

Annual Report for 2023 on Official Controls performed in Great Britain under the OCR Multi-Annual National Control Plan



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Food
Standards
Agency
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**Food
Standards
Scotland**

For safe food and
healthy eating



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

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Executive Summary

This Annual Report sets out the key official control compliance data and activities for Great Britain in 2023, relating to feed and food safety, animal health and welfare (including aquatics), and plant health.

Production and publication of the Annual Report is a legal transparency requirement for DEFRA, under Article 113 of the [Official Controls Regulation 2019](#).

Introduction

Across Great Britain, official controls for food, animal feed, animal and aquatic health and welfare, and plant health are the ultimate responsibility of the Appropriate Authorities – the Secretary of State in England and Scottish and Welsh Ministers. Delivery responsibilities are designated by the Appropriate Authorities to a range of Competent Authorities across Great Britain, including Government Departments, Agencies and Local Authorities.

Strengthening control systems

Authorities across Great Britain continued to work closely together, using risk-based approaches and better data to deliver effective biosecurity controls.

Within the **food and feed sectors** there was an expansion of risk-based inspections, strengthening of import controls, and enhanced coordination between national and local authorities. In addition there was a greater focus on traceability, with an emphasis on better record-keeping and sampling across the supply chain. New training programmes helped enforcement officers to maintain high standards, while updated procedures supported faster responses to food safety incidents.

Animal health controls continued to be strengthened across Great Britain. Surveillance for exotic diseases and zoonoses was intensified, and contingency plans updated and tested through national exercises. Collaborative efforts between government agencies, industry, and veterinary professionals led to quicker responses and better coordination during disease incidents.

Good progress was made on **animal welfare**, with an increase in the consistency and coverage of inspections, expansion of in-house training for inspectors and new entrants. There was a strong focus on regulatory action, with clearer guidance and more co-ordinated action across agencies.

Whilst the delivery of **plant health** import controls at place of destination continued to present a challenge, the number of import inspections increased. Strengthening surveillance systems to detect pests and diseases earlier, helped manage ongoing outbreaks of harmful pests like *lps typographus* and to rapidly respond to new outbreaks.

Performance improvement

Competent Authorities across Great Britain continued to deliver a range of improvements during 2023 to the existing regulatory systems for animal and plant health and welfare, food safety, and incident management processes, including:

Food & Feed

- Feed inspection delivery by Competent Authorities improved, with the National Feed Audit programme showing stronger performance than in recent years.

Animal Health

- Expanding disease surveillance, improving traceability systems, and enhancing outbreak preparedness.

Animal Welfare

- Refinement of the selection process, based on risk, using FSA and FSS data, to identify farms with potential welfare issues, leading to targeted inspections.

Plant Health

- Over 60,000 physical import inspections were conducted to detect pests and diseases in imported plant material, with suspect samples sent to official laboratories for analysis.

Chapter 1 - Introduction and scope of the report

- 1.1 The Official Controls Regulation (OCR [EU 2017/625](#)) sets out the official control systems for monitoring compliance with - and enforcement of – sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) matters, namely feed and food law, animal health and welfare rules, and plant health law.
- 1.2 OCR requires Great Britain to publish and maintain a Multi-Annual National Control Plan (MANCP), detailing the controls systems and the public bodies and processes responsible for delivering them. To ensure transparency in delivering this Control Plan, OCR requires that appropriate authorities designate a person to publish the data and analysis of these OCR controls and enforcement activities. Defra has been designated for this purpose. **This Report delivers that requirement for the reporting year 2023.**
- 1.3 The reporting period for the Annual Report is generally by calendar year – the twelve months from 1st January to 31st December. For some reporting areas, data has historically been collected for the twelve months from 1st April – 31 March. As in previous years, this Annual Report therefore includes data from 1st January 2023 to 31 March 2024. Reporting periods and data for each control area are in line with the comparative data for previous years' Reports.
- 1.4 The MANCP and Annual Reports for Great Britain are produced by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) with contributions from:
- Chemicals Regulation Division of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
 - Defra's Agencies, principally the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)
 - 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)
- 1.5 The Annual Report includes:
- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 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 the performance of Competent Authorities and food business operators |
- 1.6 The 2023 Annual Report, and the Annual Reports for 2022, 2021 and 2020, are available on [the Defra website](#).

UK Annual Reports up to 2019 are available on [the FSA website](#).

Chapter 2 - Effectiveness of official controls

- 2.1 This section sets out SPS official controls activities and compliance levels in the reporting year 2023/24, comparing results with those achieved in 2022/23.

Official controls in the food sector

- 2.2 The FSA produced quarterly resource and performance reports for 2023/24 and presented these to the FSA Board. The reports tracked progress against the FSA's corporate objectives. The [Performance and Resources Report Q4 2023/24](#) gives the position at the end of 2023/24 FY¹.

UK local authority food law enforcement

- 2.3 The COVID Recovery Plan ended on 1st April 2023. The FSA expected LAs in England and Wales to return to business as usual, and to realign with the Food Law Code of Practice (FLCoP) for the delivery of official food controls. Since then, LAs have been required to submit biannual data returns (October for Q1 and Q2 and April for Q3 and Q4) so 2023/24 delivery could be monitored against these expectations.
- 2.4 By the end of the recovery period, all LAs were expected to be back on track for high and medium risk establishments for food hygiene (rated A, B, C or 'less than broadly compliant'² D) and high risk for food standards (rated A). The data indicated that LAs had broadly managed to deliver against the milestones in the recovery plan by then.
- 2.5 However, there are a larger number of establishments in the lower risk categories, and many LAs began the year with significant backlogs of interventions at establishments rated D and E for food hygiene and B and C for food standards.

Interventions achieved

Food hygiene

- 2.6 The reported percentage of due interventions achieved at establishments in categories A to E for food hygiene in England and Wales are set out in the table below. Data for some of the risk categories are missing from the table for some years, as the LAs were only expected to report on the number of interventions achieved for the higher risk categories during the recovery period. This was because there were no milestones during that period for interventions to be carried out at lower risk categories (D-rated and broadly compliant and E-rated establishments).

¹ [FSA Board Meetings | Food Standards Agency](#)

² In England and Wales, the FSA tracks the proportion of food establishments that are "broadly compliant" with food hygiene legal standards, meaning that the food establishment achieved a score of 10 or less for compliance in each category - hygiene, structure, and confidence in management

Percentage of due interventions achieved at establishments in England and Wales 2019/20 – 2023/24

Year	Country	A-rated %	B-rated %	C-rated %	D-rated %	E-rated %
2019/20	England	99	96	91	84	72
	Wales	100	99	93	81	82
2020/21	England	72	48	30	23	27
	Wales	67	34	19	13	15
2021/22	England	96	81	-	-	-
	Wales	97	74	-	-	-
2022/23	England	99	99	91	-	-
	Wales	100	100	77	-	-
Oct 2023*	England	83	86	68	41	18
	Wales	91	89	63	26	12
April 2024*	England	99	98	84	58	26
	Wales	99	100	91	44	25

* October 2023 refers to the first half year of the reporting period (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023) and April 2024 refers to 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024. Data cannot be added from Oct 23 and April 24 to calculate the annual % interventions achieved as the number due that were reported at each return includes those due and outstanding from the previous period. Data was not collected for C, D and E-rated establishments in 2021/22, or for D and E rated establishments in 2022/23. Data for 2022/23 has been updated to represent 100% of returns.

- 2.7 The April 2024 data indicated an improvement in the percentage of food hygiene interventions carried out at all risk categories in the second part of the year. Between October 2023 and the end of March 2024, the percentage of interventions carried out for England and Wales were 99% in both countries for A-rated establishments, 98% and 100% respectively for B-rated establishments, and 84% and 91% respectively for C-rated establishments.
- 2.8 The table illustrates compliance outcomes in line with pre-COVID levels for A- and B-rated establishments and approaching the pre-COVID levels for C-rated establishments in 2019/20. Although there was also an improvement for the lower risk categories, the percentage carried out at D-rated establishments of 58% (England) and 44% (Wales) and at E-rated establishments 26% (England) and 25% (Wales) respectively was still significantly below the 2019/20 levels. This shows that LAs were tackling backlogs according to risk.

Food standards

- 2.9 The reported total percentage of due interventions achieved at Category A, B and C-rated establishments for food standards in England and Wales are given in the table below.

Percentage of food standards due interventions achieved at establishments in England and Wales – 2019/20 – 2023/24

Year	Country	A-rated %	B-rated %	C-rated %
2019/20	England	76	30	32
	Wales	91	60	62
2020/21	England	28	17	17
	Wales	39	16	18
2021/22	England	75	-	-
	Wales	67	-	-
2022/23	England	87	-	-
	Wales	98	-	-
Oct 2023*	England	54	12	15
	Wales	76	19	20
April 2024*	England	83	12	12
	Wales	92	33	35

* October 2023 refers to the first half year of the reporting period (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023) and April 2024 refers to 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024. Data cannot be added from Oct 23 and April 24 to calculate the annual % interventions achieved, as the number reported due each return includes those due and outstanding from the previous period. Data was not collected for B- and C-rated establishments in 2021/22 and 2022/23. Data for 2022/23 has been updated to represent 100% of returns.

2.10 In England and Wales, the percentage of achieved interventions at category A-rated establishments increased to 83% and 92% respectively in the second part of the reporting year, compared with 55% and 76% respectively at the end of September 2023. However, this is below the level of interventions achieved at the end of 2022/23. While the percentage of interventions achieved at A-rated establishments has improved in England compared with the pre-COVID levels reported in 2019/20, the percentage achieved at the lower risk establishments rated B and C were below the pre-COVID levels in both countries. Some LAs reported they did not have the resource to carry out interventions at the lower risk establishments. This data does show that LAs were prioritising interventions according to risk.

Enforcement actions

2.11 Data for 2019/20 is included below, as a baseline for comparisons. The decrease in enforcement actions in 2021/22 reflected the fall in interventions carried out at that stage of the post-COVID recovery period. From October 2023 onwards, data was collected for the previous six months rather than 12 months, as FSA shifted at that point to operate on a six-monthly reporting return.

Food Hygiene

2.12 The number of establishments subject to formal enforcement actions and written warnings in England and Wales are set out in the table below.

Number of establishments subject to food hygiene enforcement actions in England and Wales, 2019/20 – 2023/24

Year	Country	Formal enforcement actions	Written warnings
2019/20	England	4,278	132,081
	Wales	442	12,454
2021/22	England	3,607	98,431
	Wales	263	5,756
2022/23	England	4,923	122,504
	Wales	456	10,855
October 2023*	England	2,455	62,514
	Wales	257	5,851
April 2024*	England	2,842	75,584
	Wales	222	6,671

* October 2023 refers to the first half year of the reporting period (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023) and April 2024 refers to 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, data on enforcement actions carried out during 2020/21 were not collected in England and Wales. Data for 2022/23 has been updated to represent 100% of returns.

- 2.13 In 2022/23, at the end of the recovery period, there was a marked increase in the number of establishments subject to formal enforcement actions reported in England and Wales. This was due to more interventions being carried out compared with 2021/22.
- 2.14 LAs in both countries also reported falls in compliance in premises since COVID-19, and an increase in the requirement for more enforcement activity. A 15% increase in interventions was reported for the last six months of 2023/24 in England compared with the pro-rata number from the annual 2022/23 data; and a decrease of 3% in Wales compared with the previous year.
- 2.15 However, the numbers reported varied in the first and last six months of 2023/24 and were higher in England in the second part of the year (April 2024) compared to the first part of the year (October 2023) and lower in Wales compared with October 2023. All the numbers were greater than those reported in 2019/20 (on a pro-rata basis).

2.16 There was also a 23% increase in establishments subject to written warnings in both England and Wales in April 2024, compared with 2022/23 on a pro-rata basis. The numbers increased in both England and Wales when comparing April 2024 and October 2023 data. The April 2024 numbers were greater than those reported in 2019/20.

Food Standards

2.17 The number of establishments subject to formal enforcement actions and written warnings in England and Wales are given in the table below.

Number of establishments subject to food standards enforcement actions in England and Wales, 2019/20 – 2023/24

Year	Country	Formal enforcement actions	Written warnings
2019/20	England	395	20,186
	Wales	56	2,689
2021/22	England	466	16,235
	Wales	19	2,015
2022/23	England	482	21,685
	Wales	25	2,824
October 2023*	England	241	11,652
	Wales	26	1,467
April 2024*	England	335	13,648
	Wales	23	2,162

* October 2023 refers to the first half year of the reporting period (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023) and April 2024 refers to 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, data on enforcement actions carried out during 2020/21 were not collected in England and Wales. Data for 2022/23 has been updated to represent 100% of returns.

2.18 In the second part of the year (April 2024), in England and Wales respectively there were 39% and 84% increases in establishments subject to formal food standards enforcement actions compared with 2022/23 pro-rata. April 2024 data showed an increase in England and a decrease in Wales compared to the first part of the year (October 2023). The April 2024 numbers were greater than those reported pro-rata for 2019/20 in England and lower in Wales.

- 2.19 Written warnings also increased in April 2024 by 26% and 53% in England and Wales respectively, when compared with 2022/23 pro-rata. The numbers increased in both England and Wales when comparing April 2024 and October 2023 data.
- 2.20 During the pandemic, food safety officers at LAs in both England and Wales were diverted from their normal duties to assist with the COVID-19 response. During the Recovery Plan, the return to food standards inspections in Wales was more gradual. However, in the past year as more interventions have been carried out, there has been a marked increase in formal enforcement actions reported in both countries.
- 2.21 In Scotland during 2023/2024, a total of 26,153 interventions were completed.
- 2.22 Formal enforcement action (Hygiene Improvement Notices and Remedial Action Notices) in Scotland have decreased. In 2023-24, the combined total number of HINs (203) and RANs (222) was 425, compared with 474 in the previous year.
- 2.23 Compliance in Scotland is assessed under the Food Law Rating Scheme (FLRS). The Scheme combines Food Hygiene and Food Standards into a combined intervention, with businesses risk rated. This differs from the approach taken in England and Wales, where food hygiene and food standards are assessed separately. Scottish data is therefore not directly comparable with the rest of GB data in this area. Although the rating schemes used to assess business compliance in Scotland differ from the rest of GB, both schemes relate to the assessment of an establishment's adherence to food law during an inspection.
- 2.24 The Interventions Code of Practice for Scotland 2019 is available [here](#).

Meat hygiene

- 2.25 In 2023/24, the FSA delivered official controls in 899 approved meat establishments across England and Wales. As of 31 March 2024, there were 824³ approved meat establishments. Of these, 220 were approved as slaughterhouses, 46 game handling establishments (stand-alone and co-located) and 755 approved as cutting plants (stand-alone and co-located including market stalls).
- 2.26 In 2023/24, FSS delivered official controls in 92⁴ approved meat establishments in Scotland. This included 24 slaughterhouses (four of which were also approved as game handling establishments), eight game handling establishments (in total), and 60 cutting plants including market stalls.

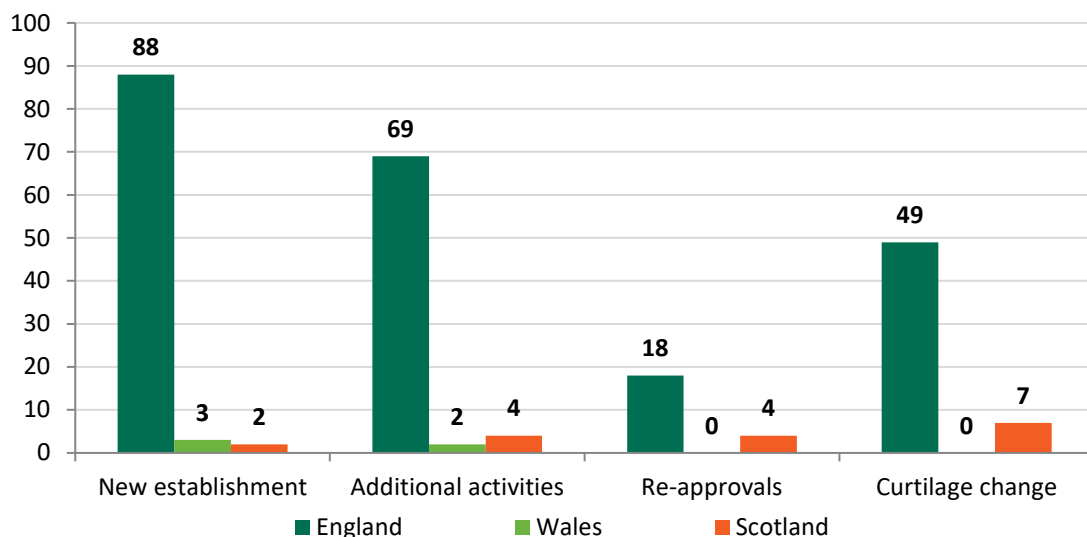
³ An establishment may be approved for more than one activity.

⁴ Approved establishments may carry out more than one function.

Approval of new meat establishments

2.27 In 2023/24, GB received 246 (England & Wales: 229, Scotland: 17) applications for approval or approval related activities, compared to 226 (England & Wales: 215, Scotland: 11) in 2022/23. All approvals applications received were logged and processed via a case management system. The volume received included a number of applications that were triaged by the Approvals Team but were identified as not requiring approval. These were not captured in previous years' data - hence the apparent increase in the volume of applications. The chart below shows a breakdown of approval applications received by type and region.

Figure 1 - Chart showing number of meat establishment approval applications received in GB in 2023/24



Refusals

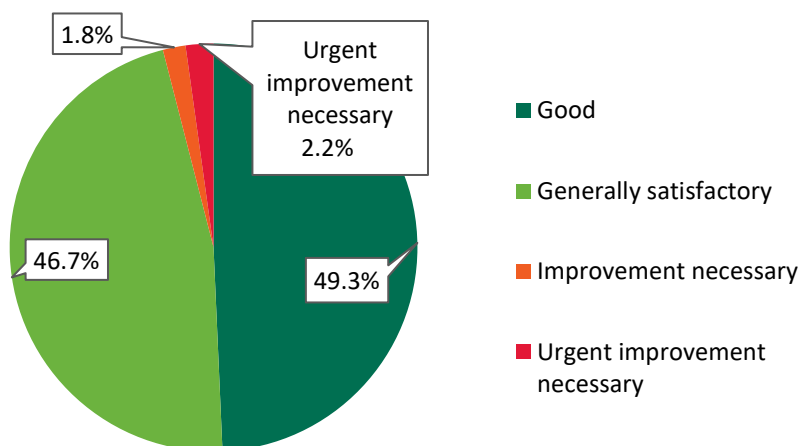
2.28 In England & Wales, 21 advisory visits were made in the 2023/24 period, compared to 12 in 2022/23. Optional advisory visits were available on a chargeable basis, with the aim of helping FBOs to identify animal welfare and hygiene requirements which might apply to their proposed activities prior to an FSA approval visit. In England and Wales, eleven FBOs were refused approval in 2023/24 - the same number as in 2022/23.

2.29 In Scotland in this reporting period, as in 2022/23, no establishments were refused approval and therefore no re-submission of applications for approval were made.

Food business operator audits in meat establishments

- 2.30 In 2023/24 in England and Wales, the FSA continued to conduct full and partial audits on approved meat establishments. Audit outcomes were based on an overall assessment across all areas audited, providing a reliable indicator on standards of hygiene, food safety, animal welfare and animal health. The FSA and FSS published audit outcomes for all approved meat establishments.⁵
- 2.31 The charts and tables below provide a breakdown of all approved meat establishments⁶ in England and Wales, as recorded at 31 March 2024. These are summarised by audit outcome following the most recent full FBO audit, irrespective of the year in which the audit was completed.
- 2.32 The data shows that 98.6% of premises were awarded a compliance rating of Good or Generally Satisfactory at the last audit (during the 2023/24 year, or rolled forward where audit frequencies spanned more than one reporting year). A separate breakdown is also provided for Scotland, as FSS operate a slightly different compliance scheme.

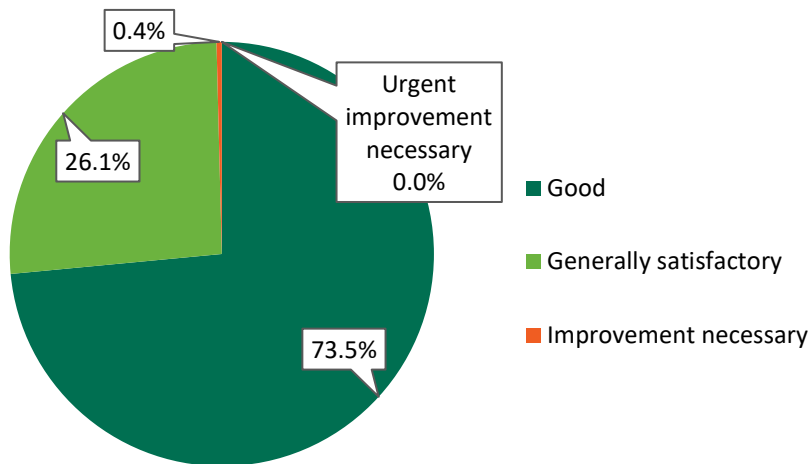
Figure 2 - Chart showing audit outcomes in England and Wales for 2023/24, by percentage, for slaughterhouses with or without co-located cutting plants and game handling (GH)



⁵ FSA meat establishment audits data can be accessed at <https://data.food.gov.uk/catalog>

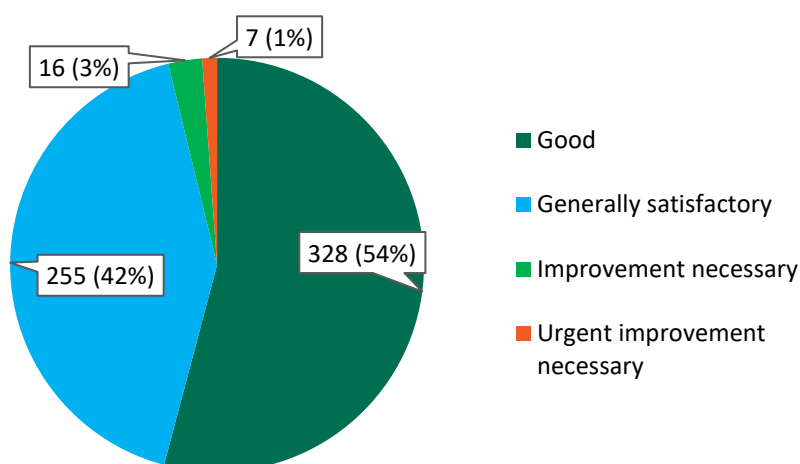
⁶ Figures exclude 35 newly conditionally approved meat establishments and those not operating long term with no score available as at 31 March 2024

Figure 3 - Chart showing audit outcomes in England and Wales for 2023/24, by percentage, for standalone cutting plants (including market stalls and co-located game handling)



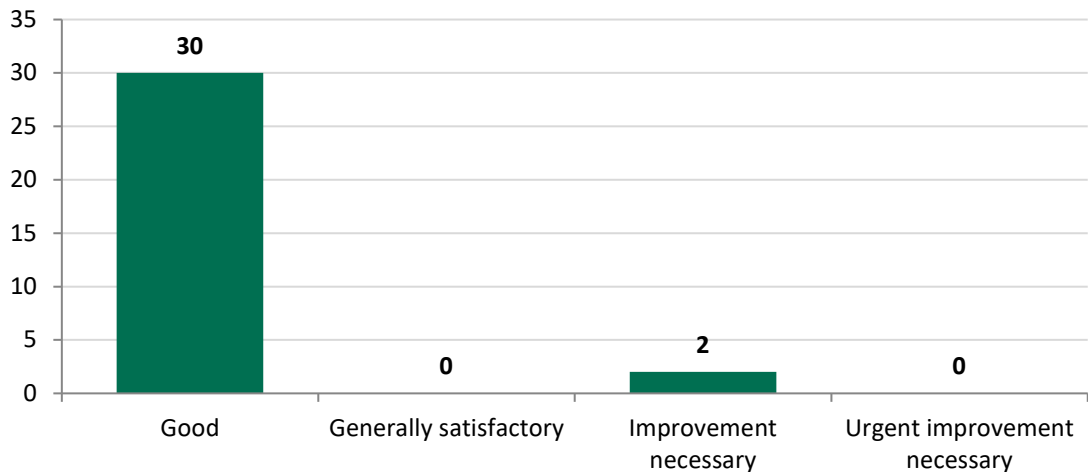
2.33 The chart below shows all completed audit scores for England and Wales awarded in 2023/24. During the reporting period, 606 full audits and 276 partial audits were completed. Audit frequency varied, depending on an FBO's previous compliance results. Some approved establishments would have been audited multiple times, with others having no audits during the reporting period.

Figure 4 - Chart showing the number of audits completed in England and Wales, and as a percentage of total audits, by audit outcome, during 2023/24



- 2.34 Of the 606 full audits completed, around 96.2% of establishments were awarded Good or Generally Satisfactory outcomes. Compliance levels remained stable when compared with 2022/23's score of 96.1%.
- 2.35 Since Q1 of 2023/24, the team has exceeded its key performance indicator target of 90% audit completions in the month in which they are due, achieving an average of 98%. Any audits not completed within the month were completed as soon as possible thereafter.
- 2.36 In Scotland, the inspection cycle (using Official Control Verification (OCV) methodology) consists of several announced and unannounced inspections/interventions in every approved establishment, with each such intervention triggering a written report and an Intermediate audit outcome. Following completion of the 12 month inspection cycle, plants receive a final audit report.
- 2.37 Due to the move to OCV methodology, Scottish data is not directly comparable with the other two nations, nor with previous years' data.
- 2.38 The following table shows the number of audits by intermediate audit outcome for 2023/24 in Scotland (FSS), as of 31 March 2024. Note that for any establishments within the approval process, the audit programme would be paused, hence the total below may be less than 92.

Figure 5 - Chart showing the number of audits completed in Scotland, by audit outcome, during 2023/24



Urgent improvement necessary

- 2.39 The [FSA](#) and [FSS](#) publish audit outcomes for all approved meat establishments. 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.

- 2.40 FBOs who fail to address non-compliances may trigger the Intervention Protocol. This Protocol seeks to safeguard consumers and improve public health, by improving overall business compliance - through education, advice, and enforcement action for meat establishments. The Intervention Protocol is triggered by 'urgent improvement necessary' or successive 'improvement necessary' scores, and can result in a review of the establishment's approval, should corrective action on non-compliances not be taken by the business operator.
- 2.41 In 2023/24, in England and Wales, nine approved premises underwent a review of approval under the [Intervention Protocol](#), compared with three in 2022/23. In the same period in Scotland, there were no plants with an 'urgent improvement necessary' audit outcome.

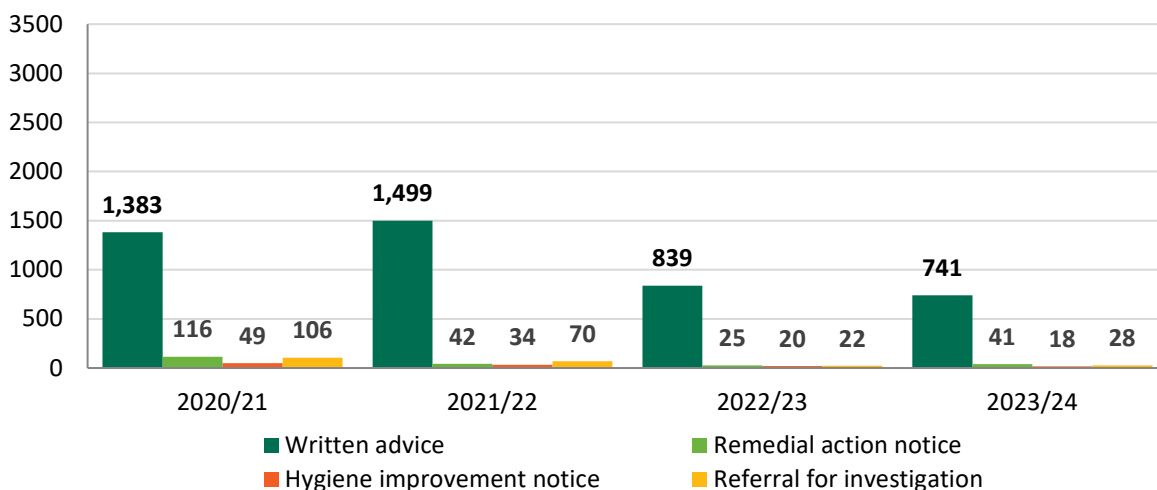
Unannounced inspections in cutting plants

- 2.42 During 2023/24, 774 unannounced inspections were completed in England and Wales, compared to 792 during 2022/23.
- 2.43 In Scotland, FSS conducts unannounced inspections (UAs) as either 'classic' (routine annual inspections carried out in all standalone Cutting Plants) or 'targeted' (specific factor identified or suspected at a plant). During 2023/24, a total of 44 classic UAs and 7 targeted UAs were completed - all as part of the audit process.

Enforcement in meat establishments

- 2.44 The chart below shows the numbers and types of enforcement action taken by the FSA and FSS in meat establishments over the last four years.

Figure 6 - Chart showing number of enforcement actions in GB meat establishments from 2020/21 – 2023/24



2.45 The FSA introduced a new Enforcement Delivery Model in slaughterhouses in May 2022, which has further improved consistency of approach and standards. The new approach allows a better understanding of the data, with removal of duplications and consistent information logging. To note: enforcement data from 2022/23 onwards cannot be directly compared to 2021/22 and earlier, due to the above-mentioned changes in the reporting methodology.

2.46 In England and Wales in 2023/24:

- a total of 695 contraventions were addressed via written advice issued to approved meat establishments including slaughterhouses, cutting plants, cold stores, and game handling establishments. This is a drop of 11.7% in contraventions addressed via written advice, compared to 787 in 2023/24
- a total of 41 Remedial Action Notices (RANs) were issued across 24 meat establishments, equating to approximately 2.7% of all meat establishments. This represents an 86.4% rise in RANS issued, compared to 22 in 2022/23
- for Hygiene Improvement Notices (HINs), 18 were issued across 13 meat establishments, equating to approximately 1.4% of all meat establishments. Levels remained stable compared to 2022/23, reducing marginally by one HIN
- there were 28 referrals for investigation, across 14 meat establishments, which is less than 2.7% of all meat establishments. This is a 40% increase - up from 20 referrals for investigation issued in 2022/23.

2.47 In Scotland, the level of formal enforcement has slightly decreased in comparison with previous years. This is likely linked to more targeted inspection and audit regimes, which generally prioritise allocation of FSS resources where they are required, allowing more timely follow-up of Written Advice, which prevents further escalation of enforcement.

Specified Risk Material (SRM) controls

2.48 In 2023/24, 100% of inspections of bovine and ovine carcasses 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. There were 82 TSE breaches in 2023/24, compared to 86 in 2022/23. Of these breaches, 75 were resolved by verbal advice and six required written advice. One case was referred for investigation after several failures.

2.49 In Scotland in 2023/2024, 100% of inspections of bovine and ovine carcasses 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 approved slaughterhouses and cutting plants, on a risk-based frequency.

Milk production hygiene

2.50 The number of GB milk production holdings as of 31 March 2024 was 8,596, as shown in the table below - which also sets out the number of primary and secondary inspections carried out in 2023/24.

2.51 The FSA has direct responsibility for delivery of dairy hygiene inspections in milk production holdings in England and Wales. In 2023/24, the number of dairy farms in England and Wales decreased by 2.2% compared to the previous year.

2.52 In England and Wales, 29.6% of visits required follow-up inspections - an increase compared to 25.3% in 2022/23. Most non-compliances are related to minor hygiene and maintenance issues, and are resolved within agreed timescales, with any other non-compliances being escalated through the established enforcement hierarchy.

Milk production holdings from 2021/22 – 2023/24

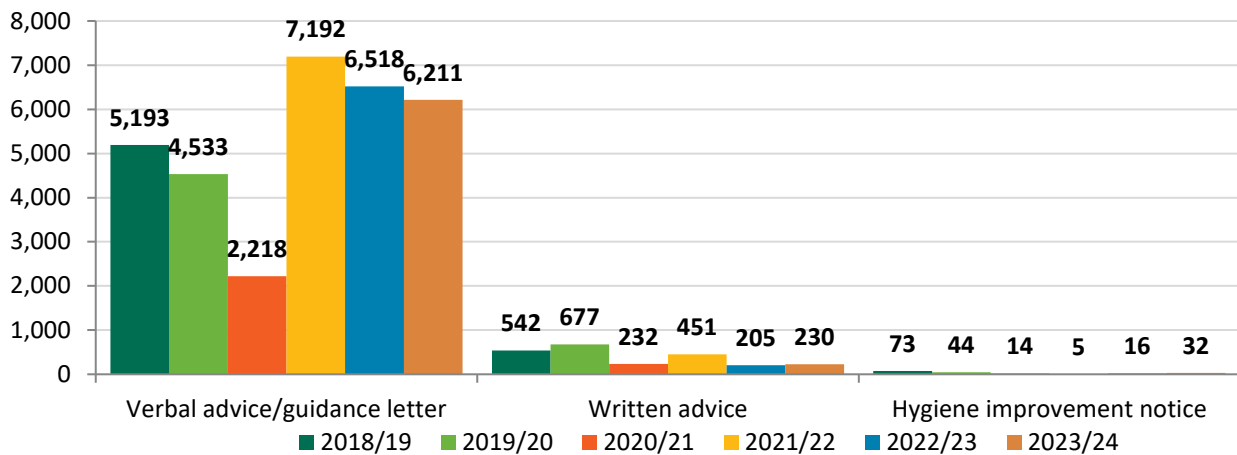
	Eng & Wales			Scotland			GB total		
	21/22	22/23	23/24	21/22	22/23	23/24	21/22	22/23	23/24
Milk production holdings and processing establishments	8,192	7,940	7,763	899	885	833	9,091	8,825	8,596

Milk production inspections from 2021/22 – 2023/24

	Eng & Wales			Scotland			GB total		
	21/22	22/23	23/24	21/22	22/23	23/24	21/22	22/23	23/24
Primary inspections	1,927	1,790	1,376	53	68	233	1,980	1,858	1,609
Secondary inspections*	392	607	578	4	5	0	396	612	578
Total Inspections completed	2,319	2,397	1,954	57	73	233	2,376	2,470	2,187

* non-compliance highlighted from primary inspections

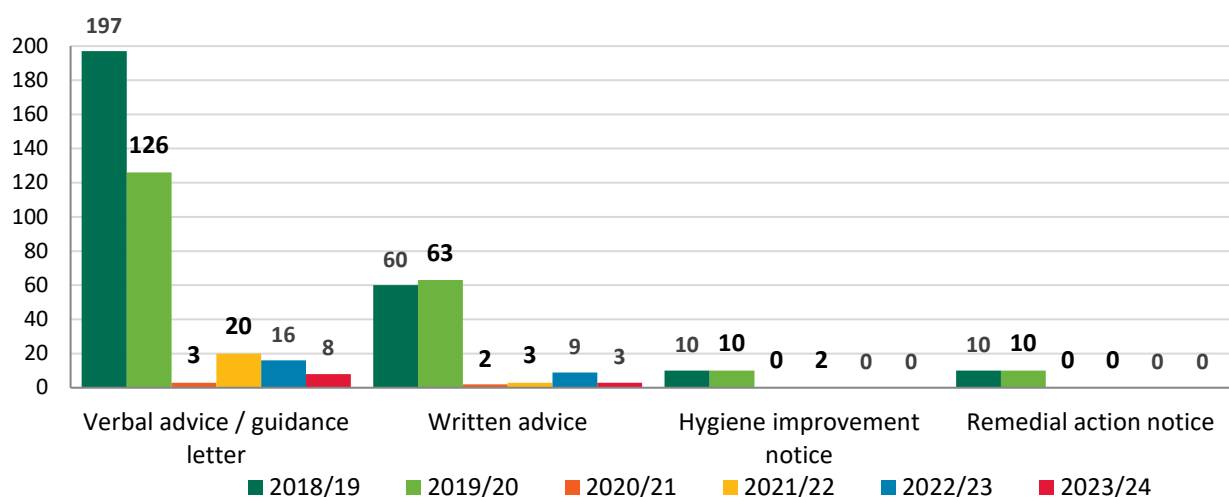
Figure 7 - Chart showing milk production hygiene enforcement actions in England and Wales from 2018/19 – 2023/24



2.53 During 2023/24, total enforcement levels decreased by 3.9% when compared to the previous year. Ninety-six percent of all enforcement action taken was verbal advice, which is classed as informal action.

2.54 In Scotland, inspections of dairy production holdings are carried out by the 32 individual Local Authorities. Scotland had an increase in the number of inspections, and a decrease in guidance letters and instances of written advice being issued in 2023/24. The number of inspections, and the extent to which problems were resolved after secondary inspection, showed that overall controls were effective.

Figure 8 - Chart showing milk production hygiene enforcement actions in Scotland from 2018/19 – 2023/24



Egg production hygiene

2.55 In England and Wales, food hygiene inspections of egg production sites are carried out by APHA on behalf of FSA. In Scotland, the Scottish Government's Poultry Unit carries out inspections on behalf of FSS. The chart below shows the total number of registered egg production sites and inspection visits for 2023/24.

Figure 9 - Chart showing the number of egg productions sites, inspections and non-compliance in GB in 2023/24

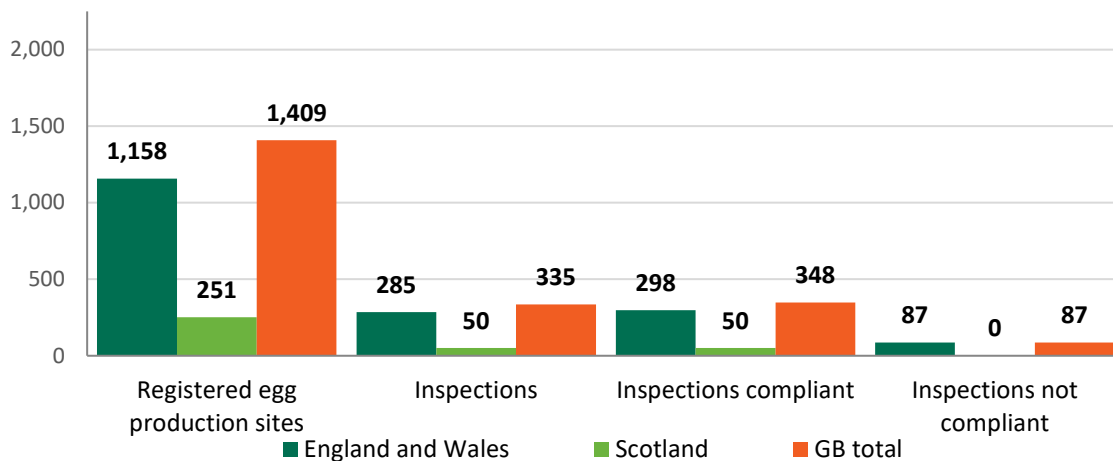
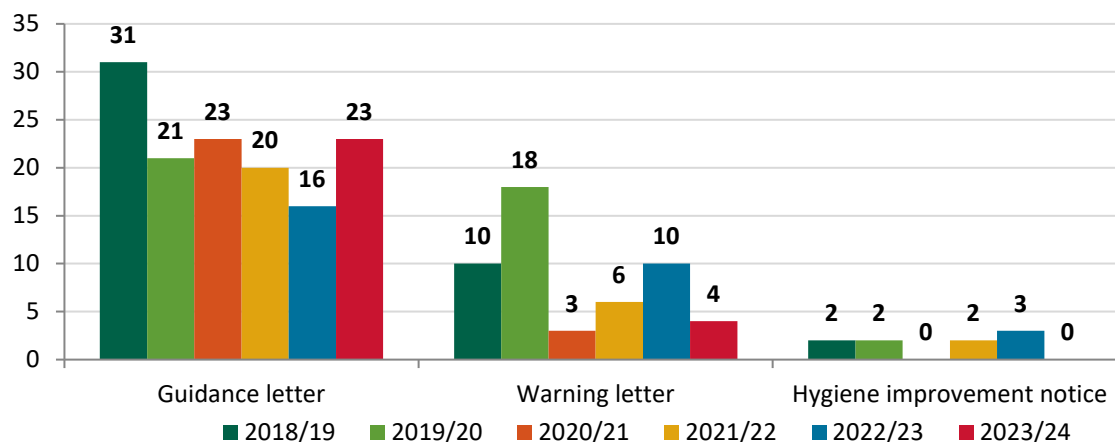


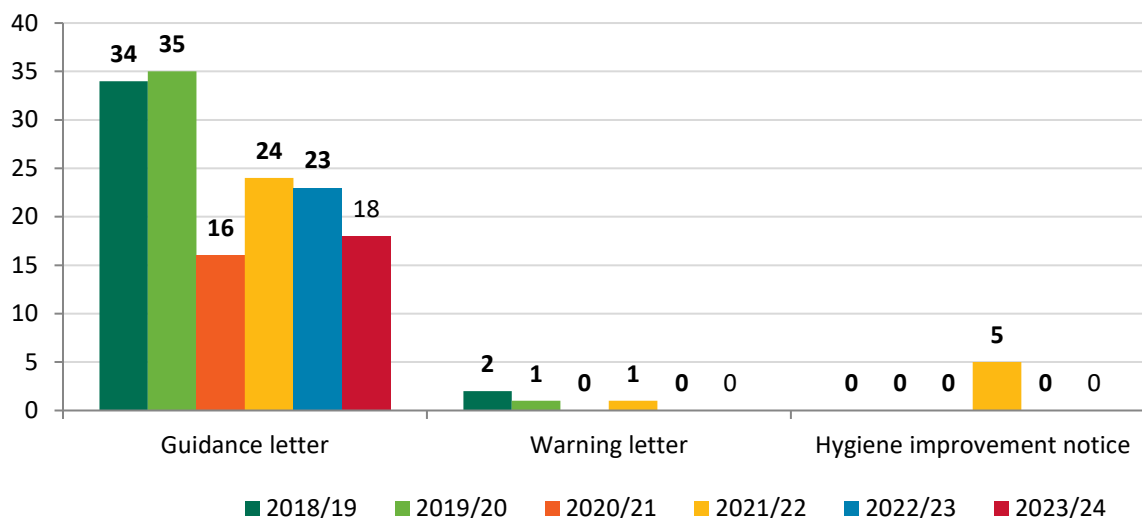
Figure 10 - Chart showing egg production enforcement actions in England and Wales from 2018/19 – 2023/24



2.56 Egg inspections in England and Wales are prioritised according to risk and historical data to inform the assessment and frequency. Compliant establishments are those where no improvements were needed.

- 2.57 In England and Wales, compliance levels have decreased by 1% overall in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23, from 70% to 69%. There was a decrease in the issue of warning letters in this reporting year, from ten in 2022/23 to four in 2023/24. The serving of Guidance letters has slightly increased.
- 2.58 During 2023/24, there was an observable rise in the number of guidance letters issued, primarily driven by general cleanliness concerns and fly control issues. This period coincided with a very hot year - the higher temperatures contributed significantly to increased fly activity, particularly in poultry farm settings.
- 2.59 Fly infestations, while impacted by seasonal conditions, were generally manageable and resolved quickly. In cases where premises addressed the issue promptly, subsequent inspections often confirmed compliance, eliminating the need for formal enforcement through warning letters.
- 2.60 Similarly, general cleanliness deficiencies tended to be straightforward to rectify. Follow-up inspections frequently found these issues resolved, resulting in compliant assessments and no further action required.

Figure 11 - Chart showing egg production enforcement actions in Scotland from 2018/19 – 2023/24



- 2.61 Egg 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 were prioritised according to risk and historical data to inform the assessment and frequency. Compliant establishments were those where no improvements were required.
- 2.62 The number of guidance letters fell during 2023/2024. No warning letters or HINs were issued - indicating high levels of compliance.

Shellfish hygiene

2.63 Shellfish sampling was carried out between 1st January and 31st December 2023, as part of the routine biotoxin monitoring programme. The results of sampling activities are summarised in the tables below.

Annual biotoxin sampling between 2020 and 2023 - England and Wales

	Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning (ASP)	Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP)	Lipophilic toxins (LTs)	Phyto-plankton (Seawater)
Total samples analysed				
2020	714	776	729	880
2021	769	796	885	937
2022	737	752	884	904
2023	765	758	907	964
Number of toxins detected				
2020	41	70	15	n/a
2021	31	1	83	n/a
2022	52	0	151	n/a
2023	45	31	143	n/a
Samples exceeding max permitted level				
2020	0	0	0	n/a (only trigger levels)
2021	0	0	8	n/a (only trigger levels)
2022	1	0	50	n/a (only trigger levels)
2023	1	0	5	n/a (only trigger levels)

2.64 In England and Wales, a total of 3,394 samples were analysed in 2023. There was a decrease in detection of LTs from 151 in 2022 to 143 in 2023. Detection of ASP toxins also decreased, from 52 in 2022 to 45 in 2023. There was an increase in the detection of PSP toxins, rising from 0 to 31, when compared to 2022. This was due to environmental variation of marine biotoxin levels.

2.65 Overall sampling levels increased by approximately 3.4% compared to the previous year. Enforcement action was taken where sample results exceeded the maximum permitted levels, which resulted in the closure of two production areas. The reason for the increase in 2023 is likely due to favourable conditions allowing toxin producing plankton to proliferate.

Annual biotoxin sampling between 2020 and 2023 - Scotland

2.66 Shellfish sampling was carried out in Scotland between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, as part of the routine biotoxin monitoring programme. The results of sampling activities are summarised in the tables below.

	Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning (ASP)	Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP)	Lipophilic toxins (LTs)	Phyto-plankton (Seawater)
Total samples analysed				
2020	963	1,276	2,056	1,316
2021	1,019	1,352	2,146	1,312
2022	1,185	1,621	2,330	1,366
2023	1060	1512	2100	1330
Number of toxins detected				
2020	70	280	813	0
2021	71	332	858	0
2022	94	443	682	0
2023	58	295	858	0
Samples exceeding max permitted level				
2020	1	11	161	n/a (only trigger levels)
2021	0	13	226	n/a (only trigger levels)
2022	4	20	111	n/a (only trigger levels)
2023	1	3	109	n/a (only trigger levels)

2.67 Scotland saw an increase in detection of LTs and a decrease in samples exceeding the maximum permitted levels in both ASP and PSP toxins compared to 2022/2023 levels. This resulted in 35 LT, 3 PSP and 1 ASP closures during 2023/24.

First sale fish

2.68 In England and Wales, during 2023/24, the MMO carried out 982 inspections of fishing vessels landing in port, and 940 inspections of establishments where first sale fish was handled. It also conducted 280 inspections of transportation of first sale fish.

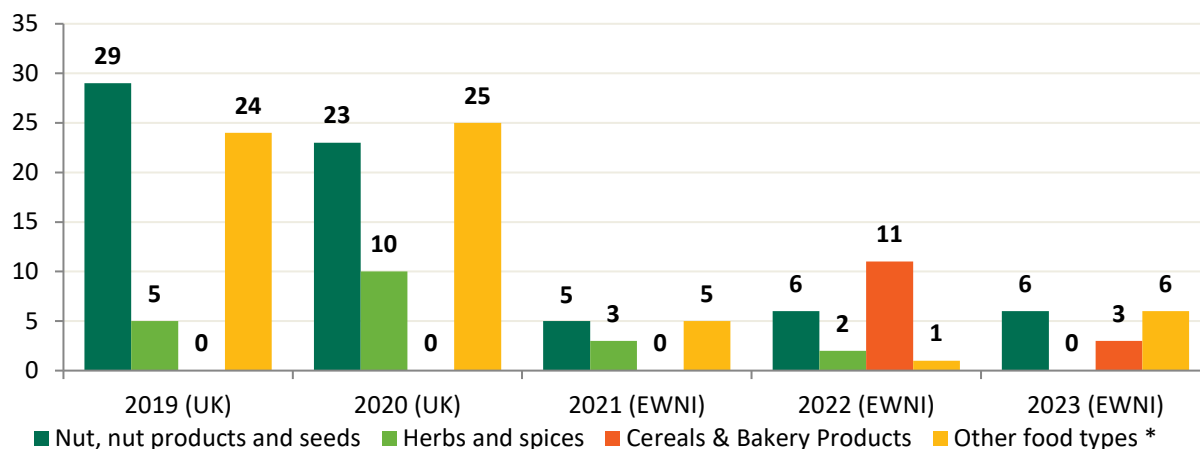
2.69 The level of dedicated fish inspections slightly reduced across all three categories during 2023/24 compared with the previous year. This reduction was due to the remit of the MMO extending across a number of areas. The MMO took on a further remit of regulation and inspection of non-fishery related issues, for example, Marine Protected Areas, grants, and wildlife licensing, which impacted on resource availability for first sale fish.

- 2.70 Checks were made to ensure compliance with the traceability requirements of the Fisheries Control Regulation. Inspections at sea were also conducted on 640 vessels and included checks on fish caught and retained.
- 2.71 Of these inspections, where first sale fish was handled and non-compliance with regulations was detected, the MMO issued a number of sanctions. In the reporting period, 102 written re-briefs were issued for late submission of sales records, and 69 written re-briefs for late submission of catching data. In addition, with the increase enforcement of the Catch Recording App (under 10m catch data), 866 advisory letters were issued.
- 2.72 Twelve offences detected in 2023/24 were significant enough to forward for further investigation. Of these, eight resulted in Official Written Warnings, four were referred to prosecution. No financial administration penalties (FAPs) were issued for first sale offences.
- 2.73 During 2023/24, the MMO continued compliance campaigns with the aim of increasing the quality and timeliness of data submitted under Control Regulation requirements. The purpose of these campaigns was to improve the traceability of catches within the UK, as well as to enable continued import and export of catches following EU Exit, alongside the requirements for verification of Catch Certificates. This work - including updates to guidance, industry engagement and enforcement - saw some improvements in industry compliance with submission rates.
- 2.74 In 2023 MMO increased the enforcement of the submission of catch records (the recording of catches from vessels under 10 metres long) and undertook an assurance campaign to increase the timeliness and quality of data of those vessels actively fishing in the period.

Mycotoxins in food and RASFF notifications

- 2.75 The UK's exit from the EU resulted in GB no longer having full access to the European Commission's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) - though it continues to receive notifications concerning the UK. The FSA has built alternative arrangements with other international partners, as well as investing in new surveillance approaches.
- 2.76 The chart below gives the number of RASFF notifications for mycotoxins in food for the five years up to end 2023.

Figure 12 – Chart showing the number of RASFF notifications for mycotoxins in food (nuts, herbs and spices) in the UK from 2019 – 2020 and EWNI from 2021 to 2023



* prepared dishes & snacks, fruit & vegetables

2.77 In 2023, England, Wales, and Northern Ireland (EWNI) dealt with a total of 15 EU RASFF notifications for mycotoxins. These were included in a total of 41 mycotoxin incidents, which were reported via various sources. Nine of these RASFFs related to mycotoxins in nut, nut products and seeds, herbs and spices and cereals & bakery products. The remaining six related to other food types. 'Cereal and bakery products' and 'fruits and vegetables products' were new entries that were not observed prior to 2022. In 2023, 'nuts and nut products' were the most common product types reported on. There was a decrease from the previous year in the number of notifications observed for 'Cereal and Bakery products' and 'herbs and spices'.

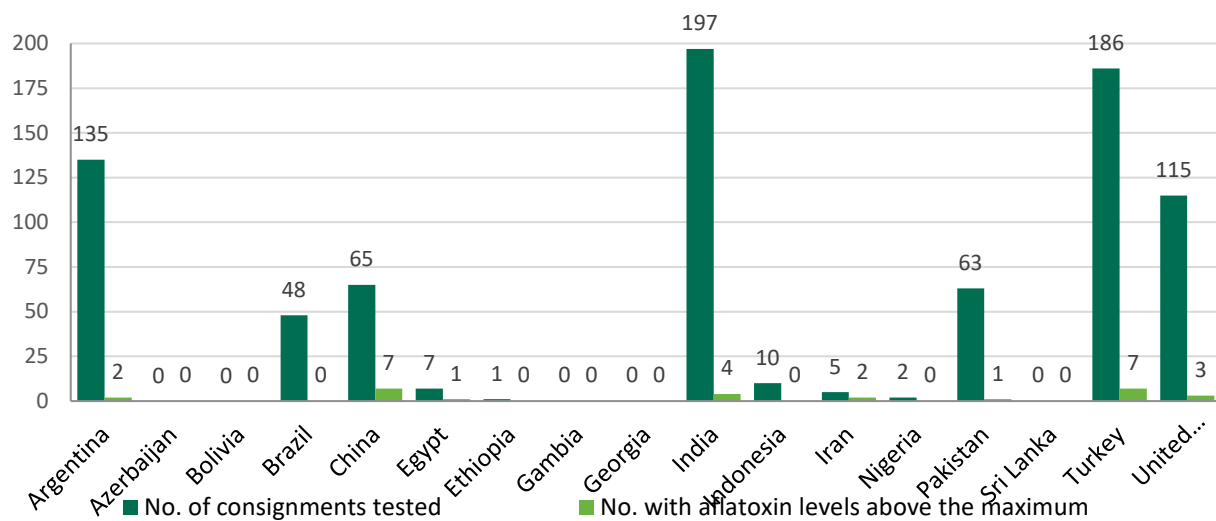
2.78 The decrease in RASFF notifications from 2019 can be attributed to changes in reporting systems. Since January 2021, the UK continued to receive RASFF notifications from EU countries where the UK is affected

Routine sampling of imported foods

2.79 The majority of samples tested for mycotoxins (aflatoxins & ochratoxin) in the reporting period 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 Border Notification (BN) would have been issued.

2.80 The chart below shows the number of samples taken for mycotoxins, and the number of non-compliances, for 2023. Overall, the level of non-compliance remained low. When compared with 2022, the proportion of non-compliances in 2023 has slightly decreased - from 3.5% to 3.2%. Given the fluctuating trade patterns of countries that export to GB, it would be difficult to identify any one country as being responsible for the increase in non-compliance.

Figure 13 - Chart showing number of GB consignments of imported food from non-EU countries tested for mycotoxins (aflatoxins & ochratoxin) in 2023



Import controls

2.81 During 2023, controls on imported feed and food at points of entry were carried out under assimilated Regulation (EU) 2019/1793 and various EU safeguard measures. Official controls were applied on products under the assimilated EU safeguard measures listed below. These included 100% documentary checks, and the prescribed risk-based levels for identity and physical checks, including sampling and analysis. Under these safeguard measures, 2,780 consignments were tested in 2023.

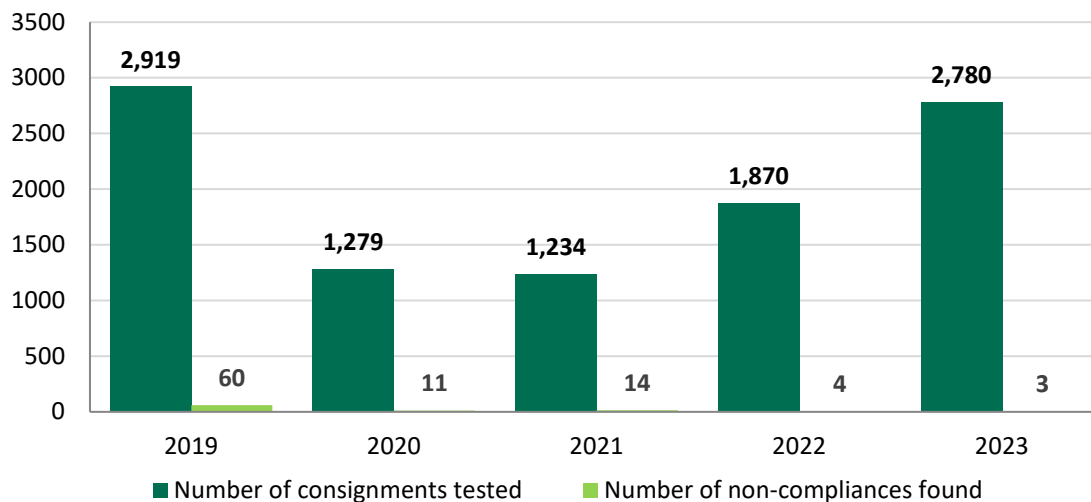
Official controls on food imported from third countries in 2023

Decision / Regulation (UK-retained legislation)	Country	Product	Hazard	Consignments tested	Unsatisfactory tests
(EU) No. 2011/884	China	Rice products	Unauthorised GMOs	74	1
(EU) No. 284/2011	China and Hong Kong	Melamine and polyamide plastic kitchenware	Formaldehyde and primary aromatic amines	1,264	2
(EU) No. 2016/1774	India	Aquaculture fishery products	Certain pharmaceutically active substances	1,442	0
(EU) No. 2016/6*	Japan	Food & feed	Caesium-134, caesium-137	0	0
Totals				2,780	3

*repealed on 29/06/2022 by SI 2022 No. 543

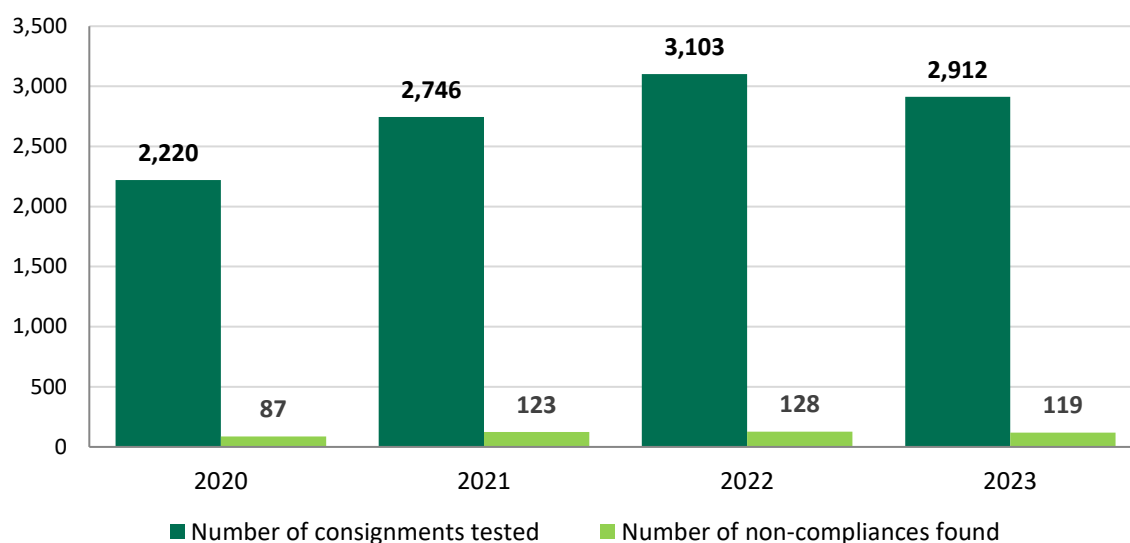
2.82 The chart below shows the number of consignments entering GB that were tested against assimilated EU safeguard measures requirements and the number of non-compliances found. Non-compliance levels in 2023 were lower than in the previous year, but this change does not reflect any particular or significant factor.

Figure 14 - Chart showing number of GB consignments tested and non-compliances under EU safeguard measures from 2019 - 2023



2.83 A total of 2,912 consignments entering GB were tested for compliance under retained [Regulation \(EC\) No. 2019/1793](#) for Annex I and Annex II.

Figure 15 - Chart showing number of consignments tested in GB and non-compliances under Regulation EC No. 2019/1793 for the years 2020 to 2023



Novel foods

- 2.84 In 2023, the FSA and FSS made the following assessments under retained [Regulation \(EU\) 2015/2283](#). 2'-Fucosyllactose (2'-FL), 3'-fucosyllactose (3'-FL), 3'-Sialyllactose sodium salt (3'-SL), 6'-Sialyllactose sodium salt (6'-SL), Magnesium-L-threonate, Calceolol, Cellobiose, *Clostridium Butyricum*, Corn Protein, Dried Miracle Berry, Isomalto-Oglucosaccharides, Krill Protein Hydrolysate, Lacto-N-fucopentaose I (LNFP-I) and 2'-fucosyllactose (2' FL) mixture (LNFP-I/2'-FL), *Madhuca Longifolia*, Magnesium-L-threonate, Mycobacterium aurum, Olive fruit dry extract standardized in hydroxytyrosol, Pasteurised Akkermansia Muciniphila, *Schizochytrium* sp. Oil, three Cannabidiol (CBD) and Vitamin D2 Mushroom Powder.

Food contact materials

- 2.85 Controls were carried out by First Points of Introduction (FPIs) – the specific ports designated to permit melamine and polyamide kitchenware from China and Hong Kong to enter GB.
- 2.86 In 2023/24, 97% (1,188 of 1,220) of consignments underwent documentary checks in GB. Some 12% (146) were subject to identity and physical checks, compared to 17% (164 of 948) of consignments in 2022/23.
- 2.87 In total, 19 consignments were rejected in GB in 2023/24, compared to 15 (of 929) in 2022/23. Of these, five were rejected due to a failure identified during physical checks. This represents 3.4% of the total 146 consignments that were physically checked. The remaining 14 were rejected based on unsatisfactory identity and documentary checks.
- 2.88 Overall, the same proportion of the 1,188 consignments undergoing documentary and physical checks were rejected in GB. Some 1.6% (19 out of 1,188) of checked consignments were rejected in 2023/2024, the same percentage as in 2022/23 (1.6% - 15 out of 929).
- 2.89 There was an increase in the rate of non-compliance for consignments that underwent physical checks - 3.4% in 2023/24, up from 0.6% in 2022/23. That was the highest level since 2020/21.

Organic products⁷

- 2.90 Inspections of organic operators in 2023 involved physical inspections and documentary checks. Physical inspections had been severely impeded by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021; as of March 2022, the requirement for physical inspections to take place in line with the retained organic regulations had resumed. Almost all operators in Great Britain who were due for an inspection in 2023 were inspected during the annual cycle. Additional visits were announced or unannounced, depending on individual visit circumstances. Annual inspections were carried out under Assimilated Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008⁸.
- 2.91 In 2023, there were 6,141 registered organic operators in Great Britain. A total of 6,080 announced and 734 unannounced inspections and visits were undertaken.
- 2.92 The table below shows additional risk-based inspections carried out in 2023. Reasons for risk-based inspections may include: suspicion that an operator has not complied with, or is not complying with, the organic requirement; selection following a risk-based inspection process; the need to check the operator has addressed irregularities found during a previous visit; selection following a random selection process; the requirement to inspect additional enterprises or changes in the scope of the enterprise.

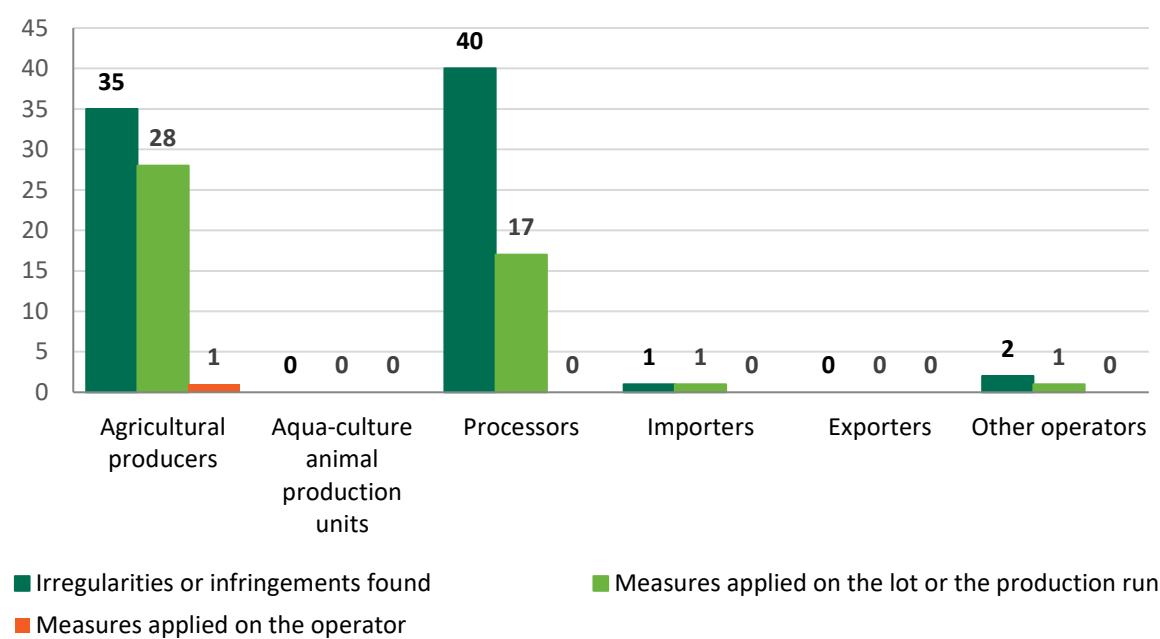
Number of additional risk-based inspections of organic operators in UK from 2023/24

Organic operators	GB-ORG-02	GB-ORG-04	GB-ORG-05	GB-ORG-06	GB-ORG-13	GB-ORG-17
Agricultural Products	77	3	206	16	24	17
Aqua-culture animal production units	0	0	1	0	0	0
Processors	43	21	265	6	0	2
Importers	4	14	0	4	0	0
Exporters	0	1	0	0	0	0
Other Operators	11	24	39	3	0	1

⁷ Data for organic products is only available at a GB level and is therefore reported as a GB figure throughout this section.

⁸ In Great Britain, the following assimilated organic regulations apply: [Assimilated Council Regulation \(EC\) No 834/2007](#), [Assimilated Commission Regulation \(EC\) No 889/2008](#), [Assimilated Commission Regulation \(EC\) No 1235/2008](#)

Figure 16 - Chart showing organic operator infringements and control measures in the UK for 2023/24



2.93 Infringements in 2023 related primarily to agricultural producers. The majority of these infringements were related to poor or inaccurate record keeping - for example, inputs used on farm, poor stock records, and mislabelling of products. In some cases, unauthorised substances were found in products, which led to formal investigations.

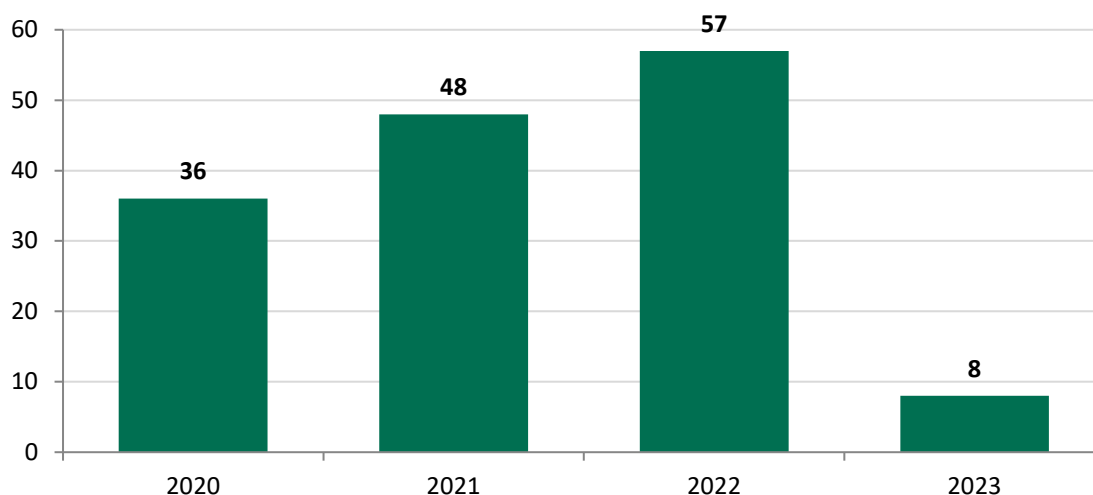
Agri-food Geographical Indications

2.94 A geographical indication (GI) is a name, or a sign used on goods that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities, reputation or characteristics that are essentially attributable to that place of origin. A GI product must be verified for compliance with the product specification before being placed on the market. Verification is cyclical, and is undertaken for every producer, rather than every product. The disparity in the number of producers across GI products is reflected in the annual number of verification inspections conducted.

2.95 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, a small number of GB producers were verified remotely for a specific product. The overall number of reported inspections increased in 2022 to 57 and decreased to 8 in 2023. No compliance issues were recorded that would result in harm to human or animal wellbeing or mislead the consumer

2.96 The data in the chart below covers the 2023 calendar year.

Figure 17 - Chart showing the number of Agri-food Geographical Indications inspections in GB from 2020 - 2023



Natural mineral waters

2.97 Following EU Exit, and after a period of implementation of six months from 1st July 2021, all EU/EEA natural mineral water producers were informed that the automatic recognition of their products for marketing as natural mineral waters in Great Britain, would come to an end on 7th January 2022.

2.98 All natural mineral waters of non-UK origin have to seek recognition from their respective GB competent authorities to continue to market their product in Great Britain, regardless of their origin (i.e., EU/EEA or Rest of World (RoW)). From 1st July 2021, Defra opened application procedures to EU/EEA and RoW natural mineral water producers. Defra also provided guidance to producers obtaining recognition to market their waters in Great Britain.

2.99 During the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, the number of non-UK natural mineral water producers that were granted recognition by the relevant GB competent authorities reduced to 15, consisting of 14 EU producers and 1 non-EU producer. This was a 50% reduction from the previous reporting period: the level of applications at that time consisted of producers already recognised by the EU, who had to seek recognition with GB CAs to continue trading their product on the GB market, following the UK's exit from the EU.

2.100 Details of non-UK natural mineral waters recognised by GB, UK natural mineral waters recognised in the UK, and UK natural mineral waters recognised by the EU and EEA, can be found at [Natural mineral waters: lists of recognised products](#).

Veterinary residues surveillance

2.101 Compliance was observed in 99.7% of all samples analysed under the National Surveillance Programme in 2023. Of the 32,526 GB samples analysed under the Programme, residues above the maximum residue level (MRL) or other action limit were detected in 89 samples. This high level of compliance is in line with levels seen in recent years.

2.102 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 the GB [Maximum Residue Limits in Great Britain list](#).
- 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

2.103 Investigations into non-compliant samples in 2023 found no evidence of the misuse or abuse of hormonal growth promoters, thyrostatic, beta-agonists or prohibited substances.

2.104 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 human error, either owing to dosing errors when administering veterinary medicinal products, or failure to adhere to withdrawal periods for these veterinary medicinal products, as per the instructions for use.

2.105 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 2022 and 2023 for anthelmintics, antibiotics, avermectin, coccidiostats, heavy metals, and NSAIDs

Animals tested	Residue tested for	2022		2023	
		Number of inspections or samples	Non-compliant residues found	Number of inspections or samples	Non-compliant residues found
Calves	Anti-microbials	328	4	305	4
Pigs	Anti-microbials	1,674	1	1,690	1
Cattle	Anti-microbials	1,255	0	1,165	1
Milk*	Anti-microbials	1,366	0	1,422	1
Sheep	Antimicrobials	2,076	5	1,916	1
Poultry***	Antimicrobials	1,917	0	2,050	0
Cattle	Anthelmintics	562	1	522	1
Sheep	Anthelmintics	1,315	3	1,212	5
Pig	Anthelmintics	282	1	285	0
Sheep	Avermectin	442	1	408	2
Aquaculture**	Avermectin	105	0	113	0
Cattle	Avermectin	306	0	284	0
Milk*	Avermectin	272	0	291	0
Sheep	Coccidiostats	295	0	272	0
Poultry***	Coccidiostats	1,375	3	1,470	5
Game****	Coccidiostats	14	2	10	0
Cattle	Heavy metals	59	1	55	2
Honey	Heavy metals	14	0	14	0
Horses	Heavy metals	1	1	1	1
Sheep	Heavy metals	47	3	43	8
Cattle	NSAIDS	352	1	327	2
Milk*	NSAIDS	136	1	144	0
Horse	NSAIDS	10	0	10	0

*Bovine milk only; **Salmon and trout, combined; ***Broilers, layers, breeders, turkeys combined;

****Partridge, pheasant, quail combined

Pesticides monitoring

2.106 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) carried out a monitoring programme in 2023. The table below shows numbers of samples taken, and the percentage of samples tested that contained residues over the MRL.

Number of samples taken and % of samples tested containing residues over the MRL in the UK / GB⁹ between 2018 – 2023

Year	Number of samples	Types of food	% containing residues	% with residues above the MRL
2018	3,385	42	42.5	3.2
2019	3,302	39	50.5	2.8
2020	2,460	33	41.54	2.52
2021	2,642	28	52.16	2.84
2022	2,671	27	57.88	2.06
2023	2,574	29	49.73	2.33

- 2.107 The Expert Committee on Pesticide Residues in Food (PRiF) published [quarterly reports on the findings](#), along with [detailed information on the samples discussed](#).
- 2.108 The Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020 (introduced in 2020 to meet the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2017/625) enable official controls to be undertaken across the plant protection products (PPPs) supply chain in Great Britain. Operators placing professional PPPs on the market have been within scope of official controls since autumn 2021, and users of professional PPPs from summer 2022. HSE and LAs undertake official controls on behalf of GB governments.
- 2.109 During 2023/24 the HSE carried out 23 inspections of distributors of professional PPPs, which resulted in 11 formal letters, three letters with advice, and two enforcement notices. Between April and December 2023, 102 PPP samples were obtained for formulation analysis. Of the 102 samples obtained, analysis identified that five samples (5% rounded up of total obtained) were inconsistent with their authorisation; and a further 18 samples (18% rounded up of total obtained) were not compliant with the physicochemical tests. HSE undertook appropriate regulatory follow up action in relation to the results of formulation analysis. This included working with authorisation holders and the manufactures of PPPs to correct any product issues identified. Failure to comply may result in the removal of authorisation.
- 2.110 The Chemicals Regulation Division (CRD) of HSE was notified of 15 concerns in 2023 about the marketing and use of PPPs, which resulted in advice being given in 13 of these cases. No enforcement notices were issued for these 15 cases. In 2024, two concerns were received, which resulted in advice for one case, with enforcement notices required for either case.

⁹ Data for MRL samples is only available at a UK level up to 2020 and is therefore reported as a UK figure. Since the 2021 report, following EU Exit, reporting of data is for GB only.

Official controls in the animal feed sector

- 2.111 In England in 2022/23¹⁰, 98.7% of planned feed inspections were delivered. All LAs contributed to the planning process for controls to be delivered in 2022/23. This delivery rate improved slightly compared to 97.1% in the previous year. The FSA continued to review and make necessary improvements to the feed inspection system.
- 2.112 In Wales, 93.6% of planned feed inspections were delivered in 2022/23. This was an even more marked improvement on the previous year's improved rate of delivery of 83.6%. The improvement reflects the return of resources made available for official feed controls, that had been diverted to support the Welsh Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.113 Data returns for 2022/23 showed a 1.9% decrease in the number of feed businesses in England and Wales. The table below provides a breakdown for the last three years by business type.

Total number of feed business operators in England and Wales 2019/20 – 2022/23

Registered and approved feed businesses by type*	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Farms and primary producers	126,103	129,878	132,290	129,542
Feed manufacturers	1,662	1,933	2,215	2,189
Food businesses placing co-products and surplus food into the feed chain	6,001	6,299	7,116	7,128
Importers, distributors, transporters & stores	3,995	4,545	5,019	5,007
Total	137,761	142,655	146,640	143,866

*Only main categories listed

- 2.114 In Scotland, FSS is the competent authority for the delivery of feed official controls, and delivery is undertaken either by FSS staff or Local Authorities (under Delegated Service Level Agreement (DSLA)). The table below provides a breakdown of feed establishments for the last six years, by business type.

¹⁰ In England and Wales, feed statistics are reported one year in arrears. In Scotland, they are reported for the reporting year (i.e., 2023/24 outcomes are reported in the 2023/24 reporting year).

Number of feed businesses in Scotland, 2018/19 – 2023/24

Feed businesses by type	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Primary producers	22,819	22,819	22,288	22,371	23,783	24,218
Manufacturers	141	141	154	190	204	259
Food businesses placing co-products into the feed chain	329	329	307	295	347	364
Food businesses placing surplus product into the feed chain	764	764	764	746	846	855
Importers	6	6	6	6	6	N/A ¹¹
Distributors	318	318	328	328	372	382
Stores	233	233	225	254	306	309
Retailers	166	166	175	157	207	215

GB feed controls and enforcement

2.115 In England and Wales during 2022/23, there was a 16.8% increase in numbers of inspections undertaken by LAs. The number of feed business operators being given advice increased by 20.3% compared to 2021/22. The number of revisits decreased by 3.7%. These numbers show a continued recovery towards pre-pandemic inspection levels.

2.116 In Scotland, in 2023/24, LAs covered by Delegated Service Level Agreements (DSLAs) carried out 95-100% of planned visits in all but one DSLA area, and FSS officers carried out 100% of planned farm visits in other areas while continuing officer training to carry out non-farm visits. Of the completed inspections noted below, satisfactory compliance or better was recorded at 99% of farms and 96% of non-farm establishments.

¹¹ This type of feed business is no longer categorised as a specific business activity and those businesses previously categorised as importers are now considered under different categories.

Number of interventions undertaken in GB, 2019-2023

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
Types of control / intervention	E & W	Scot	E & W	Scot ¹²	E & W	Scot	E & W	Scot
Number of inspections	5,609	499	3,387	0	4,724	425	5,518	1,036
Number of revisits	151	5	63	0	109	0	105	6
Number of feed business operators given advice	2,991	182	1,957	0	2,570	80	3,092	210
Number of sampling visits	156	54	100	0	105	78	136	63

Reported use of formal enforcement activity in GB, 2019-2023

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
Enforcement activity	E & W	Scot	E & W	Scot ¹³	E & W	Scot	E & W	Scot
Written warnings for non-compliance identified for the first time + not an immediate threat to feed safety	608	4	399	0	495	115	859	176
Improvement notices on issue which required attention or not actioned after written warnings	33	0	44	0	7	0	24	0
Other formal actions to address serious feed breaches	26	28	19	0	6	0	54	1

2.117 The number of written warnings issued in England and Wales increased by 73.5% in 2022/23¹⁰. In this period, 15.6% of inspections resulted in written warnings being issued, compared to 5.1% in 2021/22. Written warnings include all notifications of legal contraventions to FeBOs, including those regarded as minor. This increase was probably due to the FSA re-issuing guidance to LAs, clarifying that all legal contraventions (including minor) should be reported as written warnings. This also continues the trend of inspections returning to normal following the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, during which LA resources were diverted to other activities.

¹² In 2020/21, no on-site feed inspection activity was undertaken in Scotland due to COVID-19.

¹³ In 2020/21, no on-site feed inspection activity was undertaken in Scotland due to COVID-19.

- 2.118 Improvement notices issued increased by 242.9%, from seven in 2021/22 to 24 in 2022/23. The use of formal actions to address serious feed breaches increased significantly by 800%, from six in 2021/22 to 54 in 2022/23.
- 2.119 These large percentage swings can be attributed to relatively low numbers having been reported in 2021/22, due to LA resources being diverted during the COVID-19 pandemic. It should be noted that the combined numbers for 2022/23 were reasonably in line with previous pre-pandemic reporting, and were consistent with a gradual increase in inspection numbers as feed inspections were resumed.
- 2.120 In 2022/23, 0.4% of inspections led to an improvement notice, up from 0.1% in the previous year, and 1.0% of inspections resulted in other formal actions - an increase from 0.1% in 2021/22. Again, the figures generally reflect a return to more normal activity levels post-COVID.

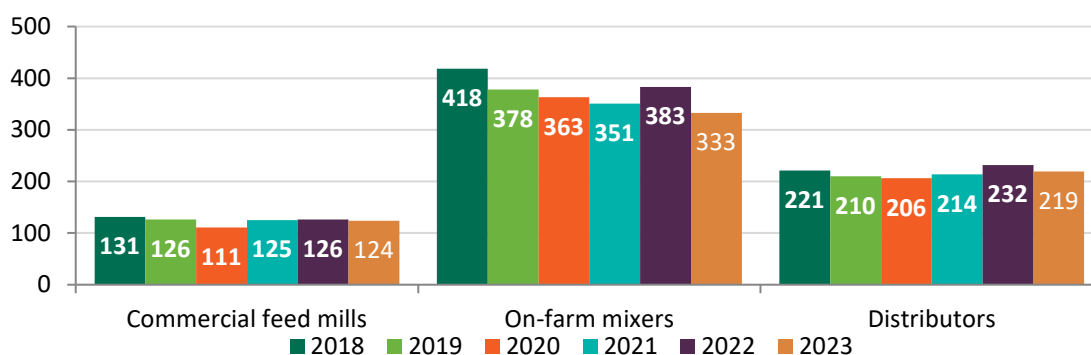
LA and DC animal feed sampling in GB

- 2.121 According to the Food Standards Agency's UK Food Surveillance System (UKFSS), LAs reported taking 254 surveillance samples in England and Wales. Samples were taken of imported feed at points of entry, as well as from raw pet food manufactured in England and Wales. Although this does not present a complete picture of all feed sampling undertaken by LAs, it was the only centrally collated data available in the period.
- 2.122 UKFSS reported that samples were tested for 543 analytes, including heavy metals, salmonella, and mycotoxins. The sampling levels reported were significantly lower than in the previous reporting period, reducing from 434 samples in England and Wales in 2021/22, to 254 in 2022/23. This may be due to reduced LA sampling levels. Additionally, some sampling data returns for 2022/23 were still outstanding at the time of reporting. These figures will be retroactively updated in the next Annual Report, to capture any additional results received.

Inspection of feed business operators by VMD

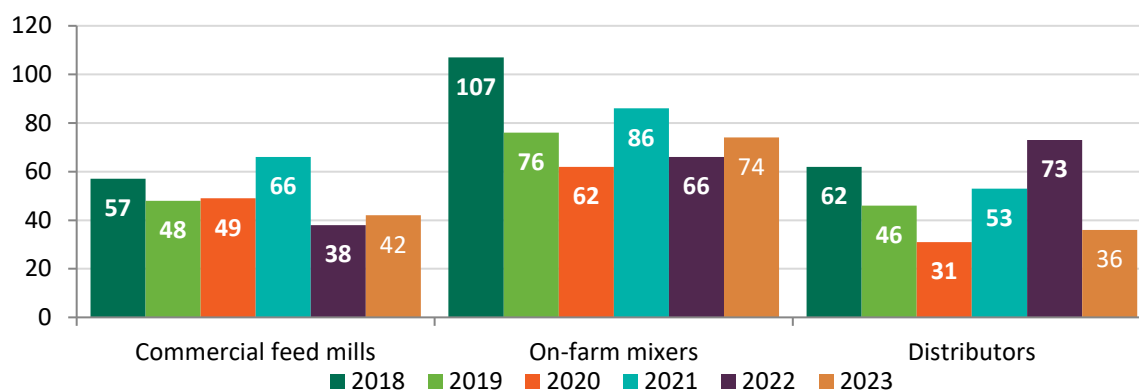
- 2.123 The number of approved feed establishments for the last six years is shown below.

Figure 18 - Chart showing the number of approved feed establishments in GB from 2018 – 2023



2.124 Other visits also included 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 feedingstuffs, or from the unintended feeding of feedingstuffs containing those products.

Figure 19 - Chart showing total feed inspections in GB from 2018 – 2023



2.125 For inspections carried out in 2023, 26.5% of commercial feed mills were fully compliant, compared with 15.8% in 2022. A total of 41.9% of on-farm manufacturers were fully compliant, compared to 31.8% in 2022, and 58.9% of distributors were fully compliant, compared to 42.5% in 2022. This shows an increase in fully compliant feed manufacturers and distributors.

2.126 A total of seven visits categorised as ‘other’ were carried out to feed business operators. These were unplanned visits, which diverted resources from scheduled inspections. Five additional visits were recorded as ‘no inspection carried out’ - which were visits to commercial feed mills or farms where no one was present at the establishments. These twelve instances have not been included in the figures in the table above.

Table of GB Sampling results for 2023/24

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	20	15	3	3
Premixture or feedingstuff tested for ‘carryover’	0	0	0	0
Premixture or feedingstuff tested as part of residue investigation	0	0	22	10
Premixture or feedingstuff tested as part of other investigation	0	0	0	0
Premixture or feedingstuff tested for 10 different AGPs	12	12	0	0

2.127 In summary: as in 2022/23, feed business operators manufacturing and distributing specified feed additives, premixtures, and medicated feedingstuffs were generally compliant with legal requirements. Where non-compliance was observed, it was dealt with in accordance with the VMD's enforcement policy.

Protein in animal feed controls

2.128 Information for Great Britain in 2023 on the National Feed Audit (the inspections and sampling programme that monitors for the presence of non-authorised animal protein in feed) is set out below:

Number of inspections comprising checks on the presence of processed animal proteins in GB in 2021 - 2023

Stage / inspection point	2021	2022	2023
Import of feed materials	28	23	28
Storage of feed materials	37	33	36
Feed mills	461	448	486
Home mixers/mobile mixers	79	67	89
Intermediaries of feedingstuffs	11	11	12
Means of transport	10	11	17
Livestock Farms	1,302	1,124	1,528
Total	1,928	1,717	2,196

2.129 In Great Britain in 2023, a procedural breach was identified in a feed mill, due to shared production lines raising cross-contamination concerns. The mill was restricted, and extensive testing of farm animal feed showed no contamination. Cleaning and disinfection measures were carried out, then audited by APHA, with post-cleaning samples testing negative. A Veterinary Risk Assessment concluded BSE risk was negligible. An enhanced sampling plan was implemented.

Number of samples tested for processed animal proteins in GB in 2023

Establishment type	Number of feed materials samples tested	Number of compound feedingstuffs for ruminants samples tested	Number of compound feedingstuffs for non-ruminants samples tested
At import	84	19	0
Feed mills	667	1,066	351
Intermediaries/ storage	138	33	0
Means of transport	1	4	0
Home mixers/ mobile mixers*	15	68	44
On farm	192	1,575	301
Fats and vegetable oils	1	0	0
Total	1,098	2,765	696

2.130 In 2023, 4,559 samples were collected in GB. No non-compliances relating to the presence of banned animal protein in animal feed were detected. The NFA runs from 1st April to 31st March annually: the figures provided correspond to the period from April 2023 to March 2024.

Number of sampling inspection visits and samples collected in GB from 2018 – 2023

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of inspection visits	2,303	2,250	2,044	1,928	1,717	2,196
Number of collected samples	5,250	4,818	4,327	4128	3,852	4,559

2.131 Since 2020, various high priority and unpredictable circumstances have consumed APHA resource, and also resulted in the numbers of NFA inspections being reduced. These included:

- 2020/21 - Covid restrictions.
- 2021/22 - Covid restrictions & HPAI outbreak.
- 2022/23 - HPAI outbreak, and emergency work supporting people fleeing Ukraine and entering the UK with their pets.

2.132 During the 2023–2024 period, there was a marked improvement in the delivery of the NFA programme compared to recent years, with BAU inspection and sampling operational activities just falling short of target.

Incidents and outbreaks in the feed sector

APHA

2.133 There were 33 illegal feeding incidents in livestock holdings in the 2023 reporting year. All related to the feeding of catering waste or prohibited animal by-products to livestock species. In most cases, the incident was restricted to one farm only, where epidemiological investigations, disposal of the contaminated feed, cleaning and disinfection, and monitoring of livestock health were followed. A distinct pattern was observed within the incident types, with the majority relating to the feeding of kitchen waste to pigs.

FSA & FSS

2.134 There were a total of 71 animal feed related incidents in 2023 - a 15.5% reduction compared to 2022. Pathogenic micro-organism (11/42) was the most common cause of incident, which is consistent with the previous year.

	2022	2023
Total of Animal Feed Incidents in the UK excluding Scotland	84*	71

*Figure revised to be consistent with 2023 calculation methodology.

2.135 In 2023, FSS managed a total of four incidents relating to feed, including three for microbiological issues and one labelling error. One of the microbiological incidents related to a RASFF notification in relation to the detection of Enterobacteriaceae in animal feed.

Official controls in the animal health sector

Exotic diseases

2.136 APHA staff investigated 309 reports of suspected exotic diseases in GB in 2023.

The following diseases were detected:

- Sixteen cases of European Bat Lyssavirus were confirmed in England
- Fifty-eight confirmed infected premises of HPAI in poultry across England, Wales and Scotland
- Seventeen confirmed infected premises of BTV in England, starting in November 2023.
- Four cases of Influenza of Avian Origin in Free-living Wild Mammals over September and October.

2.137 The table below shows the total number of official investigations for 2023.

Animal health Investigations in GB in 2023

Disease (add extra lines as appropriate)	Number of investigations	
	England & Wales	Scotland
African Horse Sickness	1	0
Anthrax	1	0
Aujeszky's	3	2
Avian Notifiable (Avian Influenza/ Newcastle Disease)	99	58
Bat Rabies	16	0
Bluetongue	48	0
Bovine Brucellosis	18	1
Brucellosis (excl. bovine brucellosis)	8	0
Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia	0	1
Contagious Equine Metritis	0	0
Echinococcus Multilocularis	1	0
Dourine	0	0
Enzootic Bovine Leukosis (EBL)	7	0
Equine Viral Arteritis	3	1
Foot and Mouth Disease	1	0
Glanders	2	0
Influenza of Avian Origin in Captive Mammals	1	0
Influenza of Avian Origin in Free-living Wild Mammals	25	2
Lumpy Skin Disease	1	0
Rabies	2	2
Swine Fevers (CSF/ ASF)	2	0
Swine Vesicular Disease (VDR)	0	0
Surra	2	0
West Nile Virus	0	0
Vesicular Stomatitis	1	0
Total	242	67

2.138 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 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, setting out the annual return made under section 80 of the Animal Health Act 1981. The 2023 Annual Report was laid before the Scottish Parliament on 31st March 2024.

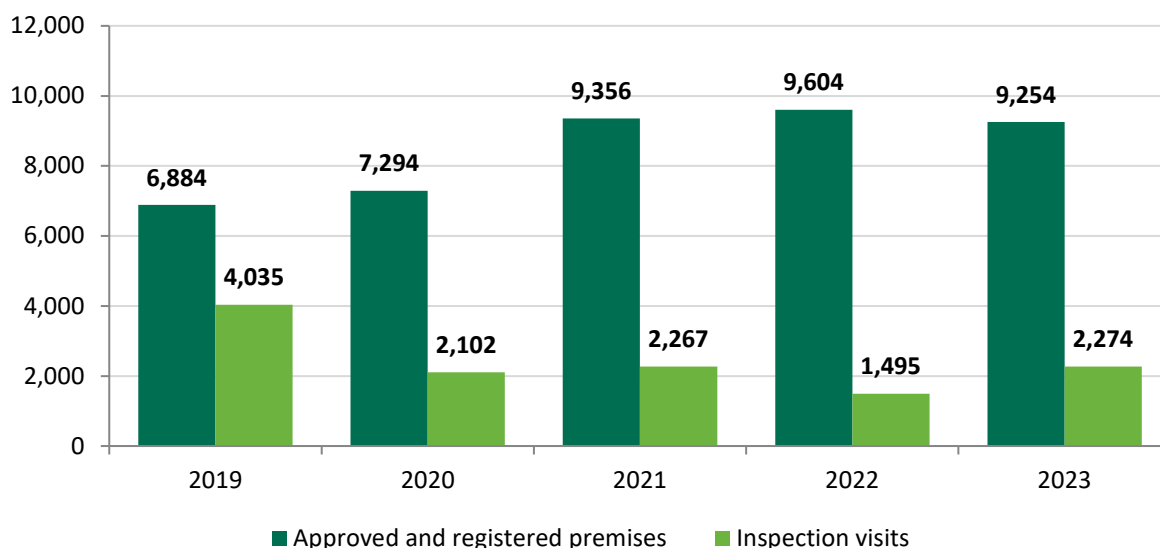
Animal by-Products (ABP)

2.139 During 2022, APHA issued 188 new approvals to ABP establishments in GB, and there were 683 new registrations of ABP establishments. A good proportion of these new approvals continue to relate to pet food operators, which continues to be an expanding market sector within the ABP industry. A significant number of ABP incineration plants were also approved during this period. For registrations, around one-third related to ABP transporters or hauliers. This industry sector accounted for the largest proportion of new registrations, with the next largest number within a single industry sector relating to Diagnostic & Research operators.

2.140 The overall number of risk-based visits to ABP establishments increased when compared with 2022. APHA continued to prioritise inspection visits to premises which presented the highest risks.

2.141 The number of ABP operators requiring new approvals/registrations, or changes to their existing approvals, continued to apply pressure to the available ABP resources. This resulted in some disruption to the delivery of other BAU ABP inspection work.

Figure 20 - Chart showing number of GB approved premises and Animal by Product (ABP) inspection visits from 2019 - 2023

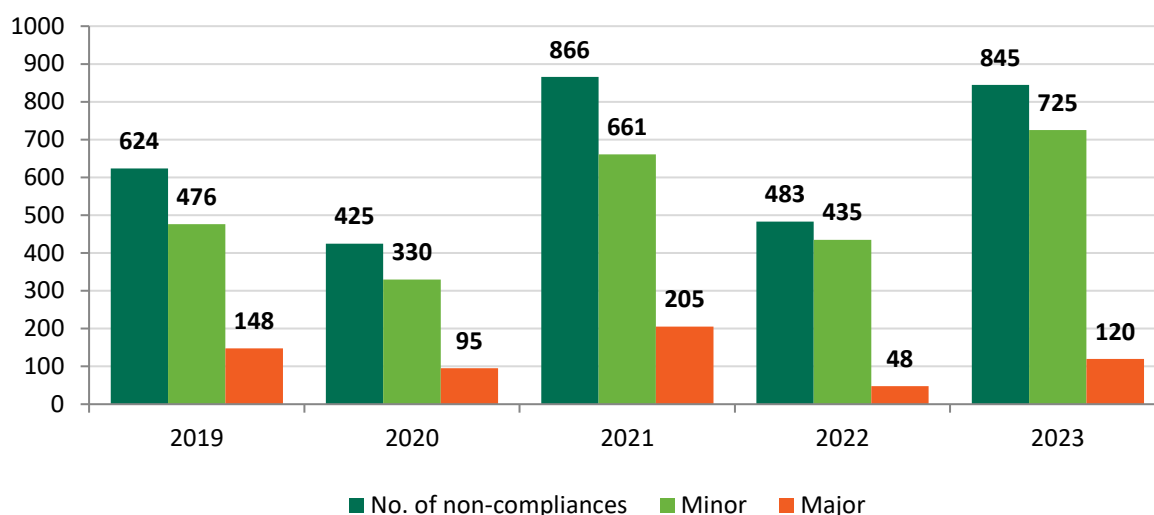


2.142 In 2023, the number of approval (261) and registration (1,004) requests continued to increase. The total number of non-compliances also increased in 2023, as set out in Figure 21 (below) – in line with the increased number of inspection visits carried out in 2023 when compared to the 2022 period.

2.143 The pet food sector accounted for a significant percentage of non-compliances, with approximately 51% of inspections identifying non-compliance. This was largely associated with an increase in inspection visits to this type of ABP premises, reflecting the higher risk activities being undertaken by operators. There was a similar pattern of non-compliance at ABP storage premises, with the rates returning to around 35% in 2023 - a slight increase on the previous period of 28% for 2022. Again, this could be attributed to an increase in overall inspection rates at these premises.

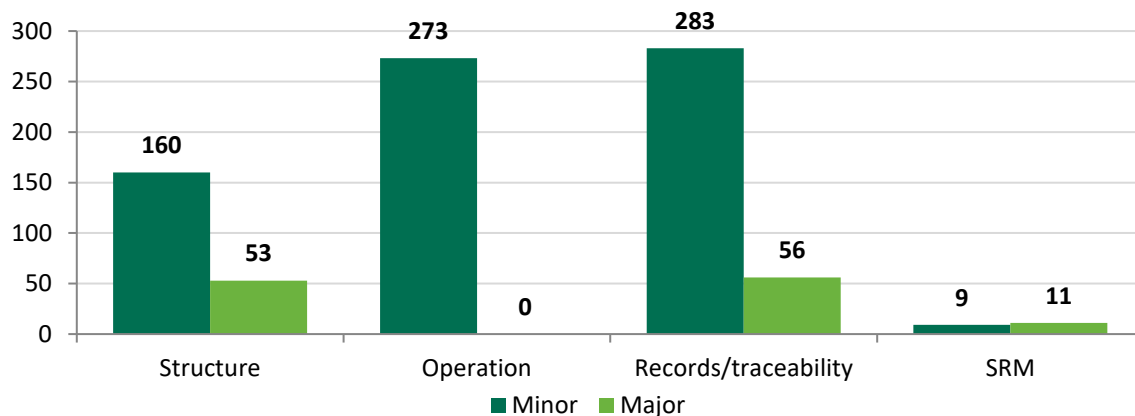
2.144 Non-compliance findings during inspections at ABP processing plants and TSE Sampling Premises (the industry sectors considered to be higher risk in terms of TSE controls) were approximately 28% and 14% respectively - increases when compared to 2022. The rates were nonetheless still assessed as acceptable for the industry sectors in question. It should also be noted that where APHA identify repeat instances of non-compliance, the inspection visit frequency at those plants would have been increased accordingly, to ensure that there was better oversight of non-compliant premises

Figure 21 - Chart showing overall GB Animal by Product (ABP) non-compliance scores for APHA risk based and follow up visits from 2019 - 2023



2.145 There was no significant pattern to these non-compliances. The most common minor non-compliances continued to be found in records & traceability, and operational issues. Records (47%) & structural defects (44%) accounted for the majority of the major non-compliances.

Figure 22 - Chart showing the number of GB ABP non-compliances disclosed at visits in 2023



Bovine Tuberculosis (TB)

2.146 In Great Britain during 2023, as part of its TB eradication (England and Wales) and surveillance (Scotland) programme activities, APHA recorded:

- 68,730 herd tests, with 3,108 herds experiencing a new TB incident (positive herd that was previously officially TB free). Of those herds with a new TB incident, 1,636 had their Officially Tuberculosis Free status Withdrawn (OTFW).
- This means that those herds in England and Scotland had at least one TB test reactor with typical lesions of TB, and/or one animal in which *Mycobacterium bovis* was identified by bacteriological culture or PCR testing of postmortem tissue samples.
- In Wales they could also have been OTFW where skin test reactors (including animals that are inconclusive reactors at consecutive tests) or animals positive to an interferon-gamma or antibody test had been disclosed regardless of the post-mortem test results.
- Approximately 9.75 million TB tests (mostly tuberculin skin tests) completed in bovine animals (domestic cattle, water buffalo and farmed bison) - including statutory pre and post movement tests.
- A total of 31,129 cattle slaughtered for TB control purposes. This included, in decreasing order of frequency; tuberculin skin test reactors, animals positive to ancillary blood tests, direct contacts, and inconclusive skin test reactors slaughtered before their re-test.

2.147 APHA traced and tested individual animals moved (to contain the potential spread of infection to other herds. including spread or forward tracings) from establishments affected by OTFW TB incidents. APHA also traced herds that had unknowingly supplied infected animals subsequently identified in herds affected by TB incidents (source or back tracings). For these, 5,521 standalone tracing skin tests were carried out in 2023, and 98% of tracings were initiated within the target time of 13 days.

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

Figure 23 – Chart showing the annual number of TB herd tests in GB between 2018 and 2023

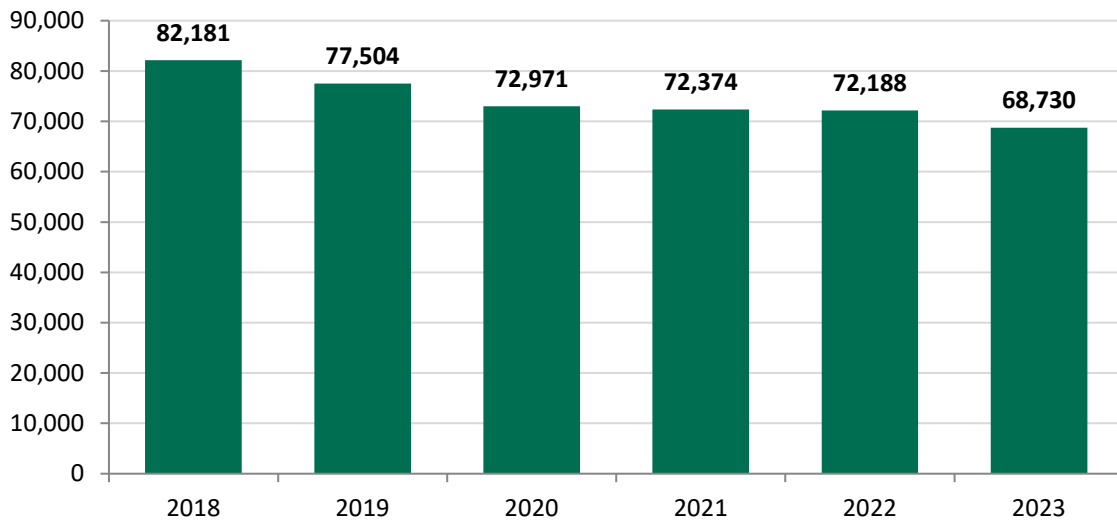
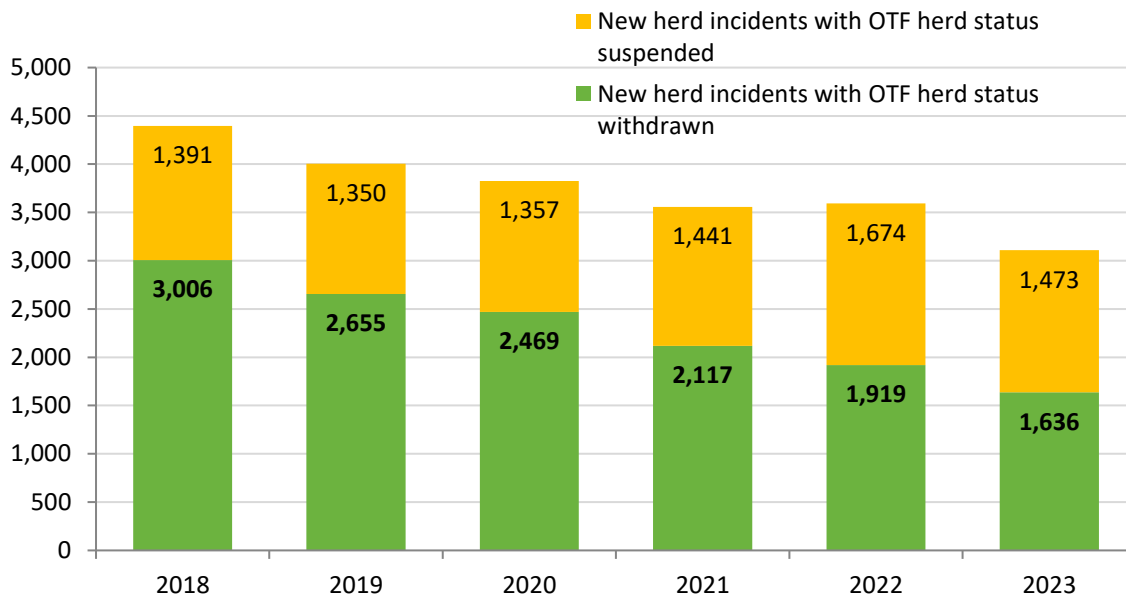


Figure 24 – Chart showing the annual number of new herd incidents where TB free herd status was withdrawn or suspended in GB between 2018 and 2023



2.149 To note: the definition of OTFW in Wales changed in January 2022, and values reported here for previous years are not directly comparable with those set out in the respective Annual Reports. In Wales virtually all new herd incidents are now classified as OTFW, except in limited circumstances. See [Bovine TB: Officially TB Free Withdrawn by default: frequently asked questions](#) .

England and Wales

2.150 In 2023, for TB surveillance and control purposes, England continued to be divided into three risk areas:

- a High Risk Area (HRA) spanning the South West of England, in which cattle herds were tested every six months
- 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 HRA and LRA, where herds were tested annually or every six months.

2.151 Defra continued to implement its long-term TB eradication strategy, to gradually achieve Officially TB Free (OTF) status in cattle for the whole of England by 2038.

2.152 Overall, the TB descriptive statistics for 2023 for England continued to show a general downward trend for the herd incidence rate and herd prevalence of TB in cattle. To note: the tighter TB testing regimes and control measures for cattle herds introduced since 2010 had resulted initially in the detection of more positive herds and animals.

2.153 The percentage of herds officially TB free in England at the end of 2023 was 95.7%, a slight increase on December 2022 (95.6%). The herd incidence rate for 2023 was 7.3 new herd incidents per 100 herd years at risk¹⁴, compared to 8.4 in 2022. The last time it was lower than this was in 2007, when it reached 7.0. The equivalent rate for OTFW incidents was 3.2 - the lowest rate since 2004. In England, the HRA saw the lowest number of new (and OTFW) TB herd incidents recorded since before 2002.

2.154 In 2023, Wales continued to divide its bovine TB surveillance and eradication into five TB incidence areas: High TB West, High TB East, Intermediate TB North, Intermediate TB Mid and Low TB Area. All herds were tested at least once annually, and the Welsh Government continued to implement its long-term eradication programme to achieve OTF status between 2036 and 2041. In 2023, the Intermediate TB Area North (ITBAN) remained an enlarged area, following transfer of hotspot areas in November 2021.

¹⁴ 'herd years at risk' – a measure of the total time that herds under surveillance during that period were at risk of infection – as set out in the methodology paper [bovinetb-herdmethod-09dec15.pdf](#)

- 2.155 Between June 2021 and April 2023, a number of additional testing measures were introduced in hotspot areas of the ITBAN aimed at increasing the sensitivity of surveillance and incident testing. Since January 2022, all incidents across Wales resulting from the finding of reactors on skin testing have become Officially TB Free Withdrawn. The three-year IR rule was also no longer applied, meaning all herds with only IRs at a surveillance test remained under restrictions until the IRs were retested.
- 2.156 Overall, there have been long term decreases in overall incidence and prevalence since the TB Eradication Programme was established in 2008, with new TB breakdowns in Wales decreasing from a peak of 1,330 in the 12 months to March 2009, to 607 in the 12 months to March 2024 - representing a 54.4% decrease.
- 2.157 In 2023, 169 new TB herd breakdowns were recorded in the High TB Area East - a decrease of 14.7% on 2022. The new TB breakdowns in the High TB Area West increased to 296 from 186, an increase of 59% from 2022. However, progress varied by TB Area, as 2023 also saw the highest number of new TB breakdowns in the Intermediate TB Area North (at 133) since the start of the data series in 1996.

Scotland

- 2.158 In 2023 in Scotland, there were eight confirmed TB breakdowns - in line with the low and stable incidence of disease that continued to support Scotland's Official TB Free status. In 2023, Scotland updated the TB Order, and the [Tuberculosis \(Scotland\) Order 2023](#) was implemented.

Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE)

- 2.159 APHA delivered on all performance indicators within the agreed criteria for the 2023 period. The table below outlines BSE, TSE, and scrapie performance indicators for Great Britain in 2023.

BSE, TSE and Scrapie performance indicators for 2023 in Great Britain

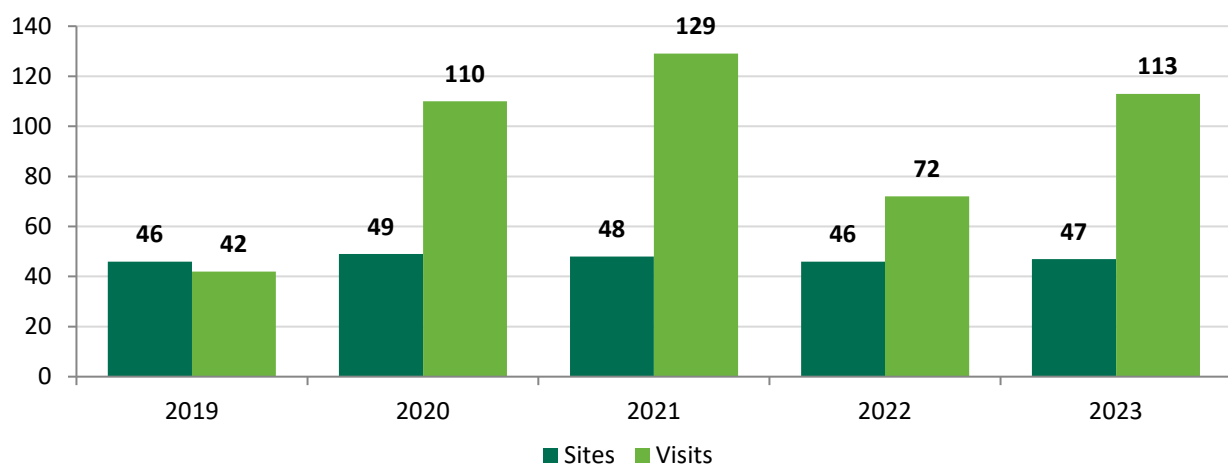
Performance indicator	Number of investigations	% completed within agreed target
Investigation of on-farm suspect BSE reports	0	N/A
Investigation of on-farm suspect Scrapie reports	1	100
Tracing of confirmed classical and atypical Scrapie cases	5	100
Risk-based inspection of approved TSE sampling sites and controlled hide stores	113	83
Restriction of eligible BSE offspring and cohorts	4*	100

* (eligible offspring & cohorts of 4 BSE investigations from fallen stock preliminary positive results were restricted as required)

2.160 There were four BSE suspects in 2023. All were fallen stock animals that had a preliminary positive TSE test result from the fallen stock survey. Following full confirmatory testing in the National Reference Laboratory, three produced negative results (allowing disease to be negated), and one case was confirmed as atypical positive.

2.161 There were four atypical cases of scrapie confirmed and no new cases of classical scrapie were recorded in 2023. All the on-farm investigation Scrapie suspects were restricted immediately and visited according to priorities.

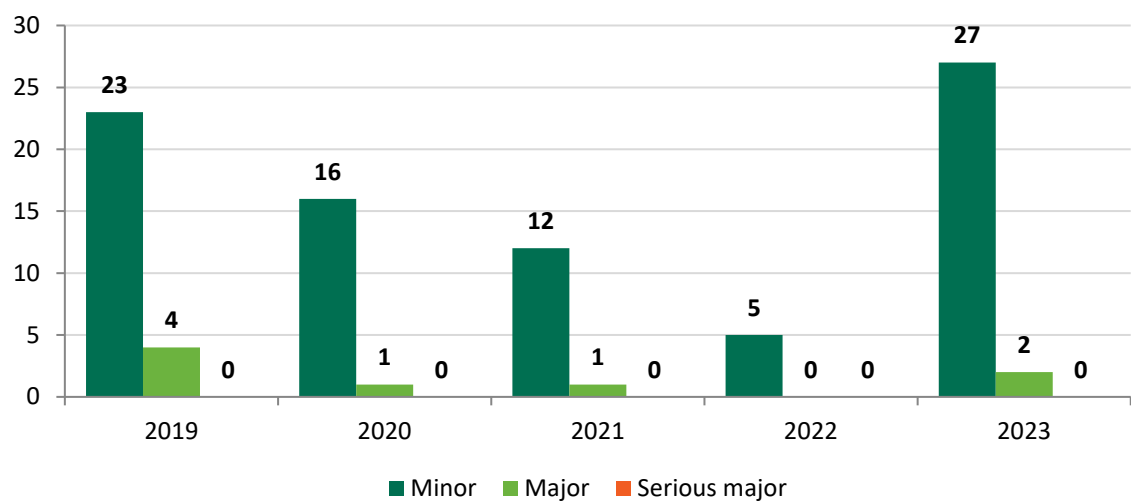
Figure 25 - Chart showing number of TSE approved sampling sites and visits in GB from 2019 - 2023



2.162 The number of TSE approved sampling sites remained stable over the previous three-year period, with a slight increase in 2023. Even though it was not possible to achieve 100% delivery of those scheduled visits, efforts were made to ensure that all premises received at least one inspection during 2023.

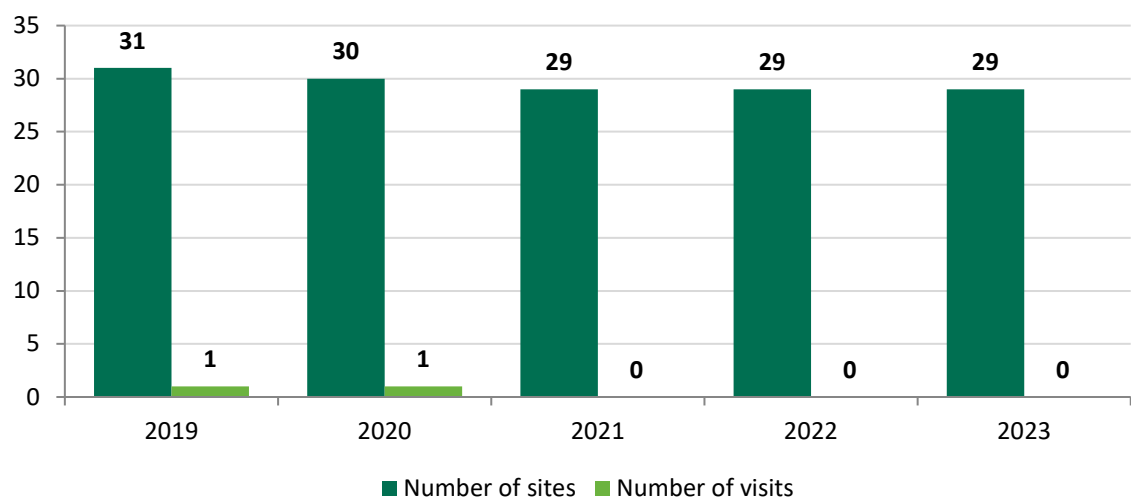
2.163 In Great Britain, 27 non-compliances were identified at TSE sampling sites during 2023. All but two were classified as minor non-compliances. One of the major non-compliances related to a record keeping issue, and the other related to a structural defect at the premises.

Figure 26 - Chart showing the number of non-compliances at GB TSE sampling sites from 2019 – 2023



2.164 The number of controlled hide establishments was unchanged in 2023. As a result of ongoing resource pressures and priorities in other work areas, no site visits were carried out in 2023.

Figure 27 - Chart showing the number of GB controlled hide establishments and the number of inspection visits from 2019 - 2023



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

Surveillance for BSE

2.165 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.

2.166 In 2023, 104,258 cattle were tested in Great Britain under the [active surveillance programme](#). No Classical BSE cases were detected through either active or passive surveillance in 2023. One Atypical BSE case in fallen stock was confirmed in England, through the Active surveillance programme. The numbers of confirmed TSE cases in Great Britain remained very low. Published [TSE surveillance statistics](#) provide further information.

Scrapie in sheep in GB

GB surveillance for scrapie from 2020 – 2023

Type of surveillance (Sheep over 18 months in Active Surveillance surveys)	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total slaughtered for human consumption	5,491	5,509	7,603	7,685
Total submitted as fallen stock	13,776	13,652	12,005	11,187
Total number of sheep tested	19,267	19,161	19,608	18,872

Positive Cases from Active and Passive Surveillance	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of classical scrapie cases	0	0	0	0
Number of atypical scrapie cases	13	11	11	4
Total positive scrapie cases	13	11	11	4

2.167 In 2023 in Great Britain, no classical cases of scrapie were identified in sheep through Active or Passive Surveillance, but four cases of atypical scrapie were identified. Of these, two cases were submitted to the Fallen Stock survey, and one case was submitted to the Abattoir survey. One case of a typical scrapie was confirmed through Passive surveillance.

2.168 [The Fallen Stock survey](#) was the main contributor to the detection of atypical scrapie. Four new sheep holdings were placed under monitoring restrictions in 2023. Throughout 2023 a total of 28 holdings had scrapie monitoring restrictions..

2.169 During the monitoring period, fallen and healthy slaughtered sheep aged over 18 months were tested for scrapie. In total, 317 fallen stock sheep and 21 annual cull sheep were submitted from atypical scrapie holdings.

2.170 Optional schemes were available for keepers exporting animals to the EU, including the Scrapie Monitoring Scheme provided privately by Scotland's Rural College (SRUC). This provided annual inspections, animal testing and a risk status award.

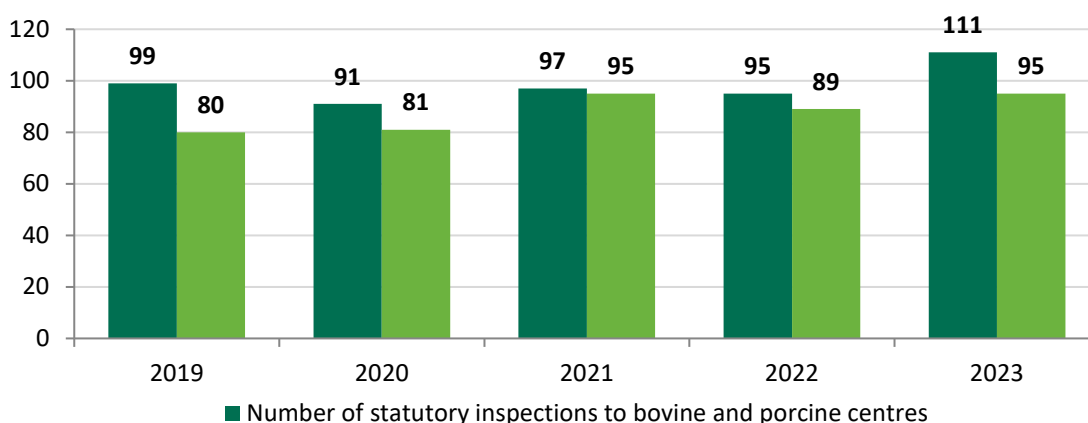
Scrapie in goats in Great Britain

2.171 In 2023, no classical or atypical cases of scrapie were identified in goats through Active or Passive Surveillance. There was one goat holding under the Compulsory Scrapie Flocks Scheme (CSFS). In total, 565 fallen stock goats, 120 CSFS fallen stock goats, and 199 CSFS annual cull goats aged over 18 months were tested - and no positive cases were confirmed from this surveillance route.

Artificial breeding controls

2.172 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. This work was delivered in line with expectations, and controls remained broadly consistent for 2023.

Figure 28 - Chart showing number of artificial breeding inspections carried out in GB, by bovine embryo centres and bovine porcine centres, from 2019 - 2023



Number of artificial breeding control activities undertaken in GB 2018/19 - 2023/24

Activity	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Number of bovine embryo collection / production / transfer teams approved	3*	4*	9*	7*	4*	9
Number of bovine and porcine semen collection, processing and storage centres approved	7*	3*	4*	4*	3*	5
Number of animals licensed for on-farm domestic semen collection	262	265	308	355	292	315
Number of animals approved to move onto approved AI centres	1,248	1,413	1,687	1,460	1,378	1,327
Number of animals licensed for semen export	1,204	1,366	1,625	1,357	1,326	1,244

*Embryo stores and porcine AQU approvals not included.

2.173 No sampling information was available in this period for collection of bovine and porcine semen production.

Sheep and goat identification and tracing inspections

2.174 GB Competent Authorities each met the regulatory requirement¹⁵ 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 between 2018 – 2023

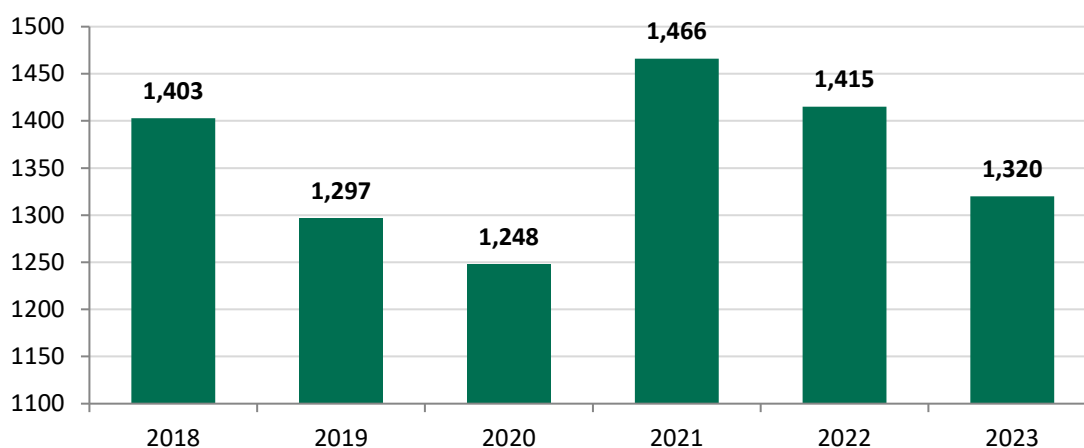
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total number of MS registered holdings at the start of the reporting period	114,720	108,212	109,217	136,959	122,241	113,350
Total number of holdings checked	4,216	3,602	3,468	4,350	3,957	4,108
Total number of MS registered ovine and caprine animals at the beginning of the reporting period	17,333,838	16,586,206	16,087,152	16,677,987	16,381,371	16,831,715
Total number of ovine and caprine animals in holdings checked during the reporting period	2,430,758	1,965,889	1,809,360	2,294,864	2,371,032	1,509,686

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

2.176 In 2023 there was a 7.27% decrease in registered sheep and goat holdings in GB. There was a 3.82% increase in holdings checked in 2023, and a 6.71% decrease in non-compliant holdings. The chart below shows the number of non-compliant holdings.

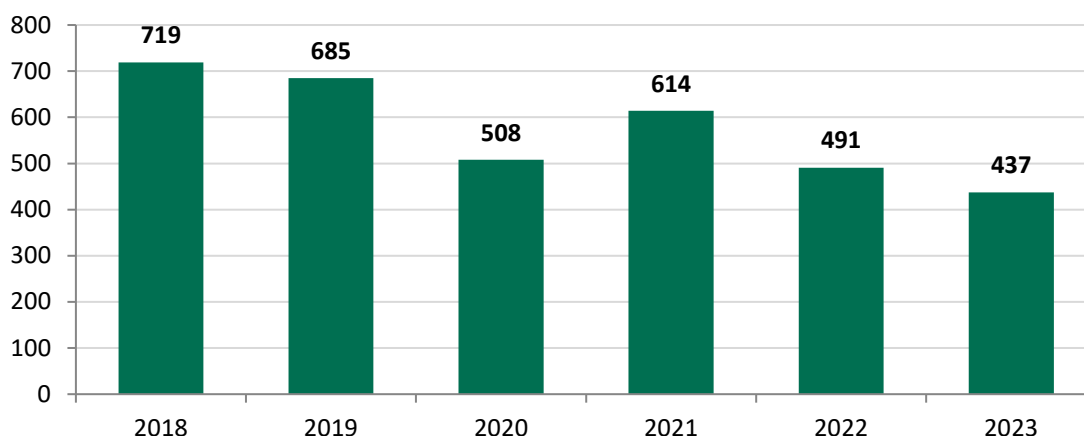
¹⁵ Retained Regulation (EC) No 21/2004, via retained Commission Regulation 1505/2006.

Figure 29 - Chart showing the number of sheep and goat holdings with non-compliances in GB from 2018 - 2023



2.177 Penalties were applied to sheep and goat keepers for non-compliances discovered during an SMR 8 cross compliance inspection. The chart below shows the number of penalties imposed in GB from 2018 to 2023.

Figure 30 - Chart showing the number of sheep and goat holdings with penalties imposed in GB from 2018 – 2023



2.178 In 2023 there was a decrease of 11% in the number of holdings with penalties imposed. The proportion of non-compliant holdings to have a penalty imposed in 2023 was 33%, compared to 35% in 2022.

Cattle identification and registration

2.179 In 2023, 3.34% of holdings were inspected in accordance with regulation (EC) 1760/2000, with the minimum requirement being 3% (per Commission Regulation (EC) 1082/2003). All inspections were completed on time during the reporting period.

2.180 In Great Britain¹⁶, 80% of the holdings inspected were selected using a computerised risk analysis. Criteria for this included 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.

General information on holdings and bovine animals in Great Britain 2018 – 2023

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total number of holdings registered at the start of the reporting period	71,946	70,555	68,661	68,488	66,349	65,730
Total number of holdings checked during the reporting period	2,925	2,431	2,345	2,488	2,275	2,198
Total number of holding found to be non-compliant	1,366	1,028	1,027	1,082	1,034	1,295
Total number of bovine animals registered at the start of the reporting period	7,964,321	7,984,511	7,781,796	7,699,276	7,703,152	7,679,799
Total number of bovine animals checked during the reporting period	366,698	265,352	296,518	292,908	257,921	264,172
Total number of individual bovine animals found to be non-compliant	28,115	17,470	22,500	21,358	19,255	27,646

2.181 In 2023, the results of the cattle identification inspection annual programme for Great Britain showed a mixed picture of compliance, with the number of non-compliant holdings increasing from 1,034 to 1,295. There was an increase in the number of bovines found to be non-compliant with identification requirements, from 19,255 in 2022 to 27,646 – a rise of 8,391.

2.182 Potential reasons for this increase might have included changes to the selection criteria used to identify holdings for inspection or increased intelligence prompting particular holdings to be inspected. Although the number of non-compliances showed an increase on the previous 3 years, it is broadly in line with 2017 and 2018. Also, fewer cattle were subject to movement restrictions - 6,753 (2.56% of animals inspected) in 2023, compared to 9,780 (3.79% of animals inspected) in 2022.

¹⁶ Data is taken from the inspection year 2023 and is aggregated across England, Scotland, and Wales

2.183 Breaches were categorised under one of the following four headings:

- Animal identification failure
- Holding register discrepancies
- Failure to notify birth, death, or movement
- Passport anomalies

2.184 The most common types of non-compliance related to late reporting or failure to report births, movements and deaths, which accounted for 751 of the 1,295 non-compliant holdings and 13,634 of the non-compliant animals. Most animals inspected were found to have only one error.

2.185 In 2023, 6,753 bovine animals were subject to movement restrictions in GB. A total of 1,543 animals were subject to individual restrictions, and 5,198 were subject to whole herd movement restrictions. This represented 2.56% of animals subject to inspection. A total of 89 holdings were subject to a whole herd restriction, which equated to 4.04% of all inspected holdings.

2.186 The charts below show holdings with non-compliances and inspections relating to cattle ID and registration from 2019 to 2023.

Figure 31 - Chart showing the number of holdings with non-compliances for cattle identification regulations in GB from 2019 - 2023

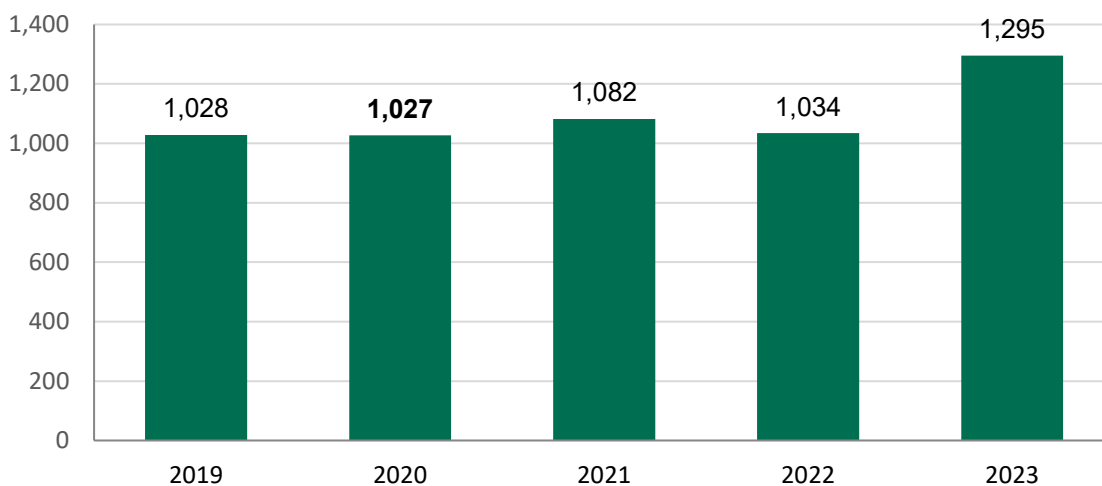
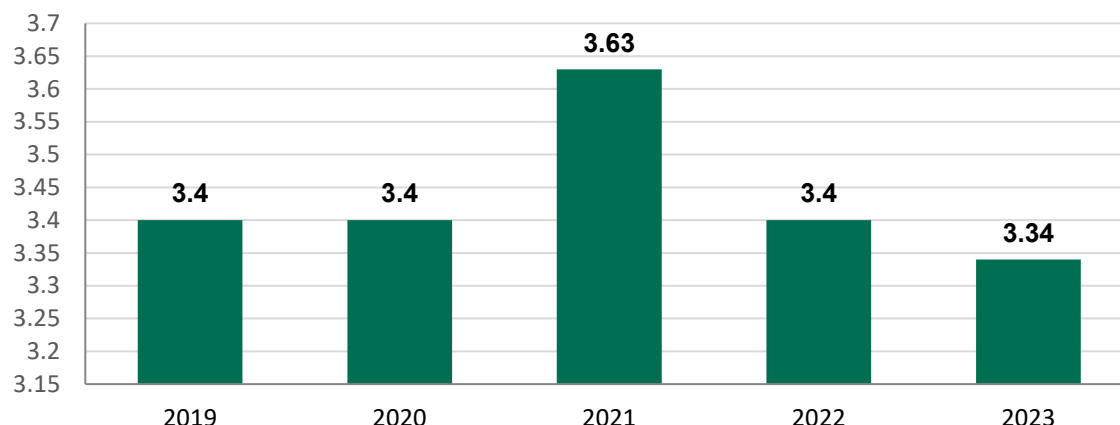


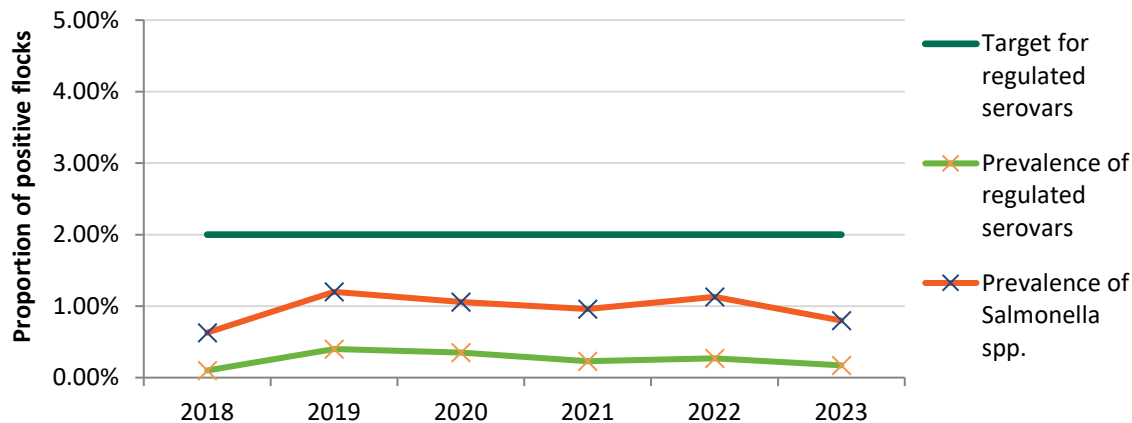
Figure 32 - Chart showing the percentage of cattle holdings inspected under the cattle identification regulations in GB from 2019 – 2023



Zoonoses

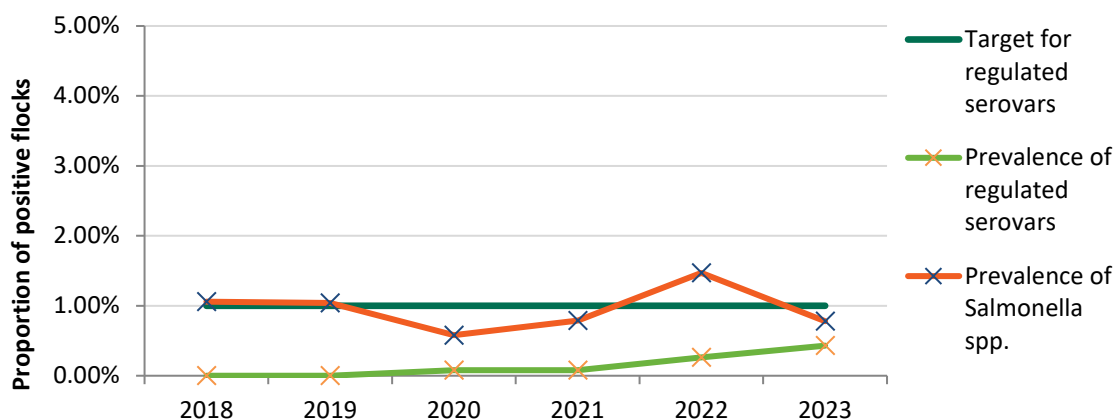
- 2.187 Control of *Salmonella* in all GB poultry sectors was maintained in 2023. England, Scotland and Wales continued to meet or exceed their respective target prevalence for regulated serovars in all five National Control Programmes (NCPs). More detail on salmonella control trends can be found in the reports listed at [Salmonella in animals and feed in Great Britain](#).
- 2.188 The *Salmonella* National Control Programme (NCP) monitored results for the five NCPs (breeding, laying and broiler chickens, and breeding and fattening turkeys) for 2023. The data showed that the levels of the regulated (target) *Salmonella* serovars were all below and within the legally designated targets in each country. Following EU Exit, reporting continued to be delivered at a national level rather than for the UK as a whole. England, Scotland and Wales all maintained separate Control Programmes for the five poultry categories, which were implemented consistently across the three nations.
- 2.189 Operator and official sampling (required by legislation) under the *Salmonella* NCPs remained in place for each sector.
- 2.190 The estimated prevalence of *S. Enteritidis*, *S. Typhimurium* and/ or monophasic strains of *S. Typhimurium* in adult flocks of laying hens within the NCPs in Great Britain during 2023 was 0.17%. Prevalence remained well below the target of 2%, and was also lower than the rates of 0.27% in 2022 and 0.23% in 2021.
- 2.191 A total of six adult laying flocks (from four separate holdings) tested positive for regulated *Salmonella* serovars (*S. Enteritidis* and/ or *S. Typhimurium*, including monophasic strains) in GB in 2023. Three adult flocks from one holding tested positive for *S. Enteritidis* (PT4 (x2), PT8 (x1)) in 2023. Two adult flocks from two separate holdings tested positive for *S. Typhimurium* (DT1 (x1), DT99 (x1)) in 2023. One adult flock was positive for monophasic *S. Typhimurium* 4,12:i:- DT193.

Figure 33 - Chart showing prevalence of *Salmonella* spp. in regulated serovars relative to the target in adult laying hen flocks of *Gallus gallus* in the *Salmonella* National Control Programme from 2018 – 2023 in Great Britain



2.192 The GB breeding chicken sector had a reported prevalence for regulated (target) serovars of 0.43% for 2023, comparing favourably with the legal target of less than 1%. Five adult breeding flocks tested positive for a regulated *Salmonella* serovar in 2023. Two parent broiler breeder flocks on the same premises tested positive for *S. Typhimurium* DT99 (via operator sampling), one parent broiler flock tested positive for *S. Typhimurium* DT99 (via annual official sampling), one further parent layer flock tested positive for *S. Typhimurium* DT105 (via operator sampling) and *S. Infantis* was identified in a layer parent breeding flock (via risk-based official sampling).

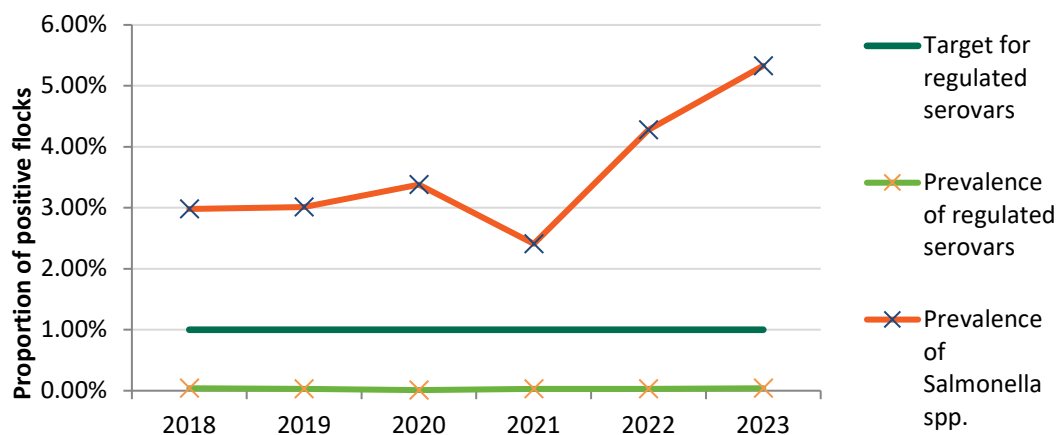
Figure 34 - Chart showing prevalence of *Salmonella* spp. and the regulated serovars relative to the target in adult breeding flocks of *Gallus gallus* in the *Salmonella* National Control Programme from 2018 - 2023 in Great Britain



2.193 Sixteen broiler flocks on 11 separate holdings tested positive for regulated serovars in 2023. Seven flocks from six separate holdings tested positive for *S. Typhimurium* (DT75 x2, DT105 x3, and RDNC x2) in 2023. Four flocks from one holding tested positive for monophasic *S. Typhimurium* 4,5,12:i:- DT193 in 2023. Five flocks tested positive for *S. Enteritidis* (all PT8) in 2023.

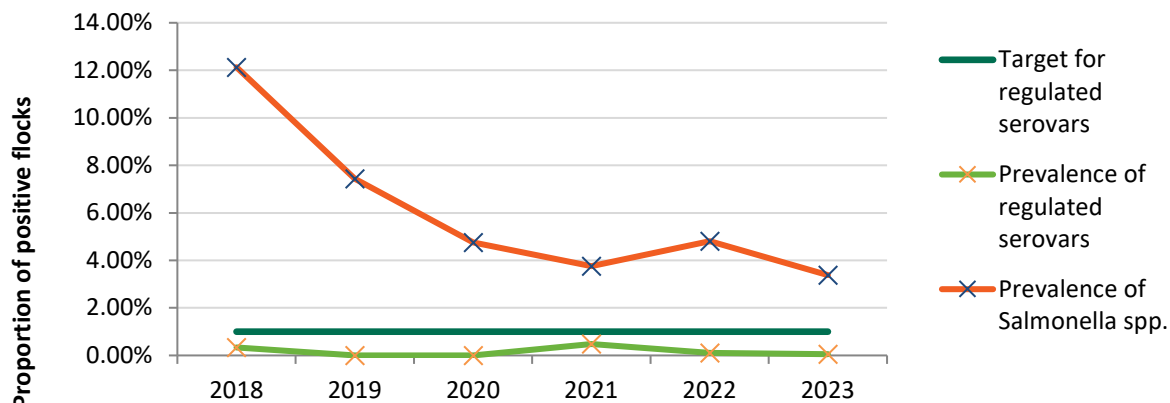
2.194 Based on the estimated number of broiler flocks in 2023, the estimated prevalence of regulated *Salmonella* serovars in GB was 0.04%. This compares with 0.03% in both 2022 and 2021 – again a favourable result in the context of a less than 1% legal target for regulated serovars.

Figure 35 – Chart showing prevalence of *Salmonella* spp. In regulated serovars relative to the target for broiler flocks of *Gallus gallus* in the *Salmonella* National Control Programme from 2018 – 2023 in Great Britain



2.195 In 2023, one turkey fattening flock tested positive for the monophasic *S. Typhimurium* strain 4,12:i:- DT193 (via operator sampling). The 2023 prevalence of the target serovars was 0.05%, which is below the legislative target of a maximum of 1% of flocks positive for regulated serovars in fattening turkey flocks. This compares with 0.10% in 2022 and 0.48% in 2021.

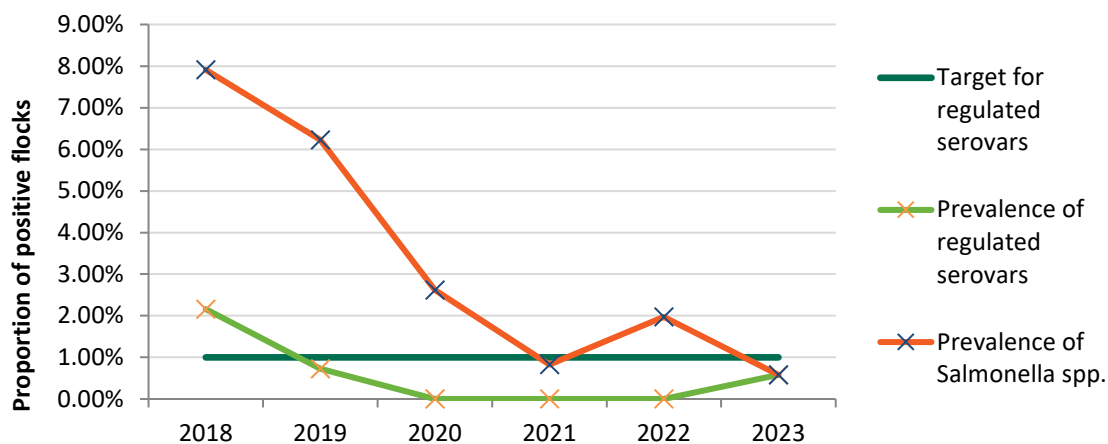
Figure 36 - Chart showing prevalence of *Salmonella* spp. and the regulated serovars relative to the target for fattening turkey flocks in the *Salmonella* National Control Programme from 2018 - 2023 in Great Britain



2.196 In 2023, 128 adult turkey breeding flocks were tested under the National Control Programme by either APHA officials or Official Veterinarians on behalf of the Competent Authority. All flocks were sampled at the hatchery, none at the holding. One adult turkey breeding flock was positive for *S. Typhimurium* DT193 (via on-farm operator sampling). The 2023 prevalence of the regulated serovars was 0.58% - below the legislative target of 1% of flocks positive for *S. Enteritidis* and *S. Typhimurium*, including monophasic *Salmonella* Typhimurium strains.

2.197 No adult or rearing turkey breeding flocks were positive for *S. Enteritidis* in 2023. This has been the case since the introduction of the UK breeding turkey NCP in 2010.

Figure 37 - *Salmonella* spp. and the regulated serovars relative to the target in breeding turkey flocks in the *Salmonella* National Control Programme from 2018 - 2023 in Great Britain



2.198 The requirements for official sampling are set out in assimilated Regulation 2160/2003 (as amended) and implementing legislation. In total, for all poultry sectors across Great Britain, 2,253 poultry flocks were subject to annual routine official NCP sampling in 2023.

Number of flocks officially sampled in Great Britain per annum 2019-2023

Sector	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Breeding chickens	1,246	1,067	1,099	879	1,090
Laying chickens	1,187	805	1,044	869	840
Broilers	125	107	122	73	145
Fattening turkeys	44	32	37	24	50
Breeding turkeys	227	187	182	137	128

2.199 The assessment of FBO compliance with the requirements of the NCPs 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.

Summary of non-compliance in the poultry sector in Great Britain from 2019 – 2023

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Non-compliances	83	35	44	39	84

2.200 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 NCPs. During 2023, 29 case referrals (22 in England and seven in Wales) were received, and 26 of these were moderated by APHA. As a result, nine penalty notices were sent out to customers in England, and 15 warning letters were issued (eight in England, seven in Wales), compared with 13 penalty notices and 14 warning letters issued in 2022. To note: this financial penalty system is not used in Scotland.

Salmonella in pigs

2.201 During 2023/24 in England and Wales, sampling was undertaken at abattoirs that slaughter 100,000 or more pigs per annum. There were 1,882 salmonella tests carried out, of which 39 were positive. For the same period in Scotland, 325 Salmonella samples were collected, with one positive identified.

Border controls – Animals and products of animal origin

2.202 The number of consignments of animal products imported into Great Britain decreased from 58,109 in 2022 to 57,262 in 2023. For live animal imports, the consignment numbers also decreased, from 11,542 in 2022 to 8,483 in 2023.

- 2.203 Compliance remains high for non-EU country imports of animals and animal products. In 2023, the number of consignments rejected was 1,601 in 2023 (2.8%) compared to 1,294 (2.23%) in 2022.
- 2.204 The major non-compliances were for animal products, of which 1,371 (85%) were confirmed as documentary errors. For live animals, 14 (0.17%) consignments were rejected in 2023, compared to 124 (1.07%) consignments in 2022. The majority of rejected consignments of live animals were dogs, cats and fish, and most rejections (11 or 79%) were confirmed as documentary failures.
- 2.205 If a consignment presented a public or animal health risk, it was destroyed. Otherwise the importer / person responsible for the consignment had the option to either re-export, destroy, or arrange for the consignment to be subjected to special treatment or any other measure to ensure compliance – and, where appropriate, to allocate the consignment for purposes other than those for which it was originally intended. Where required, this action must be undertaken under the control of the relevant competent authority. For live animals, most consignments were re-exported.
- 2.206 Since 1st January 2021, Great Britain placed strict biosecurity controls on the highest risk imports of animals, animal products, plants and plant products from the EU. To reduce disruption to travellers and support businesses as these controls were introduced, temporary easements were implemented in 2021, which were still in effect in 2023.

GB controls on imported consignments: animal products from 2019 – 2023

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total certificates issued	54,826	48,489	53,229	58,109	57,262
Number of controlled certificates	54,826	48,489	53,229	58,109	57,262
Number of rejections	1,102	965	1,093	1,294	1,601
Number of rejections re-exported	376	246	371	421	730
Number of rejections transformed	1	6	1	0	0
Number of rejections destroyed	725	713	661	830	834

GB controls on imported consignments: live animals from 2018 – 2023

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total certificates	8,614	8,585	5,829	10,395	11,542	8,483
Number of controlled certificates	8,614	8,585	5,801	10,395	11,542	8,483
Number of rejects	30	55	103	183	124	14
Rejects re-exported	24	48	102	160	90	3
Rejects slaughtered	1	0	1	0	0	2
Rejects subject to euthanasia (fish & gastropoda)	5	7	0	1	1	1

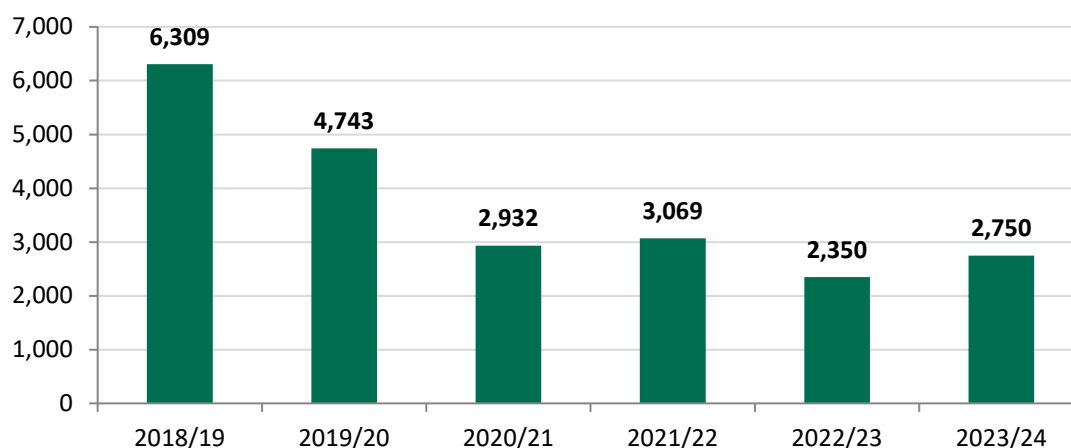
GB Imports of live animals from the EU

2.207 From October 2023, live animal imports from the EU were notified on the Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS). This is therefore the first year in which EU live animal imports were recorded and can be included in this Annual Report.

	2023
Total certificates	5,646

2.208 Border Force confirmed an increase in the number of seizures of illegal imports¹⁷ of products of animal origin (POAO) in 2023/24, compared with the previous year. The ban on imports of pork and pork products over 2kg for personal consumption or use (unless commercially produced and packaged to EU requirements) that was imposed by Defra and the DGs in September 2022 continued throughout the 2023 reporting period.

Figure 38 - Chart showing the number of seizures of imported products of animal origin in UK from 2018/19 - 2023/24



*2019/20 and 2020/21 figures have been amended to correct an error in the previous report.

¹⁷ '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

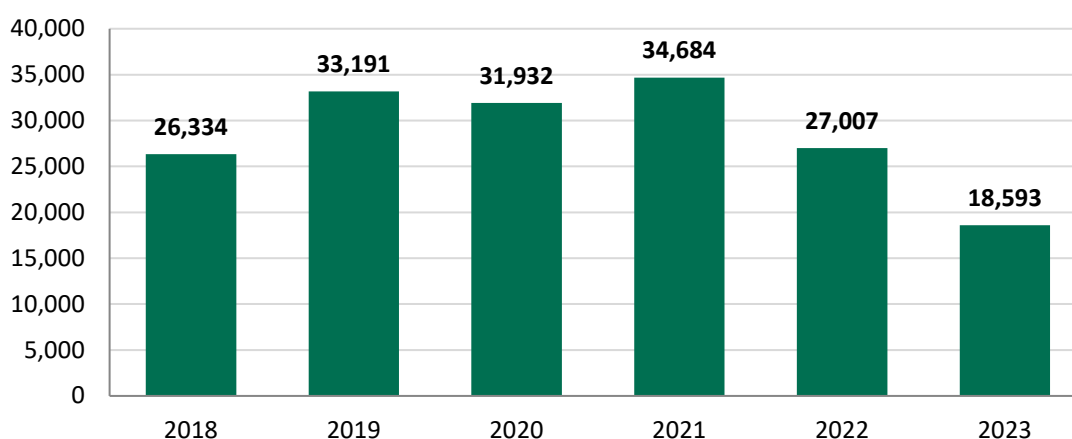
2.209 In England and Wales, the National Bee Unit (NBU) carried out a statutory inspection programme for Defra and the Welsh Government. Diagnostic support for the programme is provided by Fera Science Limited. Details of the programmes are available from the [NBU's BeeBase](#), along with full details of the NBU's inspections and pest and disease incidence in 2023 and in previous years.

2.210 The number of colonies infected with American foulbrood (AFB) and European foulbrood (EFB) have 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 or a technique called 'Shook Swarm'.

2.211 Honey samples were also collected under contract for the VMD for the National Surveillance Scheme. Approximately 100 samples were collected in 2023, in line with previous years.

2.212 A total of 18,593 unique colonies in 2,931 apiaries were inspected across England and Wales in 2023. The chart below shows inspections undertaken from 2018 to 2023.

Figure 39 - Chart showing the total number of unique colonies inspected in England and Wales from 2018 – 2023¹⁸



¹⁸ To note: laboratory diagnosis and control measures in England and Wales up to the end of 2020 were based only on samples of rest-of-world import apiaries, for which 100% of samples received were analysed. Following our exit from the European Union in December 2020, from 2021 onwards samples include bees imported from apiaries in the EU, for which a proportion of samples received are analysed, rather than 100% analysis.

Turnaround times on laboratory diagnosis and control measures on diseased apiaries in England, 2021 - 2023

Type of sample	Target (working days within which 95% of samples should be completed)			% within target			Number of samples analysed		
Year	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Statutory Exotics	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	0	0
Voluntary Exotics	1	1	1	94	90	89	185	153	133
Import Samples	10	4	10	72	10	30	33	24	30
Statutory Foulbrood	1	1	1	95	97	92	913	605	514
Voluntary Foulbrood	1	1	1	n/a	50	0	0	2	12

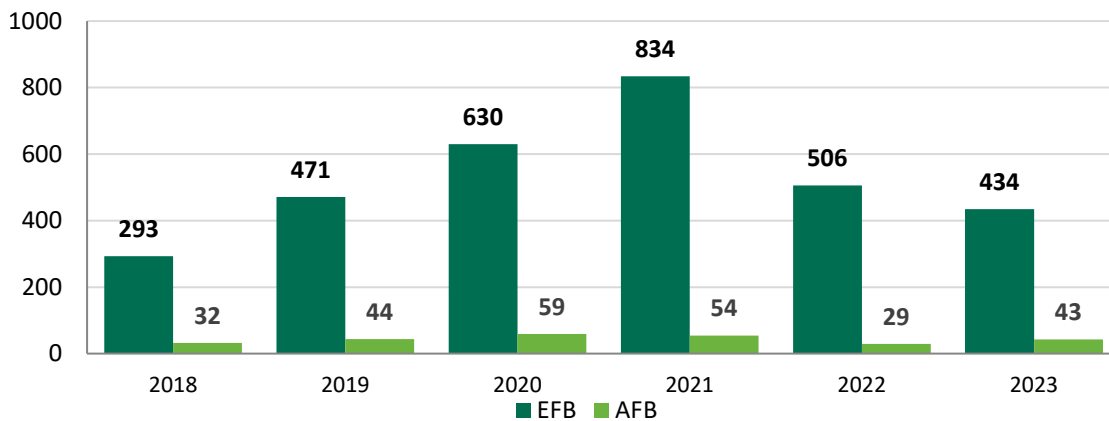
Turnaround times on laboratory diagnosis and control measures on diseased apiaries in Wales, 2021 - 2023

Type of sample	Target (working days within which 95% of samples should be completed)			% within target			Number of samples analysed		
Year	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Statutory Exotics	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	0	0
Voluntary Exotics	1	1	1	89	94	81	19	17	16
Import Samples	10	4	10	n/a	8	n/a	0	2	0
Statutory Foulbrood	1	1	1	88	100	80	49	62	30
Voluntary Foulbrood	1	1	1	100	n/a	n/a	1	0	0

2.213 In England and Wales, official controls on colonies infected with foulbrood comprised 112 colonies in 67 separate apiaries, where 88% were treated by shook swarm within 10 days (with a mean treatment time of three days), while 87% of 393 colonies in 301 separate apiaries were controlled by destruction within 10 days (mean treatment time two days).

2.214 The NBU's continuing inspection priorities include the detection and management of statutory notifiable diseases AFB and EFB, and surveillance for the exotic pest species of small hive beetle and *Tropilaelaps* mites. In 2023 in England and Wales, there were 43 cases of AFB and 434 cases of EFB. The numbers of AFB cases over the past 10 years remain at relatively low levels. The chart below summarises infection levels in colonies from 2018 - 2023.

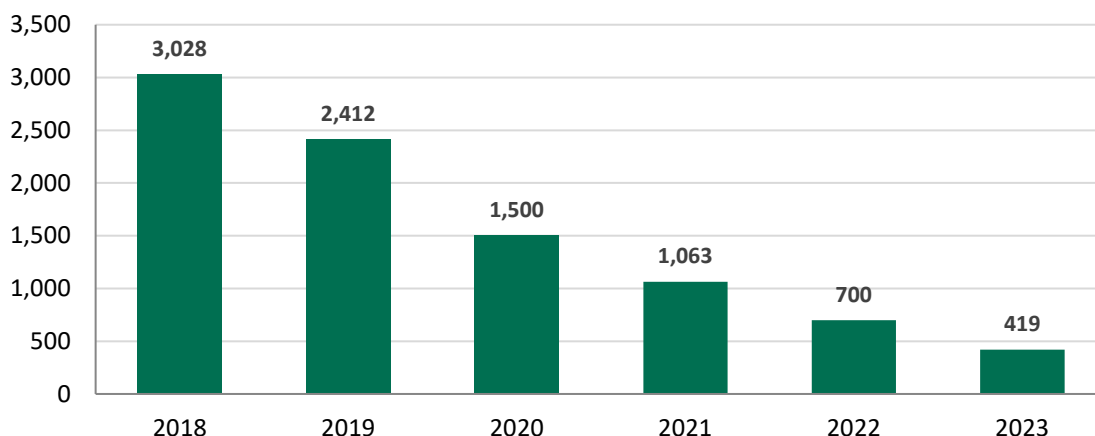
Figure 40 - Chart showing the number of colonies found to be infected with EFB and AFB in England and Wales from 2018 – 2023



2.215 A total of 2,001 colonies in 419 apiaries were specifically examined in England and Wales for the presence of exotic pests. A further 149 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.

2.216 The risk-based system for prioritising apiary inspections was reviewed in 2020, which resulted in something of a shift in focus - from exotic inspections to foulbrood inspections. The below chart shows inspections for exotic pests in England and Wales from 2018 to 2023.

Figure 41 - Chart showing the number of apiaries inspected for exotic pests in England and Wales from 2018 – 2023



2.217 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](#).

- 2.218 The number of Scottish colonies infected with American foulbrood (AFB) and European foulbrood (EFB) have remained at low levels in recent years. However, Scotland had an unprecedented number of both AFB and EFB cases in 2023. Thirty six colonies with 6 different beekeepers were diagnosed with AFB, and 212 colonies with 34 different beekeepers were diagnosed with EFB. An outbreak in East Lothian was the first detected in this area in recent years. Out of 24 hives in one apiary, 14 were found infected (eight with AFB, four with EFB, and two with both AFB and EFB). This was unprecedented in the history of the Bee Health Team in Scotland.
- 2.219 This data led to the Minister for Energy and the Environment writing a letter to beekeepers in Scotland, to remind them of their responsibilities - to limit spread of disease, and to ensure a healthy and sustainable population of honey bees is achieved in Scotland. All colonies that were found to be infected with AFB were destroyed. Treatment for EFB involved either destruction or 'shook swarm'.
- 2.220 Despite this, EFB remained less prevalent in Scotland compared to England and Wales, with the disease primarily concentrated in the eastern regions of the country. The western, northern and borders areas of Scotland remained largely unaffected. The Honey Bee Health Team continued to work on establishing the true picture of EFB spread in Scotland, with ongoing research projects aiming to better understand the disease.
- 2.221 A total of 14,394 unique colonies in 578 apiaries were inspected across Scotland. The Scottish Bee Inspectorate's inspection priorities are the detection and management of statutory notifiable diseases (AFB and EFB), and surveillance for exotic pest species (Small Hive Beetle and *Tropilaelaps mites*).
- 2.222 [The Scottish Government EFB Control Plan](#) has been in operation since 2010, allowing commercial beekeepers to complete their own initial disease inspection, subject to a certification process.
- 2.223 Honey samples were also collected under contract for the VMD for the National Surveillance Scheme. Ten samples are collected each year under Council Directive 96/23/EC; none of these samples were non-compliant in 2023. Results of the Scottish Government inspection programme are provided below.

Figure 42 - Chart showing the number of apiaries and colonies infected with EFB in Scotland, from 2018 – 2023

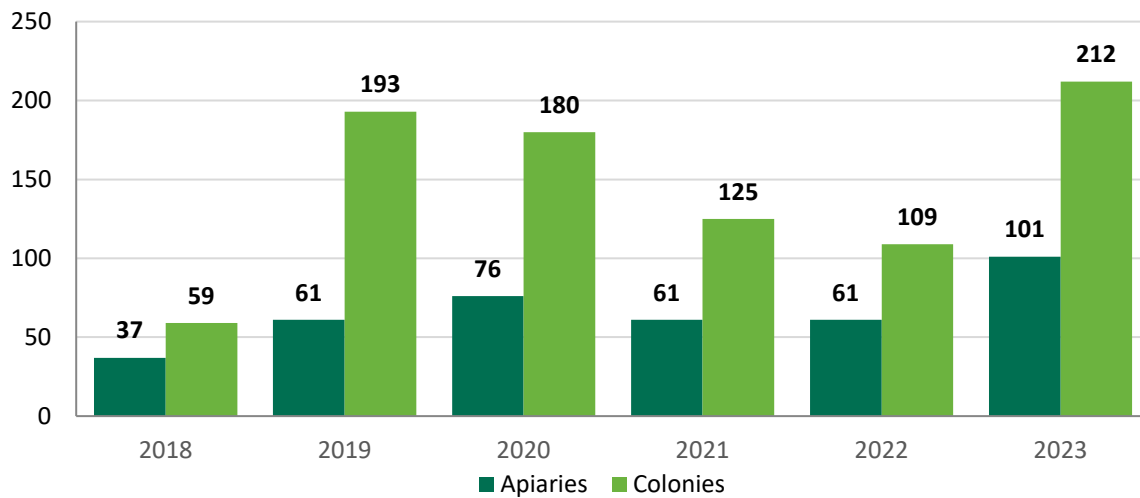


Figure 43 - Chart showing the number of apiaries and colonies inspected in Scotland from 2018 – 2023

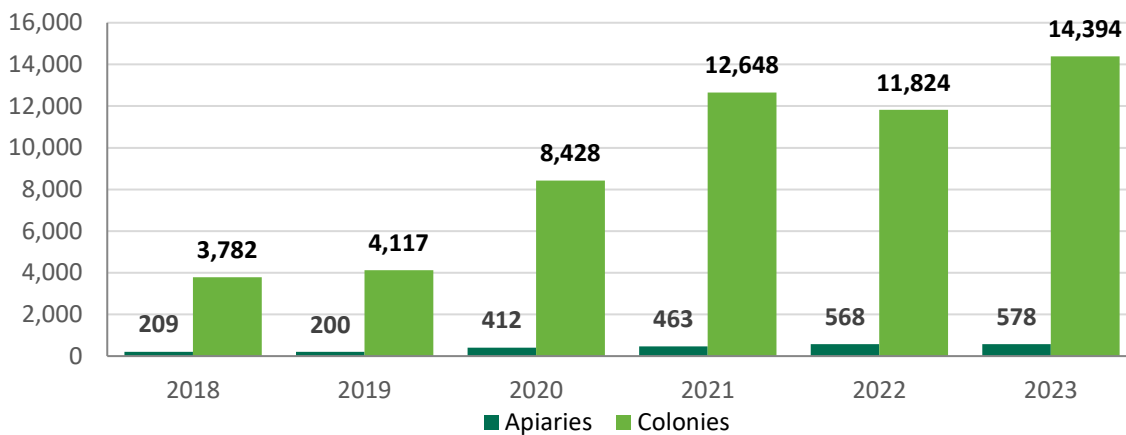
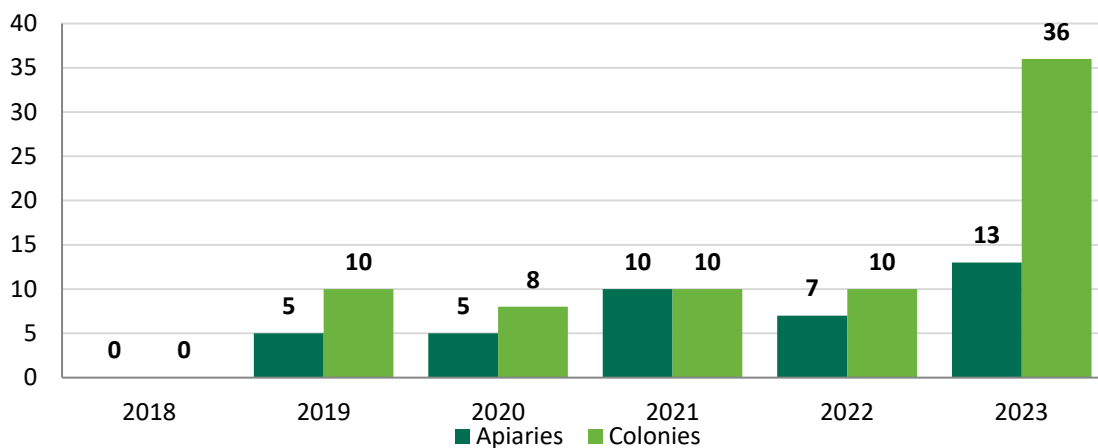


Figure 44 - Chart showing the number of apiaries and colonies infected with AFB in Scotland, from 2018 – 2023



Aquatic animal health (AAH)

AAH Aquaculture Production Business Compliance, Disease Surveillance and Control Summary (England and Wales)

- 2.224 The 2023 annual risk-based routine compliance and aquatic animal health (AAH) surveillance inspection programme continued, at a minimum annual inspection on every Aquaculture Production Business (APB) in England and Wales. The annual programme fulfilled the statutory requirements for aquatic animal health surveillance and delivery of official controls on APBs, delivered by the Fish Health Inspectorate (FHI) at Cefas.
- 2.225 Routine inspections were undertaken to monitor stock health and carry out surveillance for notifiable diseases (according to species susceptibility and conditions conducive to clinical expression of the disease in question) and to audit compliance with the requirements of The Aquatic Animal Health (England and Wales) Regulations 2009.
- 2.226 The routine programme of inspections was successfully completed for England and Wales in 2023, meeting the objectives and targets set out in the MoU between Defra and Cefas, and fulfilling the risk-based statutory programme requirements. The official control programme supports the continued maintenance of GB's high aquatic animal health status for the listed (notifiable) diseases of fish and shellfish.
- 2.227 In England and Wales, the intensity and type of controls remained consistent in 2023 compared to the previous year.
- 2.228 In 2023, 79 new APBs were authorised and 38 APBs were deauthorised.

Total number of routine Aquaculture Production Business compliance inspections 2018 – 2023

ABP compliance inspections	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Fish Farms	308	310	263	243	230	232
Mollusc Farms	77	75	63	50	60	59
Crustacean Farms	6	4	6	8	11	16
Purification Centres	50	49	40	43	46	44
Importers (live fish and shellfish)	114	79	72	66	65	69
Exporters (live fish and shellfish - new programme Nov 21)	NA	NA	NA	12	26	45

- 2.229 In addition, a total of 413 routine disease surveillance programme inspections and samples were completed by the FHI on fish and shellfish APBs, to monitor for the presence of notifiable diseases and detect increased mortalities.

- 2.230 The FHI received 88 disease and mortality reports in 2023. In response to these, and to clinical signs observed during routine inspections, the FHI issued 41 Initial Designation Notices (IDNs - controls on suspicion of notifiable or emerging disease in fish and shellfish), and conducted 83 investigations on suspicion of (or to rule out) notifiable and emerging disease. In total, 62 diagnostic samples were collected: 51 from fish, eight from molluscs, and three from crustaceans. These were submitted for diagnostic testing - to screen for notifiable, new, and emerging diseases.
- 2.231 In 2023, 24 Confirmed Designation Notices (CDNs) were issued on confirmation of notifiable disease, 23 CDNs were placed for the control of KHV disease outbreaks in recreational carp / coarse fisheries, and an ornamental Koi carp importer. Although KHV is notifiable, GB is not free of the disease and outbreaks occur routinely in this sector. One CDN was also placed in the marine environment for an outbreak of Oyster herpesvirus-1 microvariant (OsHV-1 μ var) in the River Exe.
- 2.232 To monitor compliance with movement restrictions and biosecurity measures, 72 inspections were carried out on fish and shellfish sites subject to controls (under Confirmed Designation Notices) for notifiable diseases - 47 at molluscan APBs and purification centres, 24 at registered fisheries (for recreational angling), and one at an ornamental fish importer site.

Total number of investigations & inspections for disease control, 2018 – 2023

Investigations/inspections	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Disease Investigations	168	127	59	118	87	83
Disease Control Inspections	177	145	67	113	68	72

- 2.233 The number of disease investigations remained similar in 2023 compared to the previous year. KHV outbreaks continued to account for the majority of listed disease investigations and outbreaks in England and Wales. To note: the numbers of cases each year can vary markedly, as the disease is affected by environmental conditions during the outbreak season, such as a shorter / cooler summer.
- 2.234 Long-standing disease control zones remained unchanged across multiple shellfish harvesting areas for the control of the protozoan parasite *B. ostreae* (affecting native oyster *Ostrea edulis*). For *Marteilia refringens*, zoning remained limited to a single estuary system, following the detection of infection in edible mussels (*Mytilus edulis*) in 2011. However, an outbreak of Oyster herpesvirus-1 microvariant (OsHV-1 μ var) was detected in the River Exe in Devon following reports of 90% mortality in juvenile Pacific oysters (*Magallana gigas*) at an APB. Official controls were placed and the original CDN on the River Teign was expanded to incorporate this new detection on the River Exe – [CD15.2023](#).

- 2.235 The position for other notifiable diseases remained stable in 2023, 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. Details of all fish and shellfish disease controls and Designations in England and Wales are published in the guidance on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).
- 2.236 The FHI registers low risk aquaculture production businesses such as managed fisheries for recreational angling. These are not subject to routine inspection, and must be registered if introducing or removing live fish. In 2023, 308 recreational fisheries were registered. By the end of 2023 there were a total of 10,486 registered fisheries and cropping waters in England and Wales.
- 2.237 The FHI has a contractual agreement with the VMD to undertake sampling of fish on their behalf for veterinary residue testing, and inspection of APB premises holding mixing licences for veterinary medicines. In 2023, 59 residue samples were obtained and submitted to the analytical laboratory FERA (at Sand Hutton, York) for testing, and mixing licence inspections were conducted on nine fish farms.
- 2.238 The risk-based import surveillance programme continued to be targeted at sources of live fish posing a higher risk for disease introduction. In 2023, a total of 30 import samples were collected under the risk-based monitoring programme and screened for notifiable diseases.

Total number of fish and shellfish import samples 2018 – 2023

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Rest of the world	36	22	6	25	29	23
EU/EEA	10	6	1	9	8	7
Total import samples	46	28	7	34	37	30

- 2.239 The level of trade and import/export activity delivered by the FHI in 2023 continued at a high level in 2023, with the FHI issuing 213 health certificates for the export of live aquatic animals from England and Wales, and undertaking 100% documentary checks on consignments of live fish and shellfish imported into GB from the EU.
- 2.240 The number of controls (Regulation 16 and 23 notices) applied to imports under TARP Regulations 2011 rose in 2023, which was in part a result of the introduction of new health certificates, which came into effect in August 2023, and issues in the uptake and documentary errors associated with this change.

Figure 45 – Chart showing the number of import checks and export certificates issued by the FHI (England and Wales) from 2018 – 2023

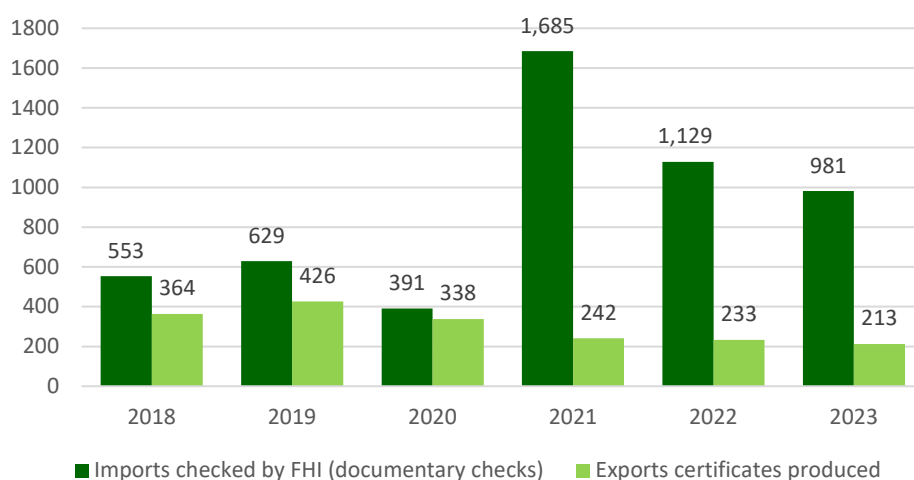


Figure 46 - AAH Non-compliance and Enforcement Summary (England and Wales) from 2018 - 2023

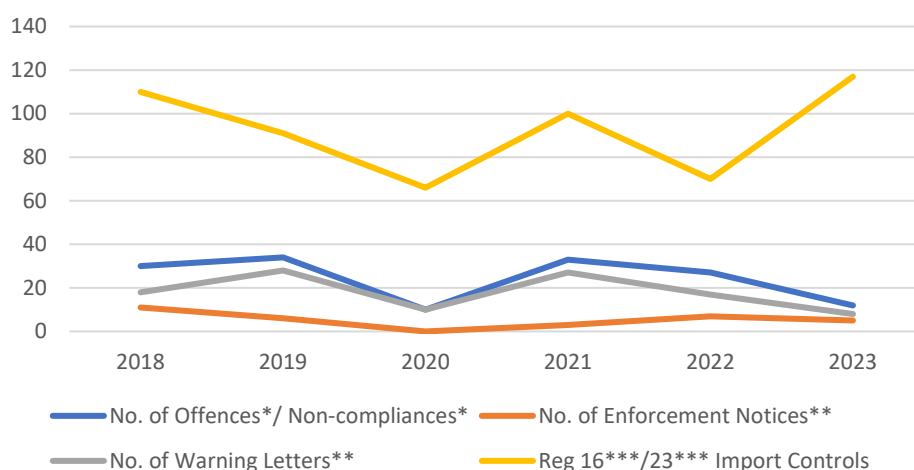


Table showing annotations for AAH Non-compliance and Enforcement Summary data (England and Wales) from 2018 - 2023

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
No. of Offences*/ Non-compliances*	30	34	10	33	27	12
No. of Enforcement Notices**	11	6	0	3	7	5
No. of Warning Letters**	18	28	10	27	17	8
Reg 16***/23*** Import Controls	110	91	66	100	70	117

* Under The Aquatic Animal Health (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 (AAH Regs)/ APB Conditions of Authorisation

** The actual no of WLs/ ENs issued may differ to the number of offences and non-compliance, as they may be combined

***The Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011 (TARP 2011):
 Regulation 16 notices – authorise the removal of animals from the BCP
 Regulation 23 notices – to detain and isolate or destroy consignments.

2.241 Details of the 12 offences and non-compliances in 2023 included:

- Eight warning letters, predominantly for APB non-compliance with one or more conditions of authorisation - such as operating without authorisation for the particular species or activity, or for failure to notify the competent authority of increased mortality. Warning letters were issued where the non-compliance or offence could not be immediately rectified with the use of an Enforcement Notice.
- Two of the warning letters were specifically for import or export non-compliances, such as failure to supply a health certificate via IPAFFS for imports from the EU.
- Five Enforcement Notices were for non-compliance with APB authorisation conditions, such as the keeping of movement and mortality records, operating in accord with an approved Biosecurity Measures Plan.

2.242 The 117 Reg 16/23 controls issued under TARP were largely administrative, due to missing or incomplete health certificates, and were successfully resolved through, for example, re-issuing of missing or inaccurate certificates. Where applicable, advice was given to importers and assurances sought from CAs in exporting countries.

2.243 All offences and non-compliances were dealt with by warning letters or enforcement notices, followed by further inspections to check that corrective measures had been actioned where necessary. This was sufficient to ensure good statutory compliance, without further escalation or major enforcement action required. The FHI continued to place emphasis on working with industry, to improve awareness of biosecurity and protection of stocks against incursion of disease, and to encourage and facilitate the high standard of compliance with statutory requirements.

2.244 Overall APB compliance with conditions of authorisation continued to be high, reflecting the effectiveness of the inspection programmes, advice given, and prompt and consistent actions taken in the event of non-compliance. During 2023, no APBs had their authorisation suspended or revoked as a result of actions arising from official controls.

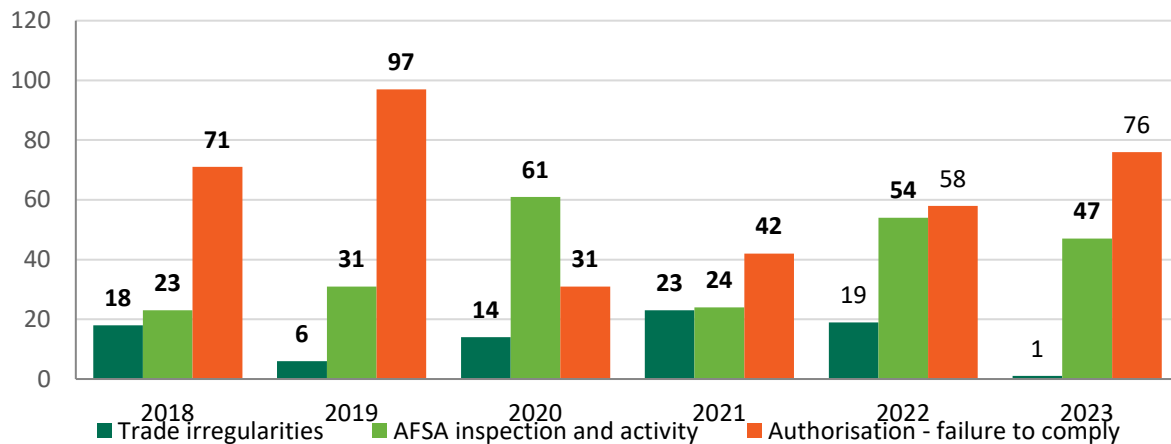
Aquatic animal health – Scotland

2.245 In Scotland, in accordance with the Risk Based Surveillance scheme (Council Directive 2006/88/), 144 inspections relating to fish farms and 147 inspections relating to shellfish farms were conducted in 2023. In addition, one inspection was conducted at a put-and-take fishery, and one inspection at a private ornamental pond. During the inspection process, three unannounced inspections were conducted.

- 2.246 A total of 53 diagnostic samples were taken from fish and one from 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](#).
- 2.247 Through a contractual arrangement with the VMD, a total of 1,847 samples were collected from finfish aquaculture sites. These samples were submitted to Fera Science Limited, for analysis on residues of chemotherapeutants or environmental contamination.
- 2.248 Eight inspections were conducted at fish farm sites approved by the VMD as 'manufacturers of medicated feedingstuffs intended for feeding to their own fish'. All eight facilities inspected rated as Category 5 ($\leq$ three minor deficiencies).
- 2.249 At the beginning of 2022, three fresh water rainbow trout farm sites had movement restrictions in place for Bacterial Kidney Disease (BKD). Additional movement restrictions were placed at two seawater salmon farms. The domestic control policy for BKD involves control measures where clinical disease is confirmed. Restrictions were removed from one of the salmon farms where clinical disease was not confirmed, and remained in place on the other farm upon confirmation of clinical BKD.
- 2.250 Following the suspicion of the presence of Infectious Salmon Anaemia virus (ISAv), movement restrictions were placed on three Atlantic salmon farms. Further analysis of laboratory results, involving gene sequencing, confirmed the presence of a non-pathogenic variant of ISAv known as HPR0. This strain of the virus is not subject to statutory control measures and subsequently the movement restrictions in place were withdrawn.
- 2.251 Throughout the year protection zones were in place to control *Bonamia ostrea* within four sea water lochs in Scotland. All four zones remained under restriction at the end of the reporting year. Movement restrictions were placed on a private ornamental facility following the confirmation of the presence of Koi Herpesvirus (KHV) in carp. The fish on site were culled, the pond was drained, cleaned and disinfected and the movement restrictions were withdrawn. One private ornamental facility remained under restriction for KHV, following confirmation of the virus within fish at the facility.
- 2.252 Movement restrictions were also placed at a research facility in response to research work being undertaken with respect to Oyster herpesvirus-1 microvariant (OsHV-1 μ var), White Spot Disease and *B. ostreae*.

2.253 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 for the risk of contracting or spreading serious aquatic animal disease. To note: a case is equivalent to a single site visit, which may record more than one issue of non-compliance.

Figure 47 - Chart showing the number of non-compliances in Scotland from 2018 - 2023



Outcomes of the non-compliances found in Scotland during 2023

2.254 One trade irregularity relating to an issue with an animal health certificate, involving a last minute change of site designation, was resolved through advice.

2.255 Inspection and activity associated with the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2007 and 2013 saw a total of 47 non-compliances:

- Six cases related to the Act's enhanced inspection programme
- Five issues related to farm management statements or agreements
- Three issues related to containment (one) and escapes (two)
- Thirty-three issues raised due to sea lice reporting

2.256 All of these non-compliances were successfully resolved, either through complying with the recommendations made, or through meeting the requirements of an enforcement notice issued on four occasions in relations to containment.

- 2.257 There were 76 non-compliances for failure to comply with authorisation conditions. These included 71 issues related to record keeping, and five instances where the farm was operating without appropriate authorisation. One non-compliance related to the movement of shellfish onto a fish farm subject to statutory movement restrictions. In addition, one put-and-take fishery was found to be operating without registration. Three warning letters were issued in relation to a record keeping requirements (2) breach in authorisation conditions: failure to provide records (2) and stocking species not covered by authorisation (1). All issues were successfully resolved through addressing recommendations or requirements imposed following inspection.
- 2.258 The main types of non-compliance were administrative in nature, most notably for 'failing to comply with authorisation conditions', and related directly to the maintenance of site records and record keeping. Compliance levels for 2023 decreased slightly in comparison to 2022.
- 2.259 It should be noted that the number of non-compliances represents the number of issues detected: more than one issue can be found per individual visit. The data also includes mortality reporting - which is not strictly an authorisation requirement, but a recognised procedure that relevant industry sector areas have agreed to undertake.

Visits and non-compliances on fish and shellfish farms from 2018 – 2023

Visits and non-compliances	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of visits	351	292	183	249	325	332
Number of cases of non-compliance	68	89	27	47	58	78
% of non-compliance	19	30	15	19	18	23

- 2.260 Risk-based enhanced inspections were conducted in accordance with the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2007 (as amended) during 2023. 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 2023, in comparison to 2022, although compliance was greater in comparison to previous years. This analysis has not been statistically tested, however, and lower levels of enhanced inspections must be taken into consideration.

Risk based enhanced inspections and non-compliances on fish and shellfish farms from 2018 – 2023

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of inspections	7	32	7	16	20	16
Number of cases of non-compliance	4	19	6	13	5	6
% of non-compliance	57	59	86	81	25	36

Incidents and outbreaks in the animal health sector

APHA

- 2.261 In 2023, there was one confirmed incident of Salmonella in a chicken breeder flock that required mandatory slaughter with compensation. There was one case of Salmonella in an adult turkey breeder flock in 2023 - but as the flock was depopulated by the producer, it was not eligible for compensation. Turkey breeder flocks, regardless of age, require official slaughter with compensation under NCP legislation .
- 2.262 In 2023, 309 reports of suspected cases of exotic notifiable diseases were investigated, of which 157 were for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and 48 for Bluetongue. There were 58 confirmed infected premises of HPAI in poultry across GB (an decrease from 237 in 2022), two cases of influenza of avian origin in wild mammals, 17 cases of European Bat Lyssavirus reported in England, and 17 cases of Bluetongue (BTV-3) - all of which were in SE England.
- 2.263 All incidents were resolved, although the atypically long Avian Influenza season (October 2021 onwards) effectively merged once again over the summer into the 2023-24 season, when controls restarted following new outbreaks in October 2022, due to the migration season and continual cases detected in colony nesting sea birds and continued into early 2023.

AAH England and Wales – Cefas FHI

- 2.264 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 2023 there were a total of 23 confirmed outbreaks of Koi herpesvirus (KHV) disease, 22 of which were in recreational coarse fish fisheries affecting common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) and varieties of. i carp *Cyprinus carpio*) and one on an Koi carp importer site..
- 2.265 KHV is a listed disease for which GB is not officially declared free. The number of outbreaks in 2023 was as expected, with no change to prevalence or severity. An outbreak of Oyster herpesvirus-1 microvariant (OshV-1 μ var) was detected in the River Exe in Devon following reports of 90% mortality in juvenile Pacific oysters (*Magallana gigas*) at an APB. Official controls were placed and the original CDN on the River Teign was expanded to incorporate the new detection of OshV-1 μ var on the River Exe – [CD15.2023](#).

AAH Scotland – MD FHI

- 2.266 During 2023, one clinical outbreak of BKD was confirmed on a seawater salmon farm. One further case of KHV was confirmed at a private ornamental facility.

Scottish Government

2.267 In 2023, there were 26 confirmed cases of HPAI at premises in Scotland.

Bee health

2.268 2023 saw a large number of outbreaks detected of the non-native Asian hornet species compared to previous years. In 2023, 72 nests were discovered. In each case a nest was quickly located by National Bee Unit (NBU) inspectors, and successfully destroyed by APHA colleagues.

Official controls in the animal welfare sector

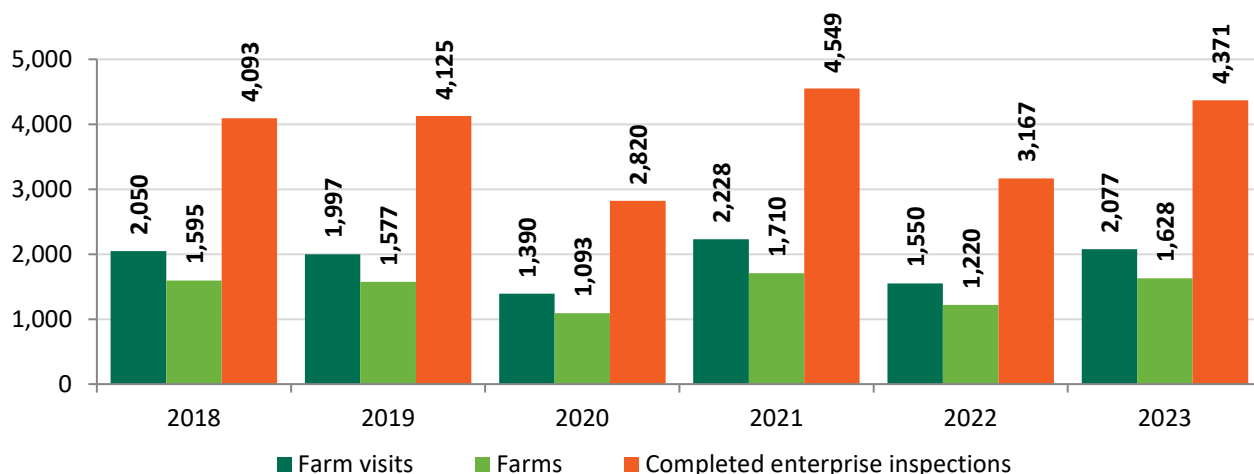
- 2.269 The centralised FSA and FSS referrals process for England, Wales and Scotland continued to report conditions indicative of welfare issues to APHA. Urgent referrals (where there was an immediate concern for animal welfare on farm or during transport) were referred to Local Authorities (LA) and to APHA, within 24 hours, for prompt investigation and appropriate and proportionate action.
- 2.270 Non-urgent FSA and FSS referrals relating to on farm welfare issues, or to combined farm and transport issues, were triaged by the APHA Customer Service Centre (CSC) administration team. Further action and investigation, by both APHA and LAs, was guided at a country level by the dedicated APHA central vet teams. Final triage and actions were completed at a local level.

On-farm animal welfare in Great Britain

- 2.271 In 2023, the total number of farm visits to individual farms and enterprises increased by 34% compared to 2022 figures, with 2,077 visits completed compared to 1,550 in 2022. This is a similar number of visits to the volumes undertaken each year prior to 2020, when visits were initially disrupted due to Covid 19 impacts. This 2023 increase was mainly driven by a marked increase in visits undertaken in England, with a proportionately smaller increase in visits undertaken in Scotland. On a country basis, visit numbers increased by 71% in England and 6% in Scotland – although they decreased by 14% in Wales compared to 2022.
- 2.272 On-farm visits continued to be conducted according to specific criteria. They included ‘proactive’ (i.e., scheduled) visits, primarily based on risk criteria but with a 20% element of random selection; and ‘reactive’ visits, triggered directly by third party complaints or referrals.
- 2.273 The number of farming enterprise types inspected at each visit remained at just over two enterprises per visit during 2023, consistent with previous years. The number of repeat visits across GB to farms inspected in 2023 comprised 36% of all visits.
- 2.274 The level of repeat visits to the same enterprises, and the correlation of scheduled ‘cross compliance’ visits¹⁹ with specific ‘triggered’ referrals at the same enterprises, both support the view that farms where welfare concerns had been and/or continued to be an issue were being identified, managed and inspected as potentially higher risk in 2023. Scotland had higher repeat inspections, comprising 44% of all farm inspections, compared to England (35%) and Wales (36%).

¹⁹ ‘cross compliance’ describes requirements for farmers to comply with a set of Statutory Management Requirements (SMRs) and keep their land in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) in order to qualify for certain rural payments. See the [Guide to Cross Compliance in England 2021](#)

Figure 48 - Chart showing farm inspections in Great Britain 2018 – 2023

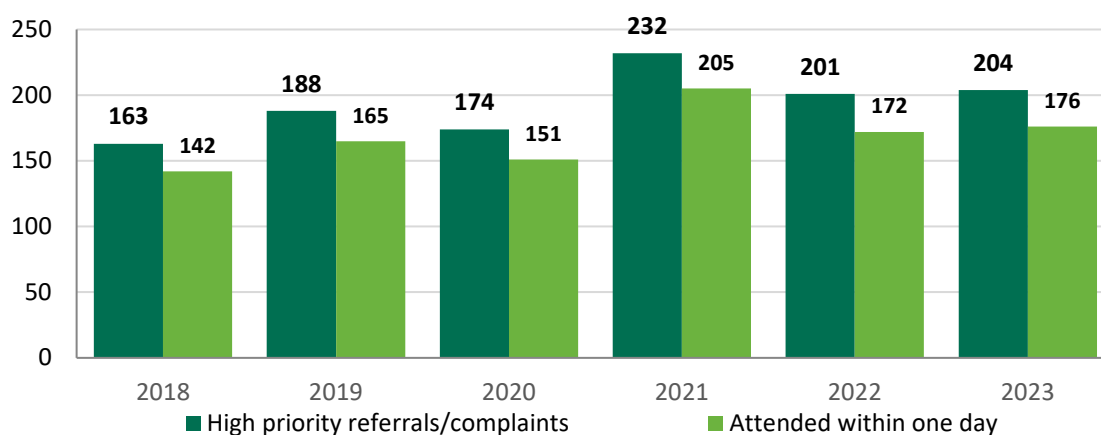


Analysis of GB farm visits by country, 2021 - 2023

	England			Scotland			Wales		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
No. of farm visits	1,482	808	1381	323	298	315	423	444	381
No. of farms	1,168	676	1093	210	211	230	332	333	305
No. of completed enterprise inspections	3,070	1,711	3,001	692	601	622	787	855	748

Year	Analysis	England	Scotland	Wales	GB
2021	Sites subject to repeated visits	221	68	68	357
	Number of repeat visits	314	113	91	518
	Proportion of total visits (%)	21	35	22	23
2022	Sites subject to repeated visits	84	55	85	224
	Number of repeat visits	216	142	196	554
	Proportion of total visits (%)	27	48	44	36
2023	Sites subject to repeated visits	190	53	61	304
	Number of repeat visits	478	138	137	753
	Proportion of total visits (%)	35	44	36	36

Figure 49 - Chart showing the number of high priority referrals/complaints alleging unnecessary suffering attended by APHA inspectors in Great Britain from 2018 - 2023



2.275 In 2023 all referrals had an assigned CPH: because of this, unlike in previous years, all referrals have been assigned to a specific country. This may indicate greater awareness and regulation of smallholders and people keeping farm animals as pets about the need to be registered. Record processes in 2023 ensured that referrals were allocated to inspection teams within the appropriate nation.

2.276 Sites and enterprises with CPHs in different countries were assessed and reported separately, according to the CPH location. In respect of follow-up or enforcement action, communications covered all enterprises and CPHs under the same ownership.

Analysis of GB high priority referrals / complaints by country, 2021 - 2023

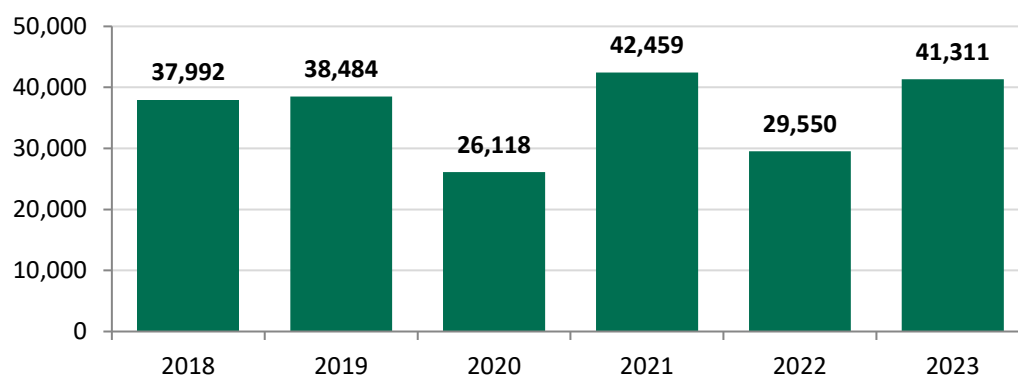
	England			Scotland			Wales		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
High priority referrals/complaints*	112	87	141	18	13	10	86	81	53
Number attended within one day	97	69	119	16	12	9	78	76	48
Percentage attended within one day	86.6	79.3	84.4	88.9	92.3	90.0	90.7	93.8	90.6

*final reporting priority at local level may not reflect initial prioritisation by central teams.

2.277 All complaints and allegations of poor welfare were risk assessed centrally at national level by a veterinary inspector. High priority referrals/complaints were visited as a matter of urgency. In 2023, the number of these types of complaints and allegations received was consistent with the previous year, with a total of 204 complaints received in 2023, versus 201 for 2022. There was an increase of 62% in high priority cases for England in 2023, with falls of 23% for Scotland and 35% for Wales.

2.278 Eighty-six percent of high priority complaints/referrals were attended within 24 hours, a small increase from 85% in 2022. On a country basis, however, there was an increase in the number attended within a day for England (84.4% versus 79.3%) and a reduction for Scotland (90.0% versus 92.3%) and Wales (90.6% versus 93.8%).

Figure 50 - Chart showing the number of individual welfare criteria assessments in Great Britain from 2018 – 2023



	England			Scotland			Wales		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Welfare criteria assessments	28,770	16,140	28,722	6,405	5,394	5,501	7,284	8,016	7,088
No. of criteria assessed per enterprise (maximum /11*)	9.4	9.4	9.6	9.3	8.9	8.8	9.3	9.4	9.5

*some enterprises cannot be assessed on all 11 criteria at the time of inspection, due to the nature of the enterprise

2.279 The number of individual welfare criteria assessments increased by 40% in 2023, returning to levels seen pre-pandemic. Changes in assessment volumes also reflected the increase in overall farm visit numbers.

2.280 The number of criteria assessed per enterprise remained similar to previous years at a country level. The level of compliance on farms in Great Britain was comparable to what was recorded in previous years, with 96% of individual category assessments indicating compliance in 2023. For all enterprise assessments, 24.5% had at least one non-compliance, and 356 advisory letters were issued to farmers.

2.281 To note: an individual farm may comprise more than one 'enterprise' - defined by different production activities on the farm. This may in turn result in individual farms being inspected more than once in a reporting period, as different enterprises on the same farm may be inspected – and there may even be more than one inspection for an individual enterprise on the same farm. Inspection data is evaluated, as below, based on the number of enterprises assessed (rather than the number of farms inspected), as the assessment per enterprise is a more precise non-compliance data measure than assessments recorded at the farm level.

2.282 The results of inspection visits were classified into four **score categories - A to D**:

A = Full compliance with legislation and code advice

B = Full compliance with legislation but not with the code advice

C = Non-compliance with legislation but no animals have suffered as a result

D = Non-compliance with legislation and at least one animal has suffered as a result

Enterprises with welfare non-compliance only (C score), Great Britain 2018 - 2023

Outcomes by year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of non-compliances per 1,000 assessments	47	43	51	49	39	41
Number of enterprises with overall C score	796	735	599	909	479	730
% of enterprises inspected with overall C score	19	18	21	20	15	17
Advisory letters issued	212	342	279	398	261	356

Enterprises with welfare non-compliance only (C score) in England, Scotland & Wales from 2021-2023

Outcomes by year	England			Scotland			Wales		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Number of non-compliances per 1,000 assessments	56	48	47	53	43	38	15	17	16
Number of enterprises with overall C score	707	310	604	143	94	68	59	75	58
% of enterprises inspected with overall C score	23	18	25	21	16	11	8	9	8
Advisory letters issued	271	127	251	85	74	60	42	60	45

Welfare non-compliance with unnecessary suffering (D score) in GB 2018 – 2023

Outcomes by year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Unnecessary suffering found per 1K assessments	8	11	9	9	9	12
Number of enterprises with overall D score	177	206	142	262	176	287
% of enterprises inspected with overall D score	4.3	5.0	5.1	5.7	5.6	6.6
Average number of days to clear D score	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

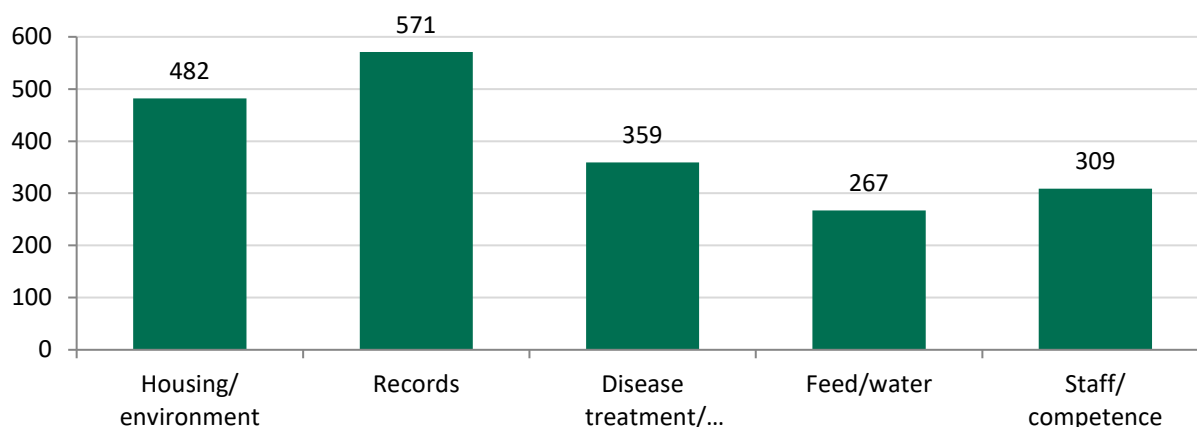
Welfare non-compliance with unnecessary suffering (D score) in in England, Scotland & Wales from 2021-2023

Outcomes by year	England			Scotland			Wales		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Unnecessary suffering found per 1K assessments	7	8	10	20	18	21	7	6	13
Number of enterprises with overall D score	142	73	154	84	69	74	36	34	59
% of enterprises inspected with overall D score	5	4	5.1	12	11	11.9	5	4	7.9

2.283 Across GB, the percentage of C scores (non-compliances where unnecessary suffering was not detected) at enterprise level was higher for 2023 (17%) than 2022 (15%). Most of this increase was due to increased C scores being awarded on English holdings - 25% in 2023 compared to 18% in 2022. There was a fall in C score percentage in Scotland, 16% to 11% and Wales 9% to 8%.

2.284 The percentage of enterprises receiving a D score (unnecessary suffering detected) in Great Britain in 2023 was higher than 2022, at 6.6%. The incidence percentage rates in Scotland continued to be higher than in England or Wales, although there was an increase from 4% to 7.9% in Wales in 2023.

Figure 51 - Chart showing the most frequently detected non-compliances (for C and D categories) in Great Britain in 2023



GB non-compliances by region, 2021 - 2023

Outcomes by year	England			Scotland			Wales		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Housing / environment	484	134	383	89	54	65	35	36	34
Records	407	204	442	101	84	74	39	59	55
Disease treatment / animal care	249	138	247	104	74	55	43	50	57
Feed / water	229	121	187	46	36	54	20	18	26
Staff/competence	275	116	237	84	43	50	17	14	22

2.285 The welfare criteria with the most non-compliances related to “records” and “housing and environment” for England and Scotland. In Wales “disease treatment”, which includes failure to provide appropriate care, was the most frequently identified followed by “records”.

2.286 During 2023, APHA provided 37 witness statements to enforcement bodies in support of legal action relating to 24 farms, compared to 20 witness statements for 7 farms in 2022. Overall, this shows an increase of 85% in witness statement production, driven by increases in Wales and England, and corresponding increases in the number of statements for farms. Due to the protracted nature of court processes, there may be wide fluctuations in the requirement to produce witness statements recorded year-on-year – as can be seen for Wales, with no statements produced in 2021 or 2022, then four in 2023.

	2021		2022		2023	
	Statements produced	Number of farms	Statements produced	Number of farms	Statements produced	Number of farms
England	52	18	11	5	32	21
Scotland	20	4	9	2	1	1
Wales	0	0	0	0	4	2

Meat Chicken Directive

- 2.287 During 2023, the FSA (on behalf of APHA) and the FSS (on behalf of the Scottish Government) continued to deliver the established system for all 'eligible' flocks (i.e., conventionally reared meat chickens). Throughout the year, all flocks were monitored at the slaughterhouse level for specific post-mortem conditions indicative of on-farm welfare issues. Producers were notified if any of these conditions were excessively high (Process 1), or if a combination of at least three conditions on-farm, and farm cumulative daily mortality, were high (Process 2). All farmers received their trigger report results directly from the FSA and FSS, and were required to take appropriate action.
- 2.288 In Great Britain, trigger report data collected from 2022 was used to target farm inspections in 2023, using a ranking process combining all-flock cumulative daily mortality rates, and total rejections (excluding those relating to mechanical processes). High risk FSA/FSS referrals and complaints were used as the main source of intelligence driving meat chicken farm inspections for most of 2023.
- 2.289 A total of 3,155 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 25% decrease in trigger reports compared to 2022. The basis of 47% of trigger reports was Process 1 triggers.
- 2.290 When assessing specific conditions associated with Process 1 Trigger reports, there was an increase in those associated with disease conditions such as ascites/oedema, cellulitis and joint lesions, and a decrease in on farm mortality reports. This could indicate reduced culling for disease on farm, as this is included in on-farm cumulative daily mortality calculations.

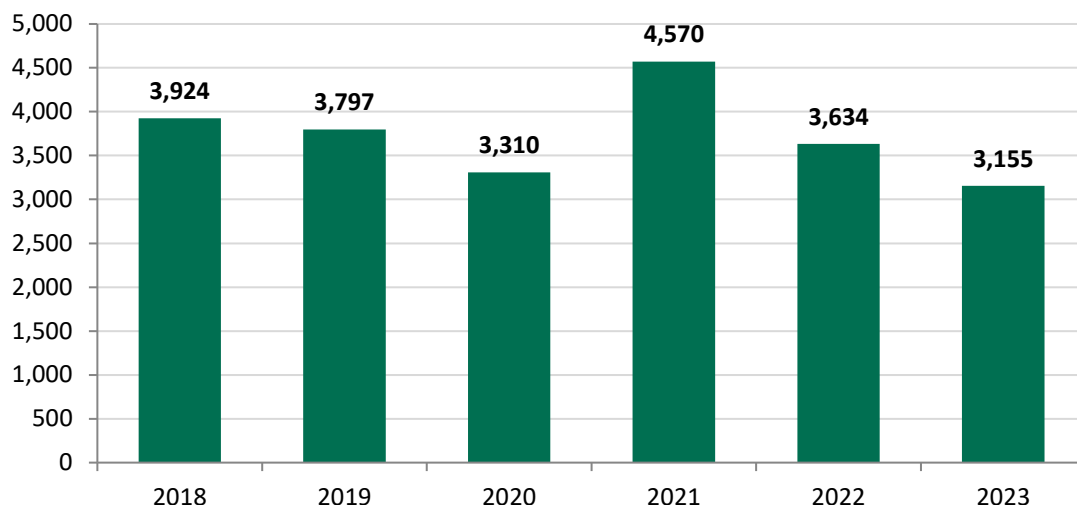
Inspection numbers and carcass conditions of relevance to farm animal welfare in meat chickens in GB 2021 to 2023

	2021		2022		2023	
Birds inspected and conditions recorded	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total inspected	901,874,003	100	891,182,267	100	876,811,161	100
Ascites/Oedema	2,644,596	0.29	2,597,979	0.29	2,700,297	0.31
Cellulitis/dermatitis	3,283,354	0.36	3,200,279	0.36	3,045,812	0.35
Dead on Arrival	996,448	0.11	982,193	0.11	926,366	0.11
Emaciation	176,655	0.02	210,637	0.02	201,925	0.02
Joint lesions	176,655	0.02	241,218	0.03	223,575	0.03
Septicaemia / Respiratory	268,408	0.03	1,516,837	0.17	1,292,871	0.15
Total farm-attributed rejections	16,439,110	1.8	12,556,780	1.41	11,068,894	1.26

Flocks assessed and reported for carcase conditions identified of relevance to farm animal welfare and generation of trigger reports, in meat chickens in Great Britain in 2021-2023

	2021			2022			2023		
Flocks assessed and reported for excessive levels of reported Process 1 conditions or Process 2 conditions	flocks	% of flocks	% of trigger reports	flocks	% of flocks	% of trigger reports	flocks	% of flocks	% of trigger reports
Total flocks assessed	120,881	100	-	119,888	100	-	105,678	100	-
Ascites/Oedema	238	0.2	5.2	204	0.17	4.8	171	0.16	5.4
Cellulitis/dermatitis	414	0.34	9.1	298	0.25	7.0	242	0.23	7.7
Dead on Arrival	223	0.18	4.9	210	0.18	5.0	133	0.13	4.2
Emaciation	127	0.11	2.8	210	0.18	5.0	110	0.10	3.5
Joint lesions	272	0.23	6	130	0.11	3.1	161	0.15	5.1
Septicaemia/Respiratory	14	0.01	0.3	8	0.01	0.2	3	0.00	0.09
Total farm-attributed rejections	125	0.1	2.7	84	0.07	2.0	40	0.04	1.3
On Farm Mortality rate	829	0.79	18.1	939	0.88	22.2	545	0.59	17.3
Foot Pad Dermatitis	152	0.37	3.3	156	0.4	3.7	155	0.57	4.9
Process 1 report	2,156	1.78	47.2	2,092	1.74	49.6	1,482	1.4	47
Process 2 report	2,414	2.00	52.8	2,129	1.78	50.4	1,673	1.58	53
Total trigger reports	4,570	3.78	100	4,221	3.52	100	3,155	2.99	100

Figure 52 – Chart showing the number of trigger reports received by APHA in Great Britain from 2018 – 2023



Actions taken in Great Britain on meat chicken welfare from 2018 - 2023

(for example, following inspections for cross compliance, or welfare complaints, or receipt of trigger reports from slaughterhouses)

	Number of actions as a percentage of total notifications by year					
	2018 %	2019 %	2020 %	2021 %	2022 %	2023 %
Farmer/owner notified in writing & requested to take action	3,924 (100%)	3,797 (100%)	3,310 (100%)	4,570 (100%)	3,634 (100%)	3,155 (100%)
Inspection based on historical data to target highest risk farms (from previous year)	29 (0.7%)	17 (0.4%)	8 (0.2%)	16 (0.3%)	2 (0.1%)	32 (1.0%)
Inspections associated with complaints, referrals or other inspections*	31 (0.8%)	55 (1.4%)	19 (0.6%)	24 (0.5%)	32 (0.9%)	32 (1.0%)
Total inspections checked for compliance with 2007/43/EC	60 (1.5%)	68 (1.8%)	27 (0.8%)	40 (0.9%)	34 (1%)	64 (2.0%)
Farms sent warning letters / prosecutions / further enforcement measures in respect of non-compliances detected at inspection	9 (0.2%)	14 (0.4%)	15 (0.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

2.291 In 2023 a total of 64 meat chicken inspections were carried out, an increase of 88% from 2022 inspections which were disrupted due to Avian Influenza outbreak work affecting availability of “clean staff” to undertake visits. Half the inspections were carried out in response to slaughterhouse referrals with the other half based on historical data. Selected visits revealing no birds present on the unit, or where birds were not inspected, are not included in the farm inspection data.

2.292 The inspections revealed that most farms were compliant with legislation but not the Code of practice for the welfare of meat chickens and meat breeding chickens. Three inspections (5%) revealed non-compliances with unnecessary suffering identified, related to environmental conditions.

2.293 The table below details outcomes from the inspections of the 64 meat chicken farms inspected under GB meat rules in 2023.

Results of GB combined APHA Inspections by categories A – D, of meat chicken holdings under 2007/43/EC from 2018 – 2023, including as a percentage of the total number of holdings inspected

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number inspected	60	67	28	40	34	64
A = full compliance with code advice & legislation	20 (33%*)	20 (30%*)	3 (11%)	6 (15%)	2 (6%)	7 (11%)
B = full compliance with legislation, but not with code advice	22 (36%*)	34 (50.7%)	14 (50%*)	20 (50%)	18 (53%)	37 (58%)
C = on-compliance with legislation, no unnecessary animal suffering detected	16 (27%)	12 (17.9%)	8 (29%*)	9 (22.5%)	0 (0%)	17 (27%)
D = Non-compliance with legislation, unnecessary suffering detected (for at least one animal)	2 (3%)	1 (1.5%)	2 (7%)	5 (12.5%)	14 (41%)	3 (5%)

* Figures amended due to an error in calculations in previous reports.

Inspections data by country, for categories A – D, from 2021 - 2023

	2021			2022			2023		
	Eng	Scot	Wal	Eng	Scot	Wal	Eng	Scot	Wal
Number inspected	31	0	9	28	3	3	56	5	3
Category A	2	0	4	0	0	2	5	0	2
Category B	17	0	3	14	3	1	32	5	0
Category C	7	0	2	0	0	0	16	0	1
Category D	5	0	0	14	0	0	3	0	0

Fish welfare

2.294 APHA (Scotland) has been working collaboratively with the Fish Health Inspectorate (Scotland) regarding animal welfare issues detected at farmed level. No inspections were carried out in 2023.

Table showing Fish welfare visits (Scotland) 2020 – 2023

Year	Complaints	Routine / Advisory inspections
2020	5	2
2021	1	0
2022	0	0
2023	0	0

Gamebird welfare

2.295 In 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 are no longer classified as farmed and thus 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
- in any birds raised for a farming purpose, and
- in the growing phase, when the birds are considered under the responsibility of humans for their day-to-day care

2.296 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.

2.297 In 2023 there were 11 inspections, a decrease from 14 in 2022. However, all inspections were on holdings in England during 2023. Non-compliance rates were at 18%, an increase of 4% compared to 2022. There was a single incident where unnecessary suffering was identified.

Table showing the number of compliant and non-compliant (Categories A -D) gamebird rearing units, following inspection in GB in 2021 – 2023

	2021			2022			2023		
	Eng	Scot	Wal	Eng	Scot	Wal	Eng	Scot	Wal
Number inspected	9	6	1	9	2	3	11	0	0
Category A	4	5	1	3	0	1	3	0	0
Category B	4	0	0	5	1	2	6	0	0
Category C	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
Category D	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

Animal welfare during transport

2.298 Inspections in 2023 continued to be carried out in Great Britain on a risk basis, and in response to intelligence received. Inspection programmes were planned by APHA and Local Authorities, through local liaison. Findings at these inspections were kept under review and local action taken as appropriate, where any major deficiencies (non-compliances) are detected.

Number of applications for transporter authorisations in Great Britain, 2018 – 2023

Year	New applications	New authorised	Refused	Applications for re-authorisations
2018	168	564	4	930
2019	820	754	0	741
2020	1,000	975	0	471
2021	1,143	1,198	0	1,292
2022	592	523	0	3,959
2023	519	436	0	1,121

2.299 Of the 519 new Transporter Authorisation applications received, 26 were from transporters based in the EU. A total of 436 applications were processed in 2023: 22 of these were from transporters based in the EU. All applications from EU nationals were for long journey (Type 2) transporter authorisation.

Figure 53 – Chart showing the number of journey logs (JL) in Great Britain, 2018 – 2023

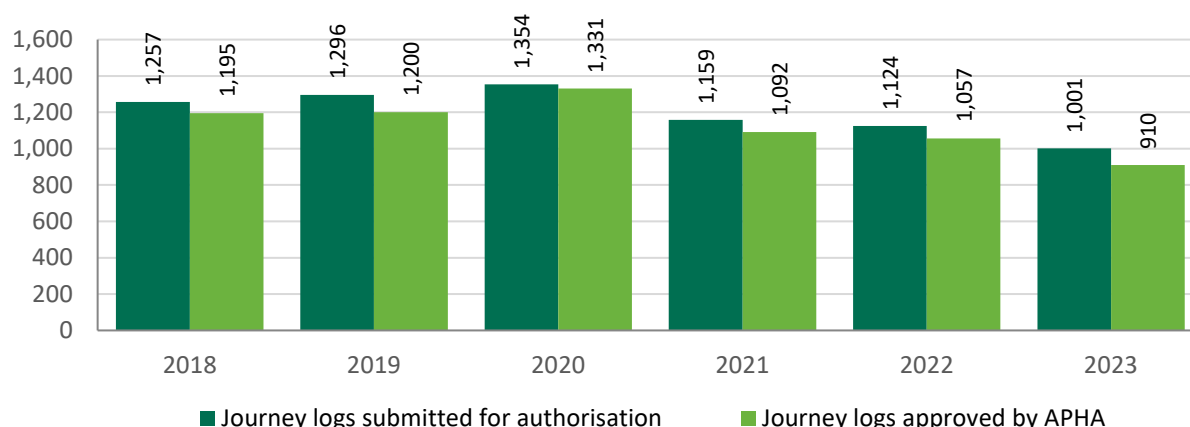


Table showing the breakdown of Journey Log applications

Year	JL Submitted	JL approved	Import JLs	Export JLs	Transit JLs
2021	1,159	1,092	705	365	22
2022	1,124	1,057	524	501	32
2023	1,001	910	476	495	30

2.300 Following EU Exit, approved journey logs issued by APHA are no longer valid for use in the EU, and EU approved journey logs are no longer valid for use in GB. From 1 January 2021, livestock and un-registered equines being transported into, out of, or transiting through GB are required to have a journey log approved by APHA (or in some cases Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland).

- 2.301 All GB to EU live animal exports in 2023 were required to enter the EU via a Border Control Post (BCP). In 2023, no BCP had been designated for live animal exports between Dover to Calais – a key trade route for livestock. Livestock export traders had to use a significantly longer road route via Ireland, or move livestock by air using airports with BCPs designated for the relevant categories of live animals. This impacted on the number of export journey logs issued by APHA in 2023. Equine movements using the short straits were not affected, as a Border Control Post in Calais had been designated for equine controls.
- 2.302 In 2023, 1,001 journey logs were submitted to APHA for approval, with 910 approved. Of these, 495 were for export (their origin was in GB). The journey logs approved for export are consistent with the journey logs issued for export in 2022.
- 2.303 A total of 506 journey logs were approved by APHA for import and transit journeys, a 9% decrease from 2022 levels. APHA rejected 10 journey logs in 2023, because the applications submitted did not meet the requirements of the Welfare in Transport Regulations. A further 81 applications did not proceed to approval, and were deemed ‘cancelled by the transporter’. This is likely the result of the transporter being unable to demonstrate compliance with the relevant Regulation, following APHA requests for further information to support the application.
- 2.304 Overall there was a 10% decrease in the number of journey logs submitted for approval.

Number of checks on vehicles transporting animals in GB from 2020 – 2023

Checks and non-compliances	2020	2021	2022	2023
Vehicles inspected (incl. documentary checks)	28,835	41,032	54,889	59,243
Non-compliances (excl. documentary non-compliances)	1,899	1,199	1,149	1,607
Documentary only checks (vehicles inspected)	1,336	0	51	11
Non-compliances documentary checks only	507	86	174	41
APHA checks of vehicles transporting livestock and horses at ports through UK	65	5	7	18
APHA supervised loading inspections	65	0	0	0

- 2.305 The majority of routine checks of animals being transported in 2023 were carried out by Local Authority inspectors in conjunction with APHA in Great Britain. APHA’s aim remained to supervise 100% of loadings for animals on export journeys for slaughter purposes. There was 1 journey log application approved for fattening consignments in 2023 which did not meet the required threshold for a supervised loading and therefore the supervised loading data remains consistent with 2022 and the continued reduction in livestock exports to EU.

Number of checks of animals and means of transport in GB across England, Wales and Scotland from 2021 – 2023

	England			Scotland			Wales		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Vehicles inspected (incl. documentary checks)	31,050	41,247	48,001	2,963	3,108	1,453	7,019	10,534	9,789
Non-compliances (excl. documentary non-compliances)	1,069	1,015	1,563	45	40	23	85	94	21
Documentary only checks (vehicles inspected)	0	49	7	0	2	4	0	0	0
Non-compliances doc checks only	66	161	36	3	2	2	17	11	3
APHA checks of vehicles transporting livestock and horses at ports through UK	5	7	18	0	0	0	0	0	0
APHA supervised loading inspections	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

2.306 Inspections of vehicles transporting live animals increased by 8% overall in GB compared with 2022, with increases seen in England by 16%. There was a drop in Wales by 7% and 53% in Scotland. The overall non-compliance rate rose by 40%. This was a result in England's non-compliance rate increasing by 53%. Wales saw a 77% drop and Scotland saw a 42% reduction.

2.307 GB inspections resulted in a variety of enforcement actions, ranging from verbal warnings to prosecutions. In 2023 there were five prosecutions. Two involved transport of animals without transporter authorisation or required transport documentation, one was for the transport of cattle without a suitable vehicle, and two were for the use of inappropriate handling while transporting pigs.

Transport on-farm – FSA and FSS referrals

2.308 The following tables provide information on non-urgent referrals received by APHA from the FSA (English and Welsh slaughterhouses) and FSS (Scottish slaughterhouses) for 2023, regarding potential non-compliances associated with animal welfare during transport (including poultry catching), at markets, at collection centres and/or on farm.

2.309 Urgent referrals in 2023 were dealt with as complaints by APHA or local authorities and were accounted for in data sets on pages 79 and 80 of this Report. Enforcement action associated with referrals may also be covered within other data sets. Slaughterhouse location by country does not always reflect the country of origin for farms or markets.

2.310 The number of non-urgent referrals received in 2023 was the lowest since 2018 with an overall reduction of 19% compared to 2022. There was a reduction across all categories - poultry catching <33%; Dead on arrival <27%, and late gestation cases <15%.

Summary data and most common non-urgent welfare referral reasons from FSA/FSS in Great Britain from 2018 – 2023

Referral type	2018*	2019**	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total number received	5,372	5,137	4,679	4,542	4,062	3,293
Poultry catching ²⁰	2,756	2,180	1,829	1,859	1,248	836
Dead on arrival	1,372	1,333	1,464	1,287	1,448	1,060
Late gestation (>90% pregnancy)	384	489	521	426	382	325
Further triage required	860	1,135	865	970	984	1,072

* 2018 includes only 6 months of FSS data

** to note - 2019 data originally published in the 2019 Annual Report has been corrected here.

Summary data and most common reasons for referral from FSA/FSS slaughterhouses from 2020 - 2023

Referral type	Number of incidents (% of total)							
	FSA 2020	FSS 2020	FSA 2021	FSS 2021	FSA 2022	FSS 2022	FSA 2023	FSS 2023
Total	4,431	248	4,252	290	3,766	296	2,999	294
Poultry catching ²⁰	1,815 (41%)	14 (6%)	1,821 (43%)	38 (13%)	1,220 (32%)	28 (9.5%)	776 26%	60 20%
Dead on arrival	1,422 (32%)	42 (17%)	1,241 (29%)	46 (16%)	1,405 (37%)	43 (14.5%)	1,027 34%	33 11%
Late gestation (>90% pregnancy)	451 (10%)	70 (28%)	361 (8.5%)	65 (22%)	301 (8%)	81 (27%)	244 8%	81 26%
Further triage required	974 (17%)	161 (49%)	829 (9.5%)	141 (49%)	840 (22%)	144 (49%)	952 32%	120 41%

2.311 The most frequently reported non-urgent welfare in transport referral type for English and Welsh slaughterhouses (FSA) related to Dead on Arrival (DOA). This was followed by referrals relating to poultry catching. In Scotland, late gestation pregnancies were the most frequent issue identified, followed by poultry catching.

²⁰ 'Poultry catching' includes a range of welfare-related definitions, including trappings, overstocked crates, poorly maintained equipment and injuries.

- 2.312 Poultry catching issues were referred to LAs for monitoring and action as appropriate in 2023, including joint actions with APHA. Meat chickens were the only catching referrals for Scottish slaughterhouses. In England and Wales, meat chickens were the most frequent poultry referral, but small numbers of incidents were associated with turkeys (3%), breeding birds (1.3%) and layers (0.6%).
- 2.313 The most common species type referred for DOA from English and Welsh slaughterhouses were pigs (55%), sheep (33%), meat chickens (7.5%) and cattle (3%), whilst FSS reported most frequently for pigs (45%), sheep (39%) and cattle (12%). There was an increase of sheep DOA referrals across GB for 2023.
- 2.314 The most common species referred for late pregnancy from English and Welsh slaughterhouses were cattle (83%), followed by sheep (14%) and pigs (2%). The most common species in FSS referrals was also cattle (74%) then pigs (16%) and sheep (10%).
- 2.315 APHA's welfare in transport team issued warning letters with guidance to transporters on late gestation for all cases associated with GB-authorized transporters.
- 2.316 In 2023, 97% (286/294) of referrals from the FSS related to Scottish farms with 5 referrals to farms in the North of England, one in Western England and two in Wales.
- 2.317 Eighty three percent of FSA referrals (2,495) related to English holdings with 10% (310) from Welsh holdings and 6.5% (194) referrals relating to Scottish holdings . The FSA referrals comprised 40% of all referrals in respect of Scottish holdings in 2023, an increase from 35% reported in 2022.
- 2.318 The referrals from FSA regarding Scottish holdings were not equally spread across referral types, with FSA reporting 74% of DOAs, all species and 5% of poultry catching incidents originating from Scottish farms in 2023. This decrease is in proportion for poultry catching compared to 2022.
- 2.319 Fifty out of 92 of the FSA referred DOAs regarding Scottish holdings related to sheep, which comprised 79% of all sheep DOAs for Scottish holdings. Thirty-five of the FSA referred DOAs were associated with Scottish pig holdings, comprising of 70% of all pig DOAs for Scottish holdings.
- 2.320 The following table splits the referrals by original holding of animals and by country. In 2023, 76%, 14.5% and 9.5% of referrals originated from English, Scottish and Welsh holdings, respectively. This is a slight increase in proportion from Scottish holdings at 14.5% compared to 11% in 2022 and a decrease from English holdings - 76% compared to 79% in 2022, although the country of origin spread was similar.

2.321 The actual number of incidents relating to DOAs decreased across all countries in GB from 2022 levels. Incidence (in actual numbers) of late gestation fell for England and Wales and increased for Scotland for 2023.

Table showing country of origin location for FSA/FSS referrals from 2021 - 2023

Referral type	Number of incidents (% of total in each country of origin)								
Year	2021			2022			2023		
Country	Eng	Scot	Wales	Eng	Scot	Wales	Eng	Scot	Wales
Total	3,593	433	498	3,210	432	420	2,501	480	312
Poultry catching	1,585 (44%)	44 (10%)	226 (45%)	1,060 (33%)	39 (9%)	149 (35%)	695 (28%)	62 (13%)	79 (25%)
Dead on arrival	1,046 (29%)	133 (31%)	97 (19%)	1203 (37%)	131 (30%)	114 (27%)	860 (34%)	124 (26%)	76 (24%)
Late gestation (>90% pregnancy)	277 (8%)	77 (18%)	72 (14%)	254 (8%)	91 (21%)	37 (8%)	204 (8%)	97 (20%)	24 (8%)
Further triage required	685 (19%)	179 (41%)	103 (21%)	693 (21%)	171 (39%)	120 (28%)	742 (30%)	197 (41%)	133 (43%)

2.322 Across GB in 2023, 1072 incidents were determined for triage – a similar value to 2022.

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

FSA/FSS referrals requiring further triage in Great Britain from 2018 – 2023

Referral type	2018*	2019**	2020	2021	2022	2023
Welfare in transport (WIT)	298	208	173	183	150	245
Welfare on farm (WOF)	210	343	177	220	97	170
Welfare in transport and Welfare on farm origin / cause (WIT / WOF)	271	497	459	515	612	595
Welfare issue could not be determined from evidence	81	35	41	25	17	29
Other issue / action / DOAs / catching***	-	63	21	28	108	33
Total	-	1,146	871	971	984	1,072

*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.

- 2.324 Cases relating to welfare on farm, markets & collection centre 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. However, such data would still be collated and recorded, to monitor repeat referrals for transporters, markets or farms of origin. There were cases where insufficient information was recorded to fully triage the referral or determine where the reported injury had occurred (on farm, during transport or at the abattoir).
- 2.325 Whilst civil cross compliance penalties were usually applied by RPA based on on-farm findings during an inspection, 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 farm. These included animals with chronic untreated disease conditions, animals in very poor condition, and animals with ingrowing horns.

FSS/FSA referred farm inspections and non-compliances in GB 2018 – 2023

	2018*	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total farm inspections following referral	200	321	246	355	199	306
Non-compliant findings	30	39	33	55	43	72
Non-compliant findings without unnecessary suffering	17	31	19	29	20	38
Non-compliant findings with unnecessary suffering detected	13	8	14	26	23	34

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

- 2.326 There was an increase in the number of farm inspections carried out following triage of FSS/FSA referrals in 2023. A total of 306 GB farm inspections were carried out. Inspections increased in England by 81% and 28% in Wales and fell in Scotland by 10%.
- 2.327 Of these farm inspections, 23.5% resulted in a non-compliance being recorded in 2023, an increase on the previous 2 years. Although this could reflect an increase in non-compliance, it does also indicate that official controls at the slaughterhouse level are effective in detecting and targeting on farm animal welfare issues.
- 2.328 The number of incidents/findings involving unnecessary suffering at farm level was slightly reduced at 11% compared to 11.6% of assessments in 2022 but still higher than from 2018-2021. Ante-mortem and post-mortem findings continued to be used as an indicator of serious animal welfare issues on farm.

2.329 At national level, Scotland reported 9 cases of unnecessary suffering at farm inspections in response to slaughterhouse referrals, compared to 14 in 2022; this was a decrease from 33% to 23% of all slaughterhouse referred farm inspections for 2023. England reported 11 cases of unnecessary suffering in 2023 – an increase in absolute number, although a similar proportion, 4.8% in 2023 compared to 3.9% in 2022, was due to the increased number of referrals carried out. Wales reported 14 cases, comprising 38% of all slaughterhouse referred farm inspections in 2023 – an increase from 14% in 2022.

FSA/FSS referred farm inspections and compliance levels by country for 2020 – 2023

Outcomes by year	2020			2021			2022			2023		
	Eng	Scot	Wal	Eng	Scot	Wal	Eng	Scot	Wal	Eng	Scot	Wal
Farm inspections following referral	145	53	48	249	66	40	127	43	29	230	39	37
Non-compliances recorded*	23	1	9	23	11	13	12	3	5	43	10	19
Non compliances where suffering was determined*	7	0	7	8	9	9	5	14	4	11	9	14

* to note: these may be associated with the slaughterhouse finding only in Wales and England

Animal welfare at slaughter or killing

2.330 Welfare at the time of killing (WATOK) is regulated and enforced through the assimilated Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing, the Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015, the Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014, and for Scotland the Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Scotland) Regulations 2012, and in Scotland retained sections of the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995.

2.331 In 2023, APHA followed up reports and allegations relating to poor animal welfare during slaughter or killing operations outside of approved slaughterhouses. Slaughter and killing operations, along with the associated facilities, were also assessed by APHA during the evaluation for a WATOK licence at premises located outside of slaughterhouses.

2.332 In GB all 49 inspections carried out by APHA to regulate compliance with the welfare at killing legislation were conducted alongside a visit for an assessment for a WATOK licence and 12 were carried out independent of an WATOK licence assessment. No non-compliance was found during the inspections. 30 visits occurred in the pre-Christmas period associated with seasonal slaughter of poultry. Non-compliance was found on 5 APHA visits.

2.333 The graph and table below show the numbers of assessments for slaughter and killing outside of an approved slaughterhouse, and for non-compliances detected in GB.

Figure 54 – Chart showing the number of welfare inspection visits during slaughter in Great Britain from 2020-2023*

(*data calculation methodology has changed since 2020 and cannot be compared with previous years)



2.334 The tables below set out GB non-compliance data by country for 2023; and the types of non-compliance assessment finding in GB between 2018 and 2023. WATOK Licence assessment may involve more than one species.

GB non-compliance data by country for 2023

	England	Scotland	Wales
Premises visited	51	4	3
Slaughter visits**	53	4	4
Visits for slaughter licence assessment	46	0	3
Species categories assessed**	55	0	4
Non-compliances at visit	2	1	2
Non-compliances recorded where suffering was not determined	2	1	2
Non compliances where suffering was determined	0	0	0

** Note for years previous to 2023 number of visits carried out was for slaughter assessments only.

GB non-compliance assessment finding between 2018 – 2023

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Licensing	17	2	1	0	0	3
Construction, equipment, maintenance	11	11	4	0	0	2
Animals awaiting killing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Handling and restraint	3	0	0	0	0	0
Stunning and killing	11	5	2	1	0	1
Bleeding or pithing	4	5	0	1	0	2

Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing (WATOK) in Great Britain, 2021 - 2023

Country	Slaughterman Licence			Certificate of Competence (CoC)			Temporary CoC		
Year	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
England & Wales	62	66	36	859	1,060	1,171	1,513	1,499	1,450
Scotland	N/A	N/A	N/A	79	110	100	153	147	180

2.335 In England and Wales in 2023, slaughterman licences and CoCs were issued under Welfare of Animals at Time of Killing (WATOK) by the FSA.

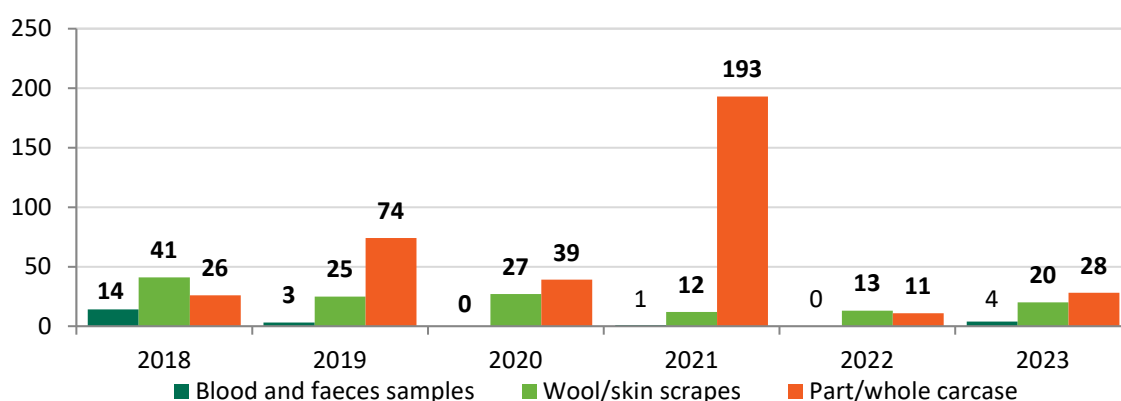
2.336 In Scotland, 100 CoCs were issued for operatives in slaughterhouses, farms and knackeries, under the WATOK (Scotland) Regulations 2012, between April 2023 and March 2024. Thirty-two existing TCoCs were amended to withdraw units and six were amended to include new activities.

2.337 The FSA publishes [quarterly reports showing welfare non-compliances in each area of the slaughterhouse](#). The reports are set out by species. FSS publishes [animal welfare data](#) on a monthly basis.

Welfare forensic pathology and advice

2.338 The chart below shows submission to the regional veterinary laboratories in England and Wales from 2018 to 2023.

Figure 55 – Chart showing the number of samples submitted to Regional Veterinary Laboratories in England and Wales from 2018 – 2023



- 2.339 In 2023, APHA's Regional Laboratories (RLs) received 37 welfare forensic submissions, consisting of 24 whole carcasses and 4 carcass parts (such as heads or limbs). To note: a submission may comprise parts from more than one carcass.
- 2.340 In 2023 submissions were received from investigation into sheep, cattle and chicken welfare. The submission of material for forensic examination is reactive depending on what is identified at farm visits therefore no real trends regarding number of submissions can be determined.
- 2.341 Six of the submissions were from the same holding, where severe welfare issues were identified - including emaciated animals, poor care of young animals resulting in excess deaths. All animals on the holding were seized by the LA.
- 2.342 The remainder of the submissions were wool or skin submissions (20) relating to suspect sheep scab cases, blood samples (1) and faeces (3) submitted following visits by APHA field delivery staff.

Official controls in the plant health sector

Controls on imported plants, plant products and plant material

England and Wales

- 2.343 In 2023, targets were met for the inspection of the majority of [controlled plant health](#) material imported into England and Wales from countries other than the EU. Prohibited material imported or held under scientific licence was subject to the required level of inspection.
- 2.344 When including EU material, 27% of the highest risk commodities were inspected at designated inspection sites. For Rest of World material, a 67% inspection rate was achieved. The target was not met for inspecting other lower risk controlled material, with 44% of material inspected against the required 65% target. The target of completing 100% of document and identity checks was not met, with 79% of the checks achieved.
- 2.345 The delivery shortfall resulted from a combination of the challenges arising from delivering controls at PoDs for EU material, and the ongoing resource need for established inspectors to train the influx of new staff recruited to deliver the inspection of EU material. Recruitment pressures continued in 2023.
- 2.346 The trend of growing numbers of controlled consignments requiring inspection continued at a slightly higher rate. In 2023, there was a 20% increase in the number of consignments declared and requiring control, compared to 2022. The total controlled and declared consignments in 2023 was 320,960 compared to 266,905 in 2022.
- 2.347 There was a change for the 2023 reporting year: reduced checks were no longer measured on how many of the required levels were met per commodity. For 2023, the percentage inspected was reported against how many consignments required an inspection, based on the reduced inspection rate and the risk engine selection. This resulted in 44% of commodities subject to reduced import checks and requiring an inspection being inspected.
- 2.348 The import of all controlled wood from Russia continued to be replaced by trade in unregulated bark-free sawn conifer from elsewhere in Europe, following the changes in checks on bulk shipments of sawn timber made by the Forestry Commission (FC) in 2022. The shift in the source of conifer imports into Great Britain coincided with an overall decline in sawn wood imports, which were 24%²¹ below levels seen in 2022.

²¹ [Forestry Statistics 2024, Chapter 3: Trade](#)

2.349 FC continued to receive additional Defra funding to support its checks at border checks and its inland activities, and was able to increase its operational staffing by six new posts (from 33 to 39 posts). These additional staff:

- Continued to strengthen the inland plant health team, increasing the surveillance level for newly emerging pests and diseases in trees and woodlands
- Responded to an increasing number of harmful pest outbreaks in England including *Ips typographus* and *Phytophthora pluvialis*
- Carried out surveillance of conifer woodland for *I. typographus*, *Phytophthora ramorum* and *P. pluvialis*
- Successfully contained a new outbreak of the Oak processionary moth found within the Pest Free Area between Derby and Nottingham in 2023
- Continued to check controlled timber from the EU including sawn ash and ash firewood
- Continued to deliver certain statutory plant health functions on behalf of the Devolved Governments in Scotland and Wales, as well as in England. The extent of this work was detailed in a cross-border memorandum of understanding, with delivery coordinated and reported on for all three countries.

Scotland

2.350 In 2023 there were 71 import notifications from non-EU countries. Apart from two sea containers landing at Grangemouth (containing Japanese bonsai and tree ferns from Australia), Edinburgh and Glasgow airports continued to be the main import points. Shipments consisted of propagation material from the Canary Islands, Kenya and Uganda, as well as mixed fresh fruit and vegetables from Jordan, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand. All received documentary checks, as well as 41 physical and identity checks based on risk. For one of the containers which landed at Grangemouth, soil samples were taken around the plants to check for quarantine nematodes. None were found, apart from some saprophytic non-quarantine species.

2.351 With the continuation of checks of EU high priority imports at inland Points of Destination, 432 sites were registered in Scotland, which took 2,537 consignments. All received a documentary check, and 40% of risk based identity and physical checks were completed. The main issues identified were Tobacco whitefly on Dutch house plants, missing additional declarations, and incorrect quantities declared on Phytosanitary Certificates (PCs). However, towards the end of the year a significant improvement to completing the PCs was achieved – again, this reflected a combination of improved trader education and communication.

Plant health surveillance and outbreak management

England and Wales

2.352 In 2023/24, work continued to monitor and manage several plant and tree health pest and disease incidents, including:

- ***Thaumetopoea processionea* (Oak processionary moth (OPM))** – In March 2023 the Established Area and Buffer Zone management zone boundaries were expanded to reflect the current areas of known infestation.
- A breeding population of OPM was found in Derbyshire, which was within the Pest Free Area for the pest. Surveillance action identified the source of the outbreak and the extent of the infestation. An eradication programme was introduced and oak trees were extensively monitored in the surrounding area through a programme of ground surveys and pheromone trapping.
- ***Ips typographus* (Spruce bark beetle)** – 7 new outbreak sites were identified through surveillance in England, 4 sites were in the southeastern region and 3 in East Anglia. The Demarcated Area for *I. typographus* was extended to include controls on spruce movement within most of East Anglia. Over 300 suspect sites were followed-up by ground surveys following a combination of aerial surveillance and pheromone trapping in the wider environment. Since the first outbreak was found in 2018, 22 outbreak sites have been identified, 11 through aerial surveys, eight through pre-felling and movement authorisation inspections and three through other means such as direct reports.
- ***Cryphonectria parasitica* (sweet chestnut blight)**
There were 36 sites under official surveillance within Buckinghamshire, Derbyshire, Devon, Herefordshire, Kent, Leicestershire, London, East Sussex and West Sussex by June 2024. Winter surveillance had inspected sweet chestnut trees at over 100 sites across England for the presence of *C. parasitica*.
- A single colony of **Colorado beetle** was confirmed in a single potato field in Kent in July 2023. The population was initially identified by the farmer's agronomist, before APHA visited the farm and took samples of larvae, which were confirmed by FERA Science Ltd to be Colorado beetle.
- A demarcated area was established, which included the infested area and a 1 km buffer zone around it. Actions were taken within the infested area to eradicate the beetle, and official surveillance was undertaken out to 5 km to detect the presence of other beetles. The outbreak was communicated directly to other potato growers in Kent, to grower trade associations and more widely on gov.uk.

- Since the initial finding, only one male adult beetle was found in a potato field within the 1 km buffer zone. This beetle was removed and insecticides were applied on the field. Ageing of the beetle indicates that it was contemporaneous with the known outbreak. A Statutory Notice issued in 2023 will run until 2025 requiring that no host or root crops be grown in the 1 km buffer zone, except for a potato trap crop nearby to the infested area. Surveillance of the trap crop and adjacent fields will be carried out regularly.

Surveillance surveys carried out during 2023/24 in England and Wales

- 2.353 In line with EU member states, and adopted whilst UK was in the transition period following our exit from the EU, Great Britain was required to undertake annual surveillance for all GB priority pests, and to survey for all other listed pests, over a five year period.
- 2.354 The APHA 2023-24 surveillance programme is summarised in the table below. The programme was reviewed and many of the pre-existing surveys were updated and adapted to improve their methodologies, robustness, and value for money. Development of the surveillance programme is a long-term project undergoing continuous improvement, to be able to prove country freedom and for early detection.
- 2.355 Some survey locations include inspections for both annual and multi-annual pests. These form the basis of country status for each pest and disease, and input to decision making regarding import/export legislation.

Survey	Action taken in 2021/22	Action taken in 2022/23	Action taken in 2023/24
Potato ware crop survey – Tuber Epitrix spp, Clavibacter michiganensis (Ring rot), Synchytrium endobioticum (Potato wart disease), Candidatus Liberibacter solanacearum (Zebra chip) ^{Error!} Bookmark not defined. , Ralstonia solanacearum (Brown rot), Meloidogyne chitwoodi, Thecaphora solani, Ralstonia pseudosolanacearum, Tectia solanivora & Naupactus leucoloma visual & tuber cutting	180 ware crops	317 ware crops grown from UK/EU seed	270 ware crops sampled grown from UK/EU seed
Potato seed crop survey – Tuber Epitrix spp, Clavibacter michiganensis (Ring rot), Synchytrium endobioticum (Potato wart disease), Candidatus Liberibacter solanacearum (Zebra chip) ²² , Ralstonia solanacearum (Brown rot), Meloidogyne chitwoodi, Thecaphora solani, Ralstonia pseudosolanacearum, Tectia solanivora & Naupactus leucoloma visual & tuber coring for latent testing	1,291 crops inspected including all Seed Potato Classification Scheme E&W seed stocks marketed	777 E&W Seed Potato Classification Scheme stocks sampled	609 E&W Seed Potato Classification Scheme stocks sampled
Potato ware crop survey – Field <i>Leptinotarsa decemlineata</i> and <i>Candidatus Liberibacter solanacearum</i> (Zebra chip) ^{Error! Bookmark not defined.} - visual inspection of growing crop	48 crops	51 crops	54 crops

²² Proxy survey for *Bactericera cockerelli*

Survey	Action taken in 2021/22	Action taken in 2022/23	Action taken in 2023/24
Post planting tree survey Ceratocystis platani, Thaumatopea processionea, Thaumatopea pityocampa, Agrilus anxius, Anoplophora chinensis, Anoplophora glabripennis, Ips typographus, Elm Yellows and Xylella fastidiosa	141 post planting sites inspected following extensive tracing exercise to identify sites planted in the last 3 years	122 planting sites inspected following tracing exercise to identify sites planted in the last 3 years	86 planting sites inspected following tracing exercise to identify sites planted in the last 3 years
Xylella fastidiosa latent survey		134 inspections at plant passport premises. 140 inspections at managed parks and gardens.	136 inspections at plant passport premises. 131 inspections at managed parks and gardens.
Phytophthora ramorum survey – wider environment <i>Phytophthora ramorum</i> & <i>P. kernoviae</i>	365 sites inspected against a min target of 300	244 sites	300 sites
PCN ware survey – Field	501 Ha sampled from a target area of 424 Ha.	520 Ha	530 Ha

Survey	Action taken in 2021/22	Action taken in 2022/23	Action taken in 2023/24
Brown rot water course survey <i>Ralstonia solanacearum</i>	The Brown Rot river survey was completed during August/September 2021, involving approximately 200 samples from 24 water courses and 48 sampling points. One river returned positive samples (the River Jubilee in Berkshire). This was effectively our +ve control and is already designated within the existing notice and demarcated area	24 water courses	24 water courses
Ornamental survey Acleris issikii, Acleris robinsoniana, Aleurocanthus spiniferus, Amauromyza maculosa, Bemisia tabaci, Candidatus Phytoplasma 'ulmi', Candidatus Phytoplasma 'prunorum', Candidatus Phytoplasma 'solani', Candidatus Phytoplasma phoenicium, Citrus exocortis viroid, Conotrachelus nenuphar, Cryphonectria parasitica, Davidsoniella virescens, Eotetranychus lewisi, Fusarium circinatum, Hirschmanniella spp., Liriomyza huidobrensis, Liriomyza trifolii, Paysandisia archon, Phytophthora kernoviae, Phytophthora ramorum, Popillia japonica, Rhizococcus hibisci, Rhynchophorus ferrugineus, Rhynchophorus palmarum, Scirtothrips citri Sphaerulina musiva, Trialeurodes abutiloneus, Xanthomonas arboricola pv. Pruni	No set targets per pest. Plant hosts were inspected as part of a programme of visits to clients. Frequency is determined by PHSI established risk matrix.	No set targets per pest. Plant hosts were inspected as part of a programme of visits to clients. Frequency is determined by PHSI established risk matrix.	No set targets per pest. Plant hosts were inspected as part of a programme of visits to clients. Frequency is determined by PHSI established risk matrix.

Survey	Action taken in 2021/22	Action taken in 2022/23	Action taken in 2023/24
Tomato & Pepper crop survey Bemisia tabaci, Pepino mosaic virus (PEPMV0), Potato spindle tuber viroid (PSTVD0), Columnea latent viroid (CLVD00), Pepper chat fruit viroid (PCFVD0), Tomato apical stunt viroid (TASVD0), Tomato brown rugose fruit (TOBRFV), Tomato chlorotic dwarf viroid (TCDVD0), Tomato chocolate virus (TOCHVO), Tomato infectious chlorosis (TICV00), Tomato marchitez virus (TOANV0), Tomato mottle mosaic (TOMMV0), Tomato planta macho viroid (TPMVD0), Tomato torrado virus (TOTV00), Tomato yellow leaf curl (Sardinia; TYLCSV), Tomato yellow leaf curl (TYLCV0), Tomato yellow leaf curl New Dehli (TOLCND)	N/A	56 tomato & pepper production sites	63 tomato & pepper production sites
Vineyard survey Draeculacephala minerva, Candidatus Phytoplasma australiense, Cicadellidae (non-European), Candidatus Phytoplasma 'solani', Graphocephala atropunctata, <i>Lycocorna delicatula</i> , Margarodes prieskaensis/vitis/vredendalensis, Non-European viruses, viroids of Vitis, Peach rosette mosaic virus, Popillia japonica, Scaphoideus titanus, Thaumatotibia leucotreta, Xylella fastidiosa, Xylophilus ampelinus	N/A	N/A	60 sites

Survey	Action taken in 2021/22	Action taken in 2022/23	Action taken in 2023/24
Soft fruit survey Acleris nishidai, Anthonomus bisignifer, Anthonomus signatus, Aphelenchoides besseyi, Black raspberry latent virus/ Tobacco streak virus black raspberry latent strain, Blueberry leaf mottle virus, Blueberry scorch virus, Blueberry shoestring virus, Diaporthe vaccinii, Epochra canadensis, Longidorus diadecturus, Non-European viruses, viroids and phytoplasmas, Popillia japonica, Raspberry leaf curl virus, Rhagoletis mendax, Rhagoletis ribicola, Strawberry vein banding virus, Strawberry witches' broom phytoplasma, Thekopsora minima, Xiphinema rivesi, Xylella fastidiosa	N/A	N/A	52 sites
Orchard survey Acleris nivisellana/minuta/ senescens, Acrobasis pyrivorella, Alternaria mali, American plum line pattern virus, Anthonomus quadrigibbus, Apiosporina morbosa, Apple dimple fruit viroid, Botryosphaeria kuwatsukai, Candidatus Phytoplasma 'mali', Candidatus Phytoplasma 'prunorum', Candidatus Phytoplasma 'phoenicium', Candidatus Phytoplasma 'pruni', Carposina sasakii, Cherry rasp leaf virus, Conotrachelus nenuphar, Grapholita inopinata/packardi/prunivora, Gymnosporangium asiaticum, clavipes, globosum, juniperi-virginianae, yamadae, Lopholeucaspis japonica, Non-European viruses, viroids and phytoplasmas of Cydonia Mill., L., Malus Mill., Prunus L., Pyrus L, Oemona hirta, Phyllosticta solitaria, Popillia japonica, Rhacochlaena japonica, Rhagoletis fausta/indifferens/pomonella, Saperda candida, Thaumatotibia leucotreta, Xanthomonas arboricola pv. pruni, Xiphinema californicum, Xiphinema rivesi (non-EU populations), Xylella fastidiosa	N/A	N/A	59 sites

Surveillance surveys carried out during 2023/24 in Scotland

- 2.356 Separate surveys to those conducted in England and Wales were completed in Scotland, for both priority pests and multi-annual pests. The results were incorporated into the GB surveillance returns for 2023.
- 2.357 Inland surveillance activity within Scotland were carried out by the Scottish Government. Surveys and trade monitoring for quarantine and multi-annual pests were completed according to delivery plans.

General quarantine surveillance

England and Wales

- 2.358 As part of the APHA survey design for the Ornamental survey, inspection visits in England and Wales were determined according to the following risk matrix in 2023/24.

Plant health risk* matrix and achievements against targets in England and Wales in 2021/22 - 2023/24

		Client plant health risk rating ²³			
		Very high risk	High risk	Medium risk	Low risk
2021/22	Target No. of Visits	120	1,084	3,723	1,986
	Achievement	125%	110%	75%	85%
2022/23	Target No. of Visits	110	1,112	3,792	2,017
	Achievement	100%	100%	100%	100%
2023/24	Target No. of Visits	170	1,104	3,312	2,097
	Achievement	85%	93%	109%	102%

*A client's business is reviewed throughout the year and could result in target changes between quarters. Clients are assessed against business activity, source material and scale of production.

Scotland

- 2.359 Seed potato export tonnage in 2023 was 91.390, an increase of 18% from 2022. This was due to a shortage of seed within the EU, meaning that export destinations increased tonnages from Scotland. Ware potato export was 60,553 tonnes, an increase of 55% on the previous year's total. This can be attributed to the shortage of potatoes on the continent.

²³ Very High Risk 10-12 visits per year; High Risk 4-6 visits per year; Med Risk 2 visits per year; Low Risk 1 visit every 2 years

Number of quarantine pest tests carried out in Scotland from 2019 - 2023

Type of diagnosis	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Viroids	3,043	7,230	3,321	2,745	5,477
Virology	244	516	472	355	176
Bacteriology (incl. brown rot/ring rot)	2,996	2,758	2,809	2,794	3,311
Mycology	454	207	441	196	294
Nematology/Entomology	18,424	20,000	16,954	18,196	14,022
Total	25,161	30,711	23,997	24,286	23,280

2.360 In addition, six lines for quarantine pests of potatoes were carried out by the UK Potato Quarantine Unit (UKPQU)

Enforcement activities for Single Market and EU surveillance activities in Scotland in 2023

Disease / pest	Surveillance	Findings
<i>Ditylenchus dipsaci</i> (stem and bulb nematode)	117 stocks (163.79 ha) were inspected primarily for export markets.	There were 11 stocks (14.01 ha) sent for laboratory testing. All were negative for <i>Ditylenchus dipsaci</i> . However, low levels of <i>Aphelenchoides</i> spp were found, which prevented them being sent for the USA market. In addition, one stock (1.31 ha) failed certification for 2.5% virus.
Dothistroma Needle Blight	A survey was undertaken of tree producing nurseries of hosts susceptible to <i>Dothistroma pini</i> and <i>D. septosporum</i> . Checks were also undertaken for <i>Fusarium circinatum</i> .	<i>D. septosporum</i> was found at two sites. The infected stocks at both nurseries were destroyed under statutory notice.
<i>Erwinia amylovora</i> (fireblight)	Five nurseries requested Fireblight PFA status and had host plants tested for latent symptoms.	All samples taken from nurseries and the surrounding area were negative.

Disease / pest	Surveillance	Findings
<i>Phytophthora</i> spp.	<u>Nursery Trade/Garden Centre</u> The nursery trade was largely clear of the regulated <i>Phytophthora</i> spp. Registered nurseries producing susceptible material for <i>P. ramorum</i> and <i>P. kernoviae</i> continued to receive two site inspections a year plus one based on risk. Inspections at nurseries and garden centres also included visual checks of <i>P. austrocedri</i>, <i>P. lateralis</i> and <i>P. pluvialis</i> hosts. <u>Gardens/Landscaped Sites</u> The annual <i>P. ramorum</i> / <i>P. kernoviae</i> garden survey covering 50 sites across Scotland was completed by December 2023 and consisted primarily of prominent public gardens and some 'non-active' sites. It also included <i>P. pluvialis</i> hosts. Taking into account the new outbreaks, there are currently 20 'active' outbreaks sites for <i>P. ramorum</i> and <i>P. kernoviae</i> (9 with <i>P. ramorum</i>, 4 with <i>P. kernoviae</i> and 7 with both pathogens. There are also, 91 gardens which have a 'non-active' status (with controls lifted and continued monitoring as part of general surveillance activity).	<u>Nursery Trade/Garden Centre</u> There was two independent findings of <i>P. ramorum</i> on Rhododendron nursery stock originating from the same English supplier. Measures were taken to destroy infected host plants and hold plants in quarantine. Increased inspections were carried out at these nurseries and follow up exercise on sold plants was carried out, but nothing further was found.. <i>P. ramorum</i> was detected in a stock of containerise <i>Viburnum</i> plants at a garden centre and plants from the infected batch was destroyed. <u>Gardens/Landscaped Sites</u> The 2023 garden survey identified 1 new outbreak site with <i>P. ramorum</i>. Control measures were put in place and planned additional monitoring of the site will take place.
Netherlands	Imports of Dutch house plants	<i>Bemisia tabaci</i> (tobacco whitefly) which all were destroyed under notice.

Summary of intensity and type of plant controls in Great Britain

2.361 In GB during 2023, overall official controls compliance improved for commercial cargo, and postal interceptions went down slightly - from 1,493 in 2022 to 1,485 in 2023. Import inspection targets were largely met for England and Wales.

2.362 In England and Wales in 2023, there was an increase in notifications on imported harmful organisms - to 630 findings, compared to 585 findings in 2022, for both controlled and non-controlled material. The tables below show the most common third country import / pest combinations in 2022 and 2023.

Pests detected and non-compliances in third country imports during 2022/23

Country of origin	Pest detected	Non-compliance cases
Netherlands	Bemisia tabaci	105
Thailand	Bemisia tabaci	84
Nigeria	Bemisia tabaci	32
Nigeria	Thripidae	22
Bangladesh	Thripidae	17
Israel	Bemisia tabaci	15

Pests detected and non-compliances in third country imports during 2023/24

Country of origin	Pest detected	Non-compliance cases
Netherlands	Bemisia tabaci	147
Thailand	Bemisia tabaci	75
Thailand	Liriomyza spp.	21
Germany	Bemisia tabaci	18
Kenya	Lepidoptera (order)	16
Kenya	Thaumatotibia leucotreta	16
Morocco	Pucciniastrum americanum	16
Nigeria	Bemisia tabaci	16

2.363 Documentary issues accounted for 1,771 notifications, with 1,465 of these being related to private imports imported by post or courier. This is an increase from the previous year, for which comparative values were 1,685 and 1,463 respectively.

2.364 For Scotland, the main reason for non-compliance was documentary issues (lack of or incorrect documentation).

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

2.366 When harmful organisms or outbreaks were found at ports or inland in Scotland, the vast majority of businesses co-operated with Plant Health inspectors in destroying affected stock. Most businesses entered imports correctly into the advance notification system (IPAFFS) and produced records for plant passport inspections.

Plant, wood and wood products imports subject to inspections

2.367 In England and Wales in 2023, 320,960 consignments were subject to import inspection, declared and requiring controls - an increase of 20% over 2022 (266,905). The increase reflects the ongoing impact of Great Britain's withdrawal from the European Union in 2021, and the inclusion of high-priority commodities from EU countries within the scope of Great Britain's import controls. It also relates to the use of the new advance IT import notification system (IPAFFS) being introduced, as well as a change in reporting. The increase in 2023 continued the general yearly upward trend in the number of consignments subject to inspection since 2014/15 (with the exception of a very small decrease in 2017/18).

Figure 56 – Chart showing plant import consignments subject to inspections in England and Wales from 2018/19 – 2023/24

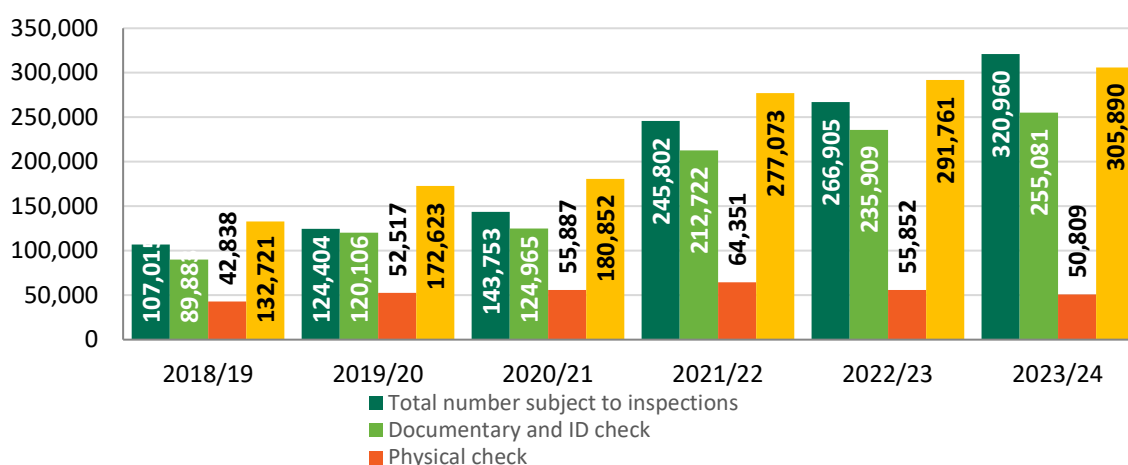
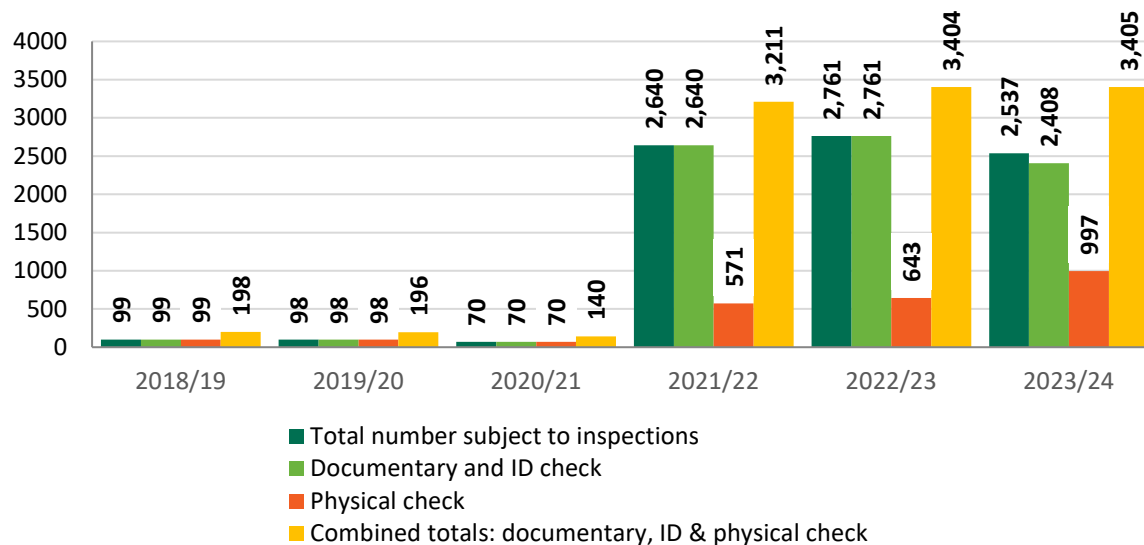
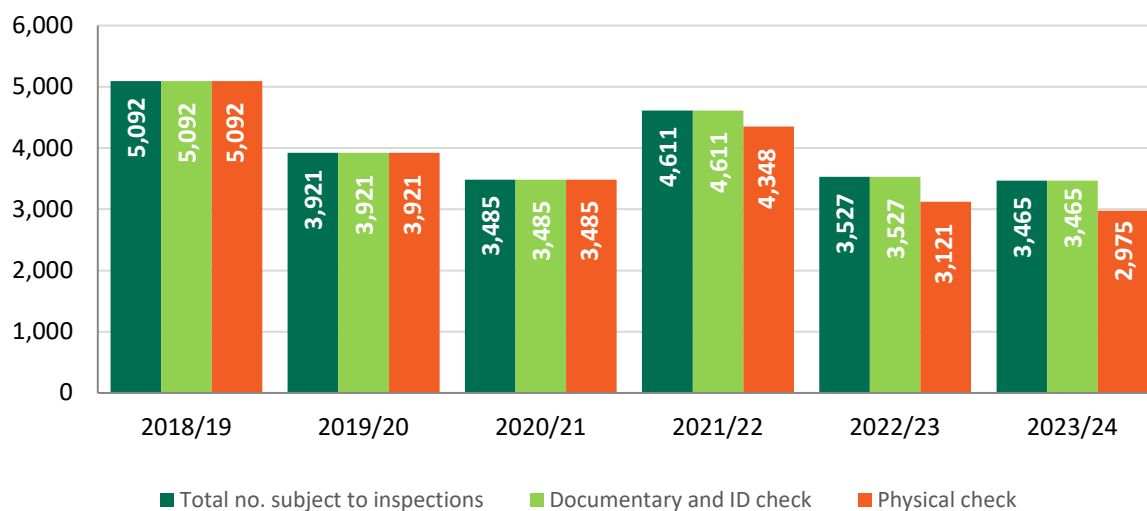


Figure 57 – Chart showing plant import consignments subject to inspections for Scotland from 2018/19 – 2023/24²⁴



*Figures higher in 2021/22 due to the transitional period following EU Exit ended on 1st Jan 2021 and inspections started on imports of high risk plants from the EU.

Figure 58 – Chart showing wood and wood products import consignments in GB subject to inspection undertaken by Forestry Commission from 2018/19 – 2023/24²⁵

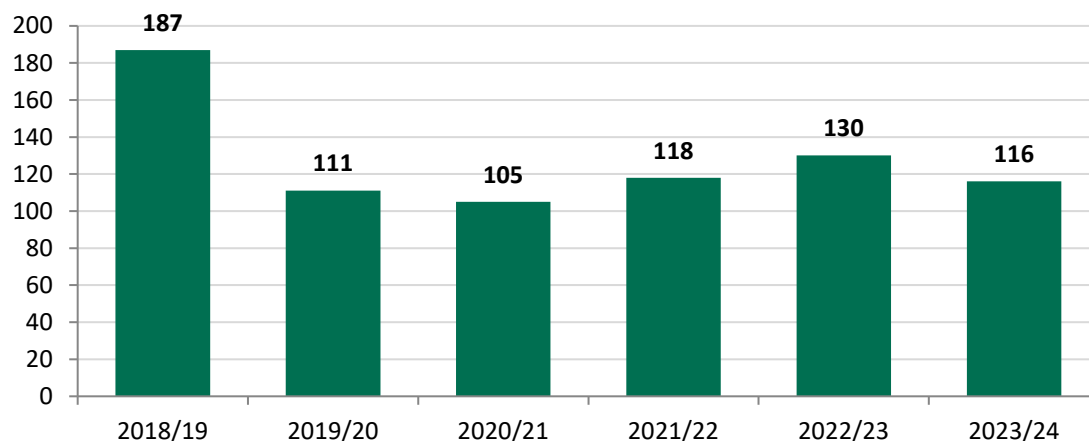


²⁴ Data for combined totals of checks from 2016/17 to 2019/20 corrected due to an error in the 2019 report.

²⁵ Data for total number subject to inspections corrected for previous years.

2.368 The inspection figures included 100% statutory checks on controlled wood, wood products and bark. Risk-based checks on wood packaging material (WPM) were not included in the figures. Checks on WPM were carried out according to an annual monitoring plan under the retained EU Plant Health legislation [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2125](#). Statutory checks on third country material were extended to include all wood of ash and other regulated material from the EU. These additional checks on sawn timber and firewood did not fully offset the sanction-driven fall in the number of checks on sawn timber imported from Russia.

Figure 59 – Chart showing imported wood and wood products non-compliances in GB from 2018/19 – 2023/24



2.369 Under the Forestry Commission's jurisdiction for imported material, the number of non-compliances in 2023/24 was lower than in 2022/23. In FY2023/24 the breakdown of the percentage non-compliance by product type was:

- WPM – 80%
- Dunnage – 15%
- Sawn timber – 0%
- Other – 5% (including bark and solid firewood).

2.370 During 2023/24 the rules for [ISPM15](#)²⁶ were being fully enforced for wood packaging and dunnage from the EU, in the same way as from other parts of the world. Interceptions of non-complaint material from the EU represented 29% of the total interceptions.

²⁶ The requirement for implementation of the standard on imported wood packaging material is also set out as a specific import condition under the assimilated 2016 Plant Health Regulation [Article 43](#)

The requirement for monitoring of WPM with goods of all kinds is set out in secondary legislation [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2125](#)

2.371 The main cause of non-compliances continued to be the failure of wood packaging material manufacturers and treatment providers to comply fully with ISPM15 in the country of export. Most non-compliance was for failing to ensure that the material was:

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

2.372 Where wood packaging failed to meet ISPM15 with any type of commodity, the material was subjected to remedial action. There were no instances with any evidence of live life stages of pests associated with the wood packaging.

2.373 In 2023/24, the checks for wood packaging material were associated with a wide range of goods of all kinds. The most intercepted imports of goods with non-compliant wood packaging were from the US, followed by India, Portugal and Lithuania.

2.374 There was a downward trend in the volume of controlled timber. The volume of material inspected is no less than half of that seen before the sanctions on Russian imports. Most checks were carried out at BCPs, with only 8% of checks at PoDs inland. The import checks on EU material represented 41% of checks overall, and 55% of controlled timber volume.

2.375 Compliance rates continued to be high for controlled timber commodities, with no findings of live pests, although several bulk shipments of isolated conifer bark were intercepted with live life forms of nematodes or (non-pest) insects, which suggested a failure of phytosanitary treatment.

Figure 60 – Chart showing the number of phytosanitary export certificates issued in GB from 2018/19 – 2023/24

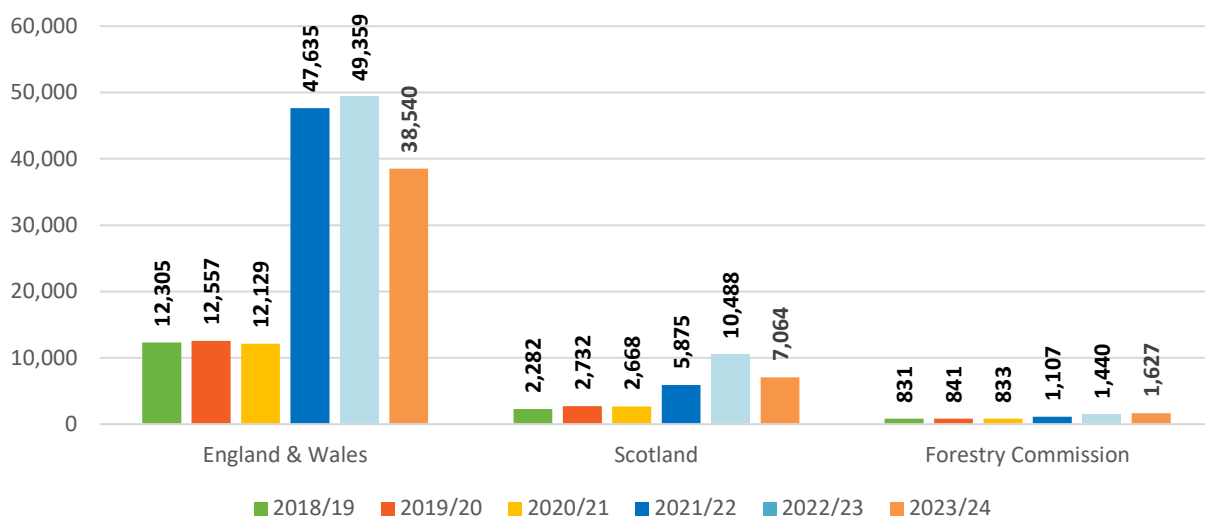
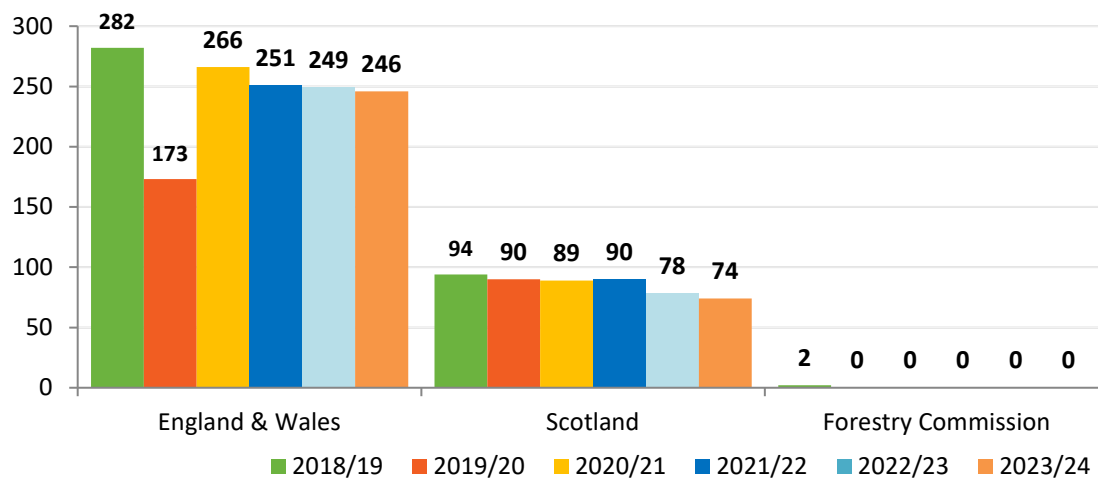


Figure 61 – Chart showing the number of licenses issued for import or holding of prohibited plants and pests in GB from 2018/19 – 2023/24



2.376 The number of phytosanitary certificates for export issued by the FC has more than doubled since 2022, to meet demand for regulated exports to the EU. No scientific authorisations (previously referred to as licences) were issued by FC, as the delivery of authorisations was transferred from the FC to APHA on 1 January 2021.

2.377 In England and Wales during 2023/24, 244 scientific authorisations were issued to allow for the import or to hold prohibited plants and plant pests. This was compared to 249 authorisations issued in 2022/23.

2.378 In Scotland, 74 authorisations were issued, including five new authorisations. This represents a decrease of 5% from the 78 issued in 2021/2022, despite an increase in the number of new authorisations granted in 2023. All were valid for the duration of the research work, and met the compliance requirements set out under Commission Delegated Regulations (EU) 2019/829

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

2.379 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.

2.380 During 2023 in England and Wales, the number of non-compliant actions for imports increased from 2,270 in 2022 to 2,401 in 2023. Sustained monitoring of postal and courier packages at postal depots contributed to the discovery of non-compliant consignments.

2.381 The enforcement of import controls in Scotland was mainly delivered by action on consignments that were non-compliant due to incorrect completion of PCs, which were corrected in time before consignments landed. The exception to this was destruction of household plants from the Netherlands, due to findings of quarantine pest *Bemisia tabaci* (tobacco white fly).

Chapter 3 – National systems of audit

Audit of local and port health authorities

- 3.1 Following the end of the FSA's LA Recovery Plan in March 2023, a programme of LA audits for 2023/24 was developed following a risk-based audit planning process carried out in both England and Wales:

England and Wales

Programme topic / policy area	Dates	Number of authorities audited	Number of establishment 'reality checks'	Number of reports	Number of recommendations
Service Planning and Prioritisation (England)	June 2023-January 2024	8	Not applicable (Remote audits)	8	7
Service Planning Arrangements & Open Audit Actions (Wales)	September 2023 – January 2024	5	Not applicable for this audit programme	5	No recommendations were made as an outcome of the Service Planning audits. Some outstanding audit actions were closed leaving 21 open across the 5 LAs.
Delivery of Official Controls in Approved Establishments (England)	June 2023-October 2023	7	7	7	21

- 3.2 In England, a series of remote audits of LA service planning and service prioritisation was delivered between June 2023 and January 2024. A second audit programme concerning the delivery of official controls by LAs in approved establishments was also completed between June 2023 and October 2023.
- 3.3 In Wales, the 2023/24 audit programme consisted of five face-to-face LA audits to assess service planning and delivery of interventions following the end of the Recovery Plan, as well as reviewing any relevant open audit actions following previous audits. The audits focussed on the delivery of official controls in relation to food hygiene and standards.

- 3.4 The audits assessed whether LAs had been able to return to the intervention frequencies within the Code following the end of the Recovery Plan; that they were carrying out official controls in line with applicable legislation, the Code of Practice and relevant central guidance. Where LAs had not been able to return to the intervention frequencies within the Code, the audits assessed whether LAs had taken a risk-based and intelligence-led approach to their prioritisation of interventions, and that they had a plan in place to re-align with the Code in the future.
- 3.5 The audits considered service delivery planning processes and arrangements. This covered an assessment of the LAs intervention plan, the resources available to the service and the risk-based prioritisation of activities, including the assessment of new food businesses.
- 3.6 In Scotland, the 2023/24 LA audit programme continued - as detailed below:

Programme topic / policy area	Dates	Number of LAs audited	Number of establishment 'reality checks'	Reporting	Number of recommendations
Service Plan Desktop Review	April 2023 – March 2024	32	N/A	N/A	N/A

Summary of audit findings

England

- All the LAs audited had developed and published documented service plans for 2023/24, describing how they would return to meeting the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice following the end of the FSA's Recovery Plan.
- Service plans were generally following service planning guidance, often with additional headings added to reflect local priorities. There was some variance in how often food service plans were produced and in the timing of approval of service plans.
- In some instances, service plans could be strengthened to ensure they included all the demands on the service, to enable accurate resource calculations.
- All the LAs audited were using a risk-based approach to delivering programmed interventions, initial inspections, and revisits. Whilst some LAs had largely realigned with statutory guidance, other LAs continued to tackle a backlog of mostly lower risk rated category establishments and initial inspections.

- LAs were monitoring performance delivery, particularly using quantitative monitoring techniques, often on a cumulative basis throughout the year. Performance information was routinely being reported to senior officers and elected Members.
- LAs were undertaking some qualitative internal monitoring and verification of the delivery of official controls, primarily involving checks undertaken by team leaders and other peer review activities. Some LAs had acknowledged that the recording of risk-based qualitative monitoring across all service areas was an area for improvement requiring more time and resource allocation.

Wales

- All LAs provided a service plan that broadly met the requirements of the service planning guidance issued by the FSA.
- None of the LAs audited had fully realigned with the intervention frequencies contained within the Code.
- All LAs demonstrated that their food service was recovering from the pandemic and the majority had a sufficient plan in place to fully realign with the Code in the coming years.
- Some relevant open audit actions were closed at all LAs, with the majority of remaining open actions receiving either a good progress or limited progress status.
- LA recovery is variable across Wales, with some LAs working towards a risk-based plan to align with the Code. Resource was identified as a major constraint in some of the LAs. Support was offered to the LAs as they produce a plan to address resource issues and tackle the backlog of interventions at overdue and unrated establishments.

LA delivery of official controls at approved establishments in England

- 3.7 All the Services audited had documented service plans in place, used to describe and explain how they would use their resources in the year ahead to deliver official controls, including those involving approved establishments. Authorities could strengthen service plans by ensuring that the resources required to assess the delivery of official controls at approved establishments are accurately estimated.
- 3.8 All the officers assessed, involved in the approval and delivery of controls in approved establishments, were able to provide evidence of appropriate specific training in the past on the approval and inspection of relevant business processes in their areas.

- 3.9 All the Services assessed had provided appropriate procedures and work instructions for their officers, on the approval process and the delivery of official controls at approved establishments.
- 3.10 All the businesses assessed as part of the audit had been appropriately approved in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice (FLCoP). All the LAs had maintained records relating to the initial approval application and the granting of the initial approval, including any conditional approvals.
- 3.11 Services were generally delivering interventions at approved establishments in accordance with the frequencies set out in the FLCoP, taking into account the impact of the Covid pandemic and the FSAs LA Recovery Plan. All the approved establishments assessed had received an appropriate onsite inspection, regardless of their allocated risk rating, in accordance with the FLCoP.
- 3.12 Authorities were taking appropriate follow up actions where necessary to bring about timely business compliance. There were some historic examples where a wider range of powers could have been considered for use in approved establishments to bring about more timely compliance.
- 3.13 All Services had sampling policies and procedures describing circumstances where sampling activities would be undertaken. Services could strengthen sampling policies and procedures by making specific reference to microbiological sampling requirements at approved establishments. The majority of LAs audited were carrying out sampling at approved establishments or had plans to re-start appropriate sampling for 2024/25.
- 3.14 One of the areas that required significant strengthening based on the audit findings was qualitative monitoring of Service activities. All the Services audited had some form of appropriate quantitative monitoring in place, but most authorities had very limited qualitative monitoring of service activities.

Scotland

Local Authority Audits

- 3.15 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 \(EU\) 2017/625](#) are met.
- 3.16 During 2023/24 the local authority audit programme in Scotland was focussed on a desktop review of the service plans for 2023/24 submitted by all 32 Local Authorities.
- 3.17 The intention was to use these audits to provide a baseline view of the delivery landscape across Scotland both as an aide to performance monitoring and to inform the Scottish Authority Food Enforcement Rebuild (SAFER) project.

- 3.18 The results confirmed that 28% of LAs were potentially at a high risk of service failure because of their inability to meet the service requirements set out in Scotland's Food Law Code of Practice 2019. A further 25% cited issues of resource with an inability to meet current demands. The remaining 47% considered themselves to be delivering to an acceptable level, however expressed concern that not all Code requirements would be met.
- 3.19 Continued support was provided to previously audited Local Authorities as they worked towards the completion of action plans subsequent to audit recommendations. Resource was provided to facilitate a review of Scotland's Food Law Code of Practice 2019.

Audit of Border Control Posts and Control Posts (POA, P&PP & LA) ²⁷

- 3.20 In the 2023/24 year, the APHA, BCP Designation & Audit team, Quality Services, Professional Advice & Standards Directorate completed annual audits at Border Control Posts (BCPs), including all Inspection centres (ICs) and Control points (CPs) designated for Products of Animal origin (POA), Live animals (LA) and Plants, Plants products, Other objects (P,PP, OO) in England and Scotland (Excluding P,PP,OO sites in Scotland which are under the direction of Scottish Government). There were no designated BCPs/ICs/CPs in Wales in the audit year. 100% of audits required were completed.
- 3.21 There is no statistically representative data for comparison with previous years owing to COVID restrictions.

Category of designation	Total Number BCPs/ICs/ CPs audited 23/24	Number of compliant audits	Sites with Findings
Live animals (LA)	8	0	8
Plants, Plants Products, Other objects (P,PP, OO)	76	18	58
Products of Animal origin (POA)	17	4	13
Total	101	22	79

²⁷ BCPs/ICs designated for PNAO only that are not shared with POA are out of scope for our team, these ICs are covered by FSA/FSS, SASA have the remit for P &PP in Scotland.

- 3.22 Audits covered facilities, operation, and procedures. No high-risk non-compliances caused an imminent risk to animal, public or plant health or animal welfare that required immediate referral to the central competent authority (CCA).
- 3.23 One high risk non-compliance was referred to CCA for consideration of suspension regarding inadequate staffing - the facility had no throughput at time of audit and the issue was resolved. Where other high-risk non-compliance was identified, mitigations were put in place and suitable actions and timescales agreed to rectify.
- 3.24 Low risk non-compliances were predominantly associated to documentation or operational and structural issues that could be resolved at time of visit or evidenced as compliant shortly after.
- 3.25 For the 23/24 audit year, increased emphasis was put on detail of documented procedures and internal verification, particularly for plants, plants products and other objects sites. It was anticipated this would increase the level of low-risk non-compliance identified.

Internal audits conducted by competent authorities

3.26 GB competent authorities completed risk-based audits of operational systems, processes and procedures for food and feed, animal welfare and plant health. Audits of associated control bodies were also undertaken. These audits ensured that requirements of Article 6 of assimilated Regulation (EC) 625/2017 were met.

Internal audits conducted by competent authorities 2023/24

Audit programme topic / policy area audited	Sector	Competent authority	Country	Assurance level	Final report issued	Recommendations
Data Protection	Animal, Plant and Bee Health	APHA	Eng, Scot & Wales	Moderate	12/10/23	8
Outbreak readiness	Animal, Plant and Bee Health	APHA	Eng, Scot & Wales	Moderate	09/10/23	3
Counter Fraud – follow up	Animal, Plant and Bee Health	APHA	Eng, Scot & Wales	Moderate	09/01/24	7
Disease Control requirements of Animal Identification	Animal, Plant and Bee Health	APHA	Eng, Scot & Wales	Moderate	07/03/24	1
Recruitment and retention	Animal, Plant and Bee Health	APHA	Eng, Scot & Wales	Limited	30/04/24	6
Balanced Scorecard	Animal, Plant and Bee Health	APHA	Eng, Scot & Wales	Position statement	30/04/24	Not applicable
Bee Health services	Animal and Plant Health	APHA	Eng, Scot & Wales	Position statement	19/06/23	Not applicable
Operational Enforcement Delivery	Approved meat establishments	FSA	Eng & Wales	Moderate	Yes (15/11/23)	5
Microbiological Criteria Sampling and Testing	Approved meat establishments	FSA	Eng & Wales	Limited	Yes (6/11/23)	7

Audit programme topic / policy area audited	Sector	Competent authority	Country	Assurance level	Final report issued	Recommendations
Follow up audit- Post Mortem Inspection	Approved meat establishments	FSA	Eng & Wales	TBC	No (due in June 2024)	TBC
Allergens Controls	Food	FSS	Scotland	Limited	November 2023	8
Egg Hygiene	Food	FSS	Scotland	Insufficient	January 2024	5
Internal Monitoring	Food	FSS	Scotland	Substantial	July 2024	0 (five considerations were made)
Review of Welsh Government Food Division	Food	Welsh Gov Internal Audit Service	Wales	Reasonable	November 2023	3
Genetically Modified (GM) Crops	Plant Health	Scot Govt	Scotland	Reasonable	July 2023	2
Animal Strategic, Planning and Exotic Diseases and Disease Control	Animal and Plant Health and Welfare	Scot Govt	Scotland	Substantial	October 2023	2
Disease Control Requirements of Animal Identification and Traceability	Animal and Plant Health	APHA	Eng, Scot & Wales	Moderate	March 2024	1
Outbreak Readiness	Animal and Plant Health	APHA	Eng, Scot & Wales	Moderate	October 2023	3
Bee Health Service	Animal and Plant Health	APHA	Eng, Scot & Wales	Advisory	June 2023	0

Summary of audit findings

England

3.27 There was no Official Feed and Food Controls work identified for inclusion in the Defra Internal Audit plan for 2023/24. Three audits with legislative requirements were, however carried out in APHA during 2023/24. Regarding the non-OFFC related audits, the following was found:

- The audit of Disease Control requirements of Animal Identification and Traceability received a moderate assurance rating. We found that the project and the implementation was covering the appropriate animal identification and traceability risks relating to disease control of the UK view. The veterinary and external risks should, however, be better integrated into the project risk management framework to ensure the project remains focussed on delivering the improvements set out in the original objectives and monitors and influences external partners.
- The review of Outbreak Readiness received a moderate assurance rating with thorough plans in place to respond to diseases identified through horizon scanning and regular exercises carried out each year leading to revisions to the plans as lessons are learned. Some improvements were identified to further strengthen control.
- An advisory review of Bee Health Services found APHA needed to improve collaboration of all three health services (Animal, Plant and Bee) in their steps towards 'One APHA'. Through the use of education, and in particular making Bees more visible within the Agency, the Agency will improve its understanding of linkages and crossovers and where Bees may have an interest, so that they can be brought into the conversation at the right time. There are opportunities through the future organisation design to bring Animal Health and Bee Health closer.

3.28 The proportion of positive opinions in 2023 is in line with last year with all audits being 'Moderate'.

Wales

3.29 The European Funds Audit Team (EFAT) and the Internal Audit Service (IAS) are 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.

- 3.30 IAS undertook a review of the Welsh Government's Food Division. The scope of the audit focused on the effectiveness of the arrangements for the delivery of the Food Division's objectives for 2023/24, specifically: Business planning framework; Risks and Opportunities; Monitoring and Performance (including delivery partners); and Financial Management and Oversight.
- 3.31 An audit opinion of '*Reasonable Assurance*' was provided with three '*Significant*' recommendations being raised. It was recommended that revisions were made to the Division's risk register, which included ensuring risks are better articulated to maximise the likelihood of successful mitigation and application of controls. The Division's delivery plan could also be improved with a formally documented and more defined timeline. It was noted that Senior Management Team meetings were not being formally minuted and action logs not always being maintained.
- 3.32 Key strengths noted by IAS from this review included the Food Division having clearly defined KPIs and monitoring mechanisms; the delivery plan being based on substantial evidence and robust assumptions to maximise successful delivery; the Delivery Partner Contract Framework sets out clearly the expectations from each contractor; and comprehensive monthly performance and finance reports are prepared covering progress against targets.

Scotland

Genetically Modified (GM) Crops

- 3.33 Two medium recommendations were identified. A reasonable assurance rating was provided. Some improvements were required to enhance the adequacy and effectiveness of procedures. There were weaknesses in the risk, governance and/or control procedures in place but not of a significant nature.
- 3.34 While most controls were found to be effective, minutes from the primary GM Crops governance group had not been published on SASA website and there was an absence of input into the SASA Internal Audit Report – Genetically Modified (GM) Crops 5 Risk Register in relation to GM Crops which could result in a failure to effectively manage and monitor risks relating to the delivery of OCR.

Animal Strategy, Planning and Exotic Diseases and Disease Control

- 3.35 One high and one low recommendation were identified. A substantial assurance rating was provided. Risk, governance and control procedures were effective in supporting the delivery of any related objectives. Any exposure to potential weakness is low and the materiality of any consequent risk is negligible.
- 3.36 The Animal Health and Welfare Division demonstrated a high level of governance over the delegation of Official Controls checks to the Animal and Plant Health Agency. They demonstrated a good understanding of the tasks related to the delivery of the Official Controls as well as the risks associated with delivery and have controls in place to monitor the performance of the delivery partner.

Food Standards Agency (FSA)

- 3.37 Audit reports for two audits were issued covering the official controls delivery for Microbiological Criteria Sampling and Testing and Operational Enforcement Delivery at approved meat establishments across England and Wales for which the FSA acts as the competent authority.
- 3.38 The Microbiological Criteria Sampling and Testing audit resulted in a limited audit opinion and highlighted the need for the FSA to review and update its policies concerning the application of regulations in relation to micro testing as well as providing improved verification processes and better training and guidance for OVs in plants on OC delivery in relation to micro sampling and testing.
- 3.39 The audit on Operational Enforcement Delivery resulted in a moderate audit opinion and highlighted the need for improved objective setting and the provision of further guidance for staff on the FSAs enforcement delivery model. The FSA should also consider and review its arrangement for the delivery of enforcement actions outside normal working hours.
- 3.40 A follow up audit on Post Mortem Inspection was started at the end of 2023/24 with the report due in June 2024.

Food Standards Scotland (FSS)

- 3.41 The FSS Audit team completed a programme of three audits in 2023/24 covering functions for which FSS is the competent authority. The substantial assurance rating for Internal Monitoring by Meat Hygiene Operations is of particular note.

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

- 3.42 Seven audits were undertaken by the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) in the 2023 reporting year, all of which were assurance pieces, although 2 provided a position statement only not an assurance level. 100% of the plan was delivered to final report by the end of April 2024.

APHA Policies / Operating Procedures

- 3.43 The audit work concluded that overall, APHA work in a controlled manner. APHA has extensive operating procedures in place. They are well documented and clear, and this was evidenced within the Recruitment and Retention audit.

APHA Quality Assurance and Lessons Learned

- 3.44 APHA has a number of controls to ensure quality and continuous improvement, including ISO accreditation and certification, quality checks and a high number of external audits and internal quality reviews. A risk was identified by UKAS (United Kingdom Accreditation Service) within the Plant Health ISO 17020 accreditation in relation to training and competency and quality awareness. This has been addressed during the reporting period and extended into 24/25.
- 3.45 APHA has an effective risk management process in place, where business risk registers are regularly reviewed and updated and management at all levels have good oversight and input.

APHA - Specific Audit Findings

- 3.46 The data protection audit recommended running a security forum to provide effective data protection oversight, improvement of records within the information asset register, processing activities and historical privacy notices, and making some improvements to privacy notices.
- 3.47 The outbreak readiness audit identified improvements required to plans, exercises and lessons learned.
- 3.48 The counter fraud audit identified the need to complete the fraud risk assessment, recording and monitoring of referrals and clear retention policies.
- 3.49 The disease control for animal identification and traceability audit identified improvements to the risk management approach to get better value from the effort.

- 3.50 The recruitment and retention audit identified improvements to interview panel guidance, root cause of selection biases and identify avenues for career progression.
- 3.51 The recommendation tracking for APHA in this period was completed. Twenty five actions were raised with the majority (21) cleared and four deadlines extended into the 24/25 reporting period.

Audit of organic control bodies

- 3.52 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. The UKAS assessments are against the assimilated Regulations; Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, and Commission Regulations (EC) 889/2008 and 1235/2008.
- 3.53 In 2023, UKAS concluded that satisfactory evidence had been demonstrated in a number of areas to allow them to recommend continued approval of all control bodies for performing organic certification duties. 2023 was the 20th round of assessment visits undertaken by UKAS in support of the Defra Competent Authority responsibilities.

Chapter 4 – Resources

Number of control staff in Great Britain

- 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 Great Britain as of 31 March 2024.

Authority	Full time equivalents (FTE) at 31 March 2021	Full time equivalents (FTE) at 31 March 2022	Full time equivalents (FTE) at 31 March 2023	Full time equivalents (FTE) at 31 March 2024
FSA	1,727	899	892 ²⁸	799 ²⁹
FSS	261	111	122 ³⁰	129
Local authorities	1,879 ³¹	1,977 ³²	1,946 ³³	2,024 ³⁴
Defra	372	388	412	436
Welsh Govt	118	101	82	109 ³⁵
Scottish Govt	112*	279**	295**	331
APHA	2,567	2,744	3,045	3,114 ³⁶
VMD	32	33	33	33
HSE	19	19	19	19
RPA	228	192	10 ³⁷	10
Forestry Com	47	52	54	62
Fera Science Ltd	112	133	138	144
Pirbright Institute	29	28	18 ³⁸	18

²⁸ Figure for 2020/21 included policy, admin and support staff. This has now been removed, so the FTE figure represents only front line staff who deliver official controls. The revised 2020/21 FTE figure is 889.5 excluding admin and support staff.

²⁹ The FTE figure represents only front-line staff who deliver official controls. It excludes admin and support staff.

³⁰ The FTE figure represents only front line staff and operational management who deliver official controls and includes feed controls carried out by LA officers on behalf of FSS.

³¹ 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.

³² 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 2022.

³³ The LA FTE figure is for the professional food posts occupied and includes FTE diverted to non-food related duties at 31 March 2023.

³⁴ The LA FTE figure is for the professional food posts occupied and includes FTE diverted to non-food related duties as at 31 March 2024. (Includes Scottish LA @ 205fte)

³⁵ Includes staff from Natural Resources Wales (NRW), a Welsh Government sponsored body who undertake a number of statutory roles on behalf of Welsh Ministers

³⁶ APHA figures are representative of total agency FTE, reported in annual published accounts

³⁷ The significant reduction in the figure for RPA in 2023 reflects front-line staff only and not support staff.

³⁸ Figure represents those funded on the Defra surveillance contract in 2023

Authority	Full time equivalents (FTE) at 31 March 2021	Full time equivalents (FTE) at 31 March 2022	Full time equivalents (FTE) at 31 March 2023	Full time equivalents (FTE) at 31 March 2024
Cefas	35	38	34	32
MSS	40	40	24***	26
MMO	94	121	113	111
Total (to nearest whole figure)	7,672	7,155	7237	7397

* revised from 2020 Annual Report published figure of 78.1

** revised from 2022 Annual Report published figures of 2022 (122); 2023 (333)

*** revised figure from 2022 Annual Report published figure of 25

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

Actions in the feed and food sectors

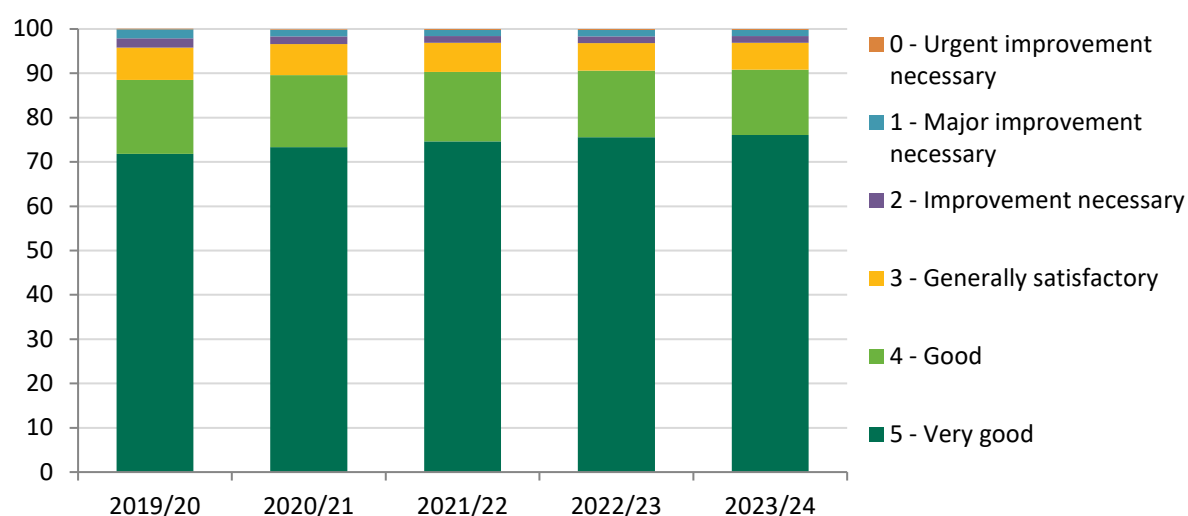
Revision of the Feed and Food Law Codes of Practice and associated Practice Guidance

- 5.1 Following consultation and revisions to the [Food Law Code of Practice \(FLCoP\) in England](#), a consultation was held in England in 2022 on proposed changes to the FLCoP to implement the new food standards delivery model. The consultation closed on 9 January 2023. The FSA considered the responses and published an updated version of the [FLCoP](#) in June 2023.
- 5.2 A six-month pilot of the proposed new food standards delivery model has been undertaken in Wales. This pilot is currently undergoing evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the proposed new model in Wales and the outcome will determine the next steps.
- 5.3 Food Standards Scotland is responsible for carrying out official controls (this includes sampling and inspections) and enforcement of feed law. In 25 Local Authority areas in Scotland, FSS has delegated feed official control functions to 16 Local Authorities operating under Delegated Service Level Agreements, with the remaining areas covered by FSS Feed Officers.
- 5.4 FSS continued to develop a modernisation programme within Food Law. The programme was designed to increase resources, reduce demand, improve efficiencies, and develop digital solutions to support local authorities in the delivery of official controls.
- 5.5 FSS worked closely with colleagues across Scottish Government Directorates, to identify resources to enable the programme to be delivered. Whilst appropriate resources were being identified, work continued on developing the programme and supporting research. For example, undertaking a detailed time measurement exercise and developing a resource calculator to confirm in greater detail the resources required for food law regulation, and initiatives to enable officers from alternate backgrounds to deliver some official controls.

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). FHIS information is available for approximately 56K food businesses.
- 5.7 At the end of 2023/24 (31st March 2024), there were records for approximately 522,000 food businesses in England and Wales published on the [FHRS website](#).
- 5.8 The chart below shows a steady improvement in businesses achieving the highest FHRS rating of five in England and Wales.

Figure 62 – Chart showing the percentage distribution of FHRS ratings in England and Wales from 2019/20 – 2023/24



*2020/21 figures have been amended.

- 5.9 Ninety seven percent of food businesses in England and Wales achieved FHRS ratings of 3 and above, unchanged from 2022/23.

Food fraud and food crime

- 5.10 The UK's approach to the investigation of food crime is co-ordinated and led by the National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) at the Food Standards Agency (FSA) for England, Northern Ireland and Wales and the Scottish Food Crime & Incidents Unit (SFCIU) at Food Standards Scotland (FSS).

- 5.11 Both units work in compliance with the National Intelligence Model (NIM) to ensure food is safe and authentic and consumers and food businesses are protected from the threats and risks of food crime.
- 5.12 Each year the NFCU conducts an intelligence-based review which updates the Unit's current understanding of the food crime threat. This analysis informs the Unit's Control Strategy priorities, which outline our areas of focus for the coming year. During 2023/24, NFCU performed a more in-depth review of the food crime threat through a Food Crime Strategic Assessment, due to be published in 2024/25.
- 5.13 The Unit also set new targets for Strategic Intelligence Requirements (SIRs). SIRs are identified intelligence gaps relating to the NFCU Control Strategy priorities and help the NFCU to focus on areas to increase the units understanding of food crime. NFCU achieved an overall improvement rate of 54% across our 37 identified SIRs, against our target of 40%.
- 5.14 A key measure of the Unit's response effectiveness is the number of National Disruptions³⁹ and NFCU Outcomes⁴⁰ recorded by Unit. In 2023/24 the unit set new targets to enhance the units focus on measurable impact on food crime. NFCU achieved 66 disruptions in 2023/24 (+11 over target) and 87 NFCU outcomes in 2023/24, (+ 37 over target).
- 5.15 Notable disruptions were related to the NFCU's operational activities on 'smokies'⁴¹. The NFCU successfully coordinated unannounced regulatory visits that resulted in the removal of illegal smokie meat from the food chain.
- 5.16 The NFCU also supported a local authority with a case concerning the operation of an illegal business supplying smokies. The subsequent trial resulted in three defendants receiving fines, totalling £36,642.
- 5.17 During 2023/24, the Unit supported a police-led investigation by providing key evidence, which resulted in 3 defendants receiving prison sentences for conspiring to commit fraud and acquiring criminal property relating to poultry, amounting to a loss of £318,347.

³⁹ National Disruptions are a validated law enforcement framework that measure when the NFCU has had a direct impact on serious organised food crime relating to UK food supply chains.

⁴⁰ An NFCU Outcome is defined as any action led, supported or co-ordinated by the NFCU that falls short of disrupting serious organised crime and therefore a national disruption but still, develops capacity and capability to identify and deal with food crime or; deters potential offenders from acting dishonestly or; improves awareness of vulnerabilities and promotes the taking of action to improve protection thereof.

⁴¹ A 'smokie' is a food prepared by the illegal process of blowtorching the fleece from the unskinned carcass of a sheep or goat.

- 5.18 The NFCU continued to target criminals' financial assets through the Unit's accredited financial investigators. The unit secured two Confiscation Orders during 23/24 which requires a convicted defendant to pay to the public purse the amount they financially benefited from the convicted crime. NFCU also obtained three Restraint Orders, making it more likely assets remain available for later confiscation.
- 5.19 At the end of the financial year 2023/24, three operations had cases awaiting trial, to be held provisionally within 2024/25.
- 5.20 The NFCU supported the strengthening of the lines of defence against food crime through participation in the FSA-led Food Fraud Industry Working Group. The group brought partners together from across the industry to focus on strategic issues arising after media coverage of an NFCU investigation. The working group activity resulted in a new freephone number for the NFCU's Food Crime Confidential hotline, improvements to NFCU processes for issuing alerts and continuing positive engagements around intelligence exchange with Third Party Assurance schemes.
- 5.21 The NFCU increased its efforts to prevent food fraud before it occurs. This included enhancing and promoting the Unit's [Fraud Resilience Tool](#) which provided support and guidance to 154 food businesses, during the year, on food fraud. The Unit complementing this activity with additional guidance for small businesses.
- 5.22 The newly revised industry alert template was used for the first time in October 2023 to share information with industry partners and local authorities about a newly identified operational risk regarding misrepresentation of housed chicken as free-range. The alert has been well received by Food Business Operators.
- 5.23 During 2023/24, the NFCU made further progression towards securing additional powers which will enable our food crime officers to conduct investigations more effectively, at pace, with more independence and under appropriate scrutiny. The FSA remains on track to support the laying of the necessary statutory instruments in 2024/25.
- 5.24 NFCU and SFCIU have increasingly developed capacity and capabilities around the collection, analysis and development of intelligence, prevention strategies, information sharing with partners and the investigation of criminality within the food supply chain. This is often linked to serious and organised crime operating across complex and diverse networks.

- 5.25 Crucial to this has been the work undertaken to develop relationships in the UK with key law enforcement partners, industry, government agencies, local authorities and the multi-agency approach the Units support in that regard.
- 5.26 This engagement has also taken place with global partners, including Europol, Interpol, the Global Alliance on Food Crime (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, UK and USA) and European Food Fraud networks. In particular, in the UK the Units lead and co-ordinate the annual Operation OPSON and EMPACT enforcement activities, the Europol and Interpol joint operations targeting fake and substandard food and beverages.
- 5.27 The SFCIU developed a webform for Local Authorities and other external partners to submit intelligence and information directly to the SFCIU for assessment and actioning, regarding suspected criminality in the food supply chain in a farm to fork concept. This has resulted in an increase in numbers and the quality of intelligence reports submitted and led to more enforcement and investigations.
- 5.28 The SFCIU developed a [Food Crime Prevention Strategic Plan 2024-2027](#). The strategy sets out a framework for the analysis of criminal intelligence, information and data in relation to food crime, with the aim of identifying effective long term preventative actions. An integral part of this is the sharing of information and learning between FSS, industry and key stakeholders. FSS will look to identify potential issues through horizon scanning and intelligence capture, coupled with identifying common themes, best practice and lessons learned from criminality as well as utilising information and intelligence shared by industry.
- 5.29 The SFCIU developed a [Food Crime Risk Profiling Tool](#) to support Food Business Operators (FBO) to understand their risk from food crime and the measures they can take to reduce this risk.
- 5.30 The tool was launched in August 2023 and this was accompanied by a proactive media campaign which included information to raise awareness of food crime and how to access and use the tool.
- 5.31 This has been replicated on several occasions using social media and the wider press. Members of the team have also taken part in wider TV programming to raise awareness of food crime, for example “David Wilson’s Crime Files” and “Crimewatch UK.” This will be an ongoing activity to reinforce our messaging around the existence of the SFCIU, awareness of food crime and the food crime risk profiling tool.

Intelligence considerations meetings

- 5.32 In the summer of 2022, the FSA's Regulatory Compliance Division created the Local authority intelligence team. Part of that team's role is to chair the established fortnightly internal intelligence Considerations Meeting (ICM). This meeting enables colleagues from multiple teams across the FSA and Food Standards Scotland, to raise issues that sit outside of the immediate remits for Incidents or Food Crime teams. An escalation mechanism was created in August 2023 for the Business Delivery Group to raise issues requiring deputy director consideration and decision making.
- 5.33 The ICM covers developing and/or cross-cutting food and feed standards challenges and uses intelligence from multiple sources to determine, agree and implement the most appropriate course of action. Examples of successful initiatives in 2023 include:

Initiating through the ICM a vegan foods comms campaign

- 5.34 Intelligence identified reports indicating that consumers with allergies to animal-based ingredients were consuming vegan products thinking it was “automatically” safe for them to eat and without taking further precautions to check. These precautions would include checking the label for ingredients and the presence of allergens and/or any cross-contamination risks. Teams including the Hypersensitivity and Intelligence teams worked with FSA comms to develop and implement the Vegan food and allergens campaign. The campaign reached over 1 million people and had 1.3 million impressions, making it the most successful FSA campaign on allergens to date. Our updated web guidance had over 10,000 visitors and 11,065 page views, representing a 7000% increase in visitors and 3274% in page views compared to the previous week. Campaign messages were shared by the three main allergy charities (Allergy UK, Anaphylaxis UK, and the Natasha Allergy Research Foundation) as well as the Vegan Society.

Wonka chocolate bars

- 5.35 Identifying and anticipating the release in Autumn 2023 of the Wonka film on general release, and in the run up to Christmas, the intelligence team drew on previous learning when dealing with a similar issue in Spring 2022. On that occasion, the FSA had issued a letter to LAs in 2022 on the risks associated with counterfeit Wonka bars on sale in the UK. Specific concerns were the risks posed to consumers with food sensitivities, due to potentially inaccurate labelling of products.

- 5.36 The intelligence team worked with partners to develop and implement a successful campaign to raise awareness of the issue and promote safe choices for consumers. The FSA worked with the brand holders to gain their support.
- 5.37 Figures from FSA Communications demonstrated the positive results in respect of the hits and interest that the material produced generated. Colleagues recorded an increase of 73% in coverage of their products on social media and an increase of over 40% to 4800 pieces of activity in that comms space, with an estimated potential reach of 1.5 billion.

Incident management protocols

- 5.38 During 2023, the FSA delivered and participated in 10 activities to build the FSA's incident response capabilities. The cross- agency activities, included the opportunity to exercise the FSA's strategic and tactical capability against fictitious food safety scenarios. Learning identified following these activities directly contributed towards the FSA's continuous improvement of its emergency preparedness and resilience. The FSA continued to work with other government departments to identify opportunities for shared exercising and good practice.
- 5.39 The FSA initiated work to address recommendations identified in the Risk and Crisis Management review; a review commissioned by the agency in spring 2023 to better understand our capability and maturity in strategic risk and crisis management. This included delivering and participating in activities to build the FSA's incident response capabilities by exercising the FSA's strategic and tactical capability against fictitious food safety scenarios. The FSA also reviewed our approach to mobilisation of an incident response resource. This allowed the FSA to further enhance emergency preparedness and resilience.
- 5.40 The FSA and FSS continued to review and develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to support the crisis management processes.
- 5.41 The final report for the [Efficacy of Withdrawals and Recalls evaluation](#), aimed at further refining the recalls process, was published in March 2023. The report recommended the development of resources tailored for smaller businesses, improved guidance, and communication mechanisms to help businesses raise consumer awareness. The FSA also enhanced support for food businesses, with a focus on increased food safety by sharing Root Cause Analysis (RCA) outcomes. A working group comprising of industry members and an independent, external chair was set up to further develop the use of RCA and the optimisation of learnings from incidents.

- 5.42 The Signals team receives alerts and proactively scans for incidents & emerging risks affecting the UK using a wide range of international data sources and prioritises signals of interest to determine UK risks, which require action to mitigate. Signals are processed daily to check for issues which might impact the UK.
- 5.43 During 2023/2024 the Signals team processed 13,216 signals and as a result identified 26 new incident / product referrals, 86 referrals to LAs and other authorities 'to investigate' and, also referred 1,061 signals 'for information'. An Incident Signal Forum ensures the FSA reacts appropriately to protect consumers and mitigate food / feed safety issues associated with signals indicative of an emerging risk, or an existing risk where incident prevention action is required. The Incident Signal Forum evaluate, progress, and agree actions and ownership of the identified issues, with an overall aim of incident detection and prevention.
- 5.44 FSS participated in a total of eight external exercises and training opportunities to continue to strengthen its incident response capability. This included the UK's Health Security Agency's Multi Agency Nuclear Emergency Response Seminar (MANERs) and the International Nuclear Emergency Exercise (INEX-06). Internal training was delivered to continue to build the organisation's incident response resilience and capacity.
- 5.45 Internal training of FSS's Incident Management Framework (IMF) was also delivered to continue to build the organisation's incident response resilience and capacity.
- 5.46 Scottish Food Crime & Incidents Unit (SFCIU) has developed an [Incident Prevention Strategic Plan 2024-2027](#). The Strategy sets out a framework with the aim of identifying effective long term preventative actions. An integral part of this is the sharing of information and learning between FSS, industry and key stakeholders. FSS will look to identify potential issues through horizon scanning and intelligence capture, coupled with identifying common themes through data analysis, best practice and lessons learned from incidents as well as utilising information shared by industry.
- 5.47 This strategy will take cognisance of other Incident prevention work elsewhere in the UK and around the world to help ensure the furthest reaching data sets and prevention activity feed into FSS analysis and preventative action plans. It is important to understand how the use of our data can be optimised across industry to prevent incidents. FSS intend to develop more proactive engagement and interaction with industry, in particular, through communication and information sharing, as well as growing a collaborative approach to incident prevention with UK stakeholders and international partners.

- 5.48 A new version of the FSS's [Incident Management Framework](#) (IMF) was published in August 2022. FSS also supported Scottish LAs and relevant partners in preparation for the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships.

Actions in the plant and plant health sectors

- 5.49 A revised version of the generic contingency plan for plant health was published in 2022. The generic contingency plan and all pest specific contingency plans (aside from *Fusarium circinatum*) are published on the [Plant Health Information Portal](#).
- 5.50 A total of 21 pest specific contingency plans have been published for agricultural and horticultural pests. A new contingency plan for *Anoplophora chinensis* was published in 2023. The contingency plan for *Clavibacter sepedonicus* was also revised.
- 5.51 There are thirteen tree health contingency plans, published on the [Plant Health Information Portal](#). There is also a contingency plan for *Fusarium circinatum* published outside of the Plant Health Information Portal.
- 5.52 Defra made new legislation to allow the import of sawn ash wood to continue from Canada and the USA without disrupting trade. The phytosanitary measures replaced a retained EU derogation, which had expired, assimilating the same import requirements into GB regulations.
- 5.53 A new [UK Pest Risk Analysis for *Ips typographus*](#) (eight-toothed spruce bark beetle) was published following stakeholder consultation. It concluded that action should continue to:
- exclude the pest through controls on imported wood products
 - contain within a pest demarcated area (DMA) in the south-east England to prevent its spread
 - destroy all affected trees and to control the felling or proposed movement of all spruce trees within the DMA.
 - survey and monitor to detect new pest incursions and to rapidly respond with eradication measures
 - work towards the management of spruce forests in high-risk areas to remove susceptible material
- 5.54 Scotland has its own generic contingency plan for plant health, and two specific contingency plans to deal with pests of potatoes. These are published on [Plant Health | SASA](#). In the absence of any other pest specific plans, where additional measures over and above those set out in generic contingency plan are required, the pest specific contingency plans published on the UK Plant Health Information Portal will be used. For 2023 new survey guidance for soft fruit, orchard fruit and vineyards were produced.

APHA

- 5.55 APHA expanded the Host Pest Index to include the full suite of detection surveys. This provided inspectors with a comprehensive in-field guide to inspection technique and relevant inspection genera for the QPD that were under ongoing surveillance as part of APHA's annual and multi annual surveillance programmes.
- 5.56 APHA continued to build on the implementation of statistical surveillance to embed it as a component part for several multi annual and annual detection surveys.
- 5.57 APHA launched four new surveys at vineyards, soft fruit premises, orchards, and ware potato fields in 2023/24. Maize and Sunflowers surveys are to be added in 2024/25

Incident management protocols

- 5.58 APHA successfully responded to several pest outbreaks and interceptions, including outbreaks of *Leptinotarsa decemlineata* and tomato brown rugose fruit virus, and an interception of *Anoplophora chinensis*.
- 5.59 Plant health assistance has also been provided to Forestry Commission in dealing with outbreaks of *Ips typographus* and *Phytophthora pluvialis*.
- 5.60 In Scotland, Plant health inspectors responded effectively to multiple pest outbreaks and interceptions, undertaking comprehensive traceback and trace-forward investigations following the identification of *P. ramorum* in *viburnum* stock originating from England.

Actions in the animal health and welfare sectors

Animal Health and Welfare Framework

- 5.61 The Animal Health and Welfare Framework has been developed by the Animal Plant and Health Agency working in partnership with local authority officers from the NAHWP, supported by the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO) and Defra.
- 5.62 The Framework builds on existing working practices and relationships to improve the delivery of animal health and welfare controls in England.

- 5.63 The [Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group](#) (WAHWFG) resumed quarterly meetings in June 2022 and continued to meet regularly during 2023, either in face to face or hybrid meetings. Activities included:
- Working in partnership with Welsh Government to take forward and monitor priorities set in the [Wales Animal Health Welfare Implementation Plan](#) which covers remainder of the current ten year Framework (2014-2024)
 - Supporting priorities set out in the five-year [Animal Welfare Plan for Wales 2021-26](#)
 - Supporting the new) [Wales Bovine TB eradication programme: delivery plan 2023 | GOV.WALES](#)
 - Supporting implementation of the [Wales Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy](#)
- 5.64 The WAHWFG have considered topics for inclusion in the next 10-year Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework.

Bovine Tuberculosis (TB)

- 5.65 The following actions were undertaken in England in 2023:
- The Bovine TB Partnership in England met six times in 2023 to continue the shared ownership and co-ordination of the strategy to achieve bTB free status for England by 2038.
 - On 1st August 2023, post-movement TB testing became compulsory for cattle moved into herds in the annual surveillance testing parts of the Edge Area from higher TB incidence areas of England, and from Wales, thus mirroring the policy already in force in the Low Risk Area since 6 April 2016.
 - The second phase of field trials for a new cattle TB vaccine and allied DIVA skin test (to Detect Infected among Vaccinated Animals) was completed in 2023.
 - In England, a total of 3,064 badgers were vaccinated against TB in 2023, an increase of 26% from the 2,434 badgers vaccinated in 2022. Further refinements were made to the badger vaccination smartphone reporting app that was first launched in 2022, reducing the administrative burden.
 - The vaccination work included a Defra-funded project in East Sussex, supporting the farming community to deploy badger TB vaccinations, which completed its third year in 2023, with 634 badgers vaccinated over 256 km².
 - Natural England (NE) authorised badger culling operations to resume to 29 intensive control areas (no new areas were licensed).. A total of 11,350 badgers were culled under these licences. NE also licensed 11 new supplementary badger control areas, bringing the total number of authorised areas of this type to 29. In 2023, a total of 8,220 badgers were culled under these licences.

- 5.66 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. In March 2023 the Welsh Government published a refreshed [TB Eradication Delivery Plan](#), setting out actions on TB for the next 5 years. Partnership working is at the heart of the Delivery Plan, recognising the benefits of working together to achieve our goals. The Delivery Plan committed to new governance arrangements with the plan to establish a publicly appointed TB Eradication Programme Board and Technical Advisory Group.
- 5.67 In 2023 the Welsh Government approved the use of Approved Tuberculin Testers to deliver TB testing. A full evaluation is being undertaken alongside the pilot to inform whether this approach will be adopted nationally on a permanent basis.
- 5.68 The Delivery Plan also committed to the following:
- Taking forward recommendations of the Task and Finish Group on farmer engagement.
 - An epidemiological review of regionalisation against targets in 2024.
 - Work to re-introduce Pre-Movement Testing the Low TB Area through the Welsh Government's legislative process.
 - Introduction of Post-Movement Testing in the Intermediate TB Areas for cattle movements from higher incidence areas.
 - Consider measures to deal with the uptick in TB incidence on Anglesey.
 - The Pembrokeshire Project – aimed at empowering farmers and vets to take back control of TB. A key aspect of the approach is focussed on identifying residual disease risk in clear testing cattle and develop a pathway for mitigating risk from cattle-to-cattle transmission.
 - Engagement with the industry on TB compensation arrangements.
 - Work towards publishing information on TB free herds on ibTB through the legislative process.
 - A number of other legislative changes, aimed at strengthening the TB Eradication Programme
- 5.69 Other key measures underway in Wales during 2023 included:
- continued Cymorth TB / 'Keep it Out' veterinary visits offered on an 'opt out' basis. This has been expanded to specified spatial units of North Wales.
 - continuing to use the Interferon-gamma test in all new TB breakdowns in the Low TB Area and in the Intermediate TB Area North (ITBAN), in persistent herd incidents (over 18 months duration), in those recurrent at a test 6 months following an incident and on an ad-hoc case management basis.

- increased use of the Flexible-extended gamma and IDEXX tests in chronic TB incidents (persistent and recurrently recurrent).
- continued heightened testing of contiguous herds in an area of increased disease prevalence in the ITBAN and now in 2 hotspot areas in North Wales.
- continued to apply severe interpretation from the beginning of a TB incident in specified spatial units in North Wales.
- continued additional supplementary Interferon-gamma and IDEXX testing in animals with an out-of-herd ear number and a positive reaction to bovine tuberculin, following a clear surveillance test, in specified spatial units in North Wales.
- continued to apply OTFW by default across Wales with limited exceptions -meaning all incident herds require 2 clear tests, the first at least at severe interpretation, for revocation of restrictions.
- maintenance and improvement of ibTB mapping system and making information available on cattle herds affected by bovine TB.
- continue, in persistent herd breakdowns, to remove all inconclusive reactors at standard interpretation of the skin test and test inconclusive reactors at severe interpretation with both a gamma interferon blood test and an antibody test (IDEXX)
- 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. This was expanded to all recurrent breakdowns to a test 6 months after an incident closes in the ITBAN and specified spatial units of North Wales
- continuation of badger vaccination projects across Wales through Grant provision.
- continuation of the All Wales Badger Found Dead Survey to increase knowledge on the disease in badgers.
- continued involvement in GB TB Cattle Vaccine Research projects.
- following a change of strain typing from genotyping using spoligotyping / Variable Number Tandem Repeat (VNTR) to Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS), changes were made to our sampling to enable more Visibly Lesioned samples (3 per batch of animals slaughtered) and less Non Visibly Lesioned samples to be PCR / cultured in a TB incident . This aims to maximise chances of WGS to identify strain variation and enhances our ability to identify transmission routes.

- 5.70 In Scotland, tighter controls to reduce the risk of spreading Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) came into force on 18 May 2023 under changes to the Tuberculosis (Scotland) Order 2023 as part of the Scottish Government's commitment to maintaining the current low levels of TB and to safeguard our OTF status. The amendments taken forward were:
- Ending the practice of accepting a clear final short interval test ("release from restrictions test") at the end of all TB breakdowns as a valid pre-movement test.
 - Shortening the period during which a pre-movement test with negative results remains valid, from the current 60 days to 30 days after tuberculin injection.
 - Reducing compensation for unclean cattle at slaughter by 50%.
 - Including requirements for 'isolation' in legislation to ensure that proper isolation of reactors and inconclusive reactors is undertaken.
 - Reducing compensation for reactors or inconclusive reactors which are not properly isolated by 95%.
- 5.71 The Scottish Government wrote to all cattle keepers in Scotland to make them aware of the new requirements. The SG also engaged with a number of organisations directly to provide briefing on the changes ahead of the coming into force date.

Bee health

- 5.72 The Healthy Bees Plan 2030 Implementation Plan containing actions agreed with key stakeholders was published in October 2021. During 2023, the Bee Health Advisory Forum met quarterly to discuss bee health matters and progress on the Implementation Plan.
- 5.73 In 2022, the Scottish Government, working in partnership with the [Bee Health Improvement Partnership \(BHIP\)](#), published its [second 10-year Honey Bee Health Strategy](#). An Implementation Plan (to support the Strategy) details the specific actions under each of the Strategy's key pillars, which the BHIP will take in order to achieve the desired outcomes for honey bee health in Scotland. In 2023, the BHIP convened every quarter to review honey bee health issues and monitor progress on the Implementation Plan.

Aquatic animal health

- 5.74 There were no significant changes to Cefas FHI (England and Wales) activities in 2023. Advice to industry on trade processes continued to be a busy area of work. Fish Health Inspectors spent additional time during 2023 ensuring operators of APBs transferred to new standardised biosecurity measures plans which allowed for modular additions including information on contingency planning and disease designation restrictions and consents.

- 5.75 There were no significant changes to the activities of Scotland's Marine Directorate in 2023.

Incident management protocols

Aquatic Animal Health – England and Wales (Cefas FHI)

- 5.76 The FHI and reference laboratory colleagues undertook an internal desk-based test for preparedness at the end of October to assess the impact of an exotic molluscan disease outbreak on resources and capability.
- 5.77 No immediate resourcing concerns or risks were identified for the scenario used but some operational actions were taken forward to improve operational response. A situation report of the exercise and outcomes was provided to Cefas Senior Management and the Defra policy lead for AAH.
- 5.78 Work began on a comprehensive review and update of the Defra Disease Control Strategies for the serious exotic finfish diseases *Gyrodactylus salaris*, viral haemorrhagic septicaemia and infectious haematopoietic necrosis, with working drafts for all three submitted to Defra policy unit for AAH for input and feedback.
- 5.79 The [Contingency Plan](#) for Exotic Notifiable and Emerging Diseases of Aquatic Animals in England and Wales was finalised and published on GOV.UK.
- 5.80 A new collection of information pages for all listed diseases of aquatic animals was published on GOV.UK, to raise awareness of clinical signs and make clear the legal reporting obligations on suspicion or knowledge, to strengthen the early detection system for listed diseases of fish and shellfish.

Aquatic Animal Health – Scotland (SG – MD)

- 5.81 Progress continued during 2023 with further updates to disease specific contingency plans for the freshwater parasite *Gyrodactylus salaris*.

Endemic Zoonotic Disease – England

- 5.82 The [Contingency plan for managing certain animal related endemic zoonotic disease incidents in England](#) was last reviewed and updated by Defra and published in July 2022. The plan is reviewed every two years.
- 5.83 In 2023/24, the following training programmes, courses and exercises were organised and held across the different CAs.

Training delivered by Competent Authorities in 2023-24

Competent authority	Course provider	Delivery method	Staff trained	Purpose of training
APHA	Bond Solon	On-line (webinar)	264 people attended	‘Enforcement Journey Law and Procedure’ Modular learning, covers creation of witness statements, regulatory engagement, delivering statements in a courtroom environment and legislation surrounding enforcement.
APHA	Bond Solon	On-line (webinar)	188 people attended	‘Enforcement Journey Statement Writing for Inspectors’ Modular learning, covers creation of witness statements, regulatory engagement, delivering statements in a courtroom environment and legislation surrounding enforcement.
APHA	Bond Solon	On-line (webinar)	20 people attended	‘Enforcement Journey Courtroom Skills’ Modular learning, covers creation of witness statements, regulatory engagement, delivering statements in a courtroom environment and legislation surrounding enforcement.
APHA	Bond Solon	On-line (webinar)	70 people attended	‘Enforcement Journey Practical Skills for Regulatory Engagement’ Modular learning, covers creation of witness statements, regulatory engagement, delivering statements in a courtroom environment and legislation surrounding enforcement.
APHA	APHA SMEs	On-line (e-learning)	7 people launched product	‘Witness Statement Refresher’ training ensuring people have the necessary knowledge and skills to prepare and write a witness statement.
APHA	Happy Computers	On-line (e-learning)	82 people requested access to this learning.	‘Core Animal Welfare’ e-learning Module, ‘Core Animal Welfare’, which provides people with basic training on animal welfare and covers the theory and legislation involved.
APHA	Happy Computers	On-line (e-learning)	80 people requested access to this learning.	‘Cross Compliance’ outlines the principles of cross compliance and enables people to inspect the welfare of livestock and report their findings in a considered, fair and consistent manner.

Competent authority	Course provider	Delivery method	Staff trained	Purpose of training
APHA	Happy Computers	On-line (e-learning)	13 people requested access to this learning.	'Enforcement Refresher.' Designed for APHA veterinary and technical staff; covers creating witness statements, delivering statements in a courtroom environment and legislation surrounding enforcement; acts as a learning resource as well as refresher training for previous recipients of core learning.
APHA	Internally through Gomo e-learning platform	On-line (e-learning)	20 people accessed the learning.	'Post mortem of Pigs Refresher' Refresh and outlines key working practices, principles and techniques that are called upon when investigating potential notifiable diseases in this species.
APHA	Internally through Gomo e-learning platform	On-line (e-learning)	29 people accessed the learning.	'Post mortem of Poultry Refresher' Refresh and outlines key working practices, principles and techniques that are called upon when investigating potential notifiable diseases in this species.
APHA	Internally through Gomo e-learning platform	On-line (e-learning)	18 people accessed the learning	'Plant health Imports Documentary and ID Checks' . Covers information e.g. why we complete documentary and identity checks, requirements for phytosanitary and documentary checks and examples of phytosanitary check and Seaway Bills
APHA	Livestock Wise	Face-to-Face	92 people attended the learning.	'Cattle Handling' To increase knowledge of instinctive cattle behaviours, reactions, handling and restraint practices in statutory work with cattle. Training considers handling from the animal's viewpoint and how best to manipulate their instinctive behaviours and reactions to it. Also focusses on current mandatory APHA operational and safety standards; enable attendees to better understand the parameters in which their work can safely be done. Events also support field colleagues in continued professional development in delivery on latest handling techniques and equipment.
APHA	Internally through the People Alchemy learning platform	On-line	36 people accessed	'Animal Food Control Pathways' Career Learning Pathways are a training package used to train staff in APHA in a specific area of work. They are intended to ensure competence and confidence of staff undertaking tasks in that work area. The pathways are made up of modules, and the aim of these modules is to create a learning workflow. In each module, the learner goes through the content, then some activities, and then has the opportunity for reflection and feedback with their assigned mentor.

Competent authority	Course provider	Delivery method	Staff trained	Purpose of training
APHA	Internally through the People Alchemy learning platform	On-line	156 people accessed	‘Animal By Product Pathways’ Career Learning Pathways are a training package used to train staff in APHA in a specific area of work. They are intended to ensure competence and confidence of staff undertaking tasks in that work area. The pathways are made up of modules, and the aim of these modules is to create a learning workflow. In each module, the learner goes through the content, then some activities, and then has the opportunity for reflection and feedback with their assigned mentor.
APHA	APHA SMEs	Online (webinar)	8 learners over 1 online event.	To provide ‘Allocations Manager’ training to ensure staff remain suitably skilled to undertake the role in the event of an animal disease outbreak.
APHA	APHA SMEs	Classroom/ field practical	49 learners over 4 face-to-face events.	To provide ‘Case Officer Core’ training to prepare staff to undertake the role in the event of an animal disease outbreak.
APHA	APHA SMEs	Classroom/field practical	21 learners over 2 face-to-face events.	To provide ‘Case Officer Refresher’ training to ensure staff remain suitably skilled to undertake the role in the event of an animal disease outbreak.
APHA	APHA SMEs	Classroom	30 learners over 3 face-to-face events.	To provide ‘Field Operations Manager’ training to ensure staff remain suitably skilled to undertake the role in the event of an animal disease outbreak.
APHA	APHA SMEs	Online	18 learners over 2 online events.	To provide ‘Forward Operating Base Manager’ training to ensure staff remain suitably skilled to undertake the role in the event of an animal disease outbreak.
APHA	APHA SMEs	Video 1 face-to-face event	154 learners over 5 F2F events.	To provide ‘Gate Officer’ training to ensure staff remain suitably skilled to undertake the role in the event of an animal disease outbreak.

Competent authority	Course provider	Delivery method	Staff trained	Purpose of training
APHA	APHA SMEs	Classroom/field practical	1 event in March, attendee numbers unknown. 33 learners over 2 events in August and September.	To provide ' Poultry Culling Officer ' training to staff to undertake the role in the event of an animal disease outbreak.
APHA	APHA SMEs	Field practical	35 attendees over 4 events	The ' Poultry Culling Officer Familiarisation ' event was an opportunity for trained Poultry Culling Officers to practice handling culling equipment.
APHA	APHA (National Bee Unit)	Blended (Online & in-person conference)	57	Technical Training at the start of the beekeeping season
Cefas – FHI	Cefas – FHI (ATTA Team)	Presentation	13	Aquatic Trade and Technical Advice Team training covering processes for: authorisation, registration, imports, exports, customer service, data acceptance, data requests
CEFAS FHI	CEFAS FHI (Internal Leads)	Presentation	All Inspectors	FHI Familiarisation - Listed Diseases Awareness
CEFAS FHI	CEFAS FHI (Internal Leads)	Presentation	All Inspectors and Aquatic Trade and Technical Advisors	FHI Familiarisation - Contingency and Emergency Response
CEFAS FHI	CEFAS FHI (Internal Leads)	Presentation	All Inspectors	FHI Practical - Annual Team Sampling Workshop
CEFAS FHI	CEFAS FHI (Internal Leads)	Presentation	Inspectors and Aquatic Trade and Technical Advisors	FHI Enforcement Training

Competent authority	Course provider	Delivery method	Staff trained	Purpose of training
CEFAS FHI	CEFAS FHI (Internal Leads)	Presentation	Aquatic Trade and Technical Advisors	Export Administration Process
CEFAS FHI	CEFAS FHI (Internal Leads)	Presentation	All Inspectors	FHI Practical - Accompanied VMD/VMX Inspection
CEFAS FHI	CEFAS FHI (Internal Leads)	Presentation	All FHI	FHI Database familiarisation training
CEFAS FHI	CEFAS FHI (Internal lead)	Presentation	24 staff including diagnostic labs and National Reference Laboratory leads	Responsibilities of Official and National Reference Laboratory functions under the Official Controls Regulations.
FSA	Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)	Webinar	29	Practical food hygiene sampling
FSA	CTSI	Webinar	29	Practical food standards sampling
FSA	CTSI	Webinar	30	Practical food standards and food information rules
FSA	CTSI	Webinar	22	Approval of food establishments
FSA	CTSI	eLearning	36	Labelling of Animal Feed
FSA	CTSI	eLearning	37	HACCP for Feed Establishments
FSA	CTSI	eLearning	70	Food Enforcement and Evidence Gathering Skills
FSA	CTSI	eLearning	32	Feed Additives – Labelling and Composition
FSA	Desq	eLearning	463	Root Cause Analysis
FSA	FSA RSPH registered Training Centre	Theory and practical application	11	Deliver, assess and award NVQ in Meat Hygiene Inspection
FSA	Apheya Animal Nutrition	Webinar	27	Overview of Animal Feed Registration/ Approval Process
FSA	Apheya Animal Nutrition	Webinar	26	Medicated Feed

Competent authority	Course provider	Delivery method	Staff trained	Purpose of training
FSA	Apheya Animal Nutrition	Webinar	29	Overview of Feed Legislation
FSA	Apheya Animal Nutrition	Webinar	42	Raw Pet Food
FSA	Apheya Animal Nutrition	Webinar	44	Feed Sampling
FSA	Abacus Training Management and Consultancy Limited	Webinar	84	Approved Establishment Training
FSA	CTSI	Webinar	62	Food Standards Sampling Course
FSA	CTSI	Webinar	60	Food Hygiene Sampling Course
FSA	Abacus Training Management and Consultancy Limited	Webinar	42	Enforcement Sanctions Training Course – Food Hygiene
FSA	Abacus Training Management and Consultancy Limited	Webinar	39	Enforcement Sanctions Training Course – Food Standards
FSS	DM Training	Virtual	11	Training for LA /FSS Authorised officers in HACCP Level 4
FSS	Dalriada Ltd	Virtual and in-person	212	Training for LA officers in Enforcement Sanctions
FSS	FSS	E Learning	148	Ready to Eat foods
FSS	FSS	E Learning	124	Wild & Farmed Game
FSS	FSS	E Learning	134	Fish & Fishery Products
FSS	FSS	E Learning	93	Tuberculosis Sampling Process
FSS	FSS	E Learning	114	Prions – What are they? And how they appear AMI?
FSS	APHEYA Nutrition	E Learning	40	General Feed Legislation
FSS	APHEYA Nutrition	E Learning	40	Primary Production
FSS	APHEYA Nutrition	E Learning	40	Sampling Theory
FSS	APHEYA Nutrition	E Learning	40	Feed Labelling
FSS	APHEYA Nutrition	E Learning	40	Raw Pet Food and Suppliers
FSS	APHEYA Nutrition	E Learning	8	Feed HACCP Level 2 and 3
FSS	APHEYA Nutrition	E Learning	2	Feed HACCP Level 4
HSE	Melmerby Training	Face to Face	10	Requirement of legislation for the transport of chemicals.

Competent authority	Course provider	Delivery method	Staff trained	Purpose of training
HSE	Premier FST	Face to Face	9	Training in first aid, chemical spills and fire
HSE	H W Training	Face to Face	18	External qualification for the application of pesticides
HSE	IAM	Face to Face	12	Mandatory driving course for all visiting staff
HSE	BASIS	Face to Face	11	External qualification for the management of pesticide stores
HSE	H W Training	Face to Face	12	Training on the safe use of aluminium phosphide
HSE	H W Training	Face to Face	2	In-depth training on the safe use of aluminium phosphide
HSE	VMG Associates	Face to Face	8	Influencing skills training for frontline staff
HSE	CSL	Face to Face	10	NEBOSH Certificate
HSE	FLP	Face to Face	8	Training on how to deal with traumatised people for frontline staff
HSE	Arco Professional services	Face to Face	42	Training on the use of respiratory protection to deal with spillages
Scottish Government	Scottish Government	Internal course	15	It ensures staff involved in plant health official controls can effectively fulfil their roles.

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
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
DSL	Delegated Service Level Agreement
EEA	European Economic Area
EFAT	European Funds Audit Team
EFB	European Foulbrood
EBLV	European Bat Lyssavirus
EMFF	European Maritime Fisheries Fund
EU	European Union
FAB	Financial Administrative Penalty
FBO	Food Business Operator (eg farmers)
FC	Forestry Commission
FeBO	(animal) Feed Business Operator
FHI	Fish Health Inspectorate
FHIS	Food Hygiene Information Scheme
FHRS	Food Hygiene Rating Scheme
FLCoP	Food Law Code of Practice
FLRS	Food Law Rating Scheme

FSA	Food Standards Agency
FSS	Food Standards Scotland
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GB	Great Britain
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
MSS	Marine Scotland Science
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 Control 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
PoD	Point of Destination
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
RLs	Regional Laboratories

RPA	Rural Payments Agency
RSPH	Royal Society for Public Health
SASA	SASA (a division of the Scottish Government Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate)
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	Shiga Toxin-Producing Escherichia Coli
TB	Tuberculosis
TSE	Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy
UAI	Unannounced Inspection
UK	United Kingdom
UKAS	United Kingdom Accreditation Service
UKFSS	Food Standards Agency's UK Food Surveillance System
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
WPM	Wood Packaging Material - e.g. pallets and dunnage