# Raw drinking milk

Information for anyone who is already consuming or is considering consuming raw drinking milk or products made from raw milk.

The majority of the milk we drink in the UK is heat-treated to kill off harmful bacteria. Raw milk isn't – it goes straight from the cow to the bottle.

Raw drinking milk may come from:

- cows
- sheep
- goats
- buffaloes
- horses

## Our advice on raw drinking milk and cream

We advise that raw or unpasteurised milk and cream may contain harmful bacteria that can cause food poisoning. People with a weaker immune system are particularly vulnerable to food poisoning and should not consume it.

These include:

- people aged 65 or over
- people who are pregnant
- infants and small children
- people with compromised immune system such as cancer patients

## Raw drinking milk and the law

The sale of raw drinking milk is legal in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It can only be sold directly to the consumer by:

- [registered milk production farms](#) at the farm gate or farmhouse catering operation
- farmers at registered farmers' markets
- distributors using a vehicle as a shop such as a milk round
- direct online sales
- vending machines at the farm

It's illegal to sell raw milk in any other setting.

Sales of raw milk and cream are completely banned in Scotland.

## How we're protecting people who choose to drink raw milk

Hygiene regulations are in place to protect consumers. Raw drinking milk offered for sale must be:

- from animals that are healthy and free from brucellosis and tuberculosis
- from a farm that complies with hygiene rules and is routinely inspected twice a year
- labelled with the appropriate health warning

Our inspectors also undertake a verification sampling programme of raw drinking milk. Testing is carried out on behalf of the FSA by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA).

We regularly review the controls on raw drinking milk and cream. We want to support consumer choice but have to balance this alongside protecting the health of the public.