

# Sampling Policy: Food Hygiene

Revision #1	Environmental Health
Issue date – 7.11.22	Food Safety
Review date –	

## 1. Introduction

This policy has been prepared in accordance with the FSA Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement, the Food Law Code of Practice (England) and relevant legislation not limited to; Food Safety (Sampling and Qualifications) (England) Regulations 1990, The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and the Food Safety Act 1990. Consideration of sampling guidance issued by the United Kingdom Health Security Agency.

## 2. Objectives

This policy sets out the arrangements and general principles it has in place to gather information on the microbiological quality and possible presence of harmful micro-organisms in foods produced or used within Hull.

## 3. Priorities

Hull City Council recognises that the microbiological sampling and examination of food stuffs is an integral tool in the protection of public health and the food law enforcement function of the local authority. Hull City Council accepts its duty to establish and implement an annual sampling programme and recognises that this is a valuable tool given the increase in novel, imported and exported foods to and from the area.

The Food Safety team is committed to carrying out a targeted sampling programme in respect of Hulls food manufacturers of high-risk foods subject to EC Regulation 852/2004 and 853/2004.

Wherever possible food sampling activities will include current national, regional and locally coordinated sampling programmes which are determined by national, regional and local programmes or intelligence including relevant national sampling programmes centrally co-ordinated by the Food Standards Agency. Samples will also be taken for investigative purposes or to assist with, but not limited to:

- Food complaints
- Process monitoring and verification
- Supporting food hygiene inspections
- Home Authority Principal activities
- Food borne illness investigations
- Response to Food Alerts/Incidents
- To support food fraud investigations
- Surveillance

## 4. Sampling Programme

Each year the local authority will produce a food sampling programme which outlines Hull City Councils general sampling strategy. Sampling will be carried out in accordance with this programme and follow the Food Safety Teams documented procedures. The programme will be

monitored throughout the year to ensure that sampling remains effective and will remain dependent upon available resources. National or local consumer issues or other intelligence may influence the level of sampling undertaken. Hull City Councils responsibilities in relation to food businesses for which it acts as the originating or home authority are considered when devising the sampling programme.

## 5. Sampling Procedure

A procedural document details the method for taking samples, continuity of evidence and preventing deterioration or damage to samples whilst under Hull City Councils control. In addition to this, independent sampling protocols are devised by the United Kingdom Health Security Agency for their national and regional surveys.

## 6. Formal Samples

Formal sampling will only be undertaken by suitably qualified and authorised officers. Samples will be taken in accordance with the appropriate sampling regulations and be submitted to a UKAS accredited laboratory.

## 7. Follow up action

Hull City Council will follow documented sampling procedures to ensure a consistent approach is maintained following the receipt of results from the laboratory and consider the Enforcement Policy before further action is taken.

Unsatisfactory results will be considered in the risk to public health and re sampling may often be necessary. A suitably qualified officer will investigate hygiene practices where appropriate, and a risk-based approach will be taken to locate and remedy the source of the problem. Where necessary a report will be made to other local authorities and/or the Food Standards Agency.

If formal samples are taken and unsatisfactory results are found, the business will be notified.

## 9. Appointment of a microbiologist

Both food and environmental samples will be submitted to:

UKHSA  
Food, water and environmental microbiology laboratory  
Block 10  
National Agri-Food Innovation Campus  
York  
YO41 1LZ

Tel: 01904 468948

Email: [yorkFWElab@UKHSA.gov.uk](mailto:yorkFWElab@UKHSA.gov.uk)

The laboratory is accredited through the UK Accreditation Service (UKAS)

## 10. Review

This Policy will be published and reviewed annually, or more frequently as required, by the Lead Food Environmental health officer.

The Sampling Programme will be reviewed annually to reflect national and local priorities.