



Policy Insight Report

EDITION 10

OVERVIEW

- Industry faces regulatory pressure as DHSC puts baby food manufacturers on 18-month notice, whilst newly published DIO-Food research demonstrating impact of HFSS promotions restrictions gains media traction.
- School food policy develops across departments, with DEFRA scoping procurement reform, DSIT consulting FSM auto-enrolment infrastructure, and DfE preserving HAF programme funding.

POLITICAL INSIGHTS

- Over 8000 farmers apply for [£150 million Capital Grants funding](#) supporting sustainable production and environmental improvements.
- DEFRA seeks expressions of interest for a [new project to improve school food procurement practices](#) that would directly contribute to the Food Strategy outcomes, with a tender process expected in October 2025.
- DSIT [consultation](#) on expanding information sharing powers to support passporting of education related benefits could support future free school meal auto-enrolment systems.
- EFRA Committee publishes [plans for next 12 months](#), including oversight of the food strategy, fairness in supply chains and future of farming.
- DEFRA appoints [Paul Kissack as new Permanent Secretary](#). He is currently Group Chief Executive at Joseph Rowntree, and has a civil service track record.
- DHSC issues [new voluntary guidance on commercial baby and toddler foods](#), putting the industry on 18 months notice to improve product composition, marketing and labelling.
- DfE has confirmed [£600m to continue the Holiday Activities and Food programme](#) for the next three years.
- Government launches [£12.6 million 'Dragons Den for farming'](#) innovation programme through two competitions - £7.8 million for Small R&D Partnerships and £4.8 million for Feasibility Studies.

MEDIA INSIGHTS

- DEFRA's latest [farmer opinion tracker for England](#) (series up to April 2025), data & ministerial commentary was covered in [Farmers Weekly](#).
- [DIO-Food research](#) showing decline of 2 million HFSS products from promotions restrictions was widely covered across [ITV News](#), [LBC](#), and [the Grocer](#).
- [Sky News](#) examines UK food supply threats, featuring NFU's Tom Bradshaw and former food security ambassador Prof. Tim Benton.
- [The Telegraph](#) and [the Guardian](#) report a survey showing 13% of dairy farmers are planning exit within a year due to rising costs and worker shortages.
- Food Ethics Council chair Elta Smith argues in [The Grocer](#) for enshrining a legal right to food as basis for effective Food Strategy delivery.

CIVIL SOCIETY UPDATES

- Civil society food and farming groups launch new [Fruit and Vegetable Coalition](#).
- [Sustainable Food Places](#) publishes report positioning Food Partnerships as critical drivers of local climate action and UK's just transition.
- Countryside Alliance has released a [report](#) showing that most government departments and councils are not monitoring or prioritising British produce in their catering policies.
- CPRE published an evidence review on [delivering better integrated land use decision-making](#), ahead of DEFRA's Land Use Framework publication later this year.

