

Appendix 2 – Port Health Food Safety Enforcement Plan 23/24

Food Safety Enforcement Plan 2023/24 – Port Health

Service Aims and Objectives

Through this plan, the London Port Health Authority (LPHA) aims to:-

- Ensure compliance with legislation related to imported food and animal feed to protect food safety and animal health
- Deliver a high quality, accessible and responsive service to protect, enhance, and improve public, environmental, and animal health throughout the London Port Health district

This Plan aims to ensure that our enforcement remains targeted, proportionate, consistent and transparent, and sets out the framework for its delivery. It has been prepared as required by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the content of this Plan provides the basis upon which the LPHA will be monitored and audited by the FSA.

The LPHA also has responsibility for Animal Feeding Stuffs, Shellfish Classification, Infectious Disease Control, Pollution Control and Pest Control.

Food Hygiene and Food Standards Inspections

The Port Health Service undertakes food hygiene and food standards inspections of premises within the Port domain, including Approved premises. The Port is also responsible for the inspection of some fixed craft and moving vessels serving food and drink on the tidal Thames. Food premises airside at London City Airport also come under the Port. LPHA currently regulates 141 food businesses, of which 7 are non-compliant at the start of 23/24.

The number of Food Hygiene/Food Standards inspections undertaken in 2022/23 were 51 for Food Hygiene (including Alternative Enforcement Strategy) and 8 Food Standards. LPHA has followed the Food Standards Agency Recovery plan (following the Pandemic) but 23/24 will be a normal year in terms of food hygiene and standards inspection delivery.

The City has also entered into a Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act section 101 agreement with Thurrock Council to exercise Thurrock's functions under the feed and food laws in a section of the Logistics Park which has resulted in another area of responsibility for LPHA.

Alternative Enforcement Strategy

The LPHA has also exercised the advice in the Food Law Code of Practice (COP) which allows for an alternative enforcement strategy (AES) for low-risk premises, i.e. Food Hygiene category E based on the COP risk rating.

All new registrations will have an initial formal inspection and if rated as an E they will then come under the AES. Under the AES the premises will be due an intervention every 3 years and the intention is that a physical inspection will be carried out every 9 years.

Premises and vessels under the AES will receive a specific questionnaire which will be scrutinised by a competent officer to assess if enough information has been obtained. A follow up telephone call may be necessary. Some premises will receive a follow up visit to verify information on the questionnaire and visits, if necessary, will take place following complaints, ID notifications, changes of activity/management or non-return of questionnaire.

It is the intention that the larger E rated premises within the Port, which have comprehensive HACCP documentation, such as large-scale storage facilities and milling plants will still have a visit at each due intervention.

Feed and Food Complaints

The Service follows corporate policy in relation to any complaints and we aim to provide a same day response to all consumer complaints on food matters.

Home Authority Principle and Primary Authority Scheme

It is our policy to contact the Primary Authority when we become aware of an importer not conforming with the relevant import regulations. We also try to identify and contact Primary Authorities following adverse sample results.

The Primary Authority database is always examined to check for any partnerships in relation to any food premises that face interventions.

We also provide updates on current issues and offer advice and support in the use of electronic systems such as the IPAFFS system.

Business Recovery Plan

Due to the enforced closure of some food businesses under The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Business Closure) (England) Regulations 2020 and the time that this was in place some of our businesses inspected under the LPHA have required some assistance in order to get back up and running. This assistance has been in relation to re-opening and the action needed to be taken prior to this, advice on waste disposal, sanitisation, pest control, legionella controls due to stagnant water, training for staff. A pragmatic approach has been taken in order to assist these businesses, this is in line with the approach taken by colleagues within the Square Mile.

The service continues to:

- a) focus on imported food and feed controls at the border,
- b) prepare for the announcement of EU border controls later this year,
- c) continue to support business recover from COVID related issues

Food and Feed Sampling

All samples in respect of Imported Food are taken in accordance with Port Health's Sampling Policy. Details regarding the selection, procurement and preparation of samples are contained in the Service's Sampling Plan.

The main aim of our sampling programme is to proactively detect foods outside specific regulation which may be a threat to public or animal health. In addition, we monitor and sample on a risk basis having regard to information from a range of sources including Border Notifications, FSA / Defra intelligence, previous adverse sample results, new products and random sampling.

POAO is checked at the frequencies set by the European Commission and as we follow the Border Operating Model (detailing the timeline for import controls) these will become GB led frequencies.

Sampling plans will change throughout the year to reflect emerging issues and evidence. Further details can be found in the Port Health Sampling Plans in Appendix 1 and 2.

In 2022/2023 the service took:

337 POAO samples (excluding Brazil) and 936 NAO consignments of food and feed were sampled for chemical and bacteriological contamination; and received:

9 POAO unsatisfactory results have been received. 45 NAO unsatisfactory results for chemical, biological and labelling issues.

This has resulted in further formal action, including detention and/or destruction of the consignment, for adverse chemical and biological results. Labelling issues are referred to the responsible Trading Standards service at consignment's destination.

Since 30 March 2017, the EU Commission implemented enhanced checks on consignments of meat and meat derived products from Brazil resulting in all consignments being subject to physical examination with 20% of the consignments being also subject to sampling for microbiological standards. This level of enhanced checks was in response to fraudulent activities in Brazil and continue in force at present. This has amounted to 773 samples taken in 22/23.

Selection of Consignments

The requirement and selection of a consignment for routine sampling is decided officers either during the documentary check process or at the time of the physical examination of the product. Officers can subject any consignment at any stage of the checks to any sampling and laboratory tests if it is considered necessary to ascertain that the consignment meets the import requirements. Officers are either a qualified Chartered/Environmental Health Practitioner or Official Veterinarian.

Information that can be used to help identify and prioritise risks includes:

1. Intelligence obtained from different national and international databases: IPAFFS, RASFF
2. Specific priorities and alerts issued by the different Regulators.
3. Local intelligence/professional expertise from results from previous years and type of imports.

The information sources listed above can be used to assess risks. The risk assessment is likely to be a combination of data, judgement and expert knowledge.

The plan specifies the types of products, origin of the products (if relevant) and the analysis or exam required. The sampling plan aims to proactively detect food or feed which may be a danger to public or animal health and to ensure compliance with food standards and relevant legislation. The sampling plan covers food and feed of POAO or NAO. The plan is not fixed, but is reviewed at regular intervals during the year, to adjust it to the fluctuations in trade and the on-going assessment of the existent and emerging risks.

Officers will undertake sampling in accordance with the standards required in the various Codes of Practice, and in compliance with any methodology when specified in the Regulations:

New products should be sampled if possible or where the AO suspects the consignment does not comply with the import conditions.

Feed, Food Safety and Standards promotional work, and other non-official controls interventions

Regular stakeholder events are held to update the trade and discuss current issues. This opportunity is taken to promote the use of Information Technology to speed clearance times.

Products of Animal Origin and Non-Animal Origin (Food & Feed) - Sampling Plan 23/24

The purpose of the plan is to specify the imported Products of Animal Origin (POAO) and Non-Animal Origin (NAO) food/feed that should be sampled for examination and analysis each year. The plan also includes locally sourced samples of shellfish from the Thames Estuary. The plan is devised using a risk-based approach when deciding which tests and products to be sampled, balanced with the requirement of randomisation in the selection of consignments.

The LPHA Imported Food Sampling Policy allows sampling of food and feed to be decided on a local basis according to product type, local knowledge, seasonal variation and historical import records at each individual port. Deviations from the sampling protocol are permitted to take account of an importer's history of non-compliance with legislative requirements, previous adverse sample results and intelligence received, for example, from inland local authorities, importers and consumer complaints.

2023/24 Sampling Plans

NAO Sampling

See Annex A for the plan for NAO food and feed samples being taken this year.

POAO Sampling

See Annex B for the plan for fishery products and POAO food and feed samples being taken this year.

FSA Food Sampling Survey

There is an additional FSA Food Sampling Survey to be carried out for this period, where funding is obtained directly from Central Government. The purpose of this survey is to supplement Local Government food sampling with specific priorities, so foods of national concern can be tested.

Laboratories used by Port Health are listed below:

1. Food Water and Environmental Microbiology Laboratory London 61 Colindale Avenue, London, NW9 5EQ
Telephone: 02083276550
Email: FWEM@ukhsa.gov.uk
2. Kent Scientific Services
8 Abbey Wood Road, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4YT Telephone 030004151000
Email : kss@kent.gov.uk
3. Public Analyst Scientific Services (Eurofins UK)
i54 Business Park, Valiant Way, Wolverhampton. WV9 5GB
Telephone 01902627200
Email: info@publicanalystservices.co.uk
4. Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) Pakefield Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 0HT
Telephone 01502562244
Email : www.cefasc.co.uk/contact-us

Results

When the results are received, they are entered in the City's database Port Health Interactive Live System (PHILIS) and UK databases, where appropriate.

For unsatisfactory results, officers will instigate further action which includes:

1. Notifying the food/feed business operator of the failure and issue the appropriate notifications to reject the consignment if still not released for import (for instance in the case of suspicious consignments). The possible options will be destruction or re-export, depending on the assessment of the risk posed by the failure.

2. Notifying the Local Authority of the premises of destination when the consignment was released pending the results, to allow them to take appropriate action for the non-compliant product in circulation.
3. Depending on the failure IPAFFS might trigger the issuing of an emergency notifications.

Feed and Food Safety Incidents

LPHA are committed to responding promptly to all food or feed safety incidents. The Service has arrangements in place to ensure that it is able to respond to Food Alerts issued by the FSA. Warnings are received electronically, and all urgent Food Alerts receive immediate attention and action where necessary. Out of hours arrangements are in place.

Border Notifications issued by the European Commission are sent to a designated Officer who is responsible for their distribution amongst LPHA Officers involved in Imported Food Enforcement. LPHA's database, Port Health Interactive Live Information System (PHILIS) can be used to issue reminders when specific products are subject to control.

Organisational Structure

The service is staffed by:

- 1 Assistant Director
- 5 Managers
- 3 Team Leaders
- 12 Port Health Officers
- 10 Official Veterinarians
- 15 Port Health Technical Officers (PHTOs)
- 10 Support Assistants
- 6 Launch Crew
- 1 Apprentice
- 56 staff in total at start of 23/24 financial year
- 8 additional staff continue to be funded by Central Government in 23/24

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Annex A:

Proposed Imported FNAO NMP – sampling priorities table for 23/24 for food not of animal origin

	High priority
	Medium priority
	Low priority

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Nuts & seeds products

Priority Ranking	Product Category	Hazard	Specific sampling guidance
High	Nuts & seeds products	<i>E. coli</i> , <i>Salmonella</i> , <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	Potentially ready-to-eat commodities: fresh coconut, nut spreads, sesame seeds, cumin seeds; alfalfa sprouts, all bean sprouts, other sprouted seeds, tahini & halva (from Syria)
High	Nuts & seeds products	<i>Aflatoxins</i>	Almonds (including ground/flour), groundnuts (including spreads/flour), Brazil nuts, pistachios, hazelnuts, walnuts, other tree nuts and mixed nuts, nut spreads and butters, melon seeds (egusi), chia seeds
Medium	Nuts & seeds products	<i>Cyanide (hydrocyanic acid)</i>	Apricot kernels, bitter almonds
Medium	Nuts & seeds products	<i>Undeclared allergens</i>	Nut spreads and butters
Medium	Nuts & seeds products	<i>Pesticide residues</i>	Bean sprouts (mung beans)
Low	Nuts & seeds products	<i>Undeclared sulphites</i>	Coconut (desiccated, dried, flour)

Herbs & spices

Priority Ranking	Product Category	Hazard	Specific sampling guidance
High	Herbs & spices	<i>Salmonella</i> , <i>Shiga toxin producing E. coli (STEC)</i> , <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	Potentially ready-to-eat commodities: paan (betel) leaves, coriander leaves and other herbs (fresh or dried); pepper (black, pink & white), paprika powder, chilli powder, spice mixtures

High	Herbs & spices	<i>Aflatoxins</i>	Nutmeg (whole & ground), paprika, chilli powder
High	Herbs & spices	<i>Sudan dyes</i>	Turmeric (from Bangladesh), crushed pepper (from China), paprika (from Russia), spices and sumac (from Turkey)
Medium	Herbs & spices	Undeclared allergens, colours/dyes or sulphites	Spice mixtures, curry powder
Medium	Herbs & spices	<i>Pyrrolizidine alkaloids (PAHs)</i>	Cumin, oregano (from a number of countries)
Medium	Herbs & spices	<i>Pesticide residues</i>	Tea leaves (especially from India); ginger, coriander roots & leaves, paprika, chilli powder; herbs (from Israel and Cambodia)
Low	Herbs & spices	<i>Benzo(a)pyrene (BaP)</i>	Ginger, oregano

Fruit & vegetables

Priority Ranking	Product Category	Hazard	Specific sampling guidance
High	Fruit & vegetables	<i>Salmonella, Shiga toxin producing E. coli (STEC), Listeria monocytogenes</i>	Potentially ready-to-eat commodities: e.g. peppers (sweet or bell), salad leaves, prepared fresh vegetables, enoki mushrooms (especially from China)
High	Fruit & vegetables	<i>Aflatoxins</i>	Dried figs, chilli peppers (fresh or dried)
Medium	Fruit & vegetables	<i>Pesticide residues</i>	Dried beans (from any non-EU country), beans (fresh), yardlong beans, okra, peppers (sweet or bell), chilli peppers (fresh or dried), spinach, vine leaves (from Egypt). Vine fruits/raisins, pomegranates, citrus fruits, mangoes (fresh or dried), prepared fresh fruit, dried dates, bananas (from Ecuador), apples (from India)
Medium	Fruit & vegetables	<i>Norovirus / Hepatitis A</i>	Frozen sweetcorn, frozen raspberries, other small fruit & berries
Low	Fruit & vegetables	<i>Ochratoxin A</i>	Vine fruits/raisins, dried figs

Low	Fruit & vegetables	<i>Cadmium</i>	Avocados & asparagus (from Peru)
Low	Fruit & vegetables	<i>Undeclared sulphites</i>	Dried apricots, dried dates, other dried or candied/mixed fruits
Low	Fruit & vegetables	<i>Iodine</i>	Seaweed and kelp (from China, Japan & Korea)

Other FNAO products

Priority Ranking	Product Category	Hazard	Specific sampling guidance
High	Edible oils	<i>Sudan dyes</i>	Palm oil (from Ivory Coast)
High	Grain products	<i>Sudan dyes</i>	Couscous (from Lebanon), fruit bars (from USA)
Medium	Edible oils	<i>3-MPCD & Pyrrolizidine alkaloids (PAHs)</i>	Palm oil
Medium	Grain products	<i>Pesticide residues</i>	Rice (from India)
Low	Grain products	<i>Ethylene oxide</i>	Noodles (from Vietnam)
Low	Food supplements	<i>Ethylene oxide</i>	Various food supplements (from India)

Annex B:

Imported POAO NMP 23/24

BCP	Type	Sample	Samples
London Gateway	Honey	LPHA - Honey - Antibacterials and Pesticides	4
London Gateway	Honey	LPHA - Honey - Authenticity	2
London Gateway	Casings	LPHA - Meat & Products for Anthelmintics	1
London Gateway	Casings	LPHA - Animal Casings - Antibacterials	1
London Gateway	Casings	LPHA - Meat for Residues	1
London Gateway	Dairy	LPHA - Milk Products - Fungal moulds and yeasts	1
London Gateway	Dairy	LPHA - Milk Products - lead and cadmium	1
London Gateway	Dairy	LPHA - Milk products - Microbiological	3
London Gateway	Bovine	LPHA - Fresh and Poultry Meats - dioxin and PCB	1
London Gateway	Bovine	LPHA - Fresh and Poultry Meats - lead and cadmium	1
London Gateway	Bovine	LPHA - Hormonal growth promoters	2
London Gateway	Bovine	LPHA - Meat & Products for Anthelmintics	11
London Gateway	Bovine	LPHA - Meat for E. Coli STEC	3
London Gateway	Bovine	LPHA - Canned products - tin	4
London Gateway	Bovine	LPHA - Flame Grilled Products - PAH	1
London Gateway	Ovine	LPHA - Fresh and Poultry Meats - dioxin and PCB	1
London Gateway	Ovine	LPHA - Fresh and Poultry Meats - lead and cadmium	1
London Gateway	Ovine	LPHA - Meat and Preparations - Salmonella and E. coli	3
London Gateway	Ovine	LPHA - Meat for Residues	4
London Gateway	Porcine	LPHA - Fresh and Poultry Meats - dioxin and PCB	1
London Gateway	Porcine	LPHA - Fresh and Poultry Meats - lead and cadmium	1
London Gateway	Porcine	LPHA - Meat for Residues	2
London Gateway	Porcine	LPHA - Flame Grilled Products - PAH	1
London Gateway	Poultry	LPHA - Fresh and Poultry Meats - dioxin and PCB	1
London Gateway	Poultry	LPHA - Fresh and Poultry Meats - lead and cadmium	2
London Gateway	Poultry	LPHA - Poultry for Residues	20
London Gateway	Poultry	LPHA - Raw Poultry - Carbapenemase, AmpC, ESBL	8
London Gateway	Poultry	LPHA - Raw Poultry AMR	8
London Gateway	Poultry	LPHA - Meat and Preparations - Micro	8
London Gateway	Poultry	LPHA - Cooked Poultry AMR	8
London Gateway	Poultry	LPHA - Meat Products - Micro	4
London Gateway	Gelatine/Collagen	LPHA - Gelatine / Collagen - Residues 853/2004	4
London Gateway	Gelatine/Collagen	LPHA - Gelatine / Collagen - Salmonella	1

	Petfood/Dog		
London Gateway	Chews	LPHA - Dog chews / petfood - microbiological	6
	Petfood/Dog	LPHA - Dog chews / petfood - Veterinary	
London Gateway	Chews	Residues	1
London Gateway	Ready to Eat	LPHA - POAO Ready to Eat	2
Tilbury	Honey	LPHA - Honey - Antibacterials and Pesticides	2
Tilbury	Honey	LPHA - Honey - Authenticity	1
		LPHA - Milk Products - Fungal moulds and yeasts	
Tilbury	Dairy		1
Tilbury	Dairy	LPHA - Milk Products - lead and cadmium	1
Tilbury	Dairy	LPHA - Milk products - Microbiological	4
		LPHA - Fresh and Poultry Meats - dioxin and PCB	
Tilbury	Bovine		1
		LPHA - Fresh and Poultry Meats - lead and cadmium	
Tilbury	Bovine		1
Tilbury	Bovine	LPHA - Meat & Products for Anthelmintics	1
Tilbury	Bovine	LPHA - Meat for E. Coli STEC	2
		LPHA - Fresh and Poultry Meats - dioxin and PCB	
Tilbury	Ovine		1
		LPHA - Fresh and Poultry Meats - lead and cadmium	
Tilbury	Ovine		1
		LPHA - Meat and Preparations - Salmonella -E coli	
Tilbury	Ovine		2
Tilbury	Ovine	LPHA - Meat for Residues	2
Tilbury	Poultry	LPHA - Meat and Preparations - Micro	1
	Petfood/Dog		
Tilbury	Chews	LPHA - Dog chews / petfood - microbiological	2
	Petfood/Dog	LPHA - Dog chews / petfood - Veterinary	
Tilbury	Chews	Residues	1

Total Samples: 148

Fishery Products Monitoring Plan 23/24

Port	Total Samples	Product	Test
London Gateway	1	Cooked molluscs	Salmonella/Vibrio
London Gateway	7	Cooked crustacean	Salmonella/Vibrio
London Gateway	26	Farmed fishery products	Residues/antimicrobials/dyes
Tilbury	2	Farmed fishery products	Residues/antimicrobials/dyes
London Gateway	9	Fishery products – fish/molluscs/cephalopods/crustaceans	Cadmium/Lead/Mercury
Tilbury	1	Fishery products – fish/molluscs/cephalopods/crustaceans	Cadmium/Lead/Mercury
London Gateway	7	Fishery products associated with high amounts of histidine	Histamine
Tilbury	1	Fishery products associated with high amounts of histidine	Histamine
London Gateway	1	Dried fish	Irradiation
London Gateway	1	Imitation crab claws from India	E. coli/Staphylococcus Aureus
London Gateway	2	Oily fish	Dioxins/PCBs

Total Samples:58