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 is retained in GB law, the transitional measures for the marketing of insects no longer apply in GB, as the transitional period has expired. Therefore insects (excluding the German cheese mite) are regarded as Novel Foods and [require authorisation](#) before being placed on the GB market. Currently, no insect has been authorised by the FSA/FSS.

Although the EU has recently adopted a regulation allowing dried yellow mealworm (*Tenebrio molitor*) to be placed on the market, this will not apply to the GB market. This is the only insect which has received this authorisation. There are 11 other applications for authorisation currently under consideration by EFSA relating to Insects as novel food.

Local Authorities will wish to be aware that the FSA is currently reflecting on its policy regarding the marketing of insects in GB, including whether to introduce new GB-specific transitional measures. The FSA will provide another update once a policy approach has been finalised.

Insects as Novel Foods in Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Protocol (NIP) means that EU Food Law relating to Novel Foods continues to apply in Northern Ireland.

In respect to the Northern Ireland market, the Novel Food Regulations ([Regulation \(EU\) 2015/2283](#)) require that an authorisation must be received before a novel food product can be placed on the market.

Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 provided for transitional measures for those products that were lawfully placed on the market in the EU to remain on the market, so long as certain requirements were met.

This transitional arrangement applies to products that were lawfully placed on the market by 01 January 2018, for which the EU received an application for authorisation by 01 January 2019. Therefore, until a final decision has been adopted in respect of the application by the EU, these products can continue to be placed on the Northern Ireland Market.

For other species of insect to be compliant with the Novel Foods Regulations, the product must first be authorised by the EU before being placed on the Northern Ireland market.

Please contact Novel Foods policy team if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

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