Public Health England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

Healthier, More Sustainable Catering

Information for commissioners

Includes useful information for organisations aiming to meet Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services

About Public Health England

Public Health England exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. We do this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. We are an executive agency of the Department of Health, and are a distinct delivery organisation with operational autonomy to advise and support government, local authorities and the NHS in a professionally independent manner.

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Published February 2017
PHE Publications gateway number: 2016220



Commissioning healthier and more sustainable catering

1. This guidance has been developed to help those involved in commissioning of food and catering services to ensure that the service provides both health and sustainability benefits. It will also help those who must meet or have chosen to meet Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering (GBSF) commission a service that meets these standards.

2. GBSF help organisations provide a healthier and more sustainable food service that ensures:

    - foods procured are served to higher nutritional standards
    - foods are produced to higher sustainability standards
    - procurement of catering operations meet higher sustainability standards eg through reducing food waste

3. Central government procurers directly or through their catering contractors are required to apply GBSF. Others are encouraged to follow it. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) 'A Plan for Public Procurement: Food and Catering' makes it easier for procurers and suppliers to meet and exceed the requirements of the GBSF. Key to this is the 'balanced scorecard for public procurement', a simple and visual tool underpinned by GBSF that can be used to procure food and catering services by setting technical specifications and evaluating bids, encouraging innovation and best practice beyond the GBSF via use of award criteria.

4. To ensure your potential providers recognise and address your requirements, your invitation to tender documents should contain a clear reference to those criteria you would wish them to meet. For organisations that must, or have chosen to, meet GBSF a clear reference to GBSF is essential and inclusion of the GBSF checklist in your tender documents would be important.

5. The invitation to tender should also clearly identify how you will performance manage these criteria and whether there are specific incentives to meeting higher standards. For example, CQUIN

(Commissioning for Quality and Innovation[1]) payments may be negotiable for NHS Trust provision where standards of provision are above the minimum required.

6. Experience shows that contracts may on occasion need updating to reflect changes in requirements for healthier and more sustainable provision. You should ensure you incorporate wording to reflect this requirement in your tender document and contracts.

Example wording to reflect need to update criteria for healthier and more sustainable catering

The [body/trust/local authority etc] will from time to time update the checklist in accordance with government updates to the GBSF and agree in writing with the supplier that the supplier can meet these additional requirements if any.

The [body/trust/local authority etc] will carry out an audit of the supplier from time to time [specify regularity] to ensure that GBSF and other aspects of this specification are applied appropriately as part of their supplier management.

7. The GBSF criteria highlighted in this document relate specifically to healthier, more sustainable food and drink. Other mandatory and best practice criteria relate to production, processing and distribution, animal welfare, the environment, variety and seasonality, resource efficiency, and socio-economic issues. These criteria should be specified in relevant tenders often commissioned by facilities or estates management.

8. The food table below provides information on what a service provider might offer to meet a healthier more sustainable provision. This is an extract from the Food Guidelines presented in Healthier and More Sustainable Catering - A toolkit for serving food to adults.

1 The CQUIN scheme is intended to deliver clinical quality improvements and drive transformational change. These will impact on reducing inequalities in access to services, the experiences of using them and the outcomes achieved. For further information see https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhs-standard-contract/cquin/

9. When commissioning food and catering services you should ensure those contracted to procure, prepare and serve food and drink are familiar with PHE's separate tools available for the purchasing and preparation of food. This will help ensure all contract specifications are met.

10. It is also important to consider how you might envisage monitoring of these aspects of the contract to be managed. For example, PHE's GBSF Checklist sets out both the mandatory and best practice GBSF criteria 'at a glance'.

Things to consider within your contract to help meet a healthier and more sustainable food service

Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates	
All foods in this category	Boiled starchy foods, eg rice, potatoes and pasta, and grains, must be cooked without added salt Meal deals should include a starchy carbohydrate, vegetables and one portion of fruit
Bread/ sandwiches	Consider setting proportions of products that contribute high amounts of salt to the diet for procurement at lower volumes To meet GBSF, at least 50% of breads and pre-packed sandwiches (procured by volume) must meet salt targets[2]
Cereals	Consider setting proportions of breakfast cereals that meet criteria for higher fibre and lower sugar and salt. To meet GBSF, at least 50% of breakfast cereals (procured by volume) must be higher in fibre (ie more than 6g/100g) and must not exceed 22.5g/100g total sugars. At least 50% must also meet salt targets[2]

Fruit and vegetables	
All foods in this category	Menus should be designed to reflect the natural growing or production period for the UK when using fresh produce, and in-season fresh produce should be highlighted on menus Meal deals should include a starchy carbohydrate, vegetables and 1 portion of fruit
Fruit	Set a proportion of desserts that should be fruit based. To meet GBSF, at least 50% of the volume of desserts available is based on fruit – which can be fresh, canned in fruit juice, dried or frozen Stipulate that a portion of fruit should be cheaper than a portion of hot or cold dessert
Vegetables	Vegetables must be cooked without added salt

[2] Salt targets to be met by 2017 were published in March 2014. GBSF criteria relate to the targets to be met by 2012. Where products meeting the 2017 targets are available these should be purchased in preference

Dairy and alternatives	
All foods in this category	Specify that, in line with the industry principles on country of origin information, food and catering service supplies shall indicate the origin of dairy products either on the menu or accompanying literature[3] At least 75% of ready meals must contain less than 6g saturated fat per portion
Milk	Consider setting proportions of products that contribute high amounts of saturated fat to the diet for procurement at lower volumes. To meet GBSF, at least 75% of milk is reduced fat
Cheese	Consider setting proportions of products that contribute high amounts of saturated fat to the diet for procurement at lower volumes. To meet GBSF, at least 50% of hard yellow cheese has a maximum total fat content of 25g/100g

Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins	
All foods in this category	Specify that, in line with the industry principles on country of origin information, food and catering service supplies shall indicate the origin of the meat and meat products either on the menu or accompanying literature[3]
Meat	Specify that all food served must be produced in a way that meets UK legislative standards for animal welfare, or equivalent standards[4] Consider setting proportions of products that contribute high amounts of salt to the diet for procurement at lower volumes. To meet GBSF, at least 50% of meat and meat products,

[3] http://www.fdf.org.uk/publicgeneral/principles_on_country_of_origin_information.pdf
If this is not practicable, then at minimum the information must be available and be provided on request to the procuring authority or end consumer

[4] Please refer to: https://www.gov.uk/animal-welfare
UK standards are generally similar to EU standards for food production. There are, however, differences in animal welfare standards for some aspects of pigmeat and broiler chicken production. Broiler chicken, pork and pork products must be compliant with UK standards, as set out in the Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2007 (as amended). If in any particular circumstances, this leads to a significant increase in costs which cannot reasonably be compensated for by savings elsewhere, the procuring authority shall agree with the catering contractor or supplier to depart from this requirement and the reasons for doing so shall be noted and recorded. This decision shall be signed off by the Head of Procurement or equivalent senior official of the government department or other public body. In such an eventuality, EU standards shall be met at minimum

	soups and cooking sauces, and ready meals (procured by volume) must meet salt targets[5] and all stock preparations must be lower salt varieties (ie below 0.6g/100ml) Consider setting proportions of products that contribute high amounts of saturated fat to the diet for procurement at lower volumes. To meet GBSF, meat and meat products must be lower in saturated fat where available and at least 75% of ready meals must contain less than 6g saturated fat per portion
Eggs	All eggs, including fresh in-shell, liquid and powdered eggs, should be sourced from systems that do not use conventional cages. If from a caged system, enriched cages must be used
Fish	All fish (including where it is an ingredient in a composite product) are demonstrably sustainable with all wild-caught fish meeting the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (includes Marine Stewardship Council certification and Marine Conservation Society 'fish to eat', or equivalent). No 'red list' or endangered species of farmed or wild fish shall be used (Marine Conservation Society 'fish to avoid') If serving lunch and an evening meal, fish is provided twice a week, one of which is oily. If only serving lunch or an evening meal, an oily fish is available at least once every three weeks Consider setting proportions of products that contribute high amounts of salt to the diet for procurement at lower volumes. To meet GBSF, at least 50% of soups and cooking sauces, and ready meals (procured by volume) must meet salt targets[5] and all stock preparations must be lower salt varieties (ie below 0.6g/100ml)

[5] Salt targets to be met by 2017 were published in March 2014. GBSF criteria relate to the targets to be met by 2012. Where products meeting the 2017 targets are available these should be purchased in preference

Oils & Spreads	
Oils and spreads	Consider setting proportions of products that contribute high amounts of saturated fat to the diet for procurement at lower volumes. To meet GBSF, at least 75% of oils and spreads are based on unsaturated fats From the end of 2015 all palm oil (including palm kernel oil and products derived from palm oil) used for cooking and as an ingredient in food must be sustainably produced[6]

Foods high in fat, salt and sugars	
Snacks	Consider setting proportions of products that contribute high amounts of saturated fat to the diet for procurement at lower volumes. To meet GBSF: • biscuits, cakes and pastries (procured by volume) are lower in saturated fat where available Consider setting limits on the size of savoury snacks, confectionery and packet sweet snacks. To meet best practice elements of GBSF: • savoury snacks should only be available in packet sizes of 30g or less • confectionery and packet sweet snacks should only be in the smallest standard single serve portion size available within the market and not to exceed 250kcal
Sugary drinks	Consider setting limits on the size of sugar sweetened beverages. To meet best practice elements of GBSF: • all sugar sweetened beverages to be no more than 330ml pack size and no more than 20% of beverages (procured by volume) may be sugar sweetened. No less than 80% of beverages (procured by volume) may be low calorie/no added sugar beverages (including fruit juice and water)

Non-food category specific criteria	
Table salt	Specify that salt should not be available on tables
Meal deals	Meal deals should include a starchy carbohydrate, vegetables and one portion of fruit
Ready meals	At least 75% of ready meals must contain less than 6g saturated fat per portion
Ethical trading	Consider purchasing fair trade tea and coffee. To meet GBSF at least 50% of tea and coffee is fairly traded. To meet best practice elements of GBSF:

[6] Support and advice on procuring sustainable palm oil is available from http://www.cpet.org.uk/ (email cpet@efeca.com, telephone 01305 236100)

	• all tea, coffee, cocoa and bananas are certified as fairly traded and dairy products meet the Voluntary Code of Practice on Best Practice on Contractual Relationships
Water	Tap water should be visible and freely available and such provision should be promoted Pre-bottled water (mineral or spring) should not be included in any hospitality menu
Menu analysis, calorie and allergen labelling	To help provide information to customers, menu cycles should be analysed to meet stated nutrient based standards relevant to the major population subgroup of the catering provision. This would also support action on monitoring of the contract This information would also allow menus (for food and beverages) to include calorie and allergen labelling. To meet best practice elements of GBSF both these criteria must be met
Production standards	Commissioners working for central government must specify that all food served must be produced in a way that meets UK legislative standards for food production, or equivalent standards[7]. See appendix 1 for a list of relevant legislation
Traceability of fresh, chilled and frozen produce	Specify that catering contractors or food suppliers are to ensure the traceability of fresh, chilled and frozen produce in accordance with current UK legislation or equivalent
Authenticity	Specify that the catering contractor or supplier must have systems in place to enable it to check and ensure authenticity of products

[7]GBSF notes that if in any particular circumstances, this leads to a significant increase in costs which cannot reasonably be compensated for by savings elsewhere, the procuring authority shall agree with the catering contractor or supplier to depart from this requirement and the reasons for doing so shall be noted and recorded. This decision shall be signed off by the Head of Procurement or equivalent senior official of the government department or other public body. Procurers or catering contractors must ensure that food is verifiable as meeting these standards by either checking that farm inspection systems meet UK standards of inspection or their equivalent, or if not, that they are subject to an independent assurance system

Higher environmental production standards	To meet mandatory elements of GBSF at least 10% of the total monetary value of primary commodity (ie raw ingredient) food and drink procured shall be inspected and certified to meet publicly available Integrated Production (IP) or Integrated Farm Management (IFM) standards, or publicly available organic standards. Such standards require systematic and integrated management of natural habitats, energy, water and waste, and management of soils, landscape and watercourses for example. To meet best practice criteria of GBSF at least 40% of the total monetary value of primary commodity (ie raw ingredient) food and drink procured shall be inspected and certified to publicly available Integrated Production standards or Integrated Farm Management standards, or publicly available organic standards

Further information

For more information on PHE's Healthier and More Sustainable Catering toolkits and tools see:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthier-and-more-sustainable-catering-a-toolkit-for-serving-food-to-adults

Appendix 1. Annexe to Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering

UK Standards of Production

If you are purchasing food from the UK or abroad you must ensure it is sourced from producers who adhere to the relevant UK or equivalent standards of production. The standards of production are contained in the legislative standards for cross-compliance as set out in Common Agriculture Policy legislation (Commission Regulation (EC) No 1122/2009 & 73/2009). The full set of cross-compliance rules for England can be found at http://rpa.defra.gov.uk/CrossCompliance2014.

Cross-compliance is the set of rules that serves as a baseline for all farmers in England applying for direct payments (such as the Basic Payment Scheme) and certain Rural Development payments. These rules cover the environment, animal, plant and public health, animal welfare and landscape features. They are split into two types; Statutory Management Requirements (SMRs) which reflect specific elements of EU legislation, and standards of Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC). SMR standards are the same in all EU member states; however, GAEC standards will have some variation.

You must therefore ensure that:

- if sourcing from the UK or an EU Member State, your producer must adhere to the relevant cross-compliance rules of the country of production
- if sourcing from a third country, your producer must adhere to all Statutory Management Requirements (SMRs) in cross-compliance, and all England Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) which are of relevance to the farming land and system in that country of production

You should note that:

- cross-compliance rules differ between UK devolved administrations and can be found on each administrations website
- cross-compliance rules will change from 1 January 2015 as the new CAP scheme comes into force (Commission Regulation (EC) No

1306/2013). Details of these changes will be published on Gov.uk in late 2014

Summary of cross-compliance GAECs and SMRs

Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions:

- GAEC 1 - Soil Protection Review (SPR)
- GAEC 5 - Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
- GAEC 6 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)
- GAEC 7 - Scheduled monuments
- GAEC 8 - Public rights of way
- GAEC 9 - Overgrazing and unsuitable supplementary feeding
- GAEC 10 - Heather and grass burning
- GAEC 11 - Control of weeds
- GAEC 12 - Agricultural land which is not in agricultural production
- GAEC 13 - Stone walls
- GAEC 14 - Protection of hedgerows and watercourses
- GAEC 15 - Hedgerows
- GAEC 16 - Felling of trees
- GAEC 17 - Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)
- GAEC 18 - Water abstraction
- GAEC 19 - No spread zones
- GAEC 20 - Groundwater

Statutory Management Requirements:

- SMR 1 - Wild birds
- SMR 3 - Sewage sludge
- SMR 4 - Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs)
- SMR 5 - Habitats and species
- SMR 6 - Pig identification and registration
- SMR 7 - Cattle identification and registration
- SMR 8 - Sheep and goats identification
- SMR 9 - Restrictions on the use of plant protection products (PPPs)
- SMR 10 - Restrictions on the use of substances having hormonal or thyrostatic action and beta-agonists in farm animals
- SMR 11 - Food and feed law
- SMR 12 - Prevention and control of transmissible spongiform
- encephalopathies (TSEs)
- SMRs 13, 14, 15 - Control of foot and mouth disease, certain animal diseases and bluetongue
- SMR 16 - Welfare of calves
- SMR 17 - Welfare of pigs
- SMR 18 - Animal welfare

Animal welfare

In most cases UK standards of production are the same as those required by the EU See https://www.gov.uk/animal-welfare. There are certain differences in production of meat chickens and of pigmeat, where the UK has more stringent standards:

- EU meat chickens can be stocked to a maximum of 42 kg per m^2 if conditions in Annex 5 of Directive 2007/43/EC are met, whereas England, Scotland and Wales have an absolute maximum of 39 kg per m^2
- close confinement stalls for breeding sows have been unilaterally banned in the UK since 1999, whereas the rest of the EU still permits sows to be kept confined individually for four weeks after service; Council Directive 2008/120/EC , which partially bans the use of sow stalls, came into force on 1 January 2013