

21 November, 2022

Re. Call for written evidence: Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill

Dear Sir or madam

The Institute of Food Science and Technology is the UK's leading professional body that aims to advance the application of food science and technology for the benefit, safety and health of the public, and support the development and maintenance of professional standards and science-based food standards that underpin the success of British food manufacturing, retail and regulation. As an independent, charitable body, we bring professional expertise from across academia, industry and the public sector, centered around the professional, sustainable advancement of the UK food system.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written evidence to the Public Bill Committee concerning the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill. Whilst it is unclear at this stage exactly which pieces of legislation relating to food will be most impacted, IFST would like to raise the following points and receive written assurance that these will be considered:

Timing: Considering the potential unforeseen consequences of any change to legislative procedure, IFST would like the committee to ensure that sufficient time is given to ensure that the appropriate government, non-government, industry and other concerned stakeholders are able to assess the impacts and can consult on each change to specific regulations. Additionally, the workload for government departments related to the Bill should be considered against known and ongoing priorities in determining any timeframe for revocation and reform.

Standards: It is critical that UK maintains its high standards for food safety and quality throughout any review of regulatory standards. The UK is rightly held as a leader in these areas, which should be seen as a competitive advantage, and not be compromised to expedite trade or with the sole aim of simplifying regulatory structures.

Harmonisation: UK food standards and food law should remain founded upon transparent and independent scientific advice to protect the health and interests of UK consumers as well as overseas consumers of UK produced food. Wherever possible these should be compatible with the need for international trade.

Scrutiny: The Bill provides delegated powers and removes and downgrades the existing forms of Parliamentary scrutiny relating to modification or revocation of law of EU origin. IFST would like to be assured that the appropriate level of review, impact assessment and scrutiny is in place to prevent unforeseen impacts of modification or revocation of these laws.

We would like to formally request that IFST are notified as specific pieces of legislation relating to food and food standards are being considered and to be involved in each consultation.

Best regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S French". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'S' being particularly large and stylized.

Stephen French, Ph.D

Scientific Policy Director, Institute of Food Science & Technology

