

National Reference Laboratories (NRLs)

The role of National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) and details of the UK and Northern Ireland (NI) NRLs for food and feed testing

NRLs are specialist laboratories responsible for maintaining standards for the routine testing of feed, food and animal health. They provide advice and support on methods for official control testing, ensuring the delivery of risk-based and proportionate food enforcement to protect consumers.

Food Standards Agency (FSA) has a legal obligation to designate NRLs for food and feed. FSA and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) designated food and feed NRLs for UK. FSA designated food and feed NRLs providing specific EU requirements for Northern Ireland.

Defra has a legal obligation to designate NRLs for animal health and live animals in Great Britain (GB). This role is undertaken by [DAERA](#) for Northern Ireland (NI).

In GB, NRLs are designated under the [Official Control Regulation \(EU\) 2017/625 for Official Feed and Food Controls](#), as amended and retained in UK legislation under [Statutory Instrument 2020/1481](#).

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, EU law continues to apply post EU exit in respect of the majority of food and feed hygiene law, as listed in the [Northern Ireland Protocol \(NIP\)](#). This includes the [Official Control Regulation \(EU\) 2017/625 for Official Feed and Food Controls](#). In accordance with the Northern Ireland Protocol (NIP), the FSA has designated laboratories based in EU Member States to provide required NRL functions under Regulation 2017/625 for Northern Ireland.

However, Northern Ireland may still refer to UK NRLs for other functions such as assistance with technical questions and support with proficiency testing beyond that provided by NI specific NRLs.

FSA and FSS designated food and feed NRLs for UK

Additives for use in animal nutrition

[Laboratory of the Government Chemist Ltd](#)

Teddington
Middlesex
TW11 0LY
Tel: 020 8943 7000

Antimicrobial resistance

Food, Water & Environment (FWE) Microbiology Network
[UK Health & Security Agency \(UKHSA\)](#)
61 Colindale Avenue
London
NW9 5EQ

Tel: 020 8327 7160/7325

Campylobacter

FW&E Microbiology Network

[UKHSA](#)

61 Colindale Avenue

London

NW9 5EQ

Tel: 020 8327 7160/7325

Coagulase positive Staphylococci, including Staphylococcus aureus

FW&E Microbiology Network

[UKHSA](#)

61 Colindale Avenue

London

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Tel: 020 8327 7160/7325

Escherichia coli, including Verotoxigenic E. Coli (VTEC)

FW&E Microbiology Network

[UKHSA](#)

61 Colindale Avenue

London

NW9 5EQ

Tel: 020 8327 7160/7325

Foodborne viruses

[Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science \(CEFAS\)](#)

The Nothe

Barrack Road

Weymouth

DT4 8UB

Tel: 01305 206600

Genetically modified organisms

[Laboratory of the Government Chemist Ltd](#)

Queens Road

Teddington

Middlesex

TW11 0LY

Tel: 020 8943 7000

Halogenated Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

[Food and Environment Research Agency \(FERA\) \(Dioxins\)](#)

Sand Hutton

York

YO41 1LZ

Tel: 01904 462000

Listeria monocytogenes

FW&E Microbiology Network
[UKHSA](#)
61 Colindale Avenue
London
NW9 5EQ
Tel: 020 8327 7160/7325

Material intended to come into contact with foodstuffs

[FERA \(Materials\)](#)
Sand Hutton
York
YO41 1LZ
Tel: 01904 462000

Metals and nitrogenous compounds

[FERA \(Heavy metals\)](#)
Sand Hutton
York
YO41 1LZ
Tel: 01904 462000

Monitoring of marine biotoxins

[Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute \(AFBI\)](#)
Shellfish Toxin Unit - VSD Stormont
Stoney Road
Belfast
BT4 3SD
Tel: 028 9052 5636

Monitoring the bacteriological contamination of bivalve molluscs

[CEFAS](#)
The Nothe
Barrack Road
Weymouth
DT4 8UB
Tel: 01305 206600

Mycotoxins and plant toxins

[FERA \(Mycotoxins\)](#)
Sand Hutton
York
YO41 1LZ
Tel: 01904 462000

Parasites (Trichinella and Echinococcus)

[Animal & Plant Health Agency \(APHA\)](#)
National Agri-Food Innovation Campus
Sand Hutton
York
YO41 1LZ
Tel: 01904 462000

Processing contaminants

[FERA \(Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons\)](#)
Sand Hutton
York
YO41 1LZ
Tel: 01904 462000

The analysis and testing of Zoonoses (Salmonella)

FW&E Microbiology Network
[UKHSA](#)
61 Colindale Avenue
London
NW9 5EQ
Tel: 020 8327 7160/7325

FSA designated food and feed NRLs for Northern Ireland

Additives for use in animal nutrition

[Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety \(AGES\)](#)
Institute for Animal Nutrition and Feed
Spargelfeldstrasse 191
1220 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 50555 33216
Email: nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at

Antimicrobial resistance

[Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine](#)
Agriculture House
Kildare Street
Dublin
DO2 WK12
Tel: +353 (0) 1 607 2000
Email: info@agriculture.gov.ie

Campylobacter

[Foodborne pathogens, Sciensano](#)
Rue Juliette Wytsmanstraat 14
Brussels

Belgium
1050
Tel: +43 50555 35107
Email: NRL.NI@sciensano.be

Coagulase positive Staphylococci, including Staphylococcus aureus

[Laboratorio Nazionale di Riferimento Stafilococchi coagulasi positivi, compreso S.aureus
S.C. Sicurezza e Qualità degli Alimenti](#)

Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale del Piemonte Liguria e Valle d'Aosta
Via Bologna 148
Torino
Italy 10154
Tel: 0039 0112686234 / 225 or 335
Email: nrlstafilococco@izsto.it

Escherichia coli, including Verotoxigenic E. Coli (VTEC)

[Foodborne pathogens, Sciensano](#)

Rue Juliette Wytsmanstraat 14
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Email: NRL.NI@sciensano.be

Foodborne viruses

[Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety \(AGES\)](#)

Institute for Food Safety Vienna
Spargelfeldstrasse 191
1220 Vienna
Austria
Tel: +43 50555 35107
Email: nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at

Food Contact Materials

[Health Service Executive](#)

Public Analyst Laboratory
Sir Patrick Dun's
Lower Grand Canal Street
Dublin 2
DO2 P667
Tel: +353 (0) 16612022
Email: info.dpal@hse.ie

Genetically modified organisms

[Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety \(AGES\)](#)

Institute for Food Safety Vienna
Spargelfeldstrasse 191
1220 Vienna
Austria

Tel: +43 50555 35107
e-mail: nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at

Halogenated persistent organic pollutants (POPs)

[Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment \(BIOR\)](#)

Lejupes iela 3
Riga
Latvia
LV-1076
Tel: +37167620513
Email: bior@bior.lv

Listeria monocytogenes

[Foodborne pathogens, Sciensano](#)

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Brussels
Belgium
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Email: NRL.NI@sciensano.be

Metals and nitrogenous compounds

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Institute for Animal Nutrition and Feed
Wieningerstraße 8
4020 Linz
Austria
Tel: +43 50555 33216
e-mail: nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at

Monitoring of marine biotoxins

[Wageningen Food Safety Research \(WFSR\)](#)

Akkermaalsbos 2
Wageningen
Netherlands
6708 WB
Tel: +31317 481603
e-mail: mirjam.klijnstra@wurl.nl

Mycotoxins and plant toxins

[Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety \(AGES\)](#)

Institute for Food Safety Linz
Wieningerstraße 8
4020 Linz
Austria
Tel: +43 50555 35107
e-mail: nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at

Parasites

[Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine](#)

Agriculture House

Kildare Street

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Email: info@agriculture.gov.ie

Processing contaminants

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