

Food Standards Agency: Information released under the Freedom of Information Act

Date released: 12 February 2018

Request

Could I put in a separate FOI for the same data for poultry (fresh, frozen and poultry products) from Thailand?

This request relates to a previous one which was answered on 12 January 2018:

I understand the FSA has a national monitoring plan for imports of products of animal origin.

Under this plan it carries out random sampling of imports of animal origin to detect residues, pathogenic organisms or other substances dangerous to humans, animals or the environment.

I am a researcher looking into the aquaculture sector in Vietnam and am interested in products from this country.

I understand that farmed fish and crustacean products from Vietnam have been identified as a high priority by the FSA and should be tested for trimethoprim, macrolides and dyes (e.g. malachite green).

I also understand fish products and crustaceans are tested for salmonella bacteria, E.coli bacteria as well as veterinary medicines residues (eg chloramphenicol, sulphonamides, nitrofurans and penicillin) as well as mercury.

Please could you provide me with:

- the number of samples of fish and crustaceans from Vietnam tested under this programme***
- the date the consignment was tested***
- the level of antimicrobial; other veterinary medicine residue; chemical; dye or bacteria (salmonella or E.coli) found in each sample***
- whether the consignment was rejected as a result of the sampling***

Please provide this information for each of the past 5 years (broken down by individual year)

Response

The Food Standards Agency assumed responsibility for the UK's National Monitoring Plan for sampling products of animal origin in 2014, prior to which, this role was undertaken by Defra. We are therefore only able to provide NMP data for the last three financial years.

It is not possible to provide the precise level of detail that you have requested, such as the specific hazards that Thailand poultry samples have been tested for (i.e. particular veterinary medicine residues, heavy metals or microbiological hazards), nor are we able to provide the exact levels of the various hazards detected in each sample, as that information is not captured.

However, we can provide you with information on the total number of poultry products originating from Thailand sampled in each financial year since 2014; the specific dates when those samples were taken; the general category of the hazard for which each sample was analysed and whether each of the samples tested were found to be satisfactory or not. All of this information has been collated into an Excel spreadsheet, which is being sent with this response. This shows that a total of 443 samples of Thailand poultry products were tested between April 2014 and March 2017, of which all but five were found to be satisfactory. Please note that for some of the entries in the 'Group' column of the spreadsheet, specific product information was not available. In those instances, poultry meat has been identified from the dataset by the reference to the Latin names '*Aves*' and '*Gallus gallus*'.

You also requested details of the number of rejected consignments arising from unsuccessful laboratory results. Please note that as National Monitoring Plan samples are not official controls, the consignments cannot be rejected on the basis of the laboratory results. Nonetheless, if a laboratory test suggests a consignment is non-compliant, where possible, the consignment will then be subject to an official control with a formal sample taken under suspicion which is rejected if it fails that official control.