

DVMs for distribution

Border Inspection Posts (England) – for action  
Chief Port Health Officers – for action

cc:

Nominated officers for Imported Food (England)  
APHA  
CIEH  
APA  
Trading Standards Institute  
Health Protection England

17<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Reference: OVS/2015/43

Dear Colleagues,

## **UK NATIONAL MONITORING PLAN FOR IMPORTS OF PRODUCTS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN 2015/16 – MID YEAR REVIEW UPDATE**

This letter is addressed to Border Inspection Posts and Chief Port Health Officers in England only.

### **Purpose**

1. To provide BIPs with and update of the UK's National Monitoring Plan priorities for imports of Products of Animal Origin and request that samples are taken and returns logged on TRACES, for the remainder of the 2015-2016 financial year.

### **Background**

2. Directive 97/78/EC and Regulation 136/2004 require Member States of the EU to have a National Monitoring Plan to detect residues, pathogenic organisms or other substances dangerous to humans, animals or the environment. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is developing the Plan to be more flexible with risk based priorities targeted using the intelligence and knowledge of BIPs, the EU Commission's TRACES web based data collection system and FSA's data collection systems. The Plan requires a random element of samples to be determined by BIPs which reflects current levels of sampling of throughput of products of animal origin. This is designed to ensure that no predictive element can be made as to what products may or may not be sampled at any BIP.



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency



3. I attach a copy of the UK National Monitoring Plan for imports of products of animal origin from third countries following the mid-year review. The plan has 2 parts:

- a sampling table setting out what FSA policy teams have identified as high priority for testing for the UK;
- a sampling table setting out what FSA policy teams have identified as medium and lower priorities for the UK;

This replaces the information in the BIP manual, which will be updated in due course.

4. Authorised Officers should also use their local intelligence and knowledge to target samples that are taken under the National Monitoring Plan where they consider it is appropriate and where such products enter through the relevant BIP. The current level of sampling is sufficient and while the samples should cover as far as possible the full range of contaminants and products in the Plan, we understand that not all such products come through every BIP and some may be small in number and quantity. You may use previous results and RASFF to direct sampling (i.e. which contaminant(s) to sample for) but you should note that this is a monitoring plan rather than safeguard activity so there should be some unpredictability to the choice of consignment to be sampled. Due consideration should also be given to the Food Law Code of Practice and associated Practice Guidance issued by the FSA. The FSA is committed to producing an end of year report for circulation to you to summarise returns, trends and patterns identified.

5. Please note the Plan **does not include** the following:

- Samples taken under the VMD's non-statutory surveillance programme.
- Samples taken as a result of Article 24 procedures.
- Samples taken under specific EU safeguard measures.
- Samples taken under the FSA's National Coordinated Sampling Programme which should be submitted through UKFSS (not TRACES)
- Sampling of live animals and animal by-products.

6. The Plan **does include** the following:

- Microscopy and samples taken for bacteriological examination as part of the general import controls.

- Samples taken based on suspicion, where the consignment is not subject to an Article 24 procedure.

7. In previous years National Monitoring Plan returns have had to be sent in monthly using an Excel spreadsheet. In order to reduce the burden on Port Health Authorities the FSA are pleased to confirm that we are now able to compile this data directly from the TRACES system so Port Health Authorities will no longer be required to report monthly.

### **IMPORTANT – PLEASE NOTE**

**The National Monitoring Plan data can only be accurately collated if the ‘RANDOM’ box is completed on Page 2, Section 29 of the CVED and entered on TRACES when a sample is taken under the National Monitoring Plan.**

**Samples taken under the FSA’s National Coordinated Sampling Programme should not be entered onto the TRACES system**

8. Results of laboratory tests should be entered on to the TRACES system as soon as they are received, in addition any positive results relating to Anti-Microbial Resistance should be notified directly to Kara Thomas at the FSA at [Kara.Thomas@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Kara.Thomas@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)

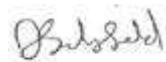
9. FSA will review the Plan throughout the year and will further develop the Plan based on changing priorities.

### **10. Action for Authorised Officers**

- Use the guidance to target National Monitoring Plan sampling activity at the BIP from 1 April 2015.<sup>1</sup>

**Contact point for enquiries:** If you have any enquires please contact the Imports Team at [imported.food@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:imported.food@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely



**Alex Schofield**  
**Senior Imports Policy Advisor**

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<sup>1</sup> Unsatisfactory results should also be reported immediately using the RASFF system in the normal manner.