Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

THE GOVERNMENT BUYING STANDARD FOR FOOD AND CATERING SERVICES[1]	
Central government procurers directly or through their catering contractors are required to apply this GBS. Others are encouraged to follow it. It includes a set of minimum mandatory standards for inclusion in tender specifications and contract performance conditions. It also includes some best practice standards which are recommended but not required. The Balanced Scorecard is a supporting tool to use in order to procure food and catering services. It goes beyond production standards, resource efficiency and nutrition helping provide a comprehensive tool for setting technical specifications and evaluating bids. It includes award criteria to reward good practice, and to further stimulate investment and innovation.	
IMPACT AREA	**MANDATORY STANDARDS**
A. Production, Processing and Distribution	
1. Production standards	All food served must be produced in a way that meets UK legislative standards for food production, or equivalent standards. Please refer to Annex for a list of relevant legislation. If in any particular circumstances, this leads to a significant increase in costs which cannot reasonably be compensated for by savings elsewhere, the procuring authority shall agree with the catering contractor or supplier to depart from this requirement and the reasons for doing so shall be noted and recorded. This decision shall be signed off by the Head of Procurement or equivalent senior official of the government department or other public body. Procurers or catering contractors must ensure that food is verifiable as meeting these standards by either

[1] Updated March 2015 to clarify wording regarding sweetened beverages.

	checking that farm inspection systems meet UK standards of inspection or their equivalent, or if not, that they are subject to an independent assurance system.
2. Traceability of fresh, chilled and frozen produce	Catering contractors or food suppliers shall ensure the traceability of fresh, chilled and frozen produce in accordance with current UK legislation or equivalent.[1] [1]Traceability and labelling of beef ,eggs, fish, shellfish, most fruit and vegetables, honey, olive oil, wine and imported poultry is covered by EU regulations. Regulations covering sheepmeat, goatmeat, swinemeat and poultry will come into force in 2015. See here for details.
3. Authenticity	The catering contractor or supplier must have systems in place to enable it to check and ensure authenticity of products.
4. Origin of meat and dairy	In line with the industry principles on country of origin information[1], food and catering service suppliers shall indicate the origin of the meat, meat products and dairy products either on the menu or accompanying literature. If this is not practicable, then at minimum the information must be available and be provided on request to the procuring authority or end consumer. [1]http://www.fdf.org.uk/publicgeneral/principles_on_country_of_origin_information.pdf
Animal Welfare	
5. Animal welfare	All food served must be produced in a way that meets UK legislative standards for animal welfare, or equivalent standards. Please refer to: https://www.gov.uk/animal-welfare UK standards are generally similar to EU standards for food production. There are, however, differences in animal welfare standards for some aspects of pigmeat and broiler chicken production. Broiler chicken, pork and pork products must be compliant with UK standards, as set out in the Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2007 (as amended). If in any particular circumstances, this leads to a significant increase in costs which cannot reasonably be compensated for by savings elsewhere, the

	procuring authority shall agree with the catering contractor or supplier to depart from this requirement and the reasons for doing so shall be noted and recorded. This decision shall be signed off by the Head of Procurement or equivalent senior official of the government department or other public body. In such an eventuality, EU standards shall be met at minimum.
6. Eggs	All eggs, including fresh in-shell, liquid and powdered eggs, are sourced from systems that do not use conventional cages. If from a caged system, enriched cages must be used.
Environment	
7. Higher environmental Production standards	At least 10% of the total monetary value of primary commodity (i.e. raw ingredient) food and drink procured shall be inspected and certified to: i) Publicly available Integrated Production (IP) or Integrated Farm Management (IFM) standards that require the systematic and integrated management, at farm level, of: - natural habitats & biodiversity; - prevention and control of pollution; - energy, water and waste; - management of soils, landscape and watercourses; and contain within their scope requirements that are consistent with the definition of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) contained in European Council Directive 2009/128/EC OR ii) Publicly available organic standards compliant with European Council Regulation 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products. NOTE: The 10% is of the total monetary value and can be made up of any combination of commodities allowing the procurer flexibility to find the best solutions for their circumstances.
8. Palm oil	From the end of 2015 all palm oil (including palm kernel oil and products derived from palm oil) used for

	cooking and as an ingredient in food must be sustainably produced[1]. [1]Support and advice on procuring sustainable palm oil is available from http://www.cpet.org.uk/ (e-mail cpet@efeca.com, telephone 01305 236 100).
9. Fish	All fish[1] are demonstrably sustainable with all wild-caught fish meeting the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (includes Marine Stewardship Council certification and Marine Conservation Society 'fish to eat', or equivalent). No 'red list' or endangered species of farmed or wild fish shall be used (Marine Conservation Society 'fish to avoid'). [1]Fish includes all fish including where it is an ingredient in a composite product.
Variety and seasonality	
10. Seasonal produce	In respect of the use of fresh produce, menus shall be designed to reflect the natural growing or production period for the UK, and in-season produce shall be highlighted on menus.
B. Nutrition	
11. Reducing Salt	Vegetables and boiled starchy foods such as rice, pasta and potatoes, are cooked without salt.
	Salt is not available on tables.
	At least 50% of meat and meat products, breads, breakfast cereals, soups and cooking sauces, ready meals and pre-packed sandwiches (procured by volume) meet Responsibility Deal salt targets and all stock preparations are lower salt varieties (i.e. below 0.6g/100mls).
12. Increasing Fruit and Vegetable Consumption	At least 50% of the volume of desserts available is based on fruit – which can be fresh, canned in fruit juice, dried or frozen.
	A portion of fruit is cheaper than a portion of hot or cold dessert.
	Meal deals include a starchy carbohydrate, vegetables and 1 portion of fruit.
13. Reducing Saturated	Meat and meat products, biscuits, cakes and pastries

Fat	(procured by volume) are lower in saturated fat where available. At least 50% of hard yellow cheese has a maximum total fat content of 25g/100g; at least 75% of ready meals contain less than 6g saturated fat per portion; at least 75% of milk is reduced fat; and at least 75% of oils and spreads are based on unsaturated fats.
14. Cereals	At least 50% of breakfast cereals (procured by volume) are higher in fibre (i.e. more than 6g/100g) and do not exceed 22.5g/100g total sugars.
15. Fish	If caterers serve lunch and an evening meal, fish is provided twice a week, one of which is oily. If caterers only serve lunch or an evening meal, an oily fish is available at least once every 3 weeks.
C. Resource Efficiency	
16. Water	Tap water is visible and freely available and such provision is promoted.
	Pre-bottled water (mineral or spring) is not included in the hospitality menu.
17. Reducing Landfill	Where waste management is included in the contract, facilities shall be available to staff and customers for recycling cans, bottles, cardboard and plastics.
18. Food waste	Food and catering supplier with **off-site** meal preparation operations shall provide evidence of a systematic approach to managing and minimising the impacts of waste throughout their direct operations i.e. those operations over which they have direct financial and/or operational control. This shall include evidence of a continual improvement cycle of objective setting, measurement, analysis, review and the implementation of improvements actions. Catering service suppliers which will supply **on-site** catering services shall: • Take steps to minimise food waste in their on-site operations by creating a food waste minimisation plan, describing what actions they will undertake[1] • Review and revise the actions they are taking with suitable regularity so as to continue to reduce food waste wherever possible; and • Feed back to clients on progress and results with suitable regularity. [1]A list of potential aspects and actions is provided in the guidance for implementing the Government Buying Standard for Food & Catering. See the 'indicative checklist' in section 19: http://sd.defra.gov.uk/documents/GBS-guidance-food.pdf
	The contracting authority shall check whether a separate food waste collection service can be

	provided. If the service can be provided, while achieving value for money, then it shall meet the best practice standard.
19. Energy Management	**Energy management policy (off-site catering operations)** Catering service contractors with off-site preparation kitchen operations shall have in place an energy management policy appropriate to the nature and scale of their energy use and consumption. Their policy shall commit the organisation to the continual improvement of its energy performance **Energy management policy (on-site catering operations)** On-site catering operations shall be run in accordance with the host building's overall energy management policy.
20. Catering equipment	The minimum mandatory Government Buying Standards for catering equipment apply as well as the duty under Article 6 of the Energy Efficiency Directive. Kitchen taps shall have flow rates of not less than 5l/min delivered through either automatic shut off, screw down/lever, or spray taps; and non-flow rate elements shall meet the Enhanced Capital Allowance Scheme (ECA) Water Technology List criteria.
21. Paper products	The minimum mandatory Government Buying Standards for paper products shall apply where relevant: e.g. kitchen paper, napkins and cardboard cups.
D. Social-economic	
22. Ethical trading	At least 50% of tea and coffee is fairly traded
23. Inclusion of SMEs	Provide opportunity for separate contracts for supply and distribution; and advertise all food-related tenders to SMEs.
24. Equality and diversity	The catering contractor or food supplier shall have a written equality and diversity policy to help ensure it and its sub-contractors are compliant with employment law provisions in the UK Equality Act (2010). In addition, to ensure the procuring authority meets its public sector equality duty, the contractor or food supplier shall have a policy in place as to carrying out its business, such as in terms of awarding sub-contracts or procuring goods, in a way that is fair, open

	and transparent.
IMPACT AREA	**BEST PRACTICE**
A. Production, Processing and Distribution	
25. Environmental production standards	At least 40% of the total monetary value of primary commodity (i.e. raw ingredient) food and drink procured shall be inspected and certified to: Publicly available Integrated Production standards or Integrated Farm Management standards; or Publicly available organic standards compliant with European Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products.
B. Nutrition	
26. Snacks	Savoury snacks are only available in packet sizes of 30g or less.
27. Confectionery	Confectionery and packet sweet snacks are in the smallest standard single serve portion size available within the market and not to exceed 250kcal.
28. Sugar Sweetened Beverages	All sugar sweetened beverages to be no more than 330ml pack size and no more than 20% of beverages (procured by volume) may be sugar sweetened. No less than 80% of beverages (procured by volume) may be low calorie/no added sugar beverages (including fruit juice and water)
29. Menu analysis	Menu cycles are analysed to meet stated nutrient based standards relevant to the major population subgroup of the catering provision.
30. Calorie and allergen labelling	Menus (for food and beverages) include calorie and allergen labelling.
C. Resource Efficiency	
31. Environmental Management Systems	The contractor must prove its technical and professional capability to perform the environmental aspects of the contract through: an environmental management system (EMS) for catering services (such as EMAS, ISO 14001or equivalent).
32. Packaging waste	Packaging waste in delivering food for the catering service is minimised. i. tertiary and secondary packaging consists of at least 70% recycled cardboard; and ii. where other materials are used, the tertiary packaging must either be reusable or all materials contain some recycled content.

33. Food waste	The food waste minimisation plan includes actions and estimated quantifiable reductions. The supplier ensures that appropriate training is given to staff to ensure best practice in terms of food waste minimisation. Surplus food that is fit for consumption is distributed for consumption rather than sent for disposal as waste e.g. gifted to charities / food banks.
34. Energy efficiency	The on-site catering operation is run in accordance with the Carbon Trust food preparation and sector guide (CTV035).
35. Waste minimisation	Food and drink to be consumed in restaurants and canteens must be served using cutlery, glassware, and crockery which are reusable and washable.
36. Catering equipment	The best practice Government Buying Standards for catering equipment apply where relevant: o Domestic Dishwashers o Commercial cooking equipment, including ovens, fryers and steam cookers o Domestic fridge freezers
37. Paper products	Disposable paper products (e.g. napkins, kitchen tissue, take-away food containers) meet the requirements of the EU Ecolabel, or equivalent.
D. Social-economic	
38. Ethical trading	All tea, coffee, cocoa and bananas are certified as fairly traded.
	Where food is sourced from states that have not ratified the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), or are not covered by the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprise, the supplier of catering and food services shall carry out due diligence against ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998). Risk based audits have been conducted against social / ethical supply chain standards e.g. SA8000 compliance, audit evidence for Ethical Trade Initiative (ETI) Base Code compliance, or equivalent. Working with suppliers to improve conditions through pro-active, direct engagement programmes.
	Dairy products meet the Voluntary Code of Practice on

	Best Practice on Contractual Relationships: http://www.dairyuk.org/2014-04-23-11-00-42/vcop-home. Measures are taken to ensure fair dealing with farmers through, for example, the guidance contained in the Groceries Supply Code of Practice: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/groceries-supply-code-of-practice/groceries-supply-code-of-practice
39. Inclusion of SMEs	i) Contracts are broken into "lots" to facilitate bids from small producers; ii) Contract documents are simplified, with a degree of standardisation. Requirements are clearly stated, up front; iii) Contract lengths are geared to achieve the best combination of price and product; iv) Longer-term contracts are offered to provide stability; v) Tenders are widely advertised; vi) Potential bidders are advised on how to tender for contracts; vii) Projects to help small producers do business are undertaken; viii) Social enterprises are encouraged to compete for contracts; ix) Small producers and suppliers are made aware of sub-contractors/suppliers, so that they know who to do business with; x) Competition on quality rather than brand **Fair treatment of suppliers** xi) Suppliers of food and catering services provide fair and prompt payment terms for their supply chain e.g. 30 days maximum. xii) Length of contracts and notice period are agreed fairly with suppliers.