

Performance and Resources report quarter 4 2022 to 2023: FSA sampling activity

Performance and resources results related to FSA sampling activity.

Regulatory monitoring

- 6,768 samples taken
- 51 non-compliant results
- £1.33 million*

Purpose

This is sampling carried out to monitor compliance with prescribed regulatory standards. It includes Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), shellfish and radiological sampling.

Successes

Shellfish and associated water sampling has enabled the classification of beds, ensuring that shellfish receive the correct level processing to be safe to eat, and if necessary, harvesting is prevented to protect consumers. The annual radiological monitoring programme checks that discharges from UK nuclear sites do not cause unacceptable exposure to radioactivity through our food. The latest report in 2022, as in previous years, showed that doses to the public from all sources of exposure to artificial radioactivity, including food, were well below the legal limit.

Targeted surveillance

- 2,585 samples taken
- 367 non-compliant results
- £1 million

Purpose

Sampling and testing of specific commodities for specific hazards which forms part of the FSA's work to consider emerging risks. Decisions on which commodities / hazards to target is based on intelligence from a variety of sources. Thus, aims to validate intelligence that there may be a risk.

Successes

This targeted sampling successfully identified a potential emerging risk - undeclared peanut in African spices, which presents a risk to those with a peanut allergy. Results of non-compliant samples were raised with the relevant LAs for follow-up, a letter sent to all LAs alerting them to the results and this intelligence shared with industry through the FSA's Food Industry Liaison Group and Food Industry Intelligence Network.

Sampling to inform Science and Research

- 1,301 samples taken
- 39 non-compliant results
- £0.65 million

Purpose

Sampling undertaken on a specific topic to increase our scientific knowledge on the risk to consumer from food and feed in areas such as antimicrobial resistance and chemical contaminants. This work informs risk assessments and policy.

Success

Surveys undertaken to inform our knowledge on the risk of food and feed. included a survey of 80 cat food products to provide data on mycotoxin presence and concentrations. The results will be reviewed by the FSA's Advisory Committee on Animal Feedstuffs and will inform policy and advice to industry. In addition, a survey of AMR bacteria in retail chicken and turkey which will contribute to the National Action Plan on AMR.

Official Controls (Enforcement Sampling)

- 1,214 samples taken
- 216 non-compliant results
- £0.35 million

Purpose

Supports LA activity by funding targeted sampling but does not seek to replace their own local sampling programmes. Samples may be taken due to adverse results from FSA targeted surveillance, in order to bring businesses into compliance.

Successes

Over quarter 3 and quarter 4, the FSA funded 13 LAs to take 263 samples from targeted points within the supply chain, with known risks, as part the food standards directed sampling programme. Samples taken have included, imported soft drinks from wholesalers/cash and carry/importers tested for composition such as non-permitted additives, and labelling, and kebab from manufacturers tested for composition. Where non-compliant results are obtained LAs take appropriate action to bring businesses into compliance.

*excludes cost of radiological monitoring funded by industry

**not including samples taken for trichinella testing