# Annual report for 2020 on Great Britain's progress towards implementation of the UK Multi-Annual National Control Plan

# Contents

# Contact point

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# Executive summary

## Overall effectiveness of controls

This summary, and the Annual Report, set out Great Britain's (GB) key biosecurity official control data and activities for 2020, relating to feed and food safety, animal health and welfare (including aquatics) and plant health.

As with previous Annual Reports, data included in this report refers generally to the calendar year 2020. It should be noted that, as in previous years, some data is collated annually over an accounting year period of 1 April – 31 March.

All sectors covered by this Annual Report, and the control activities relating to them, were all significantly and exceptionally affected by the outbreak of the global coronavirus pandemic in 2020, and by the public health controls then in effect for most of 2020 and 2021, as well as the consequential impacts after these public health controls were lifted.

Almost all comparative data recorded for this period can be seen to have substantively deviated from the trends of previous years. As far as it is possible to determine through the limited empirical data available, this overarching variance is wholly attributable to the pandemic impact, and does not reflect any defect in the overall biosecurity status of Great Britain in this period, or of the controls that were able to be applied during this time.

## Feed and food sectors summary

### Food establishments where official controls are delivered by local authorities

During 2020/21, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) adjusted its expectations for Local Authorities (LAs), in recognition of the challenges LAs were facing in delivering their statutory food responsibilities and functions within the constraints created by COVID-19 restrictions. FSA advice and guidance helped LAs to target their resources at the most high-risk establishments while deferring planned routine interventions, in particular those for low-risk premises.

The pandemic constraints limited the range of data that FSA was able to obtain from LAs during 2020/21. The aim of this data is to provide a verified representation of delivery during the year, including against the minimum expectations set out in the FSA guidance for LAs in response to COVID-19.

The 202/21 data is therefore not substantively comparable with the equivalent 2019/20 data. In addition, some of the data ordinarily covered by this annual report,

such as the numbers of enforcement actions achieved, or the percentage of food establishments achieving broad compliance or higher for food hygiene, could not be collected.

The pandemic significantly limited the percentage of interventions it was possible to achieve in England and Wales in 2020-21 compared to previous years. For food hygiene, 27% of due interventions were achieved, compared with 86% in 2019/20.

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) plans to publish the official data for Scotland (on food establishments where official controls were undertaken by the relevant LAs) in 2021. The FSS 2020/21 data is limited in similar ways to that of FSA, due to the impact of COVID-19 - including the pandemic's impact on many LAs who were unable to update their Management Information Systems during this time.

## Meat establishments hygiene

Formal enforcements in England and Wales were reduced significantly across all areas due to the pandemic. The FSA took a risk-based approach to enforcement in this period, concentrating on high-risk premises with a previous history of non-compliance, or those for which intelligence had been received. This approach affected the volumes of duties such as unannounced inspections and audits, but did not affect the FSA's full-time presence in abattoirs.

In 2020/21, 1,292 instances of Written Advice were issued by FSA to 253 premises, equating to approximately 30.8% of all premises. This was a reduction of 53% compared to 2019/20.

A total of 109 Remedial Action Notices (RANs) were issued by FSA to 46 premises, equating to approximately 5.4% of all premises. A total of 49 Hygiene Improvement Notices (HINs) were issued across 26 premises, equating to approximately 3.1% of all premises. This was a reduction of 66% compared to 2019/20.

The reductions in notification volumes were driven by a number of factors, including a severe reduction in throughput and line processing speeds at the start of the pandemic. The pandemic impact continued during the various phases of UK lockdown, when demand from the UK domestic hospitality industry was significantly reduced.

## Milk production hygiene

In England and Wales in 2020/21, control measures were implemented in response to national pandemic lockdown rules. These measures resulted in 26% of visits in 2020/21 requiring follow-up checks, compared with 72% in 2019/20.

During this period, FSA only maintained inspections at premises deemed as high risk. This was in line with the agency's overarching strategy to ensure operational delivery was maintained whilst reducing the amount of travel during lockdown.

## Egg production hygiene

In England and Wales, compliance levels increased overall in 2020 compared to 2019 - from 75% to 76%. In the agency's view, the requirement to announce pre-inspections (due to pandemic restrictions) impacted both compliance rates, and a decrease in the issue of warning letters.

Inspections in Scotland were carried out in line with a three-year rolling programme, with all farms receiving a minimum of one inspection every three years. Inspections continued to be prioritised according to risk and use of historical data to inform the assessment and frequency. Locations where no improvements are required are known as 'compliant establishments'.

## Shellfish hygiene

Across Great Britain, a total of 8,070 samples were analysed in 2020. Sampling levels were consistent with the previous year. Samples tested included routine biotoxin testing, amnesic shellfish poisoning (ASP), paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) and lipophilic toxins (LTs).

Enforcement action was taken where sample results exceeded the maximum permitted levels, resulting in the closure of production areas.

For England and Wales, compared to 2019, there was a reduction in detection of lipophilic toxins (LTs) and an increase in paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) toxins. Scotland saw an increase in samples exceeding the MPL in LTs, PSP and ASP compared to 2019/20 levels. This resulted in 41 LT closures, seven PSP closures and one ASP closure during 2020/21.

## Organic operators

In 2020/21, a total of 284 unannounced visits to organic operators were conducted in Great Britain. This was a significant decrease on the 633 visits in 2018/19, due to the pandemic restrictions. 6,054 announced visits to operators took place in 2020/21, compared to 6,503 in 2019/20. Non-compliances and irregularities of a significant nature were all satisfactorily closed or flagged for further investigation. Compliance levels remain consistent with expectations.

## Feed establishments

In England and Wales during 2019/20[1] there was a 9.5% decrease in the number of hygiene inspections undertaken. The number of re-visits and sampling visits both dropped by 25%. The number of feed business operators given advice also fell by 11.3%. This aligns with the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on LA resources during the final quarter of work in 2019/20.

## Import controls

In Great Britain in 2020, 1,279 imported consignments were tested under EU safeguard measures, compared to 2,919 in 2019. Official controls were applied on products listed under the relevant regulations, which included 100% documentary checks and the prescribed levels for identity and physical checks (including sampling and analysis).

A total of 11 non-compliances were identified, compared to 60 in 2019. Non-compliance levels in 2020 appear lower than in the previous year - possibly due to reduced volumes of sampling having taken place under the pandemic restrictions. There were no significant changes to the types of consignments checked for imports of products of animal origin. Compliance remained high for third country imports of animals and animal products.

# Animal health, animal welfare, aquatic and plant health sectors summary

## Animal health

### Exotic disease

In 2020, 165 reports of suspected cases were investigated. There were 17 confirmed infected premises of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N8 and H5N1: one confirmed outbreak of Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) H5N2 in poultry in Kent: three confirmed cases of European Bat Lyssavirus (EBLV), and one case of Contagious equine metritis (CEM). All incidents were successfully resolved.

### Zoonoses

In 2020, the levels of regulated *Salmonella* serovars in chickens and turkeys in Great Britain remained below EU designated targets. A total of 2,198 poultry flocks were subject to annual routine official Salmonella National Control Programme sampling.

[1] Feed figures are reported one year in arrears; the report presents 2019/20 statistics.

## Animal welfare

### On-farm welfare

In 2020, the total number of farm visits to individual farms and enterprises in the UK dropped by 30% compared with 2019, with Scotland most significantly affected. This reduction was attributed to the impact of the pandemic which, for most of the year, meant that only those farms considered high risk for welfare compromise / suffering were inspected. In the same period, the minimum requirement for statutory inspections under cross compliance regulations was halved, in line with changes to EU requirements.

### Meat chicken directive

### Animal welfare during transport

In GB in 2020, 1,354 journey logs were submitted for validation and 1,331 were approved. This represents a 4% increase on journey logs submitted in 2019 and a 21% increase since 2015.

### Bee health

A total of 31,932 unique colonies in 5,366 apiaries were inspected in England and Wales in 2020/21. This was in line with inspections undertaken in previous years.

In Scotland there was an increase in inspections - from 4,117 colonies inspected in 2019 to 8,428 colonies inspected in 2020, with just over double the number of apiaries inspected in 2020 (412 apiaries versus the 200 inspected in 2019).

### Aquatic animal health

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the annual compliance inspection and disease surveillance programme was adjusted from the standard full programme, requiring that every Aquaculture Production Business (APB) is visited at least once per annum, to a risk-based inspection programme in line with the recommendations of ‘Council Directive 2006/88/EC on animal health requirements for aquaculture animals. In England and Wales, the intensity and the type of controls had remained consistent over the past five years but were unavoidably adjusted in 2020 due to the pandemic’s impacts.

### Plant health

In 2020, targets for the inspection of the majority of controlled plant health material imported into England and Wales were met. Prohibited material imported or held under scientific licence was subject to the required level of inspection, and 100% of required mandatory inspections were completed. The majority of import inspection

targets were met. The target was not met for inspecting other low risk controlled material, with 63% of material inspected against the required 65% target.

The target of completing 100% of document and identity checks was also not met, at 87% of checks achieved. This delivery shortfall reflects challenges of working within the pandemic restrictions. In addition, preparation and delivery of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union, and implementation of the new GB plant health regime, required many Inspectors to be re-trained or diverted away from routine inspection work.

# Summary of non-compliance trend analysis

## Statement of overall trends in compliance

There was a general decrease in the number of enforcement actions undertaken in 2020/21 compared to the previous year. This reflected two key factors: an increase in compliance levels, and a reduction in the ability to complete inspections, due to lockdown restrictions during the pandemic.

Data shows that the overall level of compliance in all sectors was (as in previous years) satisfactory, when assessed against expectations.

# Enforcement action taken in cases of non-compliance

## Statistics on enforcement and enforcement trends

### Food establishment hygiene

The pandemic impact limited the volume of enforcement data that could be collected during 2020/21 in England and Wales. For the 2020/21 LA return, a bespoke application was made available to LAs, to allow for capture of a limited range of data, which provided a picture of delivery when measured against FSA expectations during the pandemic.

### Meat establishment hygiene

Where formal enforcement was required in England and Wales, a minority of premises demonstrated a pattern requiring repeated or further action. The majority of premises did not require further action, following resolution of initial enforcement notices. 105 Referrals for Investigation were made across 27 premises, which equated to approximately 3.2% of all premises - a reduction of 52% compared to 2019/20. FSA's overall assessment was that 96.8% of the formal notices were effective in achieving compliance.

In Scotland, 13 Official Controls Verification (OCV) intermediate reports were issued to food business operators (FBO) in 2020/21. The intermediate findings indicated that of these FBOs, 100% of slaughterhouses (with or without co-located cutting plants), and 83% of standalone cutting plants, had a generally satisfactory or good level of compliance.

### Milk production hygiene

In England and Wales, there was a 55% decrease in the number of enforcement actions undertaken in 2020/21 compared to the previous year. This was due to a combination of an increase in compliance levels and a reduction in inspections completed due to pandemic restrictions.

### Specified Risk Material Controls (SRM)

The number of SRM cases referred for investigation in GB in 2020/21 remained broadly consistent with the previous year. Over the past two years, there has been a gradual decrease in cases referred for investigation

### Fish inspection

In 2020, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) carried out 974 inspections of establishments where first sale fish was handled. It also conducted 326 inspections of transportation of first sale fish. Both types of inspection were curtailed by the pandemic restrictions. Checks were made to ensure compliance with the traceability requirements of the Fisheries Control Regulation.

### Feed establishments

In England and Wales during 2020/21, the number of formal actions to address serious breaches of feed requirements increased - from 23 formal actions in 2018/19, to 59 in 2019/20. This increase is due to improved targeting of inspection activity, resulting in increased formal action.

## Summary of national audit systems

## FSA and FSS audit of local authorities

In England and Wales during 2020/21, no programmed audits or follow-up audits took place, due to the pandemic. This absence of audit activity means that it has not been possible to draw any compliance conclusions for this period. The pandemic restrictions meant that no LA audits were conducted in Scotland – where flexibility from the Food Law Code of Practice was granted to LAs as a result.

## Internal audits conducted by Competent Authorities on feed, food and control bodies

In Great Britain, official controls delivery audits were undertaken by various competent authorities, covering Defra and its agencies, the Scottish and Welsh Governments, FSA and FSS.

In England and Wales, official controls delivery was found to be generally satisfactory in the activities audited, with no significant control issues being identified.

In Scotland, an Animal Health and Welfare – Review of Risk and Governance audit undertaken by the Scottish Government was given a limited assurance audit opinion. This means that controls are weak, but developing.

### APHA

The level of positive audit opinions increased from 62% in 2019, to 100% in 2020. There were two substantial opinion reports. These outcomes led to the conclusion that there was an improvement in the control environment.

The audits confirmed a high level of compliance with external requirements. There have been a very high number of external audits and internal quality reviews in APHA in the period of this Annual Report. The results of these audits have been appropriately escalated, with APHA bringing all the reports into one central location, and all actions into one database, for more effective monitoring.

APHA has delivered a strong follow-up process, in which the rate of implementation and evidence provided was satisfactory. Only two actions remained from the previous year, relying on replacing the key IT operational system – eDomero - which Digital, Data and Technology Services (DDTS) are responsible for.

Some improvements were highlighted to enhance the Veterinary Medicines control framework, intended to reduce the error rate and drive efficiency.

## Summary of staff resources

Numbers of staff (FTE) have risen slightly in most sectors, with Defra FTE rising 48% from 249 to 369. The total number has remained consistent with the previous Annual Report.

## Summary of actions taken to improve performance of control activities and business compliance

Great Britain continued to improve the quality and delivery of official controls, notwithstanding the unprecedented global, country, and sector-wide impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in this period. A number of new and ongoing initiatives were delivered in 2020/21, including:

- enhanced training programmes - webinars, eLearning, face to face workshops and seminars
- ongoing review and revision of the Food and Feed Law Codes of Practice, to simplify and align the codes across GB
- increased information sharing and access to food industry intelligence data, to bolster the work of the FSA's National Food Crime Unit and the FSS's Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit, contributing to the prevention of food crime and gathering of intelligence to identify emerging risks and trends in the supply chains
- incident management related activities (including exercises, drills, and training), as well as the development of GB standard operating procedures
- ongoing engagement with GB-wide working groups, to foster closer links, and share best practice on official control delivery

In addition, the following measures were taken to help improve the performance of business operators in 2020/21:

- ongoing operation of the FHRS to encourage businesses to improve and maintain hygiene standards
- development of guides to improve compliance. These included guidance on animal welfare relating to captive-bolt stunning and signs of unconsciousness in adult bovines, as well as renewed guidance on slaughterman Certificates of Competence (CoCs) relating to suspension and retraining

# Chapter 1 - Introduction and scope of the report

1.1 UK legislation on biosecurity official controls requires that Great Britain has in place a Multi-Annual National Control Plan (MANCP), demonstrating that we have effective official control systems in place for monitoring compliance with, and enforcement of, feed and food law, animal health and welfare rules, and plant health law. From 2020, GB and Northern Ireland are required to publish their own annual reports on implementation of the MANCP for their respective countries. This document is Great Britain's Annual Report for 2020.

1.2 The MANCP and the associated annual reports for GB are produced by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) with contributions provided by:

- Chemicals Regulation Directorate of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- Defra's agencies and non-departmental public bodies – Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS), Rural Payments Agency (RPA), Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), Marine Management Organisation (MMO)
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland (DAERA)
- Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Food Standards Scotland (FSS)
- Scottish Government Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate (SG ARE)
- Welsh Government Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs (WG EERA)

1.3 The report is set out as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Chapter 2** | The effectiveness of controls, including trends and enforcement measures |
| **Chapter 3** | How audits were implemented and results of audits |
| **Chapter 4** | The allocation of resources delivering official controls |
| **Chapter 5** | Actions taken to improve performance of competent authorities and food business operators |

1.4 The MANCP and annual reports for previous years are available on the FSA website.

# Chapter 2 - Effectiveness of official controls

2.1 In this section we report on the official controls activities undertaken and the level of compliance achieved for 2020/21, compared with 2019/20.

## Official controls in the feed and food sectors

2.2 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) produced quarterly resource and performance reports for 2020/21. These were presented to the FSA Board and tracked the FSA's progress against corporate objectives. The Quarter 3 2020/21 update gives a position at the end of 2020.

2.3 Food Standards Scotland (FSS) has developed a performance reporting system for updating the FSS Board on a six-monthly basis in May and November. Further information on the performance reports are published on the FSS website.

### UK local authority food law enforcement

2.4 For the 2020/21 LA return, a bespoke application was made available to LAs enabling them to capture a limited range of data, which provides a picture of delivery against FSA expectations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.5 FSA's expectations were adjusted during the year in recognition of the challenges LAs were facing in delivering their statutory food functions whilst having to prioritise other COVID-19 related duties. This approach also reflected the changing business landscape, with many food businesses closing or changing operations.

2.6 The 2020/21 data is therefore not comparable with previous year's data for trend analysis purposes.

#### Interventions achieved

**Food hygiene**

2.7 The total percentage of due interventions achieved in England and Wales in 2020/21 was 27% compared with 86% in 2019/20. This reduction was due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Food standards**

2.8 The total percentage of due interventions achieved in England and Wales in 2020/21 was 18% compared with 38% in 2019/20. This reduction was due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Enforcement actions

2.9 Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, only limited enforcement data was collected during 2020/21 in England and Wales. For the 2020/21 LA return, a bespoke application was made available to LAs in order to capture a limited range of data which provides a picture of delivery against the FSA's expectations of them during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.10 In Scotland, food hygiene and food standards interventions are combined within an overall food law intervention as supported by the Food Law rating System.

2.11 In Scotland, during 2020/2021, interventions fell significantly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown circumstances that affected all catering, retail and hospitality services. Despite this a total of 10,505 interventions were completed; a 74.8% decline from 2019/20. 1,123 enforcement actions took place, representing a decrease of 92% from 2019/20.

2.12 The data gathered this year does not include COVID-19 interventions at food establishments that resulted in actions related to food law. As a result, these figures will be underestimates of the actual level of activity.

## Meat hygiene

2.13 In 2020/21, the FSA delivered official controls in 870[2] approved meat establishments in England and Wales. This included 241 slaughterhouses, 47 game handling establishments and 773 cutting plants (including market stalls).

2.14 In 2020/21, FSS delivered official controls in 99[3] approved meat establishments in Scotland. This included 27 slaughterhouses, 15 game handling establishments and 57 cutting plants including market stalls.

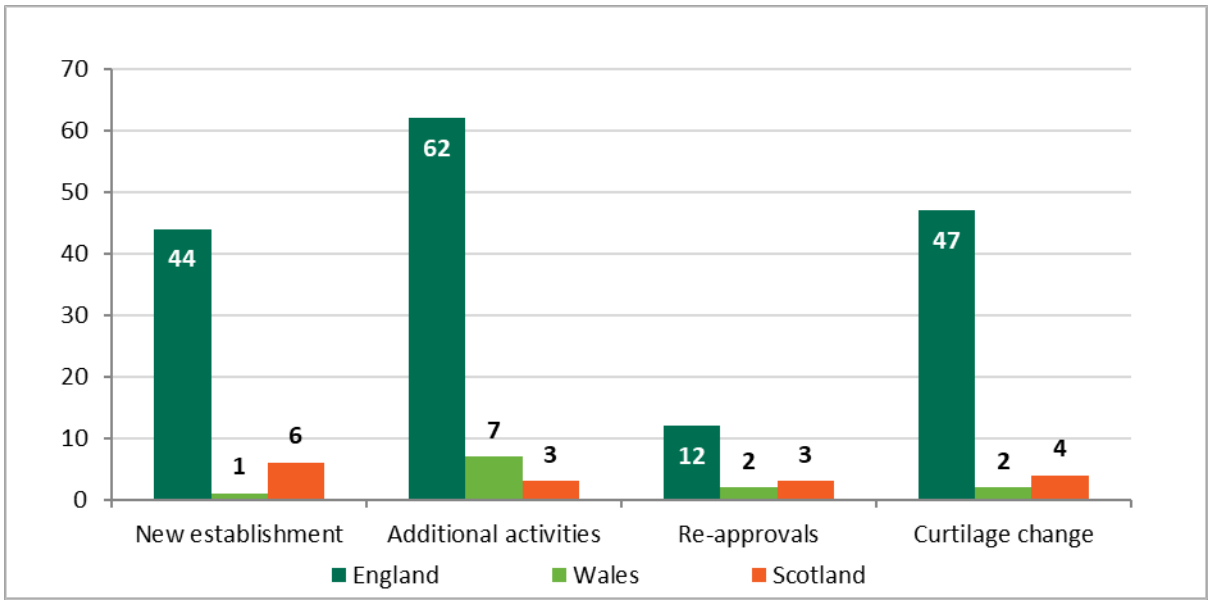
### Approval of new meat establishments

2.15 In 2020/21, GB received 193 applications for approval or approval related activities, compared to 245 in 2019/20. The chart below shows a breakdown of approval applications received by type and region.

[2] An establishment may be approved for more than one activity.

[3] Approved establishments may carry out more than one function.

**Figure 1 - Chart showing number of approval applications received in GB in 2020/21**




## Refusals

2.16 Nineteen advisory visits took place during the 2020/21 financial year, compared to 23 in 2019/20.

2.17 Advisory visits aim to help FBOs identify the welfare and hygiene requirements which may apply to their proposed activities. In April 2019, charges for advisory visits were introduced in order to reduce the need for multiple approval re-visits by the FSA. FBOs who had not requested and paid for an advisory visit and were subsequently found to be below standard at the approval visit, were refused approval.

2.18 In England and Wales, seven FBOs were refused approval in 2020/21 compared to 18 in 2019/20. The decrease in refusals is thought to be due to several factors including a reduction in new approval applications received during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Additionally, the administrative processes for progressing applications for approval visits have been improved following training of office staff in HACCP level 3 principles.

2.19 In Scotland, no establishment was refused approval and therefore no re-submission of applications for approval were made.

## Food business operator audits in meat establishments

2.20 During 2020/21, England and Wales conducted routine audits of approved meat establishments. A programme of focused audits was undertaken in slaughterhouses on cleansing and disinfecting, microbiological sampling, approved game handling establishments and welfare. Key findings and

recommendations were agreed with industry and are currently being implemented.

2.21 In April 2020, FSS suspended veterinary audits, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was reviewed regularly throughout the year and, in January 2021, a new audit methodology was rolled out based on Official Controls Verification (OCV). The OCV system was trialled and implemented in 2018 and is deemed low risk, as it includes remote review of FBO documentation and use of OV evidence for plants with regular FSS attendance, reducing the FSS auditor footprint.

2.22 Audits resumed in January 2021, using the OCV methodology, with plants entering the inspection cycle (which is a set period of 12 months) in a gradual manner, 7-8 plants every month, anticipating that by January 2022 all plants would have started the new audit format. The inspection cycle consists of several inspections/ interventions in every approved establishment, with each such intervention triggering a written report and an Intermediate audit result. Following completion of the 12 months inspection cycle, plants will receive a final audit outcome.

2.23 The charts below provide a breakdown of the proportion of businesses in England and Wales for each audit outcome, based on full FBO audits. A separate breakdown is also provided for FSS as they operate a slightly different scheme.

**Figure 2 - Chart showing audit outcomes in England and Wales for 2020/21 by percentage for slaughterhouses with or without co-located cutting plants**

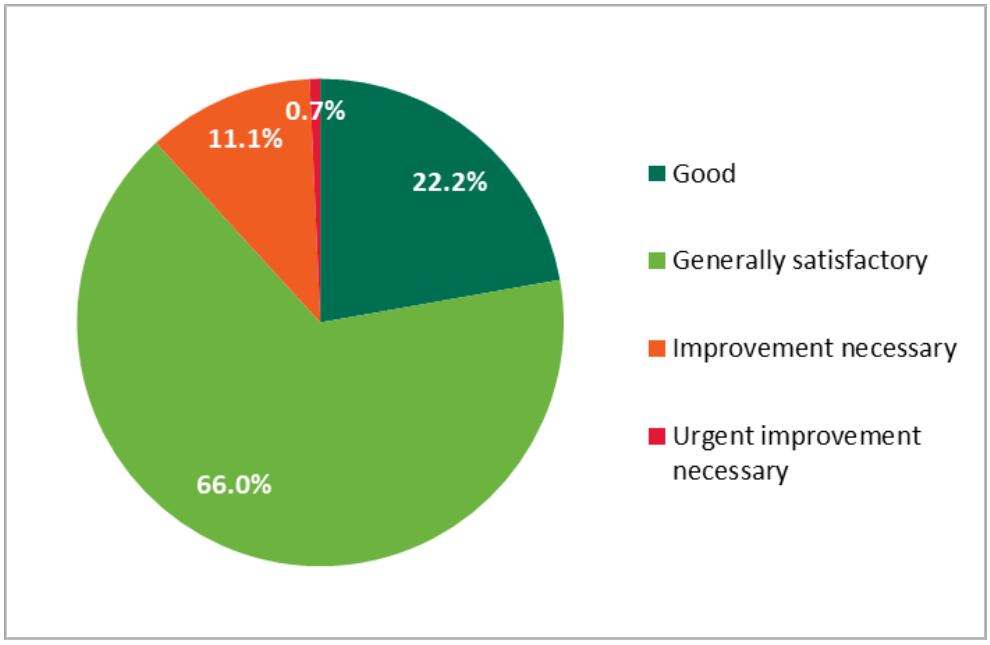


**Figure 3 - Chart showing audit outcomes in England and Wales for 2020/21 by percentage for standalone cutting plants (including market stalls)**

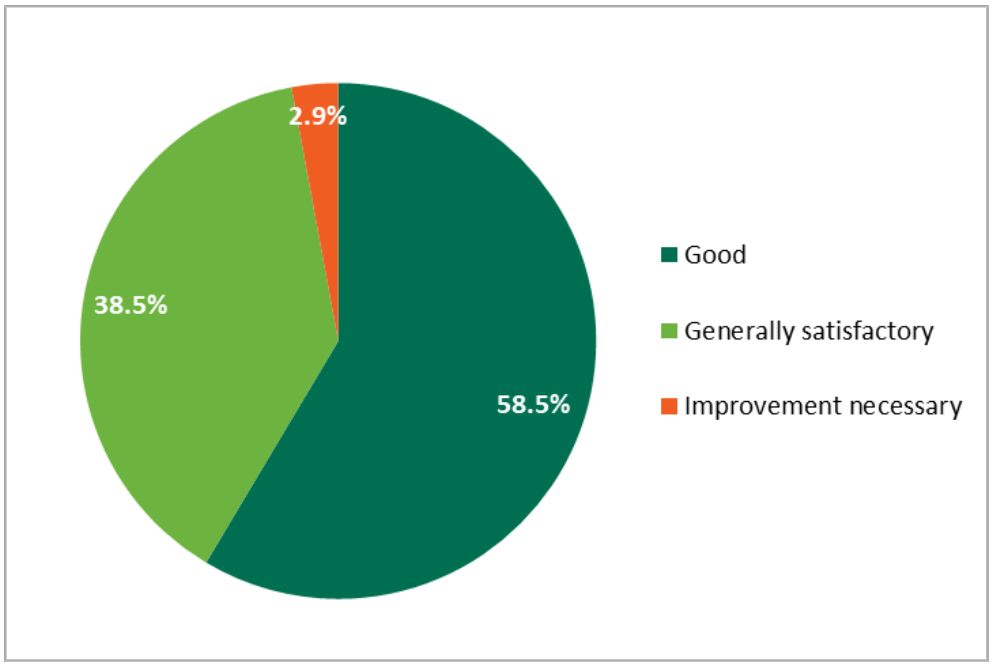



**Figure 4 - Chart showing intermediate audit outcomes in Scotland for 2020/21 by percentage for standalone cutting plants (including market stalls)**

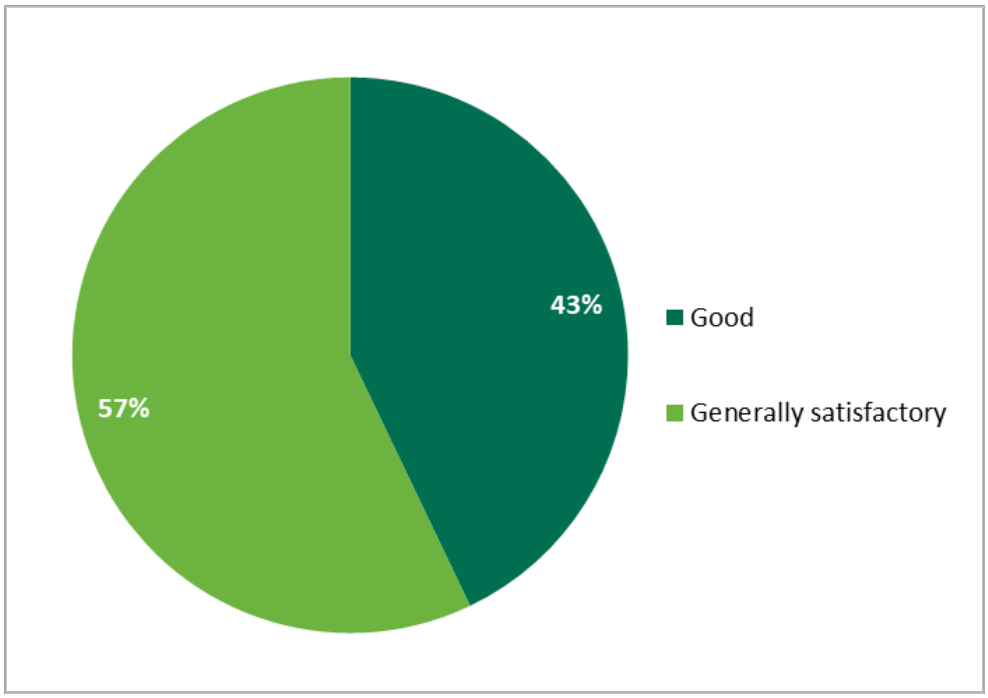


**Figure 5 - Chart showing intermediate audit outcomes in Scotland for 2020/21 by percentage for slaughterhouses with or without co-located cutting plants**

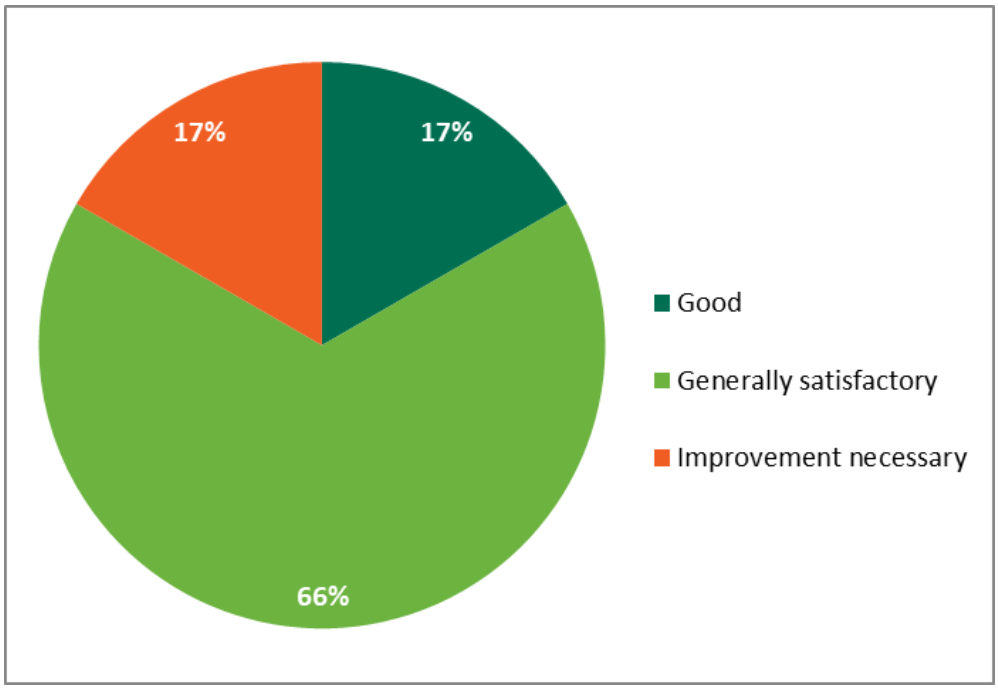



**Figure 6 - Chart showing the number of audits completed in England and Wales, by audit outcome during 2020/21**

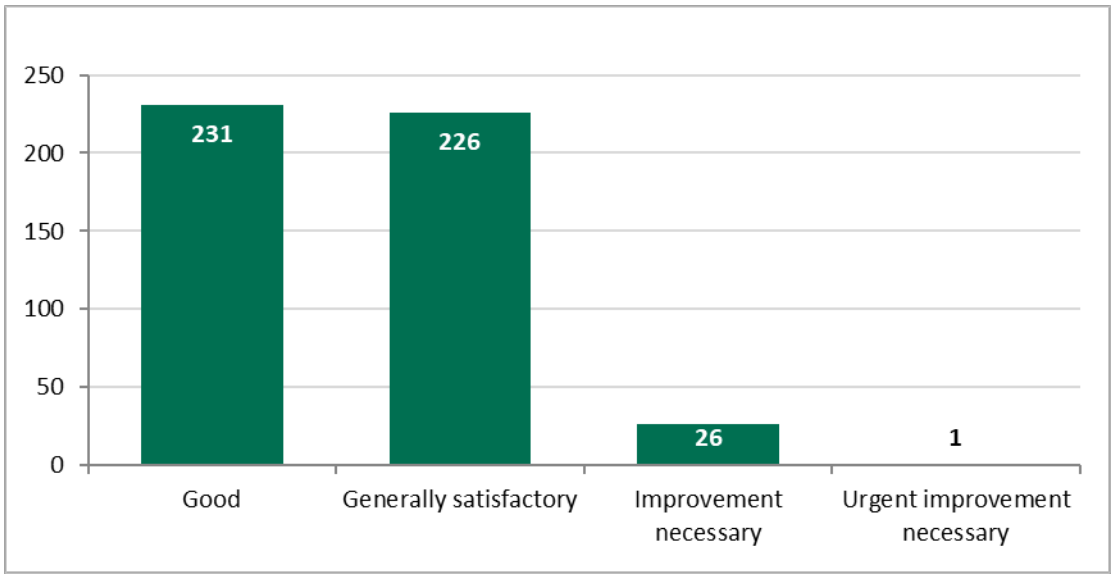
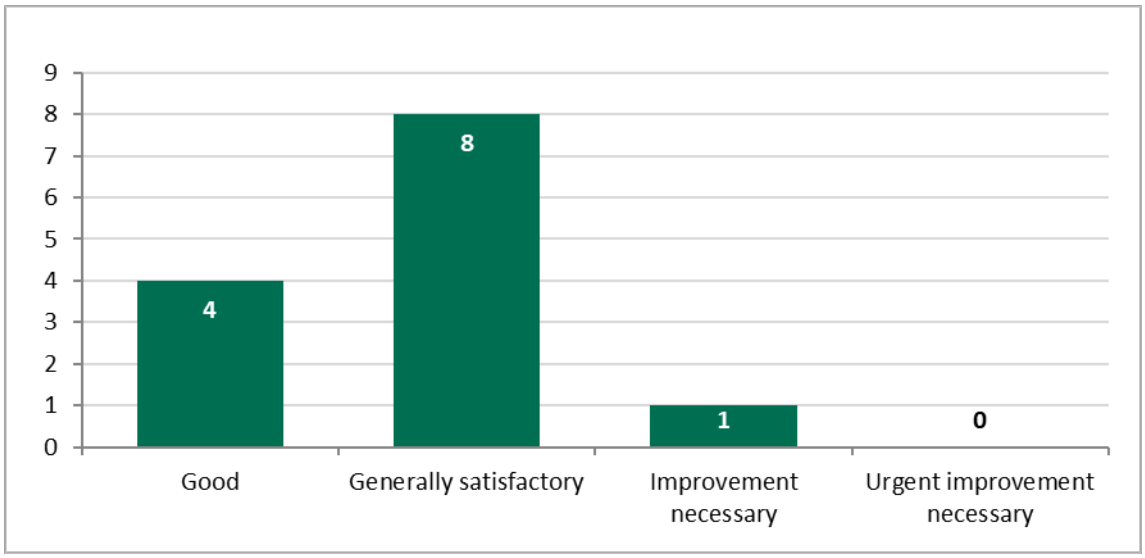


**Figure 7 - Chart showing the number of audits completed in Scotland, by audit outcome during 2020/21**




2.24 A total of 484 full audits were completed in England and Wales in 2020/21. The findings indicated that over 94% of slaughterhouses (with or without co-located cutting plants) and standalone cutting plants had generally satisfactory or good level of compliance. This is broadly consistent with the figures for 2019/20. However, the programme of audits was severely disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. A number of FBO audits were delayed which consequently increased the regular audit intervals. Audit resumption was prioritised based on risk.

2.25 In Scotland, 13 OCV intermediate reports were issued to FBOs in 2020/21. The intermediate findings indicated that of these FBOs, 100% of slaughterhouses, with or without co-located cutting plants, and 83% of standalone cutting plants had a generally satisfactory or good level of compliance.

2.26 The GB data should be considered in the context that any establishments conditionally approved would not have been subject to audit until full approval was granted. Also, slaughterhouses with or without a co-located cutting plants that had received a ‘good’ rating in 2018/19 following two previous ‘good’ audit outcomes, may not be subject to another audit for 18 months. This differs in Scotland where the set audit frequency is now 12 months.

## Urgent improvement necessary

2.27 Audit outcomes are based on an assessment across all areas providing a reliable indicator on standards of hygiene, food safety, animal welfare and animal health. The FSA and FSS publish audit outcomes for all approved meat establishments.

2.28 In 2020/21, in England and Wales one slaughterhouse with or without co-located cutting plant and no standalone cutting plants received an audit outcome of 'urgent improvement necessary'. The intervention protocol seeks improvements through education, advice and enforcement action for premises requiring urgent improvement. In Scotland, no plants received an audit outcome of "urgent improvement necessary".

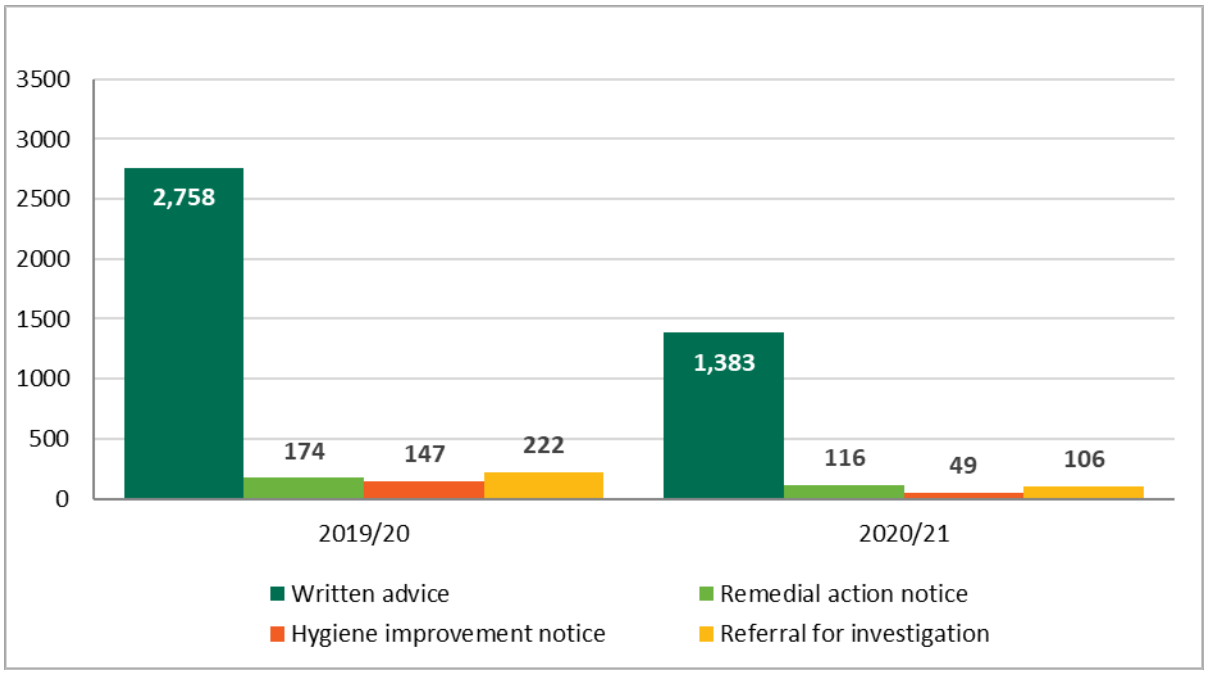
## Unannounced inspections in cutting plants

2.29 During 2020/21, 259 unannounced inspections were completed in England and Wales, compared to 907 during 2019/20. This represents a 71% reduction. This was due to the impact of the COVID-19, which affected production and travel. No unannounced inspections in Scotland were carried out in 2020/2021.

## Enforcement in meat establishments

2.30 The chart below shows the numbers and types of enforcement action taken by the FSA and FSS in meat establishments, over the last two years.

**Figure 8 - Chart showing number of enforcement actions in GB meat establishments from 2019/20 – 2020/21**




2.31 In 2020/21 formal enforcement reduced significantly across all areas because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.32 In England and Wales, there were 1,292 instances of Written Advice issued across 253 premises, equating to approximately 30.8% of all premises. This was a reduction of 53% compared to 2019/20. In Scotland, there were 91

instances of Written Advice issued, a reduction from the 150 issued in 2019/20.

2.33 In England and Wales, a total of 109 Remedial Action Notices (RANs) were issued across 46 premises equating to approximately 5.4% of all premises. This was a reduction of 37% compared to 2019/20. In Scotland, seven RANs were issued, an increase from five in 2019/20.

2.34 In England and Wales, total of 49 Hygiene Improvement Notices (HINs) were issued across 26 premises equating to approximately 3.1% of all premises. This was a reduction of 66% compared to 2019/20. In Scotland, no HINs were issued, a reduction from the three issued in 2019/20.

2.35 In England and Wales, there were 105 Referrals for Investigation made across 27 premises, approximately 3.2% of all premises. This was a reduction of 52% compared to 2019/20. In Scotland, one Referral for Investigation was made, a reduction from the two made in 2019/20.

2.36 Several factors have contributed to these reductions in England and Wales. The Meat Industry saw a general reduction in throughput and line processing speeds, particularly at the start of the pandemic and during UK lockdown, when demand from the UK domestic hospitality industry significantly reduced.

2.37 To follow government advice in respect of working from home where possible, certain FSA activities were conducted on a risk-based approach, or remotely rather than face to face, throughout the majority of 2020/21. These activities were resumed on a staggered approach from February 2021.

2.38 The FSA's risk-based approach concentrated on high-risk premises, with a previous history of non-compliance or where intelligence had been received. This approach did not affect the FSA's full-time presence in UK Abattoirs but was in relation to other duties such as unannounced inspections and audits.

2.39 Supervisory visits by Area Veterinary Managers on behalf of our Service Delivery partner Eville and Jones were also reduced in 2020/21. This was in line with COVID-19 government guidelines. Internal assurance checks on OV activity in premises by FSA Field Veterinary co-ordinators was also reduced during this time, with a focus on high-risk establishments only.

2.40 It is likely that this influenced the levels of enforcement but has not adversely impacted delivery of the FSA Official Controls. Onsite OVs have utilised verbal advice more frequently, rather than progressing through the hierarchy of enforcement. Supervisory visits resumed on 12 April 2021.

2.41 The FSA will continue to monitor enforcement on a quarterly basis in 2021/22 to analyse trends and the impact of returning to business as usual following the resumption of all duties.

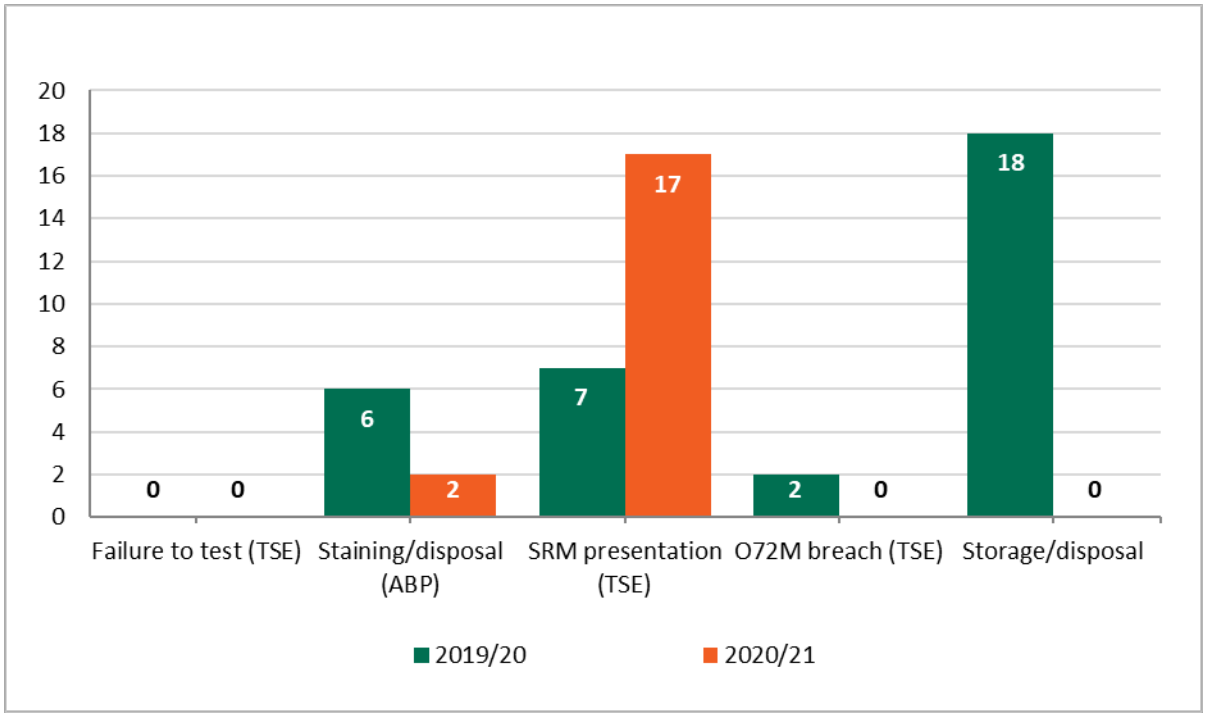
2.42 In Scotland, the level of formal enforcement remains lower than previous years. This is highly likely to be a consequence of the deferred Official Audit Programme and associated Unannounced Inspections from April 2020 to January 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

## Specified Risk Material (SRM) controls

2.43 In 2020/21, 100% of inspections of bovine and ovine carcases for SRM removal at slaughterhouses were carried out. Verification and audit of FBO processes for removal, storage, staining and disposal of SRM were carried out in all authorised slaughterhouses. In line with the reduction in unannounced inspections and physical audits, verification and audit of cutting plants was undertaken using a risk-based approach, concentrating on high-risk premises and intelligence received

2.44 In Scotland in 2020/21, 100% of inspections of bovine and ovine carcases for SRM removal at slaughterhouses were carried out. Verification and audit of FBO processes for removal, storage, staining and disposal of SRM were carried out in authorised slaughterhouses on a risk-based frequency whilst in cutting plants they were carried out upon intelligence received. Routine verification and audit of the aforementioned FBO processes were deferred due to COVID-19 pandemic. The chart below shows a gradual decrease in SRM breaches referred for investigation in GB in the last two years

**Figure 9 - Chart showing SRM breaches referred for investigation by year in Great Britain from 2019/20 - 2020/21**



## Milk production hygiene

2.45 The number of GB milk production holdings as of 31 March 2021 is shown in the table below. The table sets out the number of primary and secondary inspections carried out in 2020/21.

2.46 Follow up inspections were conducted via a physical visit by an FSA inspector or remotely using digital evidence to demonstrate compliance. This approach resulted in the majority of non-compliances being resolved within agreed timescales, with any non-compliances not resolved within agreed timescales being escalated through the established enforcement hierarchy.

**Milk production holdings and inspections 2020/21**

| Holdings and inspections | England and Wales | Scotland | GB total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Milk production holdings and processing establishments | 8,409 | 871 | 9,280 |
| Primary inspections | 949 | 12 | 961 |
| Secondary inspections (non-compliance highlighted from primary inspections) | 243 | 6 | 249 |

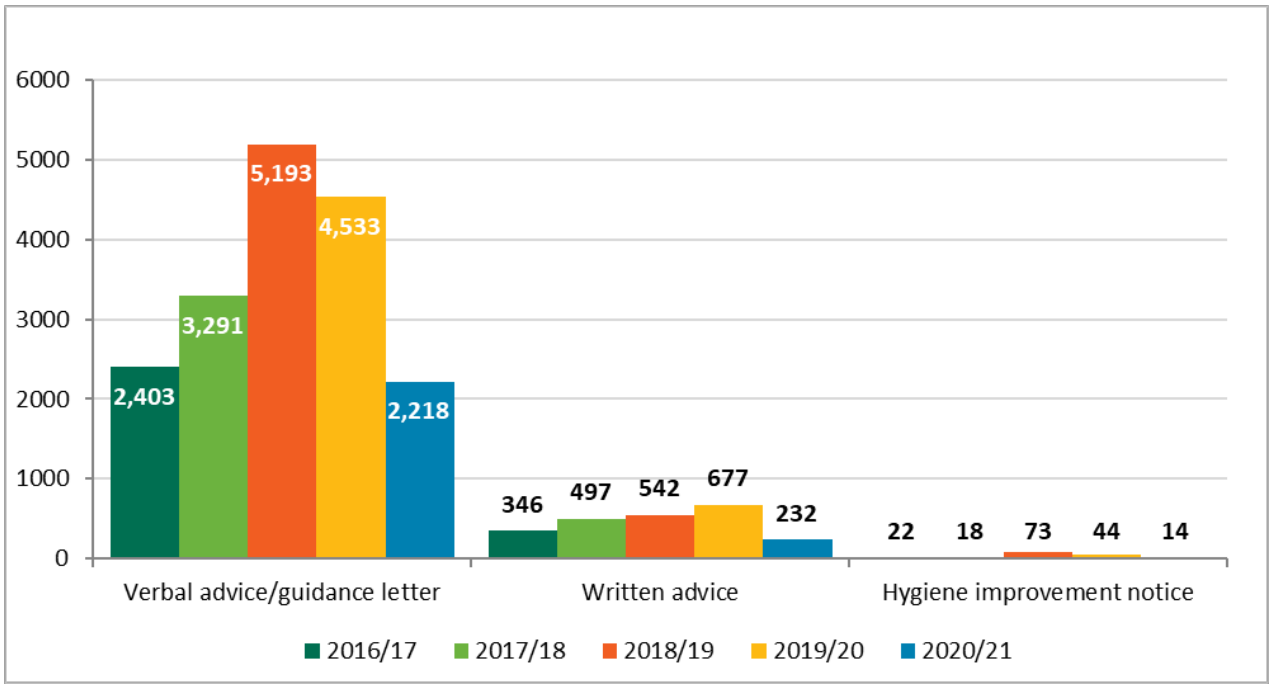
2.47 The FSA has direct responsibility for delivery of dairy hygiene inspections in milk production holdings in England and Wales. In 2020/21, there was a 1.4% decrease in the number of dairy farms in England and Wales compared to the previous year.

2.48 Fewer inspections were completed in 2020/21 when compared to the previous year. In the England and Wales, 26% of visits required follow-up checks compared with 72% in 2019/20. This reduction was due to control measures that were implemented as part of national COVID-19 lockdown rules.

2.49 During this time the FSA maintained inspections at all premises deemed as high risk only, which was in line with the FSA overarching strategy to ensure operational delivery was maintained whilst reducing the amount of travel during lockdown restrictions.

2.50 A small number of remote inspections were also carried out where low risk concerns had been highlighted.

**Figure 10 - Chart showing milk production hygiene enforcement actions in England and Wales from 2016/17 – 2020/21**

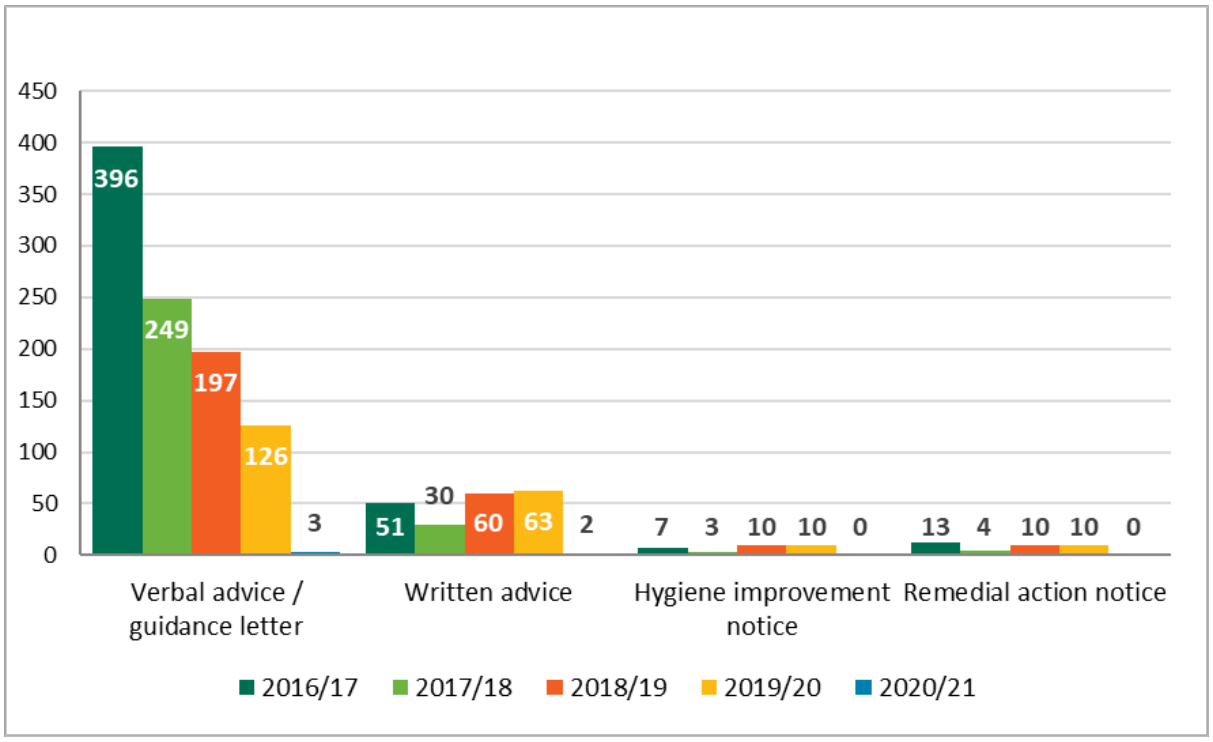



2.51 There was a 55% decrease in the number of enforcement actions undertaken in England and Wales in 2020/21, compared to the previous year. This was due to a combination of increased compliance and the reduction of inspections completed due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.52 In Scotland, inspections in production holdings are carried out by 32 individual LAs. In 2020/21, dairy inspections were impacted by the on-going COVID-19 measures which had a resultant effect on the number of guidance letters and instance of written advice being issued.

2.53 The number of inspections and the extent to which problems were resolved after secondary inspection showed that overall controls were effective across GB.

**Figure 11 - Chart showing milk production hygiene enforcement actions in Scotland from 2016/17 – 2020/21**




## Raw drinking milk (RDM)

2.54 In 2020/21, the number of registered RDM producers remained broadly consistent, with 158 registered in England and Wales compared with 162 in 2019/20.

## Egg production hygiene

2.55 Food hygiene inspections of egg production sites are carried out by APHA in England and Wales, for the FSA. In Scotland, the Scottish Government's Poultry Unit carry out inspections for the FSS.

2.56 The chart below shows the total number of registered egg production sites and inspection visits for 2020/21.

**Figure 12 - Chart showing the number of egg productions sites, inspections and non-compliance in GB in 2020/21**

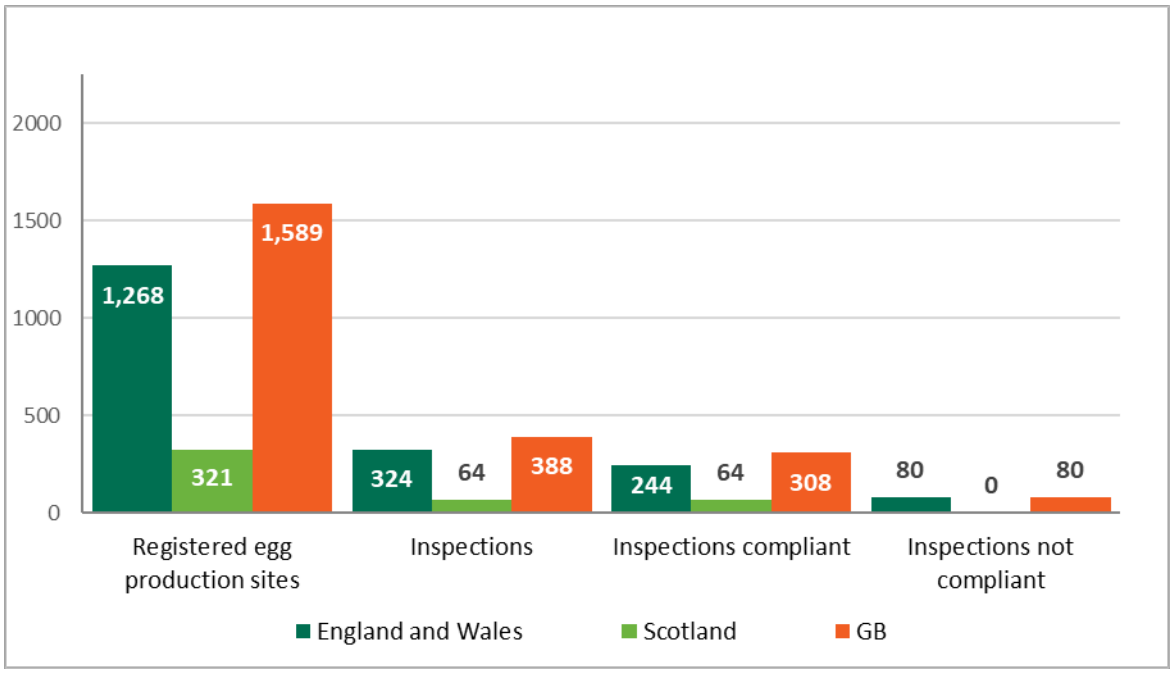



**Figure 13 - Chart showing egg production enforcement actions in England and Wales from 2016/17 – 2020/21**

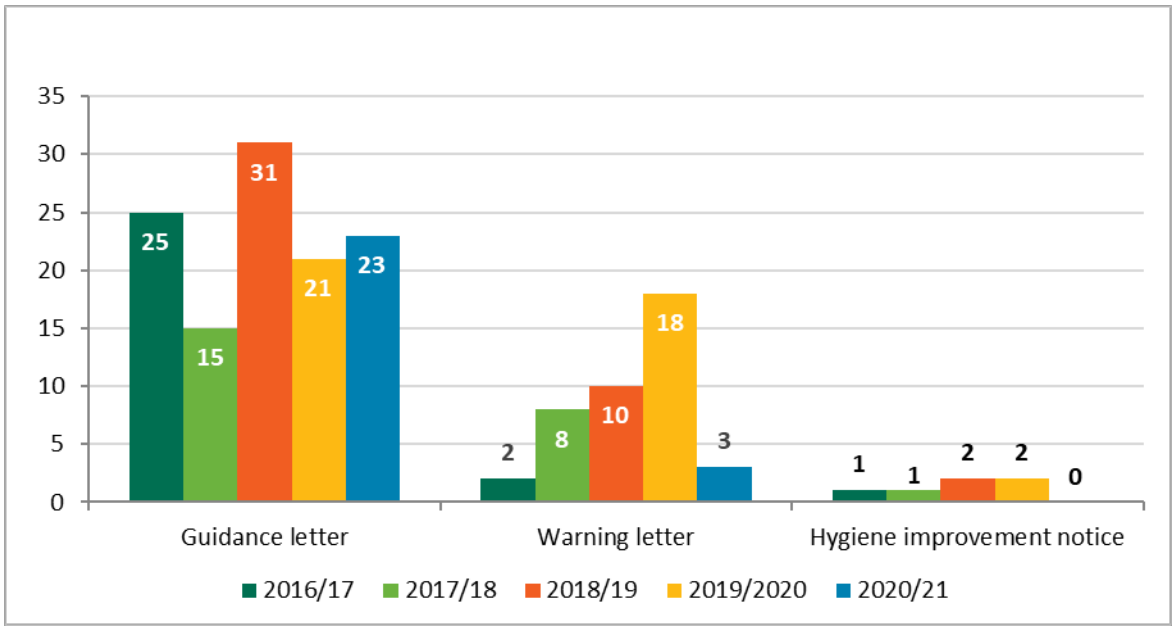
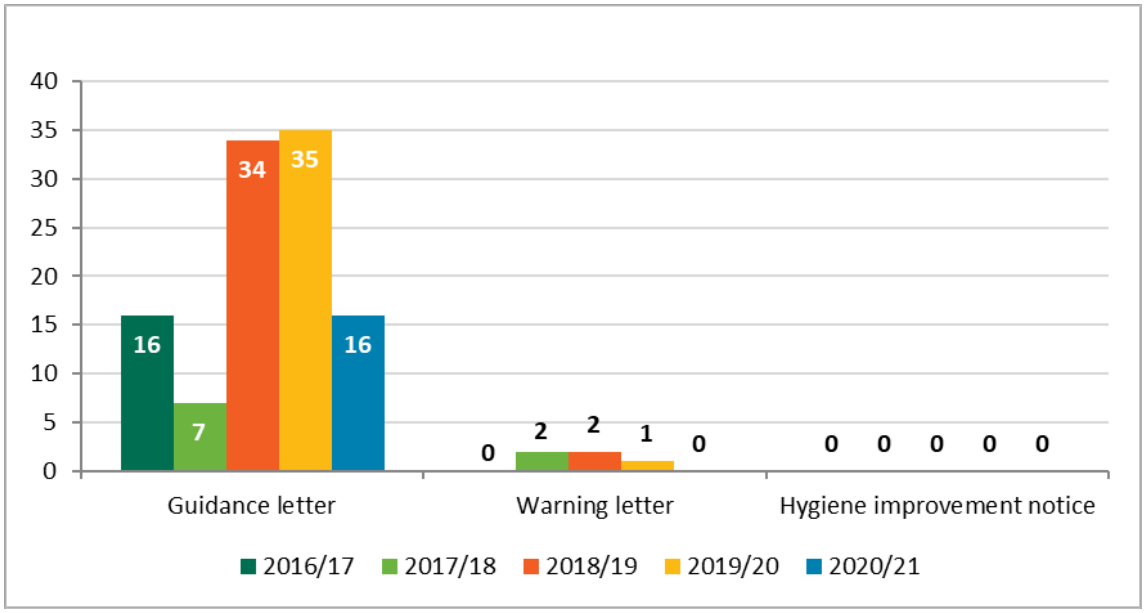


**Figure 14 - Chart showing egg production enforcement actions in Scotland from 2016/17 – 2020/21**




2.57 Egg inspections in England and Wales are prioritised based on a risk assessment. Compliant establishments are those where no improvements were needed. In England and Wales, compliance levels have increased overall this year compared to last year from 65% to 76%. It is considered that the requirement to announce inspections due to COVID-19 restrictions has impacted on both compliance rates and the decrease in issuing warning letters

2.58 There was a significant decrease in the issue of warning letters whereas guidance letter numbers have remained relatively static. It is considered that the decrease in warning letters is due to the requirement to give advance notice of inspections due to COVID-19 restrictions. This has given the producer additional time and notice to rectify issues on farm that would usually require an escalation through the risk matrix and the immediate issue of a warning letter.

2.59 Inspections in Scotland were carried out in line with a three-year rolling programme, with all farms receiving a minimum of one inspection every three years. Inspections are prioritised according to risk and historical data to inform the assessment and frequency. Compliant establishments are those where no improvements are required.

2.60 During 2020/2021 there was a drop in the number of guidance letters issued, from 35 in 2019/20 to 16 in 2020/2021. Overall, compliance levels remained high as levels of warning letters and HINs were low.

## Shellfish hygiene

2.61 Shellfish sampling was carried out between 1 January and 31 December 2020 as part of the routine biotoxin monitoring programme. The results of sampling activities are summarised in the tables below.

**Biotoxin sampling in 2020 - England and Wales**

| Biotoxin sampling type | Total samples analysed | Number of toxins detected | Number of samples that exceeded maximum permitted level |
|---|---|---|---|
| Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning (ASP) | 714 | 41 | 0 |
| Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP) | 776 | 70 | 0 |
| Lipophilic toxins (LTs) | 729 | 15 | 0 |
| Phytoplankton (Seawater) | 880 | n/a | n/s (only trigger levels) |

**Biotoxin sampling in 2020 - Scotland**

| Biotoxin sampling type | Total samples analysed | Number of toxins detected | Number of samples that exceeded maximum permitted level |
|---|---|---|---|
| Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning (ASP) | 963 | 70 | 1 |
| Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP) | 1276 | 280 | 11 |
| Lipophilic toxins (LTs) | 2056 | 813 | 161 |
| Phytoplankton (Seawater) | 1316 | 0 | n/a (only alert levels) |

2.62 For England and Wales, compared to 2019, there was a reduction in detection of LTs and an increase in the detection of PSP toxins. Scotland saw an increase in samples exceeding the MPL in LTs, PSP and ASP compared to 2019/20 levels. This resulted in 41 LT closures, seven PSP closures and one ASP closure during 2020/21.

## First fish sale

2.63 In 2020, the MMO carried out 974 inspections of establishments where first sale fish was handled. It also conducted 326 inspections of transportation of first sale fish. Inspection ability for both these inspection types was impacted

by the COVID-19 pandemic. Checks were made to ensure compliance with the traceability requirements of the Fisheries Control Regulation.

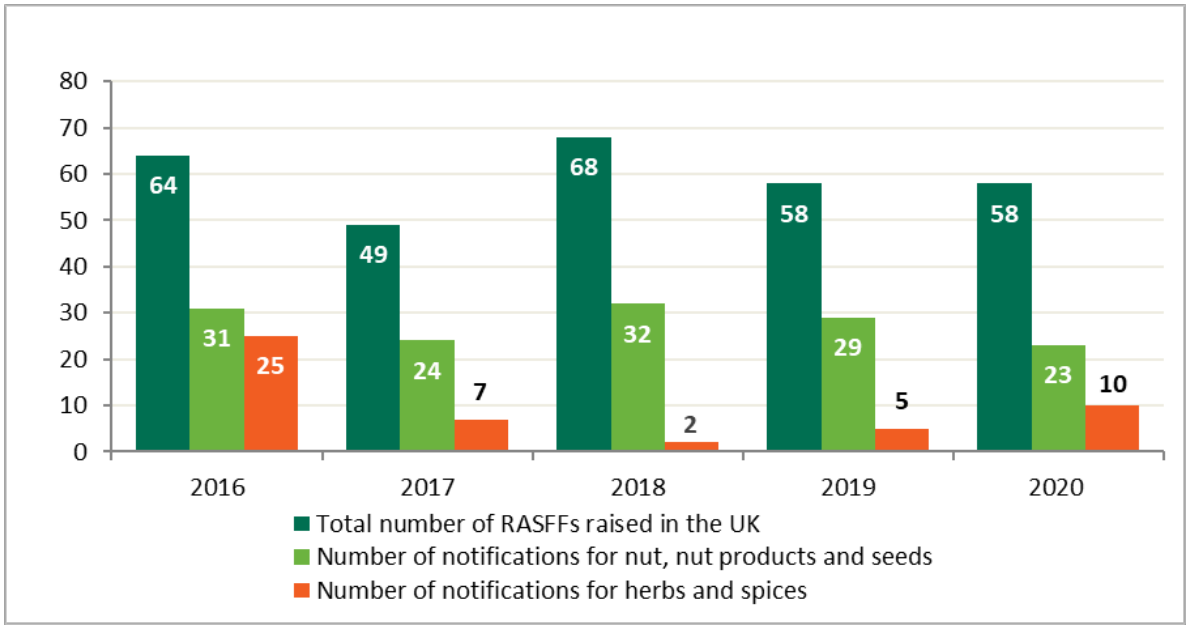
2.64 For establishments and transport where first sale fish was handled, 176 written/verbal re-briefs and one Financial Administrative Penalty were issued for breaches of Fisheries Control Regulations. 26 cases were referred for further investigation.

2.65 Despite the lower levels of inspection of both premises and transport, 44 infringements were recorded across these inspection types with an additional 142 breaches detected through compliance tools.

## Mycotoxins in food and RASFF notifications

2.66 The UK[4] raised a total of 58 RASFF notifications for mycotoxins in 2020; the same as in 2019. The number of notifications on herbs, spices and nuts demonstrated some variation from the previous year. For herbs, spices, nuts, nut products and seeds, there was a small increase in the number of notifications. Notifications for mycotoxins in food are all consistent with the previous year. The small changes are reflective of the annual variability for these incidents. The chart below gives the number of RASFF notifications for mycotoxins in food in the last five years.

**Figure 15 - Chart showing the number of RASFF notifications for mycotoxins in food (nuts, herbs and spices) in the UK from 2016 – 2020**



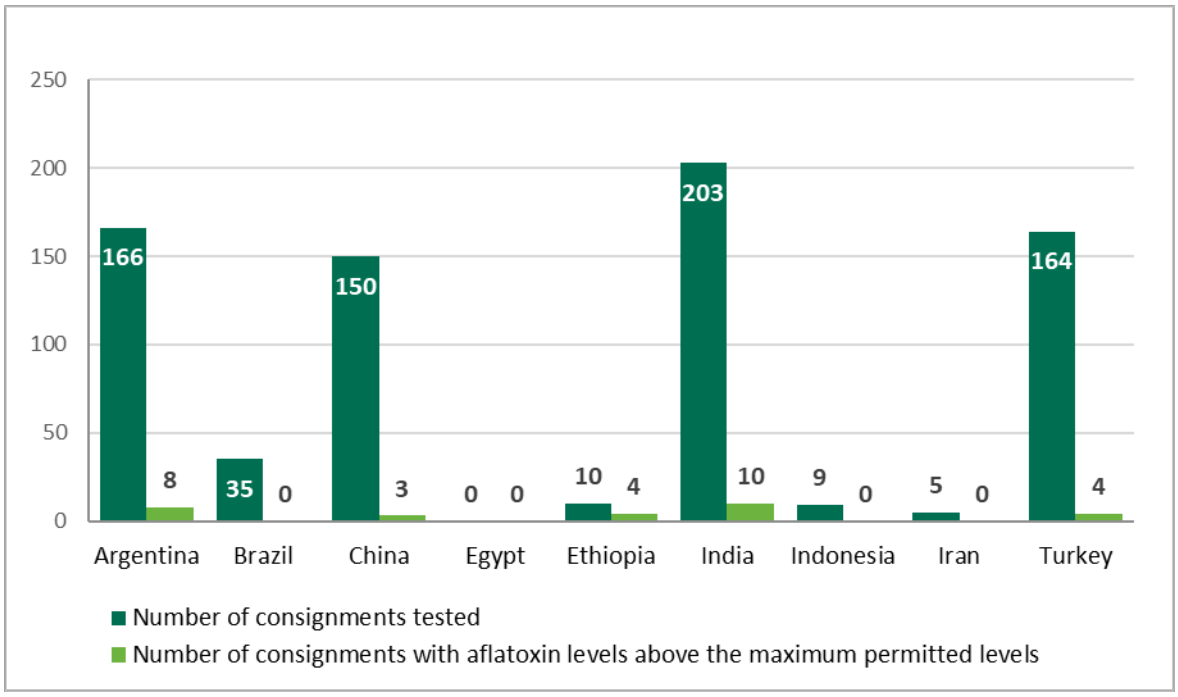

[4] Data for RASFF notifications is only available at a UK level and is therefore reported as a UK figure.

## Routine sampling of imported foods

2.67 The majority of samples tested for aflatoxins were found to be compliant. Where non-compliant samples were found, the product was withdrawn or recalled based on a risk assessment. Where appropriate, a RASFF was issued.

2.68 The chart below shows the number of samples taken for aflatoxins and the number of non-compliances. Overall, the level of non-compliance remained low. Compared with 2019, the proportion of non-compliances is lower than the previous year with 15 fewer non-compliances in 2020. This is possibly due to less sampling having taken place under COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

**Figure 16 - Chart showing number of GB consignments of imported food from non-EU countries tested for aflatoxins in 2020**




## Import controls

2.69 During 2020, operational targets for controls on imported feed and food at points of entry were met, including the additional controls required at points of entry under various EU safeguard measures and Regulation (EU) 2019/1793.

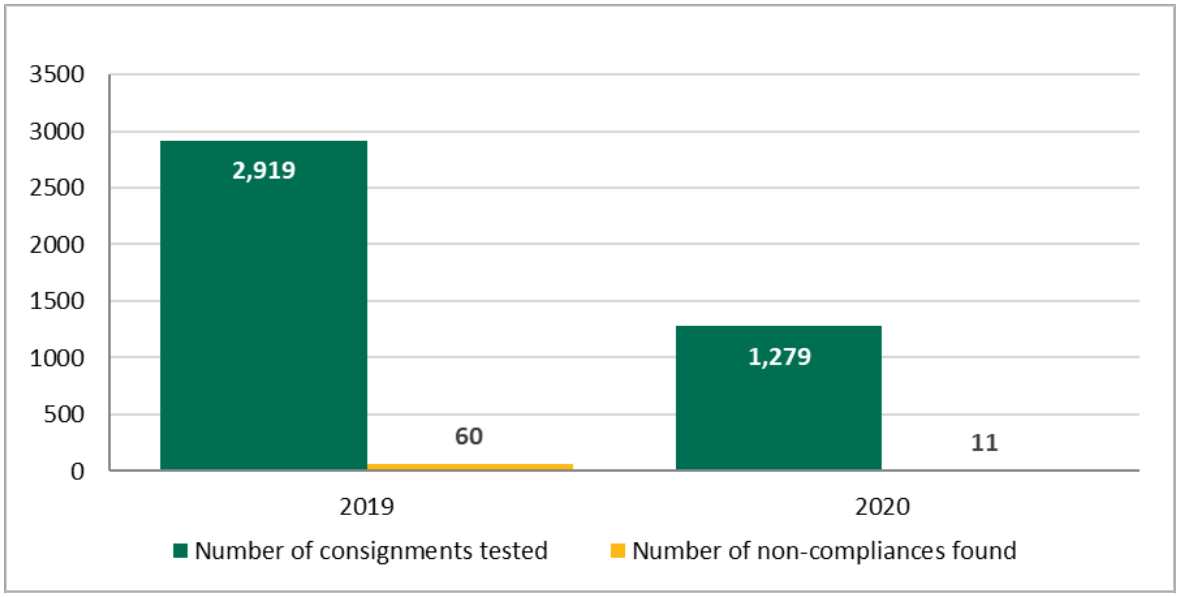
2.70 Official controls were applied on products listed under the relevant regulations, which included 100% documentary checks and the prescribed levels for identity and physical checks, including sampling and analysis. Under the EU safeguard measures 1,279 consignments were tested in 2020.

## Official controls on food imported from third countries

| Decision / Regulation | Country | Product | Hazard | Consignments tested | Unsatisfactory tests |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (EU) No. 2011/884 | China | Rice products | Unauthorised GMOs | 160 | 5 |
| (EU) No. 284/2011 | China and Hong Kong | Melamine and polyamide plastic kitchenware | Formaldehyde and primary aromatic amines | 95 | 6 |
| (EU) No. 2016/1774 | India | Aquaculture fishery products | Certain pharmaceutically active substances | 1,015 | 0 |
| (EU) No. 2016/6 | Japan | Food & feed | Caesium-134, caesium-137 | 9 | 0 |
| **Total** | | | | **1,279** | **11** |

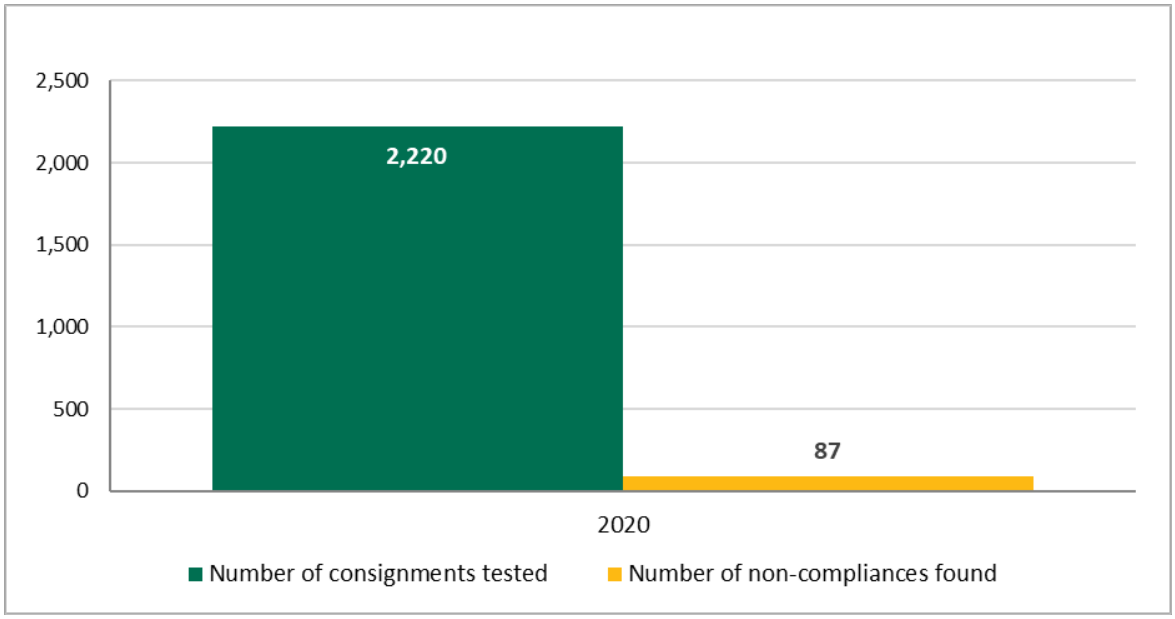
2.71 The chart below shows the number of consignments entering GB that were tested against EU safeguard measures and the number of non-compliances found . Non-compliance levels in 2020 appear lower than the previous year, possibly due to less sampling having taken place under COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

**Figure 17 - Chart showing number of GB consignments tested and non-compliances under EU safeguard measures from 2019 – 2020**




2.72 A total of 2,220 consignments from GB were tested for compliance under Regulation (EC) No. 2019/1793.

**Figure 18 - Chart showing number of consignments tested in GB and non-compliances under Regulation EC No. 2019/1793 from 14 December 2019 – 31st December 2020**



## Novel foods

2.73 The FSA made no assessments of dossiers for traditional food notifications, required under Regulation (EU) 2015/2283. This was due to transitional measure requirements during the UK's departure from the EU.

## Food contact materials

2.74 Controls were carried out by First Points of Introduction (FPIs), which are specific ports through which melamine and polyamide kitchenware from China and Hong Kong is permitted to enter into the European Union and Great Britain. In 2020/21, 99.9% of 1,076 consignments underwent documentary checks in GB. Approximately 9% were subject to identity and physical checks, compared to 18% of consignments in 2019/20.

2.75 In total, 15 consignments were rejected in GB in 2020/21, compared to 21 in 2019/20. Of these, six were rejected due to a failure identified during physical checks, representing 6% of the total 95 consignments that were physically checked. The remaining nine were rejected on the basis of unsatisfactory identity and documentary checks.

2.76 The same proportion of consignments were rejected in GB in 2020/21 as 2019/20 - 1.5%. However, there has been an increase in the rate of non-compliance for consignments that underwent physical checks. In 2020 6% were found to be non-compliant compared to 1.5% in 2019.

## Organic products[5]

2.77 Inspections of organic operators in 2020/21 involved physical inspections where possible, documentary checks and virtual audits. Physical inspections were severely impeded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost all UK operators due for an inspection in 2020/21 were inspected during the annual cycle. Additional visits were announced or unannounced depending on the circumstances.

2.78 In 2020/21, there were 6,686 registered organic operators in the UK. A total of 6,054 announced and 284 unannounced inspections and visits were undertaken.

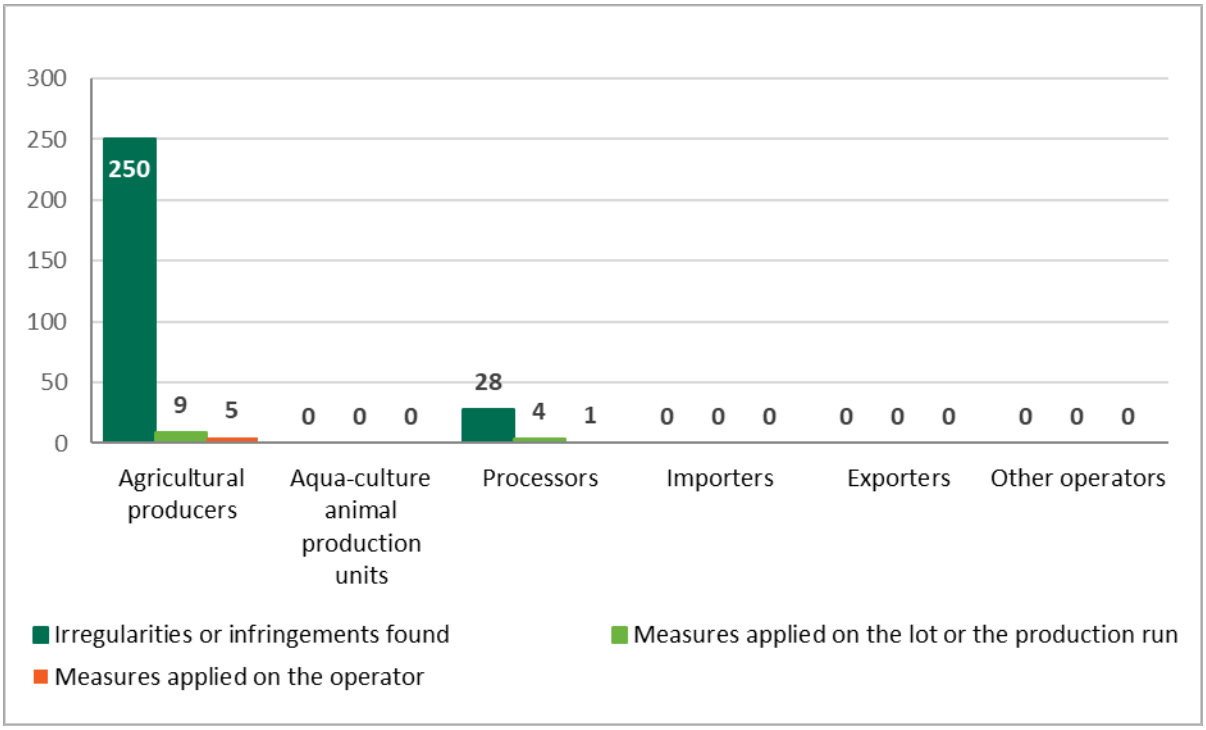
2.79 The table below shows additional risk-based inspections carried out in 2020/21. A derogation was introduced reducing the 10% minimum additional risk based unannounced visits stipulated in the organic regulation to 5% because of difficulties caused by the pandemic.

[5] Data for organic products is only available at a UK level and is therefore reported as a UK figure throughout this section.

**Number of additional risk-based inspections of organic operators in UK from 2020/21**

| Organic operators | UK-02 | UK-04 | UK-05 | UK-06 | UK-07 | UK-09 | UK-13 | UK-17 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agricultural Products | 62 | 1 | 140 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 9 |
| Aqua-culture animal production units | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Processors | 3 | 4 | 188 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Importers | 2 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Exporters | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other Operators | 3 | 17 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Figure 19 - Chart showing organic operator infringements and control measure in the UK from 2020/21**




2.80 Infringements in 2020 related primarily to agricultural producers. The majority of these infringements were due to poor or inaccurate record keeping where inputs used on farm or medicinal applications were not properly recorded. Some producers purchased non-organic stock or seed without prior approval from the relevant control body or Defra. Non-organic feed was fed to organic livestock.

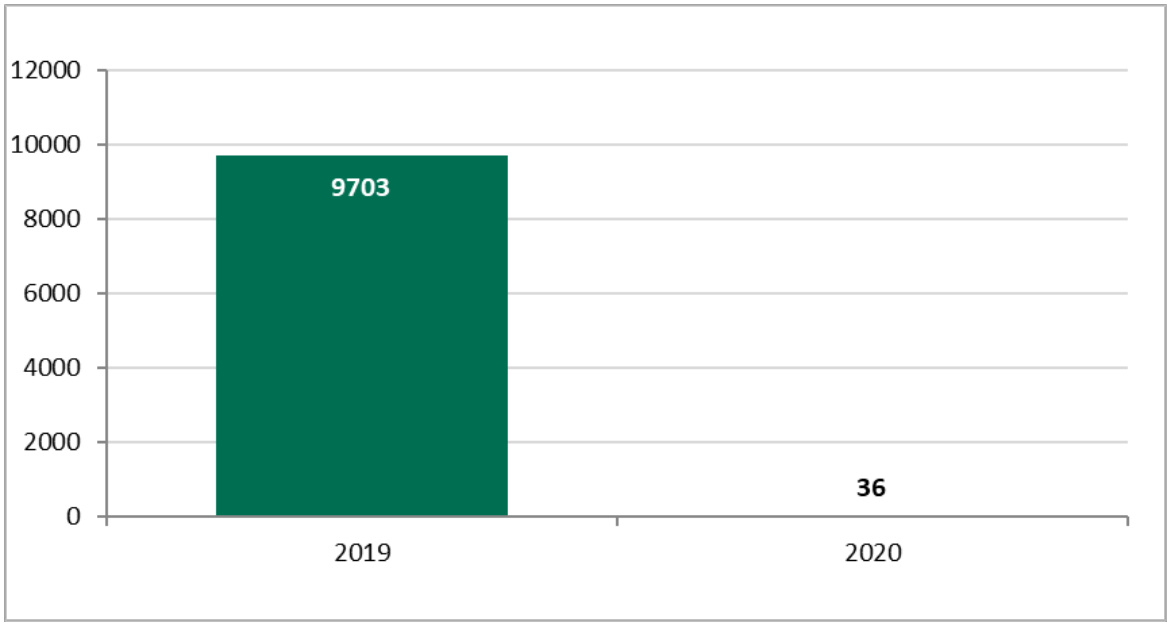
2.81 In some cases, unauthorised substances in produce were found and led to a formal investigation. Deliberate spraying field parcels with herbicide resulted in decertification of the field and in very serious cases, loss of a producer's organic licence.

## Agri-food Geographical Indications

2.82 The control bodies responsible for inspecting some of the larger producer groups are participating in a verification and accreditation pilot to ensure control bodies meet the scope for Agri-food Geographical Indications inspections.

2.83 The cyclical nature of verification, means that there were a higher number of reported inspection results for 2019 compared to the subsequent year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 a small number of GB producers were verified remotely for a specific product. No compliance issues were recorded that would result in harm to human or animal wellbeing or mislead the consumer.

**Figure 20 - Chart showing the number of Agri-food Geographical Indications inspections in GB from 2019 – 2020**




## Natural mineral waters

2.84 No non-EEA recognitions were conducted in England, Scotland or Wales during 2020. A current list of recognised natural mineral waters in and by the UK is available online.

## Beef labelling

2.85 In England and Wales, the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) operates a risk based and random inspection regime that focuses on those establishments with a history of non-compliance. RPA completed 264 initial inspections in 2020/21. Where non-compliance was found, establishments were revisited for a follow-up inspection, usually within four to six weeks until compliance was

achieved or enforcement action taken. Of the 264 initial inspections, 44 were found to be non-compliant.

2.86 In England and Wales, the overall level of non-compliance against initial beef labelling inspections is set out below.

**Percentage of beef labelling non-compliance for establishments in England and Wales between 2016 – 2020**

| Year | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % non-compliant | 32.1% | 38.9% | 42.9% | 38.9% | 16.6% |

2.87 In 2020/21, a total of 368 inspections were completed, initial and follow-ups, giving an overall non-compliance rate of 11.9%. There were three enforcement notices issued in the 2020 scheme year, compared with 22 in 2019.

2.88 The Scottish Government carried out its planned official controls for 2020 when possible due to COVID-19 restrictions, completing a total of 11 inspections. Where non-compliance was found, establishments were normally revisited as a follow-up inspection, within 14 days, until a satisfactory outcome was achieved. Of the 11 initial inspections, one achieved an unsatisfactory outcome. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the follow up inspection to ensure that corrective action had been taken was outside of normal follow up timelines. No prosecutions were brought in Scotland in 2020.

**Percentage of beef labelling non-compliance for establishments in Scotland between 2016 – 2020**

| Year | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % non-compliant | 19% | 5% | 13% | 20% | 7% |

**Summary of beef labelling enforcement actions taken for Scottish establishments between 2016 – 2020**

| Year | Verbal warning | Follow-up inspection | Warning letter | Enforcement notices |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2016 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 2017 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 2018 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| 2019 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 2020 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

## Veterinary residues surveillance

2.89 Compliance was observed in 99.7% of all samples analysed under the National Surveillance Programme in 2020. Of the 32,932 GB samples analysed under the National Surveillance Programme, residues above the maximum residue level (MRL) or other action limit were detected in 101 samples. This high level of compliance is in line with levels seen in recent years.

2.90 Non-compliances can be categorised into three groups:

- unauthorised substances: certain substances (hormonal, thyrostatic action and beta-agonists) having a growth promoting effect, and substances contained in Table 2 of Commission Regulation 37/2010
- authorised veterinary medicines (substance detected above the maximum residue limit): e.g., antibiotics, anthelmintics, anti-coccidials, carbamates and pyrethroids, sedatives, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and glucocorticoids
- environmental contaminants and insecticides: e.g., organophosphates, organochlorines, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), heavy metals and dyes

2.91 Investigations into non-compliant samples found no evidence of the misuse or abuse of hormonal growth promoters, thyrostatic, beta-agonists or prohibited substances.

2.92 Non-compliant residues were confirmed for various classes of compound, as presented in the summary table below. Investigations showed that the main cause of these residues was that the withdrawal periods for these veterinary medicinal products had not been adhered to, as per the instructions for use.

2.93 Similarly, the investigations into non-compliances for heavy metals concluded that these residues arose due to environmental contamination, or the accumulation of substances over time. There were no confirmed non-compliant cases for PCBs.

**Summary of results of GB residues analysis in 2020 for anthelmintics, antibiotics, avermectins, coccidiostats, heavy metals, and NSAIDs**

| Animals tested | Residue tested for | Number of inspections or samples | Number of non-compliant residues found |
|---|---|---|---|
| Calves | Anti-microbials | 341 | 8 |
| Pigs | Anti-microbials | 1652 | 1 |
| Cattle | Anti-microbials | 1258 | 6 |
| Milk* | Anti-microbials | 1474 | 0 |
| Cattle | Anthelmintics | 568 | 1 |
| Sheep | Anthelmintics | 1332 | 8 |

| Animals tested | Residue tested for | Number of inspections or samples | Number of non-compliant residues found |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pig | Anthelmintics | 277 | 0 |
| Sheep | Avermectins | 450 | 1 |
| Aquaculture** | Avermectins | 87 | 1 |
| Cattle | Avermectins | 309 | 1 |
| Milk* | Avermectins | 301 | 1 |
| Sheep | Coccidiostats | 298 | 0 |
| Poultry*** | Coccidiostats | 1394 | 1 |
| Game**** | Coccidiostats | 14 | 2 |
| Cattle | Heavy metals | 60 | 3 |
| Honey | Heavy metals | 15 | 0 |
| Horses | Heavy metals | 1 | 1 |
| Sheep | Heavy metals | 47 | 1 |
| Cattle | NSAIDS | 356 | 1 |
| Milk* | NSAIDS | 146 | 0 |
| Horse | NSAIDS | 36 | 0 |

*Bovine milk only
**Salmon and trout, combined
***Broilers, layers, breeders, turkeys combined
****Partridge, pheasant, quail combined

## Pesticides residues monitoring

2.94 The HSE carried out a monitoring programme in 2020. The table below shows numbers of samples taken and the percentage of samples tested containing residues over the MRL, over five years. Samples containing chlorate measured over the default MRL were not assessed as over the MRL.

**Number of samples taken and % of samples tested containing residues over the MRL in the UK[6] between 2016 – 2020**

| Year | Number of samples | Types of food | % of samples containing residues | % containing residues above the MRL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2016 | 3,448 | 41 | 47.8% | 3.2% |
| 2017 | 3,357 | 39 | 43.7% | 3.3% |
| 2018 | 3,385 | 42 | 42.5% | 3.2% |
| 2019 | 3,302 | 39 | 50.5% | 2.8% |
| 2020 | 2,460 | 33 | 41.54% | 2.52% |

[6] Data for MRL samples is only available at a UK level and is therefore reported as a UK figure.

2.95 The Expert Committee on Pesticide Residues in Food (PRiF) published quarterly reports on the findings, along with detailed information on the samples discussed in each report.

2.96 A higher rate of non-compliance continued to be found in certain products. A previous high rate of non-compliance is a factor taken into account annually for inclusion in the programme. These were generally in samples produced outside the EU, in particular speciality beans, okra, dried beans and dried grapes. These high incidences are generally because EU MRLs do not take account of pesticide uses outside the EU.

2.97 HSE checked all residues detected using a risk assessment screen. In 2020, details of four samples where risk to consumers were identified were passed to the FSA with a draft RASFF notification.

2.98 In 2020, the Secretary of State, with the consent of Scottish and Welsh Ministers, introduced the Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020 to meet the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2017/625. These Regulations enable official controls to be undertaken across the plant protection products (PPPs) supply chain in Great Britain.

2.99 Operators placing professional PPPs on the market will be within scope of the official controls commencing autumn 2021, and users of professional PPPs will be in scope from summer 2022. HSE and LAs will undertake official controls on behalf of GB governments. Defra has provided funding for an additional 9.65 FTE to HSE in 2020 and has committed to increasing this to a total of 23.65 FTE by Oct 2021 to support the delivery of the official controls programme of work across GB.

2.100 The HSE already conducts a limited number of reactive controls including a small number of proactive controls. In 2019/20, the HSE inspected 10 distributors of professional PPPs and collected 99 PPP samples for formulation analysis. Of the 67 samples obtained in 2019, analysis identified that 14 (20%) samples were non-compliant. In 2020, only 32 samples were collected due to the impact of COVID-19. Preliminary analysis so far has identified that two (6.25%) samples appear to be inconsistent with their authorisation.

2.101 The Chemicals Regulation Division (CRD) of HSE received 82 concerns relating to the marketing and use of PPPs in 2019 which resulted in advice or an enforcement notice in 34 cases. In 2020, 309 concerns were received which resulted in advice in 54 cases.

2.102 The Field Operations Division (FOD) of HSE investigated 16 PPP cases in 2019 and 47 pesticide cases in 2020.

## Official controls in the feed sector

2.103 In England, in 2019/20[7], 95% of planned feed inspections were delivered. All LAs contributed to the planning process for controls to be delivered in 2020/21. The FSA continued to review and make necessary improvements to the feed inspection system.

2.104 In Wales, in 2019/20, 83.2% of planned feed inspections were delivered. There were 738 interventions that resulted in the discovery of feed establishments no longer trading, improving the accuracy of animal feed establishment registers.

2.105 Data returns for 2019/20 showed a 14.3% increase in the number of feed businesses in England and Wales. The table below provides a breakdown for the last two years by business type.

**Total number of feed business operators in England and Wales**

| **Registered and approved feed businesses by type*** | **2018/19** | **2019/20** |
|---|---|---|
| Farms and primary producers | 126,780 | 126,103 |
| Feed manufacturers | 1,352 | 1,662 |
| Food businesses placing co-products and surplus food into the feed chain | 5,691 | 6,001 |
| Importers, distributors, transporters, and stores | 4,424 | 3,995 |
| Total | 138,247 | 137,761 |

*only main categories listed

2.106 During 2020/21, FSS continued to develop a centralised model for feed official control delivery for Scotland, with implementation planned for April 2021. The table below provides a breakdown for the last five years by business type.

**Number of feed businesses in Scotland**

| **Feed businesses by type** | **2016/17** | **2017/18** | **2018/19** | **2019/20** | **2020/21** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Primary producers | 18,067 | 15,423 | 22,819 | 22,819 | 22,288 |
| Manufacturers | 103 | 130 | 141 | 141 | 154 |
| Food businesses placing co-products into the feed chain | 760 | 278 | 329 | 329 | 307 |
| Food businesses placing surplus product into the feed chain | N/A** | 764 | 764 | 764 | 764 |

[7] In England and Wales Feed statistics are reported 1 year in arrears.

| Feed businesses by type | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Importers | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Distributors | 296 | 279 | 318 | 318 | 328 |
| Stores | 181 | 169 | 233 | 233 | 225 |
| Retailers | 896 | 187 | 166 | 166 | 175 |

**New category added in 2017/18

## GB feed controls and enforcement

2.107 In England and Wales, during 2019/20, there was a 9.5% decrease in numbers of inspections undertaken by LAs. The number of feed business operators being given advice dropped by 11.3% compared to 2018/19. The number of revisits and sampling visits both dropped by 25%. This was due to the impact of COVID-19 on LA resources.

2.108 In Scotland, during 2019/20, there was a 45% decrease in numbers of inspections undertaken by LAs. The number of feed business operators being given advice dropped by 64% compared to 2018/19. The number of revisits dropped by 81% and sampling visits by 41%. Uncertainty on the development of the future implementation of a feed delivery model in Scotland is likely to have led to LAs concentrating resources to other Trading Standards areas over this period.

### Number of interventions undertaken in GB

| Types of control / intervention | 2018/19 | 2019/20 |
|---|---|---|
| Number of inspections | 7,098 | 6,108 |
| Number of revisits | 228 | 156 |
| Number of feed business operators given advice | 3,873 | 3,173 |
| Number of sampling visits | 300 | 210 |

### Reported use of formal enforcement activity in GB

| Enforcement activity | 2018/19 | 2019/20 |
|---|---|---|
| Written warnings for non-compliance identified for the first time and not an immediate threat to feed safety | 1,126 | 612 |
| Improvement notices on issue which required attention or not been actioned after written warnings | 8 | 33 |
| Other formal actions to address serious feed breaches | 15 | 26 |

2.109 The number of written warnings issued in England and Wales decreased by 46% in 2019/20. The number of formal actions to address serious breaches of feed requirements increased from 23 formal actions in 2018/19 to 59 in 2019/20. This increase is due to improved targeting of inspection activity, resulting in more formal action.

2.110 The use of written warnings in Scotland increased to four in 2019/20 compared to zero in 2018/19. The number of formal actions to address serious breaches of feed requirements increased to three.

## LA and DC animal feed sampling in GB

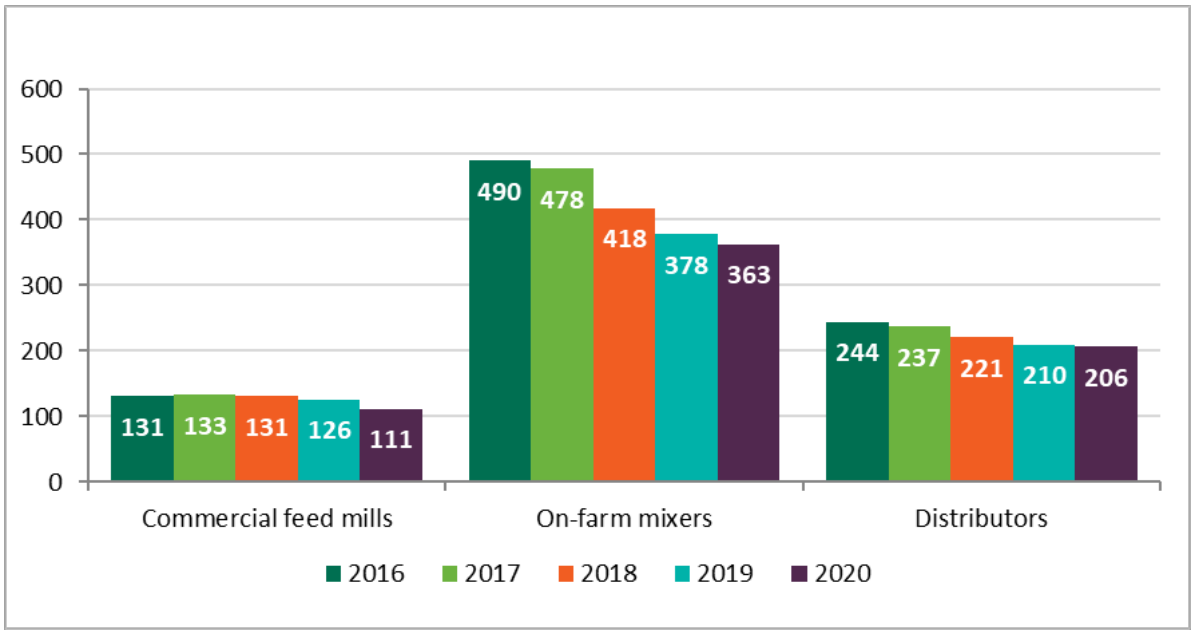
2.111 LAs reported carrying out 291 samples in England and Wales. Samples were taken of imported feed at points of entry, as well as from feed manufactured in England and Wales and feed used on farms.

2.112 In England samples were tested for 2,187 analytes, including heavy metals, dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs, salmonella, mycotoxins and carry over of coccidiostats. This data is not available for Wales.

2.113 FSS can directly access results of 87 samples in the Scottish Food Sampling Database (SFSD), which were analysed for 771 analytes. 32 samples were unsatisfactory, the majority for undesirable substances, 28 samples for heavy metals and 12 for microbiology. A further 11 sample results were not on SFSD.

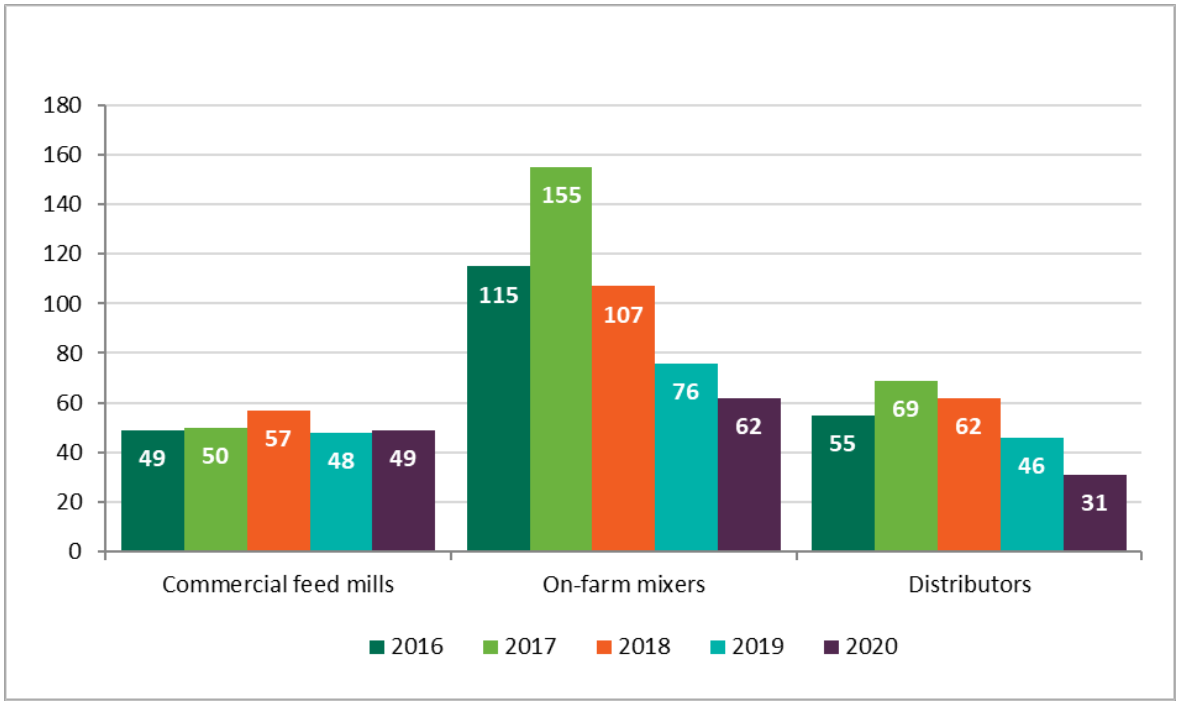
## Inspection of feed business operators by VMD

**Figure 21 - Chart showing the number of approved feed establishments in GB from 2016 – 2020**




2.114 ‘Other’ visits also include investigations into residues of veterinary medicinal products (VMPs) and specified feed additives (SFAs) that may have arisen due to cross-contamination during manufacture or distribution of feeding stuffs, or the unintended feeding of feeding stuffs containing those products.

**Figure 22 - Chart showing total feed inspections in GB from 2016 – 2020**




2.115 Of the total inspections carried out in 2020, 16.3% of commercial feed mills were fully compliant, compared with 18.7% in 2019. A total of 43.5% of on-farm manufacturers were fully compliant, compared to 43.4% in 2019 and 25.8% of distributors were fully compliant, compared to 29.5% in 2019. This shows an overall slight reduction in fully compliant commercial feed mills.

2.116 A total of six 'other' visits were carried out to feed business operators. These were unplanned visits and diverted resources from scheduled inspections. Four visits were recorded as 'no inspection carried out'. These were either commercial feed mills or farms where there was no one at the establishments.

**GB Sampling results for 2020/21**

| Sample type | Veterinary medicinal product (VMP) | Number of VMP compliant samples | Specified Feed Additive (SFA) | Number of compliant SFA samples |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Premixture or feedingstuff routinely tested for declared active substance | 22 | 19 | 5 | 4 |
| Premixture or feedingstuff tested for 'carryover' | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Premixture or feedingstuff tested as part of residue investigation | 0 | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| Premixture or feedingstuff tested as part of other investigation | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Sample type | Veterinary medicinal product (VMP) | Number of VMP compliant samples | Specified Feed Additive (SFA) | Number of compliant SFA samples |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Premixture or feedingstuff tested for 10 different AGPs | 10 | 10 | 0 | 0 |

2.117 The introduction of 'earned recognition' in 2015 for commercial feed mills certificated under the Agricultural Industries Confederation's (AIC's) Universal Feed Assurance Scheme resulted in extended inspection interval for mills which achieved a compliance rating of '5' or '4' (i.e., observations only, or up to six minor non-compliances). Earned recognition for assured distributors commenced in 2018.

2.118 In summary, feed business operators manufacturing and distributing specified feed additives, premixtures and medicated feeding stuffs were generally compliant with legal requirements. Where non-compliance was observed it was dealt with in accordance with the VMD's enforcement strategy.

## Protein in animal feed controls

2.119 Information on inspections and the sampling programme for GB in 2020 is set out below:

**Number of inspections checks on the presence of processed animal proteins in GB in 2020**

| Stage / inspection point | |
|---|---|
| Import of feed materials | 29 |
| Storage of feed materials | 42 |
| Feed mills | 483 |
| Home mixers/mobile mixers[8] | 54 |
| Intermediaries of feeding stuffs | 13 |
| Means of transport | 19 |
| Farms keeping non-ruminants | 31 |
| Farms keeping ruminants | 904 |
| Farms keeping both ruminants and non-ruminants | 469 |
| Total | 2,044 |

[8] In the figures above the category of home mixers mainly includes those farms producing non-ruminant feed containing fishmeal where ruminants are kept. Visits to ruminant home mixers are a priority in the livestock farm inspection programme and are included in figures for farms keeping.

2.120 In GB there were no non-compliant samples. The lesser number of visits reflects the impact of COVID-19, whereby no inspections or a limited risk assessed inspections took place due to COVID-19 pandemic measures.

**Number of samples tested for processed animal proteins in GB in 2020**

| Establishment type | Number of feed materials samples tested | Number of compound feeding stuffs for ruminants samples tested | Number of compound feeding stuffs for non-ruminants samples tested |
|---|---|---|---|
| At import | 95 | 14 | 0 |
| Feed mills | 775 | 1,046 | 257 |
| Intermediaries/ storage | 98 | 11 | 2 |
| Means of transport | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Home mixers/ mobile mixers* | 17 | 46 | 22 |
| On farm | 172 | 1,504 | 259 |
| Fats and vegetable oils | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **1,166** | **2,621** | **540** |

2.121 In 2020, 4,327 samples were collected in GB. There were no non-compliances observed.

2.122 The risk assessment criteria remained the same as for the previous two years. The number of control inspections completed in the last five years is shown below. Please see detailed reports published online.

**Number of sampling inspection visits and samples collected in GB from 2016 – 2020**

| Year | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of inspection visits | 2,549 | 2,192 | 2,303 | 2,250 | 2,044 |
| Number of collected samples | 5,023 | 4,751 | 5,250 | 4,818 | 4,327 |

## Incidents and outbreaks in the feed sector

### APHA

2.123 16 out the 17 incidents in 2020 were related to the feeding of catering waste or prohibited animal by-products to livestock species. The incidents were restricted to one farm only, where epidemiological investigations, disposal of the contaminated feed, cleaning and disinfection and monitoring of livestock health were followed.

2.124 There was a further incident, a case of garlic granules exported to Northern Ireland (NI) that, on investigations in NI, revealed the presence of over 5 bone particles derived from terrestrial animals. An investigation followed up where the samples taken in GB were negative or had a low-level contamination of unspeciated bone spicules, therefore classifying the consignment as negative. However, the client decided to send the batches back to the provider.

**FSS**

2.125 There was one feed incident in Scotland related to microbiological failures in raw pet food which required investigation.

# Official controls in the animal health sector

## Exotic diseases

2.126 APHA staff investigated 165 reports of suspected exotic diseases in GB in 2020. The following diseases were detected:

- Three cases of European Bat Lyssavirus were reported in England from July to December
- 17 confirmed infected premises of HPAI in poultry across England and Scotland
- One outbreak of LPAI H5N2 was confirmed in poultry in Kent
- One confirmed case of CEM

2.127 In addition, there were 715 field investigations of bovine sudden deaths for Anthrax and 935 field investigations for bovine Brucellosis abortions were conducted. None of these investigations resulted in the confirmation of disease.

2.128 The following table shows the total number of official investigations for 2020.

**Animal health Investigations in GB in 2020**

| Disease | Number of investigations |
|---|---|
| Anthrax | 1 |
| Aujeszky's | 2 |
| Avian Notifiable (Avian Influenza/ Newcastle Disease) | 71 |
| Bat Rabies | 3 |
| Bluetongue | 13 |
| Bovine Brucellosis | 35 |
| Brucellosis (excl. bovine brucellosis) | 1 |

| Disease | Number of investigations |
|---|---|
| Contagious Equine Metritis | 1 |
| EIA | 2 |
| Enzootic Bovine Leukosis (EBL) | 1 |
| Equine Viral Arteritis | 22 |
| Foot and Mouth Disease | 1 |
| Glanders | 1 |
| Rabies | 3 |
| Swine Fevers | 4 |
| Swine Vesicular Disease | 2 |
| Vesicular Stomatitis | 1 |
| West Nile Virus | 1 |
| **Total** | **165** |

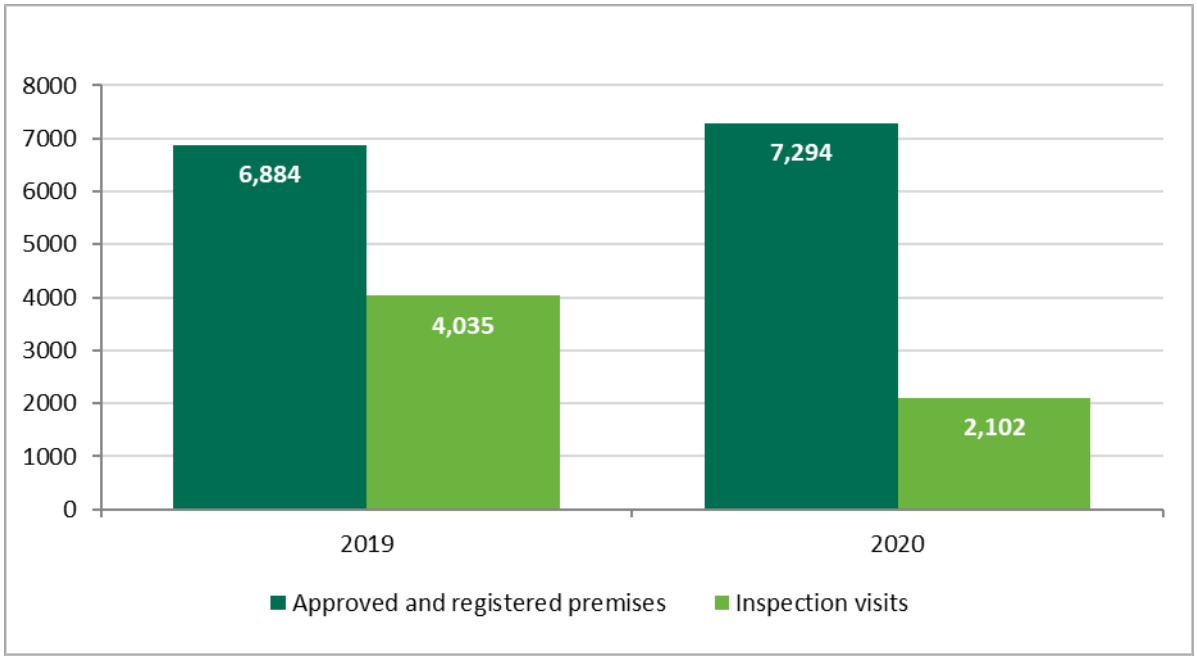
2.129 Under section 80 of the Animal Health Act 1981 (as amended), Defra is required to produce an annual report to Parliament on the enforcement actions (including convictions) of the local authorities in England and Wales and the compensation paid for animals slaughtered to prevent the spread of animal disease. A separate report is produced by the Scottish Government. The 2019 annual report was laid before the Scottish Parliament on 31st March 2020. The report will be published shortly.

## Animal by-Products (ABP)

2.130 During 2020, APHA issued 410 new approvals to ABP establishments in GB. The majority of these were in the incineration and pet food sectors. The overall number of risk-based visits to ABP establishments remained relatively constant in previous years.

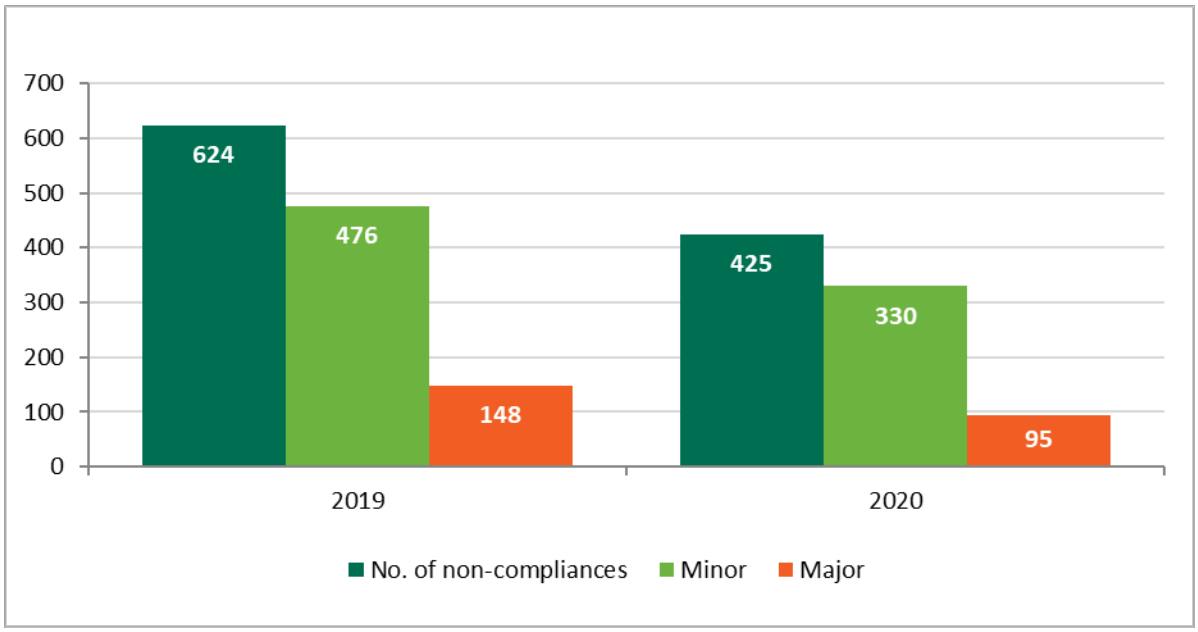
2.131 However, as shown in the chart below, there was a substantial decrease in the number of visits recorded for 2020 due the impact of COVID-19 on delivery of field inspections. The decrease does not provide a true representation of improved compliance as the figures are confounded by reduced overall inspections in the reporting year.

**Figure 23 - Chart showing number of GB approved premises and Animal by Product (ABP) inspection visits from 2019 – 2020**




2.132 In 2020, the number of registration requests continued to increase. The chart below shows that the total number of non-compliances decreased in 2020. The number of major non-compliances compared to minor in 2020 reflects data from 2019. There was no significant pattern associated with the nature of these non-compliances.

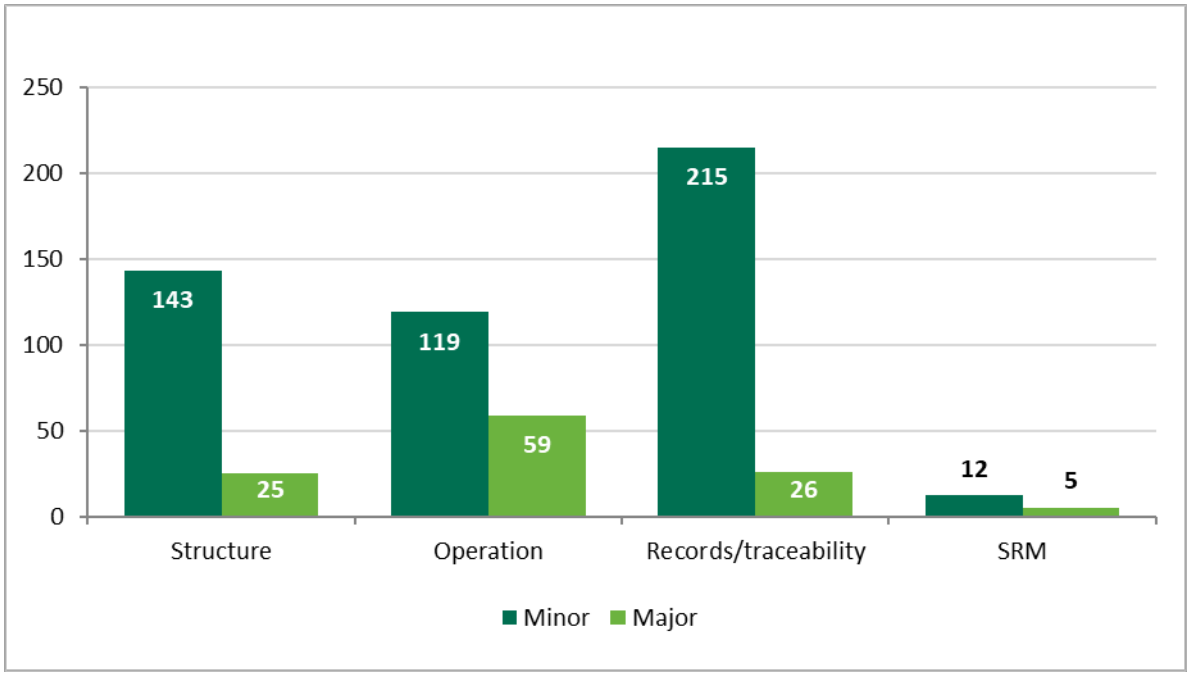
**Figure 24 - Chart showing overall GB Animal by Product (ABP) non-compliance scores for APHA risk based and follow up visits from 2019 – 2020**




2.133 The main cause of non-compliance was record keeping issues. In 2020, there were 19 serious major non-compliances identified, with seven for structural

issues, eight for operational issues, three for record-keeping and one for SRM.

**Figure 25 - Chart showing the number of GB ABP non-compliances disclosed at visits in 2020**




## Bovine Tuberculosis (TB)

2.134 In Great Britain, during 2020, as part of its TB inspection work APHA recorded:

- 73,051 herd tests, with 3,822 herds experiencing a new TB incident (positive herds), of which 2,209 contained at least one animal with typical lesions of TB and/or positive culture results (i.e., herds with Officially Tuberculosis Free status Withdrawn (OTFW)).
- 9.1 million TB tests in bovine animals, including 682,282 statutory pre and post movement tests.
- 37,834 cattle slaughtered for TB control purposes. This includes reactors, inconclusive reactors, and direct contacts.

2.135 APHA traced bovines moved to or from establishments affected by TB incidents. OTF status was withdrawn within a timeframe based on the time of completion of the last herd (source trace) or individual (spread trace) test respectively.12,010 standalone tracing skin tests were carried out in 2020, 90% completed within the target time. In addition, 3,827 tracing skin tests were undertaken as part of a test of the whole herd.

2.136 The charts below show the annual numbers TB herd tests completed and new OTFW herd incidents detected in Great Britain.

**Figure 26 - Chart showing the number of TB tests in Great Britain from 2016 – 2020**

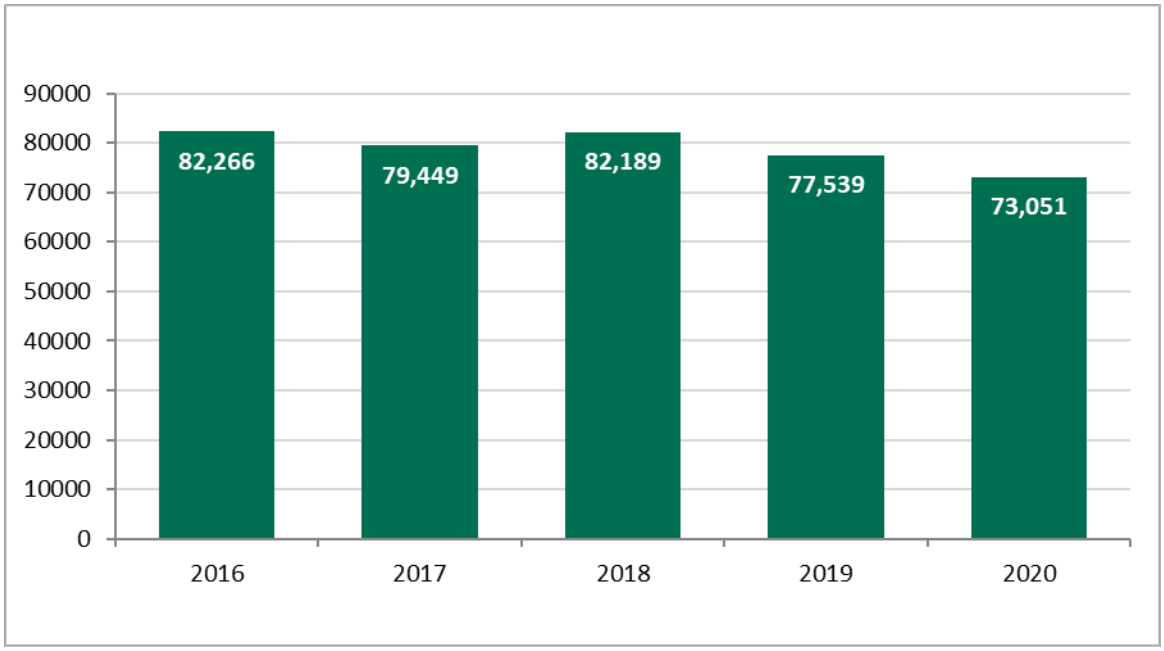
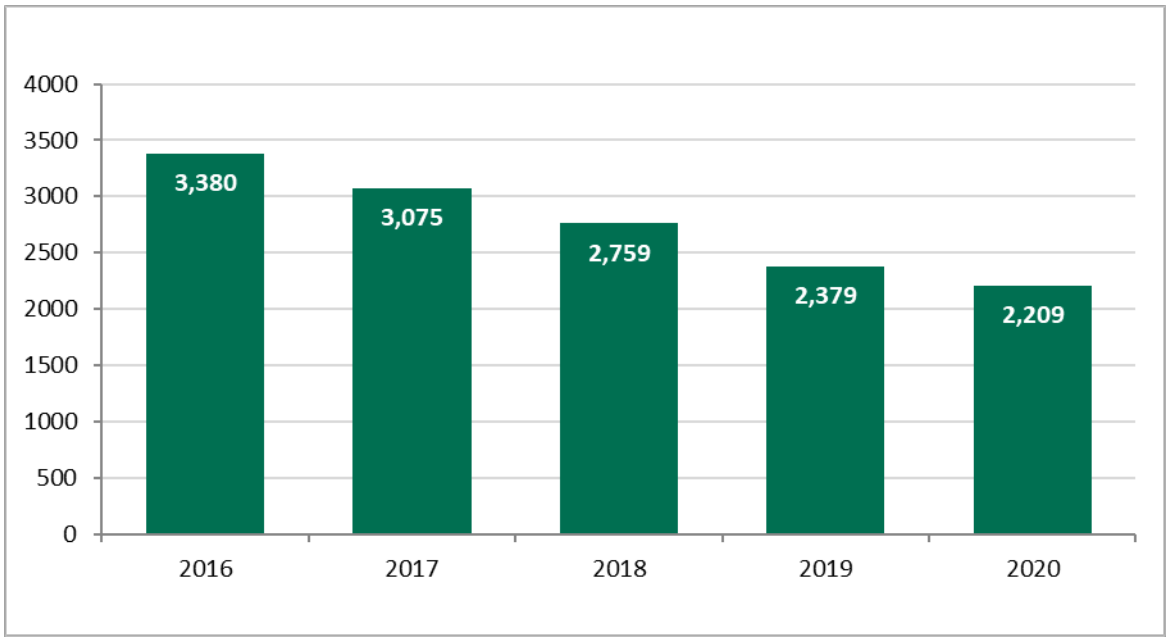



**Figure 27 - Chart showing the number of new herd incidents where TB free herd status was withdrawn in GB from 2016 – 2020**




## England and Wales

2.137 Due to the challenges presented by COVID-19 during 2020, advice from the UK's national governments was to only carry out TB testing of cattle where it was safe do so in line with COVID-19 public health (social distancing) rules and guidelines. While the majority of surveillance bTB skin tests were completed in 2020, it was recognised there were particular public health risks

involved in testing animals that were too small to be restrained by conventional cattle handling systems.

2.138 As a consequence, a temporary relaxation to the normal bTB testing instructions was put in place in England and Wales, from early May 2020 (backdated to 23 March 2020). Calves under 180 days old at the start of a routine or targeted herd surveillance TB test could be excluded from skin testing in officially bTB free (OTF) herds if, in the official vet's judgement, they could not be tested safely in line with social distancing.

2.139 If all eligible animals 180 days old and over in a herd were tested with negative results, the test was considered complete. Any calves 42 to 179 days old that could not be tested safely whilst maintaining social distancing were left untested until the next bTB herd test. In the meantime, the usual pre- and post- movement bTB testing rules for cattle continued to apply without temporary easements or derogations.

2.140 In 2020, England continued to be divided for TB surveillance and control purposes into three risk areas. A High Risk Area (HRA) spanning the South West of England, in which cattle herds are annually tested, a Low Risk Area (LRA) in the North and East of England where the majority of herds were tested every four years, and an Edge Area in between the High Risk Area and Low Risk Area, where herds are tested annually or every six months.

2.141 Defra continued to implement its long-term TB eradication strategy to gradually achieve OTF status for the whole of England by 2038.

2.142 Overall, the TB descriptive statistics for 2020 for England point to a stabilisation (and subsequent improvement) of the herd incidence rate and herd prevalence of TB over the last eight years. The tighter TB testing regimes and control measures for cattle herds introduced since 2010 initially resulted in the detection of more positive herds and animals.

2.143 This increasing trend peaked between 2011 and 2015, and continued until 2018 in the edge area, but 2020 saw reductions in annual herd incidence, prevalence and a number of new positive herds recorded. In England, 2020 saw the lowest number of new (and OTFW) TB herd incidents recorded since 2009. For the HRA, this was the lowest recorded number since 2006.

2.144 It is hoped that the reductions that took place in 2020 will continue in future years with the gradual rollout of badger vaccination, which will replace badger culling across the HRA and in parts of the Edge Area of England, now that the government has committed to bringing large scale badger culling to an end.

2.145 Progress was made with England's bovine TB eradication strategy in 2020, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Farm vets and Official Veterinarians (OVs) were designated by the government as 'key workers', which enabled bovine TB testing to continue

largely unaffected. TB testing would only occur if, in the vet's judgement, it could be done safely in accordance with COVID-19 public health advice.

- During the first national lockdown introduced in March 2020, APHA temporarily permitted the closing date of routine TB surveillance testing windows to be delayed on a case by case basis.
- In May 2020 OVs were given discretion to exclude calves under 180 days old from routine or targeted herd surveillance TB skin tests of officially TB free (OTF) herds if, in the vet's judgement, such young animals could not be tested safely in line with COVID-19 public health advice
- In June 2020 a new general licence was issued for the movement to slaughter of inconclusive skin test reactors that re-test with negative results.
- Six-monthly surveillance testing of cattle herds in two High Risk Area counties (Staffordshire and Shropshire) was introduced in September 2020.
- In November 2020, private veterinary practices in England were able to employ suitably trained lay technicians (Approved Tuberculin Testers - ATTs) following a successful field trial in 2019/2020.
- The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) granted permission to APHA to conduct field trials of a cattle BCG vaccine and a companion 'DIVA' skin test to differentiate detect infected among vaccinated animals.
- Badger culling operations for 2020 saw ten new intensive cull areas authorised alongside the existing 33 intensive cull areas that were reauthorized. In addition, culling is taking place in a bovine TB hotspot area straddling the Edge Area county of Leicestershire and the Low Risk Area (LRA) county of Lincolnshire, following the detection of *M. bovis*-infected badgers earlier in 2020.
- APHA completed badger vaccination across 102 km² of the East Cumbria hotspot in the LRA of England.

2.146 In 2020, Wales continued to be divided for bTB surveillance and eradication purposes into five bTB incidence areas: High TB West, High TB East, Intermediate TB North, Intermediate TB Mid and Low TB Area. All herds are tested at least annually and Welsh Government continues to implement the long-term eradication programme to achieve OTF status between 2036 and 2041. Overall, there have been long term decreases in incidence and prevalence since the TB Eradication Programme was established in 2008, with the new TB herd breakdowns recorded in 2020 the lowest since 2001.

2.147 The Welsh Government continued to pursue its programme to eradicate bovine TB in Wales, through a comprehensive suite of measures aimed at tackling all sources of TB infection. The programme was endorsed by the European Commission as part of the UK TB Eradication Programme for 2020. Key measures implemented in 2020 included:

- continued veterinary 'Keep it Out' visits offered on an 'opt out' basis
- continued heightened testing of contiguous herds in an area of increased disease prevalence (Intermediate TB Area North)
- maintenance and improvement of ibTB mapping system and making information available on cattle herds affected by bovine TB

- continue to remove all inconclusive reactors at standard interpretation of the skin test in persistent herd breakdowns
- cattle testing ‘inconclusive’ at severe interpretation of skin test, now subject to both gamma interferon blood test and antibody tests (IDEXX)
- badger trap and test operations continue on a selection of persistent breakdown farms, together with industry led badger vaccination projects
- continued with appropriate enforcement action on farmers who fail to test their cattle on time and those suspected of carrying out illegal activity
- Individual Herd Action Plans are developed by the case vet for all persistent herd breakdowns and now for all recurrent herd breakdowns at the 6M test, if they have had an Action Plan as a persistent herd breakdown previously.
- The Welsh Government has engaged with a group of farmers and vets on Gower Peninsular who started to deliver badger vaccination alongside enhanced cattle control measures in order to eradicate TB in the area.
- The Welsh Government has agreed a protocol to allow non-validated tests to be used in Wales, under specific criteria, which have to be agreed by the keeper and their private veterinary surgeon. This enables the Welsh Government to authorise the use of a non-validated test, to enable an assessment of its performance in the live animal under field conditions, prior to test validation. One herd has taken advantage of this protocol to use the Actiphage test in small groups of higher risk animals. Similar arrangements are being extended to the use of the Enferplex Antibody Test in 2021.

## Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE)

2.148 APHA delivered on all performance indicators within the agreed criteria for the 2020 period. The table below outlines BSE, TSE and scrapie performance indicators for Great Britain in 2020.

**BSE, TSE and Scrapie performance indicators for 2020 in Great Britain**

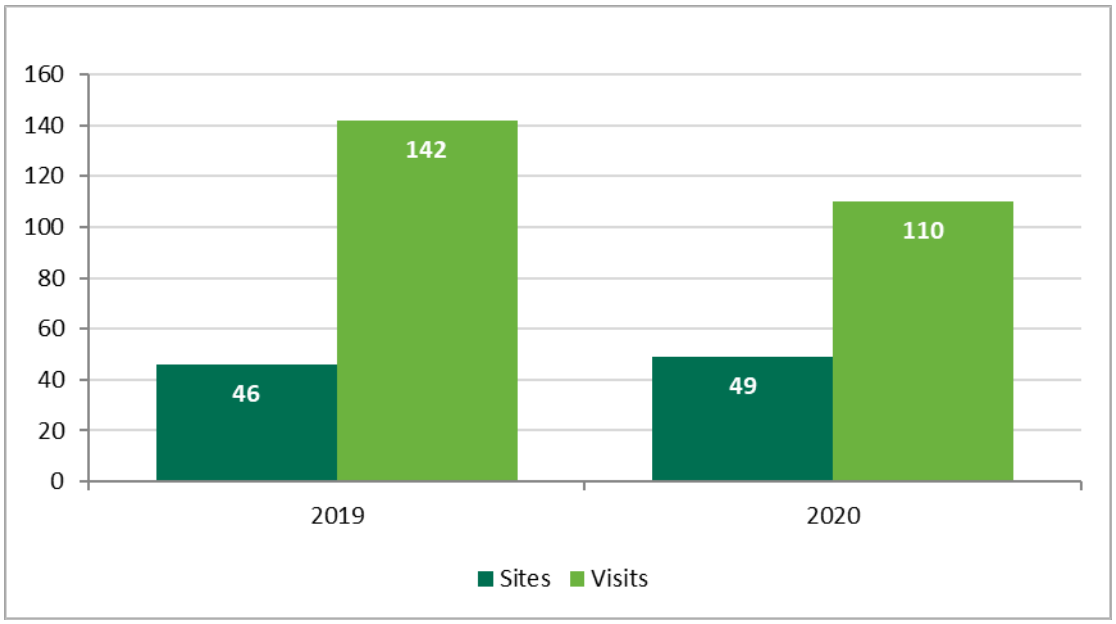
| Performance indicator | Number of investigations | % completed within agreed target |
|---|---|---|
| Investigation of on-farm suspect BSE reports | 2 | 100% |
| Investigation of on-farm suspect Scrapie reports | 1 | 100% |
| Tracing of confirmed classical and atypical Scrapie cases | 4 | 75% |
| Risk-based inspection of approved TSE sampling sites and controlled hide stores | TSE:108<br>Hide:1 | N/A |
| Restriction of eligible BSE offspring and cohorts | 11 | 100% |

2.149 There were two BSE suspects in 2020, one in England and one in Wales. Both cases were cattle showing nervous signs which may be consistent with clinical BSE, reported by the farmers. The suspect animal in Wales was

euthanised and samples were submitted to the National Reference Laboratory, which following full confirmatory test, produced negative results allowing disease to be negated. The case in England was left on observation and BSE was not suspected due to clinical signs related to peripartum pathology instead.

2.150 There was only one new case of classical scrapie in 2020. All the on-farm investigation Scrapie suspects were restricted immediately and visited according to priorities.

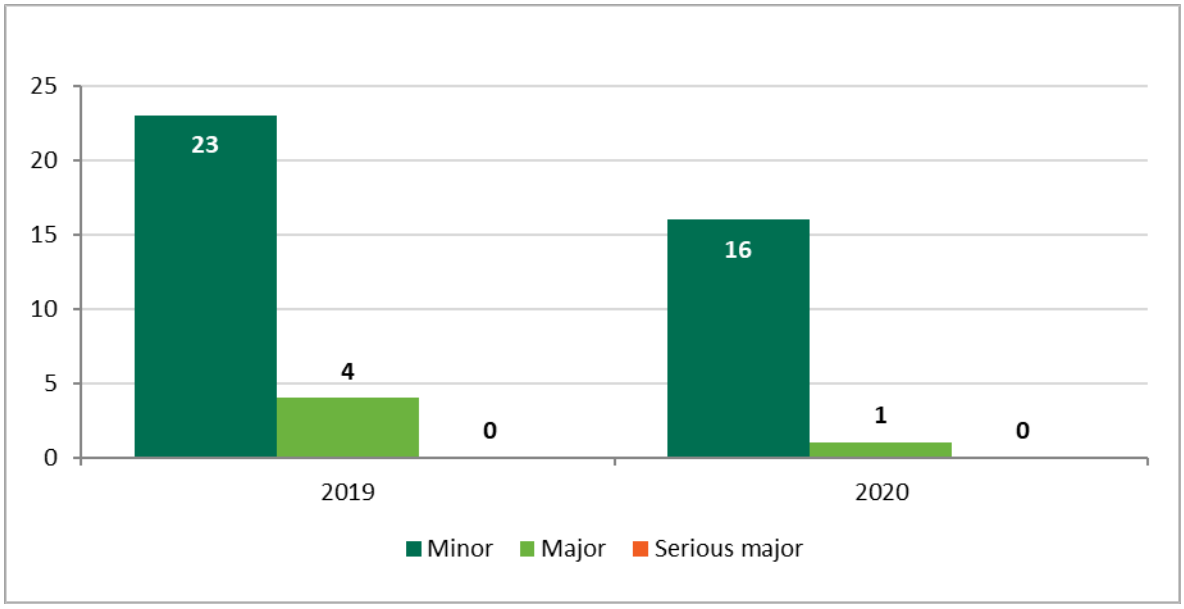
**Figure 28 - Chart showing number of TSE approved sampling sites and visits in GB from 2019 – 2020**




2.151 The number of TSE approved sampling sites remained stable over the two-year period. The number of risk-based inspections reduced in 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19 on delivery of field inspections.

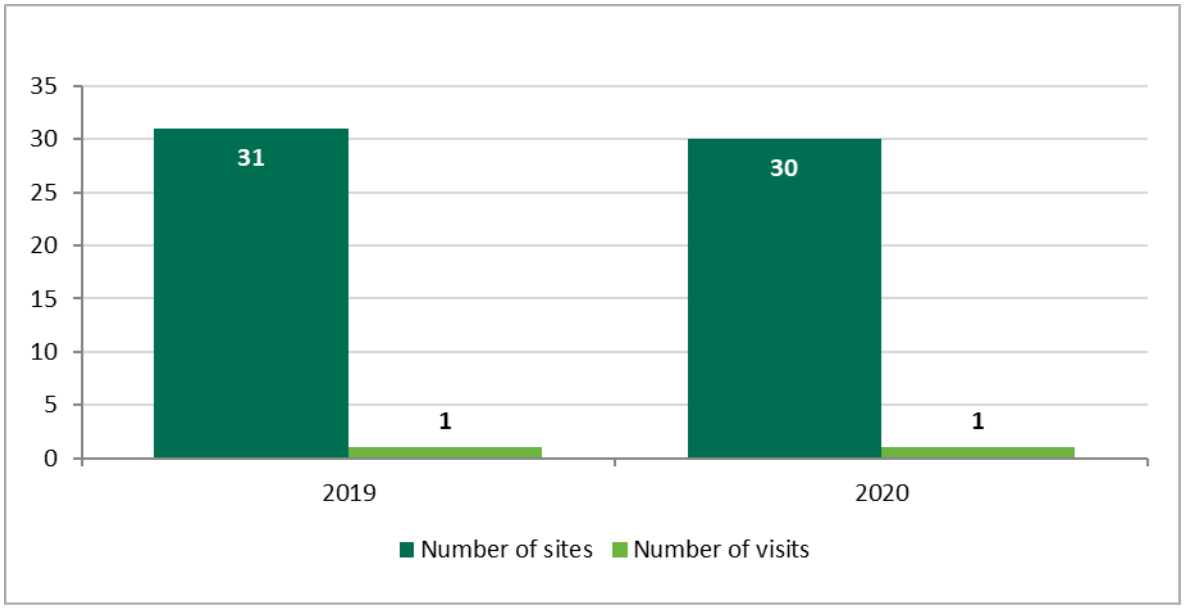
2.152 In Great Britain, 17 non-compliances were identified at TSE sampling sites during 2020, of which 16 were minor non-compliances and one was a major non-compliance. These mainly related to structural and record keeping issues. No serious major non-compliances were identified.

**Figure 29 - Chart showing the number of non-compliances at GB TSE sampling sites from 2019 – 2020**




2.153 The number of controlled hide establishments slightly decreased in 2020*, although the number of visits remained the same as 2019. Only one site visit was required, which was found to be compliant.

**Figure 30 - Chart showing the number of GB controlled hide establishments and the number of inspection visits from 2019 – 2020**




*2019 figure for number of sites amended due to an error in the 2019 report.

## Surveillance for BSE

2.154 The main purpose of BSE surveillance is to monitor the level of BSE in cattle over time and to check the continued effectiveness of BSE controls.

2.155 In 2020, 111,695 cattle were tested in Great Britain under the active surveillance programme. No BSE cases were detected by active and passive surveillance in 2020. The numbers of confirmed TSE cases in Great Britain remained very low. Published TSE surveillance statistics provide further information.

2.156 Whilst there were no cases of BSE in Scotland in 2019 and 2020, a final report on the 2018 classical BSE case in Scotland is available in the published epidemiological report.

## Scrapie in sheep in GB

### GB surveillance for scrapie 2020

| Type of surveillance | 2020 |
|---|---|
| Number of sheep over 18 months slaughtered for human consumption | 5,491 |
| Number of sheep over 18 months (Fallen stock) | 13,713 |
| Number of sheep tested - fallen stock (including death in transit) | 13,776 |
| Number of classical scrapie cases | 0 |
| Number of atypical scrapie cases | 13 |
| **Total number of sheep tested** | **19,280** |

2.157 In Great Britain in 2020:

- One sheep flock premises with classical scrapie undertook a voluntary flock cull. This disclosing case was confirmed via the identification of one case as part of active surveillance in 2019.

- 13 cases of atypical scrapie were confirmed. Nine cases identified in sheep were submitted to the Fallen Stock survey and four cases from sheep submitted to the Abattoir survey.

- The Fallen stock survey was the main contributor to the detection of atypical scrapie. 16 new sheep holdings joined the Compulsory Scrapie Flocks Scheme (CSFS) in 2020, leaving a total of 40 holdings with confirmed atypical scrapie and three with classical scrapie, two of which were depopulated via a flock cull.

- During the restriction period, fallen and healthy slaughtered sheep aged over 18 months were tested for scrapie. One sheep fallen stock sample was tested from the classical scrapie restricted farms, and 447 sheep fallen stock submitted from atypical scrapie flocks.

- In 2020, the Atypical Scrapie Monitoring Scheme (ASMS) continued to test the throughput of sheep holdings under restrictions by any kind. 16 holdings joined the existing 24 monitored due to confirmation of atypical scrapie. 26 of the 40 holdings under restrictions submitted 452 samples to the various testing routes of the scheme.

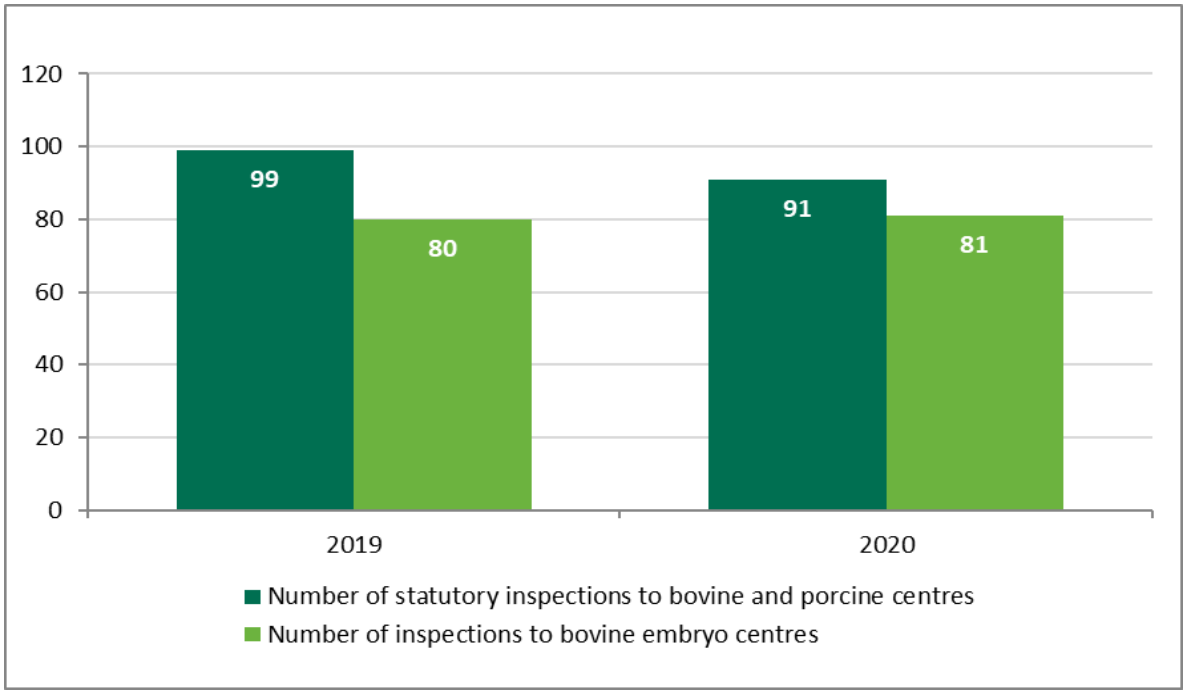
## Scrapie in goats in the UK

2.158 In 2020, there were no confirmed clinical cases of classical scrapie, together with no clinical cases of classical scrapie recorded, outside of a CSFS holdings. In addition, no atypical scrapie cases were recorded. 502 fallen goats aged over 18 months were tested, and one positive case was confirmed from this surveillance route, outside of a CSFS holding. One new goat holding entered the CSFS in 2020.

## Artificial breeding controls

2.159 This area of work is largely driven by industry activity, stemming from requests for approvals and testing of approved sites. As such, no set targets were prescribed. The delivery of this work was in line with expectations. Controls remained consistent for 2020. The chart below summarises inspections for the past two years.

**Figure 31 - Chart showing number of artificial breeding inspections carried out in GB, by bovine embryo centres and bovine porcine centres, from 2019 – 2020**



**Number of artificial breeding control activities undertaken in Great Britain 2016/17 - 2020/21**

| Activity | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of bovine embryo collection / production / transfer teams approved | 21 | 10* | 3* | 4* | 9* |
| Number of bovine and porcine semen collection, processing and storage centres approved | 6* | 2* | 7* | 3* | 4* |
| Number of animals licensed for on-farm domestic semen collection | 280 | 329 | 262 | 265 | 308 |
| Number of animals approved to move onto approved AI centres | 184 | 1,950 | 1,248 | 1,413 | 1,687 |
| Number of animals licensed for semen export | 1,312 | 1,881 | 1,204 | 1,366 | 1,625 |

*Stores and AQU approvals not included.

2.160 No sampling information was available for collection of bovine and porcine semen production.

## Sheep and goats identification and tracing inspections

2.161 GB competent authorities each met the requirement in retained Regulation (EC) No 21/2004 (Via Retained EC 2006/1505) to inspect 3% of sheep and goat holdings, covering 5% of national sheep and goat populations.

**General information on holdings, animals and checks in GB 2016 – 2020**

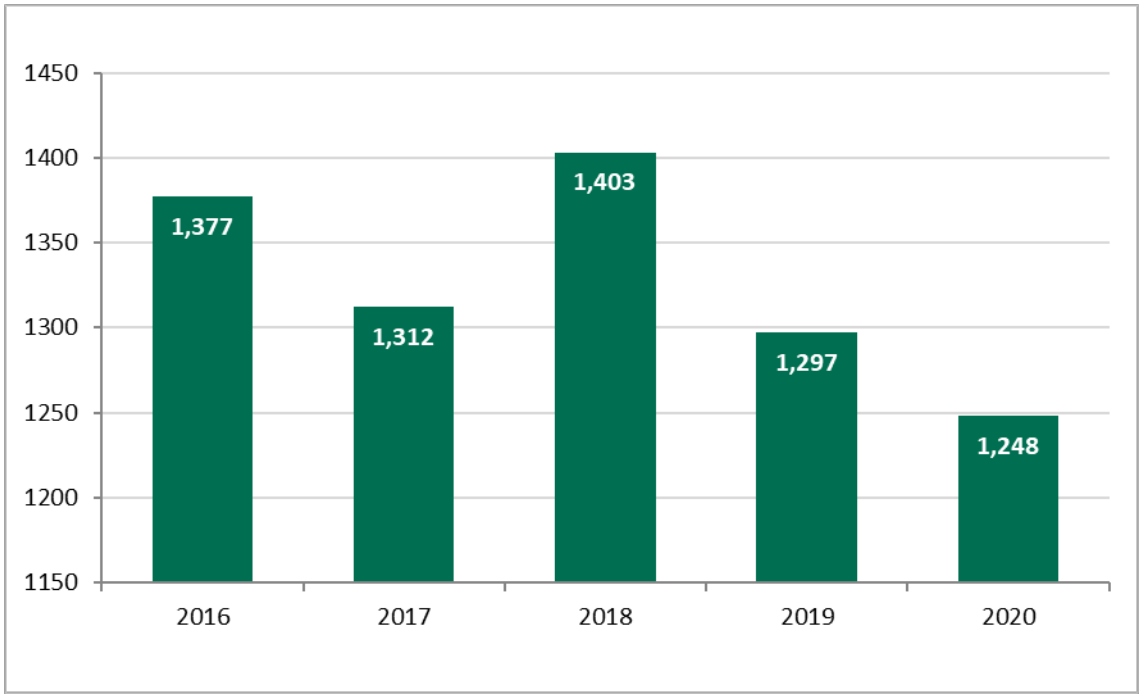
| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total number of holdings in the member state registered at the start of the reporting period | 109,347 | 112,040 | 114,720 | 108,212 | 109,217 |
| Total number of holdings checked | 3,456 | 3,561 | 4,216 | 3,602 | 3,468 |
| Total number of ovine and caprine animals in the member state | 17,316,040 | 17,614,132 | 17,333,838 | 16,586,206 | 16,087,152 |

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| registered at the beginning of the reporting period | | | | | |
| Total number of ovine and caprine animals in holdings checked during the reporting | 1,752,686 | 1,785,910 | 2,430,758 | 1,965,889 | 1,809,360 |

2.162 No significant changes were made to the risk selection criteria and the assessment of compliance, which are allied to retained Regulation 1505/2006 and EU Statutory Management Requirement (SMR) 8.

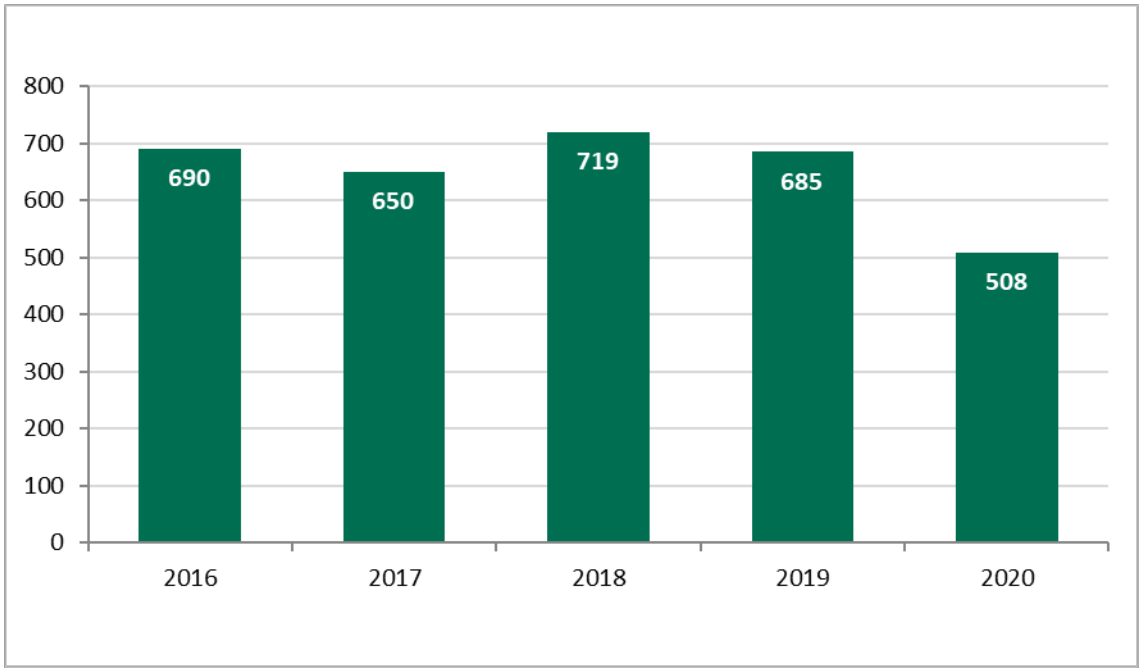
2.163 In 2020, there was a further modest decrease of 4% in the number of non-compliant holdings. This was primarily due to a reduction in the size of the national flock. The chart below shows the number of non-compliant holdings from 2016 to 2020.

**Figure 32 - Chart showing the number of sheep and goat holdings with non-compliances in GB from 2016 – 2020**




2.164 Penalties were applied to sheep and goat keepers for non-compliance discovered during an SMR 8 cross compliance inspection. The chart below shows the number of penalties imposed in GB from 2016 to 2020.

**Figure 33 - Chart showing the number of sheep and goat holdings with penalties imposed in GB from 2016 – 2020**




2.165 In 2020, there was an appreciable 25% decrease in the number of holdings with penalties imposed, however this was due to the impact of COVID-19 rather than an improvement in compliance. The most common types of non-compliance related to inaccurate or incomplete on-farm records, including failure to record movements accurately.

## Cattle identification and registration

2.166 Commission Regulation (EU) No 1034/2010 requires a minimum of 3% of member states holdings to be inspected annually. All inspections were completed on time during the reporting period.

2.167 In Great Britain, 80% of the holdings inspected were selected using a computerised risk analysis, criteria including previous non-compliance, results of previous years' inspections and specific high-risk indicators, such as high numbers of replacement tag purchases. In addition, 20% of the holdings inspected were selected at random to ascertain the level of compliance across Great Britain.

**Information on holdings and bovine animals in Great Britain 2016 – 2020**

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total number of holdings registered at the start of the reporting period | 73,844 | 72,733 | 71,946 | 70,555 | 68,661 |
| Total number of holdings checked during the reporting period | 2,885 | 2,975 | 2,925 | 2,431 | 2,345 |
| Total number of bovine animals registered at start of the reporting period | 8,129,271 | 8,108,766 | 7,964,321 | 7,984,511 | 7,781,796 |
| Total number of bovine animals checked during the reporting period | 351,765 | 339,633 | 366,698 | 265,352 | 296,518 |

2.168 In 2020, the results of the cattle identification inspection annual programme for Great Britain have shown a 'mixed picture' of compliance, with the number of non-compliant holdings decreasing by one from 1,028 to 1,027, but with an increased number of animals found to be in breach of the cattle identification regulation, increasing by 5,030 from 17,470 to 22,500.

2.169 Various activities were inspected on farms, such as tagging standards, record keeping and notifications to the central database. Where necessary, penalties were applied to cattle keepers found to be in breach of cross-compliance inspections. In 2020, the most common types of non-compliance related to late or no report of movements and late or no report of births and deaths, with the majority of animals inspected found to have only one error.

2.170 In Great Britain during 2020, 6,866 bovine animals were subject to movement restrictions. A total of 1,366 animals were subject to individual restrictions and 5,500 were subject to whole herd movement restrictions. This represented 2.3% of animals subject to inspection. A total of 92 holdings were subject to a whole herd restriction, which equated to 3.9% of all inspected holdings. This represented a deterioration on 2018/19's GB figures of 1.5%.

2.171 The charts below show holdings with non-compliances and inspections relating to cattle ID and registration from 2019 to 2020 in Great Britain.

**Figure 34 - Chart showing the number of holdings with non-compliances for cattle identification regulations in GB from 2019 – 2020**

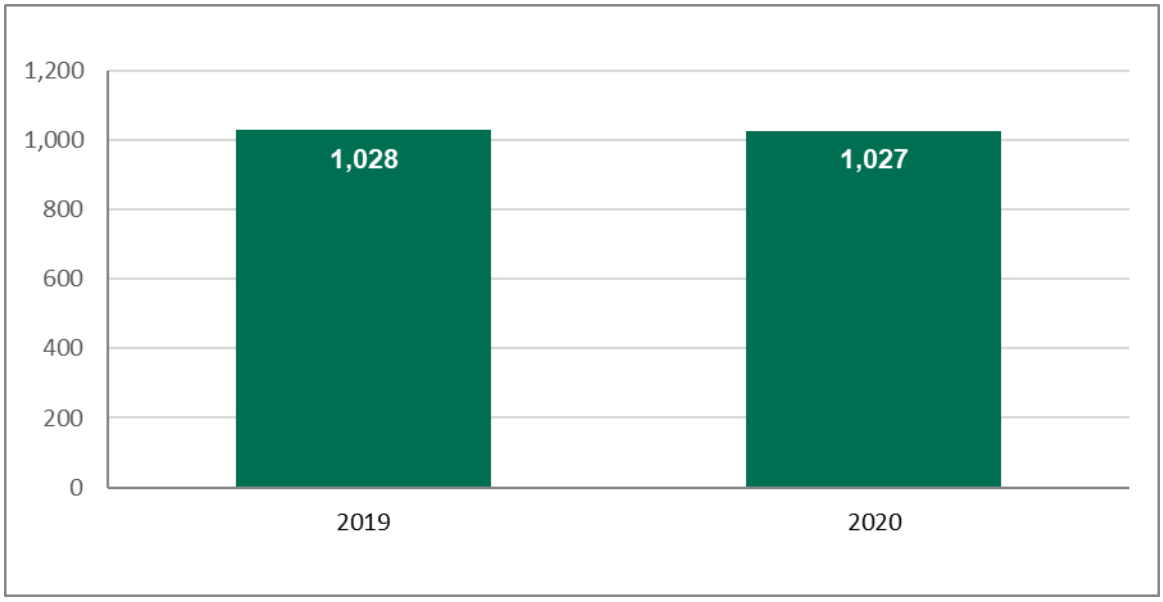
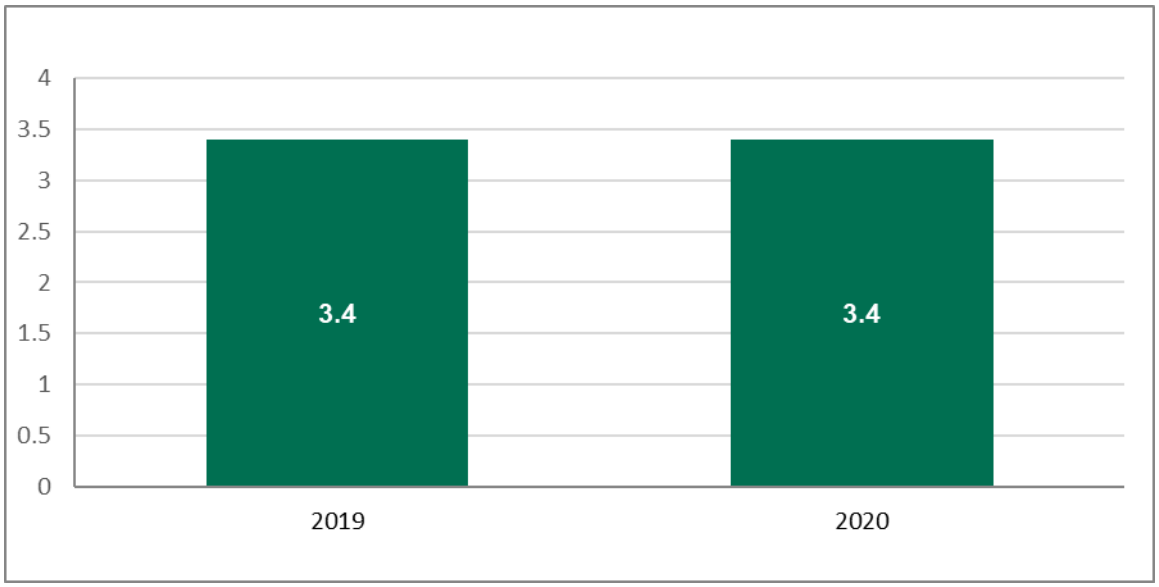



**Figure 35 - Chart showing the percentage of cattle holdings inspected under the cattle identification regulations in GB from 2019 – 2020**




## Zoonoses

2.172 Control of *Salmonella* in all the UK poultry sectors was maintained in 2020. Great Britain continued to meet or exceed the target prevalence for regulated serovars in all five NCPs. More detail on trends up to 2020 can be found in the report on Salmonella in livestock in Great Britain 2019.

2.173 The *Salmonella* National Control Programme (SNCP) monitoring results for 2020 for all five NCPs (breeding, laying and broiler chickens and for breeding and fattening turkeys) showed that the levels of the regulated (target) *Salmonella* serovars were all below and within the EU designated targets.

2.174 Official sampling programmes, as required by the retained EU legislation, are in place for each sector. A two-day national training event primarily for APHA staff was held in October 2019, to raise NCP awareness and build capacity, and a webinar for approved NCP-approved labs was held in 2020.

2.175 The UK breeding chicken sector had a reported prevalence for regulated (target) serovars of 0.08% for 2020. One adult breeding flock was positive for a regulated *Salmonella* serovar: *S*. Typhimurium RDNC was identified in a broiler grandparent flock via operator sampling. This is the first time a regulated serovar has been identified since 2016, when one chicken breeder flock tested positive for *S*. Typhimurium DT85.

2.176 The estimated prevalence of *S*. Enteritidis, *S*. Typhimurium and/ or monophasic strains of *S*. Typhimurium in adult flocks of laying hens within the NCP in Great Britain during 2020 was 0.35%. While remaining well below the target of 2.00%, this is comparable with 0.40% in 2019 but is a high prevalence compared to 2018 (0.10%).

2.177 11 adult flocks of laying hens, originating from four separate holdings, were positive for *S*. Enteritidis (PT8 x8, PT13 x2, UNTY x1). One of these flocks tested positive for two different phage types of *S*. Enteritidis (PT8 and PT13) but is counted only once in the number of positive flocks (PT13 is a variant of PT8). Another of these flocks also tested positive for *S*. Typhimurium DT2 but is included only once in the total number of flocks positive for a regulated serovar. Four adult flocks of laying hens, originating from two separate holdings, were positive for *S*. Typhimurium (DT2 x2, DT193 x2).

2.178 A total of 14 adult flocks of laying hens, originating from five separate holdings, were therefore recorded as positive for regulated serovars (*S*. Enteritidis and/ or *S*. Typhimurium, including monophasic strains) in GB in 2020. 11 of these flocks were identified through official sampling (sampling other flocks on site following confirmation of a regulated serovar x7; enhanced risk-based sampling x3; confirmatory sampling x1) and three of these flocks were identified through operator sampling.

2.179 Three broiler flocks of *Gallus gallus,* on three separate holdings, were positive for regulated serovars: one for *S*. Enteritidis (PT8), one for *S*. Typhimurium (DT2), and one for *S*. 4,12:i:- monophasic Typhimurium (DT193) in 2020. Based on the estimated number of broiler flocks in 2020, the estimated prevalence of regulated *Salmonella* serovars in GB was 0.01%. This compares with 0.03% in 2019 and 0.04% in 2018.

2.180 For the second year in a row, no regulated serovars were isolated from turkey fattening flocks in 2020 - for the second year in a row . 2019 was the first year since the NCP began that no regulated serovars were isolated from turkey fattening flocks. The 2020 prevalence of the target serovars was therefore 0% again: well below the EU target of a maximum of 1% of flocks positive for regulated serovars in fattening turkey flocks.

2.181 In 2020, there were 267 turkey breeding flocks tested in the National Control Programme. No turkey breeding flocks were positive for regulated serovars. The 2020 prevalence of the target serovars was therefore 0%, which is below the EU target of 1% of flocks positive for S. Enteritidis and S. Typhimurium, including monophasic Salmonella Typhimurium strains.

2.182 No turkey breeding flocks were positive for S. Enteritidis in 2020. This has been the case since the introduction of the UK turkey NCP in 2010.

**Figure 36 - Chart showing prevalence of *Salmonella* spp. in regulated serovars relative to the EU target in audit laying hen flocks of *Gallus gallus* in the *Salmonella* National control programme from 2016 – 2020 in Great Britain**

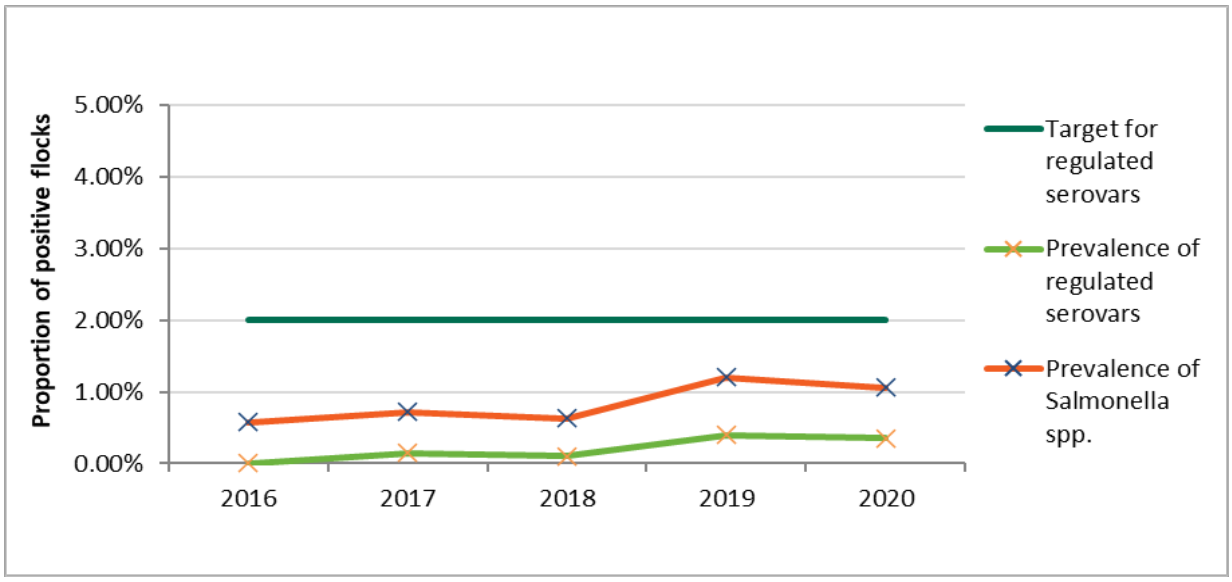



**Figure 37 - Chart showing prevalence of *Salmonella* spp. in regulated serovars relative to the EU target for broiler flocks of *Gallus gallus* in the *Salmonella* National control programme from 2016 - 2020 in Great Britain**

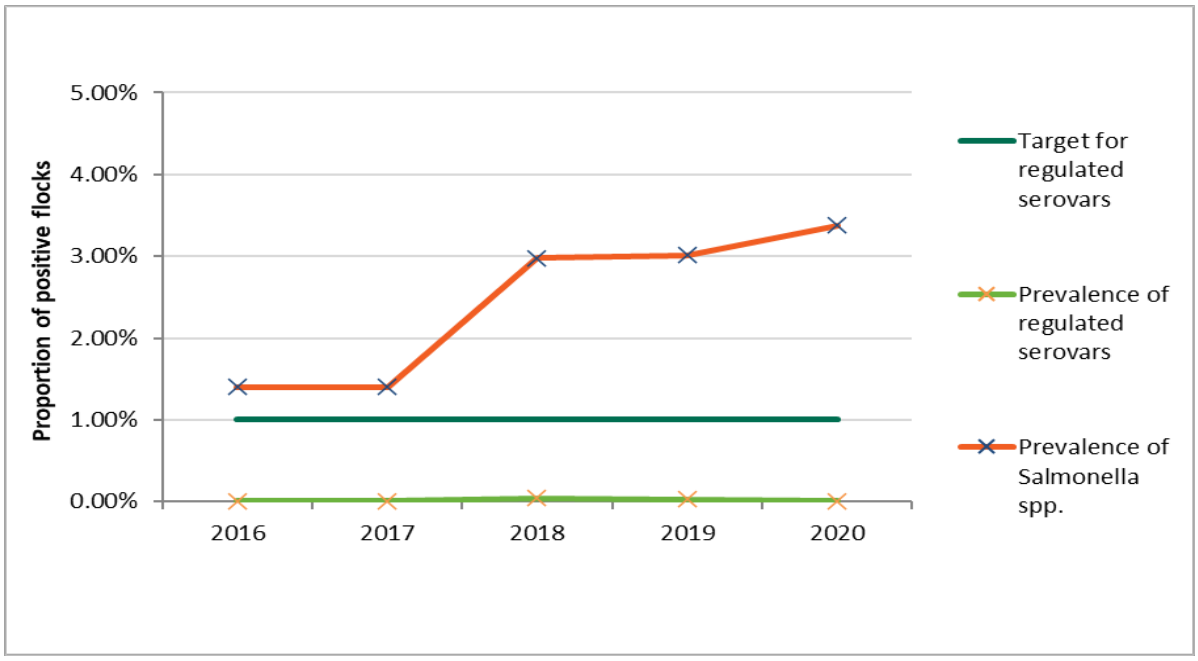


**Figure 38 - Chart showing prevalence of *Salmonella* spp. and the regulated serovars relative to the EU target in adult breeding flocks of *Gallus gallus* in the *Salmonella* National control programme from 2016 - 2020 in Great Britain**

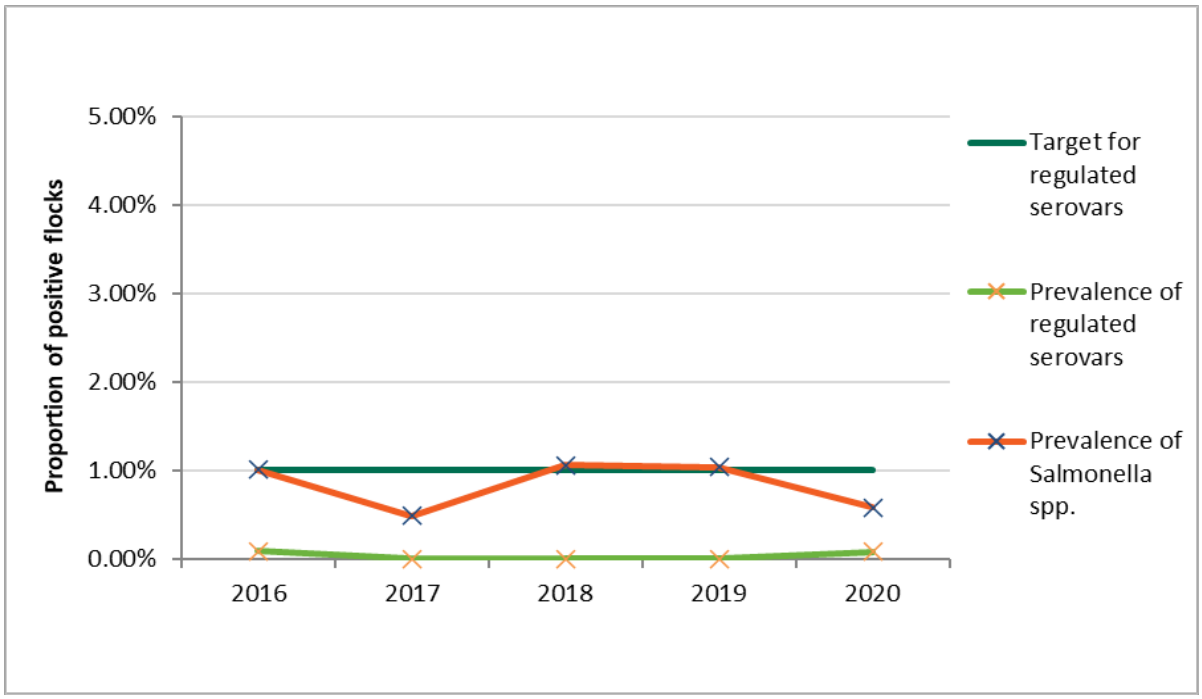



**Figure 39 - Chart showing prevalence of *Salmonella* spp. and the regulated serovars relative to the EU target for fattening turkey flocks in the *Salmonella* National control programme from 2016 - 2020 in Great Britain**

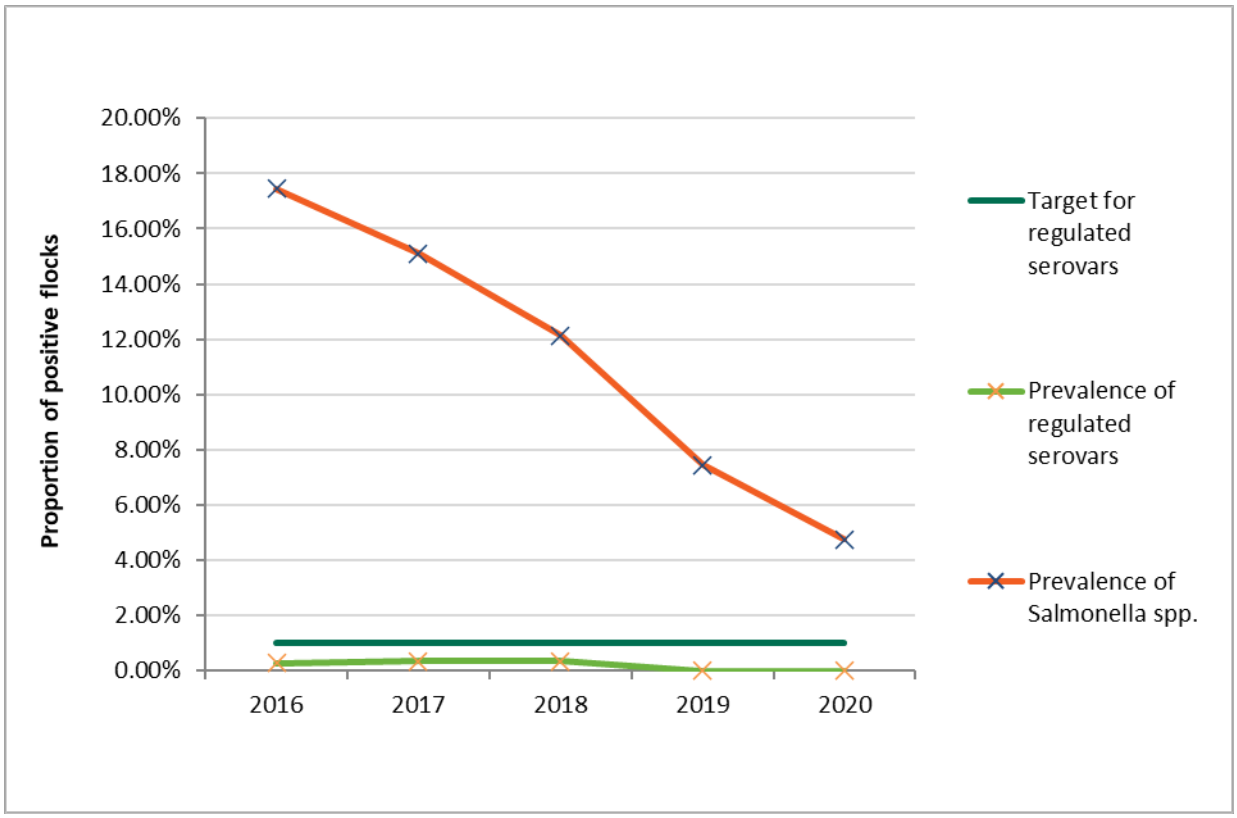
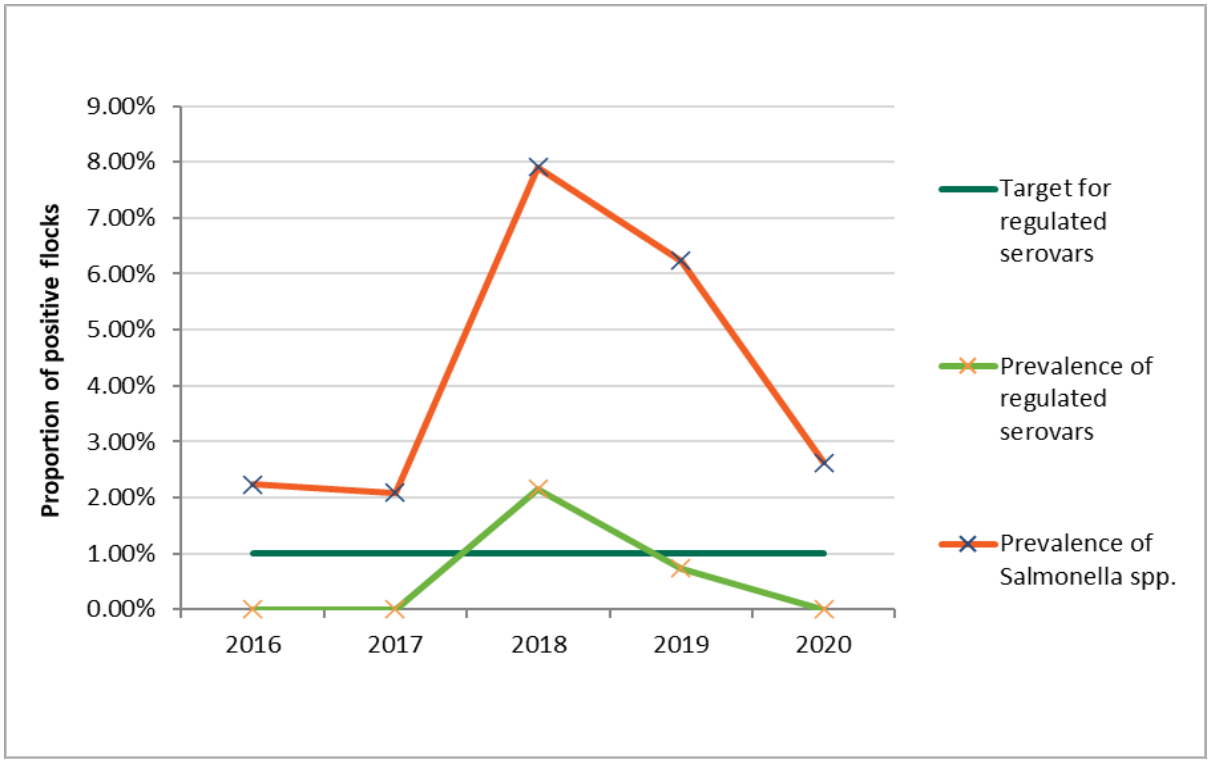


**Figure 40 - *Salmonella* spp. and the regulated serovars relative to the EU target in breeding turkey flocks in the *Salmonella* National Control Programme from 2016 - 2020 in Great Britain**




2.183 The requirements for official sampling are laid out in Regulation 2160/2003 (as amended) and implementing legislation. In total for all poultry sectors across Great Britain, 2,198 poultry flocks were subject to annual routine official NCP sampling in 2020.

**Number of flocks officially sampled in Great Britain per year 2019-2020**

| Sector | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Breeding chickens | 1,246 | 1,067 |
| Laying chickens | 1,187 | 805 |
| Broilers | 125 | 107 |
| Fattening turkeys | 44 | 32 |
| Breeding turkeys | 227 | 187 |

2.184 The assessment of FBO compliance with the requirements of the SNCP for all sectors in Great Britain, showed general overall compliance. The criteria for defining a non-compliance and the number of compliance inspections varied between poultry sectors, so data should only be compared within a specific sector for the years reported and should not be compared between sectors. Non-compliances were 83 in 2019, and 35 in 2020.

2.185 In England and Wales, for laying chicken farms where non-compliances are detected, financial penalty notices may be issued for significant non-compliance with the requirements of the SNCP. There were 27 penalty

notices and nine warning letters issued in 2019. During 2020, 35 case referrals were received and moderated by APHA. As a result, 14 penalty notices were sent out to customers, and 13 warning letters were issued. This financial penalty system is not used in Scotland.

### Salmonella in pigs

2.186 In 2019/20, in England, Scotland and Wales, sampling at abattoirs that slaughter 100,000 pigs weekly, 2,806 salmonella tests were carried out of which 48 were positive.

### Border controls – Animals and products of animal origin

2.187 The number of consignments of animal products imported into Great Britain has decreased from 54,926 in 2019 to 48,489 in 2020. In the case of live animal imports, the number of consignments also decreased from 8,585 in 2019 to 5,829 in 2020.

2.188 Compliance remains high for third country imports of animals and animal products. For products, the figures are lower the previous year. In 2020, the number of consignments rejected was 965 (1.9%) compared to 1,102 (2.0%) in 2019. The major non-compliances are documentary errors, in particular absence of a health certificate or an invalid health certificate. This is likely to be due to a lack of understanding or knowledge of the EU rules in the third country exporting authority. For live animals, 103 (1.8%) consignments were rejected in 2020 compared with 55 (0.6%) consignments in 2019. This is a significant increase in rejections and comprised of consignments (70%) coming from non-approved countries.

2.189 If a consignment presented a public or animal health risk, it was destroyed, otherwise the decision to re-export or destroy was made by the importer and destruction for animal products remained the most common enforcement action. For live animals most consignments were re-exported.

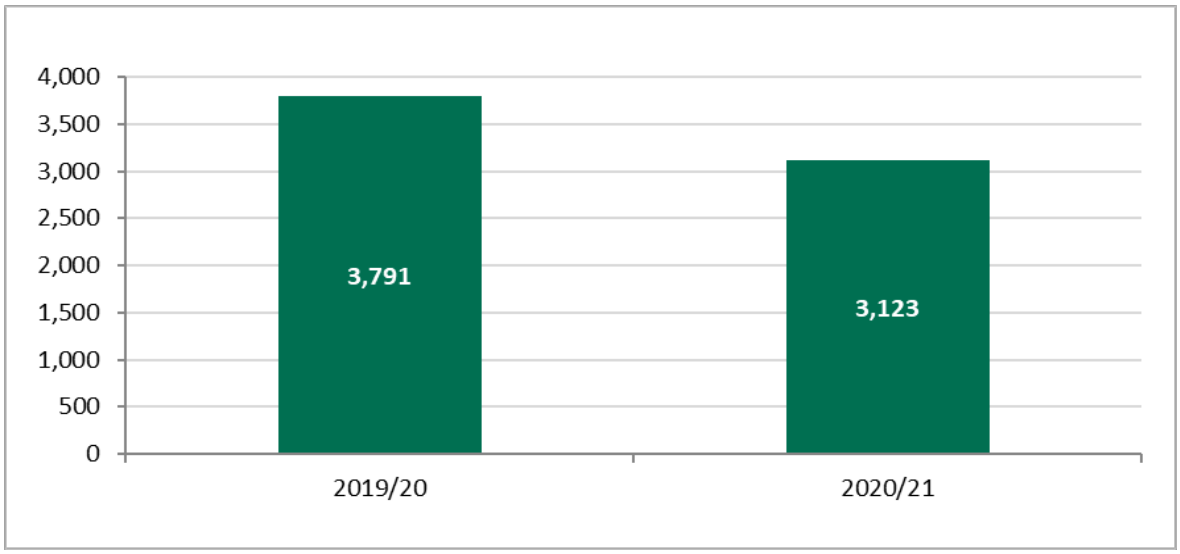
**GB controls on imported consignments: animal products from 2019 – 2020**

| | **2019** | **2020** |
|---|---|---|
| Total certificates issued | 54,826 | 48,489 |
| Number of controlled certificates | 54,826 | 48,489 |
| Number of rejections | 1,102 | 965 |
| Number of rejections re-exported | 376 | 246 |
| Number of rejections transformed | 1 | 6 |
| Number of rejections destroyed | 725 | 713 |

**GB controls on imported consignments: live animals from 2016 – 2020**

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total certificates | 9,375 | 8,820 | 8,614 | 8,585 | 5,829 |
| Number of controlled certificates | 9,375 | 8,817 | 8,614 | 8,585 | 5,801 |
| Number of rejects | 50 | 61 | 30 | 55 | 103 |
| Rejects re-exported | 37 | 50 | 24 | 48 | 102 |
| Rejects slaughtered | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Rejects euthanised (fish & gastropods) | 12 | 10 | 5 | 7 | 0 |

**Figure 41 - Chart showing the number of imported products of animal origin seized in GB from 2019/20 - 2020/21**




## Illegal imports[9] controls of products of animal origin

2.190 Between 2019/20 and 2020/21, the number of seizures at GB airports and ports of illegally imported products decreased by 17.6%. This may reflect the reduction in passenger numbers during this period due to travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.191 Granular data relating to the origin of seized animal products are not available, but there is some evidence of substantial illegal importation of animal products from Africa following targeted enforcement activity by Border Force. Imports via online sales continue to be monitored, with scope for further enforcement action to prevent non-compliant animal products being imported without veterinary checks.

[9] 'Illegal' refers to products of animal origin seized from individuals in contravention of the personal concessions permitted or commercial consignments that have sought to evade correct entry procedures by not declaring at a Border Control Post. These statistics also include items voluntarily surrendered by passengers at ports and airports.

## Bee health

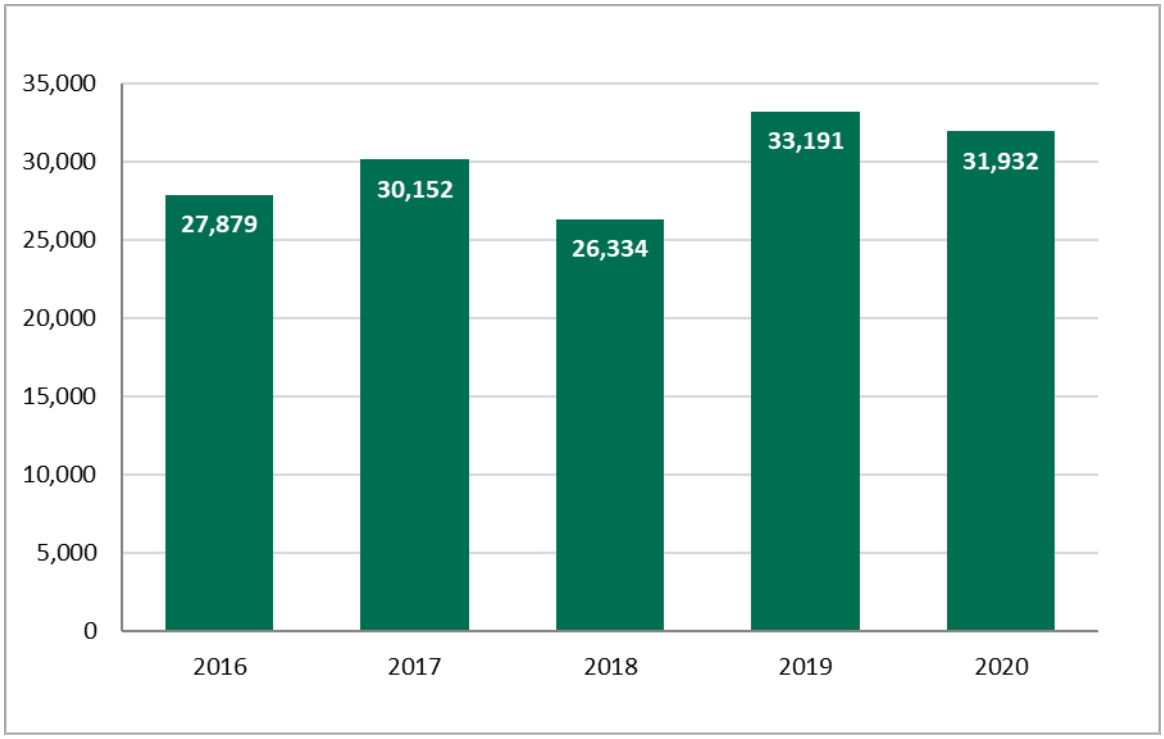
2.192 In England and Wales, the National Bee Unit (NBU) carried out a statutory inspection programme for Defra and the WG. Diagnostic support for the programme is provided by Fera Science Limited. Details of the programmes are available from the NBU's BeeBase, along with full details of the NBU's inspections and pest and disease incidence in 2020 and in previous years.

2.193 The number of colonies infected with American foulbrood (AFB) and European foulbrood (EFB) has remained at relatively low levels in recent years. All colonies found to be infected with AFB were destroyed. Treatment for EFB is dependent on the level of infection and the time of year it is found, but it can involve destruction, a technique called 'Shook Swarm' or more rarely and as a last resort the antibiotic Oxytetracycline (OTC).

2.194 Honey samples were also collected under contract for the VMD for the National Surveillance Scheme. Approximately 100 samples are collected each year under Council Directive 96/23/EC.

2.195 A total of 31,932 unique colonies in 5,366 apiaries were inspected across England and Wales. The chart below shows inspections undertaken from 2016 to 2020.

**Figure 42 - Chart showing the total number of unique colonies inspected in England and Wales from 2016 – 2020**



**Turnaround times on laboratory diagnosis and control measures on diseased apiaries for 2020 in England**

| Type of sample | Target (working days within which 95% of samples should be completed) | % within target | Number of samples received |
|---|---|---|---|
| Statutory Exotics | 1 | n/a | 0 |
| Voluntary Exotics | 1 | 97% | 177 |
| Import Samples | 4 | n/a | 0 |
| Statutory Foulbrood | 1 | 95% | 701 |
| Voluntary Foulbrood | 1 | 100% | 3 |

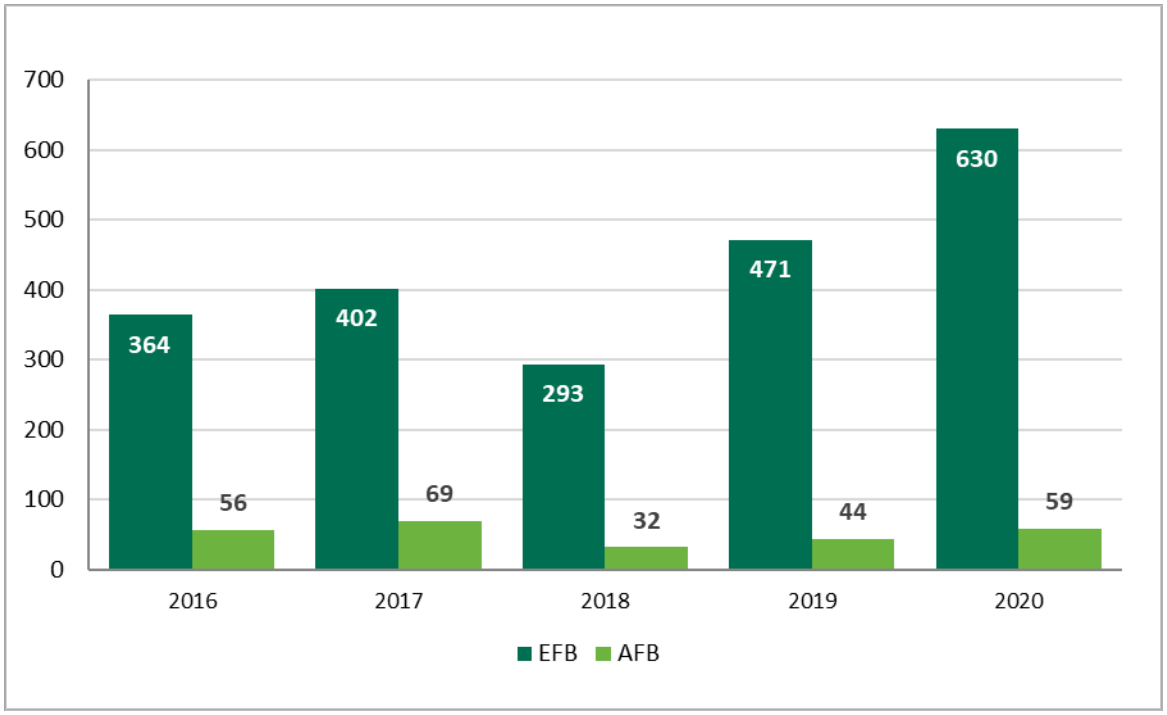
**Turnaround times on laboratory diagnosis and control measures on diseased apiaries for 2020 in Wales**

| Type of sample | Target (working days within which 95% of samples should be completed) | % within target | Number of samples received |
|---|---|---|---|
| Statutory Exotics | 1 | n/a | 0 |
| Voluntary Exotics | 1 | 100% | 27 |
| Import Samples | 4 | n/a | 0 |
| Statutory Foulbrood | 1 | 87% | 39 |
| Voluntary Foulbrood | 1 | n/a | 0 |

2.196 In England and Wales, field work and inspection comprised 193 colonies in 114 separate apiaries treated by shook swarm/or Oxytetracycline antibiotic: 97% within 10 days (mean treatment time two days), while 512 colonies in 265 separate apiaries were controlled by destruction: 99% within 10 days (mean treatment time one day).

2.197 The NBU's inspection priorities are the detection and management of statutory notifiable diseases, AFB and EFB, and surveillance for the exotic pest species Small hive beetle and *Tropilaelaps* mites. In 2020, there were 59 cases of AFB and 630 cases of EFB in England and Wales. These figures represent significant increases compared with 2018 and 2019. Overall, however, the numbers of AFB cases over the past 10 years remain at relatively low levels. The chart below summarises infection levels in colonies from 2016 - 2020.

**Figure 43 - Chart showing the number of colonies found to be infected with EFB and AFB in England and Wales from 2016 – 2020**



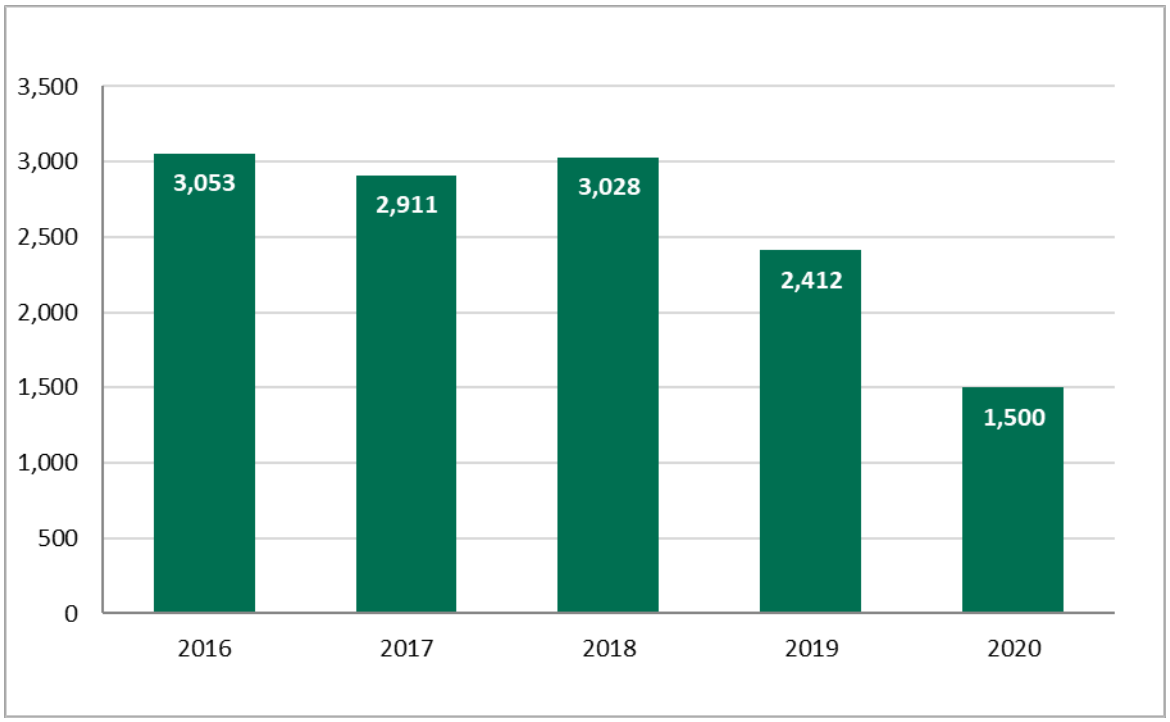

2.198 The NBU continued to monitor for the exotic pests Small hive beetle and *Tropilaelaps mites*.

2.199 A total of 7,933 colonies in 1,500 apiaries were specifically examined in England and Wales for the presence of exotic pests. A total of 204 samples were also submitted voluntarily by beekeepers. None of these inspections revealed any findings of Small hive beetle and *Tropilaelaps* mites and no samples submitted by beekeepers tested positive. At present, both pests are believed to be absent from the UK. Surveillance programmes and the use of sentinel apiaries will continue.

2.200 The significant increase in exotic pest inspections since 2014 was due to a change of policy after consultation with beekeeping stakeholders. Responders to the consultation sought additional emphasis on surveillance for exotic pests, whilst monitoring endemics to ensure the continuation of existing low levels.

2.201 The reduction in exotic pest inspections after 2018 was due to increased time spent tackling outbreaks of European foulbrood, cases of which had increased from the previous year. Also, responding to outbreaks of Asian hornet: three nests were detected and destroyed in 2019 and one nest in 2020. The risk-based system for prioritising apiary inspections was reviewed in 2020 and this resulted in a shift in focus somewhat, from exotic inspections to foulbrood inspections. The below chart shows inspections for exotic pests in England and Wales from 2016 to 2020.

**Figure 44 - Chart showing the number of apiaries inspected for exotic pests in England and Wales from 2016 - 2020**




2.202 In Scotland, the Bee Health Inspectorate carried out statutory inspection programme for the Scottish Government. Diagnostic support for the programme is provided by SASA. Details of the programmes are available from the Scottish Government Bee Health Pages. Full details of the Scottish Government Bee Inspectorate inspections and pest and disease incidence across the years can be found in the NBU pages.

2.203 The number of colonies infected with American foulbrood (AFB) remained at low levels in recent years. All colonies found to be infected with AFB were destroyed.

2.204 European Foulbrood (EFB) is widespread in Scotland as in England and Wales. The Bee Health Inspectorate are continuing to work on establishing the true picture of EFB spread in Scotland and there are ongoing research projects that aim to better understand the disease. The overall incidence has generally been in decline since 2009, although 2019 and 2020 saw an unexplained spike in the number of cases.

2.205 A total of 8,428 unique colonies in 412 apiaries were inspected across Scotland. The Scottish Bee Inspectorate inspection priorities are the detection and management of statutory notifiable diseases, AFB and EFB and surveillance for exotic pest species, the Small hive beetle and *Tropilaelaps mites*.

2.206 The numbers of AFB cases over the past 10 years remained at relatively low levels. In 2020, there were eight colonies diagnosed with AFB and 180

colonies diagnosed with EFB in Scotland. The cases of AFB however were in a single beekeeper, in five of his apiaries.

2.207 The Scottish Government EFB Control Plan has been in operation since 2010, where commercial beekeepers are able to complete their own initial disease inspection.

2.208 The Scottish Honey Bee Health Strategy (SHBHS) brought together several agencies and stakeholders to continue delivery of disease control. Simple measures adopted with a great degree of cooperation on all sides working in close partnership contributed to this progress. The first 10-year Strategy is being reviewed and a new 10-year plan is in development.

2.209 Honey samples were also collected under contract for the VMD for the National Surveillance Scheme. 10 samples are collected each year under Council Directive 96/23/EC; none of these samples were non-compliant.

2.210 Results of the Scottish Government inspection programme are set out below:

**Figure 45 - Chart showing the number of apiaries and colonies infected with EFB in Scotland, from 2016 – 2020**

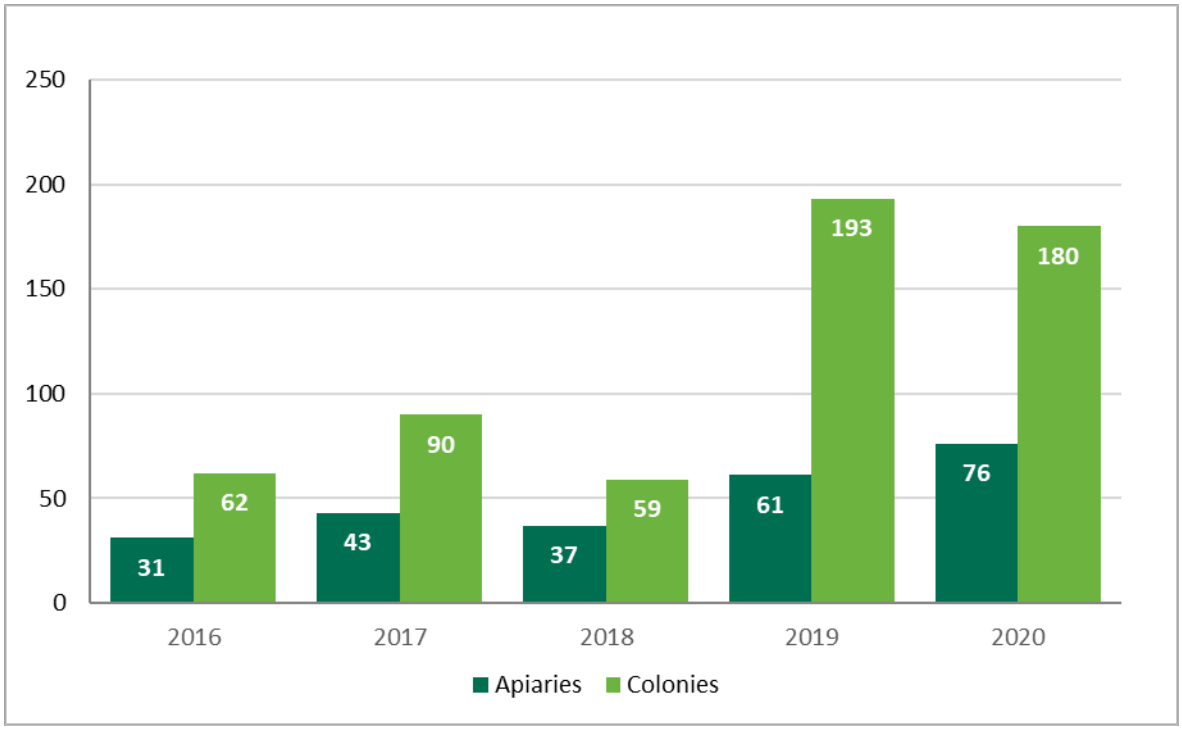


**Figure 46 - Chart showing the number of apiaries and colonies inspected in Scotland from 2016 – 2020**

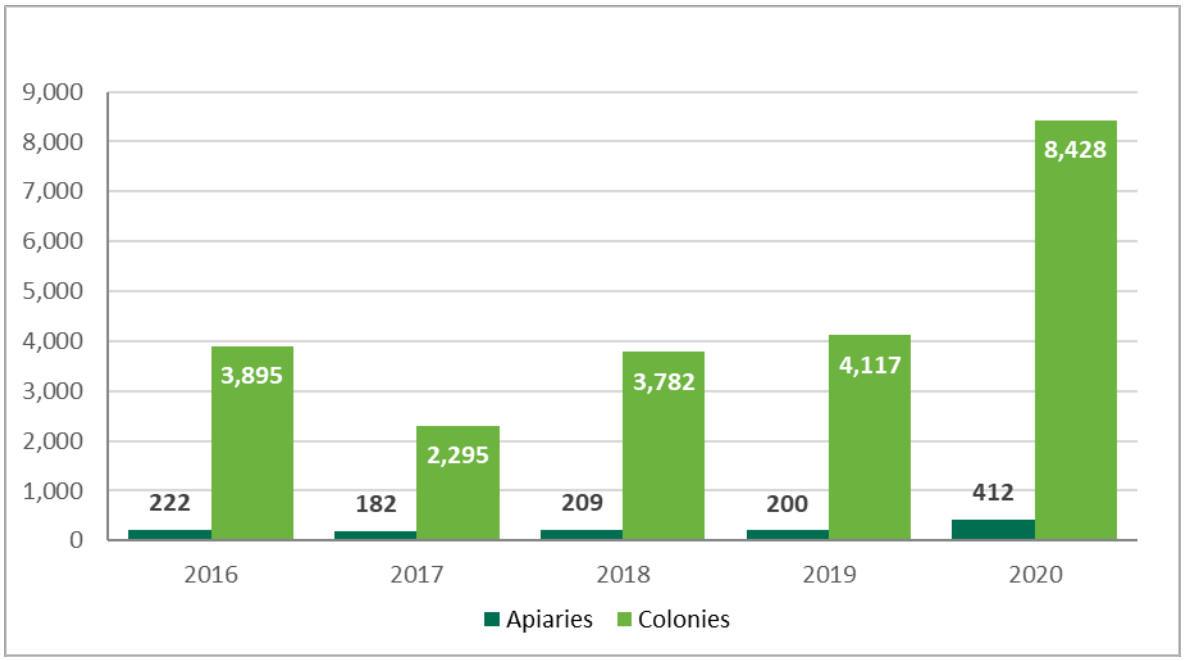
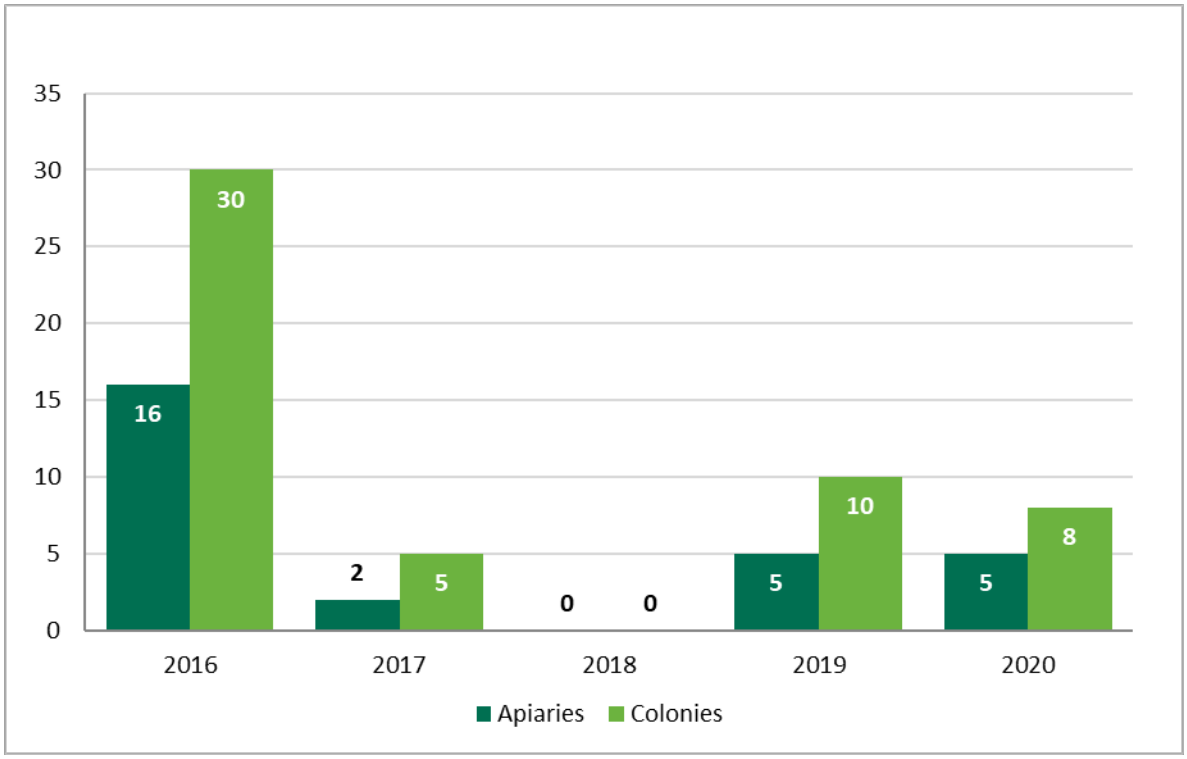



**Figure 47 - Chart showing the number of apiaries and colonies infected with AFB in Scotland, from 2016 – 2020**



## Aquatic animal health

### England and Wales

2.211 Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the annual compliance inspection and disease surveillance programme was adjusted from the standard full programme, requiring that every Aquaculture Production Business (APB) is visited at least once per annum which exceeds minimum statutory requirements, to a risk-based inspection programme in line with the recommendations of 'Council Directive 2006/88/EC on animal health requirements for aquaculture animals.

2.212 The adjusted official control programme on aquatic animal health was successfully completed for England and Wales, meeting the objectives and targets set out in the MOU between Defra and Cefas and by the 2020 programme year end the risk-based statutory programme requirements were fulfilled. The official control programme supported the continued maintenance of approved zone status for the UK for a number of serious diseases of fish and shellfish and contributed to the protection of the UK's high aquatic animal health status.

2.213 All the inspection programmes are run on a calendar year basis, therefore figures in this section of the report are for the 2020 calendar year.

2.214 In England and Wales, the intensity and the type of controls had remained consistent over the past five years but were necessarily adjusted in 2020 due to COVID-19. The annual routine inspection programme for compliance with the Aquatic Animal Health Regulations (England and Wales) 2009 was completed successfully for the authorised Aquaculture Production Businesses (APBs). The inspection programme figures are given in the table below. In 2020, 39 new APBs were authorised and 24 APBs were deauthorised.

**Total number of APB compliance inspections 2017 – 2020**

| ABP compliance inspections | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fin Fish | 320 | 308 | 310 | 263 |
| Shellfish | 88 | 77 | 75 | 63 |
| Crustacea | 6 | 6 | 4 | 6 |
| Depuration | 53 | 50 | 49 | 40 |
| Importers | 112 | 114 | 79 | 72 |

2.215 An additional 59 unprogrammed (ad hoc) inspections were undertaken on authorised APBs and other sites. These were in response to notifications of mortality, suspicion of disease, or observation of clinical signs of disease during routine inspection. A total of 21 diagnostic samples from fish, six samples from molluscan shellfish and 10 samples from crustaceans were submitted for diagnostic testing. This testing covered listed diseases, new and emerging diseases and to identify the cause of mortality. In addition, 67 official controls were undertaken on sites under either initial designations (ID) or confirmed designations (CD) for the control of listed diseases.

**Total number of investigations and inspections for disease control from 2017 - 2020**

| Investigations / inspections | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Disease Investigations | 159 | 168 | 127 | 59 |
| Disease Control Inspections | 225 | 177 | 145 | 67 |

2.216 The Fish Health Inspectorate also registers low risk aquaculture production businesses such as managed fisheries. In 2020, 338 recreational fisheries were registered giving a total of 11.693 registered fisheries in England and Wales.

2.217 The FHI has a contractual agreement with the VMD to undertake sampling for veterinary residues and inspection of premises holding mixing licences, on their behalf. In 2020, 54 residue samples were obtained and submitted to the analytical laboratory FERA, Sand Hutton, York for testing. Inspections were also conducted on fish farms holding veterinary medicines mixing licences and in 2020 a total of 26 farms were inspected.

2.218 The risk-based import surveillance programme is targeted at sources of live fish posing a higher risk for the introduction of disease. This programme was effectively halted in March 2020 because of national controls due to COVID-19. Despite the restrictions in 2020, the import surveillance programme took a total of seven samples which were subject to diagnostic testing for listed diseases. No evidence was found for the presence of listed diseases in imported consignments of live fish.

2.219 The secondary impact of COVID-19 on this programme was the massive reduction in international flights resulting in trade being curtailed by supply, although demand in GB for tropical ornamental fish in England and Wales increased.

**Total number of fish import samples from 2016 – 2020**

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Third country | 30 | 32 | 36 | 22 | 6 |
| EU | 9 | 17 | 10 | 6 | 1 |
| Total import samples | 39 | 47 | 46 | 28 | 7 |

2.220 Koi herpesvirus (KHV) disease continues to represent a significant cause of mortality in common carp in managed fisheries although 2020 had the lowest number of Confirmed Designations since 2015. The FHI issued a total of 11 Confirmed Designations (CD) in 2020, for the control of KHV disease. 10 were applied to control outbreaks in recreational coarse fisheries. The remaining CD was for an ornamental wholesaler and the affected fish at the site were humanely culled and the site was cleaned and disinfected.

2.221 The decrease may largely be attributed to the closure of fisheries and reduced angler presence due to COVID-19 restrictions leading to a marked reduction in reports by anglers and other members of the public.

**Total number of confirmed designations issued for KHV from 2016 – 2020**

| | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Designations issued for KHV | 33 | 26 | 30 | 18 | 10 |

2.222 As far as the salmonid sector is concerned, the FHI again received few reports of disease as has been the trend over recent years. This probably reflects the trend towards lower stocking densities on farms, increased biosecurity and improved management practices.

2.223 In 2020, there were two new outbreaks of Oysterherpesvirus-1 microvariant (OsHV-1 µvar) confirmed in Pacific oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*). Following an investigation into a report of increased mortalities in juvenile Pacific oysters at an APB in Butley Creek, Suffolk, OsHV-1 µvar was confirmed through molecular testing and gene sequencing. A Confirmed Designation Notice was issued to contain the outbreak and an epidemiological investigation undertaken to assess the extent of the spread. No other APBs were affected.

2.224 An extension was made to the Confirmed Designation in Essex and Kent (was CD23/2016), approximately 30km north to include part of the Suffolk coast, following detection of OsHV-1 µvar in wild Pacific oysters in the buffer zone near Wrabness in the River Stour. The Wrabness buffer zone was sampled as part of the Butley Creek investigation to establish the extent of spread from the newly affected site. However, this was an incidental detection not believed to be linked to the infection at Butley Creek, a different strain of OsHV-1 µvar was isolated.

2.225 Details of the new and extended Confirmed Designations are published on GOV.UK.

2.226 Long-standing disease control zones remain unchanged across multiple shellfish harvesting areas for the control of the protozoan parasite *B. ostrea* - affecting native oyster *Ostrea edulis*, while controls for the protozoan parasite *Marteilia refringens* remain restricted to a single estuary system following detection of infection in edible mussel (Mytilus edulis) in 2011.

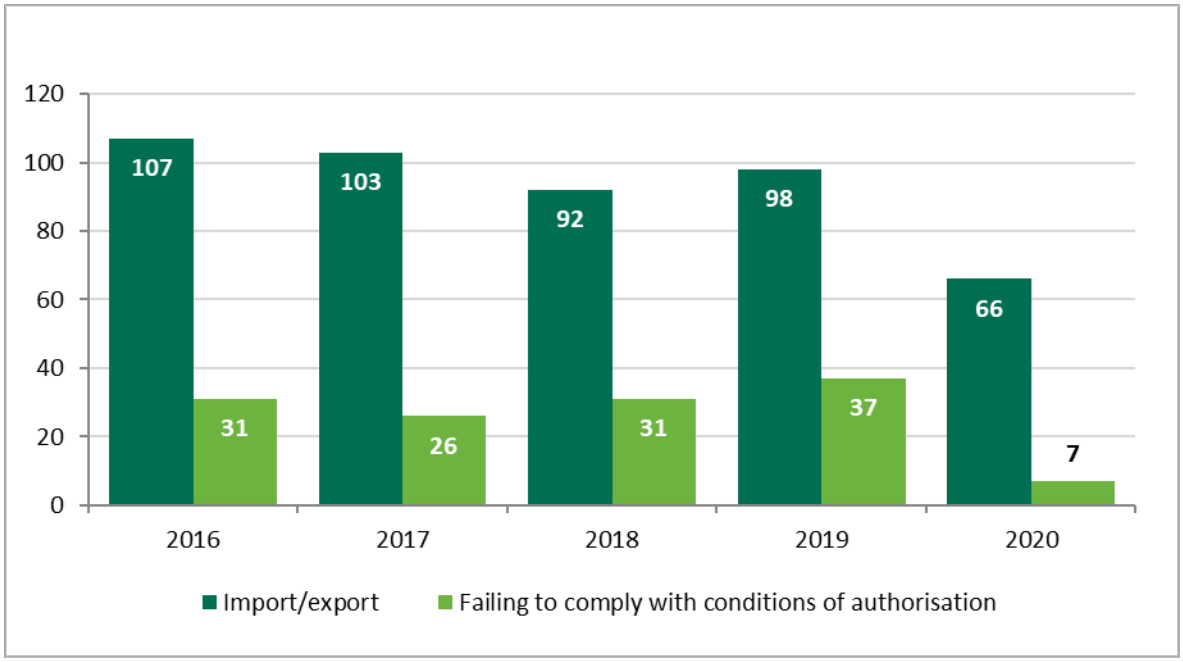
2.227 A recurrence of Infectious Haematopoietic of Infectious Hypodermal and Haematopoietic Necrosis Virus (IHHNV) was confirmed in a warm water Whiteleg shrimp (*Penaeus vannamei),* farmed at a bio-secure closed facility in Lincolnshire. The site operators contacted the FHI to report an increased mortality in stocks, IHHNV was confirmed through molecular testing with gene sequencing, using OIE primers. While considering options for eradication the site suffered a system failure and lost all remaining livestock, the site is now completely empty and fallow. IHHNV is not subject to official control in the UK

but is reportable to the World Organisation for Animal Health (The OIE). The outbreak was reported to the OIE as required.

2.228 The situation in respect of the other listed diseases remains stable with the high status for aquatic animal health maintained overall. Improved levels of awareness and enhanced biosecurity in the fish farming, ornamental wholesale and fisheries sectors have helped to contribute to the containment and control of serious disease.

2.229 Trade and import and export activities remained high with the FHI issuing 338 health certificates for the export of aquatic animals from England and Wales. Despite COVID-19 restrictions, all sectors of the industry continued to trade, and lockdown led to a surge in interest in indoor aquaria and tropical fish keeping. The number of non-compliances relating to the import of aquatic animals has remained largely consistent with the overall trend decreasing since 2016, as illustrated in the table below.

**Figure 48 - Chart showing the number of imports/exports and the number failing to comply with conditions of authorisation from 2016 – 2020**




2.230 Compliance by aquaculture production businesses (APB) remained at a high level, reflecting the effectiveness of the inspection programmes, and the prompt and consistent actions taken in event of non-compliance. The number of non-compliances requiring action in 2020 was significantly lower due to a reduced surveillance programme and reduced direct interaction with APB's and associated businesses due to COVID-19 measures. The FHI works on an intelligence led approach and due to reduced trade and interactions between APBs and customers, intelligence on non-compliant activities was reduced.

2.231 The majority of non-compliances were administrative in nature and dealt with through the provision of advice, warning letters and enforcement notices,

followed by further inspections to check corrective measures had been actioned. This was sufficient to ensure good statutory compliance, with infrequent need to take further action. The FHI continues to place emphasis on working with industry to improve awareness on biosecurity and protection of stocks against incursion of disease to encourage and facilitate the high standard of compliance with statutory requirements. The nature of trade and authorisation non-compliances were as follows:

2.232 Two sites not authorised to import brought in fish from the EU and also failed to notify the FHI of the imports. One was an import from a known EU source of salmonid ova and was resolved through the issue of warning letters. The second was an uncertified consignment of carp which was culled at the port of entry in cooperation with the importer to prevent the possibility of disease introduction. The FHI followed up this action with a combination of warning letters and advice to the importer.

2.233 Two sites were found to be keeping unauthorised or illegal species. One site was selling a non-native species prohibited for trade in England and Wales. The animals were seized and destroyed, and warning letters were issued. The second site failed to seek prior permission before bringing on species for which they were not authorised. A warning letter was issued to the operator and following consultation with Natural England and the Environment Agency they were authorised to keep the additional species and allowed to retain them.

2.234 One site failed to attend inspections. Enforcement notices were sent to the site operator and subsequent inspections undertaken.

2.235 One site was found to be in breach of the conditions of their confirmed designation and an enforcement inspection was undertaken and a warning letter issued. Subsequent unannounced follow up inspections found the site to be compliant

2.236 Two sites failed to notify a mortality. As is standard practice an enforcement inspection with a sample was undertaken at both sites immediately on receipt of the information. The presence of carp Edema virus a non-listed disease was confirmed at one of the sites and the listed disease koi herpesvirus at the other site and a confirmed designation was placed on this site. Both site operators were issued with warning letters.

2.237 Cefas FHI continued to engage with importers and trade bodies and to provide advice and guidance to encourage better compliance with import requirements. The majority of non-compliances are associated with irregularities in certification requirements by third country authorities rather than non-compliance by recipient stakeholder businesses. This type of non-compliance presents a relatively low risk to aquatic animal health in England and Wales, as most fish are destined for secure facilities. However, enforcement continues in this area in order to prevent this type of non-compliance spreading to higher risk activities.

2.238 The engagement of the FHI with importers, exporters and trade bodies was stepped up in the latter half of 2019 to help industry prepare for the changes in the way they would need to trade as of 1 January 2021 following the UK's exit from the EU. Information packs, updates to.Gov.uk and direct contacts with known traders were all provided to the industry to assist with the transition.

2.239 Illegal import of live freshwater fish continued to represent the biggest risk to the aquatic animal health status of England and Wales. In 2020, the FHI maintained an intelligence-led approach to tackling illegal imports but operational proactive work effectively ceased on 16 March 2020 due to national COVID-19 restrictions. This included gaining approval for procurement of the "Clue" intelligence database system which will improve the gathering and sharing of intelligence and strengthen the FHI's investigative capability.

2.240 The FHI continued to work in accordance with the National Intelligence Model and works closely with other government Agencies such as Border Force (BF) in the investigation of illegal activities. The Cefas FHI contributed to many joint agency operations resulting in a significant increase in the flow of intelligence from other government agencies and from stakeholders about illegal trade in elvers, failures to comply with statutory requirements and failure to report mortalities. As a consequence, the Cefas FHI has maintained a programme of unannounced visits to a range of sites and as a result, identified a number of non-compliances.

2.241 During 2020, no businesses were closed as a result of actions arising from official controls.

### Aquatic animal health – Scotland

2.242 In Scotland, in accordance with the Risk Based Surveillance scheme (Council Directive 2006/88/),151 inspections on fish farms and 22 inspections on shellfish farms were conducted in 2020. In addition, one statutory inspection was undertaken in relation to Koi Herpes Virus (KHV). Five statutory sampling visits were conducted; four to determine the presence of *Bonamia ostreae* and one to determine the presence of Viral Haemorrhagic Septicaemia (VHS). Throughout the inspection process a total of two unannounced inspections were conducted.

2.243 A total of 14 diagnostic samples were taken from fish and shellfish in response to notifications of mortality, suspicion of disease, or through routine active inspection involving the observation of clinical and post mortem signs of disease. Further details are available through published case information.

2.244 Through a contractual arrangement with the VMD, a total of 1,421 samples were collected from finfish aquaculture sites. These samples were submitted to Fera Science Limited for analysis on residues of chemotherapeutants or environmental contamination. One positive result was obtained from the

samples examined and investigated with the outcomes passed on to the VMD Enforcement Team.

2.245 11 inspections were conducted at fish farm sites approved by the VMD as ‘manufacturers of medicated feedingstuffs intended for feeding to their own fish’. 10 facilities inspected rated as Category 5 with ≤3 minor deficiencies, one facility was rated as Category 3 with ≥6 minor deficiencies, and two facilities inspected, demonstrated >6 minor (other) or 1-3 major deficiencies.

2.246 At the beginning of 2020, three fresh water rainbow trout farm sites had movement restrictions in place for bacterial kidney disease (BKD). No new movement restrictions for BKD were placed during 2020. Control measures are only placed where the presence of clinical disease was confirmed.

2.247 During 2020, movement restrictions were placed on one freshwater rainbow trout farm site following suspicion of the presence of VHS. Suspicion was ruled out following statutory inspection and sampling, with negative test results allowing the movement restrictions in place to be withdrawn.

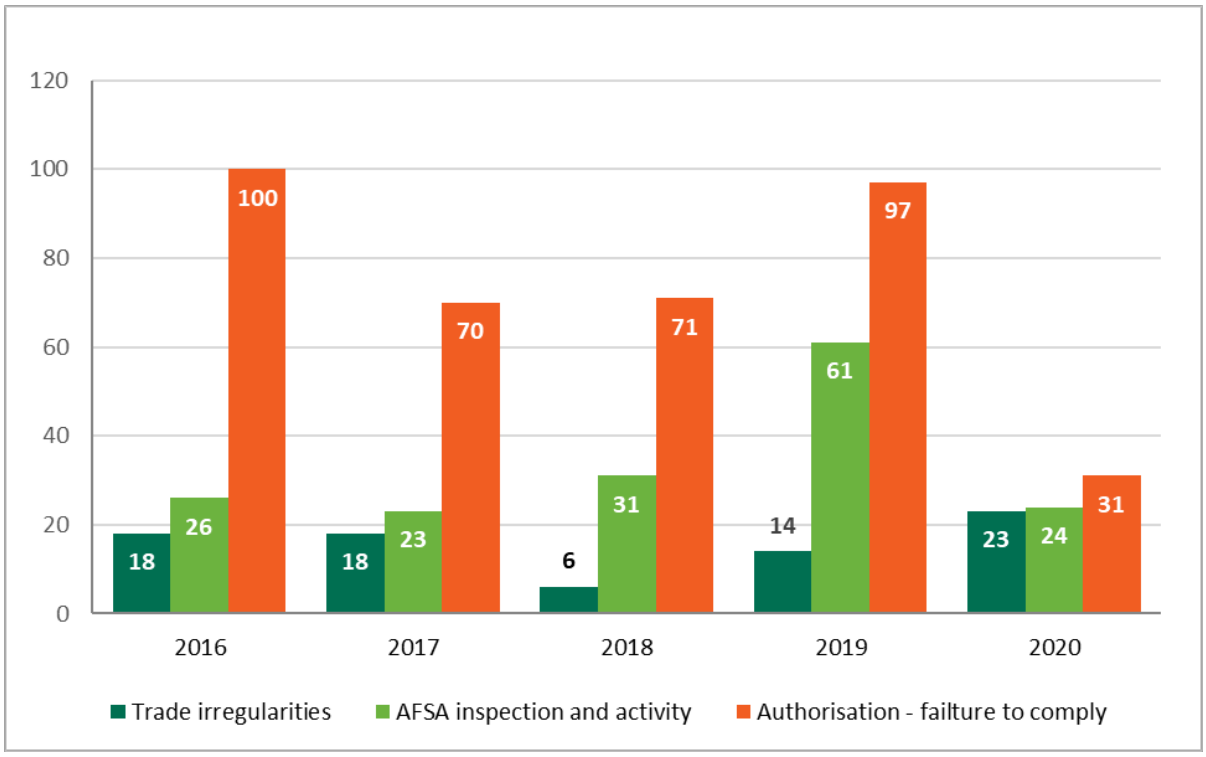
2.248 Throughout the year protection zones were in place to control *Bonamia ostrea* within four sea water lochs in Scotland. All four zones remain under restriction.

2.249 One private ornamental facility was placed under restriction for KHV following confirmation of the virus within fish at the facility.

2.250 There are presently around 700 active fish and shellfish sites in Scotland. The aquaculture sector in Scotland shows a significant level of compliance with legislation to control aquatic animal disease. This was evidenced by the number of cases of non-compliance compared to the number of active sites and the fact that the majority of non-compliances are not considered significant on the risk of contracting or spreading serious aquatic animal disease. A case is equivalent to a single site visit which may record more than one issue of non-compliance.

2.251 It should be noted that the restrictions enforced as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact upon the delivery of aquatic animal health surveillance during 2020. This is reflected in a lower level of routine surveillance in comparison to previous years. Despite the restrictions, emergency responses to the suspicion and presence of serious listed diseases were maintained and delivered throughout the year. Once re-established, routine surveillance was targeted towards high and medium risk aquaculture sites and was supplemented with increased activity associated with passive surveillance initiatives.

**Figure 49 - Chart showing the number of non-compliances in Scotland from 2016 - 2020**




## Details of outcomes of the non-compliances found in Scotland during 2020

2.252 All 23 trade irregularities were resolved through advice or actions taken, for example re-issuing of missing or accurate certificates. Where applicable, advice was given to importers and assurances sought from CAs in exporting countries.

2.253 Inspection and activity associated with the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2007 and 2013 saw a total of 24 non-compliances.

- Six cases related to the Act's enhanced inspection programme
- Two issues related to farm management statements or agreements
- Seven issues related to sea lice records
- Four issues related to containment and one to escapes
- Five issues raised due to sea lice reporting

2.254 All of these non-compliances were successfully resolved, either through complying with the recommendations made, or with respect to sea lice reporting, through warning letters requiring no further action (two cases) or advisory letters requiring follow up action (three cases, two of which were resolved through issuing enforcement notices).

2.255 There were 31 non-compliances for failure to comply with authorisation conditions.

- 23 issues related to record keeping requirements
- Seven sites were found to be operating without prior authorisation
- One instance of a site holding species/stage without prior authorisation.

2.256 All issues were successfully resolved either through addressing recommendations or requirements imposed following inspection, following the issuing of a warning letter (4 cases), or complying with the conditions of an enforcement notices (1 case). No further enforcement action was required to be taken. Some authorisations were amended retrospectively once the issues had been satisfactorily addressed.

2.257 The main types of non-compliance were administrative in nature, most notably on 'failing to comply with authorisation conditions' and related directly to the maintenance of site records and record keeping. Compliance levels for 2020 increased in comparison to 2019. It should be noted that the number of non-compliances represents the number of issues detected and more than one issue can be found per individual visit.

**Visits and non-compliances on fish and shellfish farms from 2017 – 2020**

| Visits and non-compliances | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of visits | 254 | 351 | 292 | 183 |
| Number of cases of non-compliance | 70 | 68 | 89 | 27 |
| % of non-compliance | 28% | 19% | 30% | 15% |

2.258 Risk-based enhanced inspections continued to be conducted in accordance with the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2007 (as amended), during 2020. Analysis of the number of inspections in comparison to the number of cases involving non-compliance suggests a decrease in the level of compliance during 2020 in comparison to previous years. This analysis has not been statistically tested and lower levels of enhanced inspections must be taken into consideration.

**Risk based enhanced inspections and non-compliances on fish and shellfish farms from 2016 – 2020**

| Risk based enhanced inspections & non-compliances | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of inspections | 21 | 22 | 7 | 32 | 7 |
| Number of cases of non-compliance | 8 | 10 | 4 | 19 | 6 |
| % of non-compliance | 38% | 45% | 57% | 59% | 86% |

2.259 During 2020 the reporting requirements relating to Marine Scotland's policy on satisfactory measures for the control of sea lice were reviewed. The levels at which fish farm operators report sea lice levels and are required to act were reduced. Details of the current policy are available on the Scottish Government website.

2.260 The level of compliance on trade irregularities in 2020 decreased in relation to those reported in 2019. Most of the issues are minor in nature and related to late or missing notifications and consignments destined for alternative sites to

that specified on the health certificate. None of the issues detected presented a significant risk in terms of a biosecurity breach or lowering of health status.

2.261 During 2020 no businesses were closed as a result of actions arising from official controls.

## Incidents and outbreaks in the animal health sector

### APHA

2.262 In 2020, 165 reports of suspected cases were investigated. There were 17 confirmed outbreaks of Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N8 and H5N1, one confirmed outbreak of Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) H5N2 in poultry in Kent, three confirmed cases of European Bat Lyssavirus (EBLV), and one case of Contagious equine metritis (CEM). All incidents were successfully resolved.

### Cefas FHI

2.263 Cefas FHI has a statutory duty to investigate suspicion of listed (notifiable) and emerging diseases in fish, molluscs and crustacea in England and Wales. In 2020 there were a total of 11 confirmed outbreaks of Koi herpesvirus (KHV) disease (10 in recreational fisheries and one in ornamental imported koi carp *Cyprinus carpio*). KHV is a listed disease for which GB is not officially recognised as free.

2.264 There were two confirmed outbreaks of Oyster herpesvirus (OyHV-1 µ) in Pacific oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*) resulting in an additional control area and extension to an existing control area, in the marine environment. There was a recurrence of the OIE listed disease Infectious Hypodermal and Haematopoietic Necrosis Virus (IHHNV) in warm water Whiteleg shrimp (*Penaeus vannamei*) farmed at a bio-secure closed facility. The site is now empty and fallow. IHHNV is not subject to official control in the UK but is reportable to the World Organisation for Animal Health (The OIE).

### Bee health

2.265 One outbreak of the exotic pest Asian hornet occurred in 2020, in Hampshire. The nest was quickly located by NBU inspectors and successfully destroyed.

# Official controls in animal welfare sector

2.266 The centralised FSA and FFS referrals process for England, Wales and Scotland continued to report to APHA. This covered all non-urgent welfare issues where animal welfare was not immediately at risk. This was in addition to urgent referrals to LAs and APHA for immediate investigation and appropriate action.

2.267 FSA referrals relating to on-farm welfare issues, or a combined farm and transport issue, were triaged by the central APHA administration team. Further action and investigation by both APHA and LAs was guided at a central level by a dedicated central vet team. All other complaints and referrals were assessed in a similar manner at a country-centralised level.

## On-farm animal welfare in Great Britain

2.268 Whilst the previous three years showed minimal reductions in farm visits of up to 3% year on year, the total number of farm visits reduced by 30% across GB during 2020 compared with 2019. This was attributed to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on operational work. On a country basis, Scotland was the worst affected (35% reduction), followed by England (31%) then, Wales reduced inspections by (23%).

2.269 The number of enterprise types inspected at each visit remained at two enterprises per visit during 2020, similar to previous years. The number of repeat visits in 2020, to farms inspected the same year, comprised 24% of all visits; similar to that in 2019 (25%). This suggested that, despite COVID-19 impacts on visits, farms that needed regular attendance due to welfare concerns were still being inspected. On a country basis, Wales and Scotland had higher repeat inspections, comprising 29% and 26% respectively, of all farm inspections, than England (18%).

2.270 It should be noted that, throughout this welfare report, the GB data may not match up to the combined England, Scotland and Wales data. This is because some inspections had no county parish holding (CPH) number associated (for example farmed livestock kept in private dwellings, with no statutory obligation for registration). These could not be assigned to a country using current IT system downloads.

2.271 Sites and enterprises with CPHs in different countries were assessed and reported separately, according to the CPH location - but in relation to follow-up or enforcement action, communications would cover all enterprises and CPHs under the same ownership.

**Figure 50 – Chart showing the number of farm inspections in Great Britain from 2016 – 2020**

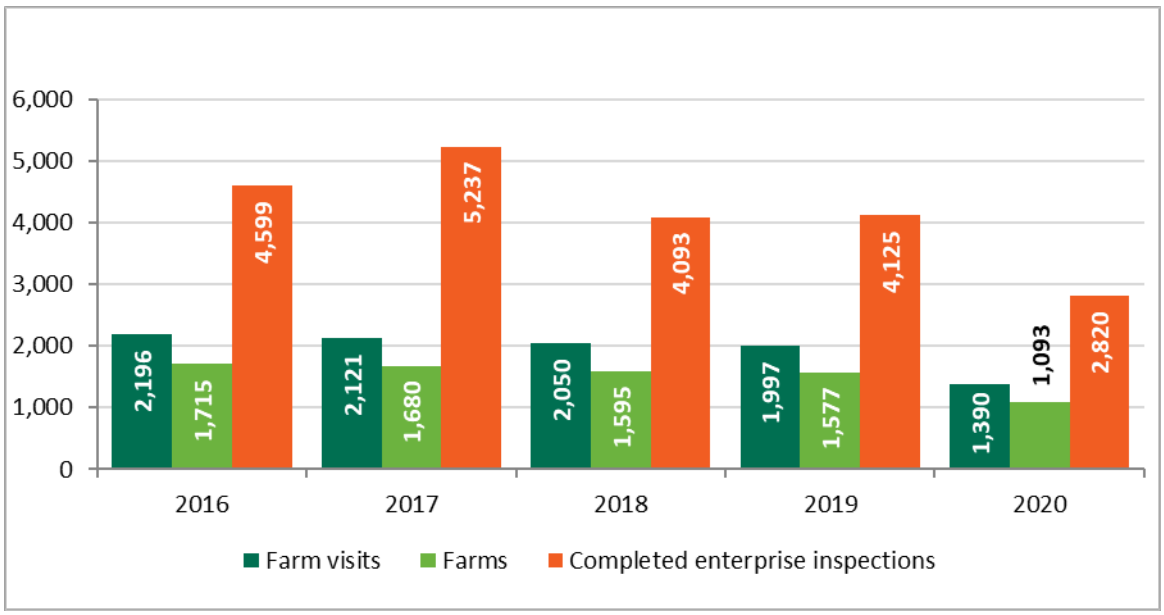
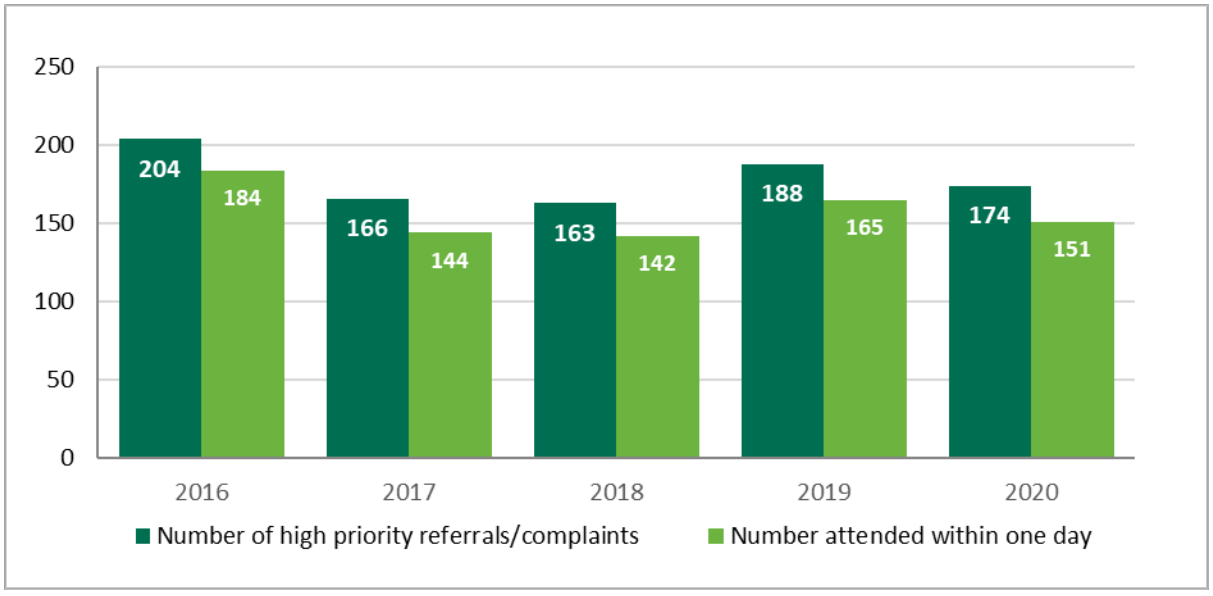



**Figure 51 – Chart showing the number of high priority referrals/complaints alleging unnecessary suffering attended by APHA inspectors in Great Britain* from 2016 – 2020**



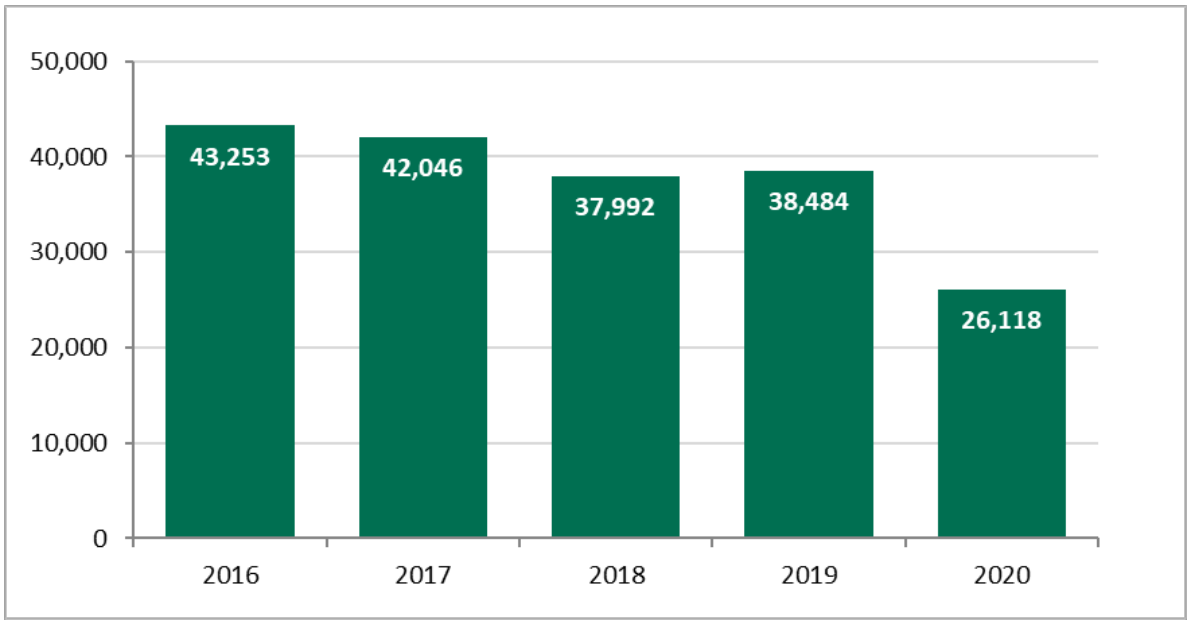

*21 referrals in 2019 and 19 referrals in 2020 had no assigned CPH and therefore could not be assigned to a specific country.

2.272 All complaints and allegations of poor welfare were risk assessed centrally on a country-basis by a veterinary inspector and high priority visits were carried out as a matter of urgency. In 2020, a slightly lower number of these types of complaints and allegations were received compared to 2019, but higher than 2017-18 levels. 87% of high priority complaints/referrals were attended within 24 hours, similar to previous years. However, on a country basis, there was a

marked difference between England (82%) and Scotland (94%) or Wales (97%). These country-level figures were similar in 2019.

2.273 A new process for monitoring changes to the welfare risk assessment (priority level for inspection) between central and local level was introduced part-way through 2020, requiring evidence that could be fully audited, to explain why priority was sometimes downgraded or upgraded at local level. This may, in future, explain some of the disparities between England, Scotland and Wales in regard to timing of attendance at high priority risk visits.

**Figure 52 – Chart showing the number of individual welfare criteria assessments in Great Britain from 2016 – 2020**




2.274 When assessed at country level, the number of criteria assessments per enterprise in 2020 remained similar to 2019, with Wales averaging just under 9 criteria assessments per enterprise and Scotland & England closer to 9.5. The number of individual welfare criteria assessments reduced by 32% in 2020, reflecting the reduction in overall farm visits. The level of compliance on farms in Great Britain was similar to that recorded in previous years. Overall, 94% of individual category assessments indicated compliance in 2020, similar to previous years. 24.5% of all enterprise assessments, had at least one non-compliance and 279 advisory letters were issued to farmers.

**Enterprises with welfare non-compliance only (C score) in GB from 2016 – 2020**

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of non-compliances per 1K assessments | 43 | 48 | 47 | 43 | 51 |
| Number of enterprises with overall C score | 798 | 899 | 796 | 735 | 599 |
| % of enterprises inspected with overall C score | 17% | 20% | 19% | 18% | 21% |
| Advisory letters issued | 194 | 189 | 212 | 342 | 279 |

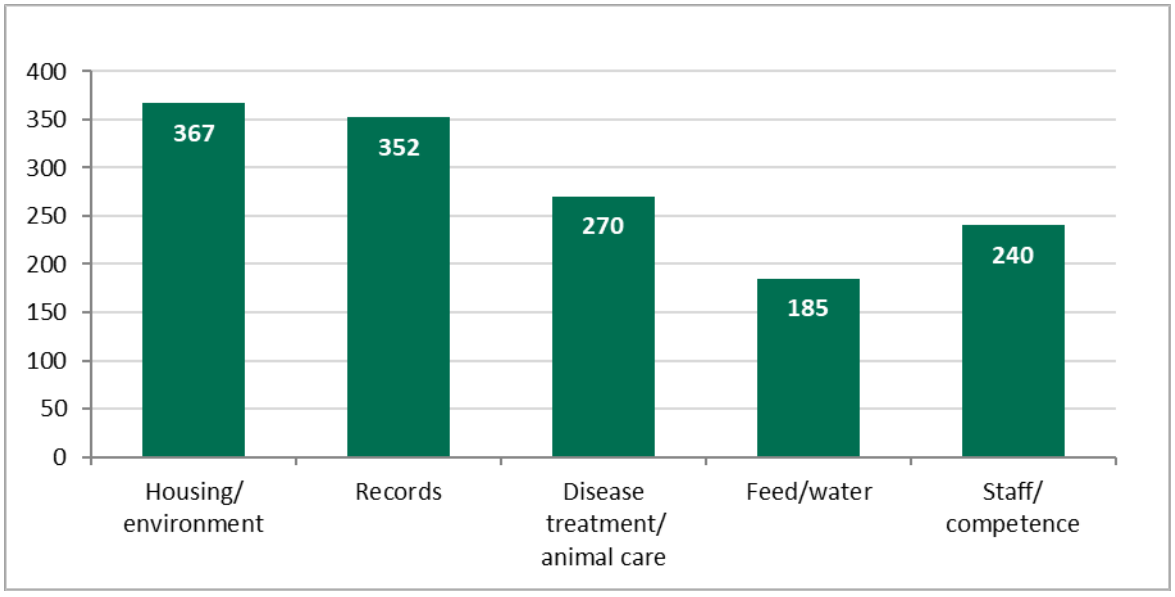
**Welfare non-compliance with unnecessary suffering (D score) in Great Britain from 2016 – 2020**

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Unnecessary suffering found per 1K assessments | 6 | 8 | 8 | 11 | 9 |
| Number of enterprises with overall D score | 154 | 186 | 177 | 206 | 142 |
| % of enterprises inspected with overall D score | 3.3% | 4.1% | 4.3% | 5.0% | 5.1% |
| Average number of days to clear D score | 14.2 | * | N/A | N/A | N/A |

*Figure not available

2.275 The results of inspection visits are classified into four score categories – A to D. The percentage of non-compliances where unnecessary suffering was not detected, a C score, at enterprise level, for 2020 was higher than all previous years at 21%, which reflected the focus on high priority cases for most of the year during COVID-19 restrictions. However, the percentage of enterprises receiving a D score, where unnecessary suffering had been detected, increased only slightly on the previous year from 5.0 to 5.1% when assessed at enterprise level. There was a marked difference at country level. England's D scores increased from 5% to 6%, Scotland's increased from 2% to 3% whilst Wales's D-scores reduced from 7% to 4%.

**Figure 53 – Chart showing the most frequently detected non-compliances in Great Britain in 2020**




2.276 As in previous years, welfare criteria with the most non-compliances related to: housing and environment, record keeping, disease treatment (including failure to provide appropriate care), staffing and competence, and provision of feed, water and other substances. When assessed at country level there are some differences. England and Scotland's reporting reflects the overall GB

picture in 2020, whereas Wales's highest non-compliances related to record-keeping.

2.277 During 2020, APHA provided 56 witness statements concerning 22 farms to enforcement bodies in support of legal action, compared to 86 statements for 40 farms in 2019. Overall, this shows a 35% reduction in witness statement production involving 45% less farms. This is unlikely to reflect an improvement overall in welfare but reflects the impacts of COVID-19 on local authority activity and reduced court availability through 2020 to proceed with more formal enforcement.

## Meat Chicken Directive

2.278 APHA, FSA and FSS deliver a system for all eligible flocks. All trigger reports generated were assessed for further action. All farmers received their trigger report results from the FSA and FSS and were required to take action.

2.279 In Great Britain, trigger report data collected from 2019 was used to target farm inspections in 2020. This was done using a ranking process from a combination of all-flock cumulative daily mortality rates and total rejections, excluding those relating to mechanical processes. The top 55 ranked farms were not prioritised for visits until much later in the year in 2020, due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. They were, however, all evaluated on a desk-basis by local inspectors, and investigated as necessary through communication with farmers and/or central companies / food business operators. Instead, high risk FSA/FSS referrals and complaints were used as the main source of intelligence leading to meat chicken farm inspections for most of 2020.

2.280 Throughout the year, all flocks were monitored at the slaughterhouse level for specific post-mortem conditions associated with on-farm welfare issues and producers notified if the rate of any of these conditions were excessively high (Process 1) or the rate of at least three conditions were high and the on-farm cumulative daily mortality rate was unusually high (Process 2).

2.281 In 2020, the impact of COVID-19 infection in the poultry processing sector at certain time-points limited the normal throughput of some slaughterhouses, As a result, mitigating actions were taken by industry, which included destruction of hatching eggs at hatchery level to reduce the number of poultry being reared on farm.

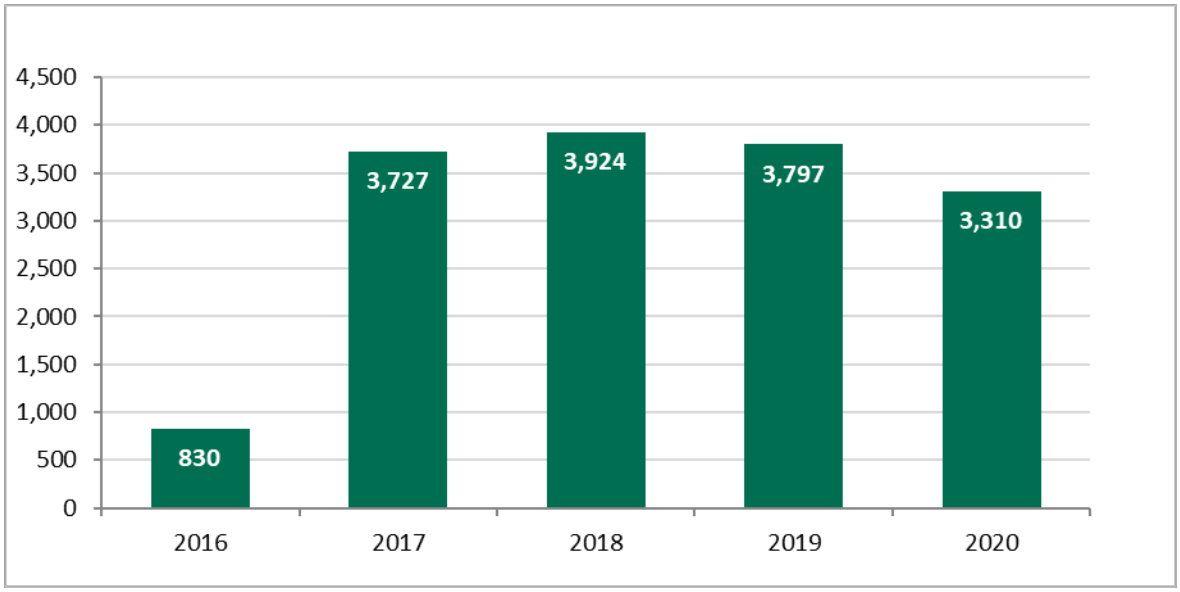
2.282 Multiple outbreaks of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) also significantly impacted resources overall, reduced "clean" resources for poultry welfare inspections and generally restricted inspector access to meat chicken units to only those with the highest risk welfare concerns.

2.283 In 2020, 953,684,560 meat chickens were inspected and assessed during the slaughter process in GB slaughterhouses, and it was this data which contributed to meat chicken trigger data for 2020. The number processed

overall was very similar to 2019 levels, despite the issues with COVID-19. Farm-attributed rejections and conditions followed a similar pattern in 2020 to that of previous years, with a slight reduction in farm-attributed rejection data, whilst cellulitis/dermatitis and septicaemia/respiratory conditions increased slightly on the previous year.

2.284 A total of 3,310 trigger reports at flock level were generated in GB and sent to producers, in response to high levels of the specific conditions recorded for meat chicken welfare purposes. This was a 13% reduction in trigger reports compared to 2019. 56% of trigger reports were based on Process 1 triggers in 2020, similar to 2019.

**Figure 54 – Chart showing the number of trigger reports received by APHA in Great Britain from 2016 – 2020***




*2019 figure amended due to an error in the 2019 report.

2.285 Due to restrictions imposed by COVID-19 and HPAI outbreaks, only 27 meat chicken inspections were carried out in 2020, a 40% reduction on 2019 inspections. As explained earlier only a small number (8) of the 55 risk scored sites based on 2019 data were inspected in 2020. More than half of the 19 other inspections were carried out in response to slaughterhouse referrals. Inspections which revealed no birds present on the unit, or where birds were not inspected, are not included in the farm inspection data.

**Actions taken in Great Britain on meat chicken welfare from 2016 – 2020**

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Farmer notified in writing and requested to take action | 2,946 | 3,763 | 3,924 | 3,797** | 3310 |
| Telephone discussion | 296 | 25 | 47 | 4 | 3 |
| Action plan received | 41 | 11 | 42 | 8 | 0 |
| Inspection based on historical data to target (prior year) highest risk farms | 5 | 15 | 29 | 17 | 8 |
| Inspections associated with complaints, referrals or other inspections* | 20 | 20 | 31 | 55 | 19 |
| Total inspections checked for compliance with 2007/43/EC | 25 | 35 | 60 | 68 | 27 |
| Farms sent warning letters / prosecutions/other further enforcement measures in respect to non-compliances detected at inspection | 4 | 2 | 9 | 14 | 15 |

*For example, cross compliance, exception report or trigger reports from slaughterhouse).
**Figure amended due to an error in the 2019 report.

2.286 Ten inspections (37%) revealed non-compliances, with two of these revealing unnecessary suffering, which reflected the highly targeted nature of inspections in 2020.

2.287 The table below details outcomes from the inspections of the 27 meat chicken farms inspected under GB meat rules in 2020.

**Results of GB combined APHA Inspections of meat chicken holdings under 2007/43/EC from 2016 – 2020**

| | 2016 (%) | 2017 (%) | 2018 (%) | 2019 (%) | 2020 (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number inspected | 25 (100%) | 35 (100%) | 60 (100%) | 67 (100%) | 27 (100%) |
| Compliance with code & legislation | 9 (36%) | 29 (83%) | 20 (37%) | 20 (30%) | 3 (11%) |
| Compliance legislation, but not code | 12 (48%) | 4 (11%) | 22 (27%) | 34 (51%) | 14 (52%) |
| Non-compliance with legislation, unnecessary suffering not detected | 13 (12%) | 1 (3%) | 16 (27%) | 12 (18%) | 8 (30%) |
| Non-compliance with legislation, unnecessary suffering detected | 1 (4%) | 1 (3%) | 2 (3%) | 1 (1%) | 2 (7%) |

2.288 The most frequent non-compliances in 2020 related to environmental issues, with the most common involving lighting, either insufficient minimum lux or relating to lighting patterns. Other environmental failures included litter quality, ventilation and excessive carbon dioxide levels.

2.289 The two incidents involving unnecessary suffering related to poor litter quality leading to severe pododermatitis (footpad dermatitis) and an incident where equipment failure meant the ventilation failed. Local authorities were involved in considering further formal enforcement action.

## Fish welfare

2.290 In recent years, APHA (Scotland) has worked collaboratively with the Fish Health Inspectorate (Scotland) regarding animal welfare issues detected at farmed level. Inspections were carried out by inspectors trained in fish health and welfare in previous years. In 2020, there were seven fish welfare inspections carried out, compared to 11 in 2019.

**Table showing the number of fish welfare inspections in Scotland 2019 – 2020**

| | **2019** | **2020** |
|---|---|---|
| Routine/Advisory | 2 | 2 |
| Complaints | 9 | 5 |
| **Total** | 11 | 7 |

2.291 Whilst all inspections were considered compliant with the welfare requirements of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act, 2006, some recommendations were provided:

- more regular inspection of “cleaner fish” and to keep detailed mortality records
- review the procedure for humane killing of moribund fish and increase inspection frequency
- improved biosecurity and vaccinations
- continue recommended treatment protocols

2.292 England and Wales carried out no physical fish welfare inspections in 2019 and 2020, since APHA started recording outcomes of fish welfare inspections. However, some incidents involving electricity supply companies threatening to cut off electricity to farmers were dealt with by telephone or email discussion, to explain their responsibilities under the Animal Welfare Act, in order to ensure fish welfare and avoid unnecessary suffering.

## Gamebird welfare

2.293 In more recent years, increased public interest in gamebird welfare has led to increased inspections of commercial gamebird rearing units by APHA and local authorities. “Gamebirds” bred for game purposes, once released, fall outside of APHA and the local authorities’ remit with respect to animal

welfare. However, APHA is involved in monitoring animal welfare in breeding birds, any raised for a farming purpose and in the growing phase, whilst the birds are considered under the responsibility of humans for their day-to-day care.

2.294 APHA also records non-compliances with the Animal Welfare Act for any wild birds used in Larsen traps or similar devices, if these are seen during inspections on agricultural land.

2.295 In 2020, there were 12 inspections carried out in GB, a slight reduction compared with 2019. Most areas for non-compliance focused principally on record-keeping and a lack of suitable environment. No incidents of unnecessary suffering were detected, as was found in 2019.

**Table showing the number of compliant and non-compliant gamebird rearing units following inspection in GB in 2019 – 2020**

| | **2019** | **2020** |
|---|---|---|
| Total number of units inspected | 15 | 12 |
| Units compliant with code and legislation | 3 | 2 |
| Units compliant with legislation but not code | 9 | 5 |
| Units not compliant with legislation where unnecessary suffering not detected | 3 | 5 |
| Units not compliant with legislation where unnecessary suffering detected | 0 | 0 |

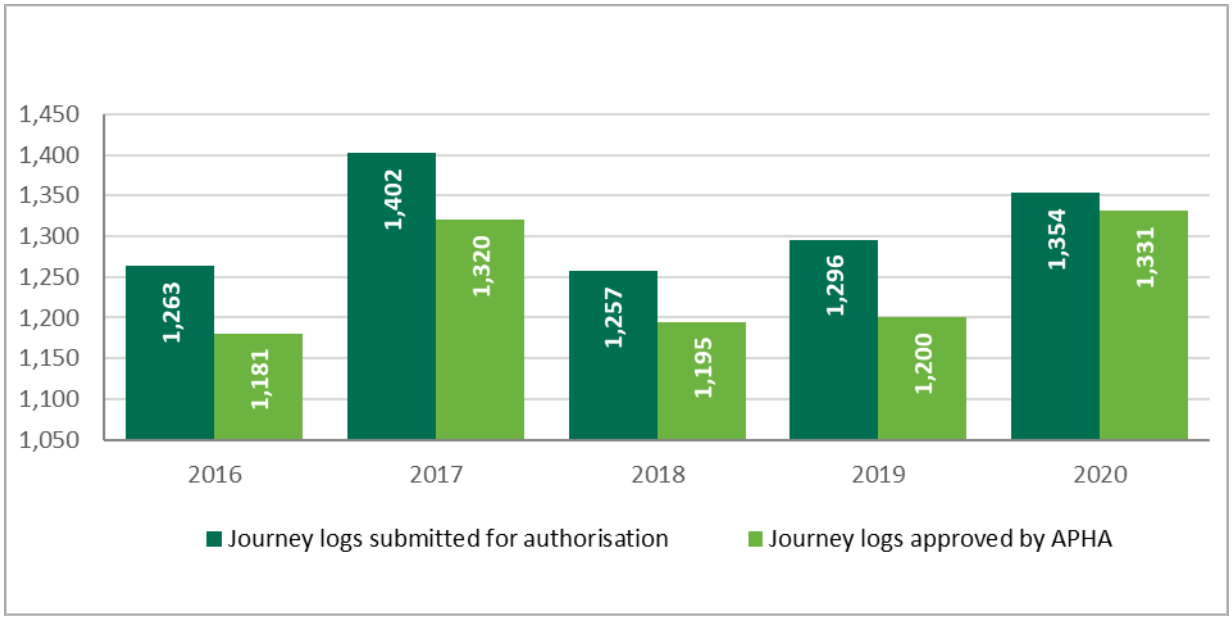
### Animal welfare during transport

2.296 Inspections are carried out in Great Britain on a risk basis and in response to intelligence received. Inspection programmes are planned by APHA and LAs through local liaison. Findings are kept under review and local action taken as appropriate where any major deficiencies are detected.

**Number of transporter authorisations in Great Britain from 2016 – 2020**

| **Year** | **New applications** | **New authorised** | **Refused** | **Applications for re-authorisations** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2016 | 883 | 684 | 0 | 149 |
| 2017 | 817 | 865 | 8 | 7,988 |
| 2018 | 168 | 564 | 4 | 930 |
| 2019 | 820 | 754 | 0 | 741 |
| 2020 | 1000 | 975 | 0 | 471 |

**Figure 55 – Chart showing the number of journey logs in Great Britain from 2016 – 2020**




2.297 In GB, in 2020, 1,354 journey logs were submitted for validation and 1,331 were approved. This represents a 4% increase on journey logs submitted in 2019, and a 21% increase since 2015.

2.298 No journey logs were rejected by APHA. 36 applications did not proceed to approval and would be deemed cancelled by the exporter. This is likely the result of the exporter being unable to demonstrate compliance with the Regulation following requests for further information to support the application.

**Number of checks of animals and means of transport in GB from 2019 – 2020**

| **Checks and non-compliances** | **2019** | **2020** |
|---|---|---|
| Vehicles inspected (including documentary checks) | 53,378 | 28835 |
| Non-compliances (excluding documentary non- compliances) | 738 | 1899 |
| Documentary only checks (vehicles inspected) | 361 | 1336 |
| Non-compliances documentary checks only | 363 | 507 |
| APHA checks of vehicles transporting livestock and horses at ports through UK | 154 | 65 |
| APHA supervised loading inspections | 70* | 65 |

*Figure amended due to an error in the 2019 report.

2.299 Inspections and enforcement of welfare during transport by both LAs and APHA were impacted by COVID-19 restrictions in 2020, when resources were focused on urgent high priority areas where risk of animal welfare suffering was greatest. Vehicle inspections reduced by 46% overall in GB compared with 2019, but - as the next table shows - this change was variable by country. England and Welsh inspections reduced by 48%, whilst inspections increased slightly by 14% in Scotland.

2.300 There was a marked (2.5 fold) increase in non-compliances detected, and when assessed on a country basis. More than 3.5 times the non-compliances were detected in 2020 for transporters in England when compared with 2019, whilst in Wales the increase was 35%. In contrast Scotland had far fewer detected non-compliances - less than 10% of the levels detected in 2019.

2.301 The apparent increase in England relates to one Local Authority, which introduced an improved reporting system during the period. This new system recorded more detailed information relating to minor IATA Live Animals Regulations non-compliance: in effect, the new system now records more accurate data than the previous system, rather than indicating a surge in new levels of non-compliance.

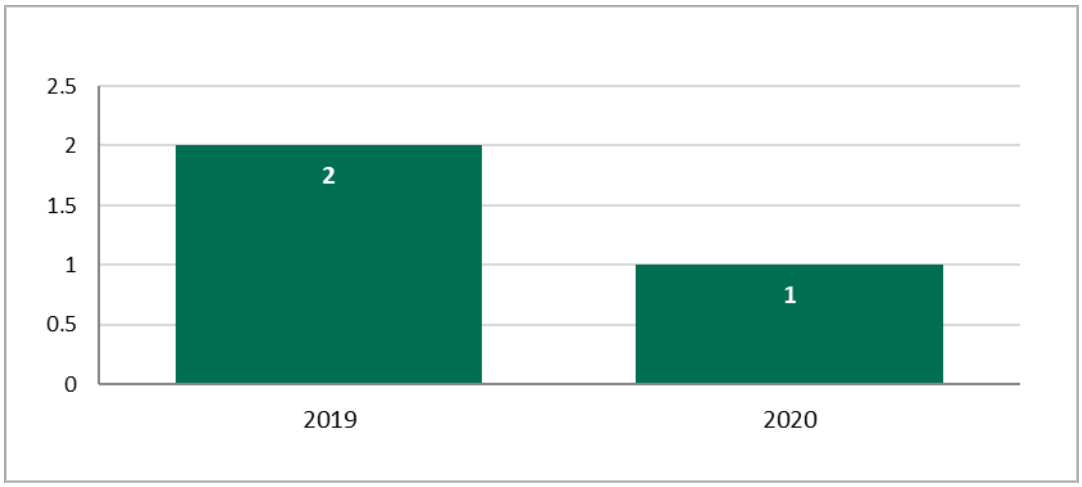
2.302 The majority of routine checks of animals and means of transport were carried out by LA inspectors in conjunction with APHA in Great Britain. APHA aims to supervise 100% of loadings for animals on long journeys for slaughter purposes. However, at the end of 2020, ten supervised loadings in England were not attended due to lack of resource, much more than the single loading not attended in 2019. The timing and location suggests resources were impacted by ongoing Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreaks in the south of England. In Scotland no supervised loadings occurred, despite APHA efforts to attend with limited resources.

2.303 Whilst some reasons for late notification by the transporter were due to genuine re-scheduling of journeys, there was some concern of deliberate action to avoid attendance of APHA staff at the time of loading. Despite resource impacts, both England and Wales increased supervised loading attendance by over 30% and 50% respectively in 2020 compared with 2019. In total, 65 supervised loading inspections were allocated, with 55 completed and 10 not completed.

2.304 GB inspections resulted in a variety of enforcement actions, including verbal warnings, written advice/guidance, written warnings, suspension and revocation of TAs, and statutory notices. In 2020 there were four prosecutions relating to two incidents; one involving the transport of a dog in an unsuitable container, and the other three involving the transport of an unfit horse.

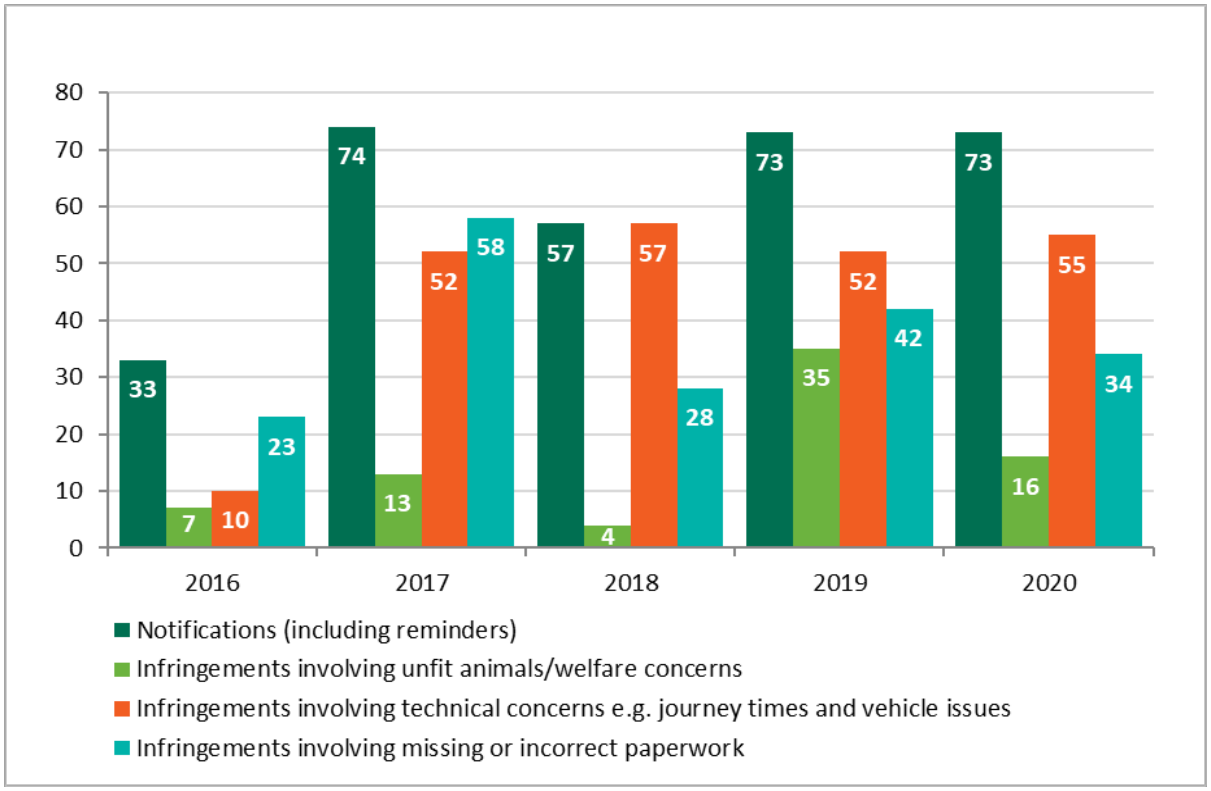
2.305 During UK Exit transition period, GB authorities continued to communicate and work with EU member states on potential contraventions of Regulation EC 1/2005 and information exchange under Article 26. GB received thirteen notifications from EU Member States, but only one related to an authorised GB pig transporter, where the ITAHC had not been validated and the journey log had details missing. The other 12 notifications related transporters based outside GB.

**Figure 56 – Chart showing the number of reports of infringements by GB authorised transporters raised by other Member States from 2016 – 2020**




2.306 73 notifications were sent to EU Member States during 2020, identical figures to 2019, however the number regarding unfit animals was more than halved compared to the previous year. 15 of the infringements involving unfit animals were for dogs and cats, with 16 unfit animals reported. The other infringement involved three unfit horses on a single means of transport.

**Figure 57 – Chart showing the breakdown of types of infringement by non-UK transporters from 2016 – 2020[10]**




[10] Data for types of infringement is only available at a non-UK level.

### Transport on-farm – FSA and FSS referrals

2.307 The following table provides information on non-urgent referrals received by APHA from the FSA (English and Welsh slaughterhouses) and FSS (Scottish slaughterhouses) for 2020 regarding potential non-compliances associated with animal welfare during transport (including poultry catching), at markets and/or on farm. This was the first time a full two years of combined FSA and FSS data could be evaluated.

2.308 Some cases could not be attributed to the three main welfare in transport categories and required further evaluation to establish and understand the cause of underlying welfare issues. It should be noted that the slaughterhouse location by country does not always reflect the country location for farm or market of origin.

2.309 There was a 26% reduction in non-urgent referrals in 2020 compared to the previous year, most of which were due to a reduction in poultry catching referrals. Urgent referrals are dealt with as complaints by APHA or LAs and are accounted for in other data sets. Enforcement action associated with referrals may also be covered within other data sets.

**Summary data and most common non-urgent welfare referral reasons from FSA/FSS in Great Britain from 2018 – 2020**

| **Referral type** | **2018*** | **2019**** | **2020** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total number received | 5,372 | 5,137 | 4,679 |
| Poultry catching | 2,756 | 2,180 | 1,829 |
| Dead on arrival | 1,372 | 1,333 | 1,464 |
| Late gestation (>90% pregnancy) | 384 | 489 | 521 |
| Further triage required | 860 | 1,135 | 865 |

*For 2018, only 6 months of FSS data was available.
**Figures amended due to an error in the 2019 report.

2.310 As with previous years, the most frequently reported non-urgent welfare in transport referral type for English and Welsh slaughterhouses (FSA) related to poultry catching issues. This was followed by referrals relating to animals found dead on arrival and animals past 90% gestation, which are classed as not fit for transport.

2.311 Less poultry slaughter occurs in Scotland: these referrals were therefore much lower, with late gestation pregnancies being the most frequent of the top three.

2.312 Poultry catching issues were referred to LAs for monitoring and action as appropriate, including joint actions with APHA. Meat chickens were the only

catching referrals for Scottish slaughterhouses in 2020. In England and Wales, meat chickens were the most frequent poultry referral, but small numbers of incidents associated with breeding birds, turkeys, ducks and end-of-lay hens were also referred.

2.313 There was an increase in referrals for dead on arrival (DOA) animals in 2020 overall, and for both the FSA and FSS, compared with 2019. The most common species type referred for DOA from English and Welsh slaughterhouses were pigs (53%), sheep (27%), meat chickens (16%) and cattle (4%), similar to 2019, whilst FSS reported most frequently for pigs (62%), sheep (24%) and cattle (14%), again with similar proportions to 2019. The main cause for the rise in DOA for 2020 related to an increase in incidents associated with DOA meat chickens; the possible reasons associated with this are addressed under the Meat Chicken Directive section.

2.314 APHA's Welfare in Transport (WIT) team issued warning letters with guidance to transporters on late gestation for all cases associated with GB-authorised transporters.

2.315 In 2020, 95% of referrals from the FSS related to Scottish farms, with only 11 referrals for farms in the North of England and one for Wales, relating to late gestation, DOAs or needing further triage, for sheep and cattle.

2.316 96% of FSA referrals related to English and Welsh holdings, with 162 referrals to Scottish holdings. This comprised 40% of all referrals regarding Scottish holdings in 2020. These figures were similar to 2019, when approximately one third of all Scottish holding referrals were reported by the FSA.

2.317 The referrals from FSA regarding Scottish holdings were not equally spread across referral types, with two-thirds of DOAs and one-quarter of poultry catching incidents originating from Scottish farms being reported by the FSA in 2020. These proportions (for DOAs and poultry catching) were the same in 2019. 44 out of the 80 FSA-referred DOAs regarding Scottish holdings related to sheep, which comprised 85% of all sheep DOAs for Scottish holdings, and all five meat chicken DOA referrals for Scottish holdings were reported by the FSA.

2.318 The actual number of incidents relating to DOAs increased by approximately 10% in each country in 2020 compared with 2019. In contrast, whilst late gestations remained around the same for England, late gestation incidents increased by 10% in Scotland and by 33% in Wales, suggesting further stakeholder communication on this issue will be required in 2021. It is possible that the impact of COVID-19 restrictions in 2020 reduced non-urgent veterinary/technical visits to farms, which may have included pregnancy diagnosis.

2.319 In addition to the 865 incidents determined for further triage, three DOA, two poultry catching incidents and one late gestation incident were also selected for immediate triage and evaluation, resulting in 871 triage events in 2020.

This was a 25% reduction in total incidents selected for triage compared to 2019, where 1,135 triages plus a further nine DOA and two catching incidents resulted in 1,146 total triages.

2.320 The table below shows how these referrals were triaged by APHA. Cases relating to a welfare in transport issue were logged with APHA's transport team and allocated to the appropriate LA for action or information as part of ongoing monitoring. APHA's WIT team also handled monitoring and ongoing action in reaction to authorised transporters associated with any FSA/FSS referrals.

**FSA/FSS referrals requiring further triage in Great Britain from 2018 – 2020**

| **Referral type** | **2018*** | **2019**** | **2020** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Welfare in transport (WIT) | 298 | 208 | 173 |
| Welfare on farm (WOF) | 210 | 343 | 177 |
| Welfare in transport and a Welfare on farm origin / cause (WIT / WOF) | 271 | 497 | 459 |
| Welfare issue could not be determined from evidence | 81 | 35 | 41 |
| Other issue / action / DOAs / catching*** | - | 63 | 21 |
| Total | - | 1,146 | 871 |

*For 2018, only 6 months of FSS data was available.
**Figures amended due to an error in the 2019 report.
***Data only available since 2019.

2.321 Cases relating to welfare at markets, collection centres, referral for transport, and on-farm issues, were subject to further triage, to determine if lead action would be taken by the LA and APHA. Those cases designated 'further action not required' included referrals where the action taken by the OV was considered sufficient, or where further investigation revealed that a potential non-compliance was determined to be unavoidable(for example, injury caused by an emergency stop). Any such data would still be collated and recorded to monitor repeat referrals for transporters, markets or farms of origin.

2.322 Whilst civil cross compliance penalties are usually applied by inspectors for on-farm findings, certain slaughterhouse findings were reported as a breach to the relevant paying agency for any farmer that was a claimant, where the non-compliance was clearly something that had occurred on the farm. These included animals with chronic untreated disease conditions, animals in very poor condition, and animals with ingrowing horns.

2.323 During routine QA checks it was found that in Scotland, and for some Welsh and very few English farms, inspectors were referring slaughterhouse

breaches without recording on farm non-compliances against APHA records following the farm inspection, if the farm inspection itself was compliant. Wales had a similar approach but changed in 2020 to ensure non compliances detected at slaughterhouse level were recorded with the farm inspection findings. In England, inspectors were reminded that if the non-compliances had a clear on-farm origin then it must be recorded against farm inspection data following inspection.

2.324 This meant that most of the data presented for England and Wales includes all farm non-compliances detected, whether at the slaughterhouse or during inspection, whilst Scottish data only shows non-compliances determined at the time of inspection and does not account for any non-compliance detected at the slaughterhouse level.

2.325 A total of 246 GB farm inspections were carried out by APHA in 2020 following triage. Inspections reduced by 23% compared with the previous year. In England, inspections reduced by 25%, Scotland reduced by 37% whilst inspections in Wales increased slightly.

2.326 13% of inspections resulted in a non-compliance being recorded in 2020, similar to 2019. This continues to demonstrate official controls at the slaughterhouse level are effective in detecting and targeting on farm animal welfare issues. As previously explained, some non-compliances recorded may only have been associated with the slaughterhouse finding itself, if the farm inspection was otherwise compliant, in England and Wales.

2.327 This likely explains the disparity between Scotland and England/Wales with regards to non-compliant findings. England, Scotland and Wales recorded 16%, 2% and 20% non-compliant findings in 2020 compared with 18%, 4% and 9% respectively in 2019. Therefore, figures remained similar in England, whilst the increase in Wales likely reflected the change in non-compliance recording to ensure that slaughterhouse breaches were captured.

2.328 The table below summarises inspections and non-compliances for 2018 to 2020.

**FSS/FSA referred farm inspections and non-compliances in Great Britain from 2018 – 2020**

| | **2018*** | **2019** | **2020** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total farm inspections following referral | 200 | 321 | 246 |
| Non-compliant findings | 30 | 39 | 33 |
| Non-compliant findings without unnecessary suffering | 17 | 31 | 19 |
| Non-compliant findings with unnecessary suffering detected | 13 | 8 | 14 |

*For 2018, only 6 months of FSS data were available.

2.329 The number of incidents/findings involving unnecessary suffering at farm level more than doubled to 5% of referred farm inspection assessments in 2020

when compared to 2019. Therefore, ante-mortem and post-mortem findings should continue to be considered a key indicator of serious animal welfare issues on farm.

2.330 When assessed at the country level, Scotland report no cases of unnecessary suffering at farm inspections in response to slaughterhouse referrals in either 2019 or 2020. England reported 7 cases of unnecessary suffering in 2020, a similar figure to 2019, but an increased proportion of total cases due to reduced inspections. Wales reported 7 cases comprising 15% of all slaughterhouse referred farm inspections in 2020 and a marked increase on 2019, most likely reflecting the change in reporting format.

### Animal welfare at slaughter or killing

2.331 Welfare at the time of killing was enforced through the Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing (England) Regulation 2015. Parallel legislation applied in the devolved administrations of Scotland and Wales.

2.332 In 2020, APHA followed up reports and allegations relating to poor animal welfare during slaughter or killing operations at locations outside of approved slaughterhouses in Great Britain. APHA also assessed slaughter operations during the licensing of slaughtermen in locations outside of slaughterhouses. Where appropriate, APHA provided support to LAs for prosecution.

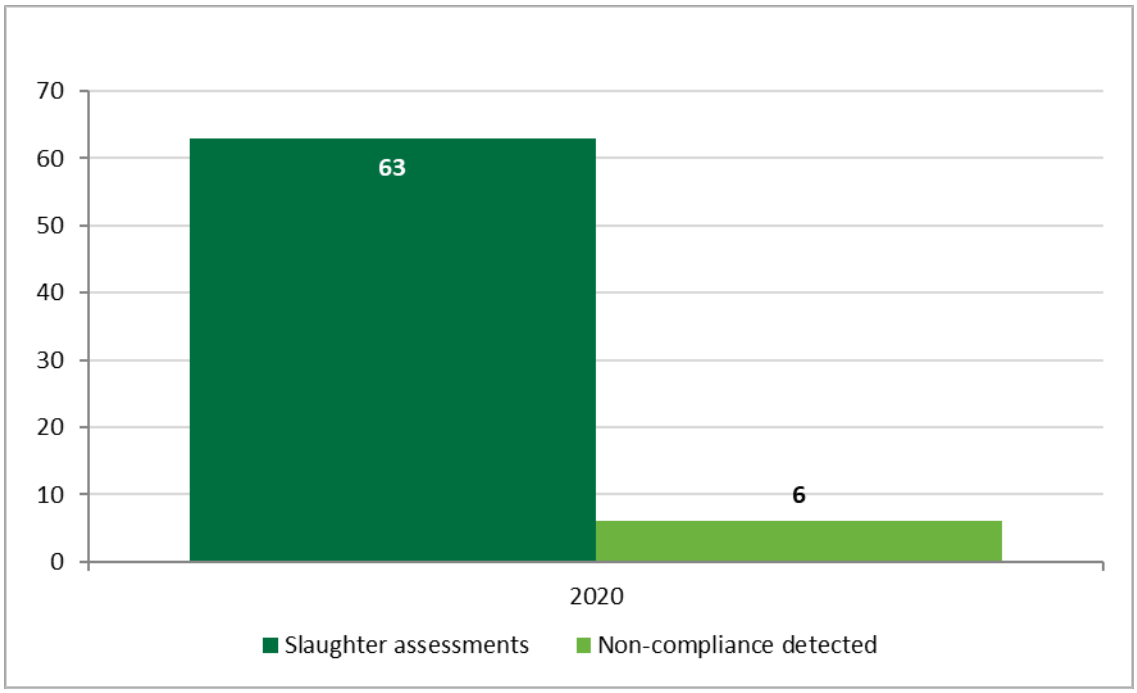
2.333 Farm animal welfare at the time of killing was considered high risk and was therefore treated as a high priority. There was proactive engagement with seasonal slaughterers, a process that was centralised in England and Wales to ensure consistency across all areas.

2.334 APHA field staff and LAs continued to raise concerns about the lack of intelligence on when and where licensed slaughtering occurred. Businesses are under no obligation to inform the APHA and LAs when and where licensed slaughter occurs.

2.335 Defra reviewed the killing regulations for England in 2019-2020, and the Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing review was published in January 2021.

2.336 The chart below shows the number of slaughter assessments and non compliances detected in GB in 2020. These data were calculated differently in 2020 and are therefore not comparable to previous years.

**Figure 58 – Chart showing the number of slaughter assessments and the number of non-compliances in Great Britain in 2020**

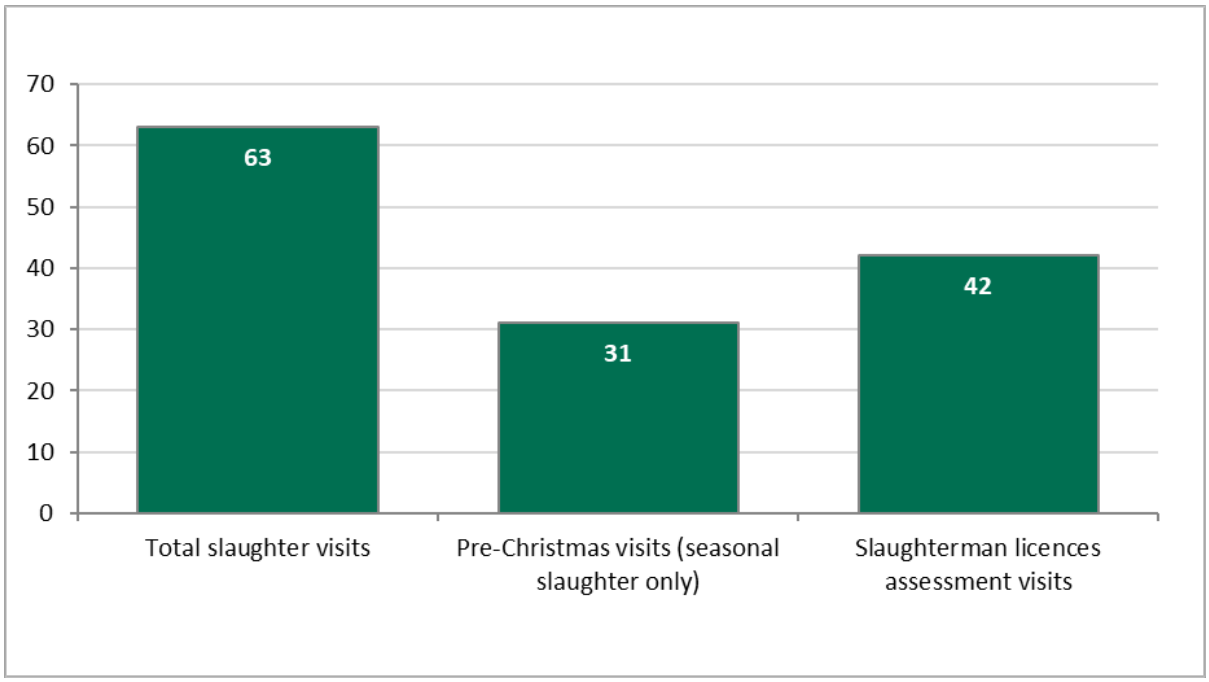



2.337 In Great Britain, 42 (67%) of the 63 visits carried out by APHA were undertaken as part of a licensing assessment of staff intending to kill animals on farm, where 47 species categories were assessed. Slaughter assessments at each visit could involve multiple personnel assessed for individual licences, for different types of slaughter process and/or species-type slaughtered on the day of assessment, however most assessments involved one species type, one type of equipment and one or more individuals assessed for the same species and equipment. In total, 65 individuals were assessed for a licence at 42 visits throughout the year. Half of the visits occurred in the immediate pre-Christmas period involving seasonal slaughter of poultry.

2.338 A total of six slaughter assessments detected non-compliances; five of those found non-compliant were associated with seasonal slaughter of turkeys, organic meat chickens and geese. The other related to duck slaughter during a slaughter licence assessment. Multiple non-compliances were found at some of these non-compliant assessments.

2.339 The chart below shows the number of inspection visits regarding welfare during slaughter or killing outside of approved slaughterhouses in GB in 2020. These data were calculated differently in 2020 and are therefore not comparable to previous years.

**Figure 59 – Chart showing the number of welfare inspection visits during slaughter in Great Britain in 2020**




2.340 Inspectors assessed the slaughter or killing of horses, growing and adult cattle, deer, sheep, pigs, goats, calves, ducks, geese, quail, turkeys and chickens during 2020. The table below describes the areas where non-compliances were disclosed.

**Disclosure of non-compliances in Great Britain from 2018 – 2020**

| Assessment finding | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Licensing | 17 | 2 | 1 |
| Construction, equipment, maintenance | 11 | 11 | 4 |
| Animals awaiting killing | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Handling and restraint | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Stunning and killing | 11 | 5 | 2 |
| Bleeding or pithing | 4 | 5 | 0 |

2.341 Whilst hand held electric stunners predominated in the assessments of humane slaughter of poultry, assessment of captive bolt percussive stunners increased in these sectors. Containerised gassing of poultry was also assessed for the commercial poultry sector, where large numbers of birds needed killing on farm quickly (for example due to COVID-19 impacts on slaughterhouse operations).

2.342 The most common areas of non-compliance related to equipment and its maintenance. Whilst previous assessments in 2019 found nearly all non-compliances relating to the lack of back-up stunners, non-compliances in 2020 were more varied but all related to the use of electric stunners in Scotland. The non-compliances detected included no visible or audible alarms

(3), no ammeter (1), no visible voltage and amperage when using equipment (1), no maintenance records (2), no standard operating procedures (2) .

2.343 Two stunning and killing non-compliances in England related to a failure to improve contact for the electric stunner used and thus not reaching sufficient voltage to achieve an effective stun. In one instance this was determined to have caused unnecessary suffering. In this case the operator also demonstrated a lack of knowledge and competence, was operating without a licence and transferring birds from one farm to another, which was also contrary to the regulations. Actions included enforcement letters and planned follow-up visits.

2.344 One positive report was the use of the Humane Slaughter Association by one company to deliver detailed training in the morning, on the principles of humane stunning and slaughter, the correct use of the equipment on the species being assessed on the day, followed by the APHA inspector assessment of seven individuals in the afternoon. This was a really positive action for welfare by the business operator to ensure all his staff were correctly trained before assessment.

**Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing (WATOK) in Great Britain in 2020**

| Country | Slaughterman licence | Certificate of Competence (CoC) | Temporary CoC |
|---|---|---|---|
| England & Wales | 57 | 872 | 1235 |
| Scotland | n/a | 64 | 0 |

2.345 In 2020, 57 slaughtermen's' licences were issued under Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing (WATOK) by the FSA, in England and Wales.

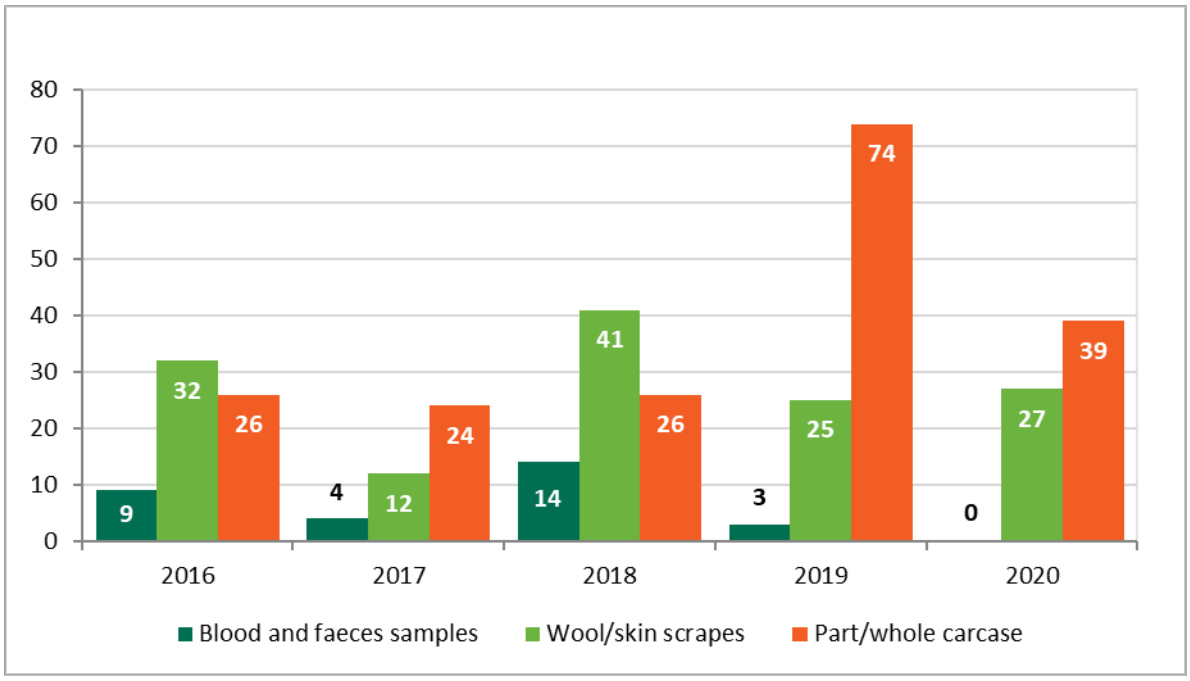
2.346 In Scotland, 64 CoCs were issued for operatives in slaughterhouses, farms and knacker companies, under the WATOK (Scotland) Regulations 2012, between April 2020 and April 2021. Twelve existing CoCs were amended to include new activities.

2.347 From 1 April 2017, the FSA began publishing quarterly reports showing welfare non-compliances in each area of the slaughterhouse. The reports are set out by species.

## Welfare forensic pathology and advice

2.348 The chart below shows submissions to the regional veterinary laboratories in England and Wales from 2016 to 2020.

**Figure 60 – Chart showing the number of samples submitted to Regional Veterinary Laboratories in England and Wales from 2016 – 2020**




2.349 In 2020, APHA's Regional Laboratories (RLs) received 66 welfare forensic submissions consisting of 20 whole carcases and 19 carcase parts, such as heads or limbs. One carcase and 13 carcase parts were from cattle, 19 carcases and six carcase parts were from sheep. Examples of findings included: severe osteoarthritis in dairy cattle, ingrown horns in sheep, necrotic leg wounds following constrictive injuries and a fractured jaw. The remainder of the samples, 27 in total, were wool or skin samples relating to suspect sheep scab cases, and three faeces samples.

2.350 In addition to the above, from a routine scanning surveillance post mortem examination of a yearling bovine, there was evidence of offences at slaughter. The case was referred to AH field services and the local authority for additional on farm investigation.

2.351 Despite a reduction in court cases in 2020 due to COVID-19, there were still a number of cases with VIO involvement resulting in guilty verdicts for offences under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. This included a ban on owning, keeping, dealing and transporting farm animals for a farmer in North Wales plus suspended prison sentence, seizure of cattle from a holding in Lincoln and financial penalties in other cases.

### Incidents and outbreaks in the animal health sector - APHA

2.352 In 2020, 165 reports of suspected cases were investigated. There were 17 confirmed outbreaks of Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N8 and H5N1, one confirmed outbreak of Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI) H5N2 in poultry in Kent, three confirmed cases of European Bat Lyssavirus (EBLV), and one case of Contagious equine metritis (CEM). All incidents were successfully resolved.

# Official controls in the plant health sector

## Controls on imported plants, plant products and plant material

### England and Wales

2.353 In 2020, targets for the inspection of the majority of controlled plant health material imported into England and Wales were met. Prohibited material imported or held under scientific licence was subject to the required level of inspection and 100% of required mandatory inspections were completed. The majority of import inspection targets were met.

2.354 The target was not met for inspecting other low risk controlled material, with 63% of material inspected against the required 65 target%. The target of completing 100% of document and identity checks was not met, with 87% of the checks achieved. Delivery shortfalls resulted from working to new COVID-19 restrictions, preparation and delivery of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union and implementation of the new GB plant health regime requiring many Inspectors to be re-trained or diverted away from routine inspection work.

2.355 In keeping with previous years' pattern of growing numbers of controlled consignments requiring inspection, 2020/21 saw a 16% increase in the number of consignments declared and requiring control, compared to 2019/20. The total controlled and declared consignments in 2020/21 was 143,753, compared to 124,404 in 2019/20.

2.356 For the 123 commodities and trades subject to reduced import checks[11], the required levels of inspection were met. Additionally, there were 4,312 inspections of non-regulated material were inspected against a target of 5,000.

2.357 In 2020, the Forestry Commission (FC) customer service standard target of inspecting 95% of imports of wood and wood products on the day of notification of landing, or the next working day, was met. Customer Service Standard response time was achieved in over 97% of cases in 2019, therefore the annual target was met.

2.358 FC receive additional funding to increase its inspections of wood packaging material associated with known high-risk commodities and were able to:

[11] The general rule is that all consignments of material listed in Schedule 2 in the Plant Health (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 must be inspected on arrival in Great Britain; however, plant health checks can be carried out at a reduced frequency where this can be justified. See https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/imports/reduced-frequency-checks

- employ two Cross Border Plant Health Officers and an Assistant Economist to assist in the additional inspection programmes, contingency planning and financial impact assessments
- employ additional field staff to strengthen the inland plant health team to increase the surveillance level of trees and woodlands for newly emerging pests and diseases.
- increase inspections of wood packaging material associated with known high-risk commodities at ports, leading to increased detection of non-compliant wood packaging material
- meet the EU minimum target inspecting 15% of all imported consignments of eight stated commodity codes
- continue its import inspection regime, which commenced in 2018, for wood packaging material associated with 52 commodities from both China and Belarus to comply with the requirements of the EU's Commission Implementing Decision 2018/1137. The legislation has an inspection rate of 1% of all of the 52 commodities being imported.
- The EU Commission Implementing Decision was valid until 30 June 2020, however the Forestry Commission continued with the legislation's inspection regime as its wood packaging material monitoring plan until March 2021 with a view of reviewing and revising it as a result of the UK withdrawal from the European Union
- deliver certain statutory plant health functions on behalf of the Devolved Administrations in Scotland and Wales as well as in England. The extent of this work was detailed in a cross-border memorandum of understanding and delivery is coordinated and reported on to all three countries
- Growing numbers of conifer logs from the US were intercepted and found to contain the harmful pest of conifer trees – the pinewood nematode.

## Plant health surveillance and outbreak management

### England and Wales

2.359 In 2020, work has continued to monitor and manage a number of plant and tree health pest and disease incidents, as summarised below.

- **Tomato Brown Rugose Fruit Virus (ToBRFV)** - This virus was found in GB for the first time in 2019 at a tomato production site where, following statutory measures, it has now been eradicated. Additional surveillance was performed by the PHSI. As a result, five new outbreaks of ToBRFV were detected in 2020, plus 38 interceptions on imports of tomato and pepper seed. Statutory action was taken where found to eradicate the pest and prevent further introductions.

- ***Phytophthora ramorum* and *Phytophthora kernoviae*** – The risk of spread of the pathogens via the trade in plants has been reduced by continued regular inspections and eradication action whenever the pathogens are diagnosed.

- ***Dryocosmus kuriphilus*** **(Oriental chestnut gall wasp) –** The application to release a non-native biocontrol agent, *Torymus sinensis* was refined and submitted following public consultation in Autumn 2020. The licence to release *T. sinensis* was approved in early 2021, and they were released across 10 sites in spring 2021.

- ***Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*** **(ash dieback) –** Most parts of the UK (all counties) are now experiencing ash tree decline. The FC has a surveillance programme in place to monitor the infection. Since ash dieback was first detected in the UK, government has invested more than £6 million to advance our scientific understanding of this disease. FC conducted the world's largest screening trials for tolerant trees in 2020 and planted 3,000 trees in the first UK archive of tolerant ash. This will provide the basis for a breeding programme of tolerant ash over time and is a major step towards landscape recovery.

- ***Cryphonectria parasitica (*****Sweet Chestnut blight)** –. In 2019, as part of ongoing surveillance activity, several new outbreak sites were detected (in London, West Sussex and Cornwall). Infection also appeared to have re-emerged on a few sites previously thought eradicated. Infected host trees were removed from most infected sites (although a few were retained for research into disease control and/or due to operational constraints). A surveillance programme is in place to monitor disease presence. In addition, research is ongoing to investigate whether an effective treatment for sweet chestnut blight can be developed, and is exploring the potential to use a biocontrol, using a phenomenon known as hypovirulence. In 2020, a multi-partner research project was initiated to inform future policy.

- ***Thaumetopoea processionea*** **(Oak processionary moth (OPM))** – In 2019, the UK plant health service dealt with numerous interceptions of OPM caterpillars on oak trees imported into the UK. Around 70 planting sites were affected in the UK Protected Zone and eradication action was completed at these sites. Work continues on investigating the situation through tracing work and surveillance activities. A lessons learnt exercise was carried out in November 2019, attended by representatives from all the key organisations involved in the interceptions. A number of key recommendations were identified from this process and are being implemented. This includes a review of the pest specific contingency plan, as well as an ongoing review of the generic contingency plan which will integrate many aspects of the lessons learnt process of the OPM incident.

- ***Ips typographus*** **(Spruce bark beetle) –** This was found for the first time in the wider environment in 2018 in Kent. A wide-ranging programme of surveillance is in place (including enhanced trapping and surveillance measures in the wider environment), and emergency national legislation was introduced to reduce the risk of spread within the UK. To date, there is no evidence of breeding populations of the beetle elsewhere.

- ***Xylella fastidiosa* (bacterial disease in olive trees)** – In 2020, research from a major BBSRC / Defra funded project Brigit provided evidence for the UK's response to *Xylella.*

2.360 In selecting consignments for inspection, the rationale was to target multiple different genus, supplier and country combinations, to increase the breadth of the horizon scanning. COVID-19 impacted on surveillance throughout 2020 and early 2021, with restrictions on site visits affecting potato inspections particularly.

### Scotland

2.361 Two growers are part of the Fruit Certification Scheme, one producing micro-propagated Pre-Basic material (*Fragaria* and *Rubus*) and the other raising field grown raspberry canes at Certified grade.

2.362 All Garden Centre chains saw instances of interceptions of pest and diseases on regulated plants, and these plants were destroyed under notice.

**Preventive action on deliveries at point of destination as a result of trace forward/back exercises or general quarantine surveillance – England and Wales**

| Disease / pest type | Host | Action taken in 2020/21 |
|---|---|---|
| *Ceratocystis platani* | *Platanus* (Plane) | In total, 101 consignments of *Platanus* from EU Member States were notified. These were all selected for inspection and 72% (73 consignments) were inspected on arrival or in active growth within six months of arrival, against a target of 75% (76 consignments of those selected). |
| *Cryphonectria parasitica* | *Castanea* (Sweet Chestnut) | In total, 5 consignments of *Castanea* from EU Member States were notified. Of these, 3 were selected for inspection and all (100%) were inspected on arrival or in active growth within six months of arrival, against a target of 75%. |
| *Phytoplasma ulmi* | *Ulmus* (Elm) | In total, 147 consignments of *Ulmus* from EU Member States were notified. Of these, 144 were selected for inspection and 100 (69%) were inspected on arrival or in active growth within six months of arrival, against a target of 75% (108 consignments of those selected). |
| *Thaumetopoea processionea* (Oak Processionary Moth) | *Quercus* (Oak) | In total, 600 consignments of *Quercus* from EU Member States were notified. Of these, 588 were selected for inspection and 407 (69%) were inspected on arrival or in active growth within six months of arrival, against a target of 75% (439 consignments of those selected). |
| *Dothistroma pini* and *Dothistroma septosporum*; *Thaumetopoea pityocampa* | *Pinus* (Pine) | In total, 1,875 consignments of *Pinus* from EU Member States were notified. Of these, 624 were selected for inspection and 80% (497 consignments) were inspected on arrival or in active growth within six months of arrival, against a target of 75% (465 consignments of those selected). |
| *Xanthomanus arboricola pv. Pruni* / other pests and diseases | Prunus | In total, 12,283 consignments of *Prunus* from EU Member States were notified. Of these, 3,365 were selected for inspection and 2,627 (78%) were inspected on arrival or in active growth within six months of arrival, against a target of 75% (2,507 consignments of those selected). |
| *Xylella fastidiosa* | *Olea Europa* | In total, 1,095 consignments of *Olea Europa* from EU Member States were notified. Of these, 1,062 were selected for inspection and 100% were inspected on arrival or in active growth within six months of arrival, against a target of 75% (792 consignments of those selected). |
| *Epitrix spp* | *Solanum tuberosum* | The target was to inspect 50% of all Spanish and Portuguese notified ware potato consignments. 147 consignments were notified and 104 (71%) were inspected. |

**Surveillance surveys required under EU legislation carried out during 2020/21 in England and Wales**

| Disease / pest type | Action taken in 2020/21 |
|---|---|
| *Ralstonia solanacearum* (Brown rot) tuber survey and *Clavibacter michiganensis* (Ring rot) tuber survey | 794 inspections of seed stocks from the Seed Potato Classification Scheme (SPCS). This covers all English and Welsh seed stocks excluding Pre Basic not marketed. |
| Brown rot river survey of treated/scheduled water courses completed | The Brown Rot river survey was completed during August/September 2020, involving approximately 200 samples from 24 water courses and 48 sampling points. There were 2 new positive results at two separate watercourses in in Bristol and County Durham in 2020. Containment measures have been implemented including additional sampling. |
| EU minimum: Phytophthora ramorum and Phytophthora kernoviae survey of parks, gardens and commercial establishments | 2,208 retail outlets and nurseries were visited against a minimum target of 1,000 (target met). 342 wider environment sites were inspected against a minimum target of 300 (target met).<br>258 clients authorised to issue plant passports for *P. ramorum* hosts received an additional inspection visit (70%) against a target of 95% of 369 clients.<br>The total number of visits was 3,854. |
| PCN survey | EU regulations required 0.5% of the area used to produce ware potatoes to be sampled. For England and Wales, this amounts to 432ha in 2020. Growers are randomly selected for inspection.<br>In 2020, 460ha were sampled from 50 fields and 50% were found to be infested.<br>Area of fields with *G pallida* only = 267<br>Area of fields with *G rostochiensis* only = 0<br>Area of fields with combined population = 0<br>Total infested area = 267 |
| *Epitrix* surveillance | In England and Wales, a target was set to inspect 200 consignments of ware potatoes grown from UK seed. 80 consignments (40%) were inspected. |

| Disease / pest type | Action taken in 2020/21 |
|---|---|
| Anoplophora chinensis survey, Xylella fastidiosa survey, Leptinotarsa decemlineta survey, Erwinia amylovora survey, Potato spindle tuber viroid survey, Rhynchophorus ferrugineus survey, Giberrerella ircinate survey, Dryocosmus kuriphilus survey and Bemisia tabaci survey. | No set targets per pest. Plant hosts were inspected as part of General Quarantine Surveillance inspections.<br>Frequency is determined by PHSI established risk matrix. |
| Clavibacter michiganensis (Ring rot) tuber survey | 66 consignments of E&W ware from EU seed & EU ware inspected against a target of 120 (55% inspected).<br>79 inspections were carried out on consignments of EU seed entering the SCPS scheme up to 1st Jan 2021<br>341 consignments (86%) of EU seed inspected from 396 selected for inspection. 849 consignments notified up to 1st Jan 2021 |

## General quarantine surveillance

### England and Wales

2.363 As part of quarantine surveillance, inspection visits in England and Wales were determined according to the following risk matrix in 2020/21. The delivery shortfall resulted from working to new COVID-19 restrictions.

**Plant health risk matrix and achievements against targets in England and Wales in 2020/21**

| Client plant health risk rating* | Minimum and maximum achievement | Achievement (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Very high risk (10 to12 visits per year) | 210 visits (100% of required visits) | 188 (90%) |
| High risk (4 to 6 visits per year) | 1,300 visits (100% of required visits) | 1,090 (84%) |
| Medium risk (2 visits per year) | Min = 2,296 visits (50%)<br>Max = 4,592 visits (100%)<br>Target = 3,444 visits (75%) | 3,110 (68%) |
| Low risk (once every two years) | Min = 1,598 visits (50%)<br>Max = 3,196 visits (100%)<br>Target = 2,396 visits (75%) | 1,675 (52%) |

*A client's business is reviewed throughout the year and could result in target changes between quarters.

2.364 For Brown rot (*Ralstonia solanacearum*), as a result of the 2019 surveillance programme, positive results were recorded at two separate watercourses. Further investigations are proceeding at these sites for the survey next year. The 2020 survey followed up the findings at locations in 2019. Containment measures being implemented including additional sampling.

### Scotland

2.365 In Scotland in 2020, the number of import consignment from third countries was 70, a decrease in comparison to imports in 2019, reflecting the fall in international trade due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions. Operational targets for inspections, documentary and identification checks were all achieved.

2.366 Seed potato export tonnages in 2020 (82,617 tonnes) saw a 10% increase to those in 2019 (74,756 tonnes). Ware potato exports decreased from 10,545 tonnes in 2019 to 8,716 tonnes in 2020. Other significant third country exports included a mixture of plants (*in-vitro* and in containers), brewing products, cut flowers, dried and processed products, green coffee beans and a new trade for sweet potato slips to Egypt.

2.367 All Narcissus bulbs packed last summer were exported to either the USA (for retail sales) under pre-clearance programme, the Netherlands and Scandinavia (for retail sales, commercial planting or forcing), or Russia (for retail sales). Approximately just under a half of the bulbs packed were exported to USA (1,474 tonnes / 27, 582,384 bulbs, with a value of £1.6 million).

2.368 Potato quarantine testing carried out by the UK Potato Quarantine Unit (UKPQU) consisted of 13 lines from outside the EU.

**Number of potato quarantine tests carried out in GB from 2019 – 2020**

| **Type of diagnosis** | **2019** | **2020** |
|---|---|---|
| Viroids | 3,043 | 7,230 |
| Virology | 244 | 516 |
| Bacteriology (incl. brown rot/ring rot) | 2,996 | 2,758 |
| Mycology | 454 | 207 |
| Nematology/Entomology | 18,424 | 20,000 |
| **Total** | **25,161** | 30,711 |

2.369 The project to ensure that true potato seed from the Commonwealth Potato Collection (CPC), James Hutton Institute, Dundee, meets the testing requirements of Commission Directive 2008/61/EC continues.

| **Enforcement activities for Single Market and EU surveillance activities in Scotland in 2020** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Disease / pest** | **Surveillance** | **Findings** |
| *Erwinia amylovora* Fireblight | Three nurseries requested fireblight buffer zone status and had host plants tested for latent symptoms. | All samples taken from nurseries and the surrounding buffer zone were negative. |
| Oak Processionary Moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*) | Follow up surveillance visits were made during July and August to 31 oak planting sites. These were notified in 2019 and included the 6 former infested sites along with sites receiving 10 or more trees. | No OPM activity was found apart from one dead egg plate located near Livingston. SASA entomology verified it had not been viable for several years and would have been in this condition at time of arrival. Pheromone traps were also installed at the 6 former infested sites and the planting site near Livingston from July to the end of October, and monitored by Forest Research: no moths were caught. |
| *Phytophthora* – Nursery Trade | The nursery trade had four findings of *P ramorum* during 2020. Registered nurseries producing susceptible material for *P. ramorum* and *P. kernoviae* continue to receive two site inspections a year + one based on risk. Inspections at nurseries and garden centres have also included visual checks of *P. austrocedri* and *P. lateralis* hosts. | *P. ramorum* was identified on *Rhododendron* hybrids at one registered nursery located near Barrhead.<br>• Two stocks originating in the Netherlands were infected. One had been imported in 2020 and the other had been on the site prior to 2020<br>Control measures, along with tracing activity, were carried out and the infected plants were destroyed. |
| *Phytophthora – Gardens / Landscaped sites* | There are currently 53 ‘active’ outbreak sites across Scotland consisting of 35 with P. ramorum, 5 with P. kernoviae and 7 with both pathogens.<br>There are also 66 gardens which have ‘non-active’ status where controls have been lifted following a programme of monitoring and the disease has not been detected for at least 3 years.<br>The 2020 garden survey covering 50 sites across Scotland was completed in late 2020. | *This was a decrease in comparison with the 61 active outbreak areas for P. Ramorum and P. Kernoviae in 2019*<br>*Six infected sites were identified during this surveillance, two of which were known from historic surveillance and were on the ‘non-active list.* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Plum Pox* | The Plum Pox survey (undertaken once every 3 years) was completed in 2020. | *153 trees from 11 locations producing either cherries or plums, or both, were sampled and submitted for laboratory testing. All samples taken were found negative for the virus.* |
| *Pine Processionary Moth* | Routine surveillance at an Edinburgh wholesale flower trader during December 2020, | *A consignment of cut pine was found to have a single PPM caterpillar present. The material was traced through the auctions in the Netherlands and had been harvested in Germany.*<br>*Tracing was undertaken and later batches of pine were inspected, with no further findings of PPM.* |
| *Tobacco Whitefly:* | Inspections of finished Poinsettia plants to supermarket distribution depots | *There were low level infestations of Tobacco Whitefly found in two consignments from the Netherlands Infested material was removed and further deliveries were cancelled from the supplier concerned.* |
| *Tomato Brown Rugose Fruit Virus:* | After suspected virus symptoms were discovered on plants at a large tomato grower located in the Scottish Borders samples were taken to test. | *Results returned a negative for ToBRFV.* |
| *Xanthomonas arboricola pv pruni:* | A notification of an interception in trade was received from APHA and some plants from the infected batch had been sent to Scotland. | *A follow up visit to a planted site in the Stirling area was confirmed as infected with Xanthomonas arboricola pv pruni following laboratory testing and the plants were subsequently destroyed under a Statutory Plant Health Notice.*<br>*All other material from the batch was traced and no further findings were made.* |

## Summary of intensity and type of plant controls in GB

2.370 In GB, during 2020 overall compliance in the official controls improved for commercial cargo, however the growing trend for detections of non-compliances in postal imports continued. Import inspection targets were largely met for England and Wales.

2.371 In England and Wales, there was a decrease in notifications on imported harmful organisms in 2020 to 341 findings, compared to 533 findings in 2019 for both controlled and non-controlled material. The decrease in commercial pest interceptions has principally been achieved by feedback to exporting countries, which resulted in improved biosecurity at export or the cessation of certain high-risk trades. The table below shows the most common third country import / pest combinations in 2020/21.

**Pest detected and non-compliances in third country imports during 2020/21**

| **Country of origin** | **Pest detected** | **Non-compliances (number of cases)** |
|---|---|---|
| Kenya | *Thaumatotibia leucotreta* (False Codling Moth) | 32 |
| Rwanda | *Thaumatotibia leucotreta* (False Codling Moth) | 23 |
| Colombia | *Liriomyza sp*. (leaf miners) | 20 |
| Rwanda | Potato Virus Y | 19 |
| Uganda | Potato Virus Y | 14 |

2.372 The main reason for no compliance was for documentary issues (lack of or incorrect) which accounted for 1181 interceptions and of these 982 related to private imports imported by post or courier. The increase in interceptions was the result of closer cooperation with UK Border Force, in the case of exports from countries with known issues of non-compliance.

2.373 When harmful organisms or outbreaks were found at ports or inland in the UK, the vast majority of businesses co-operated with APHA, PHSI, and other inspectors, in destroying affected stock. Most businesses entered imports correctly into the advance notification system (PEACH) and produced records for plant passport inspections.

## Plant, wood and wood products imports subject to inspections

2.374 In 2020/21, in England and Wales, the number of consignments subject to import inspection, declared and requiring controls was 143,753, an increase of 16% from 2019/20 (124,404). The increase in 2020/21 reflects the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union and the inclusion of some commodities from EU countries within the scope of Great Britain's import controls, despite decreased levels of trade as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. The increase in 2020/21 continues the general yearly upward

trend in the number of consignments subject to inspection since 2014/15, barring a very small decrease in 2017/18 of 0.55%.

**Figure 61 – Chart showing plant import consignments subject to inspections in England and Wales from 2016/17 – 2020/21**

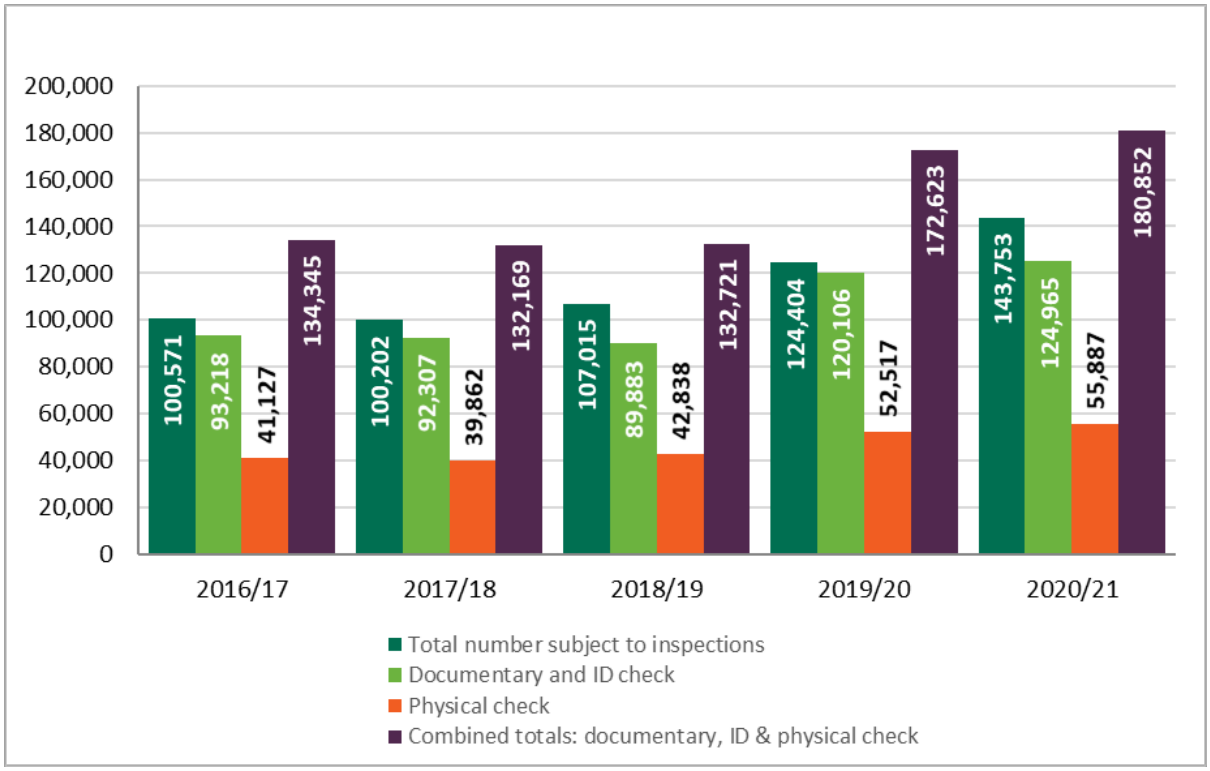
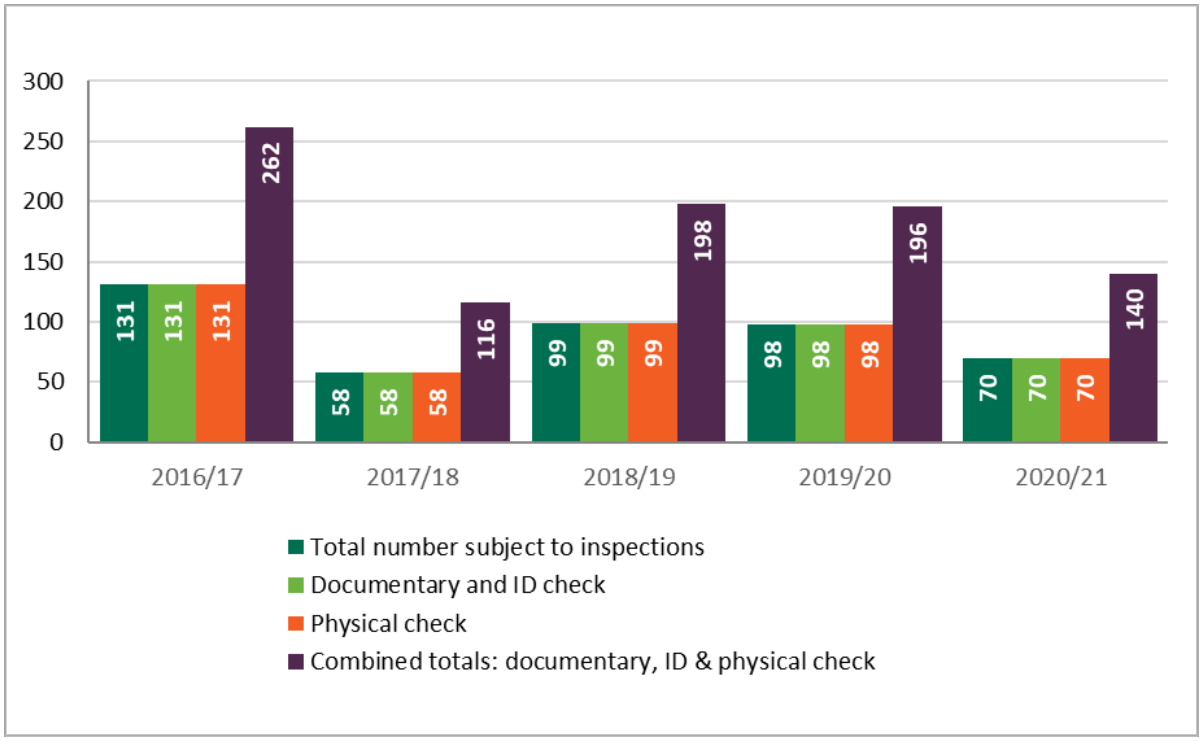


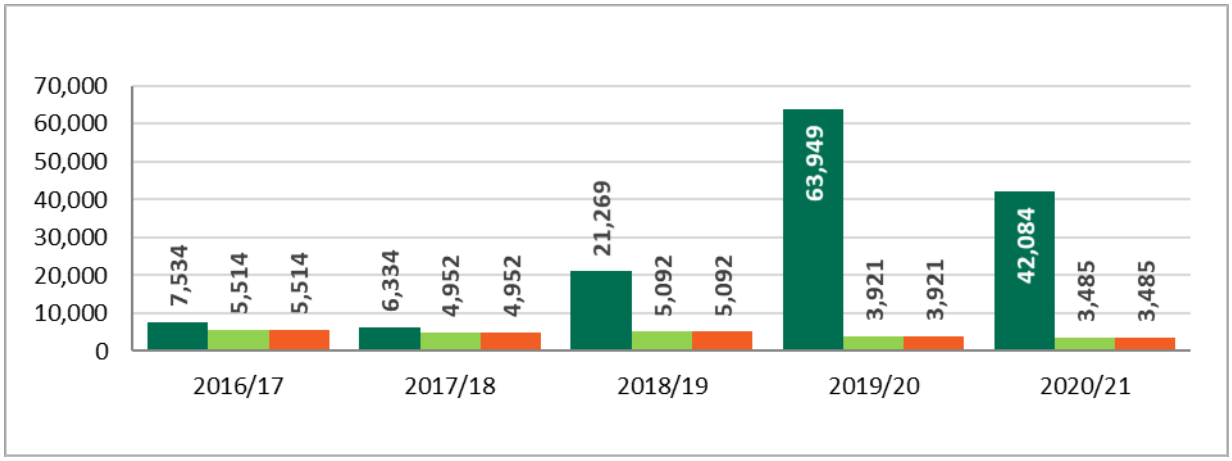

**Figure 62 – Chart showing plant import consignments subject to inspections for Scotland from 2016/17 – 2020/21***




*Data for combined totals of checks from 2016/17 to 2019/20 has been corrected to rectify an error in the 2019 report.

2.375 Other than low level infestations of Tobacco Whitefly which were found in two consignments from the Netherlands, there were no reported pest and disease findings on material imported to Scotland during 2020.

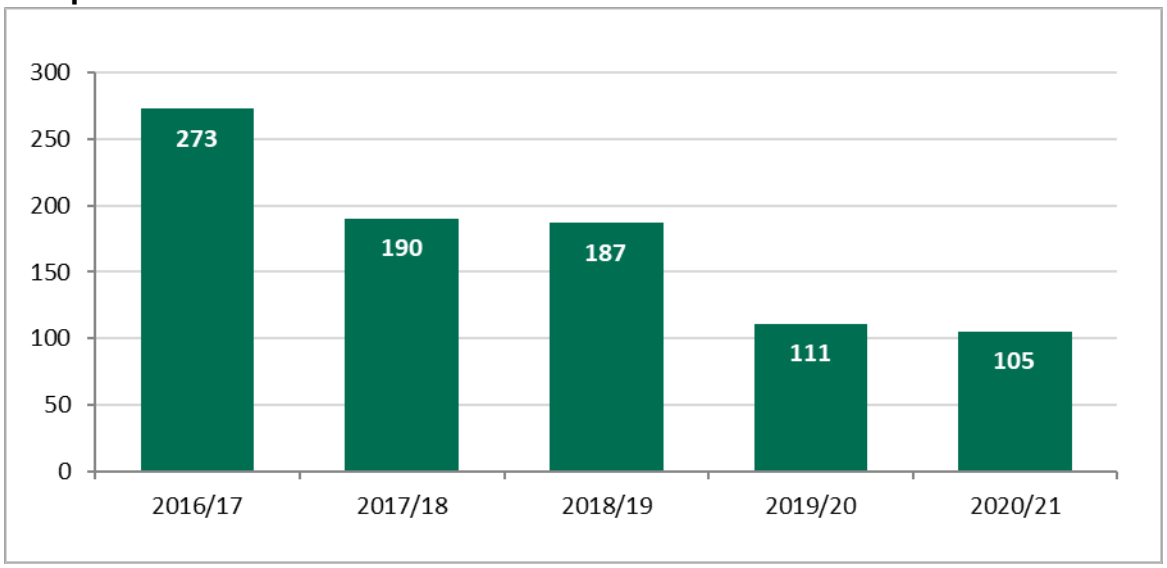
**Figure 63 – Chart showing wood and wood products import consignments in GB subject to inspection undertaken by Forestry Commission from 2016/17 – 2020/21**




2.376 Higher inspection figures for 2019/20 and 202/21 relate to the higher number of commodities requiring inspection as part of the Commission Implementing Decision 2018/1137. Although total inspection numbers have increased under the above Decision, only 1% of the commodity codes listed require an inspection at point of import.

2.377 Whilst Commission Implementing Decision 2018/1137 was only valid until 30 June 2020, the Forestry Commission maintained the regulation requirements as the basis of its wood packaging material monitoring plan. This will remain until March 2021, with a view to review and revise it after the UK withdrawal from the EU.

**Figure 64 – Chart showing imported wood and wood products non-compliances in GB from 2016/17 – 2020/21**



2.378 Under the FC's jurisdiction for imported material, the number of non-compliances in 2020/21 was lower than in 2019/20. The main cause was failures of wood packaging material manufacturers and treatment providers in the country of export. Most non-compliances were for failing to ensure that the material was compliant with ISPM15, for example:

- clearly marked with a traceable ISPM15 mark
- within the bark tolerance level permitted
- free from pests and signs of live pests

2.379 Any type of commodity consignment where non-compliances were identified were subjected to remedial action. A very low number of cases were found where evidence of live life stages of pests was found. The most significant consequence of non-compliances is that a quarantine pest such as Asian Longhorn beetle could be introduced into GB. As above, the underlying causes were poor compliance with ISPM15 marking requirements, or wood packaging material that had not been subjected to ISPM15 approved measures, and/or had potentially been fraudulently marked.

2.380 In 2020/21, there remained a focus on inspections of wood packaging material associated with stone and iron materials from China and Belarus, due to the introduction of Commission Implementing Decision 2018/1137.

2.381 The Forestry Commission maintained the number of controlled species of wood being imported from countries where the Round Headed Apple Tree borer beetle (*Saperda candida*) was known to be present. This did not result in a significant increase in timber inspections, as the species of wood added to the controlled list was not regularly traded at commercial levels in the UK.

2.382 The upward trend in imports - including significant volumes of conifer logs from the USA - continued, as did the upward trend in those that were intercepted and found to contain the harmful pest of conifer trees, the pinewood nematode (*Bursaphelenchus xylophilus)*. The statutory notification of solid fuel wood as firewood or as feedstock to produce bioenergy contributed to the increase interceptions. There was a 20% (77,440m3) increase in regulated imported timber volume on the previous financial year.

2.383 The largest increases involved volumes of containerised North American hardwoods into Liverpool and break bulk softwood consignments into the Humber ports from Russia. Importers reported increased levels of stockpiling of timber during 2020 in advance of the end of the EU Exit transition period on 31 December. Imports of timber (including materials related to house construction) were at an all-time peak, which looks likely to continue throughout 2021/22.

**Figure 65 – Chart showing the number of phytosanitary export certificates issued in GB from 2016/17 – 2020/21**

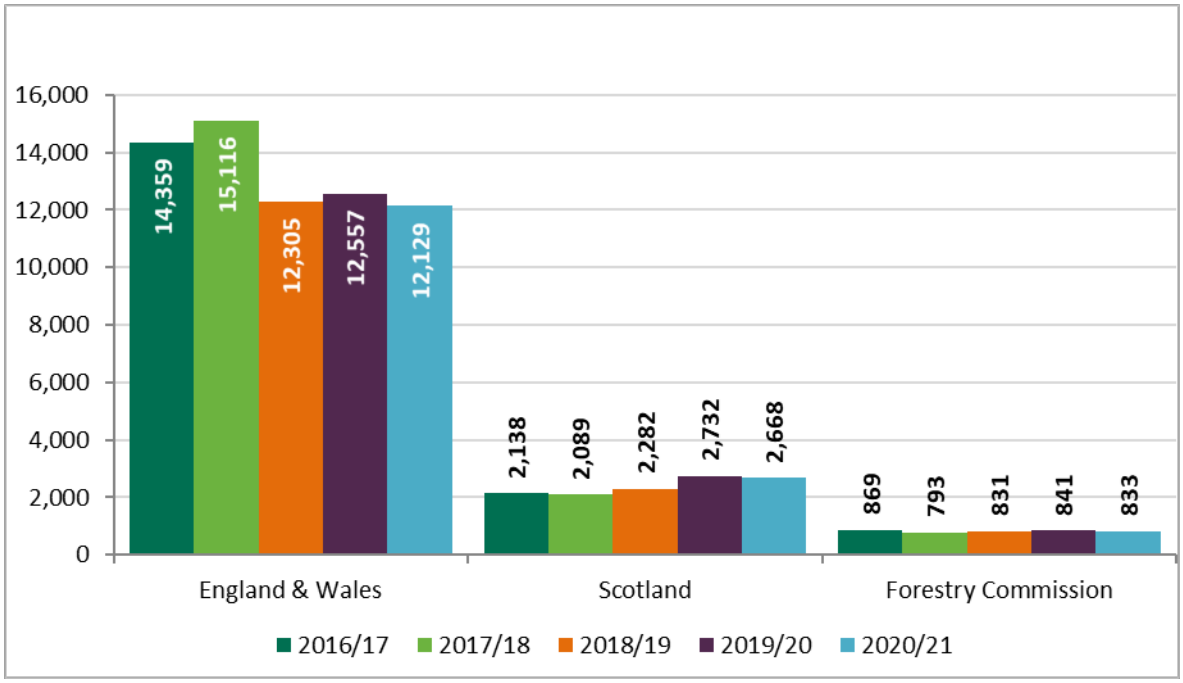
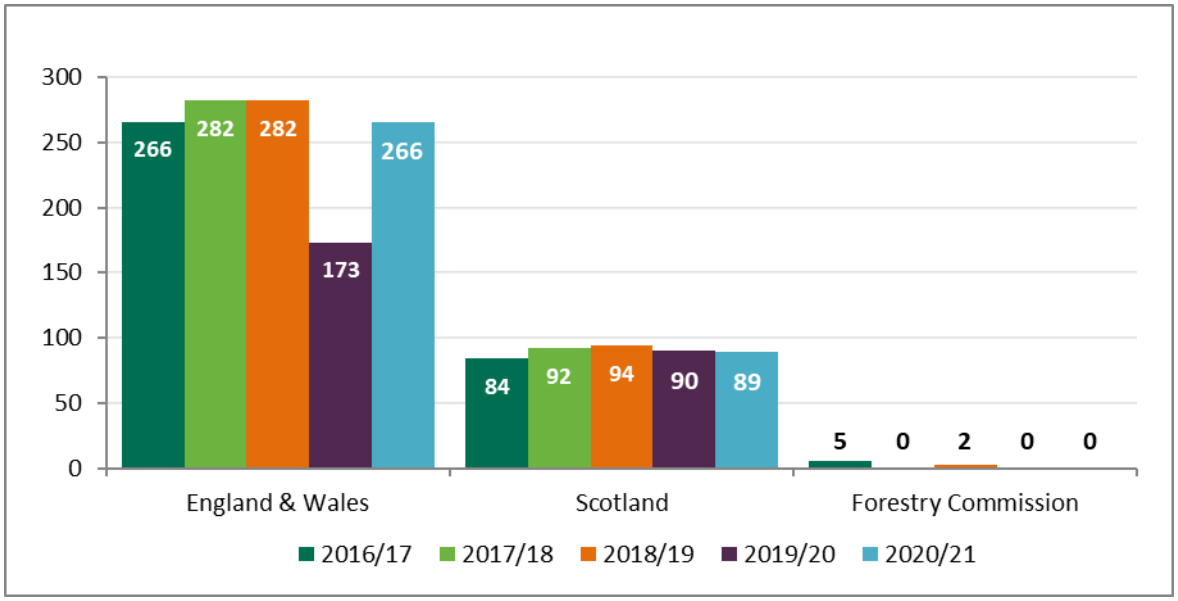



**Figure 66 – Chart showing the number of licenses issued for import or holding of prohibited plants and pests in GB from 2016/17 – 2020/21**




2.384 The number of phytosanitary certificates for export issued by the FC in 2020/21 continued the general downward trend in issuing FC export certificates since 2015/16. No scientific licences were issued in 2020/21 by FC and the delivery of scientific licensing authorisations was transferred from the FC to APHA on 1 January 2021.

2.385 In England and Wales, in 2020/21, 266 licences were issued to allow for the import or to hold prohibited plants and plant pests. The implementation of Smarter Rules and Safer Foods package combined Forestry and Plant Health pests under one piece of legislation, which has allowed consolidation of the licensing regime in England and Wales[12].

2.386 In Scotland, there was a small decrease in the number of scientific licences issued, compared to 2019/20.

### Import controls enforcement trends and actions taken in cases of non-compliance

2.387 For APHA PHSI, enforcement of import controls was mainly by action on non-compliant consignments. This was generally handled by re-export or destruction of the consignment at the importer's expense.

2.388 During 2020/21 in England and Wales, the number of non-compliant actions for imports increased slightly from 1,503 in 2019/20 to 1,522 in 2020/21. Sustained monitoring of postal and courier packages at Langley's postal depot contributed to the discovery of non-compliant consignments. The number of actions was higher in comparison to the period 2011 to 2015, when there has been a relatively consistent level of non-compliance actions of between 1,100 and 1,400 actions per year.

[12] Additional legislative requirements in relation to licensing have also supported a move to a unified approach, such that from January 1 2021, APHA has taken taking over responsibility for all plant pest licences that were previously issued by the FC.

# Chapter 3 – National systems of audit

## Audit of local and port health authorities

3.1 The following LA audits were undertaken by the FSA in England and Wales in 2020/21.

**England**

| Programme topic / policy area | Dates | Number of authorities audited | Number of establishment 'reality checks' | Reporting | Number of recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Audits of LA's suspended since March 2020 due to COVID-19 | April 2020 – March 2021 | 0 | 0 | N/A | N/A |

**Wales**

| Programme topic / policy area | Dates | Number of LA's audited | Number of establishment 'reality checks' | Reporting | Number of recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Follow-up audits (food hygiene) to assess LA progress in implementing agreed full audit action plans. | April 2020 – March 2021 | 0 | 0 | N/A | N/A |
| Feed audits | April 2020 – March 2021 | 0 | 0 | N/A | N/A |

3.2 In Scotland, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, flexibility from the Food Law Code of Practice was granted to LAs. No LA audits were conducted in 2020/21.

## Summary of audit findings

### England

#### LA delivery of official controls at approved establishments in England

3.3 A programme of audits to assess LA delivery of official controls at approved establishments commenced in August 2019, involving 10 Local Authorities. Contact between FSA officials and Local Authorities was suspended before the audit had been completed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Audits of LAs had not resumed at the end of the 2020/21 financial year.

### Wales

#### Follow-up Food and Focused Feed Audits

3.4 Between 2013 and 2017, all 22 LAs in Wales were subject to a programme of full audits to assess performance in delivering food hygiene and food standards official controls. A detailed review of the findings of the full audit programme was completed and a programme of follow up audits was put in place to assess progress in implementing the agreed full audit action plans. In 2020/21, no follow-up audits were undertaken due to the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore it has not been possible to draw any further conclusions due to the absence of audit activity.

3.5 A focused audit programme to assess the extent to which the six regional feed services in Wales were meeting requirements commenced in 2019/20. Four services, covering the responsibilities of 16 LAs received an audit in 2019/20 and the services of nine of those LAs received an audit visit. The focussed feed audit programme remains unfinished with no audits taking place in 2020/21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Scotland

#### Local authority sampling

3.6 In March 2021, FSS issued a data gathering exercise across Scottish LAs to establish the on-going activities of LAs during the pandemic. The areas of focus related to changes in the enforcement of food law between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, the additional workloads incurred as a result of Export Health Certificates, and the COVID-19 control activities that involved elements of food law compliance.

## Internal audits conducted by competent authorities

3.7 GB competent authorities undertake risk-based audits of operational systems, processes and procedures for food and feed, animal welfare and plant health. Audits of associated control bodies are also undertaken. These audits ensure that requirements of the UK Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and Article 6 of Regulation (EC) 625/2017 are met.

**Internal audits conducted by competent authorities**

| Audit programme topic / policy area audited | Sector | Competent authority | Country | Assurance level | Final report issued | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TSE – Incident Management Communications | Animal Health | APHA | England, Scotland & Wales | Substantial | May 2020 | 1 |
| OFFC – Plant Variety and Seeds Service – The process of the UK National Authority (as recognised by UPOV) invoicing for carrying DUS testing on behalf of third countries under UPOV Bi-Lateral DUS testing agreements. | Plant Health | APHA | England | Moderate | July 2020 | 3 |
| OFFC – Veterinary Medicines Residue | Feed & food | APHA | England, Scotland & Wales | Moderate | November 2020 | 3 |
| OFFC – Safeguarding TB Status (Scotland) | Animal Health | APHA | Scotland | Substantial | January 2021 | 1 |
| Movement Assistance Scheme | Animal Health | APHA | England, Scotland & Wales | Not provided | March 2021 | 2 |

| Audit programme topic / policy area audited | Sector | Competent authority | Country | Assurance level | Final report issued | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CIT / CSC – Welfare in transport (OFFC) | Animal Health | APHA | England, Scotland & Wales | Moderate | April 2021 | 7 |
| Export Trade Processes | Animal Health | APHA | England, Scotland & Wales | Moderate | April 2021 | 3 |
| Review of forged documentation relating to APHA sample results. | Animal Health | APHA & Defra | England, Scotland & Wales | Not provided | January 2021 | 3 |
| Leadership of the Veterinary profession | Animal Health | Defra | England, Scotland & Wales | Moderate | April 2020 | 5 |
| OFFC Organics | Plant Health | Defra | England | N/A – advisory | April 2021 | 0 |
| Delivery and Oversight re training of Official Auxiliaries | Food Hygiene | FSA | England and Wales | Substantial | August 2020 | 2 |
| Food Chain Information and Collection and Communication of Inspection Results | Food Hygiene | FSA | England and Wales | Limited | September 2020 | 8 |
| Wine Standards | Food Hygiene | FSA | England and Wales | Moderate | September 2020 | 6 |
| Management of contract for the supply of Official Veterinarians and Meat Hygiene Inspectors | Food Hygiene | FSA | England and Wales | Moderate | November 2020 | 3 |
| Raw Drinking Milk (follow-up) | Food Hygiene | FSA | England and Wales | Substantial | February 2021 | 2 |
| FSA monitoring of Port Health Authorities | Food Hygiene | FSA | England | Substantial | March 2021 | 3 |

| Audit programme topic / policy area audited | Sector | Competent authority | Country | Assurance level | Final report issued | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Post Mortem Inspection | Food | FSS | Scotland | Limited | February 2021 | 6 |
| Imported Food | Food | FSS | Scotland | Limited | March 2021 | 10 |
| Enforcement | Food | FSS | Scotland | Reasonable | May 2021 | 8 |
| Bee health – apiculture programme | Animal and Plant Health and Welfare | RPA | England | Satisfactory | January 2020 | 0 |
| Cattle Identification Inspections | Animal and Plant Health and Welfare | RPA | England | Substantial | April 2021 | 0 |
| Beef Labelling | Feed & food | Scottish Government | Scotland | Reasonable | May 2020 | 2 |
| Fish and Shellfish Health | Feed & food | Scottish Government | Scotland | Substantial | May 2020 | 2 |
| Egg Marketing and Poultry | Feed & food | Scottish Government | Scotland | Reasonable | July 2020 | 6 |
| Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies | Feed & food | Scottish Government | Scotland | Substantial | September 2020 | 2 |
| Animal Health and Welfare – Review of Risk and Governance | Animal Health and Welfare/ Feed & food | Scottish Government | Scotland | Limited | March 2021 | 6 |
| Review of the management & control system for fisheries projects in Wales | Aquatic animal health | Welsh Gov EFAT | Wales | Reasonable | May 2020 | 28 |

## Summary of audit findings

### England

3.8 Official controls delivery was found to be satisfactory in all the activities audited with no significant control issues being identified. However, the following recommendations were made:

- Improvements to enhance the adequacy and effectiveness of controls in place over administrative processes for approving/re-approving transporter authorisations and Journey Logs (OFFC – CIT / CSC – Welfare in Transport)
- Updates to Standard Operating Procedures and simplifying the process by removing APHA from the invoicing chain for NIAB's work (OFFC plant Varieties and Seeds)
- More regular monitoring reports of positive samples should be conducted to allow for effective monitoring that inspections and follow ups have taken place in a timely manner (OFFC – Veterinary Medicines Residue Surveillance).

3.9 There was an increase in the proportion of positive opinions in 2020-21, with all opinions being either Substantial or Moderate.

### Wales

3.10 The European Funds Audit Team (EFAT) is responsible for undertaking audit work focusing on the areas where Welsh Government has responsibility, as well as some audit work looking at the arrangements in place for oversight of delegated functions.

3.11 In respect of 2020, EFAT undertook a comprehensive system audit of the controls and processes in place in regard to the management of fisheries projects, which are part funded under the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF). 28 recommendations were made (14 Significant and 14 Merits Attention). Half of the recommendations, including 12 of the 14 classed as 'Significant', were addressed by the responsible department prior to the issuing of the final report.

3.12 No further audit work was undertaken in relation to Official Controls during 2020 due to resource being prioritised into other areas following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Scotland

3.13 Official Control reviews of Fish & Shellfish Health and Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies both resulted in substantial audit assurance opinions, as controls were found to be robust and managed well.

3.14 Official Control reviews of Beef Labelling & Egg Marketing and Poultry both resulted in reasonable audit assurance opinion, as controls were found to be

adequate but required improvement. Weaknesses in the Egg Marketing and Poultry team were primarily caused by an IT programme/database used by the team with limited functionality. Minor weaknesses in the Beef Labelling team related to transparency, guidelines and communication, which have now been resolved.

3.15 The Animal Health and Welfare Division of the Scottish Government was given a limited assurance audit opinion for its risk and governance arrangements. This means that controls are weak, but developing.

3.16 The decision to undertake a risk and governance review over all of OCR was led by the significant changes being made across all delivery teams as a result of EU Exit. The governance structures within SG relating to OCR delivery are complex, and intersect with delivery by other organisations, such as FSS and APHA. This review was proposed to add value not only internally, but also for competent authorities across Scotland in the run up to EU Exit and support future development of an effective and efficient OCR assurance framework. There were no specific concerns in relation to the delivery of official controls.

3.17 All issues raised as part of this review were recognised and accepted by the Scottish Government. An action plan has been agreed and monthly meetings between SG Internal Audit and Animal Health and Welfare team are currently in place to support and monitor progress.

### Food Standards Agency (FSA)

3.18 Official controls delivery was found to be generally satisfactory in all the activities audited with no significant control issues being identified. The audit of Food Chain Information identified a number of improvements that the FSA has accepted and agreed to address.

### Food Standards Scotland (FSS)

3.19 The FSS Audit team in Scotland carried out three audits of FSS's Operational Delivery. There were no reports issued with an "Insufficient" audit outcome, however there were identified consistent and significant control weaknesses in the reports issued relating to the required updating of guidance and associated documentation.

3.20 The planned arrangements appear to be suitable to achieve the objectives of official controls but there is a need to continue the strengthening of processes and controls to ensure compliance with, and effective application of, those arrangements. FSS have continued to demonstrate ability and willingness to promptly address the issues identified through the audits.

## Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

3.21 Last year APHA achieved a positive percentage report from audits of 62% (percentage of reports with an opinion of moderate or above); in 2020 that level increased to 100% and there were two substantial opinion reports which led to the conclusion that there was an improvement in the control environment.

3.22 The audits confirmed a high level of compliance with external requirements. There are a very high number of external audits and internal quality reviews in APHA from organisations such as UKAS, Lloyds QA, the MHRA and VMD. The results of these audits are appropriately escalated and there are good local processes for monitoring the implementation of actions. There is a strong direction of travel to improvement, with APHA bringing all the reports into one central location and all actions into one database for monitoring. The control environment was found to be well managed, with processes clearly defined, documented and generally well followed.

3.23 There is a strong process for follow-up which was led by APHA. The rate of implementation and evidence provided was satisfactory, and there are no outstanding high priority recommendations. Two actions remain from the previous year and are reliant on replacement of a key operational system, eDomero, which Digital, Data and Technology Services (DDTS) are responsible for.

3.24 Five operational audits relevant to Official Feed and Food Controls (OFFC) regulatory requirements, and two other audits with legislative requirements were carried out. These demonstrated a high level of compliance. Robust links to the operating procedure manual for the OFFC audits were found but there were some gaps in the available instructions that relate to the supporting procedures that underpin regulatory arrangements. Processes were well defined and well documented, with some minor exceptions. Expected processes were largely followed and a lot of good practice was identified.

3.25 Some improvements were highlighted to enhance the Veterinary Medicines control framework around: regular monitoring of positive sample results to ensure appropriate follow up action and confirm closure; and regular review, monitoring and lessons learned regarding un-assayable (spoiled) samples, to reduce the error rate and drive efficiency.

3.26 In some audits, a lack of clarity around responsibilities was found where third-party certifying bodies are involved in the control framework; for example, improvements could be made to enhance the Veterinary Medicines control framework by review of the reports required under the SLA to ensure that APHA are providing complete, relevant and timely information to VMD.

3.27 Three reviews (Export Health Certificates (EHC), Welfare in Transport (WIT) and Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS)) looked at administrative/office functions capacity to provide support following EU Exit. All teams covered in

these reviews were directly impacted in terms of new processes and significant increase in volumes of work. The audits confirmed there is capacity and capability to handle increased workloads in the short term with good processes to monitor the ongoing impact.

3.28 COVID-19 has had a significant impact on Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) inspections, but the review of this concluded that action is being taken to manage overdue inspections with field delivery staff and veterinary leads prioritising higher risk inspections. Quality and compliance with EU and domestic legislation were not compromised.

### Audit of organic control bodies

3.29 The audit and assessment of control bodies is undertaken on Defra's behalf by the UK Accreditation Service (UKAS). UKAS checks these bodies are operating in accordance with the control requirements. In 2020, UKAS concluded that satisfactory evidence had been demonstrated in a number of areas to confirm confidence in the bodies competence to perform organic certification duties.

## Directorate F audits and missions

3.30 No directorate Directorate-F audits were carried out in 2020.

# Chapter 4 – Resources

## Number of control staff in GB

4.1 The table below shows the total number of FTE staff involved in controls on food safety, animal and plant health and animal welfare in GB as of 31 March 2021.

| **Authority** | **Full time equivalents (FTE)** |
|---|---|
| FSA | 1,727.2 |
| FSS | 260.5 |
| Local authorities | 1,878.6[13] |
| Defra | 372.49 |
| Welsh Government | 117.5 |
| Scottish Government | 78.1 |
| APHA | 2,567.18 |
| VMD | 32 |
| HSE | 19 |
| RPA | 228.4 |
| Forestry Commission | 47 |
| Fera Science Ltd | 111.65 |
| Pirbright Institute | 29 |
| Cefas | 34.81 |
| MSS | 40 |
| MMO | 94 |
| **Total** | **7,630.4** |

[13] The LA FTE figure is for the professional food posts occupied even if officers were temporarily redeployed/diverted to COVID-19 or other non-food activities at 31 March 2021. Reported data suggests around 50% of the occupied resource was redeployed/diverted at that time.

# Chapter 5 – Actions taken to improve performance of competent authorities and food business operators

## Actions in the feed and food sectors

### Revision of the Feed and Food Law Codes of Practice and associated Practice Guidance

5.1 A consultation was held in England in October 2020. The FSA considered the responses and published an updated version of the Food Law Code of Practice and associated Food Law Practice Guidance in March 2021.

5.2 A consultation was held in Wales in December 2020 on proposed changes to the Food Law Code of Practice and associated Food Law Practice Guidance.

5.3 The key proposals (in Wales) and changes (in England) included:

- modernisation of the baseline knowledge, skills and experience requirements to enable a wider cohort of local authority (LA) professionals to undertake official food controls and other official activities, which the current Code restricts
- replacing the existing competency requirements with the FSA Knowledge and skills for the effective delivery of official feed and food controls and other activities (The Competency Framework), that defines competency by activity rather than by role
- introducing a provision to enable the Food Standards Agency to be more responsive in issuing instructions (Wales) and advice (England), whereby LAs may legitimately depart form the Code, in limited circumstances
- updating the Code to reflect Official Control Regulation (EU) 2017/625 and EU exit implications, where the negotiated position is unknown.
- simplification of the Code

The consultation closed on 25 March 2021.

5.4 In Scotland, Phase 3 of the Food Law Code of Practice Review commenced and is part of a wider programme of work within our Regulatory Strategy to review the Food Law Codes of Practice. Phase 1 included a revision of the Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) 2019. In 2019, Phase 2 was completed when the Interventions Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) 2019 came into force. Following a consultation, it is proposed the Administration and Service Planning – Food Law Code of Practice and the Penalties and Sanctions – Food Law Code of Practice will both be published in the next reporting year.

5.5 In Scotland, a Feed Manual has been developed, in readiness for the new feed model implementation (April 2021) based on the Feed Code and Practice Guidance, which is in place in the rest of GB.

## Food Hygiene Rating / Food Hygiene Information Schemes

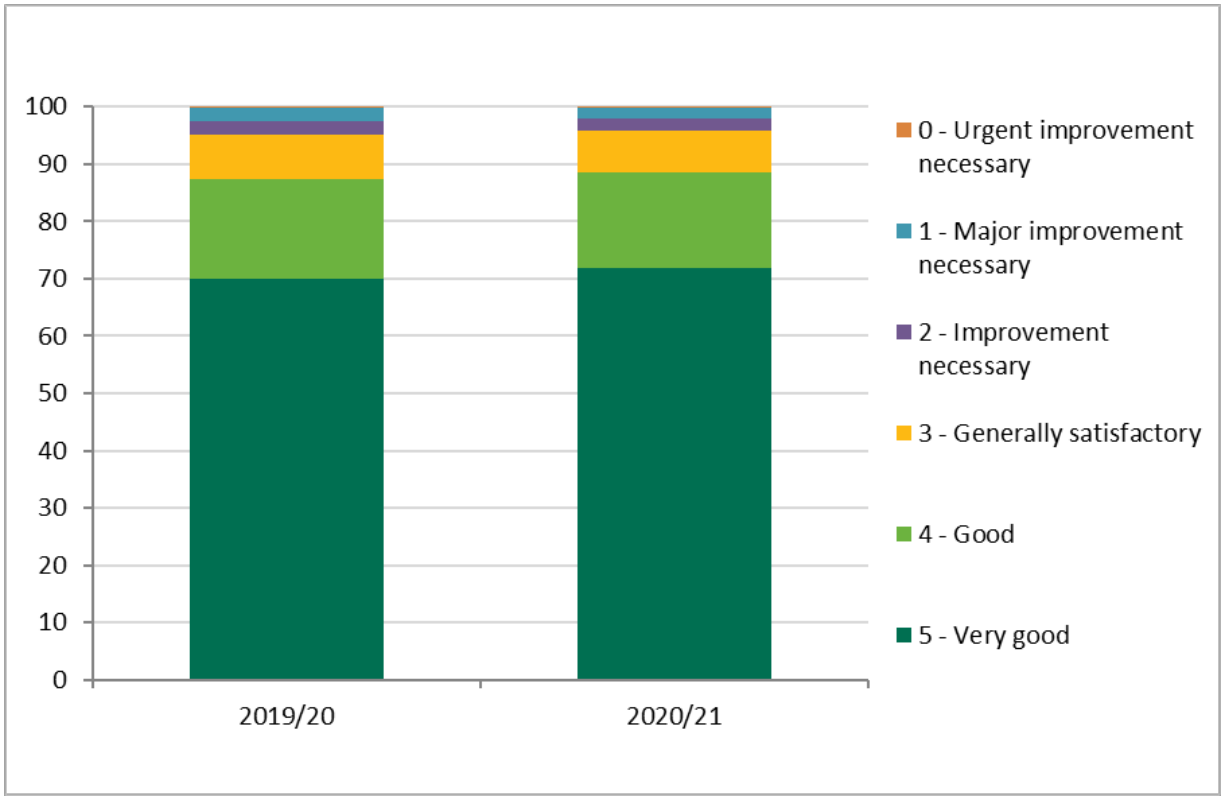
5.6 The FSA and FSS continued to work with LAs to deliver the schemes. The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) is operated by all LAs in England on a voluntary basis and participation in Wales is mandatory. All LAs in Scotland operate the Food Hygiene Information Scheme (FHIS).

5.7 In 2020, FHRS information was available for approximately 512K food businesses. FHIS information was available for approximately 50K food businesses

5.8 A report on the Review of the Operation of the FHRS Appeals System in Wales was published in February 2020. The review found LAs were operating the scheme in accordance with statutory requirements. It demonstrated the number of businesses appealing a rating has remained static and in every year since 2015 represents less than 1% of all rated businesses in Wales. The report found LAs continue to work collaboratively to ensure the consistent application of ratings.

5.9 The chart below shows a steady improvement in businesses achieving an FHRS rating of three and above in England and Wales.

**Figure 67 – Chart showing the percentage distribution of FHRS ratings in England and Wales from 2019/20 – 2020/21**




5.10 Ninety-five percent of food businesses in England and Wales were awarded FHRS ratings of 3 and above. This is a 0.7% increase on 2019/20.

## Allergen labelling

5.11 During 2020, the FSS carried out further informal and formal engagement with stakeholders in Scotland following which, the FSS Board considered the feedback and provided advice to Scottish Ministers.

## Food fraud and food crime

5.12 The NFCU consists of a criminal intelligence, investigation and prevention capability which aim to provide an end-to-end response to combat criminal activity within the food supply chain. Its latest Food Crime Strategic Assessment, produced jointly with Food Standards Scotland, was published in September 2020.

5.13 Intelligence capabilities of the unit have been bolstered by incorporating national systems including the Police National Computer (PNC), the Police National Database (PND), the National ANPR Service (NAS) and the main intelligence database utilised by LAs (IDB). A system was also developed to allow the authorisation and conduct of covert activity, including the introduction of new operating processes to support this capability.

5.14 In 2020/21, the NFCU recorded over 1,500 new intelligence reports with a proportionate number of intelligence disseminations to internal and external partners. NFCU was responsible for 190 disruptions to food criminality. Nineteen new criminal and financial investigations were initiated, covering fraud through diversion of animal by-product, fraud by substitution of food produce, European Distribution Fraud, illicit activity around shellfish and the sale for consumption of 2,4-dinitrophenol and sodium chlorite-based solutions. A further 53 strands of operational activity were initiated including intelligence development and coordination operations.

5.15 The NFCU continues to utilise industry authenticity data through an Information Sharing Agreement with the Food Industry Intelligence Network (FIIN). Working with key operational partners, namely, the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers and the National Police Chiefs Council, has enabled the NFCU to secure relevant assistance with interventions across England and Wales.

5.16 Substantial work was undertaken to reduce the threat posed to consumers from DNP (2,4-dinitrophenol). This included working with partners across government to ensure a joint approach to tackling DNP and continuing its work to identify and remove websites, social media content and online market place listings selling DNP. To date efforts of the NFCU have resulted in the closure of:

- 102 websites
- 13 social media profiles
- 358 specific online marketplace listings

5.17 Throughout 2020, the Unit has worked with others in the Agency and externally to understand any food crime risks generated both by the COVID-19 pandemic and by the UK's exit from the European Union and the conclusion of the Transition Period.

5.18 The Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit (SFCIU) continues to focus on the protection of consumers and industry in Scotland from serious dishonesty within food supply chains. Although the prevention, investigation and detection of food crime is highly challenging, the SFCIU continues to expand its capability and capacity to meet that challenge, including its ability to work collaboratively with key partners such as Local Authorities, Police Scotland, Border Force, HMRC, Marine Scotland, NFCU and APHA.

5.19 The Intelligence Team has developed a number of information sharing agreements with law enforcement and industry partners, which has resulted in the increased sharing of intelligence relating to food crime and associated matters connected to organised crime, which has been vital in the detection and disruption of criminal activity across Scotland and further afield.

5.20 The Analytical Team enhances this area of work with their internal and external horizon scanning and production of problem profiles, more recently including assessments of risks and vulnerabilities linked to EU Exit and COVID-19 pandemic.

5.21 As a reporting agency our investigations arm is now well established leading and working with partner agencies identifying food fraud in Scotland and reporting those crimes to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

5.22 SFCIU continue to attend and contribute to multi-agency law enforcement groups chaired by Police Scotland, which provides an overview of emerging risks and trends and a platform to identify cross-interests and collaborative working.

5.23 As a leading partner in Operation OPSON, the Europol and Interpol joint operation targeting fake and substandard food and beverages, SFCIU has established international partnerships and proactively led successful campaigns resulting in actions across the world in relation to DNP, coffee, tuna and counterfeit alcohol. These partnerships continue to be developed through the European Food Fraud Network, European Heads of Food safety Agencies and the Global Alliance on Food Crime (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, UK and USA).

## Incident management protocols

5.24 The COVID-19 pandemic affected the delivery of the FSA's 2020/21 programme of training and exercises. In total, 10 activities were delivered. These activities focussed on raising awareness, stress testing and validation of the FSA emergency response procedures and processes.

5.25 Lessons learnt from the FSA's response to the pandemic will be used to inform the 2021/22 Exercise Programme and will support the continual improvement of our incident response capacity, capability and overall resilience.

5.26 The FSS 2020/21 planned exercise programme was also impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. FSS ran four events to rehearse current incident management arrangements, train staff and build resilience. In addition, arrangements outlined in FSS's Incident Management Framework (IMF) were adapted to manage FSS's business continuity in response to the pandemic. This provided the opportunity to establish the crisis management response structures, battle rhythm and use of bespoke incident tools.

5.27 A review of the IMF also took place and incorporated lessons learned from FSS's COVID-19 response.

5.28 During 2020/21, the FSA and FSS continued to jointly review and develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to support the crisis management processes. This included the development of the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) Operational Communications SOP. The SOP explains how to communicate with international food safety authorities regarding food incidents via INFOSAN. Since 1 January 2021, the FSA and FSS have non-member access to the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF).

5.29 The FSA and FSS published a package to help businesses understand the theory and practice of root cause analysis (RCA), explaining how it aids in reducing the number of recurring food safety incidents. Along with this package, FSA and FSS also published a Quick Reference Guide to the Guidance on Food Traceability, Withdrawals and Recalls within the UK Food Industry.

## Actions in the plant and plant health sectors

5.30 A revised version of the OPM contingency plan was drafted in 2020.

5.31 Work began to revise the contingency plan for *Xylella* in consultation with stakeholders. In Scotland, the *Xylella* Contingency Exercise took place in March 2020, to ensure staff remained familiar with contingency requirements.

5.32 Several existing forestry contingency plans were reviewed, and several new plans were commissioned and completed. Pest-free area reports were also commissioned and completed for:

- Oak Processionary moth
- the pest-free area for conifer bark beetles in north-west Scotland (completed by colleagues in Scottish Forestry).

### Incident management protocols

5.33 APHA successfully responded to several incidents and disease/pest outbreaks, as well as delivering a virtual regional exercise programme due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.34 APHA detected a new species of *Eriophyidae* mite on leaves and stems of *Agapanthus praecox*; through significant tracing activity, risk assessment and treatment at other Agapanthus growers, industry are now able to effectively manage this issue

## Actions in the animal health and welfare sectors

### Animal Welfare

5.35 Guidance on the Mandatory use of Closed Circuit Television in Slaughterhouses (Scotland) Regulations 2020, which will come into force on 1 July 2021, was published on 15 June 2020 and shared with Industry representatives on the same day. Small island slaughterhouses have been offered financial assistance to aid compliance with the regulations.

5.36 An updated code of practice for the welfare of pigs for England and codes of practice for laying hens and pullets in Scotland and Wales were published in 2020. Wales also published a code of best practice for animal welfare establishments.

5.37 In 2020, the Animal Welfare Committee published two reports on animal welfare issues associated with COVID-19 (AWC Opinion on the Animal Welfare Issues related to Covid-19 and AWC Second Opinion on the Animal Welfare Issues related to Covid-19 – medium to longer term) and a report on the killing of goats.

### Animal Health and Welfare Frameworks

5.38 The National Animal Health and Welfare Panel (NAHWP) meet quarterly to share intelligence and discuss national priorities. These are then updated based on current trends.

5.39 During 2019, a sub-group of NAHWP members trialled a new risk prioritisation programme, to assess the risks posed by animal health and welfare non-compliance. The Management of Risk in Law Enforcement (MoRiLE) standardised process sets out the thematic areas for Animal Health and Welfare priorities, the sub-threats, and the rationale behind risk scoring.

5.40 Discussions around priority setting using MoRiLE have not been finalised due to being superseded by COVID-19 pressures. Rather, the framework is used to discuss priorities and projects for the coming year.

5.41 The Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework 2014-24, sets out a ten-year overarching plan for making improvements in standards of animal health and welfare in Wales, whilst also helping to protect public health and making a contribution to the economy and the environment.

### Bee health

5.42 No activities were reported in the bee health sector in 2020.

### Aquatic animal health – England and Wales (Cefas FHI)

5.43 No significant changes to activities in 2020. Cefas FHI rolled out Safe Systems of Work to ensure operational delivery of Official Controls could continue (safely) under the climate of COVID-19 restrictions, all official duties and statutory programmes were successfully delivered.

5.44 Additional members of the Cefas FHI (Inspectors and Technical Trade Administrators) were recruited at the end of 2020 as part of the readiness preparations for EU-exit end of TP. This also required a significant period of in-house team training to ensure all members of staff were prepared for the resulting operational changes.

## Incident management protocols

### Aquatic Animal Health – England and Wales (Cefas FHI)

5.45 In 2020, Cefas FHI participated in a Defra led Contingency exercise with a specific focus on communications. This was a successful exercise which resulted in production of revised draft Q&A's and comms lines for future use. Internal quarterly desktop exercises (stress tests) implemented in 2019 to test capacity for response to a serious disease outbreak, continued throughout 2020, the outcomes of which are reported to Defra. The quarterly exercises involve available members of the Cefas FHI, Diagnosticians and Epidemiologists on the given day and are a useful real-time check of resource capability and readiness

### Bee health

5.46 2020 was the first year of National Bee Unit involvement in APHA's ERMAS (Emergency Readiness) audit programme – this proved useful, for example, to clarify roles during outbreaks and to help consider stakeholder engagement.

### Aquatic Animal Health – Scotland (SG – MSS FHI)

5.47 Further updates were made to contingency plans within Scotland in light of the recommendations following an internal Scottish Government audit assessing the implementation of official controls with respect to aquatic animal health.

5.48 Contingency plans and procedures for dealing with serious listed diseases were enacted in relation to both the suspicion of VHS and confirmation of KHV as referenced within Chapter 2 of this report.

### APHA

5.49 APHA successfully responded to several incidents and disease outbreaks, as well as delivering a virtual regional exercise programme (due to the pandemic). In March 2020, a pandemic plan was created, setting out how APHA and its operational partners would deliver an outbreak response. The plan was enacted in November 2020 to deal with the avian influenza outbreak. A lessons identified process has seen the plan further reviewed. Brief details of the responses are given below:

- Worked through our preparations for EU Exit, whilst maintaining business as usual, to ensure preparedness should any outbreaks occur.
- In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, APHA Contingency Planning Division established an Incident Management Team (IMT) to ensure that we prepared and responded accordingly.
- Dealt with an instance of Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM) in Scotland
- Responded effectively to a single outbreak of Avian Influenza that included lowly pathogenic and highly pathogenic strains. The detection of four HPAI H5 subtypes in the same epidemic event is unparalleled in the UK.
- There were 26 Infected Premises (Ips) identified across the four UK administrations. Most of these premises were in England.
- Over 300 dead wild birds were collected, tested, and identified as being affected by Avian Influenza.
- APHA performed several virtual regional and local exercises to consider the threats and challenges of dealing with an outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF).

## Training delivered by competent authorities

5.50 In 2020/21, the following training programmes, courses and exercises were organised and held across the different CAs.

| Competent authority | Course provider | Delivery method | Staff trained | Purpose of training |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| APHA | APHA (National Bee Unit) | Online – webinar | 62 | Technical training at the start of the beekeeping season |

| Competent authority | Course provider | Delivery method | Staff trained | Purpose of training |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| APHA | APHA | Virtual | 150 | Forward Operating Base set up in a pandemic |
| APHA | APHA | Office based | 40 | Allocations in an Outbreak |
| APHA | APHA | Virtual | 100 | African Swine Fever for Field Operations Managers |
| APHA | APHA | Virtual | 150 | Stakeholder Engagement Events with industry and operational partners |
| Cefas – FHI | Barefoot thinking | Face to face and practical | 2 | Challenges of Science Leadership |
| Cefas – FHI | Spartan rescue ltd | Face to face and practical | 5 | Essentials of working in, on, or near water |
| Cefas – FHI | STCW Training UK Ltd | Face to face and practical | 5 | STCW – Personal survival techniques |
| Cefas – FHI | Internal lead trainer | Face to face | 5 | Training on FHI COVID-19 Controls |
| Cefas – FHI | Internal lead trainer | Face to face | 18 | Training on export legislation and certification |
| Cefas – FHI | Internal lead trainer | Face to face | 18 | IPAFFs Training |
| Cefas – FHI | Internal lead trainer | Face to face | 18 | Training on Regulation 16/23 |
| Cefas – FHI | Internal lead trainer | Face to face | 10 | Training on UK listed diseases and status |
| Cefas – FHI | Internal lead trainer | Face to face | 18 | Training in UK NNS Controls, ILFA, ASR, IAS |
| Cefas – FHI | Internal lead trainer | Face to face | 18 | Imports and Import Controls in E&W post 1.1.21 |
| Cefas – FHI | Internal senior bacteriologist | Face to face and practical | 10 | FHI Practical – Annual Team Sampling Workshop |
| FSA | MacVet Consultants | Face to face | 7 | Level 3 HACCP principles delivered to Approval administrative staff |
| FSA | Origin growth/Indegu | eLearning | N/A | Allergens for LA officers |
| FSA | Origin growth | eLearning | N/A | Vacuum packing for LA officers |
| FSA | Desq | eLearning | 563 | Root cause analysis for LA officers |

| Competent authority | Course provider | Delivery method | Staff trained | Purpose of training |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FSA | Desq | eLearning | 6,702 | Labelling for LA officers |
| FSA | Desq | eLearning | 3,204 | Traceability for LA officers |
| FSA and FSS | FSA | eLearning | 241 | Introduction to Imported Foods |
| FSA and FSS | FSA | eLearning | 83 | Official Fish Inspectors Course |
| FSA and FSS | FSA | eLearning | 86 | Imported Food Sampling |
| FSS | FSS | Online webinar | 66 | Fishing Vessels Inspections (Health & Safety and Enforcement) |
| FSS | FSS | Online webinar | 42 | Training on OCV Guidance to LA/FSS authorised officers |
| FSS | FSS | Online webinar | 60 | Advanced HACCP to LA/FSS authorised officers |
| FSS | FSS | eLearning | N/A – available to the public via FSS website | Online Allergen training |
| FSS | FSS | Online webinar | 8 | Advance HACCP to FSS Aos |
| FSS | FSS | Online webinar | 45 | Verification of Microbiological Criteria of foodstuff |
| FSS | FSS | Online webinar | 116 | Post Mortem Inspection Regulation (EU) 2017/625 |
| FSS | FSS | Online Live Event | 46 | Animal By-Products and the use of Former Food in Feed |
| FSS | FSS | Online webinar | 80 | The Science of STEC Detection |
| FSS | FSS | Online webinar | 63 | Training for CO-CSO in Fish Hubs |
| HSE | HSE | Virtual Course | 10 | HSE new starter Induction |
| HSE | HSE | eLearning | 10 | Unconscious Bias/Equality/Diversity |
| HSE | HSE | eLearning | 8 | Conflict Resolution |
| HSE | HSE | Virtual Course | 10 | GDPR |

| Competent authority | Course provider | Delivery method | Staff trained | Purpose of training |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| HSE | HSE | Virtual Course | 10 | Overview of PPP Legislation |
| HSE | Premier Partnership | eLearning and exam | 7 | NEBOSH Certification |
| HSE | HSE | Virtual Course | 7 | Agricultural awareness |
| HSE | HSE | eLearning | 8 | Enforcement Officer (Legal Training) |
| HSE | HSE | Virtual Course | 7 | Witness Statements |
| HSE | HSE | eLearning & Assessment | 8 | Enforcement Officer (Occupational Health – Hazard & Risk) |
| HSE | HSE | eLearning & Assessment | 7 | Enforcement Officer (Occupational Health – Practice, Process & Substances) |
| HSE | HSE | eLearning & Assessment | 7 | Enforcement Officer (Occupational Health – Management, Handling Transport & Surveillance) |
| HSE | HSE | Face to Face and Practical | 7 | Enforcement Officer (Field Training) |
| HSE | HSE | eLearning & Assessment | 8 | Training in HSE IT systems |
| HSE | HSE | Virtual Course | 6 | Enforcement Officer (Case Assessment) |
| HSE | HSE | Virtual Course | 8 | Enforcement Officer (Witness Statements) |
| HSE | HSE | Virtual Course | 8 | Enforcement Officer (Legislative Requirements CLP, REACH, JR, ELCI) |
| HSE | HSE | Online | 2 | Principles of working in policy/further local focus on delivering/operational policy |

# Abbreviations and acronyms

| Abbreviation / acronym | Abbreviation / acronym in full |
|---|---|
| ABP | Animal By-Products |
| AFB | American Foul Brood |
| AIC | Agricultural Industries Confederation |
| APB | Aquaculture Production Business |
| APHA | Animal and Plant Health Agency |
| ASMS | Atypical Scrapie Monitoring Scheme |
| ASP | Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning |
| AO | Authorised Officer |
| BF | Border Force |
| BKD | Bacterial Kidney Disease |
| BSE | Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy |
| bTB | Bovine TB (Tuberculosis) |
| CA | Competent Authority |
| Cefas | Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science |
| CO | Certifying Officer |
| CFO | Certifying Support Officer |
| CPC | Commonwealth Potato Collection |
| CPH | County Parish Holding |
| CSFS | Compulsory Scrapie Flock Scheme |
| DAERA | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Northern Ireland) |
| Defra | Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs |
| DHSC | Department of Health and Social Care |
| EEA | European Economic Area |
| EFAT | European Funds Audit Team |
| EFB | European Foulbrood |
| EBLV | European Bat Lyssavirus |
| EMFF | European Maritime Fisheries Fund |
| EU | European Union |
| FBO | Food Business Operator |
| FC | Forestry Commission |
| FHI | Fish Health Inspectorate |
| FHIS | Food Hygiene Information Scheme |
| FHRS | Food Hygiene Rating Scheme |
| FSA | Food Standards Agency |
| FSS | Food Standards Scotland |
| FTE | Full Time Equivalent |
| GIAA | Government Internal Audit Agency |
| GM | Genetically Modified |
| GMO | Genetically Modified Organism |
| HACCP | Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point |
| HIN | Hygiene Improvement Notice |
| HRA | High Risk Area |

| | |
|---|---|
| HSE | Health and Safety Executive |
| KHV | Koi Herpesvirus |
| LA | Local Authority |
| LPAI | Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza |
| LT | Lipophilic Toxins |
| MANCP | Multi-Annual National Control Plan |
| MMO | Marine Management Organisation |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MPL | Maximum Permitted Level |
| MRL | Maximum Residue Level |
| NAHWP | National Animal Health and Welfare Panel |
| NBU | National Bee Unit |
| NCP | National Control Plan |
| NFCU | National Food Crime Unit |
| NSAID | Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drug |
| OCV | Official Controls Verification |
| OCVO | Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer |
| OFFC | Official Feed and Food Controls |
| OTF | Officially Tuberculosis Free |
| OTFW | Officially Tuberculosis Free Withdrawn |
| PCB | Polychlorinated Biphenyl |
| PCN | Potato Cyst Nematode |
| PEACH | Procedure for Electronic Application of Certificates |
| PHSI | Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate |
| PPP | Plant Protection Products |
| PRiF | Pesticide Residues in Food |
| PSP | Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning |
| RAN | Remedial Action Notice |
| RASFF | Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed |
| RDM | Raw drinking milk |
| RLs | Regional Laboratories |
| RPA | Rural Payments Agency |
| SFA | Specified Feed Additive |
| SFCIU | Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit |
| SG | Scottish Government |
| SG ARE | Scottish Government Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate |
| SHBHS | Scottish Honey Bee Health Strategy |
| SMR | Statutory Management Requirement |
| SNCP | Salmonella National Control Programme |
| SOP | Standard Operating Procedure |
| SPCS | Seed Potato Classification Scheme |
| SRM | Specified Risk Material |
| STEC | Shinga Toxin-Producing Escherichia Coli |
| TB | Tuberculosis |
| TSE | Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UKAS | United Kingdom Accreditation Service |

| | |
|---|---|
| VMD | Veterinary Medicines Directorate |
| VMP | Veterinary Medicinal Products |
| WATOK | Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing |
| WG | Welsh Government |
| WG EERA | Welsh Government Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs |