

Benefits and implications of NBT's

Helen Munday

Chief Scientific Officer

Food and Drink Federation

FDF's Food Safety and Science Objectives

- Maintain confidence in the food supply chain.
- Influence, to the mutual benefit of consumers and industry, the regulatory and policy environment in which the industry operates, ensuring that legislation and policy are proportionate and evidence-based.
- Enhance the industry's approach and response to scientific and regulatory issues by provision of timely information and advice to members.

Food and drink manufacture is 16% of the total manufacturing sector by turnover and employ around 400,000 people in the UK across 6,620 businesses

The supply is worth ~£90bn

Potential benefits

- Food security
 - Quicker response to invasion of pests
 - Better storage of crops and less waste
 - Increased robustness of the supply chain
 - Shorter time to see breeding improvements which consumers and industry could benefit from
- Reduced food prices
- Introduction of nutritionally beneficial varieties
- Improved functionality of raw materials
- Quicker progress in food and drink reformulation

Implications

- Current situation is one of great uncertainty
- Other countries are making progress in regulatory approval – therefore such products will enter the global supply chain
- But looking for speed may not give an evidence based decision
- A situation analogous to that of GM could occur
 - If considered as GM, they will be subject to mandatory traceability and labelling requirements.
 - A labelling obligation would lead to substantial additional costs even if there is little or no use of NBTs in crop production in the EU
 - Additional costs on segregation of crops
 - Traceability would most likely be by paper trail and burdensome
- Complications due to lack of detection techniques – you can not tell how a variety has been produced
- If GM legislation is applied this could lead to barriers of acceptance by consumers