

Better Training for Safer Food



The BTSF newsletter is prepared by the Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (Chafea) and issued six times a year. If you wish to receive the newsletter, please register [here](#).

Interview: Monise Theobald

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BTSF Information day

Chafea - the Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency - organises an information day on the latest Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) Calls for tenders...



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In your work as NCP, what main challenges do you face in choosing participants?

Since I became NCP in 2008, BTSF has developed considerably. Along with traditional training, the e-learning programme was launched in 2014. The training is of high quality and a reference point in the sanitary and phytosanitary field. The language barrier remains the main problem we face in choosing participants. This has become more pronounced since 2011 and stops us from using all of the places allocated to France. Chafea asks us to only send candidates with good written and spoken English as, in order to ensure a high level of diversity and foster exchange between participants, it's not possible to have workshops just for French speakers. The use of English has also been accentuated in written and telephone correspondence.

For some programmes, candidates must have at least 3 years of professional experience or must have followed an e-learning module on the subject. This principle can block access for officials who just took up a new position and need to attend BTSF training as part of their adaptation to this new position but lack the required experience.

Another challenge is the short time between getting the invitation to a workshop and the deadline for proposing participants, particularly for the first session in a programme. At the same time, for some programmes we get a 3-months deadline for a workshop scheduled for a year later. Candidates can't commit to attending as they don't have a clear view of their agenda over such a long period of time.

France is allocated fewer places on certain programmes than we actually need. In addition, various national competent authorities have quotas for places, so this requires mediation and diplomacy. Some people take rejection of their candidacy badly.

For contracts that have been renewed several times, once all relevant people have attended training it can be difficult to find new candidates if the legislation hasn't changed. Also, some programmes attract more interest than

others.

How does your work as NCP affect your daily work and that of your department?

The European Commission designated the Management Office for Quality and Coordination of Controls (Bureau du management par la qualité et de la coordination des contrôles - BMQCC) of the Directorate-General for Food (Direction générale de l'alimentation - DGAL) as NCP in 2008. The BTSF workload now requires daily involvement, a high level of availability, attention to detail, vigilance and good organisation, and is actually almost a full-time job. The long-term nature of the role, along with the contact network, has given me a good awareness of who does what and which subject is relevant to whom, good knowledge of the procedures and the ability to answer a variety of questions quickly, all of which makes things easier.



Given that everything is in English, I have to translate training invitations before sending them out to various contact lists, which means that I don't have to explain everything individually.

As NCP, I get a lot of messages, phone calls and online requests for assistance. I am the interface between Chafea, the training contractors, the competent authorities and the candidates. I coordinate all information on each year's training schedule, including invitations, receipt and transmission of registration forms, enquiries into training needs and impact, proposals for improvements, complaints and solutions to any problems.

I also attend BTSF working group meetings at European level and provide feedback on relevant issues. This includes the need for participants' travelling expenses to be covered by all contractors, including for people from overseas departments who, in spite of the distance, want to attend training, harmonisation of registration forms and extension of the time frame for completing e-learning modules - currently a month and a half - in order to allow participants to strike a balance between work and learning.

Other topics on which NCPs' input is required by their services are terminology issues during meetings of Chief Veterinary Officers, statistical data, technical terms in English, identification of tutors and provision of lists of training participants on specific subjects, which are particularly useful during DG SANTE audits.

What do you see as the most interesting aspects of BTSF?

The richness of BTSF comes in the opportunity it provides for participants from every Member State to exchange good practices. All participants agree on this. Concerning the training, I get messages from participants who express their satisfaction and tell me how the training has improved their work, career path and self confidence. Participants swap contact details and stay in touch in order to complete the experience. They can count on one another and form a kind of pool of experts.



Overall, what do you think of BTSF as a training tool?

Its diversity and high level of training make BTSF a top quality programme. It's now famous across France and also globally for its organisation of international conferences and training for third countries which is aimed at enabling them to improve their working practices and make sure that the food they export to the EU meets its standards. BTSF strengthens participants' knowledge and understanding, especially regarding EU legislation, thus increasing their effectiveness at work. It also helps to harmonise official controls in the EU. Furthermore, it meets training needs that aren't covered at national level and contributes to improvements in national-level training in terms of

certification, content and provision of tutors who have attended BTSF training. BTSF is in great demand and this means that it comes at a price, which has to be kept under control if it is not to become a victim of its success.

What is your view of the collaboration within the BTSF NCP working group? Would you like the group

to meet more often?

With their view of things, their work, their diligence and their goodwill, the NCPs are the people best placed to provide constructive criticism and suggestions which contribute to the development of each year's training programme. The group is cohesive and attentive, with a lot of mutual respect. Two meetings a year, with extraordinary sessions when needed, is enough, especially as we have plenty of opportunity to inform Chafea of any problems.

In your opinion, which training subjects are particularly important to France?

Amongst traditional training courses, animal welfare, especially given current problems, TRACES, contingency planning and animal disease control, HACCP, feed law, contaminants in food and feed, microbiological criteria, food hygiene and flexibility, risk assessment and plant health. With e-learning, we would like new modules to be deployed and more modules made available in French so that candidates for whom language is a barrier can take part without feeling uncomfortable.

Are there any subjects not currently on offer that you would like to see included?

The selection is already wide enough, but biosecurity is becoming a major component of animal health, considering the new trend towards prevention, surveillance and basing decisions on risk analysis (such as in the Animal Health Law framework).

There is, however, a lack of common tools to evaluate the quality of biosecurity measures at all levels. BTSF training could provide at least a basis for common indicators or tools.

On a personal level, how long have you worked in the food sector?

I have been a public official since 1980.

Commission adopts financing decision on BTSF work programme

July 2016 saw the European Commission adopt the financing decision for the launch of new BTSF training programmes. The decision concerns training on 15 subjects, as well as support for the implementation of the BTSF e-learning project and the possibility to organise other contingency training and conferences, and to produce further learning and dissemination tools.

The total budget for the activities covered by the decision is EUR 15.5 million. Chafea is responsible for the EUR 15.365 million earmarked for traditional training activities, while the Commission will oversee the management of the EUR 135 000 dedicated to e-learning support.

The subjects of the programmes to be launched based on the financing decision are as follows: anti-microbial resistance, plant health controls, pesticide application equipment, risk assessment, food hygiene at primary production, disease outbreak preparedness and management, food information and composition, animal nutrition, control of contaminants in food, controls at border inspection posts, movement of dogs and cats, the Trade Control and Expert System, animal welfare, food testing and EU food standards.

Chafea now aims to identify external contractors to take care of the organisational and logistical aspects of the programmes on these topics. In some cases, a second two-year phase of an existing contract will be initiated. In others, new public procurement procedures are to be launched.

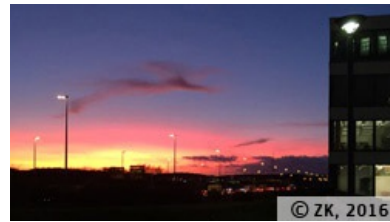
- [Full text of the financing decision](#)



New BTSF calls for tender

launched by Chafea

Following the adoption by the European Commission of the new BTSF financing decision in July 2016, Chafea has published five calls for tender in August. These relate to the training programmes on veterinary and food safety import controls in border inspection posts, use of the EU's Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES), control of movement of dogs and cats, animal nutrition and contaminants in food.



Each programme initially takes place over two years, with the possibility of launching a second two-year phase also foreseen. All training within the programmes is to take place in EU Member States.

Border inspection posts training is for officials involved in controls in seaport, airport, road or rail border posts and comprises eight four-day courses. Of these, two are on each of import controls on live animals and import controls on animal by-products, and four are on import controls on food of animal origin and composite products. All activities should be held in, or close to, relevant border inspection posts so as facilitate practical demonstration of the subject matter. Each session caters for around 40 participants from EU Member States, as well as candidate, potential candidate and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries. The budget for the first phase of the programme is EUR 975 000.

Training on TRACES has a first phase budget of EUR 1 180 000 and comprises 16 three-day sessions. Four sessions are on TRACES use for import of live animals and products of animal origin, while three are on each of TRACES use for import of products of non-animal origin, import of live plants and import of organic products, and for intra-EU trade of live animals and animal by-products. Each session should be attended by approximately 30 people from EU Member States, and candidate, EFTA and selected non-EU countries.

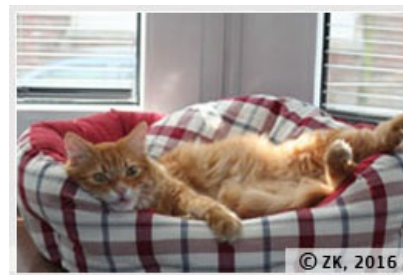
A re-launched programme on dogs and cats



Eight three-day sessions are to be held on movement of dogs and cats for a budget of EUR 610 000 in the first phase. Around 30 people should participate in each workshop. They will come from official veterinary and customs services involved in animal health actions in EU Member States, as well as corresponding veterinary services in candidate, European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and EFTA countries.

The animal nutrition programme is aimed at feed control staff and comprises six five-day workshops providing general training on EU feed legislation and six three-day workshops providing specific training on EU feed hygiene rules and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point auditing. Each session should train some 30 people from EU Member States and candidate countries, as well as EFTA, ENP and other non-EU countries. The first phase has a budget of EUR 1 040 000.

A total of 12 three-day courses are to be held on contaminants in food of which eight are basic courses on EU regulations and guidelines applicable to control of contaminants. These are for competent authority staff in EU Member States, candidate, ENP and EFTA countries responsible for control of contaminants in feed and food. The other four courses are more advanced and cover official control plans and systems for control of contaminants. They are open only to people who attended BTSF courses on contaminants organised during 2013-16 or who first participate in the basic-level contaminants course within this programme. The workshops are targeted at officials of EU Member States, candidate countries and EFTA countries responsible for development, coordination and implementation of monitoring and control plans at central administrative level. All 12 workshops cater for some 30 participants for a total budget of EUR 880 000.



- [Related documents](#)

INVITATION

20
September
2016

2016 BTSF INFORMATION DAY
*The Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food
Executive Agency organises an information day
on the latest BTSF Calls for tenders*

What is it?

Send your answer with the reference
"September 2016 newsletter" to
and participate to win a BTSF USB key.

Where was that?

Answer from the previous edition

**Magna Plaza
Amsterdam**

Click on the picture to enlarge

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PREVIOUS EDITIONS

August 2016	May 2016	January 2016	November 2015	March/June 2015	February 2015
December 2014	August 2014	May 2014	November 2013	August 2013	May 2013
February 2012	December 2012	October 2012	August 2012	May 2012	February 2012