

Temporary Operational Instruction

Action note: 2025-10-17 - Dairy referrals to Other Government Departments

Purpose

This action note is to inform operational staff of a new temporary operational instruction relating to the referral of issues identified during visits to dairy farms that fall outside the FSA remit.

Background

The FSA is responsible for the delivery of official controls at dairy farms for food related matters (i.e. dairy hygiene and animal health aspects) until the milk is in the bulk tank.

Authorised Officers (AOs) might identify issues on other aspects of official controls outside of the FSA responsibilities during their visits which might need to be

referred to the relevant Government agency for information and potential enforcement action.

This temporary operational instruction updates the current off-line referral instructions, prior to being included in the next MOC amendment (MOC 112).

Procedure

When issues outside the FSA remit are identified during dairy hygiene and/ or animal health visits to dairy holdings, the AO has to complete the form accessible through the links on Annex I, using the instructions on Annex II which explains the procedure to follow. If photographic evidence needs to be attached to the referral form, please use the form in Annex III.

Front line staff are required to note the following action

This instruction is directed to Dairy Hygiene Inspectors (DHIs) and Official Veterinarians (OVs – SDP, Veterinary Auditors, other OV roles) carrying out dairy inspections/ visits.

Officials shall note the contents of the action note, ensuring it is read and where necessary, print a copy for the plant file.

Distribution

This action note will be:

- uploaded to the [Temporary Operational Instruction Folder held in the MOC area of SharePoint](#) (accessible only on an official FSA device)

- logged on the [Temporary Operational Instruction tracker](#) (accessible only on an official FSA device)
- published alongside the [MOC chapters on food.gov.uk](#)

The action note will remain live until either incorporated into the MOC or revoked.

Annex I

Dairy Operations referral form

The referral forms can be found on your relevant team SharePoint for dairy visits accessible through the following links:

- Dairy Hygiene Inspectors ([here](#))
- Official Veterinarians - either FSA Veterinary Auditors, SDP OVs or other FSA OVs - ([here](#))

The main changes to this document have been:

- Identification of the document as belonging to Dairy Ops.
- Addition of a choice to select the type of visit: either Hygiene visit or AH visit
- Addition of OV role as part of the referrals for and its user.
- Amendment of the list of stakeholders to make the referral to, removing any mention about Assurance Schemes referrals.
- Removal of the columns “earned recognition removed” and “revised inspection frequency”.
- Clarification in relation to “issues” vs “contraventions” as the final decision responsibility falls under to the CA responsible.

Annex II

How to use this form

This annex amends the [how to use this form](#) template in the dairy section of the share drive. It will be updated in the next MOC amendment, but it can be also found through a link on a tab on the referral form.

Use this form to

Refer issues identified on Dairy Hygiene or Animal Health inspections which are outside of the control of the FSA **and/ or** of interest to Other Government Departments (OGDs).

Dairy Inspectors/ Official Veterinarians should give a brief description of the issue/ s they wish to report and a brief outline of any enforcement or action they have taken, if relevant in the appropriate boxes.

How to complete the form

Please select the type of visit carried out by deleting the one that does not apply

Type of visit: Hygiene inspection or Animal Health inspection *(please delete as necessary)*

Complete the table below with relevant and accurate information; select the correct information from the drop-down menus.

DHI/OV Name & contact details	Name of business	FSA ID Number	CPH Number	Address of Business	Referral to (Please select from menu below)	Are supporting photos attached?

Provide information of the issues identified and the date these were identified on the section below

Summary of issues found
A Dairy health or Dairy Animal Health Inspection was undertaken on the above business on DD/MM/YYYY. On the visit.....

Add information on actions taken or intended to take (e.g. discussed issues with farmer, etc. + I will refer this issue to “name of Agency”) on the section below

Action the dairy hygiene inspector (DHI) or Official Veterinarian (OV) has taken or intends to take.
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Either the feedback will be input by the relevant Competent Authority, or the FSA Dairy Hygiene Data team will add it on the relevant section of the document:

Feedback/update from other relevant Competent Authorities.
Please insert update

Specifically, if an inspecting officer has:

- Serious animal welfare concerns, report the concern immediately via Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301 and choose the relevant options for APHA(England) or call 0300 303 8268 for issues identified in Wales.
- Serious pollution concerns they should contact The Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 as soon as possible.

A referral form must be completed in all cases, including when serious issues have already been reported to the relevant authorities by phone.

Saving the referral form

The completed form should be saved using the following file name format:

FBOs FSA ID Number, FBOs CPH, FBOs Business Name, Referral to(the relevant 3rd party)- date.

e.g. 111, 01-234-5678, Joe Bloggs & Son, Referral to APHA- 03.09.25

The form has been created with the following security label “Official- Sensitive” to manage its privacy and distribution. Please do not change the label assigned to the document.

Where to send completed referral forms

Once completed, the Dairy Hygiene Inspector (DHI) or Official Veterinarian (OV) should email the referral form to the ***Dairy Hygiene data team*** at dairyhygienedata@food.gov.uk. Please select “Official-Sensitive” label for the email.

In the body of the email the DHI/ OV should paste one of the following email addresses to whom the referral is being made:

Agency	Contact	Referred for (examples)
Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA)	customeradvice@apha.gov.uk	Animal welfare, Animal by-products. E.g. overgrown hooves. Carcasses on site.
Rural Payments Agency (RPA)	bcmsenquiries@rpa.gov.uk	Animal ID. E.g. Lack of ear tags.
Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)	enforcement@vmd.gov.uk	Veterinary drugs (e.g. illegal usage, improper usage, etc.). E.g. withdrawal period for milk not observed.
The Environment Agency (EA)	ics@environment-agency.gov.uk	Other pollutants, contaminants
Local Authorities (LAs) - environmental hygiene	the DHI/ OV should establish an email address	e.g. Hygiene issues after bulk tank
Local Authorities - Trading Standards (TSs)	the DHI/ OV should establish an email address	e.g. Labelling issues

The subject heading of referral emails sent to the Dairy Hygiene data team should be in the following format:

FBOs FSA ID Number, FBOs CPH, FBOs Business Name, Referral to(the relevant 3rd party)- date.

e.g. 111, 01-234-5678, Joe Bloggs & Son, Referral to APHA- 03.09.25

What happens to the referral form once sent to the Dairy Hygiene Data team?

Once received, the Dairy Hygiene data team will forward the referral form to the relevant stakeholders, and a copy will be added to the FBOs database.

The relevant stakeholder may contact you about the issue/s identified.

Photographs

Photographs which support the referral form should be saved to a blank word document and saved using the following file name format:

FBOs FSA ID Number, FBOs CPH, FBOs Business Name, Referral to???, Supporting Photographs- date

e.g. 111, 01-234-5678, Joe Bloggs & Son, Referral to APHA- Supporting Photographs- 03.09.25

Please select “Official-Sensitive” as security label when saving this document.

The document containing the photographs should be sent as an attachment along with the referral form and the email address of the relevant stakeholder to the Dairy Hygiene data team (see above).

Multiple Issues

If more than one issue is identified by a DHI/ OV which falls under the jurisdiction of two different stakeholders, a separate referral form should be completed for each stakeholder with the relevant issue(s) identified.

Feedback

Recipient of the referral are encouraged to provide feedback on the referral form but may not always do so.

Feedback from stakeholders will be sent to the Dairy Hygiene data team who will share it with relevant colleagues **in the dairy ops team and OVs.**

Annex III

Supporting photos for dairy referrals form

Access to this document can be found on the following links:

- Dairy Hygiene Inspectors ([here](#))
- Official Veterinarians -either FSA Veterinary Auditors, SDP Ovs or other FSA OVs- ([here](#))

Please note this document is marked as Official-Sensitive

SUPPORTING PHOTOS FOR DAIRY REFERRAL FORM

<u>REFERRAL REFERENCE:</u>	
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<u>BUSINESS NAME</u>		<u>CPH NUMBER:</u>	<u>CC/ PPP/ HHHH</u>
<u>BUSINESS ADDRESS</u>		<u>FSAID No.</u>	
<u>AO NAME</u>		<u>DATE OF VISIT</u>	<u>DD/ MM/ YYYY</u>

<u>TYPE OF EVIDENCE:</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION:</u>

<u>TYPE OF EVIDENCE:</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION:</u>

<u>TYPE OF EVIDENCE:</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION:</u>

Action note drafted by and date	Action note agreed by and date	Published and date
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