

Registering to Sell Raw Drinking Milk (RDM)? What You Should Know



Under the consolidated EU hygiene rules, which took effect from 1 January 2006, member states were able to introduce or maintain national rules prohibiting or restricting the placing on the market, within its territory, of raw milk or raw cream intended for direct human consumption. Schedule 6 of The Food Safety & Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and The Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006 places restriction on the sale of Raw milk intended for human consumption.

Raw Drinking Milk must meet the following standards:

Plate count at 30°C (cfu per ml) < 20,000

Coliforms (cfu per ml) < 100

All official control samples collected are chargeable to the Food Business Operator at a rate of £63, as set out in the regulations

Before you can begin selling Raw Drinking Milk you must first pre-register with the FSA.

Following satisfactory Dairy Hygiene compliance visit(s) and milk sample(s) (cow's milk only), full registration documents will then be issued.

1. The current controls on the sale of raw cows' drinking milk in hygiene and food labelling regulations are:

- a) the milk may only be sold direct to consumers by registered milk production holdings (at the farm gate or in a farmhouse catering operation i.e. B&B) or through milk roundsmen. Sales through other outlets have been banned since 1985 (although sales by the farmer at farmers markets are allowed);
- b) the supplying animals must be from a herd that is officially tuberculosis free, and either brucellosis free or officially brucellosis free;
- c) the production holding, milking premises and dairy, must comply with hygiene rules;
- d) the milk must bear the appropriate health warning;
- e) compliance with a) to d) above is monitored by inspections twice a year; and
- f) the milk is sampled and tested quarterly under the control of the Agency to monitor compliance with standards for total bacterial count and coliforms.
- g) All official control samples collected are chargeable to the Food Business Operator at a rate of £63, as set out in the regulations.

2. The sale of raw drinking milk from sheep, goats or buffaloes:

- a) is not subject to the restriction at 1a) above;
- b) raw drinking milk from buffaloes has to comply with the herd status requirement at 1b) above;
- c) raw drinking milk from sheep and goats must come from animals belonging to a production holding that is either officially brucellosis free or brucellosis free;
- d) raw drinking milk from these 3 species must comply with dairy hygiene rules and microbiological standards;
- e) In England, raw drinking milk from sheep and goats, but not buffaloes, has to carry the health warning. In Wales, raw milk from all three species has to carry the appropriate health warning; and
- f) compliance with these requirements is monitored at inspections programmed on a risk basis.

Health warning labelling

- Raw Cows Drinking Milk must be labelled on the container or a notice must be displayed at a farm catering establishment stating; **'This milk has not been heat treated and may therefore contain organisms harmful to health'**.

Additional wording for Wales:

- **'The Food Standards Agency strongly advises that it should not be consumed by children, pregnant women, older people or those who are unwell or have chronic illness.'**

Food Business operators are responsible for ensuring food placed on the market is compliant with the legislative requirements and are encouraged to arrange frequent sampling of the product as a part of their own controls and due diligence.

Should you require, a guidance visit by your local Dairy Hygiene Inspector can be arranged to discuss all of these requirements before you decide to pre-register.

Further information can be found on our website at: <http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/monitoring/dhi#toc> with more specific information on RDM at: <http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/farmingfood/dairy-guidance/rawmilkcream>

Food Standards Agency

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NOTE: This leaflet gives general guidance only and should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law.