

International Conference on

Food Safety and Regulatory Measures

August 17-19, 2015 Birmingham, UK



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The regulatory affairs of food and food industries

Consumers have a right to expect that their food will be safe and wholesome. Food businesses have legal obligations to fulfil that expectation. Those obligations are achieved through a combination of 'carrot and stick'. Putting the law to one side, the carrot can be seen as complying with the moral duty to do the right thing combined with the commercial and financial benefits that come with selling a safe high quality product. The 'stick' is the threat of enforcement action that follows a failure to comply with the vast array of rules and regulations that govern the production, manufacture and sale of food. The presentation will then consider some of the key EU and domestic regulatory affairs issues affecting the food industry such as, how integrated regulation affects all stages of food production from the 'farm to the fork'. It will then assess the importance of food businesses understanding their legal obligations in connection with making and selling food and how they can protect themselves, their food and their reputation. This includes the steps that are necessary to prevent the sale of unsafe food and knowing what they must do in the event that a problem occurs. The presentation will then look at the important issue of enforcement of food law and the various measures available to regulators to proactively assist food businesses and to reactively respond to non-compliance. We will then highlight some of the consequences for food businesses when enforcement action is taken. Finally the presentation will consider the importance of all stakeholders playing their part to protect the integrity of the food chain and protect consumers from harm.

Biography

Ian Thomas was called to the Bar of England and Wales in 1993 and he is a barrister in the Chambers of Stephen Hockman QC, 6 Pump Court, Temple, London. He is also a qualified lawyer in the Republic of Ireland. He is a Specialist Regulatory Lawyer practising in the law relating to food and beverages. He has experience of a wide range of food law matters including, food safety and hygiene, food information and claims, borderline products, food supplements, traceability, withdrawals and recalls, animal welfare and cattle identification. A large part of his practice involves the interpretation and application of EU law. He is a regular speaker at food law and regulatory events and he is an experienced legal trainer. In addition to his food law work, his practice includes other regulatory law matters such as health and safety, trading standards and consumer protection, licensing and environmental. He is authorised by the Bar Standards Board to receive instructions directly from clients as part of the public access scheme. He is a Member of the Society of Food Hygiene and Technology, the Food Law Group, the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health and the Health and Safety Lawyers' Association.

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