**Folic Acid Fortification**

Debate has been continuing for some time on the fortification of bread or flour with folic acid. The Federation of Bakers continues to watch the development of this issue with interest and will continue to voice industry opinion where appropriate.

In the Republic of Ireland it has been decided not to introduce mandatory fortification of bread or flour with folic acid, although they will continue to monitor the situation.

In the UK FSA declared that they would delay their recommendations on fortification until Spring 2009 to enable further investigations into possible links between folic acid and colorectal cancer risk.

In October 2009, the FSA wrote to the Chief Medical Officer, Sir Liam Donaldson, with updated information on folic acid and colorectal cancer risk. The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) concluded that the evidence did not provide a substantial basis to change its previous recommendation for the introduction of mandatory fortification with folic acid, with controls on voluntary fortification. SACN's recommendation was amended to clarify the advice on supplement use for particular population groups.

UK CMO's will now advise Health Ministers, so we continue to maintain a watching brief on this issue.

The baking industry has always been very responsive to consumer needs and aspirations launching many products every year. The industry is therefore committed to respond positively to any call for a discussion on folic acid fortification.

We have always stated that the option to fortify is a medical decision and we have been consistent in our view that, if mandatory fortification is approved, the place to fortify is in the flour mill, and the procedure to do so is available under the Bread and Flour Regulations.

**Update January 2017**

In late 2016 the UK Government announced that the mandatory fortification of bread with folic acid would not be introduced.

Consequently, separately the Scottish Government and the Irish Government started discussions on the options of introducing mandatory fortification in Scotland and Ireland respectively.

We await the outcome of these, in particular if they result in formal consultations.