



Food and Feed Sampling Plan

2025 - 2026

Introduction

The Port Health service recognises the important contribution sampling makes to the protection of public health and to the food and feed law enforcement functions of the Authority.

Whilst imports of food and feed, and food contact materials remain subject to a programme of risk-based official controls at a frequency defined in legislation, this plan provides an overview of food and feed safety risks from local, regional and national intelligence.

This plan covers sampling outside the scope of legislative requirements.

Food not of Animal Origin Sampling

Food sampling is not routinely carried out as part of import controls unless specified in legislation, for example, High Risk Food Not of Animal Origin has specific sampling frequencies listed in the Annex to the legislation.

Officers should consider the following when deciding whether to take routine samples of imported food.

- The history of the importer including whether they have had any imports rejected or refused entry
- Food alerts
- National Monitoring Plan
- Risk Likelihood Dashboard
- Local and national intelligence

Feed Sampling

Feed sampling is not routinely carried out as part of import controls, the decision to take samples is left to the inspecting officer's professional judgement in consultation, where required, with the Principal Environmental Health Officer.

Imported feed, including feed ingredients, makes up a significant proportion of feed used in the UK. Post-EU exit, imports of feed from the EU are now imports from third countries.

Most feed is not subject to official controls at the point of entry.

For imports at Teesport, and to support a consistent and risk-based approach to monitoring, the service will monitor consignments of feed originating from non-EU countries (including feed that has transited through the EU), in consideration of:

- a) National Trading Standards guidance on consistency and prioritisation of the delivery of official controls at points of entry

- b) sampling consignments which have not been sampled recently or have not been seen before at the point of entry or where there is reason to believe they might fail to comply with legal requirements
- c) the Risk Likelihood Dashboard

Compliance checks should be prioritised based on the scale and severity of the potential impact related to the imported feed.

Where imported feed is placed on the market packaged and labelled ready for the end user, it should be compliant with feed law, including having a UK Feed Business Operators name and address.

Products of Animal Origin Sampling

Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) checks carried out at the border are not routinely sampled, however the Food Standards Agency (FSA) provides National Monitoring Plan (NMP) guidance for both inland and at the ports. The NMP has been used to develop the POAO sampling plan using import data from 2024/25.

The imported foods NMP does not include feed for animals destined for the human food chain. However, it does include imported pet food due to the impact that cross-contamination may have on humans, particularly children, handling their pets' food.

The sampling priorities are based on the nature of the products and the risk they represent, considering the frequency and number of incoming consignments. It also considers the results from previous monitoring and other intelligence gathered from various sources.

Types of Samples undertaken

Microbiological Samples: food samples can be taken and submitted to the lab. Officers should check with the laboratory the number or weight of foodstuff required for analysis before submission; if there is insufficient sample the laboratory may not be able to carry out the necessary analysis.

Analytical Samples: food samples can be taken and submitted to the Public Analyst for a variety of reasons, such as allergens, GM foods, vet medicine residue, and pesticides.

Special Investigations: unplanned events e.g. food alerts and seizure of food, may occur which require samples to be taken as part of an overall investigation.

Surveys: the Authority will participate in national, regional or locally co-ordinated food sampling surveys, in so far as the imports of food and feed involved are available and resources allow.

Regional/local programmes: the authority will undertake food standards sampling targeting importers as part of regional and local sampling requirements.

Targets

All samples required by legislation will be carried out as per the legislative requirements.

Where a Physical check identifies an issue, a sample can be taken for analysis.

Random sample targets as per the table below for POAO.

CN code		product to sample	number of samples	hazard
2309	preparation for animal feeding	Cat & dog food to be tested for pathogens, indicator bacteria and AMR	10	Salmonella, Enterobacteriaceae & Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) where possible (Colistin resistance, Carbapenem-resistance, ESBL)
160100 + 160241	sausages, hams, and other prepared or preserved meat	Ready-to-eat minced meat, meat products (swine)	4	Salmonella (screen for AMR where possible), E. coli (screen for AMR where possible), Listeria monocytogenes, Yersinia
0406xx	cheese	Ripened cheeses made from milk or whey that has undergone pasteurisation or a stronger heat treatment.	3	Staphylococcal enterotoxins (to be carried out on samples with coagulase positive Staphylococci test results greater than 105 cfu/g)
210500	ice cream	Ice cream containing milk ingredients, excluding products where the manufacturing process or the composition of the product will eliminate the salmonella risk.	2	Salmonella, E. coli
1604 + 1605	Prepared or preserved fish; caviar	In tuna, and other fishery products from fish species associated with a high amount of histidine.	1	Histamine
03054100	fish			

Outcomes

All Sampling outcomes will be reported in the Environmental Health (Commercial) Service Plan which is reviewed and update annually.

Any survey samples will be reported to the relevant body issuing the survey as well as being included in the Service Plan.

Regional sampling will be reported to the relevant regional group at their quarterly meetings, as well as to the North East Public Protection Partnership (NEPPP) where relevant.

References

SOP/PHP2 Food Sampling

SOP/PHP3 Feed Sampling

SOP/PHP7Unsatisfactory Consignments NOT of Animal Origin

SOP/PHP16 Sampling Products of Animal Origin

Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance

Feed Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance