



---

# **Research Requirements Document**

**Issue 5**

**2001 – 2002**

July 2001

# **Contents**

<b>Background</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Guidance for Applicants</b>	<b>2</b>
A. General	<b>2</b>
B. Selection Criteria	<b>5</b>
C. Proposed Timetable	<b>6</b>
D. Monitoring of Progress	<b>6</b>
E. Intellectual Property Rights	<b>7</b>
<b>Research and Survey Requirements 2001/2002</b>	
Naturally occurring Contaminants in Foods (C04)	<b>8</b>
Microbiological Risk Management (B13)	<b>10</b>
Microbiological Surveillance	<b>13</b>
Food Additives (A01)	<b>15</b>
<b>Annex I: Guidelines for Completion of Form RCU-A3</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Annex II: Application Form</b>	<b>27</b>

## Background

1. The Food Standards Agency funds research (covering the whole range of its research and surveillance activities) to investigate specific issues. It uses the findings from its research programme both to develop its policies and to assess their effectiveness or to develop research where policy changes require new knowledge.
2. The Agency needs to base its decisions and advice on the best available science. One of the sources of this science is the Agency's research programme. This supports its work on consumer protection, and covers a wide variety of topics including food safety (including toxicology and food intolerance), nutrition, food authenticity, food quality issues and risk communication.

### Commissioning Research

3. The Agency commissions research and surveillance in open competition, to obtain the best quality and value for money. This document sets down in broad terms the research that the Agency wishes to commission from strategic R&D through to food surveillance. The document is published on a quarterly basis, with each one covering a number of different areas of the Agency's work. The document is widely distributed as hard copies and is also available on the internet (<http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk/research.htm>).
4. Proposals received will be appraised against the criteria detailed in this document, both by Agency staff and independent experts. This appraisal system allows Policy Divisions to decide in a fair and objective way which projects will be funded. Policy Divisions are thus solely responsible for commissioning research. The flexibility of this system allows the commissioning process to be carried out in a timely manner and will therefore be of benefit in responding to food safety incidents requiring scientific investigation.
5. The Agency is keen to promote the quality of the science it commissions and this is reflected in the contract Terms and Conditions. **Anyone wishing to submit a proposal must therefore ensure that the Terms and Conditions are acceptable to their organisation.**

### Managing Research Projects

6. Within the Agency, individual Policy Divisions are responsible for the management of individual projects and programmes. Policy Divisions are staffed with experienced scientists who have an intimate knowledge of the policy issues that form the rationale for the research. This ensures that research feeds directly into policy decisions.
7. Each project is assigned a Project Officer who is responsible for managing the project. This includes conducting site visits, ensuring reports are delivered on time and to a high standard, and maintaining entries on the Agency's Financial and Research Management System database (FaRMS).

This system enables the scientific progress of the project to be monitored against agreed milestones and project expenditure to be compared with budgets.

8. Programme Advisors are also appointed to take an overview of a whole programme. Programme Advisors are either Agency staff or independent experts recruited for the task. Independent experts are appointed when an external perspective is considered beneficial or to supplement the expertise of the Policy Division.

### **Disseminating Research Results**

9. The Agency is also keen to publicise its research through both new and traditional media. Certain information given on the application form will be made available on the Agency's website as well as being available in more traditional types of publication. Please ensure you are content for your material to be used on the internet. Sections to be available on the website are highlighted on the form. Successful applicants will be expected to submit regular updates of the material for the website.
10. Successful applicants will be expected to publish the findings of their research in the appropriate journals. There is a section for proposed dissemination activities in the application form. In completing the form, researchers should look carefully at this section to ensure they have planned means for publishing their work. It is anticipated that final project reports (if satisfactory) will be placed on the Agency's website and in the Agency library.
11. Finally, **please note** that all proposals should be submitted to the appropriate contact point detailed in the relevant section of the document.

## **Guidance for Applicants**

### **A. General**

12. Please note further copies of this document are also available on the Food Standards Agency Website at <http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk/research.htm>
13. To apply for a research / survey contract for this round, potential contractors are requested to submit **five hard copies** of a completed standard application form, RCU-A3 (rev 03/01), in support of each research proposal.
14. **Electronic versions of the RCU-A3 form are available and applicants are strongly encouraged to use this format.** Copies of the form can be obtained using the email auto-reply facility, as explained overleaf.
15. Use the email auto-reply facility to obtain the most up-to-date application forms and Terms and Conditions:

The email auto-reply system allows a document to be sent, *via* email, in response to a request that has been received also *via* email. The response is totally automatic and simply requires the person requesting the information to send an email (**with no text in the message box**) to:

**Autoreply@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk**

In the subject / title box the sender must enter the keyword of the document that they wish to receive using **one email for each document** requested:

<b><u>Keyword</u></b>	<b><u>Document</u></b>
rcua3.doc	Application form RCU-A3 (rev 03-01)
Resguid.doc	Guidelines for completing the application form (rev 04-01)
Resterms.doc	Agency Terms and Conditions (rev 05-01)

In the event of difficulty with this facility please contact Mr Paul Homer.  
Tel: 020 7276 8762, Email: Paul.Homer@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

16. **If the RCU-A3 is submitted on disc please ensure five hard copies are also submitted.** The Agency uses Microsoft Word 97.
17. A copy of the revised standard application form and notes on its completion are located at Annex I/II. Applicants must clearly identify which paragraph(s) of the Research Requirements Document their proposal addresses. Details of the cost and time-scale of the project must be given. Proposed start dates for research should be on or after **1 February 2002**. Forms may be completed by hand, but typed / word-processed documents are preferable. Please do not exceed 120 characters for the project title.
18. **Potential contractors should note that in the absence of the proposal summary it will not be possible to process applications.**
19. All proposals submitted should fall within the scientific objectives of one or more of the programmes listed in this document. Potential contractors must detail the scientific objectives of the project and the experimental approaches to be used. They must also indicate on the application form the requirement(s) to which their proposal relates. In the case of joint applications, a single application form should be submitted by the lead contractor detailing the aspects of the project that each individual contractor will be carrying out and clearly indicating on the application form that it is part of a joint application. Each section of this document provides details of the relevant contact person for each programme and potential applicants are **strongly encouraged** to contact the person identified with any questions they may have concerning the programme and to discuss their proposals.

20. Where a proposal involves a trial on human subjects (e.g. a dietary trial), potential contractors must provide detailed protocols appended to the application form containing the following information:
- experimental design and reason for choice of experimental design;
  - number of subjects involved and statistical power of the trial;
  - an assessment of subject compliance;
  - subject recruitment strategy;
  - an assessment of seasonal variation;
  - the nature of any placebo to be used;
  - ethical committee approval; and
  - proposed assessment of background diet.
21. Potential applicants should note that the experimental design chosen and statistical analysis of the results proposed would be important criteria in the appraisal of their proposal. The Agency strongly recommends that expert statistical advice is sought during the preparation of an application and that a statistical advisor for the proposed project is named on the application form. Agency statisticians and external statistical advisors will appraise proposals that contain a trial on human subjects (e.g. a dietary trial) and any serious flaws identified in the design of an experiment will result in failure of the application.
22. Potential applicants may wish to consult the following publication for background reading on the design of studies:
- 'Fundamentals of Clinical Trials' (3rd Edition) Friedman, L.M., Furberg, C.D. & DeMetz, D.L. publ. Moseby (ISBN: 0815133561)
23. Applicants should note that for any research proposals involving human experimentation and human tissues, **details of ethical committee approval must be submitted**. It is also recommended that any volunteers participating in Agency-funded studies are adequately covered by insurance arranged by the contractor. The Agency accepts no liability for any loss, damage, personal injury or death arising from the contractor's use of human volunteers subject to the overriding provisions of the Unfair Contract Terms Act 1977.
24. Potential contractors for surveillance work should use the current *Guidelines for Planning and Reporting Surveys*, available from Dr Wendy Matthews (Contaminants Division, Telephone: 020 7276 8707, Email: <mailto:wendy.matthews@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk>).
25. **Proposals should be submitted to the appropriate address, depending upon the subject area in which the requirement falls.**

## **NOTE**

Applications **must** be received by **5.00 pm on the date specified in the individual requirement(s)**. We regret that **(1)** faxed or e-mailed applications or **(2)** applications received after this date **cannot** be considered.

### **B. Selection Criteria**

26. All proposals for research are critically evaluated by the policy customer (the Agency), the Programme Advisor and, where appropriate, acknowledged independent experts in the relevant field. Each proposal is carefully judged against all the following criteria:
- the relevance of the research to the question in the requirements document;
  - the realism of the research;
  - the likelihood of the objectives being achieved by the proposed approaches;
  - whether or not the work seems to follow a logical progression;
  - the costs of the work, including the level of overheads;
  - the skills and resources of the contractor (and any sub-contractor);
  - the extent to which the work will be undertaken collaboratively with other research groups, particularly those overseas;
  - value for money; and
  - provisions for dissemination and intellectual property.
27. All surveillance proposals will be critically evaluated taking into account factors such as the potential costs and quality of work, thoroughness of the proposal and current analytical performance (e.g. UKAS accreditation and / or participation and satisfactory performance in a proficiency scheme such as FAPAS).
28. In addition, for much of the work in food safety and applied nutrition, it will be important to demonstrate that there is collaboration between scientists covering the multi-disciplinary skills, which are frequently necessary to achieve effective advances. The collaboration often crosses the traditional boundaries of Research Councils and University Departments. The Agency is keen to encourage collaboration between research groups, particularly where this involves overseas laboratories.

29. The proposed timetable for this Food Standards Agency commissioning round is set out below. After the closing date for applications (5.00 pm on 18 September 2001), the proposals will be distributed to Agency Policy Divisions, Programme Advisors and independent experts, where appropriate.
30. From November onwards, all appraisers will carry out an evaluation of each application. Following the receipt of written appraisals from the independent assessors, meetings will be convened in November / December for individual research programmes, as appropriate, to take decisions on which projects to fund. All applicants will be informed of the outcome of the assessment process by 9 January 2002.
31. Applications will be either successful or rejected. Those that are successful in passing the first round of the appraisal process may require post-tender negotiations before a contract can be prepared. Applications that do not meet the policy objectives or research requirements stipulated will be rejected. Details of the rejection of proposals will be made available to each bidder.

### **C. Proposed Timetable**

32. The time-scale below sets out the latest dates for completion of the actions indicated.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Action</u>
26 July 2001	Requirements document published
Date <u>specified</u> in the individual requirement(s) (by 5.00 pm)	Closing date for receipt of proposals
4 October 2001	Applicants acknowledged of receipt
9 January 2002	All applicants informed of the outcome of the appraisal of their proposals.

### **D. Monitoring of Progress**

33. All research projects commissioned by the Agency are monitored according to the milestones and key measures of achievement specified in the Scope of Work (part of the research contract). For many research programmes, the Agency has appointed Programme Advisors to assist in managing specific research programmes. In particular they:

- encourage co-operation and interchange of ideas amongst the contractors contributing to the programme;

- regularly monitor progress by individual contractors;
  - inform Policy Groups of any developments and advise on the need to set new milestones or goals as the research progresses; and
  - organise regular workshops between contractors, Agency officials and management committees where appropriate.
34. Programme Advisors report to the relevant Policy Divisions on progress in the research projects.

#### **E. Intellectual Property Rights**

35. The Agency's aim is to promote the effective transfer of new technology arising from Agency funded work to industry through the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) system. At present the Agency implements this policy by retaining IP ownership of the results of Agency funded research and collaborating closely with its contractors in deciding how to exploit its IP.

# Research and Survey Requirements 2001 / 2002

## Naturally occurring Contaminants in Foods (C04)

### Introduction

36. The Agency's research strategy on the safety of chemicals in food is designed to ensure that the levels of additives, contaminants and natural toxicants in food do not pose an unacceptable risk. The research is divided into programmes aimed at;

- the investigation of the nature and origin of chemicals in foods and the way that these may affect human health
- research on improved methodologies for assessing the risks from chemicals in food
- research on the way the risks are managed with the aim of developing up to date and transparent risk management studies.

### Research Requirements

#### Mycotoxins in Foodstuffs

##### Background

37. Many foods contain naturally occurring chemicals, which may have deleterious effects on human health. The Food Standards Agency commissions surveys in this field to assess overall safety risks, to explore ways of minimising such risks and to aid advice to consumers on specific foods.

38. The Agency will require the following surveys:

**A. Survey of offal for a range of mycotoxins.**

**B. Survey of wheat, barley and oats for a range of mycotoxins**

39. These surveys will be carried out on a minimum of 150 samples. Detailed quality assurance and validation data will be required. In addition where the stability studies of the analyte and/or commodity are not well documented, stability studies of the sample at -20°C should be undertaken.

The Agency will also require the:

**C. Collection of samples for the above surveys in accordance with a detailed sampling plan.**

## Nitrate in Lettuce and Spinach

### Background

40. Nitrate in food can be metabolised in the stomach to form N-nitroso compounds, such as N-nitrosamines and nitrosamides, which have been implicated in gastric cancers.
41. Nitrate is present in all vegetables naturally and levels are increased due to the use of nitrogen fertiliser. Green, leafy vegetables contain the highest concentration of nitrate and are the major source of nitrate in the diet.
42. The European Commission has set maximum levels for nitrate in lettuce and spinach. It requires that all Member States carry out monitoring for this contaminant with results reported annually to the EC.

The Agency will require the following survey:

<b>D. Analyse samples of UK grown and imported lettuce and spinach for nitrate content.</b>
---

43. This analysis will be performed in accordance with the EC Guidelines for Laboratories Carrying Out the Determination of Nitrate in Lettuce and Spinach.

The Agency will also require the:

<b>E. Collection of samples of lettuce and spinach from UK growers / wholesalers and imported produce in accordance with a detailed sample plan.</b>
--

44. Potential contractors for surveillance work should also use the current *Guidelines for Planning and Reporting Surveys* (available from Wendy Matthews – Tel No: 020 7276 8707, Email: wendy.matthews@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)

### Further information

45. For advice and information on the specific scientific issues or the policy background / objectives please contact Dr Wendy Matthews, Food Standards Agency, Contaminants Division , Tel No: 020 7276 8707.
46. Completed applications **to arrive by Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2001** to Dr Wendy Matthews, Food Standards Agency, Contaminants Division (Branch E), Room 702C, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH.

## Microbiological Risk Management (B13)

### Evaluation of the Butchers' Licensing Initiative in England and Scotland

#### Background

47. New food safety regulations introduced by the Food Standards Agency last year require retail butchers' shops in England and Scotland trading in unwrapped raw meat together with ready-to-eat foods to obtain an annual licence. These regulations were introduced on the recommendation of the Pennington Group following their review of the outbreak of *E.coli* O157 in Central Scotland in 1996, which caused the deaths of 17 people and illness in around 500 others.
48. Poor hygiene practices, in particular cross-contamination from raw meat to ready-to-eat food, were identified as the main cause of the Central Scotland outbreak. The licensing Regulations aim to improve consumer protection by requiring butchers handling these products to strengthen hygiene standards and operate HACCP food safety management controls within a licensing framework. Butchers in Scotland may apply strict physical separation between raw meat and ready to eat foods as an alternative to HACCP.
49. The FSA in England and FSA Scotland now wish to evaluate their respective licensing initiatives to assess their impact on food safety standards in licensed butchers' shops. Of equal importance to the Agency is the need to learn the key lessons from these schemes, in particular those relating to the operation of the HACCP principles in a small business environment, to help inform future policy in this area.

Expressions of interest are invited to:

**A: Carry out an evaluation of the Butchers' Licensing Initiative in England to assess the impact on hygiene practices and food safety management controls in licensed butchers' shops and the lessons relating to the practical application of the HACCP principles in a small food business setting.**

**B: Carry out an evaluation of the Butchers' Licensing Initiative in Scotland to assess the impact on hygiene practices and food safety management controls in licensed butchers' shops and the lessons relating to the practical application of the HACCP principles in a small food business setting.**

50. As part A of this exercise will include an evaluation of the HACCP training scheme for butchers in England, to ensure impartiality organisations or individuals that were involved in the development and/or delivery of that scheme are ineligible for part A.

**Please note that Part A will be funded by FSA UK and Part B by FSA Scotland.**

## **Further Information**

51. Expressions of Interest should be in the form of three-page maximum brief outlining the proposed approach to this exercise. Proposals may be submitted for part A or part B. Alternatively, proposals may be submitted for part A and part B on the basis that these will be carried out as separate projects. Fully worked up proposals will then be invited from short-listed candidates prior to final selection of the successful contractor or consortium. Applicants should note that it is expected that the work will be completed by 15<sup>th</sup> March 2002.

For further details please contact:

### **For part A (England)**

52. Kieran Power, Microbiological Safety Division, Tel No: 020 7276 8978, E-mail: [kieran.power@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:kieran.power@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)
53. Expressions of interest for part A, **to arrive by 5pm on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> September** to Helen Griffiths, Microbiological Safety Division, Room 816C Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH.  
**(Note: earlier closing date than other tenders in this document.)**

### **For part B (Scotland)**

54. Dr Susan Pryde, Scientific Advisor, Food Standards Agency Scotland, Tel No: 01224 285171, E-mail: [susan.pryde@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:susan.pryde@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)
55. Expressions of interest for part B, **to arrive by 5pm on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> September** to Dr Susan Pryde, Food Standards Agency Scotland, St Magnus House, Guild Street Aberdeen AB11 6NJ.  
**(Note: earlier closing date than other tenders in this document.)**

## **Proposals to consolidate and simplify EU Food Hygiene Legislation: Work to inform the preparation of a Regulatory Impact Assessment**

### **Background**

56. In July 2000 the Commission issued a suite of five linked proposals to consolidate and simplify EU food hygiene legislation. The most important element is that all food business operators, other than primary producers, will be required to introduce food safety management systems based on HACCP principles.
57. A draft initial Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) was prepared. This now needs to be refined in order to provide a more detailed assessment of the likely costs and benefits of the proposals, in order to inform Parliament's consideration of the proposals and our negotiating line. The RIA will, subject to the work needed to complete it, need to be ready in the next 4 months.
58. The following requirements could constitute one project with three work streams or could be tackled as separate projects.

Expressions of interest are invited for working with FSA staff to:

- C. evaluate the impact of the proposals across the range of food businesses affected**
- D. assess the likely costs and benefits of introducing the proposals, and**
- E. refine the initial RIA.**

59. Priority will be given to expressions of interest from individuals or organisations with appropriate previous experience.
60. Since the RIA will need to be amended to reflect the changes to the proposals secured during the negotiations, there will be the possibility of continuing work on these areas.

### **Further information**

61. For advice and information please contact Catherine Bowles, Microbiological Safety Division, Telephone number 020 7276 8952, E-mail [catherine.bowles@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.bowles@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk).
62. Expressions of interest, **to arrive by Friday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2001**, to Mr. Andy McDonald, Food Standards Agency, Microbiological Safety Division, Rm. 808C, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH.  
**(Note: earlier closing date than other tenders in this document).**

# Microbiological Surveillance

## Introduction

63. *Escherichia coli* (*E.coli*) and other coliforms can be accumulated in the tissues of shellfish (mussels, oysters, cockles, scallops etc). These organisms, which are a common inhabitant of both humans and warm-blooded animals, can be used as an indicator of faecal contamination in an area from which bivalve molluscs are harvested. In order to ensure that the public does not consume contaminated shellfish, and to meet its obligations under EC legislation, the Food Standards Agency, Scotland runs a surveillance programme to monitor *E. coli* in shellfish. The information from the programme aids the classification of shellfish harvesting sites.

## Analysis Requirements

64. Samples of bivalve molluscs, other shellfish are collected by environmental health officers from shellfish production areas and analysed for the presence of *E. coli*, throughout the year, though more intensively during the spring and summer months (April-October).

65. The analysis of samples for *E.coli* is undertaken using the agreed UK standard method given in the appendix to: Donovan T.J. *et al* Modification of the standard method used in the United Kingdom for counting *Escherichia coli* in live bivalve molluscs, Commun. Dis. Public Health 1998; 1: 188-96.

66. During the new season it is estimated that the number of shellfish samples to be analysed for *E.coli* will be a minimum of 1,000, but may be up to a maximum of approximately 2,000. Results are conveyed to the Food Standards Agency, Scotland on a weekly basis unless they are above permitted limits, in which case they are reported immediately.

67. This call is for the analysis of samples collected in Scotland. This study will be funded by the Food Standards Agency, Scotland. An invitation to bid for the work will be sent to those organisations that express an interest in conducting the analyses and have the technical capacity to undertake the work involved from the geographical region. All analysis must be carried out by one laboratory.

Expressions of interest are invited to:

<b>A. Provide an analytical service for <i>E. coli</i> in samples collected as part of the surveillance programme of shellfish harvesting areas in Scotland.</b>
--

## Further Information

68. For further advice and information on specific scientific issues or the policy background/ objectives for this requirement please contact Dr Susan Pryde, Food Standards Agency Scotland (Tel: 01224-285171; E-mail [susan.pryde@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:susan.pryde@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)).
69. Expressions of interest, **to arrive by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2001**, to Dr Susan Pryde, Scientific adviser, Food Standards Agency Scotland, St Magnus House, 25 Guild Street, Aberdeen, AB11 6NJ.

## Analysis of King Scallops for Amnesic Shellfish Poison

### Background

70. Marine biotoxins produced by phytoplankton can be accumulated in the tissues of shellfish (scallops, mussels, oysters, cockles etc). If humans then consume these species, toxin related illness can occur.
71. Proposals for a new tiered system for the harvesting and marketing of King Scallops from Scottish waters affected by Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning have been unveiled by the Food Standards Agency Scotland. The new system is intended to ensure that public health remains rigorously protected, while at the same time increasing consumer choice and reducing the impact shellfish toxins have on the scallop industry.
72. The FSAS official sampling and monitoring programme will continue to be used to determine the status of scallop fishing waters. However, the Agency's proposals will place an increased emphasis on End product Testing by processors to provide further guarantees and assurances in respect of the safety of the final produce. To this end we now wish to carry out a study designed to inform an assessment of the appropriate levels of End Product Testing for each scallop product, i.e. whole animals, gonad and adductor muscle. Samples would be collected from processing factories throughout Scotland. In addition, we will require a report providing a detailed description of the processing procedure in each scallop processing factory and a HACCP assessment of them.
73. An invitation to bid for the work will be sent to those organisations that express an interest in conducting the analyses. All analysis must be carried out by one laboratory.

Expressions of interest are invited to:

**B. Provide analytical service for ASP in King Scallop samples collected from shellfish processing factories in Scotland.**

**Please note that this study will be funded by the Food Standards Agency Scotland.**

## Further Information

74. For further advice and information on specific scientific issues: Dr Susan Pryde, Scientific Advisor, Food Standards Agency Scotland , Tel: 01224 285171, E-mail: [susan.pryde@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:susan.pryde@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)
75. Applications should be sent to: Dr Susan Pryde, Food Standards Agency Scotland, St Magnus House, Guild Street Aberdeen AB11 6NJ **to arrive by 11 August 2001**. Please note that full requirements will hopefully be sent out very shortly after this date, with a very short timescale for the full submissions due to the urgent nature of this work.

## Food Additives (A01)

### Background

76. UK consumers are protected by the law from the misuse of food additives. There are detailed legal requirements in place across the European Union that must be enforced by the extraction and analysis of food for additives. In order to build on the systems already being used to do this work in the UK, analytical methods are being developed and validated, in conjunction with the Working Party on Food Additives.
77. Extraction for some additives is very complex and time consuming. Quicker, simpler methods are needed. This project will test the viability of using antibodies against some polysaccharide additives, produced in this research programme, to simplify and speed up extraction.
78. Expressions of interest are therefore invited from laboratories to:

<b>A. Use immunoaffinity techniques and existing antibodies to develop validated extraction methods for polysaccharide additives in foodstuffs.</b>
---

## Further Information

79. **Laboratories who wish to be considered to carry out this project are asked to register an interest to Dr Foster by 17<sup>th</sup> August 2001, (Tel: 0207 276 8539, E-mail [lucy.foster@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.foster@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)).** Laboratories will be then invited to tender and will be selected on the basis of value for money.

## **Guidelines for the Completion of Form RCU-A3 for Research and Survey Contracts with the Food Standards Agency**

This document describes how to complete form RCU-A3. The form is used by external organisations when applying for research or survey contracts with the Food Standards Agency. The form is designed both for project proposals involving single and multiple participants.

**Each project proposal requires five hard copies of the completed RCU-A3 form to be submitted.**

The form is divided into five discrete Parts:

- Proposal Overview
- Part A – Relevance to the research required by the Food Standards Agency
- Part B – Description of Scientific / Technological Objectives and Workplan
- Part C – Project Finances
- Part D – Declaration

**Text boxes used in the form are auto-expandable throughout.**

### **Proposal Overview**

For successful proposals, details presented here will be reproduced on the research pages of the Agency website.

#### **Full Project Title**

This should not exceed 120 characters in length.

#### **Working Title**

A short working title of no more than 40 characters should be given. The short working title should appear on each page of the proposal to prevent errors during handling.

#### **Project Lead Contractor**

This is the person responsible for the project proposal who acts on behalf of all the participating organisations in the project consortium. If successful, the lead contractor will take overall responsibility for the workplan and for the financial aspects of the project, including administering any payments to other participants in the project consortium.

#### **Proposal Summary**

The summary should be written by the project lead contractor and should use no more than 1000 characters. The summary should, at a glance, provide the reader with a clear understanding of the proposal's objectives, how the objectives

will be achieved and their relevance in the context of the issue being addressed. The summary should be written in plain text, avoiding formulae and other special characters.

### **Summary of Total Estimated Costs (excluding VAT)**

This should include the costs of the research work that will be paid for by (a) the Food Standards Agency, (b) bodies other than the Agency and (c) 'in-kind' contributions, expressed as cash value, as appropriate. The latter could include consultancy / person time not costed for in the proposal or samples of materials donated for use in the project.

## **Part A – Relevance to the Research required by the Food Standards Agency**

This part of the form should be a maximum of 2 sides of A4 and should summarise:

- the scientific or technical problem being addressed in the proposal and reasons why the Agency should contract this research;
- the state-of-the-art in the research area;
- the scientific and technological basis for the project; and
- in what respect the project advances the state-of-the-art in the area.

## **Part B – Description of Scientific / Technological Objectives and Workplan**

Part B of the form should not exceed 25 pages and should be written in the third person. This part should detail:

- the objectives and expected achievements;
- the approaches and research plan;
- project milestones;
- project deliverables
- the role of participants;
- project management; and
- exploitation and dissemination plans.

**If the proposal is successful, information detailed here will form the Scope of Work section of the research contract. Please therefore, restrict your entry to the salient points and set these out clearly and concisely.**

## **B1. Objectives and Expected Achievements**

This section should detail the scientific / technological objectives of the project in a measurable and verifiable form. Vague expressions such as 'several experiments will be conducted' or 'the performance will be improved' should be avoided. All objectives declared should be numbered (e.g. 01, 02, 03). This section should describe the progress to be expected with regard to the state-of-the-art, as well as the different tasks to be carried out.

## **B2. Approaches and Research Plan**

This section should detail the experimental approaches to be used in realising the scientific objectives detailed in Section B1 and sets out the workplan for the life of the project. Approaches should be numbered in the same way as the objectives.

The approaches and research plan should contain details of tasks and sub-tasks necessary to realise the scientific objectives detailed in Section B1. For each task and sub-task the following information should be provided:

- i. Task or sub-task number.
- ii. Participants involved in the task or sub-task.
- iii. Estimated person-months for completion of the task or sub-task.
- iv. Estimated duration of the task or sub-task.
- v. Overview of the methodology to be used.
- vi. Links with other tasks (i.e. how does the task relate to other tasks in the project?).

Once all tasks and sub-tasks are thus described, a flow chart describing the flow of information (e.g. a Gantt Chart or Pert Chart) between tasks and sub-tasks must be provided in order to facilitate a panoramic view of the project *per se*.

## **B3. Project Milestones**

Milestones may be defined as key points within the lifetime of a contract where significant events occur within the project. Proposed milestones defined in this section should cross-reference to the project flow chart(s). A maximum of 6 milestones may be set for each year of a project. Where work is seasonal, please express milestones in day, month and year form (e.g. 01:07:1999). If work is not seasonal, please express milestones in day, month and year form **and** in terms of the number of months from the proposed start date e.g. month 15. Each milestone should relate to one scientific objective, i.e. the milestones for objective 1 should be numbered 01/01, 01/02 etc. For example, 01/02 is Objective

1/Milestone 2 and 02/01 is Objective 2/Milestone 1. Each milestone title should not be more than 100 characters; a description is optional. Try to avoid milestones that are difficult to report on. If a project starts in April 2001, and a particular output is due at the end of one year, the milestone date should be 31 March 2002 not 1 April 2002. The success in meeting this milestone will then appear in the first Annual Report for the project.

#### **B4. Project Deliverables**

A list of all deliverables by participant, task, sub-task and year in the project must be included in this section. The management of the project, as well as the evaluation of the project's progress, will be based upon this list of deliverables.

Items to be included in this list are:

- periodic reports containing all results and conclusions from tasks and sub-tasks;
- minutes of all meetings (e.g. symposia, project presentation meetings) or workshops related to the project;
- all publications produced during the project;
- presentation material such as pictures, slides, transparencies, graphs, etc.; and
- the final project report including a report of how the project results have been or are to be reported.

#### **B5. Role of Participants**

This section should detail the involvement and the responsibilities of the main participants in the project. By participants we mean organisations involved in the project (including the project lead contractor, other collaborators and any major sub-contractors) and not individuals. It is an important part of the form used in assessing two of the selection criteria ('skills and resources of contractor' and 'cost of work').

For each participant the following information should be provided:

- i. Participant Name
- ii. Objectives
- iii. Involvement in the project on a task-by-task basis, including sub-tasks
- iv. Summary of staff effort, per grade, per year
- v. Timetable of planned research activities by participant.

## **B6. Project Management**

The project lead contractor should describe how the project will be managed; the decision-making structures; the communication flow within the consortium; and, where applicable, the quality assurance used (BS 5750, ISO 9000, UKAS, GLP, etc.) and how this will be implemented (including the assessment criteria to be used for the final evaluation of project results). The proposal should also indicate and, if necessary, clarify how any legal aspects, such as intellectual property, regulations, and safety, have been taken into account.

For surveillance projects, applicants are asked to provide information regarding the performance requirements of the methods to be used in the exercise, e.g. limit of detection, accuracy, precision etc., and the quality assurance measures used in their laboratories. When presenting tenders, laboratories should confirm how they comply with these specifications and give the principles of the measures used. These requirements extend to both the laboratory as a whole and to the specific analytical determinations required in the surveillance exercise. Further information on these requirements are detailed in *Guidelines for planning and reporting surveys, Annex 3*, available from Dr Wendy Matthews (Contaminants Division, Tel No: 0207 276 8707, Email: [wendy.matthews@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:wendy.matthews@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)).

## **B7. Exploitation and Dissemination Plans**

This is a **vital** part of the proposal. It is assessed by the Selection Panel under the criterion 'provisions for dissemination and intellectual property'. It is therefore important to pay sufficient attention to this part of the form. It is always applicable as all research has to be communicated to somebody, or it is not worth undertaking. Think carefully about why the Agency is contracting the research (refer to the tender requirements) and decide how your proposal could be as cost effective as possible in delivering results and communicating them to the relevant people and organisations. Provide as much detail as possible on what will be delivered. The project lead contractor should describe plans for the dissemination and / or exploitation of the results for the consortium as a whole and for the individual participants in concrete terms.

Details should include anticipated numbers of publications in refereed journals, trade journals or the press, presentations or demonstrations to the scientific community, trade organisations and internal reports or publications.

You may plan to make reports available on the internet. This may well be useful, but it does not remove the requirement for participants to think how best to target the research output to relevant groups.

**In any publication, including press articles, the financial support of the Agency MUST be acknowledged. Permission to publish or to present work at meetings must also be sought from the Agency.**

The Exploitation and Dissemination Plans section should demonstrate the credibility of the partnership for exploitation of the results and explain the partnership's policy in respect of securing patents or granting licences for the technology (if applicable). It should deal with any possible agreements between the partners to extend their co-operation in the exploitation phase and with relevant agreements with companies, in particular users, external to the partnership.

## **Part C – Project Finances**

The project's lead contractor is required to complete form FA1 (Proposal Cost Summary), which collates the costs for all participants and summarises them in a single table.

Each member of the project consortium (including the project lead contractor and any major sub-contractors) is required to complete form FA2 (Participant Cost Summary), which details each participant's individual costs.

Once a price for the project has been agreed with the Agency, and an agreement signed, no increase in price can be considered. **Please note that any over or underspends in any one project year cannot be carried over into the next project year.**

**If the proposal is successful, information detailed here will form the Pricing Schedule section of the research contract.**

## **Pay Costs**

You should include the costs of personnel working directly on the project. Your costings must be supported by a detailed breakdown showing for each person separately:

- i. the amount of staff time (e.g. number of days, months or years) by grade / salary bands for each year of the project including staff to be recruited;
- ii. the proposed annual salary (including London (or other town) Weighting Allowances, employers NI and Superannuation) and salary spine point (i.e. pay band) of each person during each year of the project.

**N.B. An explanation should be given where the staff effort increases or decreases during the life of the project. In appropriate cases, the Agency is willing to accept pay calculations on the basis of average pay costs. In this event you should indicate the average pay used for the grade(s) in question.**

### *Inflation*

- i. If the project is submitted through competition, a percentage to cover inflation can be built into the price, but please bear in mind that overall cost is a factor in the selection process.
- ii. If the project is not submitted through competition, costings must be submitted at current prices, and the Agency will add an allowance for inflation in line with the Treasury's forecast of GDP deflator.

## **Consumables**

These are essentially scientific laboratory supplies, such as glassware and chemicals, costing individually up to £2,000 in value and purchased from third parties. Please list separately all consumables to be used, including, if possible, quantities.

## **Equipment**

Capital equipment is a fixed asset costing over £2,000, which is expected to yield continuous service beyond the year in which it is purchased. It includes items such as scientific and information technology equipment. **The equipment must be essential to the project.** Three quotations **must** be obtained for each item of equipment. (For equipment costing less than £2000, this should be included in the 'Other Costs' section of the form.)

For new equipment the Agency will only pay that proportion of its working life (normally 5 years) to which it is used solely on the project. In other words, if a project is of 3 years duration, the Agency will pay 3/5 of the equipment cost spread evenly over the 3 years (i.e. 1/5 each year). Where equipment has a useful life of more than 5 years and / or is used for other purposes, you should make an appropriate reduction in the annual rental charged to the Agency. Where new equipment is required please give details of the make, model, price and the year when each item is to be purchased and its purpose. Likewise, please indicate when equipment is to be leased from the manufacturer and give details of the costs of rental for each year.

A piece of equipment may need to be allocated full-time to a project. In such a case, the fact that an organisation owns a similar piece of equipment for use on other projects does not remove the need here for that equipment to be either purchased or hired, although the usual rules on the amount to be paid will apply. It is however for the project participant to justify such a purchase.

You may be asked by the Agency to provide the following as appropriate:

- the **original** purchasing invoice or top copy of the rental agreement. This will be returned immediately after a copy has been taken; **and**
- the original written quotations obtained from three different suppliers.

**N.B. In appropriate cases, for example where it can be shown that the technical specification of equipment precludes all but a single supplier, a single oral / written quotation will be acceptable.**

### **Travel Expenses**

Visits to conferences and similar functions in the UK or elsewhere and any foreign visits **will not** normally be regarded as an eligible cost. Exceptionally, however, such costs may be included where you can demonstrate to the Agency's satisfaction that the visits are **essential** to the project.

Where travel costs are necessary, details of their frequency, purpose, destination, the mileage and rate per mile (for road travel), air / rail fares, and number of persons travelling should be given.

Travel costs (and if necessary subsistence) should be included for the project lead contractor and any other person who may need to accompany them for one journey per year to the Agency or Agency designated location for either a presentation, seminar or workshop.

### **Overheads**

Overheads are defined as central and departmental costs (direct) that underpin the research activities and costs (indirect) that cannot readily be uniquely assigned to particular research projects. These may include the following:

- financial services (finance, accounting, tendering, marketing);
- personnel services;
- staff facilities (transport, health and safety, training, welfare, laundry);
- departmental services (administration, library, secretarial, printing, minor stores items, laboratory and workshop support);
- staff management, and cover for maternity and long-term sickness leave.

You should include details of the method of calculation of the overhead rate and list **separately** the items covered. The overhead rate should be expressed as a percentage of direct salary costs (excluding Superannuation and NI) plus consumables.

The cost of overheads will be a selection criteria and should not exceed 80% of the total direct project cost. Where overheads constitute greater than 80% of the total direct project costs, a written justification must be attached to the application form.

### **Sub-contracts and Consultancy**

You should show that any sub-contracts or consultancy work is essential to the success of the project. Any costs under this heading must be identified separately. Please detail **separately** the component parts of any consultancy or sub-contract, including pay costs, consumables, equipment, travel expenses, overheads and other costs which have been included.

### **Sampling**

Potential contractors for surveillance work should liaise with the Food Standards Agency contact person to ascertain the numbers and types of samples required.

## **Other Costs**

You should include here items that do not readily fit under the headings provided e.g. laboratory / analytical services, laboratory animals, servicing of equipment, any non-equipment rental charges, equipment costing less than £2000, recruitment costs, computer software, stationery items, student registration fees and glasshouse heating. You should also provide a short explanation of the need for all the items you list here.

## **VAT**

Businesses who are registered for VAT should include their registration number and the full amount of VAT to be charged to the Agency.

## **Ineligible Costs**

The following are excluded from eligible costs:

- interest charges;
- hire purchase interest and any associated service charges;
- profit earned by a subsidiary or by an associated undertaking on work sub-contracted under the project; and
- input VAT (an allowance may be negotiated with organisations with limited scope for recovery of input VAT).

**N.B. Contingency allowances expressed as an arbitrary percentage overall addition to eligible costs are excluded.**

## **Part D – Declaration**

The project proposal form should be signed by the project leader's head of department and administrative authority to confirm that they have read the Agency's standard terms and conditions.

Any requested deviations from the Agency's standard terms and conditions should be recorded, in writing, as an annex to the proposal.

---

## **Before You Submit the Application**

Ask somebody who is not associated with preparing the bid to assess your proposal against the published requirements using the selection criteria. Do they find the proposal easy to follow? Is adequate information provided to assess the proposal against the criteria? How do they score it against other likely bids?

# Application Form for Research and Survey Contracts with the Food Standards Agency

Proposal Full Title	
---------------------	--

- Applicants should complete each part of this form as fully and as clearly as possible
- This form should be completed in conjunction with the 'Form Completion Guidelines'

<b>For Agency Use Only</b>	
Proposal Code	
Date Received	

## PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

If the proposal is successful, information detailed in the Proposal Overview will be posted on the research pages of the Agency website.

<b>Full Project Title</b>	
<b>Working Title</b>	

### Project Lead Contractor

<b>Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms, Dr, Prof)</b>			
<b>Family Name</b>			
<b>First Name</b>			
<b>Organisation</b>			
<b>Department</b>			
<b>Address</b>			
<b>Telephone Number</b>		<b>Fax Number</b>	
<b>Email</b>			
<b>Website</b>			

### Proposal Summary

<b>Duration (in months)</b>		<b>Proposed Start Date</b>	

### Summary of Total Estimated Costs (excluding VAT)

<b>Research Purchasers</b>	<b>Project Year 1</b>	<b>Project Year 2</b>	<b>Project Year 3</b>	<b>Project Year 4</b>	<b>Project Year 5</b>	<b>TOTAL (£)</b>
Food Standards Agency						
Other than the Agency						
'In kind'						
<b>TOTAL COST (£)</b>						

**PART A – RELEVANCE TO THE RESEARCH REQUIRED BY THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY**

**PART B – DESCRIPTION OF SCIENTIFIC / TECHNOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES AND WORKPLAN**

If the proposal is successful, information detailed here will form the Scope of Work section of the research contract.

**B1. Objectives and Expected Achievements**

Objective No.	Objective Description
01	
02	
03	

**B2. Approaches and Research Plan**

--

**B3. Project Milestones**

Milestone No.	Target Date	Milestone Title
01/01		
01/02		
02/01		

**B4. Project Deliverables**

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Deliverable Title</b>

**B5. Role of Participants**

--

**B6. Project Management**

--

**B7. Exploitation and Dissemination Plans**

--

## **PART C – PROJECT FINANCES**

**If the proposal is successful, information detailed here will form the Pricing Schedule section of the research contract.**

The project lead contractor should complete form FA1 (Proposal Cost Summary), which collates the costs for all participants and summarises them in a single table.

Each member of the project consortium (including the project lead contractor and any major sub-contractors) is required to complete form FA2 (Participant Cost Summary), which details each participants' individual costs.

If the proposal is successful, the project lead contractor will be required to collate the financial details for all participants in the project consortium into a Pricing Schedule, which will form part of the research contract.

**FA1 - PROPOSAL COST SUMMARY**

Participant Name <sup>1</sup>	Project Year				
	Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)	Year 4 (£)	Year 5 (£)
<b>TOTAL YEARLY COST (£)</b>					
<b>VAT</b>					

<sup>1</sup> List the organisations involved in the project starting with the project lead contractor

## FA2 - PARTICIPANT COST SUMMARY <sup>2</sup>

<b>Participant Name</b>	
-------------------------	--

	Project Year				
	Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)	Year 4 (£)	Year 5 (£)
<b>Pay Costs</b>					
<b>Consumables</b>					
<b>Equipment</b>					
<b>Travel Expenses</b>					
<b>Overheads <sup>3</sup></b>					
<b>Sub-contracts and Consultancy</b>					
<b>Sampling <sup>4</sup></b>					
<b>Other Costs</b>					
<b>TOTAL PARTICIPANT COSTS (£)</b>					

<b>VAT</b>					
------------	--	--	--	--	--

**Are you registered for VAT? (YES or NO)**

**If YES, what is your registration number?**

<sup>2</sup> One form per participant / organisation

<sup>3</sup> The method of calculation of the overhead rate and the items covered should be listed separately

<sup>4</sup> To be completed for surveys only

**PP1 - PARTICIPANT PROFILE / INFORMATION <sup>5</sup>****Organisation Details**

<b>Organisation</b>			
<b>Department</b>			
<b>Address</b>			
<b>Telephone Number</b>		<b>Fax Number</b>	
<b>Participant Role</b>			
<b>Short Name</b>			

**Authorised Person**

<b>Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms, Dr, Prof)</b>			
<b>Family Name</b>			
<b>First Name</b>			
<b>Telephone Number</b>		<b>Fax Number</b>	
<b>Email</b>			

**Project Staffing**

Please list the names and grades of staff who will work on the project together with details of their specialism (including details of their 5 most recent relevant papers published).

--

<sup>5</sup> One form per participant / organisation

## PART D – DECLARATION

### Declaration (please note)

I confirm that I have read this application and the Agency's standard contractual terms and conditions and that:

- (a) the Agency may show this application to third parties for the purposes of obtaining expert opinion on its scientific merits; and
- (b) if successful, the work will be accommodated and administered in our Organisation in accordance with the Agency's contractual arrangements. The staff gradings and salaries quoted are correct and in accordance with the normal practice of this Organisation.

If any part(s) of the standard agency terms and conditions is / are unacceptable, then this should be declared in writing as an annex to this proposal.

#### (1) Head of Department

Signature

Date

Name and  
initials

Organisation

#### (2) Administrative Authority (the officer who will be responsible for administering any payments)

Signature

Date

Name and  
initials

Position

Organisation

Full postal  
address

Postcode

Telephone No. (including STD code)	Ext.
Fax No. (including STD code)	

Name of  
project leader

--

Full postal  
Address of  
project leader

	Postcode
Telephone No. (including STD code)	Ext.
Fax No. (including STD code)	

**Note:** This application should be submitted by / through:

- (a) **the Head of Department;** and
- (b) **the officer who will be responsible for administering any money.**

Each should sign the above declaration.