

Annual Review of Controls on Imports of Animal Products: April 2005 – March 2006



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE



defra

Department for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs

ANNUAL REVIEW MADE UNDER SECTION 10A OF THE ANIMAL HEALTH ACT 1981

This statutory return is required to be made and laid before Parliament in accordance with section 10A of the Animal Health Act 1981. It covers Great Britain and copies are being made and laid before the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales at the same time.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

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Annual Review of Controls on Imports of Animal Products: April 2005 – March 2006

Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State
for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury
by Command of Her Majesty
July 2006

Foreword by Jeff Rooker



We are required under Animal Health legislation to report on action taken to reduce the risk of disease entering the country via imports of animal products and I welcome the opportunity to report on progress made in the past year.

The control of illegal imports of animal products and plants remains a major concern for the Government. We continue to recognise the impact that disease outbreaks can have on rural communities and businesses and, in trying to protect animal health, we know how important it is to take a variety of measures both at the border and inland.

Over the last few years we have achieved a great deal in raising public awareness of the rules, enforcing the rules and understanding the risks. We have continued to build on this experience and once again seizures have continued to rise year-on-year reflecting the increase in enforcement activity, although we recognise that efforts must be maintained.

The latter part of the year was dominated by the spread of H5N1 Avian Influenza (AI) from South East Asia to the Middle East, Europe and Africa. I have been pleased with the level of cross-Governmental action to ensure co-operation at both policy and operational levels, building on the existing relationships formed over the last few years. In particular, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) have worked very closely, with Defra providing expert veterinary advice to assist HMRC in prioritising their increased enforcement effort and both further enhancing our publicity effort to draw attention to the disease risks from AI, with the involvement of both the Department of Health and the Department for Transport.

However, it is important to note that we have not taken our eye off the ball in terms of the risks from other diseases, such as Foot and Mouth Disease and Classical Swine Fever. We have further developed our more general campaigns aimed at raising public awareness of the risks posed by Products Of Animal Origin and so reduce the volume of illegal products brought in because of ignorance of the rules.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Rooker". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Jeff Rooker
Minister for Sustainable Farming and Food

Introduction

1.1.1 This is the fourth annual review of controls on imports of animal products into Great Britain (GB) in accordance with section 10A of the Animal Health Act 1981. (Northern Ireland represents a separate disease control regime within the United Kingdom (UK) and has differing challenges and controls regarding imports. Nevertheless, Northern Ireland is equally committed to tackling the problem of illegal imports. The statistics at Annex 1 include seizures made by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland (DARDNI) at ports of entry in Northern Ireland.)

- 'Animal product' is not defined in the Act and for the purpose of this review: 'Animal product' and 'Border Inspection Post (BIP)' have the same meaning as in The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) (No. 4) Regulations 2004 (as amended) (SI 3388), The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Scotland) Regulations 2002 (as amended) (SSI 445) and The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (SI 666 (W.56));
- 'import(s)' means a product or products of non-European Union (EU) country origin entering GB from outside the EU;
- 'intra-Community product' means an animal product entering GB from within the EU.

1.1.2 Work to tackle illegal imports of animal products forms part of the overall Animal Health and Welfare Strategy for GB¹ and its associated implementation plans.

1.1.3 The Government has remained committed to ensuring effective controls against illegal imports, but the risk of importing disease can never be reduced to zero. Import control measures must be proportionate and appropriate for the circumstances in each country. It is impossible for any country to stop smuggling altogether. As part of the EU, the UK must apply the same rules as other EU Member States. Regulations are designed to ensure that commercial food imports from outside the EU meet European standards, backed up by a rigorous checking programme in all EU Member States and that there are controls in place to prevent illegal imports. UK import control measures compare favourably to other EU Member States.

1.1.4 We continue to recognise that we can only successfully tackle illegal imports with a combined effort across all relevant government departments and enforcement agencies and by raising public awareness and understanding the risks.

1.1.5 All animal products from non-EU countries are checked on entry into the UK to ensure they meet EU veterinary import conditions. The State Veterinary Service (SVS) are responsible for carrying out the checks where ports do not handle food products. Local Authorities carry out the checks at ports which handle food of animal origin such as meat, fish, eggs, milk and products containing them, and a mix of animal products. Veterinarians carry out checks, except for fishery products when Environmental Health Officers may do the checks. Technical assistants may assist the vets. There are three types of checks:

- Documentary checks – checks on the certification accompanying the consignment;
- Identity checks – checks to ensure that the consignment matches the information given in the document;

¹ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/ahws/strategy/ahws.pdf>

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- Physical checks – checks on the consignment itself, including checks on temperature, condition and for microbiological and chemical contaminants.

Checks are carried out in approved facilities at ports or airports. These are known as Border Inspection Posts (BIPs). EU legislation lays down the requirements for BIPs and they are inspected periodically by the European Commission (EC) to ensure they meet the required standard. We have introduced a programme of liaison visits by the SVS to Local Authority operated BIPs to ensure compliance with the required standard. This scheme has had some success with several BIPs upgrading facilities and some choosing to come off the EU list of approved ports and airports.

1.1.6 A Service Level Agreement (SLA) sets out roles and responsibilities between Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the responsible policy departments: the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Food Standards Agency (FSA), the Forestry Commission, Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department and Welsh Assembly Government – Department for Environment Planning and Countryside. DARDNI continue to retain responsibility for border operational arrangements in Northern Ireland.

The SLA is a living document incorporating the flexibility to deal with changes in priorities as they may occur.

1.1.7 The Government made available an additional £25 million over the three financial years from 2003-2006 to tackle illegal imports from outside the EU of any meat, other animal products and plant products. £10 million was made available for the financial year 2005/06 (HMRC received £7 million, with £2 million going to the FSA and £1 million to Defra), the same amounts as for the previous financial year.

Enforcement

1.2.1 The agreed approach continues to be that HMRC will seek to reduce illegal imports, targeting on the basis of risk and intelligence, raising awareness through publicity, to prosecute in serious cases, and respond as appropriate to disease notifications. Decisions on targeting and resource deployment are assisted by information provided by Defra on the animal health disease situation around the world informed by the World Animal Health Organisation (OIE), including the risks from new disease outbreaks. Previous Veterinary Laboratories Agency's (VLA) risk assessments also provide a central role in the targeting operation.

1.2.2 All of HMRC's front line detection staff (currently 4,500 staff) have anti-smuggling responsibilities for products of animal and plant origin but within these resources, dedicated teams, totalling approximately 100 staff supported by a ten detector dog programme, had primary responsibility to detect illegal imports of Products Of Animal Origin (POAO) during the year. These teams are mobile and flexible. In addition HMRC deploy resources into investigation and intelligence. Moreover, in response to the threat imposed by the recent outbreaks of H5N1 Avian Influenza (AI), HMRC has doubled the number of staff who check passengers, freight and post from countries affected by H5N1 AI. This arrangement is kept under constant review.

1.2.3 To combat the smuggling of illicit items, including POAO, HMRC has baggage x-ray scanners at selected major airports. These scan passengers' baggage prior to collection at the carousel and assist HMRC in detecting a range of prohibited and restricted goods including POAO.

HMRC detector dog as referred to in section 1.2.2



1.2.4 The number of seizures of illegal imports of POAO totalled 32,795, a 28% increase on 2004/05. 86% of seizures are made from higher designated risk countries of origin. HMRC accounts for 99% of all UK seizures. Most seizures continue to be under 20kg from small family groups, business people and students travelling to the UK for the first time with foodstuffs as gifts, for a special occasion or simply for a 'taste of home'. HMRC has also made seizures in postal traffic and in freight and continues to monitor the situation for any significant smuggling. Further statistical information is at Annex 1.

HMRC continues to make intelligence referrals to the FSA for the use of Local Authorities where they come across consignments designated for inland commercial establishments. Fifty-nine referrals were made in 2005/06.

1.2.5 A decision to bring a prosecution before the Courts is a matter for the relevant enforcement authority. Since assuming responsibility for anti-smuggling controls on POAO at the frontier in 2003, HMRC have prosecuted nine people for illegal imports offences under the POAO Regulations. Fines issued by magistrates have varied with the maximum to date being £400. Of the two successful prosecutions in 2005/06, one conviction resulted in the imposition of a 28-day custodial sentence which indicates that the smuggling of POAO is taken very seriously. The latest prosecution led to a £100 fine and deportation of the individual found guilty.

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HMRC will seek to prosecute where proportionate and in the public interest but particularly in cases involving large scale smuggling (organised smuggling such as commercial or involving couriers), items intended for the food trade, repeat offenders or other serious factors such as abuse of a position of responsibility, violence to staff or smuggling with other goods.

1.2.6 The FSA have continued to work closely with Local Authorities to improve Local Authority enforcement of imported food controls. Initiatives this year have included 30 advanced imported food courses attended by over 350 officers, a pilot two day Food Sampling at Ports course, a pilot two day Enforcement course and a Contaminant Sampling seminar.

The Guidance and Regulatory Advice on Import Legislation (GRAIL) prototype system which provides database query facilities for information on imported food legislation has been made available to all major ports in the UK. The FSA has been developing the database to make it accessible online. It is planned that version two would have a wider deployment to UK Local Authorities, other Government Departments and potentially to a limited number of trade organisations. GRAIL currently contains information on products not of animal origin and fish and fishery products. It is however planned to expand GRAIL's content to include all POAO.

1.2.7 Defra continues to meet regularly with HMRC and the FSA to discuss progress, resolve any issues or to improve on guidance to enforcement officers. We will continue to review progress and ensure that existing relationships are further developed and strengthened where necessary.

1.2.8 The Defra Import/Export Consultation Exchange (DICE) – the consultative forum in which trade issues can be discussed with key stakeholders – continues to meet with the aim of encouraging dialogue between the trade and the regulatory bodies with a view to facilitating legitimate trade without compromising animal, plant or public health standards. It brings together a range of Defra officials dealing with import and export controls on a wide range of products, colleagues from the FSA, the SVS and HMRC, importers, exporters, shipping agents, port operators and others with an interest.

1.2.9 The National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit was established on a trial basis in April 2002. It was based within, and managed by, the National Criminal Intelligence Service and has been the national focal point for the collation, analysis and development of intelligence relating to wildlife crime. It actively sourced and coordinated intelligence from the police, HMRC and other Government agencies, and non-Government organisations such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). Following the establishment of the Serious Organised Crime Agency, all national intelligence units were reorganised. The Government has committed significant funds to maintaining and enhancing the renamed National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCU). In addition to continuing its intelligence gathering and analysis functions, the new Unit will be equipped with an investigative support role and will also target AI as one of its priority areas. The NWCU has received strong support from both the Association of Chief Police Officers and its equivalent in Scotland.

Understanding the risk

1.3.1 The endemic nature of exotic diseases in many countries around the world results in a continuous but low risk of infected meat reaching the country through illegal routes. This means that all such seizures are treated as an animal health risk and destroyed, by incineration, in the shortest possible time.

1.3.2 In early 2005 Defra commissioned the VLA to undertake a Qualitative Risk Assessment (QRA) to determine how the risk from illegal imports fit into the wider context of import risk across the range of means of entry, both legal and illegal, and for both live animals and POAO, and for EU and non-EU country imports. The report will be published in summer 2006 and will lead into longer-term enforcement strategies.

1.3.3 In September 2005, Defra conducted a seminar titled "Animal Health Risk at the Borders of the EU", with the participation of officials attending the EU's Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. The seminar was relevant to the scientific work of the Committee and was intended to develop thinking on prevention and control of contagious animal diseases, and helped generate ideas to help shape the strategic direction of EU import controls. The seminar was a success and also provided expert insight for the VLA risk assessment, including an overview of the principles of dealing with illegal imports and the difficulties which enforcement agencies across the EU experience in dealing with this.

1.3.4 The Department is part-funding a short pilot study using DNA testing techniques on samples taken from consignments of illegally imported bushmeat. The aim is to identify if any of the products tested originate from species listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) of wild fauna and flora.

1.3.5 Defra continues to monitor the occurrence of major animal disease outbreaks worldwide as an early warning to assess the risk these events may pose to the UK, and help inform our delivery partners' enforcement activities.

1.3.6 Defra publishes routine summary reports, Preliminary Outbreak Assessments (POAs) and QRAs (as required) which are regularly distributed within Government, posted publicly on our website, or published in the Veterinary Record.

1.3.7 When Defra becomes aware of a new animal disease outbreak in another country, we may carry out a POA, which may conclude that a full QRA is justified. When Defra is officially notified of a new disease incident in an EU Member State, a country on the border of the EU, or one of the UK's non-EU country trading partners, we carry out a QRA.

1.3.8 In 2005/06 Defra conducted 41 POAs on outbreaks of diseases such as AI, Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Classical Swine Fever, Bluetongue, Newcastle Disease and Peste des Petits Ruminants. Further to these, 14 more detailed QRAs were undertaken – the majority related to the evolving situation with regard to the outbreaks of H5N1 AI around the world. In relation to AI, Defra have also ensured on a daily basis that HMRC are aware of any significant developments in order to help them to prioritise the use of their resources accordingly.

1.3.9 The FSA is responsible for public health with respect to imported food controls and co-ordinates work with the Department of Health, the Health Protection Agency and Defra

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through groups such as the UK Zoonoses Group and the Human Animal Infections and Risk Surveillance Group. Government advice to UK consumers is that illegal imported food, including meat and bushmeat, should not be eaten because it has evaded official controls designed to verify compliance with food safety standards and could therefore pose a danger to human health. The FSA believes that the main risks to public health from illegal imported meat and bushmeat are those associated with well-known food pathogens, which will be destroyed by cooking, and have concluded that a formal risk assessment is not warranted. To determine whether any additional advice is required, a study was commissioned to give an overview of the microbiological risks associated with illegal imports of meat, which was put to the independent Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food. The study came to a similar conclusion to the FSA and felt that there were sufficient controls in place protecting the UK's animal population that would also serve to protect the human population. The committee endorsed this view. The committee went slightly further to look at the risks of an unknown micro-organism entering the UK in bushmeat. Based on the known biology of micro-organisms they were reassured that the risk of entry into the UK was small. However, they asked for further information on the possibility of testing illegally imported meat for contamination with unknown viruses and further information on the species of animal being imported as meat for human consumption.

Internet advertising as referred to in section 1.4.9

onlinetravel.com

Please wait while we search for the best available prices.

This will take a few moments.

Don't end your holiday with a delay or fine

It's illegal to bring any meat or dairy products and many other food items into the UK from non-EU countries.

Check the rules before you travel.
Go to www.defra.gov.uk
(If in doubt, leave it out!)

defra THE DEFRA

HM Customs and Excise

Book with confidence
Your personal and financial details are completely secure when you book with us.
Your price is guaranteed and your booking is protected.

ABTA 08731 **VeriSign** ***SECURE SITE**

Raising Awareness

1.4.1 There continues to be a joined-up approach across Government Departments on the overall communications strategy. Defra leads on inland audiences, HMRC on travellers from non-EU countries and at GB points of entry. The overall aim is to enhance awareness of the risks posed by products that may carry animal diseases and reduce the volume of illegal products brought in because of ignorance of the rules.

1.4.2 As with the previous two years, Defra has again written to a large number of organisations (universities, student groups, volunteer organisations, charities and travel guide companies) that provide information to individuals coming to, or returning to, the UK. This year we have sent out over 9,500 leaflets. We have also sent leaflets to over 11,000 doctors' surgeries and uptake has been very good.

1.4.3 Defra has continued the public awareness campaign launched on 25 October 2004, which focuses on communities who may bring back food items from their trips abroad, and is being conducted by a specialist publicity agency. Bi-lingual leaflets and posters in nine different languages have been produced: Arabic, Urdu, Bengali, Punjabi, Hindi, Gujarati, Chinese, Turkish and English (for African and Caribbean communities). 7,060 leaflets and 1,432 posters were distributed in 2005/06 to community groups/centres, places of worship, travel agents, high commissioners and visa offices. A further 3,600 posters were also distributed to over 2,800 high street shops including local supermarkets and other appropriate retail outlets.

1.4.4 Defra has also undertaken community-specific advertising in Black and Minority Ethnic press publications and on radio stations.

1.4.5 Defra continues to receive positive feedback plus good media coverage in national, local and ethnic press.

1.4.6 A branded mobile unit has toured the country, visiting approximately 35 specific cultural, religious, and community events this financial year, including the Turkish Fest and Luton Mela, distributing over 60,000 leaflets.

1.4.7 From 9-13 February and 11-13 March 2006, a Defra stand was displayed in Terminal 3 at Heathrow airport, and from 28-30 March 2006 in Terminal 4, with staff present to answer any queries, handing out leaflets to travellers flying to non-EU countries.

1.4.8 Since its release in November 2004 to the end of 2005, the Defra television (TV) filler "I Packed My Bags" has accumulated 27,945 transmissions worth £733,759 in airtime with a significant number of showings on stations such as Islam Channel and Zee TV as well as regional TV stations. The filler won an award at the United States International Film and Video Awards.

1.4.9 In March/April 2005, Defra conducted an online advertising campaign aimed at UK travellers who research and book trips abroad on the internet, targeting people who were searching for destinations outside the EU and using innovative and 'eye-catching' images to encourage users to click through to the Defra website. Campaign evaluation revealed that awareness of the import restrictions amongst the online audience increased significantly as a result of the publicity activity and was seen by a minimum of 4.5 million unique users, with a good click through rate to our website.

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Defra bi-lingual leaflets and posters available in nine different languages as referred to in section 1.4.3



1.4.10 HMRC is responsible for publicity at the border and overseas. Taking on board comments made by the Food and Veterinary Office, HMRC has produced revised high-impact leaflets and posters aimed at the travelling public to draw attention to the personal import rules for POAO. Ticket wallets and flyers advertising the rules continue to be issued for use by travel agents and message stands placed at check-in desks for 20 airlines. Specific messages are also displayed on plasma screens in Passport Offices. References to the personal import rules are included in general publicity material issued by HMRC for travellers and travel agents, as well as via Government websites.

1.4.11 HMRC has increased awareness in non-EU countries through distribution of bi-lingual leaflets (which detail the rules for specific countries) in co-operation with local Embassies and visa offices. Publicity material is also displayed in overseas airports. HMRC also initiated, as a trial, an in-depth advertising campaign in a selected non-EU country (Nigeria) to publicise the UK rules and consequences of breaking them. Consideration will be given to running a similar exercise in one or more high disease risk countries in other regions in the future.

1.4.12 With the support of the Department for Transport, Defra and HMRC have worked with airlines operating in the UK to ensure they are meeting their obligations under Commission Regulation (EC) No. 745/2004 to draw passengers' attention to the EU rules on POAO personal imports. A free in-flight video is available. HMRC is also currently piloting with one airline, the inclusion of laminated flyers, which explain the rules, in seat pockets. HMRC will evaluate the effectiveness of this and may consider extending this more widely in the future.

1.4.13 HMRC also issues warning letters and public notices to all travellers from whom products are seized, including by recorded delivery to those receiving items in the post, thus ensuring better understanding of the rules.

1.4.14 In addition to these on-going activities, an enhanced publicity campaign drawing attention to the disease risks from the recent spread of AI has been undertaken. A flyer giving a reminder of the ban on live birds and poultry products and advice on health precautions while abroad is being made available to passengers leaving the UK travelling to H5N1 AI affected countries. This flyer has been produced in 10 languages: English, Thai, French, Arabic, simplified Chinese, traditional Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Romanian and Turkish. Inbound and outbound posters are on display in most airports. Further publicity through on-line advertising on travel and tourism websites is also underway.

Stakeholder involvement

1.5.1 Representatives from Defra and HMRC provided a well-received joint presentation at the Association of Port Health Authorities' Annual Conference on 22 June 2005.

1.5.2 Since August 2005 Defra has held monthly meetings, chaired by the Chief Veterinary Officer Debby Reynolds, with a key group of 35 stakeholders on AI. Regular e-mail updates have been sent out to inform stakeholders of policy decisions and upcoming issues and during the Cellardyke and Norfolk incidents emergency meetings were held to update the group on the disease situation. Additional meetings have also been held to discuss specific issues with the game Industry, pigeon racers, supermarkets and owners of rare breeds of poultry.

1.5.3 In August 2005 Defra wrote to stakeholders informing them that we had asked the VLA to undertake a QRA on legal and illegal imports. This also provided an overview of the project plan and invited comments – feedback was positive and supportive of our intended approach.

1.5.4 At its meeting in February 2006 the Joint Industry/Government Working Group on Sharing Responsibilities and Costs of Animal Disease was informed of the work of Defra and HMRC on preventing animal disease incursion at the border². This information formed part of the fact-finding of the Group in the development of its recommendations for sharing responsibilities and costs of exotic animal disease. A report, including the recommendations of the Group, will be published at either the end of June or early July 2006. Amongst other matters the recommendations will include the prevention of disease incursion at the border.

² The Group was established following publication of the *Partners for Success – a farm regulation and charging strategy*. This strategy announced that Government would set up a joint working group with the farming industry to develop risk sharing arrangements for tackling exotic animal diseases appropriate to the English context.

Review of controls on imports of meat and other animal products

The Animal Health Act 1981 (as amended by the Animal Health Act 2002) requires a return to be made against five headings as given below:

Review of activities of enforcement agencies directed to the prevention of the introduction of disease

2.1.1 Defra and the **Welsh Assembly Government** are responsible for animal health policy in England and Wales, and Defra is the central competent authority for veterinary checks and animal health aspects of import controls on POAO. Defra remains the nominated UK management authority for CITES, and is responsible for licensing imports, exports and commercial use of listed species of animals, plants and their derivatives. Responsibility for intra-EU movements of food products is with Defra and the Local Authorities.

2.1.2 The **SVS** has a presence in most busy ports and airports. It is able to support other enforcement bodies and provide a line of communication with Defra headquarters. The SVS is also able to provide advice on identifying products and can advise on disposal arrangements, disinfecting etc. The SVS is also responsible for veterinary checks on POAO at BIPs that take only products not for human consumption. The SVS was launched as an Executive Agency of Defra on 1 April 2005. During 2006/07 the SVS will take on the responsibility for dealing with service delivery work relating to the import of POAO, such as responding to external enquiries about the requirements for imports from non-EU countries, and for intra-Community trade.

2.1.3 The **FSA** is responsible for public health aspects of food imported into the UK. The FSA has particular responsibility for policy issues for imports of fishery products, shellfish, and food which is not of animal origin. The FSA has responsibilities for assisting and co-ordinating local enforcement activities of Local Authorities, both inland and at ports, in this aspect of their duties.

2.1.4 The **Meat Hygiene Service** is an executive agency of the FSA, and operates controls at licensed meat cutting and processing plants. These include random checks on non-EU country meat and intra-Community products, to ensure compliance with public and animal health legislation.

2.1.5 **HMRC** is responsible for detecting and deterring illegal imports from non-EU countries at GB points of entry (except in areas designated as BIPs). HMRC also has responsibility for postal imports whether at sorting offices, ports or airports, and for enforcing controls under CITES. HMRC is not responsible for controlling intra-EU movements except where they have not been subject to customs control elsewhere in the EU, such as interline baggage.

2.1.6 The **Scottish Executive** and the **Welsh Assembly Government** are responsible for the legislation and overseeing of enforcement in their respective countries.

Review of controls on imports of meat and other animal products

2.1.7 Local/Port Health Authorities are responsible for food safety and standards checks on goods presented at ports, including veterinary checks required by EU law on POAO at BIPs. They are not responsible for detecting smuggled POAO at GB points of entry. If, however, they uncover illegal products in the course of their duties outside of a BIP they issue a detention notice and seek HMRC assistance. Local Authorities are also responsible for dealing with smuggled POAO when they are discovered inland. Responsibility for intra-EU movements of food products is with the Local Authorities and Defra.

2.1.8 The Police do not have any specific enforcement responsibilities under the legislation listed, but their assistance might be sought to aid Local/Port Health Authorities or other inspectorates in their enforcement duties.

Defra advert as featured in Bangla Post as referred to in section 1.4.4



Defra advert as featured in African Voice as referred to in section 1.4.4



Statistics on illegal products

2.2.1 Statistics relating to total seizures, in this and previous years (where records are available) are set out in Annex 1.

Legislation: powers

2.3.1 The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) (No. 4) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/3388), as amended by:

- The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) (No. 4) (Amendment) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/3386); and
- The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) (No. 4) (Amendment) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/844);

is the principal regulation relating to imports of products. It gives effect to Directive 97/78/EC laying down principles governing the organisation of veterinary checks on products entering the EU from non-EU countries and also Commission Regulation (EC) No. 745/2004 laying down measures with regard to imports of POAO for personal consumption. It also gives effect to the responsibility of HMRC to enforce controls on prohibited goods at points of entry. In exercising

Review of controls on imports of meat and other animal products

this responsibility, HMRC draws down its powers from the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979 under which it has wide-ranging powers, including powers of search, seizure and arrest.

Similar regulations apply in Scotland:

- The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Scotland) Regulations 2002 (as amended) (SSI 2002/445);

as amended by:

- The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2002 (SSI 2002/565);
- The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2003 (SSI 2003/165);
- The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Scotland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations 2003 (SSI 2003/225);
- The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Scotland) Amendment (No. 3) Regulations 2003 (SSI 2003/333);
- The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2005 (SSI 2005/323);
- The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Scotland) Amendment (No. 2) Regulations 2005 (SSI 2005/645);
- The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2006 (SSI 2006/156);

and Wales:

- The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/666 (W.56)).

In addition:

- Commission Regulation (EC) No. 745/2004 requests that international passenger transport operators shall draw the attention of all passengers they carry into the EU to the animal health conditions for imports of POAO.
- The EC Wildlife Trade Regulations (Council Regulation (EC) No. 338/97) came into force in June 1997, implementing CITES within the European Community, replacing Council Regulation (EEC) No. 3626/82. This Regulation restricts the movement of and/or trade in endangered wild flora and fauna, and requires EU Member States to designate Customs offices for imports and exports of all CITES specimens, set out in the Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Designation of Ports of Entry) Regulation 1985.

This has largely been superseded by the Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) legislation. Defra is looking to revise and update Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Designation of Ports of Entry) Regulations over the year.

Review of controls on imports of meat and other animal products

Defra mobile unit as referred to in section 1.4.6



Legislation: effectiveness

2.4.1 Very little legislation relevant to controls on imports of animal products is made under the Animal Health Act 1981. The Importation of Animal Products and Poultry Products Order 1980 (SI 1934), as amended in 1984 (SI 2920) is extant and applies to all animal products (derived from mammals or birds) which are not subject to the provisions of The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) (No. 4) Regulations 2004 (as amended) (SI 3388), The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Scotland) Regulations 2002 (as amended) (SSI 445) and The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (SI 666 (W.56)). This includes some hides and skins, and certain products not for human consumption.

2.4.2 The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) (No. 4) Regulations 2004 (as amended) (SI 3388), The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Scotland) Regulations 2002 (as amended) (SSI 445) and The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (SI 666 (W.56)) create an absolute offence and provide for a fine not exceeding £5,000 and/or up to three months' imprisonment on summary conviction, and an unlimited fine and/or up to two years' imprisonment on indictment.

2.4.3 HMRC may also use its powers under the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979, where penalties for being knowingly concerned with smuggling prohibited or restricted items can include imprisonment for up to seven years and/or unlimited fines.

Future action

Enforcement strategy

2.5.1 HMRC will deliver an enforcement strategy that targets anti-smuggling activity on the highest risk traffic and will continue to review deployment of resources and react flexibly in response to changes in the pattern of risk.

2.5.2 Travellers will be encouraged to voluntarily deposit any high risk items into dedicated surrender bins at manned Red (HMRC) points.

Understanding the risk

2.5.3 We will evaluate the VLA's QRA on the risks from legal and illegal trade, taking on board comments from other stakeholders such as the EC. These results and the European Food Safety Authority's assessment on the risks of FMD being introduced into the EU from legal and illegal imports will be discussed at a working group consisting of Defra and the relevant enforcement agencies (HMRC and the SVS). This will help determine our priorities for 2006/07 and influence future enforcement strategies.

Raising public awareness

2.5.4 Defra will consider the recommendation in the National Audit Office report to raise awareness in other areas (such as through schools) with a view to how this proposal might best be taken forward.

2.5.5 Both HMRC and Defra have completed the initial evaluation of activity in 2005/06. Defra will continue with its ongoing campaigns with possible changes in emphasis depending on evaluation of levels of public awareness and seizure information. Defra will also continue with the mainstream activity such as providing leaflets to universities to send to students abroad. HMRC will continue to promote the POAO personal import rules through a wide range of communication channels including high impact leaflets, posters, websites and contact with airlines, as well as seeking new opportunities for media publicity.

Defra, HMRC and the FSA will meet at regular intervals to review publicity objectives for 2006/07, taking into account successes and lessons learned from 2005/06 and any changing priorities as the year progresses.

International co-operation and information exchange

2.5.6 We continue to support all efforts to encourage closer co-operation between Customs and veterinary authorities in other EU Member States and sharing best practice. This includes, in May 2006, hosting a visit from Norwegian Customs and their Food Safety Authority to discuss our experiences on implementing the personal imports regulations (Commission Regulation (EC) No. 745/2004). They will also be visiting in October to discuss the wider food import regimes.

Review of controls on imports of meat and other animal products

Working in partnership with stakeholders

2.5.7 Defra will continue to work with stakeholders to assist in the development of its policies.

Monitoring progress

2.5.8 The Government will continue to monitor the effectiveness of all these activities.

Funding

2.5.9 HMRC will fund its enforcement activities in line with Public Service Agreement target commitments. Funding continues to be available for Defra to examine the risks and help increase public awareness, and for the FSA for work on inland controls. Overall, the money for the illegal imports programme needs to be looked at in the context of the whole control regime including the legal trade. Funding has to be proportionate to risk. Our controls compare well with other EU Member States.

HMRC bi-lingual leaflets and posters available in a number of different languages as referred to in section 1.4.10



Statistics on imports of illegal products

Background

Statistics relating to total seizures, in this and previous years (where records are available) are set out in this Annex. Table 1 (and Graphs 1 and 2) show the number of seizures from non-EU countries by HMRC at points of entry (and by staff funded by Defra until 11 April 2003), those made by DARDNI at points of entry in Northern Ireland and those made by inland Local/Port Health Authorities who were able to establish that the illegal products came from non-EU countries. Data on HMRC seizures are retained by HMRC on their Detection Control Information Service (DCIS) database and the balance of the seizure data are retained on the Illegal Import of Animal Product Seizures (ILAPS) database³ held by Defra. On occasions more than one POAO product at a time will be seized (e.g. meat and fish). This is recorded as one seizure against the product of highest weight. The weight of the other products seized is included in the weight recorded for that category. This is to avoid the double counting of seizures.

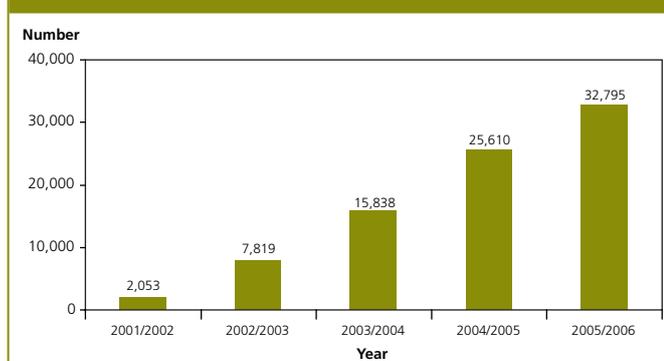
For the purposes of these seizures 'illegal' refers to POAO seized as the items are in contravention of the personal concessions permitted or that has sought to evade correct entry procedures by not being declared at a BIP. It also includes surrenders in the Red Channel.

Tables 2a and 2b (and Graphs 3–12) divide these into product type. Table 3 contains the seizures of the various product types by region. It should be noted that these figures cover the whole UK and not just GB.

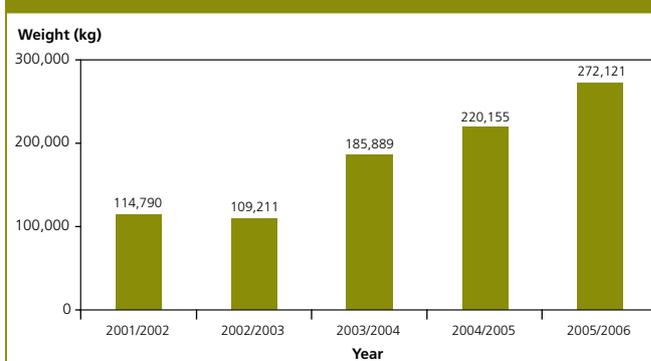
Table 1: Total seizures and weight

Period	Number	Weight (kg)
01/04/01 – 31/03/02	2,053	114,790
01/04/02 – 31/03/03	7,819	109,211
01/04/03 – 31/03/04	15,838	185,889
01/04/04 – 31/03/05	25,610	220,155
01/04/05 – 31/03/06	32,795 ⁴	272,121

Graph 1 for Table 1: Total number of seizures per year (2001-2006)



Graph 2 for Table 1: Total weight of seizures per year (2001-2006)



³ From 1 April 2006, it will no longer be possible to record new seizure information onto the ILAPS database. A new system is being implemented whereby Defra will simply record seizures reported by Local/Port Health Authorities in an Excel spreadsheet. Further information, if required, can be found at http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/illegal/pdf/illegal_prod-seizures160306.pdf.

⁴ Of this number approximately 20% were made in freight and cargo. These seizures account for approximately 54% of the total weight of seizures.

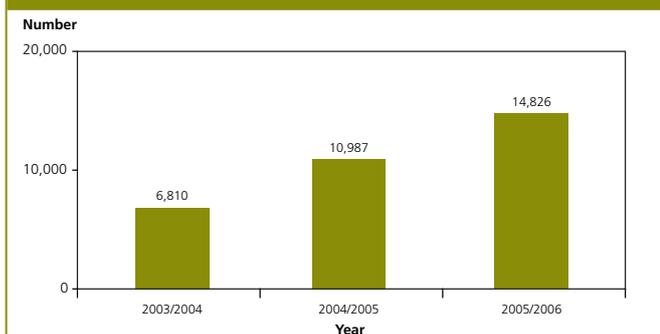
Table 2a: Seizures by product (old reporting format)

Period	Meat		Fish		Dairy		Multiple		Other	
	No.	Wgt (kg)	No.	Wgt (kg)	No.	Wgt (kg)	No.	Wgt (kg)	No.	Wgt (kg)
01/04/01 – 31/03/02	1,242	18,955	353	32,691	63	3,784	361	55,791	34	3,569
01/04/02 – 31/03/03	2,986	31,301	1,837	21,267	759	19,807	2,172	36,170	65	666
Total	4,228	50,256	2,190	53,958	822	23,591	2,533	91,961	99	4,235

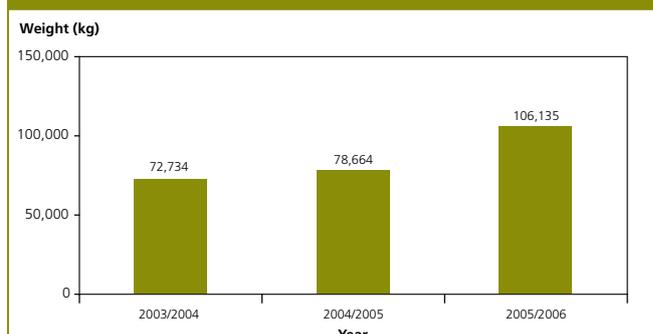
Table 2b: Seizures by product (new reporting format)

Period	Meat		Fish		Dairy		Honey	
	No.	Wgt (kg)	No.	Wgt (kg)	No.	Wgt (kg)	No.	Wgt (kg)
01/04/03 – 31/03/04	6,810	72,734	5,325	76,179	3,168	28,052	535	8,924
01/04/04 – 31/03/05	10,987	78,664	8,322	85,757	5,127	40,685	1,174	15,049
01/04/05 – 31/03/06	14,826	106,135	9,740	100,840	6,759	48,011	1,470	17,135
Total	32,623	257,533	23,387	262,776	15,054	116,748	3,179	41,108

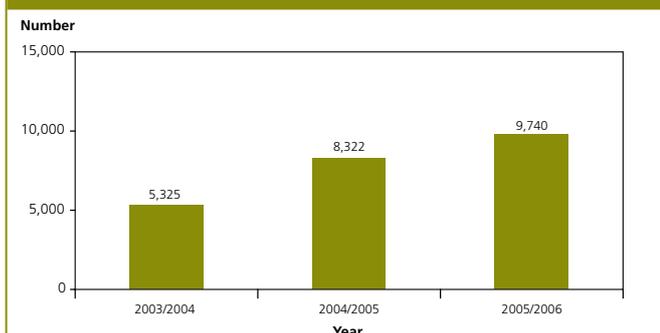
Graph 3 for Table 2b: Total number of meat seizures per year (2003-2006)



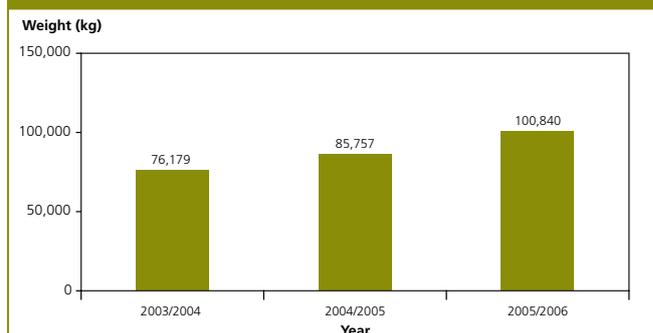
Graph 4 for Table 2b: Total weight of meat seizures per year (2003-2006)



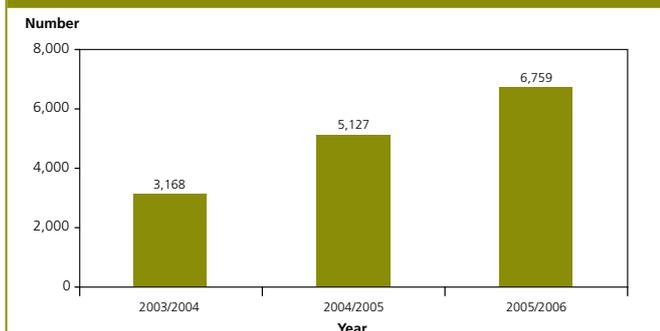
Graph 5 for Table 2b: Total number of fish seizures per year (2003-2006)



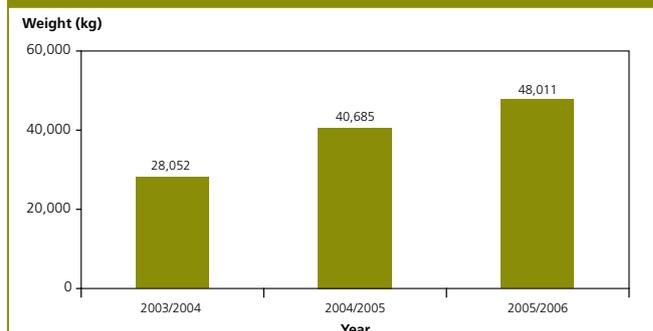
Graph 6 for Table 2b: Total weight of fish seizures per year (2003-2006)



Graph 7 for Table 2b: Total number of dairy seizures per year (2003-2006)

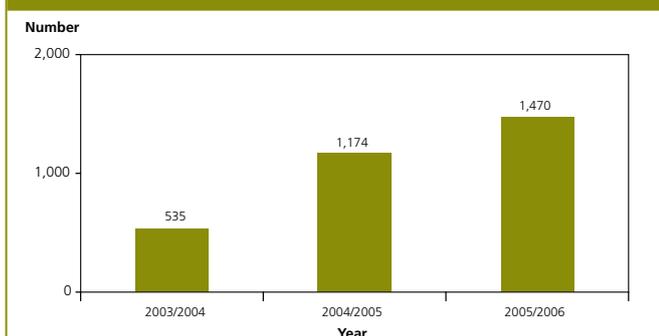


Graph 8 for Table 2b: Total weight of dairy seizures per year (2003-2006)

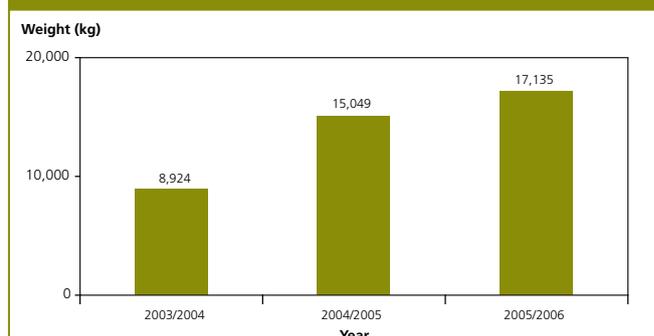


Annex 1

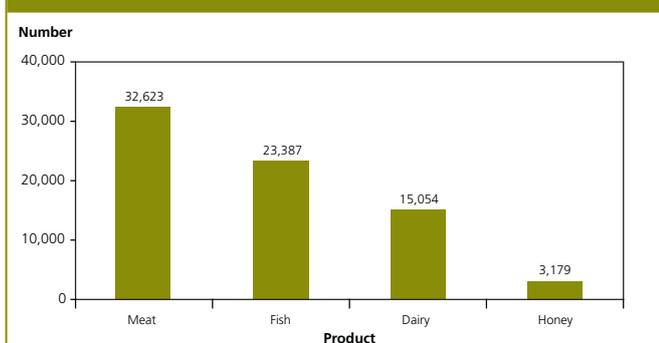
Graph 9 for Table 2b: Total number of honey seizures per year (2003-2006)



Graph 10 for Table 2b: Total weight of honey seizures per year (2003-2006)



Graph 11 for Table 2b: Overall number of seizures by product per year (2003-2006)



Graph 12 for Table 2b: Overall weight by product per year (2003-2006)

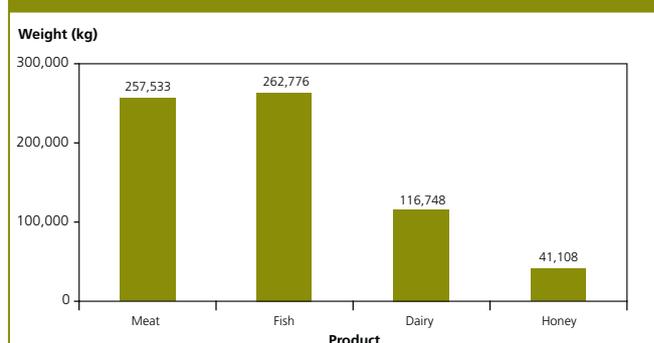


Table 3: 2005-2006 POAO seizures by region

Region ID/Name	Meat		Fish		Dairy		Honey		Total	
	No.	Wgt (kg)	No.	Wgt (kg)	No.	Wgt (kg)	No.	Wgt (kg)	No.	Wgt (kg)
1 Eastern Europe	2,734	11,261	124	456	953	3,251	125	662	3,936	15,630
2 Eastern Africa	656	5,484	162	1,452	466	3,604	215	1,701	1,499	12,241
3 North Africa	263	1,179	135	798	75	336	72	234	545	2,547
4 Central Africa	97	511	226	2,078	7	30	8	42	338	2,661
5 Southern Africa	1,541	2,352	124	1,583	101	417	10	43	1,776	4,395
6 Western Africa	1,915	11,639	4,365	25,498	406	4,640	211	1,041	6,897	42,818
7 North America	693	1,647	129	3,429	332	1,848	18	219	1,172	7,143
8 Caribbean	567	2,320	370	1,919	175	598	45	162	1,157	4,999
9 Central & South America	175	2,037	60	682	100	362	10	47	345	3,128
10 Eastern Asia	3,471	41,618	3,083	36,118	625	14,757	78	737	7,257	93,230
11 Southern Asia	757	4,208	518	3,200	1,141	4,549	129	994	2,545	12,951
12 South East Asia	143	1,715	52	179	32	60	3	12	230	1,966
13 Near & Middle East	1,527	18,401	309	22,178	2,213	11,908	504	10,647	4,553	63,134
14 Oceania	124	453	19	612	56	417	28	507	227	1,989
15 European	7	30	5	58	5	823	2	2	19	913
16 Unknown	156	1,280	59	600	72	411	12	85	299	2,376
Totals	14,826	106,135	9,740	100,840	6,759	48,011	1,470	17,135	32,795	272,121

Glossary of Commonly Used Abbreviations and Acronyms

AI	Avian Influenza
BIP(s)	Border Inspection Post(s)
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
DARDNI	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland
DCIS	Detection Control Information Service
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DICE	Defra Import/Export Consultation Exchange
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FMD	Foot and Mouth Disease
FSA	Food Standards Agency
GB	Great Britain
GRAIL	Guidance and Regulatory Advice on Import Legislation
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
ILAPS	Illegal Import of Animal Product Seizures
NWCU	National Wildlife Crime Unit
OIE	Office des International Epizooties
POAO	Products Of Animal Origin
POA(s)	Preliminary Outbreak Assessment(s)
QRA(s)	Qualitative Risk Assessment(s)
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
SI	Statutory Instrument
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SSI	Scottish Statutory Instrument
SVS	State Veterinary Service
UK	United Kingdom
VLA	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
WWF	World Wildlife Fund



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