

## Better Training for Safer Food

*Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety*

**Brona Carton, Head of Internal control and services of the Food audits and analysis Directorate,** talks about the Farm to Fork Strategy. Since September 2020, her unit is responsible for the oversight of the BTSF initiative, working together with the Commission's Consumer, Health, Agriculture and Food Agency (Chafea) for the management and implementation of the training courses.

### **How has COVID-19 effected the Farm to Fork Strategy ?**

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought food security and safety to everyone's attention. Not only is food safety linked to the origins of the pandemic, but the consequences of the pandemic resulted in panic buying, worries about shortages, and eventually a restoration of confidence in the resilience of the food supply chain.

The Farm to Fork Strategy is one of the non-COVID priorities that the Commission will continue to focus its attention on through the peaks and troughs of the crisis. No one has forgotten the panic when the shelves were empty at the beginning of this epidemic.

Food security is an important topic, and we will continue to prioritise this together with our actions on food waste and the circular economy. Of course, we, like everyone else, are adapting to the new normal and carrying out a large proportion of our consultations through online communications.

I am optimistic that we will be able to get our message across to a large audience and I am very optimistic about food security in the future.

### **What is the main idea behind Farm to Fork Strategy?**

The Farm to Fork Strategy for sustainable food is an integral part of the European Green Deal. European food is famous for being safe, nutritious and of high quality - through the Farm to Fork Strategy; it should become the global standard for sustainability.



The strategy will provide new opportunities for all operators in the food value chain, with European farmers and fishermen leading the way in the transition to sustainability. The Farm to Fork Strategy will strengthen their efforts to tackle climate change, protect the environment and preserve biodiversity. Through awareness campaigns, consumers will be more convinced about the importance of sustainability, and will buy accordingly.

The strategy calls for a reduction in the use of chemical pesticides, fertilisers and antibiotics. The Commission will identify the measures needed to bring about these reductions based on a broad stakeholder consultation and dialogue. The Commission's regulatory framework will need to reflect scientific evidence on the risk posed by chemicals such as endocrine disruptors.

The Farm to Fork Strategy will also contribute to achieving a circular economy and will work toward reducing the environmental impact of the food processing and retail sectors by taking action on transport, storage, packaging and food waste.

Lastly, the Farm to Fork Strategy will stimulate sustainable food consumption and promote affordable, healthy food for all. The Commission will help consumers choose healthy and sustainable diets and reduce food waste. It will explore new ways to give consumers better information about where food comes from, its nutritional value, and its environmental footprint.

#### **How does the Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) initiative tie into the Farm to Fork Strategy?**

BTSF provides training on a myriad of topics that directly link into the Farm to Fork Strategy. Our whole *raison d'être* is to make sure that food in Europe meets the highest safety standards, and very often, what is in people's best interest is also in the planet's best interest. We care about what pesticides are used, what the soil conditions are, how animals are raised and how food is grown, harvested, processed, packaged and stored. In short, we are involved in the whole process from farm to fork, and we are excited about contributing in a real way to maintaining the EU's high standards.

**[See all the Farm to Fork Strategy relevant documents](#)**

Implementation reports, other reports, a roadmap, staff working documents and other documents can be accessed and downloaded from this European Commission webpage.

[Read more](#)

### **Four calls for tender published - deadline for offers 9 November 2020**

Learn more about the latest calls for tenders launched under the Better Training for Safer Food Initiative and send in your bids before the deadlines close! The calls concern the topics of EU sanitary and phytosanitary standards, Border control posts, new official control regulation and organic farming.

[Read more](#)

### **Save the date! Online Info day on 20 October 2020 (14:00 to 17:00 CET)**

This is your opportunity to find out about the new calls and the procedure for taking part as a training and service provider or as a participant. It's also the chance to meet the BTSF team, at least by video, and to gain a better understanding of how the BTSF initiative works.

[Read more](#)

### **National Contact Point on line meeting on 26 October 2020**

National Contact Points will meet to discuss BTSF Academy progress, BTSF initiative's results and implementation at national level, as well as the impact of Better Training for Safer Food in their countries. They will also have the opportunity to network and to exchange experiences and views.

### **The Better Training for Safer Food 2019 Activity Report now available**

Find an overview of last year's activities, with information on courses given both inside and outside of the EU, the e-learning academy and more in this richly illustrated and detailed report.

[Read more](#)

### **European Green Deal: Commission prepares new initiatives to boost the organic farming sector**

The European Commission has launched a [public consultation](#) on its future Action Plan on Organic Farming, open through 27 November. This sector will play an important role in achieving the European Green Deal ambition, and reaching the objectives set out in the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies.

[Read more](#)

### **Project in the spotlight**

**Food hygiene and controls of meat, including derived products**



The main objectives are to ensure that local authorities are updated on the new framework and legislative requirements in the performance of official control of animal origin, especially on food hygiene and controls of meat. Participants will also learn how to interpret the EU Commission's point of view on how to best implement the new legislation, with the goal of harmonising enforcement of the legislation and identifying weak points of official controls in the past. As always in BTSF courses, there will be opportunities to discuss and share knowledge and experiences.

Topics covered in this course include legislative requirements, general and meat-specific hygiene requirements and HACCP-based procedures, traceability, welfare issues and special focus on topics/peculiarities regarding steps at and beyond slaughter (minced meat, meat preparations and meat products), official controls concerning primary production, inspections in slaughterhouses, game-handling and other meat establishments, peculiarities with regard to fresh meat, farmed game, wild game, emergency slaughter, risk-based inspection, use of flexibility provisions, microbiological criteria, sampling methods, requirements for Trichinella examination and other specialised inspection procedures.

Depending on restrictions in place for COVID-19, face-to-face courses or virtual classrooms will be organised in 2021. More information is available on BTSF Academy.

### **Visit BTSF Academy**

The BTSF Academy is a cloud-based Learning Management System (on an open source Moodle-platform) that manages both the blended training offer (face-to-face and online courses) as well as the administration of future and former participants. It is a product from the BTSF initiative which has been running since February 2018.

[Read more](#)

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