



**Summary Report of Local Authorities'
Activity and Key Findings from the Imported
Food Sampling and Surveillance Grants
2007-08**

Summary

In the 2007/08 Imported Foods Sampling and Surveillance Grants programme, 52 imported food grants were awarded and 208 UK Local authorities (LAs) took part in the £900,000 programme. Local authority officers took 4156 food samples and 366 of these were found to be adverse (9%). 20 samples failed on microbiological examination and 346 failed following a chemical analysis. 671 were found to be unsatisfactory following a labelling check. Over 4781 different analyses were carried out on the 4156 samples.

The results can be broken down into seven main areas of chemical testing: mycotoxins, inorganic contaminants, microbiological examination, additives, other contaminants and residues, labelling claims (where a chemical test was carried out) and food irradiation. The highest level of positives were found for labelling claims where 11% out of 1472 analyses carried out were adverse. Testing for illegal food irradiation treatment showed 10% adverse samples (out of 146 analyses). Analysis for mycotoxins and additives also showed a high rate of adverse results with 9% failing (out of 857 analyses) and 8% (out of 554 analyses) respectively.

Different food commodities were sampled at different rates as part of the programme, in particular there was a focus on foods from Asia and baby/infant foods and formula.

The highest percentage of total samples originated from Asia (58%); Asia also had the highest rate of adverse samples (61% of total adverse samples). China was the country from which most samples originated (485 samples); Bangladesh showed the highest rate of adverse samples (20% of a total of 41 samples were adverse).

The report contains detailed comments by FSA policy divisions on the different areas of chemical testing.

Introduction

The Food Standards Agency's Imported Food Sampling programme remains a successful mechanism by which financial support is passed to local authorities to undertake additional food sampling as part of the cross government initiative to achieve a step change improvement in imported food. The 2007/08 project was the fifth year that the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has run this programme.

In 2007-08, £900,000 was allocated for this work, bringing the total investment made by the FSA over the past five years to approximately £4.4 million.

The joint LACORS (the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services) and FSA Sampling Co-ordination Working Group met on 3 May 2007 to evaluate the preliminary results of the 2006/2007 project. The group recognised the value that this continuing programme offers both in the financial support given to local authorities, and for policy officers within the FSA.

As with previous years, priority areas were identified by FSA policy officials, LACORS, local authority enforcement officers and Public Analysts. The Sampling Co-ordination Working Group agreed the following 8 priorities at the 3 May meeting. Once again, it was agreed that local authorities should submit bids that mapped the priorities onto the local situation and reflected local risk assessment, and that bids should be submitted in terms of products and quantities of imported food available in their region.

Priority areas for 2007/08 Imported Food Sampling and Surveillance Programme.

a) Mycotoxins, particularly:

- Aflatoxins in nuts and nut products, spices and edible seeds
- Ochratoxin A in spices, coffee and red wine
- Fumonisin in maize and maize products

Although the level of adverse samples are consistently high, the number of samples taken as 'formal' samples (i.e. those samples taken in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice¹) is generally low, which limits enforcement activity (less than a third of samples taken in the 2006/07 programme were taken formally and less than a quarter of all adverse samples were formal). This year Authorities were encouraged to focus on taking samples 'formally', especially when sampling for mycotoxin contamination.

b) Other Contaminants

- **Organic - PAHs** in smoked food, vegetable oils and crustaceans/bivalve molluscs. The Agency wanted to obtain data on the levels of PAH in the above commodities because although limits are currently in place

¹ The Code of Practice sets out instructions and criteria to which the local and port health authorities (food authorities) should have regard to when engaged in the enforcement of food law. Food authorities must follow and implement the provisions of the code that apply to them.

(EC no. 1881/2006), the Commission are about to undertake a review and data is needed to feed into this process.

- **Inorganic**

- **Tin levels in canned foods.** The Commission is currently looking at revising permitted levels of tin in canned beverages (e.g. fruit juices etc), and the FSA is keen to gather as much information as possible on levels in imported products.
- **Lead and cadmium in mushrooms.** The current legal limit for these heavy metals in mushrooms is being reviewed by the Commission. The Agency requested officers to sample both wild and cultivated samples of mushroom, preferably exotic fresh species although some dried samples can be taken.
- **Arsenic in rice products.** At present there are no EC limits set, but the Commission is looking to set some in the future for certain products and data is needed to inform this process.

c) Claims on foods. Officers were requested to sample a range of food items that make any type of claim. Examples of this include claims such as: meat content, organic, gluten-free, vegetarian, GM-free, species label and nutritional composition.

d) Infant foods/ formula. In the light of the Ugandan baby food incident in May 2007 the FSA requested that officers sample a range of products for microbiological contamination as well as chemical contamination, composition and labelling. Testing focused on the following:

- **Infant formula** - a food intended for particular nutritional use by infants in good health during the first four to six months of life and satisfying by itself the nutritional requirements of such infants.

- **Follow-on formula** - a food intended for particular nutritional use by infants in good health who are over four months and constituting the principal liquid element in a progressively diversified diet.

- **Processed-cereal based foods for infants and young children** - foods for particular nutritional use within the categories listed below, fulfilling the particular nutritional requirements of infants and young children in good health and intended for use by infants while they are being weaned, and by young children as a supplement to their diet or for their progressive adaptation to ordinary food.

- Simple cereals which are or have to be reconstituted with milk or other appropriate nutritious liquids.
- Cereals with an added high protein food which are or have to be reconstituted with water or other protein-free liquid.
- Pastas which are to be used after cooking in boiling water or other appropriate liquids.
- Rusks and biscuits which are to be used either directly or, after pulverisation, with the addition of water, milk or other suitable liquids.

- **Baby foods** - foods for particular nutritional use fulfilling the particular requirements of infants and young children in good health and intended for use by infants while they are being weaned, and by young children as a supplement to their diet for their progressive adaptation to ordinary food, but excludes processed cereal-based foods.

e) Microbiological examination of non - alcoholic beverages and fresh foods. Officers were asked to sample foods aimed at children for microbiological examination.

f) Foods from Asia. This category was kept purposefully general as over the last 4 years the majority of adverse reports identified in this programme were for food sourced from Asia. The intention was to allow officers to sample food items that may cause them concern/ arouse their interest when visiting ethnic supermarkets. This approach has the potential of identifying any emerging risks.

g) Salt levels in imported food. The FSA is working closely with UK industry to reduce levels of salt and so it was decided that it would be appropriate to look at the levels in foods imported from third countries, compared with that declared on the label.

h) Using local knowledge and expertise. This provides a useful mechanism for local authorities to investigate imported food issues that may be specific to their area, or follow up issues that have been identified in previous programmes. Officers were asked to consider local priorities and take into account assessment of risk based on issues such as the scale and type of food business and the number and type of any importers in the area. This approach is useful in terms of identifying any emerging risks. In 2007 many samples were taken by local authorities under this heading including foods tested for food additives, pesticides, veterinary residues, 3-mcpd, acrylamide, food contact materials, erucic acid and irradiation.

Appraisal of Grant Applications

A panel made up of Agency officials reviewed all the submitted bids at a meeting on 9 July 2007. The 2007/08 programme started on 1 August and all final reports were due to be submitted by the end of January 2008. In total 52 grants were awarded to 206 participating authorities.

Templates were prepared for each authority and results were submitted mostly to time. Authorities were asked to provide details of enforcement activities relating to adverse samples.

Categories of Food Sampled

Local authority officers took 4156 food samples as part of this year's programme: 366 of these were found to be adverse failing on microbiological examination (20 samples) or chemical analysis (346); 671 were found to be unsatisfactory following a labelling check; and 24% of the foods were sampled formally. Table 1 shows the total number of samples taken by officers as part of this programme by food commodity type. Local authorities were asked to indicate the total number of samples that failed to meet legal standards – either on chemical or microbiological analysis. Where a sample failed on multiple checks, officers were asked to report this just once, as a single adverse sample. Details of how each sample failed are discussed later. This table represents the wide range of commodity types sampled as part of this programme.

Table 1 Frequency of formal, informal and adverse food sampled by product type.

	Total no sampled	Number of adverse chemical or microbiological samples	Number of formal samples taken
baby and infant foods & formula	66	4	9
bakery products and cereals	148	17	28
beverages	338	20	90
canned foods	11	0	5
cheese products	8	0	0
confectionery	127	11	41
dairy products	8	0	4
desserts	12	1	8
egg and egg products	3	0	1
fats and oils	34	4	8
fish products	380	27	73
food colouring	3	0	3
food contact materials	28	0	0
food supplements / herbal products	59	21	42
foods for particular nutritional uses	25	2	0
fruit - canned	100	3	18
fruit - dried	144	14	63
fruit - fresh	146	2	85
fruit - products and processed	14	3	3
herbs - dried	3	1	0
herbs - fresh	43	6	14
honey	15	1	8
meat - exotic	6	1	0
meat - products and processed	133	21	18
milk and milk products	6	0	2
miscellaneous	3	1	0
mushrooms	113	7	2
noodles	60	6	12
nuts and nut products	254	39	82
pasta and pasta products	13	4	1

ready-made meals	27	3	2
rice and rice products	360	8	55
saucers	351	50	34
seaweed products	7	4	1
seeds and seed products	115	18	35
shellfish products	90	6	31
snacks	55	6	14
soups and broths	28	4	3
spices	391	18	83
sugar and syrups	7	0	0
vegetables - beans and pulses	29	3	10
vegetables - canned	21	0	0
vegetables - fresh	135	10	60
vegetables - products and processed	209	20	47
wine	28	0	5
totals	4156	366	1000

Types of Analysis

Table 2 shows that labelling claims, irradiation, mycotoxins and additives had the highest percentage level of adverse results per number of samples tested for each analysis type. Over 4781 different analyses were carried out on the 4156 samples. This figure includes 280 samples sent for microbiological examination and the remaining were tested for chemical analysis. Labelling claims data in table 2 relate to chemical testing of label claims as opposed to the labelling checks carried out by Public Analysts, where the label is checked against the relevant legislation without chemical testing being carried out.

Table 2 Frequency of samples analysed by type of analysis.

Analysis type	Number of Analyses	Number of adverse samples	% of samples found to be adverse by total number tested in a given analysis type
Mycotoxins	857	77	9%
Inorganic contaminants	1082	28	3%
Microbiological examination	280	12	4%
Additives	554	45	8%
Other contaminants and residues	390	29	7%
Labelling claims ²	1472	161	11%
Irradiation	146	14	10%
Total	4781	366	

² Excludes general labelling checks carried out by PAs. It relates instead to claims including nutritional composition, organic, salt levels, GMO free, natural, low fat, low sugar, allergy claims where a chemical analysis is required to test the claim.

Country of Origin

Origin of Samples

Table 3 below shows the number of samples taken per continent.

The food samples taken during this programme originated from 121 countries, with 11% of samples being identified as coming from multiple regions or origin unknown. Annex 2 shows a breakdown of countries by continent.

Table 3 Number and percentage of samples by originating continents.

Continent	Number of samples	Percentage compared to total sample number
Asia	2426	58%
South America	264	6%
North America	299	7%
Europe	301	7%
Africa	299	7%
Oceania	104	3%
Unknown and Products of Various Countries	463	11%
Total	4156	

As with previous years, the greatest number of samples was sourced from Asia (approximately 58%).

With the exception of Oceania, from which 104 food samples were taken for analysis, the distribution of samples taken from the remaining continents was approximately even.

Of the 463 samples for which no single country source could be identified, 49 were appropriately labelled as being a “product of several or various countries”. The remaining 414 samples were classified as “unknown”. This may have been due to the product not displaying a country of origin, or because the enforcement officer did not record it. In the former case, where failure to display a country of origin represents a labelling error, the enforcement officer should have recorded this as an adverse sample and it would appear as an unsatisfactory report.

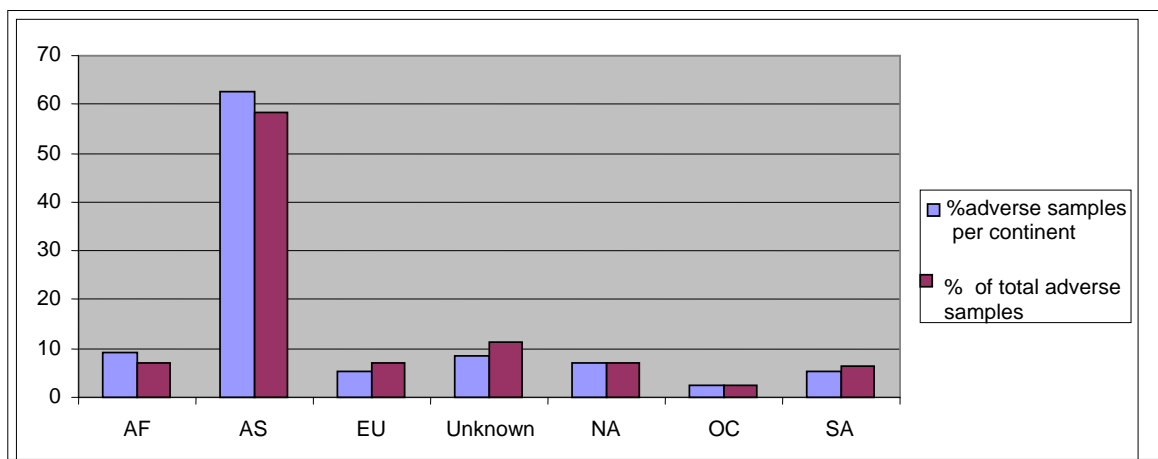
Origin of Adverse Samples

Of the 4156 samples taken as part of this programme, 366 were found to have failed on a microbiological or a chemical analysis (including labelling claims where a chemical analysis was carried out).

Figure 1 breaks down the percentage of samples from each continent that were found to be adverse (% adverse samples per continent) along side the

percentage adverse samples taken from each continent (% of total adverse samples).

Figure1 Originating continent of adverse samples.



Asia was the source for the highest number of adverse samples, with 225 of the 366 adverse samples. As 58% of all foods sampled originated from Asia and 61% of all the Asian samples were found to be adverse, the food sourced from Asia can be said to have a comparatively high failure rate (for a detailed breakdown of the number of adverse samples, by product type and analysis type for each continent see Annex 3).

Table 4 – Breakdown of samples from Asia into Country of origin with the number of samples taken, the total numbers of adverse samples and the analysis type where failures occurred.

	Number sampled	Total adverse	Labelling claims	Contaminants	Mycotoxins	Additives	Heavy metals	Microbiology	Irradiation
Bangladesh	41	8	1	1	6				
Burma	7	0							
China	485	40	13	5	1	3	12		6
Georgia	2	0							
Hong Kong	32	3	2	1					
India	458	30	13	3	6	4	2		2
Indonesia	47	7				7			
Iran	64	1			1				
Israel	56	2	1		1				
Japan	86	6	3			3			
Java	3	0							
Korea	27	3	3						
Laos	3	0							
Lebanon	33	6			5	1			
Malaysia	108	9	4		2	3			

Maldives	7	0							
Middle East	1	0							
Mongolia	1	0							
Myanmar	10	0							
Nepal	1	0							
Pakistan	159	23	8	3	1	10	1		
Philippines	71	16	10	1	5				
Saudi Arabia	17	2			2				
Singapore	22	1	1						
South Korea	5	1				1			
Sri Lanka	49	5		2		3			
Syria	12	0							
Taiwan	56	5	5						
Thailand	381	31	19	7		1	1	2	1
Turkey	119	19	2		13	2	1	1	
UAE	6	0							
Vietnam	52	7	2		1			4	
Yemen	5	0							

Table 4 shows the breakdown of the samples from Asia into 33 countries of origin. Of the 2426 samples taken from Asian countries the highest number were taken from China which made up 20% of all the Asian samples taken. India, Thailand and Pakistan were the next highest making up 19%, 16% and 7% of the Asian samples respectively.

The highest rates of adverse sample per total sampled from a particular country were as follows: Bangladesh (20% of the 41 samples were adverse); China (18% of samples 485 were adverse); Thailand (14% of 381 were adverse); India (13% of 458 samples were adverse).

Samples from Asia tested for labelling claims made up the largest proportion of adverse samples with 39% of samples being found unsatisfactory. Adverse samples in relation to Mycotoxins, additives, contaminants and heavy metals made up 20%, 17%, 10% and 8% of the total adverse samples from Asia

Adverse Analyses

A number of foodstuffs were analysed for a range of chemical and microbial analyses. Most samples were additionally submitted for labelling check or examination (not related to any chemical examination); details on the results of these labelling checks are discussed later in the report.

When considering the frequency of the food types that were found to be adverse, it must be remembered that the foods sampled and the types of analysis undertaken as part of this programme were directed by the Sampling Co-ordination Working Group and as such were biased towards certain commodities.

Table 5 Frequency of adverse samples by analysis and product type³

Food `	Food Category	Number of adverse samples	Number of samples	% adverse samples per food category and analysis type	% of adverse compared with the total adverse for the 2007/08 programme
Additives	beverages	3	31	10	1
	confectionary	11	91	12	3
	fish products	9	69	13	2
	Foods for particular nutritional uses	1	1	100	<1%
	fruit - products & processed	1	2	50	<1%
	rice and rice products	1	3	33	<1%
	sauces	8	113	7	2
	snacks	1	4	25	<1%
	spices	5	116	4	1
	vegetables products & processed	5	33	15	1
labelling & claims (includes GMO; organic; nutritional composition) relating to a chemical analysis	baby and infant foods & formula	1	20	5	<1%
	bakery products and cereals	15	95	16	4
	beverages	12	53	23	3
	desserts	1	9	11	<1%
	fats and oils	1	7	14	<1%
	fish products	14	125	11	4
	Foods for particular nutritional uses	1	39	3	<1%
	food supplements / herbal products	2	6	33	1
	fruit - fresh, canned, dried & processed	8	127	6	2
	meat - exotic	1	6	17	<1%
	meat - products and processed	20	106	19	5
	miscellaneous	1	4	25	<1%
	mushrooms	1	7	14	<1%
	noodles	6	53	11	2
	nuts and nut products	3	25	12	1
	pasta and pasta products	4	10	40	1
ready-made meals	2	20	10	1	
rice and rice products	7	115	6	2	

³ Food categories / analysis types where no adverse sample was recorded are not included in this table (therefore more samples were taken than have been recorded here).

	saucers	32	228	14	9
	seaweed products	2	5	40	1
	seeds and seed products	1	7	14	<1%
	shellfish products	2	14	14	1
	snacks	5	41	12	1
	soups and broths	4	23	17	1
	spices	1	38	3	<1%
	vegetables - fresh	3	107	3	1
	vegetables - products and processed	11	126	9	3
other	fats and oils	3	17	18	1
contaminants and residues	fish products	3	140	2	1
	food supplements / herbal products	4	22	18	1
	honey	1	7	14	<1%
	ready-made meals	1	2	50	<1%
	saucers	8	72	11	2
	shellfish products	3	60	5	1
	vegetables - fresh	6	11	55	2
inorganic	beverages	5	153	3	1
contaminants	fish products	1	61	2	<1%
	food supplements / herbal products	7	55	13	2
	fruit - canned	1	93	1	<1%
	mushrooms	6	104	6	2
	saucers	2	23	9	1
	seaweed products	2	3	67	1
	vegetables - products and processed	4	64	6	1
irradiation	food supplements / herbal products	8	30	27	2
	herbs - dried	1	2	50	<1%
	spices	5	38	13	1
microbiology	baby and infant foods & formula	3	38	8	1
	herbs - fresh	6	39	15	2
	meat - products and processed	1	6	17	<1%
	shellfish products	1	4	25	<1%
	vegetables - fresh	1	10	10	<1%
mycotoxins	bakery products and cereals	2	39	5	1
	fruit - dried	12	102	12	3
	nuts and nut products	36	216	17	10
	seeds and seed products	17	101	17	5
	spices	7	242	3	2
	vegetables - beans and pulses	3	15	20	1

Table 5 gives a breakdown of the unsatisfactory results by type of analysis and product type. Where no adverse sample was recorded data for a food category are not included in this table. Total numbers of samples taken per analysis test (and the percentage adverse samples) are shown in table 2.

Additives – including non-permitted and/ or illegal colours

There were comparatively high failure rates for confectionary products and sauces, but these should be compared with the rates of testing of these product types. The testing focused on product types that have received negative results previously. The majority of negative results have arisen where a legally permitted additive in the EU has been used, but to a higher maximum level than is permitted, or in a product where it is not permitted. This is likely to have happened where an additive permitted in a 3rd country (and in the Codex Standards) has been used according to local laws e.g. maximum permitted levels, and not EU laws. In these cases it is unlikely to raise safety concerns. Local Authorities and Border Inspection Posts continue to focus their testing on these products.

Contaminants

Mycotoxins

Samples were procured for mycotoxin analysis to reflect current legislation and in those food groups where there may be an emerging risk from mycotoxin contamination. Samples of baby foods, beverages including wine, pasta, rice, snack products and processed vegetable products were, in general, found to be compliant with the regulatory limits set in Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1881/2006. Categories of foods where some samples were found to be non-compliant in respect of aflatoxin limits include dried fruit (~12%), nuts and nut products (~4%) and spices (~2%). Two further spice samples (~1%) were found with levels of ochratoxin A higher than those limits currently under consideration. There were a significant number of adverse samples for commodities where specific limits do not yet exist such as seeds/seed products where 17% were found with high levels of aflatoxins (17%); consideration is currently being given to setting limits for these food products in Regulation 1881/2006. All non-compliant samples taken during the surveillance work were dealt with in an appropriate manner so as to minimise the risk to the consumer.

Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs)

The number of samples exceeding the regulatory limits for benzo(a)pyrene was 12 out of a total of 203 reported results, i.e. a rate of about 6%. This is an encouraging result in view of the fact that the samples tested were generally targeted as being at the highest risk. The exceedances included four samples of sesame oil, which is consistent with previous Rapid Alerts that suggest sesame oil may be prone to contamination. The four samples were from four different countries of origin, suggesting that any problem is related to the product rather than the country of origin. The other exceedances were for smoked and dried fish. Again these were from a range of countries of origin (Africa, Far East and 'unknown'). The majority of smoked and dried fish samples were found to be acceptable, suggesting that problems identified in previous years have largely been addressed. Exceedances were notified through the RASFF but, since they were of only minor concern, no other follow-up action was or is deemed necessary. However, PAH limits are currently under review, including the possibility of extending regulatory control from benzo(a)pyrene alone to include

chrysene, benz(a)anthracene and benzo(b)fluoranthene. Any PAH data collected in the future will therefore be valuable in informing negotiations with the European Commission.

Acrylamide

Levels ranged from below the reporting limit of 30 µg/kg to 2665 µg/kg. Of the 17 samples analysed 5 were below the reporting limit of 30 µg/kg. The highest level at 2665 µg/kg was found in a sample of potato snacks from Thailand. Levels of acrylamide found were in line with those found in previous and current surveys of acrylamide in food with highest levels occurring in potato and cereal products.

There is no regulatory limit for acrylamide and no practical ways to completely avoid acrylamide in food as it is inherent in a range of foods (especially those which are rich in carbohydrates) due to the processing the raw food undergoes but levels have to be kept as low as reasonably practicable. The Codex Alimentarius Commission⁴ is currently developing a code of practice as a means of disseminating strategies that will facilitate the reduction of acrylamide in internationally traded foodstuffs and includes established minimisation techniques that have been demonstrated to be effective in a commercial setting.

3-monochloropropane-1,2-diol (3-mcpd)

A total of 16 samples were tested to monitor compliance with the regulatory limit for 3-MCPD (based on 40% dry matter content), in acid-hydrolysed vegetable protein and soy sauce of 0.02 mg/kg (20 µg/kg) which has been in place since 5 April 2002. This limit was originally set by Commission Regulation (EC) No 466/2001 and retained Regulation (EC) 1881/2006 which came into force on 1 March 2007.

Of the 16 samples of soy sauces analysed, 8 were below the reporting limit of 1.4 µg/kg and 6 were below the reporting limit of 2 µg/kg. Only 2 out of the 16 samples analysed tested positive for 3-MCPD. One sample of soy sauce had a level of 18 ± 2 µg/kg which is approaching the regulatory limit of 20 µg/kg but no follow up action was taken. The results indicate that all except 1 of samples were well within the regulatory limit for 3-MCPD of 20 µg/kg.

Food Contact Materials

Eight foodstuff samples from plastic bottles were tested for the presence of antimony in the foodstuff. Antimony is not permitted to migrate from food contact plastics at levels above 0.04 mg/kg of foodstuff (antimony trioxide expressed as antimony). In all cases the detected levels were comfortably below this limit. The analysis for semicarbazide (SEM) obtained does not say what material was tested for the migration of semicarbazide, but it has subsequently been confirmed that the jar gasket was analysed by the laboratory for the presence of SEM and it was found in a number of samples. The presence of SEM is not an offence under the law governing food contact

⁴ The Codex Alimentarius Commission was created by FAO and WHO to develop food standards, guidelines and related texts such as codes of practice under the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme. The main purposes of this Programme are protecting health of the consumers and ensuring fair trade practices in the food trade, and promoting coordination of all food standards work undertaken by international governmental and non-governmental organisations.

materials, and gaskets in particular. The legislation on food contact plastics bans the use of azodicarbonamide (ADC) as a blowing agent: SEM can be a breakdown product of ADC. Its detected presence is therefore only an indicator that ADC may have been used in the sealing gasket of the food jar. Unless, therefore, the data or the importer confirms that ADC was used in a plastic in the food container, such as in a gasket in the jar lid, it cannot be determined that there has been any breach of the law. The use of ADC would only be illegal if the jar was filled after 1 August 2005, this cannot be assumed given the long shelf life of jarred foods, especially if they already heavily preserved, e.g. pickled foods. A date or date code should be on the jar lid to establish this and its omission would, of itself, be a breach of the law that enforcement authorities would need to consider.

Erucic acid

Only one of the 51 samples tested for erucic acid (less than 2%) was not in compliance with the limits in the Erucic Acid in Food Regulations 1977 (SI 1977/691) as amended.

Inorganic contaminants including metals

Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1881/2006 sets maximum levels for certain contaminants including lead and cadmium in foodstuffs and is enforced by The Contaminants in Food (England) Regulations 2007. Not all of the foods sampled as part of this programme are included in this legislation, so local authority enforcement officers and their respective public analyst reported all findings.

The levels of arsenic in food are regulated by the Arsenic in Food Regulations (1959) as amended. These Regulations are old and were set before the carcinogenic nature of inorganic arsenic was known. The European Commission is considering introduction of maximum levels for arsenic in food and has requested that EFSA produce a scientific opinion on arsenic in foodstuffs. Therefore, data was collected on arsenic levels in various foodstuffs - particularly rice. This has been sent to European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to be included in their data analysis.

There were a few instances where the levels of tin were in breach of the legislative limits. The Local Authorities involved have taken the required follow-up actions. In one case, the concentration of lead in a food supplement was considered unsafe and it was withdrawn. The percentage of unsatisfactory results for heavy metals (3%) is slightly lower than last year (3.82 % in 2006/2007) and lower than 2003/2004 (5%).

Residues

Pesticides

Analyses of 11 samples of produce (10 yard long beans and 1 root ginger) from Thailand, China and Vietnam for pesticide residues indicated an unsatisfactory level of residues in 6 samples of yard long beans from Thailand.

Veterinary Medicines

40 samples of a range of foods, including honey, shellfish, and food supplements and herbal products, were analysed for veterinary residues. Two samples were found to be unsatisfactory. A honey sample from India was found to contain chloramphenicol and streptomycin, while antibiotic residues were found in a sample of dried shrimp.

Full information was not always given by the Local Authorities on the actual levels of residues found and on the legal level that they were compared against to determine whether they were "unsatisfactory" or denoted as being at "high levels". Therefore it has not been possible to comment on whether the residues found were a health risk.

Irradiation

Certain irradiated food has been allowed in the United Kingdom for over 15 years and may be imported as long as they comply with specific rules; advice on imports of irradiated food can be found on the Agency's web-site. When assessing the legality of imported irradiated food, it is necessary to consider where the food or food ingredient was irradiated. The rules are slightly different depending on if the product was treated at a facility in a Member State of the European Union or an irradiation facility in a non-EU country. The only types of food irradiated in non-EU countries currently permitted under UK legislation are herbs and spices irradiated at facilities approved by the European Community.

Of the 146 products sampled for analysis, none were labelled "irradiated" or "treated with ionising radiation". When subjected to an initial screening test, 19 products gave results that indicated that they may have been irradiated or that a component within the food may have been irradiated. However, on further investigation, 10 of these 19 products were found to be medicinal and not subject to food law (food irradiation regulations do not include controls on medicines). Of the 9 remaining products that gave test results consistent with irradiated food, 4 were herbs or spices (chana masala spice blend, turmeric powder, cayenne pepper and garlic granules) and these screened intermediate for irradiation treatment, indicating that further more detailed analysis was required to ascertain if they were irradiated. The 5 remaining products were food supplements (ginko biloba extract, garlic clove powder capsules, ginko biloba tablets, ginseng powder capsules and a ginseng tea). These food supplement products were confirmed as irradiated and action was taken to withdraw these products from sale.

Microbiological Contamination

Commission regulation (EC) No. 2073/2005 on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs establishes two types of criterion: food safety criteria which should be used to assess the safety of a product or batch of foodstuffs and apply to imports, and process hygiene criteria which do not apply to imports. Here action would be taken under Regulation 178/2002 (General Food Law).

The Microbiological Criteria Regulations are quite specific and depend on the type of ready to eat (RTE) product being investigated. Therefore it is important that a full description of the food samples is provided and whether these samples are RTE is indicated. A number of assumptions were made that the products sampled are RTE, given the lack of information provided in the spreadsheet.

280 imported food samples were sent for microbiological testing. There were 12 (4.9%) samples which were recorded as being unsatisfactory. However on closer inspection there only appear to be 5 (1.8%) RTE samples which were unsatisfactory according to the microbiological criteria. These samples were different varieties of basil that were imported from South East Asia (Vietnam and Thailand). Unacceptable levels of *Salmonella* were detected in these samples. This has been identified as an area of work that requires further investigation.

There were 3 baby/infant food samples (2 muesli and 1 supplement/biscuit) which were recorded as unsatisfactory for *E. sakazakii* and Total Viable Counts for bacteria. However, the criterion only applies to foods for babies under the age of 6 months; since these 3 samples are labelled for babies of '6 months of age and over' the criteria does not apply. Therefore these samples are deemed satisfactory.

A baby sweetcorn sample (which is technically a RTE food) was unsatisfactory for process hygiene criteria (this does not apply for imported foods). However this product is not considered to be RTE as it is labelled as 'cook before consumption', therefore the criteria does not apply. This sample is satisfactory.

The remaining 3 samples (fresh rosemary herbs, hot smoked pork loin and sea food chunk with shrimps in white wine sauce) had high counts of either *E. coli* or TVC. *E. coli* and TVC fall under the process criterion which is not applicable to imported foods. Therefore, these food products are acceptable according to the microbiological criteria regulation 2073/2005 but not under 178/2002.

Labelling Claims

The following labelling claims were tested as part of the surveillance programme: salt and sodium levels; nutritional composition, organic, GMO-free, authenticity (for example basmati rice, fish and meat species), % of meat content in meat products, % alcohol by volume, gluten-free, presence of allergens, sugar-free, nitrate and nitrite content, MSG-free, 'free of artificial additives'.

There are 1471 samples for which the labelling claims were examined. The majority of these were testing the nutrition labelling; checking that the composition declaration was correct in terms of fat, sodium, carbohydrates, etc. In many case (884) salt declarations were the primary or secondary test conducted and for 578 an analytical test was carried out to verify a claim. Most of these were tests of organic products for the presence of pesticides, of rice tested for authenticity or other foods for the presence of GM materials. Twenty Basmati rice samples were tested for the presence of non-basmati varieties and

2 samples were found to exceed the limits allowed for non-basmati varieties under the UK Basmati Rice Code of Practice. One of these products was being formally re-sampled. Further authenticity testing was carried out on orange juice samples to check for adulteration with mandarin juice, (all 3 samples were satisfactory) and for adulteration of olive oil, again all 3 samples were satisfactory. No samples with labelling claims related to vegetarian were found to be adverse. The Agency has issued best practice guidance on use of the terms vegetarian and vegan and on criteria for use of the terms such as fresh, pure, natural etc.

There were fewer imported chicken samples taken than might have been expected and those that were investigated were found to be satisfactory from 'excess added water' and under-declaration of meat content perspectives previously found to be an issue in imported food surveys. The majority of the results of the other meat products were found to be satisfactory with some follow up actions taken where this was not the case. Apart from one sample, most of the meat speciation testing of the exotic meat samples was found to be correctly labelled and the one that was not is to be further investigated. A training course on an FSA funded DNA-based method for speciation of common and exotic meats has recently taken place in January 2009. This will transfer a rapid, sensitive method for detection of a number of meat species to public analyst laboratories thus increasing the availability of this type of analysis.

With regards to the fish samples, of the 8 samples tested some incorrect fish species names were picked up, e.g. the product being described as Sea bass when it was, in fact, Barramundi. It was noted that the fact that a product description is not currently in the commercial designations list of the Fish Labelling Regulations 2006 does not mean that it cannot be described as such, provided this name is an accurate name being used to describe the species in question and in line with the general provisions of the Food Labelling Regulations 1996. These general provisions can be used to name fish species until such time that a commercial designation is included in the Fish Labelling Regulations, although the producer, operator etc. should seek a provisional commercial designation from the Competent Authority with a view to making it definitive.

Checks on claims relating to the presence of allergens included a substantial number of products tested to check their gluten free labelling claims; these were mostly found to be satisfactory. Various other allergenic claims were tested including presence of lactose and peanut traces. Of these the vast majority of which were also found to be satisfactory, with only one of the samples testing positive for the presence of peanut, the origin of which was thought to be accidental rather than deliberate. One of the samples had presence of celery declared on the label but its presence was not detected in the sample.

The adverse results relating to the UK Food Labelling Regulations 1996 (as amended) were of interest, and will be useful as evidence for future EU negotiations and to inform testing programmes.

Adverse labelling checks

These checks are carried out by the Public Analyst and involve a visual inspection of the product label for compliance and no chemical examination is undertaken. Previous Imported Food Sampling Programmes have identified poor or inappropriate labelling to be the most significant factor in a sample being considered “unsatisfactory”. The principal provisions of the UK Food Labelling Regulations 1996 (as amended) ⁵ requires most prepacked food (with a few notable exceptions) that is ready to be delivered to the ultimate consumer should be marked with:-

- (a) the name of the food;
- (b) a list of ingredients;
- (c) the appropriate durability indication; Most food either displays a “Best Before” for foods to indicate the period for which it can be reasonably expected to retain its optimum conditions or a “Use By” date, which is required only for those foods that are highly perishable and will have a relatively short shelf life, after which their consumption would present a risk of food poisoning.
- (d) any special storage conditions or conditions of use;
- (e) the name or business name and an address or registered office of either or both of—
 - (i) the manufacturer or packer, or
 - (ii) a seller established within the European Community;
- (f) particulars of the place of origin or provenance of the food if failure to give such particulars might mislead a purchaser to a material degree as to the true origin or provenance of the food; and
- (g) instructions for use if it would be difficult to make appropriate use of the food in the absence of such instructions.

There is no statutory definition of “place of origin or provenance” in the Food Labelling Regulations 1996 or of “origin or provenance” in Directive 2000/13/EC. Under WTO Rules, the country of origin is deemed to be the place of last substantial change.”

Additional labelling requirements and controls are in place for certain foods for example those that contain specific ingredients or that are packaged in a specific manner (e.g. in a modified atmosphere) or make a certain type of claim. Quantitative ingredient declarations (i.e. QUID) must be given for ingredients mentioned in the name of a food. For example, the meat content of meat products must be quantified as a percentage of the weight of the final food, either next to the name of the food, or in the ingredients list.

The following table shows the frequency of samples that were examined as part of this project that failed labelling examination. The labelling of many samples failed on more than one aspect, but each incidence has been recorded here individually. More detail on the labelling requirements is given in annex 4. The

⁵ see <http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/guidancenotes/labelregsguidance/foodlabelregsguid>

more serious labelling infringements, as detailed in the principal provisions, are highlighted in bold in the table.

Table 6 Frequency and type of labelling error

Labelling error ⁶	Total	% of total sample numbers
Nutritional information format	190	5
Durability marking	155	4
Name insufficiently precise	96	2
Errors in ingredients list, QUID declaration	52	1
Name of business operator	53	1
No declaration – GMO, Food Allergens	13	0
General position of required elements	82	2
Misleading labelling claims	28	1
No English version of name or ingredients	27	1
Traceability	0	0
Illegibility of label	20	0
No ingredients list	94	2
No weight	7	0
No storage conditions	25	1
No production method given,	0	0
Category of additives not declared	87	2
Inappropriate labelling for specific foods	10	0
No intended use	6	0
Reason for failure not specified	116	3
Total	1061	26

Annex 5 shows a breakdown of this information by continent and the annex 6 shows the number and type of labelling error by commodity type.

Overall, 671 foods sampled were found to be inappropriately labelled. Many failed on more than one aspect therefore the total individual unsatisfactory labelling errors found totalled 1061. Nearly 62% of these were on foods originating from Asia, 11% came from North America, 10% were from unknown origin, 7% from Africa, 6% from the EU and 2% were from Oceania (OC) and South America.

5% (190) of the food labels that were examined were found to contain “nutritional information format” errors. This included, for example, where insufficient detail is given, or is not provided in the format as required by the Food Labelling Regulations 1996 (as amended). 120 of these samples originated from Asia, 11 from Africa, 36 from North America and the remainder were spread evenly over the other continents.

⁶ Further description of these errors can be found at annex 4

Inappropriate durability marking was the next reason for the greatest number of labelling errors with 153 samples found to be adverse. In most instances this was recorded as the marking not being in the appropriate format, or where the terms “Best Before” and “Use by dates” were used incorrectly. Over half of the unsatisfactory samples originated from Asia.

The Food labelling Regulations 1996 (as amended) requires that the name of the food should be sufficiently precise to indicate the true nature of the product and to distinguish it from other foods with which it could be confused. In addition the Regulations also require labelling to be in a language that can be easily understood by the average consumer of the relevant Member State (for the UK this would be English). This year’s programme identified that 27 sampled failed because the name of the product was not in English.

Errors in the ingredients list of imported foods were also a common reason for food samples to be recorded as fails; 95 of the 146 failures found were in foods originating from Asia. Examples included foods where there was no ingredients list, or where the ingredients list was not in the prescribed format, or where no QUID was given.

The Food Labelling Regulation 1996 (as amended) indicates specific labelling requirements for certain foods. For example, the Regulations themselves contain a number of “prescribed names” in schedule 1 of the Regulations. These must be used, for example, for fats and oils. Prescribed names for fish are now under separate fish labelling regulations.

Annex 6 shows that the different classification of labelling errors occurs with varying frequency over the various commodity types sampled. Overall beverages had the greatest labelling checks failure rate, followed by sauces, rice & rice products and vegetables – products and processed (non-compliances were 165, 161, 95 and 88 respectively). Following on from these the next highest failure rate were for confectionary (72 non-compliances), spices (67 non-compliances) and fish products (57 non-compliances).

Reporting sampling over time

Figure 2 – Annual percent of samples from each continent since the start of the programme

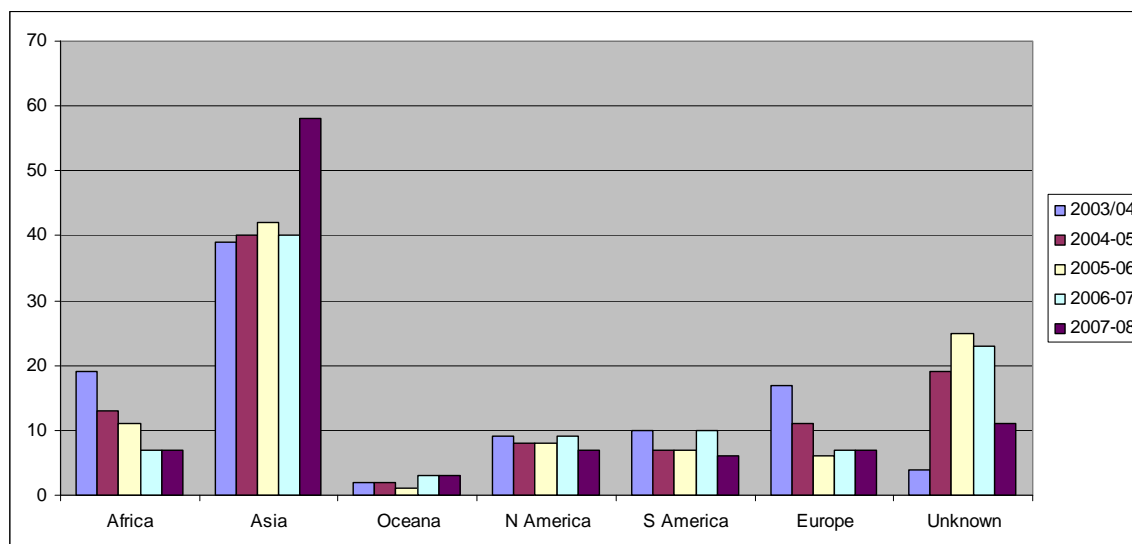


Figure 2 shows the percent of samples from each continent since the programme started in 2003. The graph shows that samples from Asia have made up a significantly higher proportion of the total samples since the start of the programme. The high peak in 2007 reflects the request specifically for samples to be taken from Asia. Samples from Oceania always make up a significantly lower proportion of those taken; samples from Africa have declined over the sample period and a similar trend is also apparent in samples from Europe, whereas sampling from North and South America has remained quite consistent.

Table 7 – samples from Asia – percentage Asian and the percentage of total adverse samples since the start of the programme

Samples from Asia		
	% of total samples each year from Asia	% of the total adverse samples for each year which were of Asian origin
2003/04	39	53
2004/05	40	50
2005/06	41	48
2006/07	39	45

2007/08	58	63
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Table 7 shows the percentage of samples taken from Asia annually since the start of the programme and the percentage of adverse samples from Asia over the same time period. The percentage of total adverse samples from Asia over the years has always been proportionally greater than the percent of total samples from Asia which indicates that the number of adverse samples from this continent has been disproportionately high.

Annex 1

List of Local Authorities that took part

Grant Number	Name of Local Authority/Food Group	Local Group Application - Names of LA's
1	Bolton Council	
2	Crawley Borough Council	
3	Southend-on-Sea Borough Council	
4	Stockton-on-Sea Borough Council	
5	The Borough of Telford and Wrekin Council	
6	Wigan Council	
7	Cambridgeshire County Council	
8	Cumbria Trading Standards	
9	East Riding of Yorkshire Council	
10	Lancashire County Council Trading Standards Service	
11	Norfolk County Council Trading Standards Service	
12	Nottinghamshire County Council	
13	North West Leicestershire District Council	
14	Uttersford District Council	
15	CeNTSA (Central England Trading Standards Association)	Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull Staffordshire, Stoke on Trent Shropshire Telford & Wrekin Walsall, Wolverhampton
16	EETSA (East of England Trading Standards Association)	Bedfordshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Suffolk County Council, Thurrock Council
17	Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) Food Panel	Blackpool BC, Blackburn with Darwen BC, Bury MBC, Oldham MBC, Rochdale MBC, Salford City Council Stockport MBC, Tameside MBC, Trafford MBC
18	Hereford & Worcester Food Liaison Group	Worcestershire County Council Trading Standards, Herefordshire County Council, Worcester City Council, Bromsgrove District Council, Redditch Borough Council, Malvern Hills District Council, Wychavon District Council, Wyre Forest District Council
19	Lincolnshire Food Group	Lincolnshire County Council, Boston Borough Council, East Lindsey District Council, Lincoln City Council, North Kesteven District Council, South Holland District Council, South Kesteven District Council, West Lindsey District Council
20	London Food Coordinating Group	City of London Port Health Authority, London Boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Camden, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Hackney, Hammersmith & Fulham, Haringey, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Lambeth, Lewisham, Newham, Redbridge, Richmond-Upon-Thames, Sutton
21	Informal Group	City of London Port Health (Tilbury), London Boroughs: Brent, Ealing, Enfield, Haringey, Harrow, LB Hillingdon, (Heathrow) Hounslow, Merton, Richmond Upon Thames, RB Kensington & Chelsea, RB Kingston Upon Thames, Wandsworth BC, Southend-on-Sea, Manchester, Isle of Anglesey, St Helens

22	North East London Food Liaison Group	London Borough Camden, Enfield, Havering, Islington, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest
23	SWERCOTS - Trading Standards for S W England	Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bournemouth BC, Bristol City Council, Cornwall CC, Devon CC, Dorset CC, Gloucestershire CC, Plymouth City Council, Poole BC, Somerset CC, South Somerset DC, South Gloucestershire Council, Swindon Council
24	Tees Valley- Lead Authority Middlesborough Council	Hartlepool, Stockton
25	Trading Standards East Midlands (TSEM)	Leicestershire, Derbyshire, City of Nottingham
26	Trading Standards South East	Bracknell Forest, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Medway, Oxfordshire, RB Windsor & Maidenhead, Slough, West Berkshire, Brighton & Hove, East Sussex, Kent, Milton Keynes, Reading, Southampton, West Sussex
27	Tyne & Wear Food Liaison Group	Newcastle City Council, Sunderland City Council, Gateshead Council, North Tyneside Council, South Tyneside Council
28	Yorkshire & The Humber Food Group	North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire, Kingston-on-Hull, York City, Sheffield, Doncaster, Rotherham
29	Bexley Council - South East Sector	
30	London Borough of Hillingdon, Imported Food Office, London Heathrow Airport	
31	London Borough of Islington	
32	Northern Ireland Food Liaison Group	All 26 District Councils in Northern Ireland
33	Crawley Borough Council	
34	London Port Health Authority	
35	Portsmouth City Council, Portsmouth Port Health Authority	
36	Southampton Port Health Authority, Southampton City Council	
37	Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority	
38	Dumfries & Galloway Council	
39	Lothian & Borders Council	City of Edinburgh Council, West Lothian Council, East Lothian Council, Scottish Borders Council, Midlothian Council
40	North of Scotland Food Liaison Group	Aberdeen Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Highland Council, Moray Council, Orkney Islands Council, Shetland Islands Council
41	Renfrewshire Council	
42	South Ayrshire Council	
43	Birmingham City Council	
44	Leicester City Council Trading Standards Service	
45	Glamorgan Food Standards Group	Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr, Neath, Port Talbot, Rhondda, Cynon Taf (RCT), Swansea, Vale of Glamorgan

46	Neath Port Talbot CBC	
47	Pembrokeshire County Council	
48	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	
49	South & West Wales Food & Agriculture Standards Group	Powys County Council, Bridgend County Borough Council, Carmarthenshire CC, Ceredigion CC, Swansea City Council
50	South & West Wales Public Analysts	
51	Torfaen County Borough Council	
52	Mersey Port Health Authority	

Annex 2 Country breakdown by Continent

<p>Africa</p> <p>Africa Algeria Burkino Faso Egypt Ethiopia Gambia Ghana Kenya Lagos Madagascar Mauritius Morocco Mozambique Nigeria Rwanda Seychelles Sierra Leone South Africa Swaziland Sudan Tanzania Tunisia Uganda West Africa Zambia Zimbabwe</p>	<p>Asia</p> <p>Bangladesh Burma China Dubai Georgia Hong Kong Indonesia India Iran Israel Japan Java Korea Laos Lebanon Malaysia Maldives Middle East Mongolia Mynamar Nepal Pacific/Indian Ocean Pakistan Philippines Saudi Arabia Singapore Sri Lanka South Korea Syria Taiwan Thailand Turkey United Arab Emirates Vietnam Yemen</p>
<p>Europe</p> <p>Austria Belgium Bulgaria Croatia The Czech Republic Denmark European Union Faroe Islands France Germany Greece Netherlands Holland Hungary Iceland Ireland</p>	<p>South America</p> <p>Argentina Bolivia Brazil Chile Columbia Costa Rica Ecuador El Salvador Guyana Paraguay Peru South America Surinam Uruguay</p>

	Italy Latvia Lithuania Norway Poland Portugal Romania Russia Serbia Sicity Spain Sweden Switzerland Ukraine UK
Oceania	Australia New Zealand Papa New Guinea

North America	Alaska America Barbados Canada Grenada Guatemala Honduras Jamaica Mexico Nicaragua Panama St. Lucia USA West Indies
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Annex 3 Frequency of product type reasons for failure and continent of origin.

Product Type	Tested for	Total	AF	AS	OC	EU	NA	SA	Unknown
Baby and infant foods & formula	Labelling & claims	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Microbiology	3	0	1	0	2	0	0	0
Bakery products and cereals	Labelling & claims	15	1	4	2	2	3	1	2
	Mycotoxins	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Beverages	Additives	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	12	0	5	0	0	6	1	0
	Heavy metals	5	0	1	0	0	4	0	0
Confectionery	Additives	11	1	9	0	0	1	0	0
Desserts	Labelling & claims	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Fats and oils	Contaminants	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fish products	Additives	9	0	8	0	0	0	0	1
	Contaminants	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Heavy metals	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	14	5	8	0	0	0	1	0
Food supplements / herbal products	Contaminants	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
	Heavy metals	7	0	7	0	0	0	0	0
	Irradiation	8	0	5	0	1	2	0	0
	Labelling & claims	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Foods for particular nutritional uses	Additives	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	Labelling & claims	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Fruit - canned	Heavy metals	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Fruit - dried	Labelling & claims	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Mycotoxins	12	0	12	0	0	0	0	0
Fruit - fresh	Labelling & claims	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Fruit - products and processed	Additives	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Herbs - dried	Irradiation	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Herbs - fresh	Microbiology	6	0	5	0	0	0	1	0
Honey	Contaminants	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Meat - exotic	Labelling & claims	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Meat - products and processed	Microbiology	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	20	0	2	0	5	0	12	1
Miscellaneous	Labelling & claims	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Mushrooms	Heavy metals	6	0	2	0	1	0	0	3
	Labelling & claims	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Noodles	Labelling & claims	6	0	4	1	1	0	0	0
Nuts and nut products	Labelling & claims	3	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
	Mycotoxins	36	5	25	1	0	3	0	2
Pasta and pasta products	Labelling & claims	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0

Ready-made meals	Contaminants	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Rice and rice products	Additives	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	7	0	6	0	1	0	0	0
Sauces	Additives	8	0	8	0	0	0	0	0
	Contaminants	8	0	8	0	0	0	0	0
	Heavy metals	2	0		2	0	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	32	1	24	0	0	0	0	7
Seaweed products	Heavy metals	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Seeds and seed products	Labelling & claims	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Mycotoxins	17	11	3	0	0	0	0	3
Shellfish products	Contaminants	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Microbiology	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Snacks	Additives	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	5	0	2	1	0	1	0	1
Soups and broths	Labelling & claims	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
Spices	Additives	5	0	4	0	0	0	0	1
	Irradiation	5	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
	Labelling & claims	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Mycotoxins	7	0	5	0	0	0	0	2
Vegetables - beans and pulses	Mycotoxins	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vegetables - fresh	Contaminants	6	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
	Labelling & claims	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
	Microbiology	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Vegetables - products and processed	Additives	5	0	4	0	0	0	0	1
	Heavy metals	4	0	2	0	0	2	0	0
	Labelling & claims	11	0	6	0	3	0	0	2

Labelling & claims relates to results of testing where a chemical analysis was carried out to test a label claim.

Annex 4 Description of Labelling Errors

With a few notable exceptions, the following gives the labelling requirements for most food sold in the UK. Full guidance notes for Food Labelling Regulations 1996 (SI 1996/1499), can be downloaded at the following web page.

<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/guidancenotes/labelregsguidance/foodlabelregsguid>

Nutritional information format

As a minimum, labels need to give the amount of energy (expressed as kJ and kcal), protein, carbohydrate and fat (all expressed in grams) provided by 100g or 100ml of the food, plus the amount of any nutrient for which a claim has been made. Values per quantified serving may be given in addition to, but not in place of, values per 100g or 100ml. Details of certain other nutrients for which no claim has been made may be given voluntarily. The requirements for the presentation of nutrition information also apply when such information is given voluntarily.

In this year's programme, LA officers reported food not displaying the complete nutritional information, or displayed in an inappropriate format.

Durability marking

The Food Labelling Regulation stipulates that the minimum durability of foods must be declared, either as a "best before" date or for highly perishable foods a "Use by date".

Officers reported durability markings not being present, displayed in an inappropriate format or unreadable on the full range of products sampled.

Name insufficiently precise

The name of the product is not given or is insufficiently precise to indicate the true nature of the product and to distinguish it from other foods with which it could be confused. This was often seen in nut and seed products.

Errors in ingredients list, QUID declaration, ingredients declaration

Generally, for those foods required to display an ingredients list, ingredients must be listed in descending order of weight at the time of their use in the preparation of the food (often referred to as "the mixing-bowl stage"). The ingredients list must include a heading consisting of, or including, the word "ingredients".

The name used for an ingredient should be a name that could be used for it if it were being sold as a food by itself and should therefore include appropriate reference to physical condition or to any process or treatment that it has undergone in cases where omission of this information would mislead. Listed ingredients that have been irradiated must be identified as "irradiated" or as having been "treated with ionizing radiation".

Name of business operator

The name and address of food manufacturer should be displayed on the food packaging.

Misleading labelling claims

The general provisions of the Food Labelling Regulations prohibit a claim in the labelling or advertising of a food that it has tonic or medicinal properties, and imposes conditions for the making of -

- claims relating to foods for particular uses and similar foods;
- reduced or low energy value claims;
- protein claims;
- vitamin claims;
- mineral claims;
- cholesterol claims;
- nutrition claims, and
- claims which depend upon another food.

No production method given

The name of a food must include, or be accompanied by, an indication of its physical condition or treatment where a purchaser could be misled by the omission of that information. For example, milk which has been "pasteurised", "sterilised", "condensed", "UHT" etc should indicate this on the label. In addition, other descriptions may apply, e.g. "homogenised".

No weight declaration

The Weights and Measures Act 1985 requires most prepacked food to carry an indication of its net weight or volume on the container.

No storage conditions

Where appropriate, any storage conditions which need to be observed if the food is to retain its specific properties until the date shown must also be given.

Inappropriate labelling for specific foods

Specific labelling legislation applies to certain foods and ingredients, which must be adhered to in addition to the general provisions in the Food Labelling Regulations.

No intended use

Instructions for use must be given if it would be difficult to make appropriate use of the food without them.

Annex 5 Breakdown of labelling errors by continent

Labelling error	AF	AS	EU	OC	NA	SA	Unknown & more than one country	Total	%
Nutritional information format	11	120	4	3	36	5	11	190	5
Durability marking	10	95	10	0	18	3	19	155	4
Name insufficiently precise	7	57	3	0	9	3	17	96	2
Errors in ingredients list, QUID declaration	4	37	1	0	5	0	5	52	1
Name of business operator	8	36	1	0	3	0	5	53	1
No declaration – GMO, Food Allergens	0	9	0	0	1	0	3	13	0
General position of required elements	4	54	5	4	2	4	9	82	2
Misleading labelling claims	1	18	0	2	5	0	2	28	1
No English version of name or ingredients	0	7	12	0	0	0	8	27	1
Traceability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Illegibility of label	1	16	0	0	1	1	1	20	0
No ingredients list	12	58	0	2	13	0	9	94	2
No weight	0	5	0	0	0	0	2	7	0
No storage conditions	0	15	1	2	1	4	2	25	1
No production method given,	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Category of additives not declared	7	61	0	2	11	0	6	87	2
Inappropriate labelling for specific foods	0	7	0	1	1	0	1	10	0
No intended use	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	6	0
No reason given for labelling non-compliance	7	61	23	5	8	2	10	116	3
Total								1061	26

Annex 6 Breakdown of labelling errors by food commodity

Labelling error	Nutritional information format	Durability marking	Name insufficiently precise	Errors in ingredients list, QUID declaration	Name of business operator	No declaration – GMO, Food Allergens	General position of required elements	Misleading labelling claims	No English version of name or ingredients	Traceability	Illegibility of label	No ingredients list	No weight	No storage conditions	No production method given,	Category of additives not declared	Inappropriate labelling for specific foods	No intended use	No reason given for labelling non-compliance	totals
baby and infant foods & formula	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	8
bakery products and cereals	8	7	8	1	3	0	1	3	1	0	0	6	1	3	0	2	0	0	4	48
beverages	28	25	20	18	10	2	7	8	7	0	3	5	0	4	0	10	0	2	16	165
canned Foods	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
cheese products	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
confectionery	14	11	7	3	4	1	2	3	2	2	2	8	0	1	0	9	1	0	4	72
dairy products	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
desserts	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	9
egg and egg products	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
fats and oils	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
fish products	8	4	3	4	2	1	16	0	0	0	1	3	0	1	0	3	1	1	9	57

food colouring	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
food contact materials	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
food supplements / herbal products	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
foods for particular nutritional uses	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	16
fruit - canned	2	3	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	18
fruit - dried	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	11
fruit - fresh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
fruit - products and processed	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
herbs - dried	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
herbs - fresh	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
honey	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
meat - exotic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
meat - products and processed	1	5	2	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	20
milk and milk products	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	5
miscellaneous	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
mushrooms	5	3	8	0	5	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	28
noodles	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	5	15
nuts and nut products	2	2	1	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	4	17
pasta and pasta products	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

ready-made meals	4	4	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	18
rice and rice products	15	12	8	1	7	3	15	1	2	0	1	8	1	11	0	2	2	1	5	95
sausages	30	24	9	12	4	5	12	5	3	0	2	16	1	0	0	26	2	1	9	161
seaweed products	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
seeds and seed products	1	3	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	13
shellfish products	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	4	10
snacks	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
soups and broths	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
spices	14	9	1	1	1	0	9	1	2	0	1	9	0	1	0	11	0	0	7	67
sugar and syrups	3	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	10
vegetables - beans and pulses	1	2	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	18
vegetables - canned	33	3	10	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	53
vegetables - fresh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
vegetables - products and processed	0	24	0	4	2	1	8	0	0	0	0	16	1	2	0	9	0	0	21	88
wine	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	4
Totals	190	155	96	52	53	13	82	28	27	0	20	94	7	25	0	87	10	6	116	
	190	155	96	52	53	13	82	28	27	0	20	94	7	25	0	87	10	6	116	