



# ANNUAL REPORT 2008

Incorporating Financial Statements for 2008



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# MISSION STATEMENT

**To protect and improve public health, by fostering and maintaining confidence in the food supply on the island of Ireland in partnership with others.**



# CHIEF EXECUTIVE STATEMENT



Responding to the challenges in the complex environment of food safety and dietary health requires **safefood** to be a flexible and responsive organisation. In developing our response we rely on our internal multi-disciplinary expertise, complemented by our formal advisory structures, and the expertise of others through our professional networks.

Given our all-island remit, and the cross-agency nature of our work, partnership is critical to our success. Whether it is in food safety and hygiene or nutrition-related activities, all our work is characterised by a complex landscape of organisations – public, private and voluntary – all working to foster and maintain public health. Our key and priority function is to bring about acceptance that the promotion of food safety and healthy eating is a shared responsibility and this can only be delivered through enduring and robust partnerships.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our four directorates – Corporate Operations, Food Science, Human Health & Nutrition, and Marketing & Communications. Our advisory structures play a vital role in providing expert guidance. Under Chairman John Dardis, the Advisory Board assists in setting the strategic direction for the organisation. The Scientific Advisory Committee, chaired by Professor Charlie Daly, provides advice of a more technical nature and, through its diverse range of expertise, helps us to identify emerging issues. I wish to record our thanks to both of the advisory structures for their excellent contribution throughout 2008.

2008 was the first year of our latest three year corporate plan. The plan was the result of a lengthy process of consultation with key stakeholders, and identifies specific objectives to influence consumer behavior and to influence the food environment, supporting behavioural change. The plan provides for the development and maintenance of a robust evidence base to underpin our activities. The promotion of a joined-up and cohesive approach to food safety and healthy eating across the island is fundamental to the plan to ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively.

The communication of our key messages is built upon sound scientific evidence. **safefood** keeps abreast of relevant research both domestically and in the international arena. Where supplementary research is required to close gaps in our knowledge, we commission work through a transparent and externally validated system. In 2008 the focus of new research commissioned by **safefood** is to provide particular knowledge to support our promotion role.

Communications is at the heart of our activities, and in 2008 we conducted a number of integrated awareness campaigns, in partnership with the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Health Promotion Agency Northern Ireland (HPANI). The purpose of the campaign, branded 'Little Steps', is to empower parents and guardians of young children by showing how small changes in physical activity and food habits can have a big impact on health. The campaign used television and radio advertising with supporting material provided through a dedicated website. 2008 represented the first phase of a three year campaign, and the initial results from market research are very positive.

In 2007 we initiated a campaign called 'Speak Out' encouraging consumers to interact directly with catering business operators where there were concerns about food hygiene in catering establishments. 2008 saw the second phase of this initiative with the distribution of supporting materials to the food businesses aimed at facilitating an appropriate response to consumer concerns.

Consumers are frequently confused by the promotion of weight loss diets and products. It is well recognised that 'quick fix' and faddish diets are ineffective in maintaining a healthy weight. **safefood** developed, in association with the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute, an online resource which helps people to lose weight in a healthy and sustainable way. The resource, 'Weigh2Live' provides a range of useful tools to assist consumers on an ongoing basis.

Seasonal messages have long been a feature of **safefood**'s work. An innovative approach was taken at Christmas where consumers were given the opportunity to text in the weight of the turkeys and receive advice electronically on optimal

cooking times. This proved to be a very popular innovation with thousands of consumers availing of the service, including 500 requests on Christmas Day itself.

**safefood** continues to build on the successful collaboration achieved in the laboratory area in previous years. Our lablinks programme continued to provide training and mobility opportunities and workshops for laboratory staff to facilitate the exchange of best practice. A key function of **safefood** is to advise the NSMC on the development of specialised laboratories. At the end of 2008 the NSMC endorsed the conduct of a wide-ranging consultation aimed at identifying viable options for the development of an enteric reference service.

As I have already mentioned, a robust evidence base is an essential foundation for all health promotion initiatives, and **safefood**'s research programme is a major contributor to this evidence. During 2008 some fourteen research projects across a wide range of disciplines were completed, and five new research projects were commissioned.

Obesity is recognised as one of the biggest health threats in the developed world. **safefood** is playing its part in contributing to meeting this challenge. At the policy advice level, we actively participated in the Obesity Prevention Steering Groups established in Northern Ireland. At the same time we developed practical tools, through our Weigh2Live and Little Steps initiatives, to help individuals and families make the right food choices. We also recognise that low income groups have particular difficulty in accessing healthy diets for a variety of reasons. In 2008 we developed a programme to encourage the development of local projects aimed at overcoming these barriers.

On behalf of the **safefood** Advisory Board and my colleagues I would like to thank all those individuals and organisations who have worked with us during 2008 to address the challenges facing us. We look forward to continuing with the partnership approach to maintain and improve public health on the island of Ireland.



**Martin Higgins**  
Chief Executive

# CORPORATE OPERATIONS

Corporate Operations supported all of **safefood's** strategies and programmes throughout all business areas of the organisation, including, in 2008, all scientific laboratory coordination activities and the assessment of the need for an enteric reference service on an all-island basis.

This was achieved by the provision of both financial and practical resources, backed by effective financial procedures and robust corporate governance arrangements. The fostering of value-for-money approach during the year underscored the achievement of efficiencies and targeted outcomes throughout **safefood**.

## HUMAN RESOURCES AND EQUALITY

All staff received Equality Training in the first quarter of 2008, the purpose of which was to provide guidance on legislative developments North and South. **safefood's** Disability Action Plan, which identifies how disability is mainstreamed into our activities, was revised and submitted to the Equality Commission in Northern Ireland in September 2008, along with all routine reporting under the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Equality Consultations were also conducted on the newly developed Communication and Nutrition Strategies.

## LABORATORY COORDINATION

### Training & Mobility Programme ('Lablink')

There was further considerable interest in this stakeholder development programme during 2008, which aims to foster coordination and interaction between public food safety

laboratories on the island of Ireland, encourages engagement and training of laboratory staff on a North-South cross border basis. Staff from the Health and Agriculture sectors (North & South) were facilitated in developing linkage with other food safety professionals and gaining valuable expertise. Staff spent time in other laboratories on the island of Ireland, and attended courses and conferences in the UK and mainland Europe.

### Workshops

The successful **Lablink** workshop series for staff of public food safety laboratories continued during 2008 with workshops on Food Microbiology Method Validation, Internal Auditing and Instrument Procurement and Calibration.

### Newsletter

Four editions of the **Lablinks** newsletter were published in 2008, including a 'bumper' Christmas 12-page edition, containing interviews with food safety professionals, laboratory profiles, articles on food safety research and information/news items. The Christmas edition was the last edition of the newsletter in its present format. In 2009, **safefood** will publish a new enlarged revamped newsletter

that will continue to include news and information for laboratory staff as well as covering additional areas of interest such as food safety education, nutrition, environmental & public health protection, microbiology & toxicology issues and obesity, etc. The purpose of the revised newsletter is to make information on **safefood** and the wider food safety arena on the island of Ireland available to a wider group of stakeholders.

#### Enteric Reference Service

The delivery of state of the art specialist laboratory services to protect the health of the consumer and support food safety on the island of Ireland is a priority role for **safefood**.

In November 2007, **safefood** submitted a paper on Enteric Reference Services for the island of Ireland with an accompanying proposal to the plenary meeting of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC). This paper set out the background to **safefood** activities in this area and outlined a number of possible options for the provision of Enteric Reference Services that will meet the needs of service users in both jurisdictions.

The NSMC endorsed the proposed way forward outlined in the paper, that **safefood** secure the services of a facilitator from outside the island, with management expertise in the relevant field, to provide a facilitation process which would be both participative and independent. Accordingly, Dr. Jon Bell, former Chief Executive of the UK Food Standards Agency, was retained in this capacity. Prof. Henrik Wegener, an independent technical expert with an international

reputation in enteric reference laboratory services was chosen to assist Dr. Bell. Prof. Wegener's role is to advise on the scientific and public health merits of the options under consideration and on the development of the service.

Following a series of informal bilateral consultations held by Dr. Bell with over 16 key stakeholders in Ireland and the UK; and a series of technical site visits by Prof. Wegener to the three reference facilities used by laboratories on the island, **safefood** will publish a Consultation Paper on the subject in early 2009. Once the consultation process is complete and submissions carefully studied, a final recommendation paper will be submitted to the North-South Ministerial Council for consideration in due course.



# FINANCE

## AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE

The Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) from both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland jointly approved the Financial Statements.

The Internal Auditor undertook a thorough examination of project management procedures during the year to ensure that our practices fully meet the requirements of the public service.

The Advisory Board Audit Committee met twice during 2008. Audit Committee training was provided in November 2008.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

The **safefood** Executive Board (Senior Management Team) was provided with regular budgetary and financial information, in order that the year-end results achieved the targeted Business Plan outputs identified. Consequently, the financial results for 2008 met both cash and budgetary targets.

**safefood**'s sponsor Departments (the Department of Health and Children in the Republic, and the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland) were provided with regular reporting on financial and operational progress.

## BUSINESS PLANNING

A three-year Strategic and Corporate Plan was produced for the period 2008-2010. This involved extensive consultation with staff, and concerned stakeholders in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The main theme relates to the need to exploit our key strategic strength as the only body dealing with food safety promotion and related issues on all-island platform - and the plan focuses very clearly on obtaining a joined-up approach on promotion, surveillance, and scientific cooperation.

**safefood** produced an integrated Business Plan for 2008 incorporating and linked to the corporate strategies that will drive targeted outputs and outcomes in 2008 - 2010.

## STAFF PENSIONS

The North/South Pension Scheme, established specifically for employees of the Implementation Bodies, was established in April 2005 and was in full operation throughout 2008. **safefood** contributed to the management and future development of the Scheme through representation on the rules sub-committee, and as a full member of the Chief Executive Officer's Pension committee. All pension contributions deducted from employees were transferred to the respective Departments of Finance (North and South).

## PROCUREMENT

Following a tender process, contracts were placed for the procurement for a wide range of contracts across the organization e.g Food Allergy Training. Procurement practices were reviewed in line with best practice to comply with all European and national legislation.

## NORTH-SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL (NSMC)

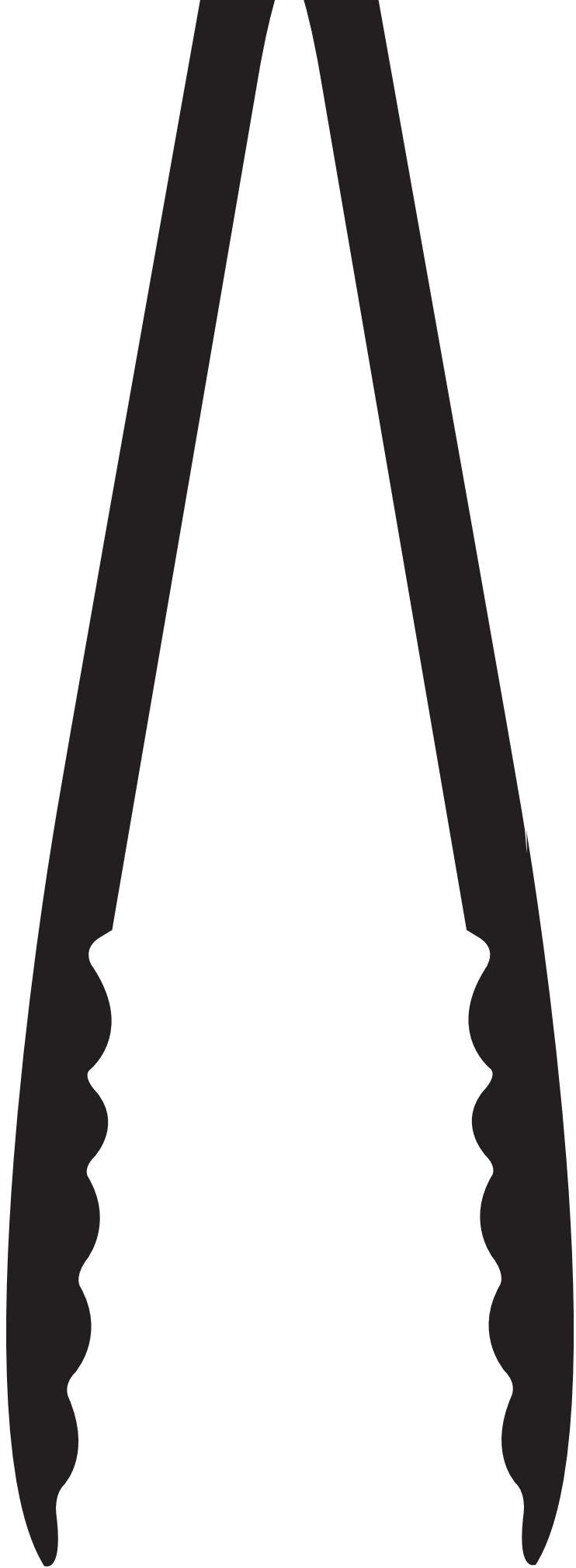
A full meeting of the NSMC in the Food Safety and Health Sector took place in May 2008. Papers were presented on the 2008 Business Plan, Corporate Plan 2008-2010 and the Enteric Reference Service.

## ST ANDREWS AGREEMENT REVIEW

The St Andrews Review Group undertook a review of North-South Bodies in 2008. Their report is expected in 2009.

## LINKS WITH OTHER FOOD SAFETY BODIES

Regular meetings continue to be held with both the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, in order to promote the effectiveness of all-island cross-border cooperation among the two agencies.



# SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES

The Food Science and Human Health and Nutrition Directorates provide the scientific foundation for the food safety, hygiene, and nutrition messages. In 2008, campaigns supported included ‘Little Steps’, ‘Speak Out’, ‘Weigh2Live’, and three Consumer Focused Reviews.

## FOOD SCIENCE

### Research

The following research projects were completed in 2008:

#### In the field of chemical safety

- Profiling for Abuse of Anabolic Agents in Meat Production
- An Evaluation of the Impact of the **safefood** on-Farm Coccidiostat Usage Guidelines

#### In the field of microbiology

- Development of a risk assessment model for Salmonella in shell eggs and processed eggs on the island of Ireland
- Arcobacter spp. in retail foodstuffs in Ireland: optimising isolation procedures and an investigation of their genetic relatedness
- An evaluation of time-temperature profiles and related practices in retail outlets handling chilled food
- Identification and characterisation of antibiotic resistance genes in poultry meat (GENECHASER)
- Risk, responsibility and choice: food and eating in second-level schools
- To determine the food hygiene indicators for customers to objectively judge hygiene standards in retail and food service outlets

Three new research projects commenced in 2008:

#### In the field of microbiology

- Control of Campylobacter in poultry - development of a dissemination programme of lessons for farmers on the island of Ireland
- A survey of retail cold sliced meats with particular reference to the presence of Listeria monocytogenes and Clostridium botulinum toxin, to include reduced-salt and reduced-fat products
- A Survey to Determine the Presence of Salmonella spp. and Campylobacter spp. in Retail Packs of Raw Chicken Purchased Throughout the Republic Of Ireland

#### Biotoxin Research Network

The 4th Annual **safefood** Biotoxin Research Network conference was held in Belfast in July. The conference addressed the issue of Azaspiracid toxin in Irish shellfish which was highly topical, as the toxin had received considerable media attention in the months leading up to the conference. **safefood** had commissioned in July 2007 a study to develop a reliable, robust and user-friendly method for detecting this toxin before it enters the market. The project involves research teams from Queen's University, Belfast (QUB), Dublin City University (DCU) and

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT). This year's Network Conference was collaboration between the Biotoxin Research Network and the Institute for Agri-Food and Land Use in QUB.

#### Irish Society of Toxicology

**safefood** supported the annual Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Irish Society of Toxicology which was held in Cork and focused on the issue of food supplements. The 70 delegates heard presentations on safety concerns pertaining to certain food supplements, the current legislative framework in which food supplements are marketed, nutritional aspects of food supplement usage and recommendations and also concerns as voiced from within the food supplement industry itself.

#### Food Allergy Training Programme

Following the highly successful Food Safety Training Programme on Food Allergies for Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) in the Border region which **safefood** co-funded with Cooperation and Working Together (CAWT) in 2006-7, **safefood** rolled out this programme to the remaining EHOs on the island of Ireland (IoI). The programme was launched at the 'Action on Reaction' food allergy conference held in Dublin in October. A total of 86 delegates attended the all-day event representing a broad range of disciplines including academia, catering, industry, the medical profession, non-governmental organisations and regulatory authorities.

The catering trade needs knowledge and training to cope with this hazard and this programme seeks to provide that information through the Environmental Health Officers who regulate the operation of food premises, the Public Analysts who test foods on sale for their allergen content and through the catering lecturers who train future caterers. Indeed, this is the first time that this training is being provided for third level catering lecturers on the island-of-Ireland (IoI).

The programme involves both distance learning and workshop events, with the focus on practical risk management of food allergens - increasing awareness of life-threatening food allergies and providing up-to-date information on food allergen recognition and control in the catering industry. A total of 29 workshops are scheduled to run during each month until June 2009. The allergen training programme fully complements the provisions made for food allergen management in the new Safe Catering pack which was launched in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

#### Allergy Northern Ireland

**safefood** supported the publication of the Allergy NI cookbook, 'Parties, Picnics & Packed Lunches', which was launched in Belfast in November. Allergy NI is a registered charity in Northern Ireland which provides support and advice to those with food allergies.

#### Coeliac Society of Ireland

The Annual General Meeting of the Coeliac Society of Ireland was held in April in Limerick and **safefood** presented on phase I of the Cross-border Training Programme in Food Allergen Control (see above). The outcomes of this highly successful programme were very well received at the conference as some of the measures developed to increase awareness of the issue of food allergy in the catering industry are also directly applicable to food intolerances such as coeliac condition.

#### International Association for Food Protection

**safefood** delivered an invited paper to the International Association for Food Protection in Columbus, Ohio in August. The session examined global perspectives for food safety communication using **safefood's** evidence-based communication as a model.



### *Salmonella*

**safefood** facilitated a multi-agency food safety and agriculture meeting to discuss the policy implications for the island of Ireland of the **safefood** funded project 'Development of a risk assessment model for *Salmonella* in pork on the island of Ireland' and other recent developments at European Union (EU) level.

**safefood's**, Chief specialist - Microbiology, made a presentation to the annual review meeting of the UK Zoonoses Action Plan, held in Belfast, relating to the *Salmonella* status of pigs slaughtered in Northern Ireland to allow the development of a risk assessment model through a project jointly funded by **safefood**.

## **HUMAN HEALTH AND NUTRITION**

### Research

The following research projects were completed in 2008:

#### In the field of human health & nutrition

- Longitudinal study of changes in body mass index, anthropometric measures, dietary intake and physical activity in cohorts of school-going adolescents
- Dietary patterns, food intakes, attitudes and their determinants among low socio-economic adults and children: an in-depth quantitative and qualitative analysis
- Determination of nature and extent of food poverty in Northern Ireland with a view to developing policies and practical initiatives to tackle the issue and increase awareness of the importance of food and nutrition from a low-income perspective
- Consumer knowledge, attitudes and beliefs around the nutritional content of smoothies
- All-island learning from the 'Decent Food For All' Programme
- Gastroenteritis symptoms in Ireland – a survey of General Practitioners
- Analysis of the National Children's Food Survey

### Food Poverty

Two food poverty research projects the evaluation of the Decent Food for All Programme in Armagh/Dungannon and the Diet, Nutrient Intake and Attitudes among Disadvantaged Groups on the island of Ireland have been completed as above. Summary reports are being developed and the project findings were launched at a designated workshop in November 2008.

The **safefood** research revealed that social stresses which are part of daily life for many people from low socio-economic backgrounds are a major contributor to an unhealthy diet. The consequences of an unhealthy diet for longer term health include heart disease, diabetes, hypertension and some cancers. The findings provide current evidence of the food and nutrient inequalities among disadvantaged young urban women in particular,

who were identified as being at particular risk of poverty and micronutrient inadequacy.

#### Two new research projects commenced in 2008:

- Development of a Validated Nutrition Evaluation and Nutrition Information Resource for the Pre-school Setting to Promote an Improved Nutrition Environment and Food Provision in this Setting
- Sugar Sweetened Drinks consumption by children and adolescents on the island of Ireland

#### Smoothies

Smoothies are becoming increasingly popular in recent years. **safefood** funded a consumer survey of adults on IOI in 2008 (see previous) to investigate consumer understanding and attitudes towards smoothies. In particular, understanding of the contribution of smoothies to fruit and vegetable intake and the sugar content of smoothies will be focused on. The results are currently being analysed and will then be used to support consumer messages.

#### ACTIVITIES

##### NI Obesity Prevention Steering Group

Department of Health Social services and Public Safety have established an Obesity Prevention Steering Group to implement the 'Fit Futures' plan. **safefood** are actively participating in the Advisory Group. Four sub-groups dealing with; nutrition; physical activity; public information; and evidence base, have been established. The original 'Fit Futures' plan was aimed at tackling childhood obesity, but the scope is now being expanded and will have a full lifecourse approach.

##### Community Food Initiatives

Healthy Food for All and **safefood** are establishing a Demonstration Programme on Community Food Initiatives and are looking for funding applications from eligible groups and organisations. The purpose of this funding is to establish a Demonstration Programme of Community Food Initiatives on the island of Ireland. Community Food Initiatives are projects that improve the availability and accessibility of healthy food for low-income groups at a local level, using a community development approach. Seven initiatives will be funded over a three-year period. Each initiative will receive annual funding over a period of three years to set up, manage and sustain a project. Funding will be up to a maximum of €75,000 (£60,000) provided on an incremental basis over the three year period.

##### Nutrition Exchange Programme

The Nutrition Exchange Programme (NEP) aims to support collaborations and communication within the nutrition field on the island-of-Ireland. It was piloted from May 2006-May 2007. The programme has been running in its current format since September 2007. A review of the programme in

2008 highlighted increased participation rates especially from Northern Ireland. The programme will be evaluated in 2010.

##### Irish Section meeting of the Nutrition Society

**safefood** sponsored and hosted a communications workshop at the Nutrition Society Irish Section summer meeting at University College Dublin. Over 100 delegates attended the workshop entitled 'Communication Nutrition Research – Practical advice for everyday life'. Speakers at the workshop included Dr. Clíodhna Foley-Nolan, Prof. Pat Wall, Irish Times journalist Paul Cullen and web commentator Richard Delevan. The event was chaired by RTE presenter Keelin Shanley.

##### Antimicrobial Resistance – Food Related

**safefood** is currently involved in several related projects on this important issue. The **safefood** Scientific Advisory group is well advanced in the preparation of a paper on this and a conference is planned for 2009 to highlight the problem. We are also working with the ROI National Zoonoses Group to investigate data gaps in the collation of antimicrobial resistance data related to food animals

##### Drinks

Nutrition surveillance has indicated that many children and teenagers are consuming sugar sweetened beverages. **safefood** have commissioned some qualitative research to identify knowledge and practice in relation to drinks for children and young people aged 12-18 years within the context of their everyday lives. Focus groups will be conducted with parents and guardians and with teenagers. The findings of the research will be used to ensure that communications and practical advice are as relevant as possible to parents/guardians and teenagers.

##### Sports Leaflet

**safefood** are supporting the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute in reprinting the Food for Sport booklet for adults. Supplement use and healthy eating are important issues among teenagers. To address **safefood** and INDI will amend the Food for Sport booklet to target teenagers. The leaflet will be piloted among teenagers and a dissemination plan will be put in place.

##### Salt

**safefood** participated in the Department of Health and Children (DOHC) Salt Workshop in September 2008. There is an EU Common Framework for Salt Reduction which involves a two strand approach (1) reduction of salt in processed foods and (2) promotion of reducing salt among EU populations. The DOHC brought a range of stakeholders in ROI to discuss an action plan for moving forward.

# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

The communication of our key messages is built upon sound scientific advice.

## CAMPAIGNS

### Little Steps

Described as a “one of the most serious public health challenges” by the World Health Organization (WHO), the problem of obesity is considered to be at epidemic proportions among adults and children across the island of Ireland, growing at a rate of 1% every year.

**safefood**, the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) came together in a partnership approach with one common purpose - to provide one voice and a clear message to the public on the issue of obesity. In June a major 3 year campaign was launched aimed at tackling this serious problem across the island of Ireland. Branded, ‘Little Steps’, the campaign is a major awareness initiative involving television, radio advertising and digital activity designed to empower parents or guardians of young children, by showing that small changes to physical activity and food habits will have a big impact on health.

The campaign was launched in the Republic of Ireland by Minister Mary Wallace TD, Minister for Health Promotion and Food Safety and in Northern Ireland by Andrew Elliott, Director of the Population Health Directorate, Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPSNI). A stakeholder event was held in both jurisdictions and media were invited to both events.

The advertising ran twice during the year, in the month of June and again in September. A piece of benchmarking quantitative research was conducted in advance of the campaign launch and the campaign was evaluated at the end of the second phase of activity using the same

questions. Both pieces were conducted by Millward Brown IMS. The TV ad scored very well among its target audience in both ROI and NI – particularly in terms of enjoyment, believability and relevance. When comparing the post-campaign results to the pre-campaign benchmark study, much behaviour shifted in a positive direction. These results included:

- a claimed increase in child’s time spent doing physical activity (+5%);
- a greater likelihood among those who had seen the campaign to have introduced dietary changes or to be currently avoiding ‘bad’ foods (+16%)
- a stronger conviction that parents’ own eating habits and activity levels ‘definitely impact’ those of their children (+7%).

### Speak Out

Food safety is a right, not a privilege and consumers should not settle for anything other than the highest standards. This is the philosophy of the ‘Speak out’ campaign which continued during 2008.

Phase two of the ‘Speak Out’ public awareness campaign ran during March for two weeks. With more and more food consumed outside the home and research showing that 61% of people purchase lunch outside the home, this phase of the campaign was aimed at the deli/sandwich bars lunchtime businesses. Similar to the first phase of the campaign, it aimed to empower consumers to speak out if they are not satisfied with food hygiene encountered in food businesses. Consumers were encouraged to let the business operators know when the cleanliness and hygiene of their catering establishment was not up to scratch. The

advertising included radio and outdoor advertising comprising bus sides, posters and commuter cards.

Phase three of the 'Speak Out' campaign was directed at the restaurant/café sector. The campaign message was 'Don't just think it, say it' and featured a poster in Northern Ireland and two radio advertisements for the island of Ireland. It ran over a four week period in October and was further supported by consumer public relations.

A direct marketing aspect of this campaign involved a two pronged approach. As well as encouraging consumers to speak out restaurants were provided with guidance on how to deal with issues raised by consumers. The materials were developed in conjunction with the Excellent Ireland Quality Association (EIQA). During this development there was close communication with the Northern Ireland Hotel Federation, the Restaurant Association of Ireland and the Irish Hotels Federation. The elements for the industry included a Customer Charter on the standards to be expected by customers, a booklet, staff poster, stickers and a brochure. Included also in this pack is material to educate members of the public on the standards to be expected in restaurants and guidance on how to raise concerns to business operators when standards are not met.

3,500 copies of the initial element of Speak Out were distributed to hotels and restaurants throughout the island with a further 1000 directly to the Irish Hotel Federation's own database.

### Weigh2live

Research shows that people want to achieve a healthy weight, but quick-fix fad diets are well recognised as ineffective, with many people 'yo-yo' dieting and ending up regaining the weight they lost or even becoming heavier. Small, gradual changes to eating habits and activity levels are the most realistic and achievable way to lose weight. A new online resource which helps people to lose weight in a healthy way was developed by **safefood** and the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute (INDI). The website [www.weigh2live.eu](http://www.weigh2live.eu), was launched in May. The launch coincided with the release of the results of the National Survey of Lifestyle, Attitudes and Nutrition (SLAN survey) published in the same week which showed that 2 out of every 3 adults on the island of Ireland are overweight or obese. The website includes a food diary, interactive BMI calculator and waist circumference assessment as well as tips and advice on healthy eating, eating out, food shopping, understanding food portions, and healthy recipes.

### Cooking at Christmas

Christmas dinner is an important occasion in the annual food safety calendar, with turkey often only cooked once a year, taking centre stage on the day. Our latest research has

revealed that while 80% of consumers buy a turkey to cook at Christmas, just 28% use a time calculation based on the weight of the turkey to estimate the cooking time. This year unique research was conducted on the optimum cooking times for turkeys to help to ease the stress of preparing a turkey dinner, ensuring the meal is memorable for all the right reasons.

**safefood** teamed up with Award winning chef, Neven Maguire to launch new turkey cooking guidelines for electric, fan assisted ovens. The campaign was supported by a radio advertisement, an SMS mechanic, a direct marketing programme to butchers distributing over 130,000 Christmas cooking leaflets and an online presence including a competition, banner advertisements and Google optimization. In addition to this, SuperValu in Northern Ireland distributed the leaflets throughout their 43 stores.

## CONSUMER INFORMATION

### Guidelines for preparing babies bottles

In partnership with the Health Service Executive (HSE) **safefood** launched a new publication on how to prepare a baby's bottle feed safely. As powdered infant formula is not a sterile product, it has the potential to cause illness if not prepared properly. In rare circumstances, certain harmful bacteria such as *E.sakazakii* have been associated with it. However water with a temperature above 70°C will kill *E.sakazakii* and any other bacteria that may be present. Titled 'How to prepare your baby's bottle feed', the resource consists of a booklet and practical 10-step poster. The resource was made available to public health nurses, dietitians working with infants and those working at pre-schools through **safefood** and the HSE.

### Supplementary advice

With research revealing that one in four adults on the island of Ireland are taking food supplements, **safefood** in collaboration with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland launched a new guide to food supplements. Titled 'Thinking of Taking Food Supplements?' the leaflet is an informative guide to what food supplements are and what they do. The emphasis of the information from the three agencies is that nutritional supplements should not be used as a replacement for a healthy balanced diet, which can provide all the vitamins, minerals and other natural ingredients beneficial to our health.

### Listeria

The Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) contacted **safefood** about an increase in pregnancy associated *Listeria* cases which primarily affected women who have recently entered Ireland from Eastern Europe, Asia and sub Saharan Africa. The two agencies co-operated to produce information leaflets urging pregnant women to be extra vigilant when consuming certain types of food and issued



advice on how to avoid the risk of listeriosis during pregnancy. The resource, 'Listeria and Pregnancy' was produced in a number of different languages including Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian, Slovak, Chinese and Arabic.

#### Consumer Focused Reviews – Beef, Dairy and Pork

The objective of the consumer focused reviews, in broad terms, is to report on specific food chains and their impact on human health and issues of consumer concern. This year 3 more reviews were launched:

##### Beef

The review of the beef food chain launched in March revealed an imbalance in consumption by men and women across the island, specifically that men are eating too much beef and that women are eating too little. The review also highlighted that consumers have enhanced confidence in the beef food chain on the island and the industry enforcement controls that are in place.

##### Milk

The review of the milk supply chain launched in April revealed that young women and teenage girls should increase their consumption of milk to improve their calcium intake. The review undertaken also highlighted that consumers have few concerns with regard to the safety of milk and the industry enforcement controls that are in place.

##### Pork

The review of the pork food chain launched in November revealed that children need to increase their consumption of lean, fresh pork, as currently too much of their pork intake is from processed varieties. The review which was undertaken before the dioxin crisis with pork found that consumers had few concerns about the safety of pork and the industry enforcement controls that are in place.

#### EVENTS

##### Balmoral – Dancing in the aisles

**safefood** and the Food Standards Agency stand at the Balmoral show once again had visitors dancing in the aisles. 'Strictly Yum Dancing' - the energetic and fun initiative was a great platform for showcasing healthy eating and food hygiene messages in a novel and fun way. This innovative stand features Boogy-ing Burgers and Salsa-ing Tomatoes performing a healthy eating dance show. Interactive quizzes, videos and prizes also kept the audience entertained. Although it was the second year using this concept it continued to prove a very popular draw and the stand was awarded the prize 'Best Indoor Stand'.

##### National Food Safety Week – Risky Shopping

The Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland and **safefood** in conjunction with the environmental health service communicated two simple messages to shoppers during this year's National Food Safety Week after a survey revealed that a quarter (24%) of people in Northern Ireland risk food poisoning when doing their grocery shopping. The messages delivered were pack raw foods separately and, try to get home as soon as possible after food shopping to get chilled and frozen foods back into the fridge or freezer. This year the agencies also joined with the Musgrave Group as a retail partner. The event distributed 22,000 co-branded, long-life shopping bags in 26 SuperValu stores across Northern Ireland (one in each District Council area). The shopping bags carried the dual campaign messages and were also supported by an in-store information leaflet and competition draw.

##### Economic Impact of Gastroenteritis Conference: Cost to economy €135 million

A report launched in April revealed the total burden of gastroenteritis on the economy for the island of Ireland is estimated at over €135 million per annum. The report commissioned by **safefood** and carried out by Trinity College Dublin and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine was launched at a conference in the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. This economic assessment enables a better understanding of the financial impact of the disease on the economy, which will help determine the measures necessary to assist in reducing the number of cases.

The **safefood** research revealed that social stresses which are part of daily life for many people from low socio-economic backgrounds are a major contributor to an unhealthy diet. The consequences of an unhealthy diet for longer term health include heart disease, diabetes, hypertension and some cancers. The findings provide current evidence of the food and nutrient inequalities among disadvantaged young urban women in particular, who were identified as being at particular risk of poverty and micronutrient inadequacy.

## EDUCATION

### Tastebuds

**safefood** and West Cork LEADER Co-operative launched 'Taste Buds', a new interactive education resource for eight to ten year olds in November. This teacher-led CD resource, launched by Minister Batt O'Keeffe, T.D. Minister of Education & Science, will teach children about the origins of their food and the importance of healthy eating and physical activity using five, fun animated characters.

'Taste Buds' was designed to support the Social Personal Health Education (SPHE) curriculum in Primary Schools. The combination of learning about healthy eating and food production will enable children to make healthier food choices. The Taste Buds resource consists of 8 different class sections, each one taking between 30 to 40 minutes to complete, with interactive sections and activity suggestions. Session topics include 'Finding Out About Food', 'Who Produces Our Food', 'Boosting Breakfast' and 'The Big Match'. Teachers' notes have also been developed to accompany the resource and include ideas for classroom discussions, along with games and quiz suggestions. Details of the resource was sent to all primary schools in the Republic of Ireland and over 1200 schools ordered a copy of the resource. Work is currently underway to adapt this resource for use in Northern Ireland.



# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2008

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# FOREWORD TO THE ACCOUNTS

## 1. FORMAT

These Accounts are prepared in a form directed by the Department of Health and Children and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, with the approval of the Department of Finance and the Department of Finance and Personnel, and in accordance with the financial arrangements of Part 7 of Annex 2 to the British-Irish Agreement.

## 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.

## 3. 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 2008 were:

**Mr. John Dardis** (Chairperson)

**Mr. Campbell Tweedie** (Vice-Chairperson)

**Mr. Ken Baird**

**Ms Lynn Ni Bhaoigheallain**

**Mr. Joe Byrne**

**Mr. Brian Cunningham**

**Ms. Aoife Healy**

**Ms. Susan Heraghty**

**Mr. Neven Maguire**

**Mr. Seamus Sheridan**

**Mr. Con Traas**

**Ms. Jane Wells**

The Scientific Advisory Committee comprises 18 members drawn from a pool of Scientific and Technical expertise available in both jurisdictions and advises on scientific and technical matters. The members are detailed in the accompanying Annual Report.

## 4. FINANCIAL RESULTS

The results of the Food Safety Promotion Board are set out in detail on page 27. The surplus for the period was €540,499 (GBP430,345).

## 5. POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

Please see Note 16 on Notes to accounts (page 37).

## 6. CHARITABLE DONATIONS

No charitable donations were received or made during the year.

## 7. POLICIES

### Disabled Employees

No disabled persons were employed during the year. However, the Board is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and welcomes applications from suitably qualified applicants irrespective of disability. A disability action plan was developed in 2007 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 June 2003 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 2008 as a mechanism for consultation with employees and has proved highly effective as a means of employee communications.

### Prompt Payment Policy and its performance

The Board operates a creditor payment policy in accordance with the provisions of the Prompt Payment Account Act 1997 and with the EU Directive 2002/35/EC on Late Payment.

### 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 2008-2010 was approved by the North / South Ministerial Council (NSMC).

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.

Budgeted Expenditure for 2009 is €10,000,000 (GBP7,800,000).

# STATEMENT OF FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION BOARD'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Department of Health and Children and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety have directed the Food Safety Promotion Board to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year 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 accrual 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, total recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts the Body is required to:

- Observe the accounts direction issued by the Department of Health and Children and Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 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.

# STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL

## 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 Government Accounting Northern Ireland 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, Social Services, and Public Safety (North) and Department of Health and Children (South)). In addition, as Chief Accounting 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 2008 and up to the date of approval of the Annual Report and Accounts, and accords with 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; and
- The preparation of regular financial reports as a basis for reviewing and monitoring progress.

In 2008, the review of the risk and control framework was aided by the comments of both the Internal and External Auditors and the Advisory Board Audit Committee.



# STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL

## CONTINUED

### 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 within the department 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.

In 2008, the following activities supported the effectiveness review:

- The Internal Auditor reported to the Advisory Board Audit Committee on the overall control environment, particularly project management.
- The Annual Budget, approved by the Sponsoring Departments, was reviewed monthly by the Senior Management Team, particularly the variances from planned activity.
- The risk register and risk-assessment matrix is under continuing review.



**Martin Higgins**  
Chief Executive Officer  
11 November 2009

# THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLERS AND AUDITORS GENERAL

## TO THE HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS AND THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

We have audited the accounts of the Food Safety Promotion Board for the year ended 31 December 2008 pursuant to the provisions of the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999 and the North South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 which require us to audit and certify, in co-operation, the accounts presented to us by the Board.

The accounts, which have been prepared under the accounting policies set out therein, comprise the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and the related notes.

### **RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND THE AUDITORS**

The responsibilities of the Board and the Chief Executive, including those pertaining to the preparation of the accounts in accordance with applicable law and the regularity of financial transactions are set out in the Statement of Responsibilities.

It is our responsibility to audit the accounts in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report our opinion as to whether the accounts give a true and fair view, and have been properly prepared, in accordance with the accounts direction issued under

governing legislation. We also report our opinion as to whether in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied for the purposes intended by Dáil Éireann and the Northern Ireland Assembly and whether the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them; and whether the proper accounting records have been kept by the Board. In addition, we state whether we have obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit and whether the accounts are in agreement with the accounting records.

We review whether the Statement on Internal Control reflects the Board's compliance with applicable guidance on corporate governance and report any material instance where it does not do so, or if the statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information we are aware of from our audit of the accounts. We are not required to consider whether the Statement on Internal Control covers all financial risks and controls, or to form an opinion on the effectiveness of the risk and control procedures.

We also report if, in our opinion, the Foreword to the accounts is not consistent with the accounts.

# THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLERS AND AUDITORS GENERAL

## CONTINUED

### BASIS OF AUDIT OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in the accounts. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the Chief Executive in the preparation of the accounts, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Board's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations that we considered necessary to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the accounts are free from material misstatement, whether caused by error, or by fraud or other irregularity and that, in all material respects, the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Dáil Éireann and the Northern Ireland Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. In forming our opinion we have also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the accounts.

### OTHER MATTERS

Without qualifying our opinion which is set out below, we draw attention to:

- Note 17 to the financial statements which discloses the circumstance in which €465,902 (£418,729) was spent on a research project which was subsequently terminated.
- The fact that the basis of accounting for pension costs that will be ultimately borne by the Irish Exchequer, and which is disclosed in accounting policy 1.5, does not comply with financial Reporting Standard 17.

### OPINION

In our opinion

- the accounts, which have been properly prepared in accordance with the accounts direction issued under the governing legislation, give a true and fair view, in accordance with that direction, of the State of the Board's affairs at 31 December 2008 and of its surplus for the year then ended
- in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Dáil Éireann and the Northern Ireland Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

We have obtained all the information and explanations that we consider necessary for the purpose of our audit. In our opinion proper accounting records have been kept by the Board. The accounts are in agreement with the accounting records.



**John Buckley**  
Irish Comptroller and Auditor General  
Dublin Castle  
Dublin 2  
Ireland  
19 Novemeber 2009



**Kieran Donnelly**  
Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland  
106 University Street  
Belfast  
BT7 1EU  
19 Novemeber 2009

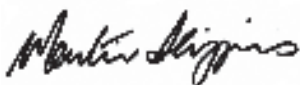
# INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2008

	Notes	2008 €	2007 €	2008 GBP	2007 GBP
<b>INCOME</b>					
Revenue Grant from Departments	2	9,295,295	9,108,593	7,400,914	6,233,010
Capital Grant Release	9a	326,908	286,042	260,284	195,739
		<b>9,622,203</b>	<b>9,394,635</b>	<b>7,661,198</b>	<b>6,428,749</b>
Other Income		1,494	1,802	1,190	1,233
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>9,623,697</b>	<b>9,396,437</b>	<b>7,662,388</b>	<b>6,429,982</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Staff Costs	3	2,205,178	2,065,263	1,755,763	1,413,259
Board Fees		109,696	73,050	87,340	49,988
Depreciation	6	326,908	286,042	260,284	195,739
Research Programme Expenditure	5	1,057,166	1,987,311	841,716	1,359,917
Food Promotion Campaigns	12	2,752,518	2,997,742	2,191,555	2,051,355
Other Operating Costs	4	2,631,732	2,511,296	2,095,385	1,718,480
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>9,083,198</b>	<b>9,920,704</b>	<b>7,232,043</b>	<b>6,788,738</b>
<b>SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>540,499</b>	<b>(524,267)</b>	<b>430,345</b>	<b>(358,756)</b>
<b>Amount transferred to General Reserve</b>	13	<b>540,499</b>	<b>(524,267)</b>	<b>430,345</b>	<b>(358,756)</b>

All amounts above relate to continuing activities.

No Gains or Losses other than those noted have been incurred during the year.



**Martin Higgins**  
Chief Executive Officer  
11 November 2009

The notes on pages 30 to 37 form part of these accounts

# BALANCE SHEET

## AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2008

	Notes	2008 €	2007 €	2008 GBP	2007 GBP
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>					
Tangible Assets	6	1,659,887	1,671,457	1,581,042	1,225,763
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
	7	578,919	414,375	551,421	303,882
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>					
Creditors- amount falling due within one year	8	(616,058)	(957,408)	(586,795)	(702,115)
<b>NET CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>(37,139)</b>	<b>(543,033)</b>	<b>(35,374)</b>	<b>(398,233)</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>					
		<b>1,622,748</b>	<b>1,128,424</b>	<b>1,545,668</b>	<b>827,530</b>
<b>FINANCED BY:</b>					
<b>Capital &amp; Reserves</b>					
General Reserve	13	(37,139)	(577,638)	(35,374)	(423,611)
Capital Grant Reserve	9(A)	1,659,887	1,671,457	1,581,042	1,225,763
Capital Grant Account	9(B)	0	34,605	0	25,378
		<b>1,622,748</b>	<b>1,128,424</b>	<b>1,545,668</b>	<b>827,530</b>



**Martin Higgins**  
Chief Executive Officer  
11 November 2009

The notes on pages 30 to 37 form part of these accounts

# CASH FLOW STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2008

		2008	2007	2008	2007
	Notes	€	€	GBP	GBP
<b>NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW)</b>					
<b>FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	10	(38,953)	(172,805)	22,311	(101,411)
<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE &amp; FINANCIAL INVESTMENT</b>					
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets	6	(315,338)	(307,896)	(251,072)	(210,693)
<b>NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW) BEFORE FINANCING</b>		(354,291)	(480,701)	(228,761)	(312,104)
<b>FINANCING</b>					
Capital Funding Received		280,733	342,501	223,520	234,374
Reserve Funding		34,605		27,552	
<b>INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH/BANK BALANCES</b>	11	(38,953)	(138,200)	22,311	(77,730)



**Martin Higgins**  
Chief Executive Officer  
11 November 2009

The notes on pages 30 to 37 form part of these accounts

# 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 accrual basis and comply with the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, the Republic of Ireland Companies Acts 1963 to 2009, the accounting standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board (except in relation to accounting for pension costs) and accounting and disclosure requirements issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel and Department of Finance, insofar as those requirements are appropriate.

### 1.2 Income

Income represents revenue grants receivable from the Department of Health and Children and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

### 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 or revalued amounts of fixed assets 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
• LIMS Capital Project	33.3% 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 (GBP423).

### 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 Pension Costs

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. The Scheme is administered by an external administrator. Funding from the Irish Exchequer is provided by the Department of Health and Children to the Body which then funds the administrator. The Northern Ireland share of the benefits paid during the year is directly funded to the administrator by the UK Exchequer.

The Northern Ireland element of the costs (ASLCs) is accounted for as if the scheme were a defined contribution scheme, i.e. the Body recognises only the employer's contributions in respect of the Northern element of the costs as an expense of the period. It also recognises a corresponding amount as income, representing the value of the resources that the UK Exchequer will make available to the administrator. In respect of the element of pension costs ultimately borne by the Irish Exchequer, the Finance Departments (North and South) have directed that the only cost recognised in the accounts up to 31 December 2008 will be the cost of the pensions paid to the extent that the cost is ultimately borne by the Irish Exchequer.

Seconded from other Public Sector organisations continue to be members of the pension schemes of those organisations. The Food Safety Promotion Board pays the pension costs as charged by these organisations.

#### 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. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in other currencies are translated into Euro at the rates of exchange prevailing at balance sheet date (closing rate). 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 while the Balance Sheet is translated using the closing exchange rate. 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(a)), Capital Grant Account (Note 9(b)) and General Reserve (Note 13).



## 2. GRANTS FROM THE DEPARTMENTS

Financial Period 1st January, 2008 to 31st December, 2008

	Note	DOHC €	DOHC GBP	DHSSPS €	DHSSPS GBP	TOTAL €	TOTAL GBP
Revenue Grant		6,924,349	5,513,167	2,370,946	1,887,747	9,295,295	7,400,914
Capital Account	9(B)	211,307	168,243	69,426	55,277	280,733	223,520
		7,135,656	5,681,410	2,440,372	1,943,024	9,576,028	7,624,434

Financial Period 1st January 2007 to 31st. December, 2007

	Note	DOHC €	DOHC GBP	DHSSPS €	DHSSPS GBP	TOTAL €	TOTAL GBP
Revenue Grant		6,406,236	4,383,787	2,702,357	1,849,223	9,108,593	6,233,010
Capital Account	9(B)	243,764	166,808	98,737	67,566	342,501	234,374
		6,650,000	4,550,595	2,801,094	1,916,789	9,451,094	6,467,384

The Food Safety Promotion Board receives grants from the Department of Health and Children (DOHC) and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS). The respective contributions are DOHC 75% (2007 70%), and DHSSPS 25% (2007 30%). The 2008 revenue grant includes notional income from DHSSPS of €95,927 (GBP76,377) in respect of Northern Ireland contributions to pension costs (ASLCs) (Note 1.5)

## 3. STAFF COSTS

A) The average weekly number of employees (full time equivalent) was:

	2008	2007
Directorates		
Senior Management	5	5
Corporate Operations	15	16
Food Science	4	4
Human Health & Nutrition	2	2
Marketing & Communications	6	8
	32	35

B) The costs incurred in respect of these employees were:

	2008 €	2007 €	2008 GBP	2007 GBP
Salary Costs	1,584,374	1,670,151	1,261,479	1,142,884
Employer PRSI	140,355	150,963	111,751	103,304
Seconded/Agency Staff	320,202	124,152	254,945	84,957
Pension Costs:				
Seconded Staff	11,848	12,511	9,433	8,561
Current Year ALSCs	95,927	107,486	76,377	73,553
Pensioner Payments	52,472	0	41,778	0
	2,205,178	2,065,263	1,755,763	1,413,259

C) 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:

	2008	2007
€40,001 – 50,000	5	9
€50,001 – 60,000	2	1
€60,001 – 70,000	5	5
€70,001 – 80,000	3	2
€80,001 – 90,000	3	1
€90,001 – 100,000	0	0
€100,001 – 110,000	0	1
€110,001 – 120,000	0	0
€120,001 – 130,000	1	1

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

	Emoluments €'000	Emoluments GBP'000	Real Increase in Pension Earned €'000	Real Increase in Pension Earned GBP'000	Value of Accrued Pension at year-end €'000	Value of Accrued Pension at year-end GBP	Age (years)
Mr M Higgins (CEO)	120 - 130	96 - 104	49	39	58	46	53

Mr Ray Dolan (Director, Corporate Operations), Dr. Cliodhna Foley-Nolan (Director, Human Health and Nutrition) and Ms Fiona Gilligan (Director, Marketing and Communications) withheld consent to disclose the above information. Dr. Thomas Quigley retired on 15th October 2008.

E) The following information is provided in respect of the Advisory Board Members:

	Emoluments €'000	Emoluments GBP'000
John Dardis	10-15	5-10
Campbell Tweedie	5-10	5-10
Ken Baird	5-10	5-10
Lynn Ni Bhaoigheallain	5-10	5-10
Joe Byrne	5-10	5-10
Brian Cunningham	5-10	5-10
Aoife Healy	5-10	5-10
Susan Heraghty	5-10	5-10
Neven Maguire	5-10	5-10
Seamus Sheridan	5-10	5-10
Con Traas	5-10	5-10
Jane Wells	5-10	5-10

F) No Benefits in Kind were provided to Senior Management or Advisory Board Members.

**4. OTHER OPERATING COSTS**

	2008	2007	2008	2007
	€	€	GBP	GBP
Rent & Electricity	624,428	620,111	497,169	424,342
Consultancy Fees	73,053	98,370	58,165	67,315
Printing, Reports & Literature	266,822	357,926	212,444	244,928
Travel & Subsistence	258,517	292,694	205,831	200,291
Computer Support	225,713	225,696	179,713	154,444
Telephone	95,002	105,092	75,641	71,914
Postage & Stationery	46,504	44,238	37,026	30,272
Meeting Costs	15,978	9,885	12,722	6,764
Office Expenses	144,082	103,618	114,718	70,906
Recruitment Expenses	62,894	56,968	50,076	38,983
Equality & Disability Schemes	3,643	13,020	2,900	8,910
Conference	62,261	48,044	49,572	32,877
Training	56,766	106,148	45,197	72,637
Insurance	29,824	29,362	23,746	20,092
Subscriptions	22,314	17,274	17,766	11,821
Auditors' Remuneration	20,500	20,500	16,322	14,028
Legal & Professional Fees	147,611	189,902	117,528	129,950
Courses Delivered	159,594	52,337	127,069	35,814
Cleaning & Catering	41,974	37,322	33,420	25,539
Maintenance & Repairs	63,407	81,268	50,485	55,612
Bank Charges	1,633	1,521	1,300	1,041
Fellowships	166,433	0	132,514	0
Community Food Initiative	42,779	0	34,061	0
	2,631,732	2,511,296	2,095,385	1,718,480

**5. RESEARCH PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE**

	2008	2007	2008	2007
	€	€	GBP	GBP
Chemistry & Toxicology	150,873	123,496	120,125	84,508
Food Science	206,425	41,021	164,356	28,071
Human Health & Nutrition	481,517	1,804,495	383,384	1,234,816
Microbiology & Surveillance	218,351	18,299	173,851	12,522
	1,057,166	1,987,311	841,716	1,359,917

## 6. FIXED ASSETS

	Office Equipment	Property & Fitout Cost	Fixtures & Fittings	Computer Equipment & Software	LIMS Capital Project	Total
	€	€	€	€	€	€
<b>COST OR VALUATION</b>						
At 1st January 2008	434,129	1,824,751	192,429	1,151,984	208,897	3,812,190
Additions	0	0	13,951	80,963	220,424	315,338
Disposals	0	0	0	125,133	0	125,133
At 31st December 2008	434,129	1,824,751	206,380	1,107,814	429,321	4,002,395
<b>DEPRECIATION</b>						
At 1st January 2008	426,995	462,428	119,601	1,062,077	69,632	2,140,733
Provision for the year	3,826	71,270	20,638	88,067	143,107	326,908
Disposals	0	0	0	125,133	0	125,133
At 31st December 2008	430,821	533,698	140,239	1,025,011	212,739	2,342,508
<b>NBV AT 31ST DECEMBER 2008</b>	3,308	1,291,053	66,141	82,803	216,582	1,659,887
<b>NBV AT 31ST DECEMBER 2007</b>	7,134	1,362,323	72,828	89,907	139,265	1,671,457
	GBP	GBP	GBP	GBP	GBP	GBP
<b>NBV AT 31ST DECEMBER 2008</b>	3,151	1,229,728	62,999	78,870	206,294	1,581,042
<b>NBV AT 31ST DECEMBER 2007</b>	5,232	999,060	53,408	65,933	102,130	1,225,763

## 7. CURRENT ASSETS

	2008	2007	2008	2007
	€	€	GBP	GBP
Debtors	185,815	76,634	176,989	56,200
Prepayments & Accrued Income	160,946	66,630	153,302	48,863
Cash at bank and in hand	232,158	271,111	221,130	198,819
	578,919	414,375	551,421	303,882

## 8. CREDITORS (AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR)

	2008	2007	2008	2007
	€	€	GBP	GBP
Creditors & Accruals	616,058	906,292	586,795	664,629
Research Contracts	0	51,116	0	37,486
	616,058	957,408	586,795	702,115

## 9.

## A) CAPITAL GRANT RESERVE

	2008	2007	2008	2007
	€	€	GBP	GBP
Opening Balance	1,671,457	1,649,603	1,225,763	1,107,708
Capital Additions	315,338	307,896	251,072	210,693
Less amount released to I&E A/C	(326,908)	(286,042)	(260,824)	(195,739)
Disposals – Cost	(125,133)	0	(99,631)	0
Disposals - Depreciation	125,133	0	99,631	0
Currency Translation Adjustment			365,031	103,101
Balance at 31 December 2008	1,659,887	1,671,457	1,581,042	1,225,763

## B) CAPITAL GRANT ACCOUNT

	2008	2007	2008	2007
	€	€	GBP	GBP
Opening Balance	34,605		25,378	
Capital Funding Receivable	280,733	342,501	223,520	234,374
Capital Grant Reserve	(315,338)	(307,896)	(251,072)	(210,693)
Currency Translation Adjustment			2,174	1,697
Balance at 31 December 2008	0	34,605	0	25,378

The currency translation adjustment reflects the amount of the movement in the value of fixed assets/funding balance which is attributable to the change in exchange rates over the year

## 10. NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW) FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2008	2007	2008	2007
	€	€	GBP	GBP
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period	540,499	(524,267)	430,345	(358,756)
Transfer from Capital Grant Reserve	292,303	286,042	232,732	195,739
Depreciation Charges	(326,908)	(286,042)	(260,284)	(195,739)
(Increase)/Decrease in Debtors	(203,497)	(74,622)	(225,228)	(58,970)
Increase/(Decrease) in Creditors	(341,350)	426,084	(115,320)	345,331
Currency Translation Adjustment			(39,934)	(29,016)
	(38,953)	(172,805)	22,311	(101,411)

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 01.01.08	Cashflow	At 31.12.08
	€	€	€
Euro Account	219,237	2,165	221,402
Sterling Account	54,483	(48,933)	5,550
Deposit Account	4,940	3,839	8,779
Petty Cash	254	13	267
Credit Cards	(7,803)	3,963	(3,840)
	271,111	(38,953)	232,158

## 12. FOOD PROMOTION CAMPAIGNS

	2008	2007	2008	2007
	€	€	GBP	GBP
Media Costs	1,991,905	2,218,458	1,585,955	1,518,091
Marketing Costs	318,445	397,434	253,546	271,964
Events	106,797	85,496	85,032	58,505
Publications	106,462	145,956	84,765	99,878
Project & Conference Sponsorship	128,882	78,646	102,616	53,817
Educational Development	68,072	50,164	54,199	34,327
Helpline Activities	31,955	21,588	25,442	14,773
	2,752,518	2,997,742	2,191,555	2,051,355

## 13. GENERAL RESERVE

	2008	2007	2008	2007
	€	€	GBP	GBP
Opening Balance	(577,638)	(53,371)	(423,611)	(35,839)
Surplus/(Deficit)	540,499	(524,267)	430,345	(358,756)
Currency Translation Adjustment			(42,108)	(29,016)
Balance at 31 December 2008	(37,139)	(577,638)	(35,374)	(423,611)

## 14. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The Food Safety Promotion Board is a cross border implementation body sponsored by DOHC and DHSSPS 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.

## 15. FUTURE CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The Food Safety Promotion Board has no additional capital expenditure, which should be disclosed in the Financial Statements at 31 December 2008.

## 16. POST BALANCE SHEET EVENT

A thirty-month research contract to study the burden of Infectious Intestinal Disease on the Island of Ireland population in November, 2007 was terminated by The Food Safety Promotion Board on 9th January, 2009. Accordingly, €967,156 (GBP 869,231) was returned to the Board in April, 2009 and this will be offset against Revenue Grants from Departments in 2009 (see Note 17).

## 17. INFECTIOUS INTESTINAL DISEASE RESEARCH CONTRACT

In November 2007, **safefood** entered into a contract to measure and report on the burden and causes of Infectious Intestinal Disease (IID) presenting to General Practitioners in the population on the island of Ireland. The project scope included a detailed clinical analysis of cases presenting to GPs on the island using the most advanced analysis methodology available.

In January 2009, the project was terminated owing to data comparability complexities arising between the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and Northern Ireland (NI) data, which developed as the contract progressed. Accordingly, the project would not be able to deliver in full the planned outcomes. As per contract, unspent funding €967,156 (GBP869, 231) was returned to the Board in April 2009 (see Note 16).

The remaining expenditures of €465,902 (GBP418, 729) were spent on project start-up and training at GP practices. The initiative provides ongoing benefits for primary care management independent of the IID research contract.

# ACCOUNTS DIRECTION

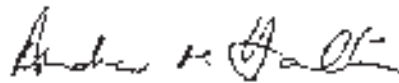
## FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION BOARD

Accounts direction given by the Northern Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and The Southern Department of Health and Children, 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 period 2 December 1999 to 31 December 2000 and subsequent financial years in accordance with

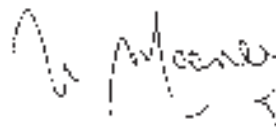
- a. The North/South Implementation Bodies Annual Reports and Accounts Guidance;
- b. other guidance which Finance Departments may issue from time to time in respect of accounts which are required to give a true and fair view;
- c. any other specific disclosures required by sponsoring Departments;

except where agreed otherwise with Finance Departments, in which case the exception shall be described in the notes to the accounts.



**Andrew M Hamilton**

Signed by the Authority of the Department of Health,  
Social Services and Public Safety  
18 June 09



**Tom Mooney**

Department of Health and Children  
18 June 09

*safefood*  
**FOOD SAFETY  
PROMOTION  
BOARD**

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