



## ***EQIA on safefood's Promotional Strategy for Educational Settings 2007-2010***

*January 2007*



## ***safefood's Mission***

***To protect and improve public health, by fostering and maintaining confidence in the food supply on the island of Ireland, in partnership with others.***

**This document is available in a range of accessible formats and minority ethnic languages, on request. Comment/feedback will be accepted in the format preferred by the consultee.**

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# **1. General information**

**1.1** The purpose of this document is to invite views on the equality impact of **safefood**'s Promotion Strategy for Educational Settings - 2007–2010 (Appendix 1). We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and wish to hear your views on how best this can be achieved.

## **1.2 Making Consultation Accessible**

**safefood** is committed to assisting all stakeholders to participate fully in this process and would welcome feedback on how the consultation process can be made accessible.

This document is available on our website: [www.safefood.eu/about\\_equality.asp](http://www.safefood.eu/about_equality.asp).

It can also be made available in a range of accessible formats on request.

## **1.3 Giving us your views and contact information**

We have listed a number of questions for your consideration and would welcome written feedback on the form attached at Appendix 2. However, this is optional and feedback will be accepted in format preferred by the consultee. Please contact the addressee below so that this can be facilitated.

The consultation period will be open for eight weeks and we would appreciate your replies to the addressee below by 5pm 23 March 2007.

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Cork  
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## **1.4 Feedback**

A summary of the responses from this consultation will be compiled at the end of the consultation period. This will be provided to all consultation participants and also placed on the **safefood** website.

## 1.5 **Background of safefood**

**safefood** is an all-island implementation body established under the governing legislation of the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999 and the North-South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) Northern Ireland Order 1999.

Funding is provided by the respective governments of the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom.

The role of **safefood** is determined by the legislation which sets out its functions. The key function is to promote food safety as a responsibility shared by the entire food chain through the:

- Promotion of food safety
- Research into food safety
- Communication of food alerts
- Surveillance of foodborne disease
- Promotion of scientific co-operation and laboratory linkages
- Development of cost effective facilities for specialised laboratory testing.

In addition to the specific functions set out above, **safefood** has a general remit to act as an independent source of scientific advice.

## 1.6 **The statutory duties on equality**

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires **safefood**, in carrying out all its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

In addition, without prejudice to the above obligation, **safefood** shall, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

**safefood's** equality scheme was approved in June 2003.

## **2. Policy context and policy aim**

- 2.1.** The strategy that is the subject of this EQIA is the Promotion Strategy for Educational Settings – 2007-2010 (Appendix 1).
- 2.2** The specific aim of this strategy is to set out a three year plan for the food safety and nutrition education in a range of educational settings from pre-school to out of school training centres.
- 2.3** Since its establishment, **safefood** has been actively engaged in the development and implementation of a number of resources and initiatives to support food safety and nutrition education in the school setting. The various initiatives that have been developed have been in response to dialogue with stakeholders, as a result of **safefood** research and in response to requests for the development of particular resources or collaborations. The range of resources, initiatives and collaborations are detailed in Table 1 of the Strategy.
- 2.4** An internal review of these initiatives has indicated that:
- the current range of initiatives and products are a valuable resource
  - these resources should be actively promoted, revised where appropriate and their use should be periodically reviewed
  - resources/programmes have not been specifically developed for or targeted at designated disadvantaged, pre-school, first years of primary school or out-of-school settings
  - **safefood** should continue to consider involvement in small projects initiated by external agencies where **safefood** has minimal input but be aware that they are of limited value
  - the e-newsletters are a considerable resource which need to be developed by active marketing, monitoring and evaluation.
- 2.5** Given the involvement of **safefood** in the promotion of food safety and nutrition in educational settings since its establishment, **safefood** has developed this strategy to ensure that the organisation continues to deliver food safety and nutrition education interventions in a way that meets the diverse needs of the children and young people on the island of Ireland. The key five areas identified in the strategy are:
- Building partnerships
  - Optimising **safefood**'s activities portfolio and identifying opportunities
  - Whole school approach
  - Food health education and learning
  - Empowering behaviour change

### **3. Consideration of available data and research**

- 3.1** Data available to **safefood** does not allow the organization to determine how the provision of food safety and nutrition education impacts on all the different equality groups in society.
- 3.2** The strategy was developed based on the input of a number of stakeholders and follows best practice to support food safety nutrition in education settings. Given that the strategy advocates a whole school approach to food safety education and the recognition of a required focus on disadvantaged groups, for example, education provision in out of school settings, it is considered that there will a limited, if any, adverse impact on the equality categories.
- 3.3** The analysis of the impact of the strategy on each of the nine equality categories is considered in detail in Section 4.

## 4. Potential for adverse impact and promotion of equality of opportunity

### 4.1 Political belief

There is no evidence to suggest that people of different political opinion will be adversely affected by this **safefood** strategy.

### 4.2 Religious opinion

There is no evidence to suggest that people of different religious opinion will be adversely affected by this **safefood** strategy.

### 4.3 Gender

Whilst **safefood** feels that its strategy does not have an adverse impact on gender difference, **safefood** recognises the need to provide supports that will provide a gender balanced approach to food safety education.

### 4.4 Marital Status

As this strategy is aimed at children and young people, **safefood** does not believe this will have an adverse impact dependent on marital status.

### 4.5 Disability

Whilst **safefood** does not consider its strategy is discriminatory, the format of some of the currently available educational material provided by **safefood** may not be immediately accessible to children/young people with different types of disability. Therefore, **safefood** will consider providing a range of alternative formats upon receiving each individual request and as indicated in the strategy, respond to various areas of social need.

Other considerations are a review of the website to ensure accessibility for people with different disabilities and using plain English in consumer educational materials.

### 4.6 Race

Children and young people from different minority ethnic backgrounds may be affected with regards to accessibility of information that may be provided by **safefood**'s strategy. For example, it has been estimated that there are approximately 1, 281 children in primary and secondary education in Northern Ireland from ethnic minorities where English is an additional language (2002 Minority Ethnic Groups in Northern Ireland: Experiences and Expectations of English Language Support in Education - OFMDFM). The Traveller Children's Experiences in Mainstream Post-Primary Schools in Northern Ireland – A Qualitative Study March 2005 (DE) reports that illiteracy was common amongst Travellers and non-attendance at post primary schools was a regular occurrence.

Therefore, the issue that may affect the ability of children from minority ethnic backgrounds with regards to **safefood**'s strategy is accessibility to programmes and information where individuals cannot speak English and issues relating to illiteracy.

It is felt that **safefood** can promote equality of opportunity by considering the translation of materials on individual basis and by providing education in out of school settings. Also, **safefood** will work closely with various partners to best develop appropriate accessible resources and programmes.

#### **4.7 Sexual Orientation**

There is no evidence to suggest that there is an adverse impact with regards to sexual orientation.

#### **4.8 Age**

As this strategy is aimed at young people and children, it is not considered to have an adverse impact with regards to age.

#### **4.9 Dependants**

For the reason outlined in 4.8, this strategy is not considered to have an adverse impact with regard to those who have dependants.

## **5. Measures to mitigate adverse impact and/or better promote equality of opportunity and promoting good relations**

**5.1** Where any adverse impact may potentially arise, **safefood** has identified the following measures:

- To continue to build partnerships with identified stakeholders e.g. educators and curriculum developers.
- To review accessibility of educational material.
- To consider providing translated material.

**5.2** Comments and suggestions will be welcome on these measures and alternative measures. **safefood** will consider these comments as part of developing the operational programmes within the strategy.

**5.3** It is felt that the process of partnership building with identified stakeholders will complement the promotion of good relations.

## 6. Formal consultation

**6.1** The Equality Impact Assessment has stated where there may be potential for adverse impact within the strategy and outlined measures where **safefood** believes it can remove or reduce adverse impact. A form is attached at Appendix 2 to allow you to answer these key questions more easily.

**6.2** **safefood** would now like to invite responses with regards to the implementation of this strategy. Comments are particularly welcome on the following:

- Does the strategy adequately outline how **safefood** will promote equality through collaborative working to develop food health education, resources and programmes?
- Do the strategic aims and objectives of this **safefood** strategy address key priorities relating to the nine equality groups?
- Do you consider this strategy has any adverse, unhelpful or negative effects on equality of opportunity and/or good relations?
- Can you identify how the policy may be changed or what action could be taken to reduce or eliminate these adverse effects?
- Do you have any other comments you would like to make on either the consultation process or the policy?
- Would you be interested in further consultation with **safefood** to move this strategy forward over the next 3 years?

## Appendix 1

# safefood's Promotion Strategy for Educational Settings 2007-2010

### Introduction

Health is shaped by the circumstances experienced and patterns established during childhood and youth<sup>1</sup>. There is currently a high level of interest internationally in the potential for health gain through investment in the health of children and young people. School going children and young people are a key target group in relation to a range of the national strategies on island of Ireland.

The link between education and health is well established and the evidence of the positive impact of school health promotion on health risk behaviour of children and young people continues to increase<sup>2,3,4,5,6</sup>. In England a national evaluation of the National Healthy Schools Programme has yielded promising results<sup>3</sup>. Further research carried out by the UK King's Fund demonstrated that strong partnerships across health, education and social services can help tackle health inequalities<sup>4</sup>. An evaluation of a coordinated school health programme across 22 States in the USA has shown an increase in student physical activity and a reduction in fat intake maintained for 3 years after the end of intervention<sup>5</sup>. Likewise, a systematic review of projects to reduce obesity supported the use of multi-faceted school-based interventions, particularly in girls<sup>7</sup>.

The EU Green Paper on Promoting Healthy Diets and Physical Activity concludes that schools are a key setting for health promotion interventions<sup>8</sup>. The effectiveness of school based health-promotion intervention is dependent on:

- Programmes implemented in partnership with all the settings that shape child and adolescent health (family, media, peers, local healthcare, voluntary and statutory agencies)
- Holistic and comprehensive programmes i.e. whole school approach (see Annex I)
- Long term (a few years) duration
- Adequate resources with staff training and support

### The School Setting

Schools are settings in which children and young people eat and learn about food and where food safety and nutrition concepts can be developed. The school and its curriculum, therefore, provide opportunities for children and young people to appreciate the importance of food for health. **safefood** has a role in working with the key partners including curriculum authorities, health promotion agencies, teachers, parents, children and young people to develop food safety and nutrition skills and practices. Though food preparation and healthy eating are key lifeskills they are only a component of a healthy lifestyle and it is important to see them in the context of the overall curriculum and school initiatives.

Food hygiene and nutrition in schools is a very wide area. It covers both the curriculum and the preparation and consumption of food in schools. A useful approach to food hygiene and nutrition identifies three aspects of food hygiene and nutrition education. These are:

- food for health focusing on nutrition and healthy eating
- food hygiene focusing on food safety and food preparation and
- food and life skills focusing on social skills and the food industry.

These three elements are included in this document and the generic term 'food health education' will be used to include all three aspects throughout this document.

The levels of involvement that **safefood** will pursue in this strategy framework include curriculum; children & young people (pre-school<sup>9</sup>, primary, post-primary and out-of-school<sup>10</sup>); teachers and school management; and parents. These levels provide the best opportunities for the promotion of food health education in school and in

out of school settings. In addition to the inclusion of those in primary and post primary settings within this strategic approach, children and young people in preschool and out of school settings are included. Pre-school settings are formative in the life of a child and provide opportunities to shape healthy habits and practices. Out-of-school educational settings for young people provide a bridge between school and work and offer an opportunity to further enhance healthy life skills. These different levels of involvement are reflected in the aims and objectives of this strategy where appropriate.

**safefood** recognises that there are other statutory organisations in both jurisdictions with lead responsibilities in education and health promotion. In this strategic plan **safefood** will add value through collaborative working to develop resources and programmes to help children and young people to learn more about food safety and eating for health and to empower them to make decisions in relation to food safety and nutrition.

### **Principles Guiding safefood's Strategy**

- The activities of **safefood** will be integral to the 'whole school approach'
- **safefood** will focus on disadvantaged groups
- **safefood** will add value
- **safefood** will be practicable
- **safefood** will build trust and value the participation of stakeholders
- Evaluation will be integrated into the entire process
- **safefood** will operate as a unit collaborating across disciplines
- The activities of **safefood** will be evidence-based, where evidence is available

## **STRATEGIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The strategic plan sets out to make progress on five key areas:

- I. Building partnerships
- II. Optimising **safefood**'s activities portfolio and identifying opportunities
- III. Whole school approach
- IV. Food health education and learning
- V. Empowering behaviour change

### **I. Building partnerships**

**safefood** and a range of partners in education, (including students, teachers, staff, parents and local, regional and national agencies,) share the common goal of enabling children and young people to choose healthy diets and handle food safely. To deliver on these objectives **safefood** recognises that success will depend on building and strengthening partnerships with key stakeholders. The development of these partnerships is fundamental to each of the strategic aims and underpins the ethos of the entire strategy.

We will build effective partnerships with partners in education (both governmental and non-governmental agencies and organisations):

1. by developing and supporting linkages between the food safety agencies, government departments and partners in education, promoting collaboration where appropriate.
2. by developing partnerships with parents organisations
3. by forging links with teachers associations
4. by playing an active part in the education curriculum development processes

Outcome/indicator of success: **safefood** will develop mechanisms for active collaboration and consultation with each of the sectors in education (government departments, NGOs, parents, teachers and other relevant groups)

## II. Optimising safefood's activities portfolio and identifying opportunities

There are many examples of existing initiatives, good practice and resources in place to support food health education. It is important to collaborate with these approaches and assist their development and extension to all children and young people on the island of Ireland. It will be necessary that resources have a curricular context, are accessible and use language and terminology that is appropriate.

We will identify opportunities where **safefood** can support the extension of best practice:

1. by keeping under review the **safefood** portfolio of food health education related activities, materials and resources.  
Outcome/indicator of success: Undertake annual review of materials and projects.
2. by establishing a system for evaluating **safefood**'s food health educational programmes.  
Outcome/indicator of success: Develop a monitoring system for measuring success in the uptake of **safefood**'s education initiatives.
3. by promoting and sharing details of food safety activities and resources to educational partners on the island of Ireland.  
Outcome/indicator of success: Promote and improve the accessibility to information concerning educational resources provided by **safefood** and other departments and agencies in the island of Ireland.
4. by identifying and developing materials and resources for out-of-school and preschool settings  
Outcome/indicator of success: Improved access to resources for these settings.

## III. Whole school approach

Healthy eating has become school policy in many schools and is increasingly promoted through the 'whole school approach'. School policy should also reinforce the basic principles of food hygiene both in the classroom and throughout the school. The schools' health and safety policy and 'whole school approach' offer mechanisms for embedding food safety policies into the school environment.

We will promote the development of food safety policy in schools within a whole school approach:

1. by working with others to promote a whole school approach to food safety and nutrition particularly in schools that are disadvantaged.  
Outcome/indicator of success: **safefood** is actively engaged in dialogue with others who can leverage a whole school approach to food health in all settings.
2. By developing guidelines and procedures to assist schools and out of school settings in integrating food safety within their policy framework  
Outcome/indicator of success: Publish a sample framework and pilot the framework in school and out-of-school settings particularly in disadvantaged schools and settings.
3. by ensuring that all **safefood** resources are promoting a whole school approach to food health.  
Outcome/indicator of success: **safefood** resources are put in the context of the whole school approach

## IV. Food health education

Food health education is provided to all children and students at some stage during their education. **safefood** recognises that there are other statutory organisations in both jurisdictions with lead responsibilities in curriculum development, education and health promotion. There are opportunities, however, to further support these organisations by using the full capacity and flexibility of the curriculum and programmes to promote healthy lifestyles.

Within the formal curriculum and throughout the school setting we will seek opportunities to strengthen food health education and practice:

1. By promoting opportunities for in-service and pre-service training in food safety and nutrition for those working in all four settings.  
Outcome/indicator of success: Examine the feasibility of such input into relevant training programmes
2. by developing food safety resources appropriate for use in learning environment that focus on the
  - i. 4 Cs:- clean, chill, cook and avoiding cross contamination
  - ii. A healthy balanced diet including understanding energy balance and nutritional priorities appropriate to target groups e.g. iron intake in teenage girls.
  - iii. Food productionOutcome/indicator of success: Broaden **safefood**'s portfolio of resources in the 4 Cs, healthy diet, and food production that specifically address the gaps in resources available to the disadvantaged, pre-school and out of school settings.
3. by collaborating with the environmental health service, district councils and departments of education to encourage the adoption of training in basic food hygiene to achieve "hygiene certification".  
Outcome/indicator of success: Increase the uptake of the "hygiene certificate" particularly in disadvantaged post primary and out-of-school settings

## V. **Empowering behaviour change**

Basic food education can make a real difference to the quality of people's lives. In broader terms it involves providing information, helping young people to change their attitudes, practices and behaviour towards healthier lifestyles and empowering them to look after their own health and safety.

We will support students in their understanding of the relationship between food and health and help empower them to take an active role in preventing foodborne and nutrition related diseases:

1. by promoting active citizenship relating to food issues and consumer rights.  
Outcome/indicator of success: To integrate and proof **safefood** resources and initiatives for active citizenship targeting all sectors.
2. by strengthening students' practical skills and behaviours to enable them to choose a safe and healthy diet e.g. understanding labels.  
Outcome/indicator of success: To promote the development of practical skills and behaviours related to food as part of all **safefood**'s initiatives.
3. by promoting hand washing as an essential disease prevention strategy.  
Outcome/indicator of success: Develop and disseminate support materials to schools and out-of-school settings

## **NEXT STEPS**

The detailed operational implementation of these strategic aims and objectives will be developed by **safefood** as part of its annual business planning process in consultation with the sponsoring departments and with the approval of the North South Ministerial Council.

## NOTES

1. Wilkinson, R and Marmot, M (1998) Social Determinants of Health: The Solid Facts World Health Organisation: Geneva.
2. World Health Organisation (1996) Promoting Health through Schools – The World Health Organisations Global School Health Initiative World Health Organisation: Geneva.
3. Aggleton, P., Blenkinshop, S., Chase, E., Eggers, M., Schagen, I., Schagen, Scott, E., Wareick, I and Zuurmond, M. (2004) Evaluation of the impact of the National Healthy School Standard. London: National Foundation for Educational Research and Thomas Coram Research Unit. [www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk/evidenceofimpact](http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk/evidenceofimpact)
4. Healey, K. (2004) Linking children's health and education: progress and challenges in London. Research commissioned by London Health Commission. London: The Kings Fund.
5. [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp)
6. IUHPE (2000) The evidence of health promotion effectiveness. Report for the European Commission. Brighton, U.K: International Union of Health Promotion and Education.
7. Mulvihill, C. and Quigley, R. (2003). The management of obesity and overweight: an analysis of reviews of diet, physical activity and behavioural approaches. London: Health Development Agency.  
[http://194.83.94.67/uhtbin/cgiisirs.exe/1098277680/0/520/EBBD\\_Obesity\\_pdf\\_ft](http://194.83.94.67/uhtbin/cgiisirs.exe/1098277680/0/520/EBBD_Obesity_pdf_ft)
8. EU GREEN PAPER "Promoting healthy diets and physical activity: a European dimension for the prevention of overweight, obesity and chronic diseases" (2005) [http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2005/com2005\\_0637en01.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2005/com2005_0637en01.pdf)
9. Pre-school settings are those that provide a non-compulsory phase of education which is designed for children before they enter primary school.
10. Out-of-school settings are those that provide a bridge between post primary school and work and involve further education and training components.

**Table 1 - Current *safefood* educational resources**

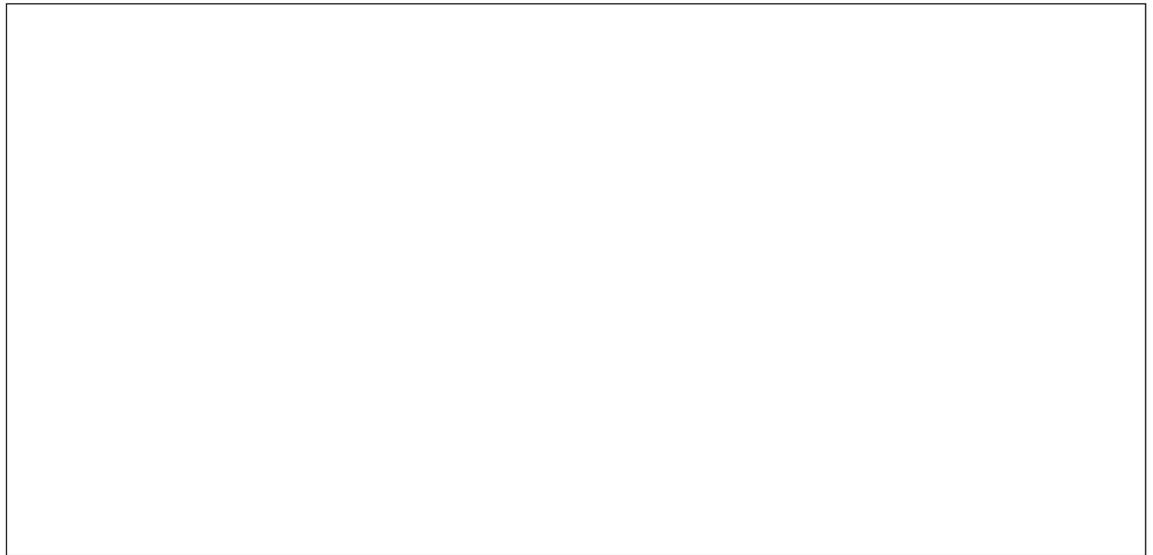
<p><b>Hands of Doom</b> - resource for primary setting Resource kit containing script, soundtrack, ideas for costumes and staging tips to put on a pantomime for primary pupils. Utilising a cross-curricular approach to communicate simple hygiene messages.</p>
<p><b>e-newsletter primary</b> - resource for primary setting Electronic newsletter with 3 features on food safety and nutrition including class activities, lessons plans. Also poll and competition.</p>
<p><b>Tastebuds</b> - resource for primary setting Interactive CD Rom to promote healthy eating amongst 8 to 9 year old children within classroom setting.</p>
<p><b>Educational pages of <i>safefood</i> website</b> - resource for primary and post-primary settings Educational pages of <i>safefood</i> website with information for teachers on food safety and nutrition</p>
<p><b><i>safefood</i> for life ROI</b> - resource for post-primary setting Hard copy teaching resource pack for Basic Certificate in food hygiene course certified by the Environmental Health Officers' Association</p>
<p><b><i>safefood</i> for life NI</b> - resource for post-primary setting CD-Rom teaching resource for Foundation Certificate in food hygiene certified by Chartered Institute of Environmental Health</p>
<p><b>Labelling resource ROI</b> - resource for post-primary setting Hard copy teaching resource consisting of three lessons on labelling and supporting materials.</p>
<p><b>Labelling resource NI</b> - resource for post-primary setting Hard copy teaching resource consisting of three lessons on labelling and supporting materials.</p>
<p><b>e-newsletter post primary</b> - resource for post-primary setting Electronic newsletter with 3 features on food safety and nutrition including class activities, lessons plans. Also poll and competition.</p>
<p><b>Science and Technology in Action</b> - resource for post-primary setting This resource contains a number of lessons for junior science upwards. It consists of hard copy case studies, CDs and support website - one lesson within the resource has been shaped and sponsored by <i>safefood</i>. This lesson concerns specifically senior cycle biology particularly the renal system.</p>
<p><b>Business 2000</b> - resource for post-primary &amp; early undergraduate settings Multimedia resource pack consisting of hard copy material, CD Rom and website <a href="http://www.business2000.ie">www.business2000.ie</a> consisting of a number of case studies that bring business on island of Ireland to life i.e. material is reviewed annually. Associated press material each term Friday in Irish Times. Quizzes.</p>
<p><b>Irish Scientist Yearbook</b> - resource for post-primary and third level settings Hardcopy book with articles on all aspects of science on the island of Ireland.</p>
<p><b>Citizenship and Science Exchange Schools Project</b> - research project Action research project undertaken by Centre for Cross Border Studies to explore Citizenship and Science issues amongst a group of 16 schools both north and south of the border. Three themes explored were Environmental Perspectives, Energy and Food and Nutrition.</p>

## Appendix 2

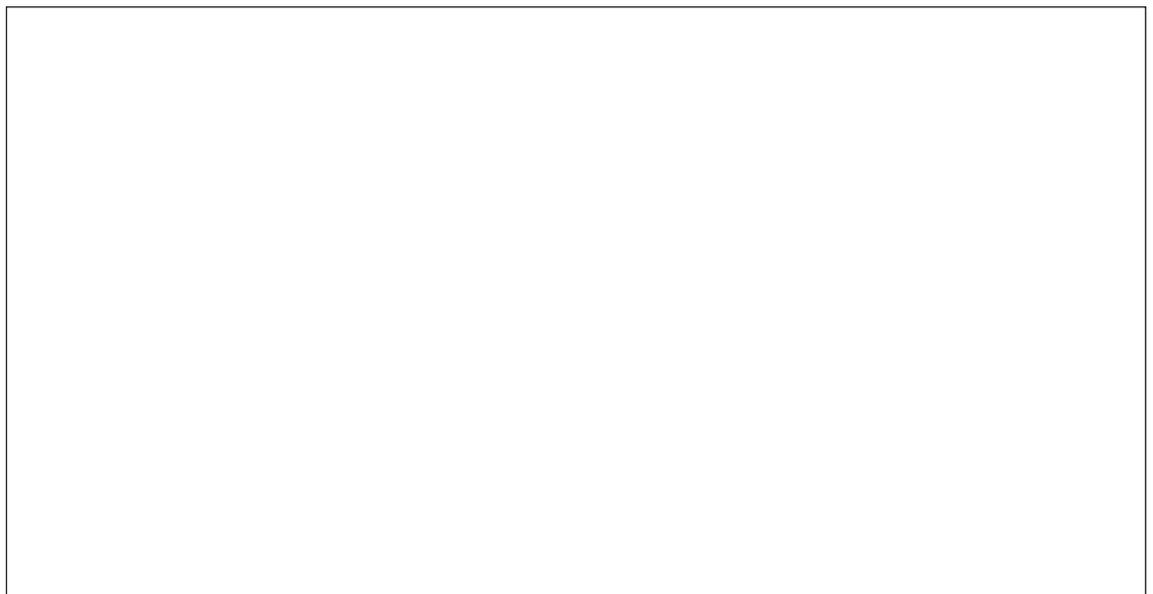
### Equality Consultation on safefood's Promotion Strategy for Educational Settings 2007-2010

**safefood** welcomes any comments on the above strategy. We would particularly welcome comments on the following:

Does the strategy adequately outline how **safefood** will promote equality through collaborative working to develop food health education, resources and programmes?



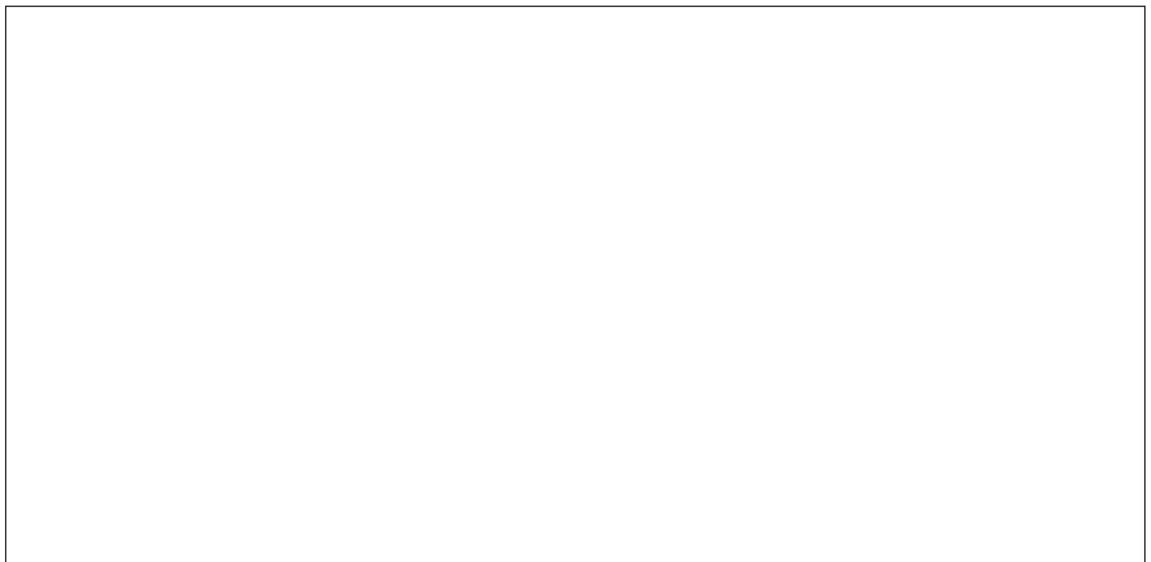
Do the strategic aims and objectives of this **safefood** strategy address key priorities relating to the nine equality groups?



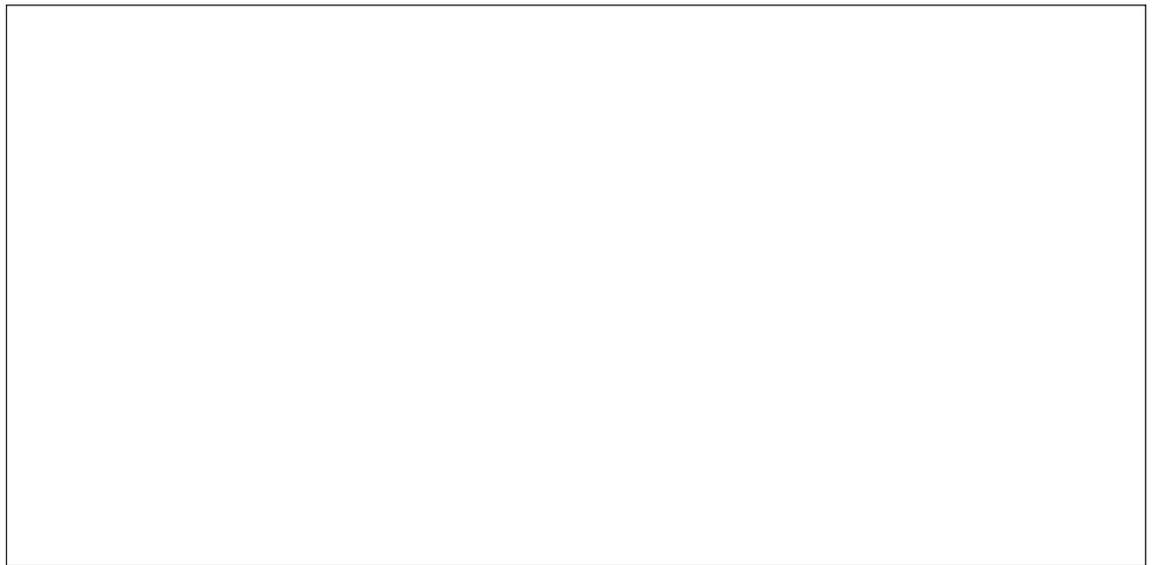
**Do you consider this strategy has any adverse, unhelpful or negative effects on equality of opportunity and/or good relations?**



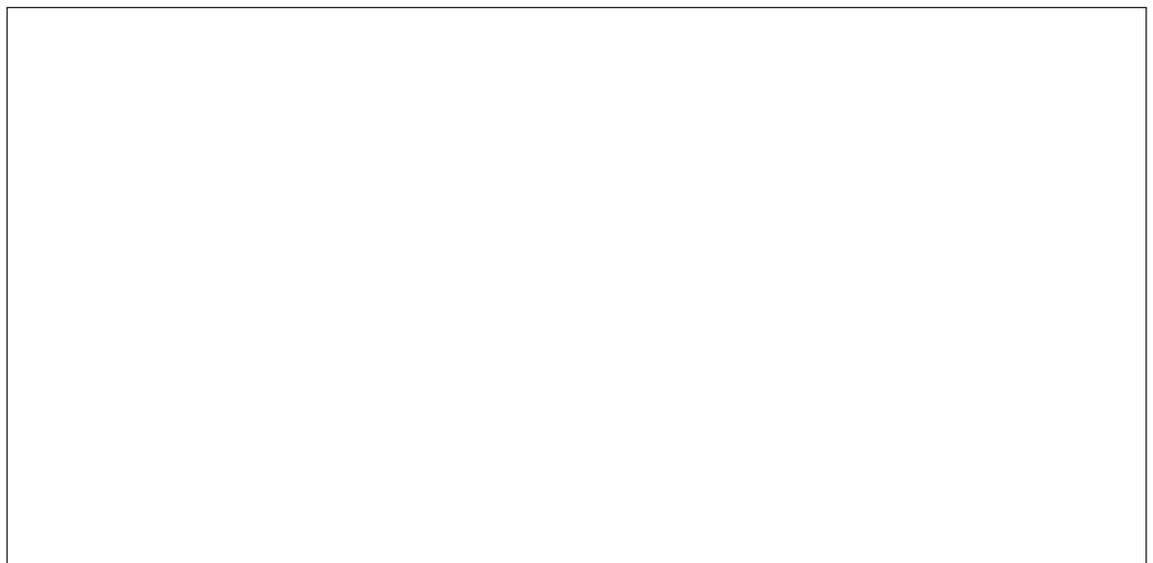
**Can you identify how the policy may be changed or what action could be taken to reduce or eliminate these adverse effects?**



Do you have any other comments you would like to make on either the consultation process or the policy?



Would you be interested in further consultation with *safe*food to move this strategy forward over the next 3 years?



Thank you for your assistance and time. Please return your response to the address below by Friday 23 March 2007.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact:

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