

Reporting on the Coalition Government's commitment on food procurement

The coalition Government set out an agreement which included a commitment to “ensure food procured by government departments, and eventually the whole public sector, meets British standards of production wherever this can be achieved without increasing overall cost”.

Government Buying Standards (GBS) are mandatory for central Government and its executive agencies, ALBs, NDPBs etc.

The Cabinet Office (CO) is committed to working with its Facilities Management Providers (FMPs) in providing food and catering services that take full account and comply with:

- The Government’s Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative;
- All relevant EU and UK legislation and standards relating to the provision of catering services;
- Current and emerging recognised industry standards in respect of catering technology and service provision and
- The Sustainable Procurement Policy Statement and the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Estate.

The Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering were introduced on the 16th June 2011. Our Sustainable Procurement policies include the intention to embed the GBS in departmental and centralised procurement contracts, within the context of Government’s overarching priorities of value for money and streamlining procurement processes.

In keeping with standard GBS practice, there is a 3-month lead-in time for Government contracts to begin compliance in respect of new contracts and they are encouraged to comply where possible in respect of existing contracts. CO is currently collecting data on its estate following recent machinery of government changes to form accurate baselines to measure its progress in the future.

2010-2011	£ %
Proportion of food by value which has been produced to UK production standards or equivalent.	£56,500 75%
Action taken or in progress to ensure future contracts reflect the Government’s commitment on food produced to UK or equivalent standards.	CO will be working with its FMPs to ensure that they meet and aim to exceed all aspects the Government Buying Standards for food and catering