



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Annual Report (2025 to 2026)

The National Reference Laboratory for Parasites (*Trichinella*, *Echinococcus*, *Anisakis*)

1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026



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1. Introduction

1.1 The National Reference Laboratory (NRL) for *Trichinella* and *Echinococcus*

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is the Competent Authority (CA) for the purpose of retained Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on Official Feed and Food Controls in the UK and has a legal obligation to designate National Reference Laboratories (NRLs).

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is an executive agency of DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and as such provides impartial advice and testing services (to government and other agencies) that may be used to inform and assist with policy decisions. With a wide range of experience in Parasitology, the APHA laboratories at York continue to maintain expertise and diagnostic capability and are consequently well placed to cover the UK for parasitic diseases particularly for *Trichinella* and *Echinococcus*.

The NRL supplies trichinae required for the Proficiency Testing (PT) scheme that assesses the performance of Official Laboratories (OLs) in the detection of *Trichinella* in meat. The York NRL was United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) accredited in March 2017 for the wild boar digest assay for the detection of *Trichinella* (SOP PARA 050) and for a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) method for the detection of *Echinococcus multilocularis*, *Echinococcus granulosus* and other cestodes (PARA 026, PARA 027 and PARA 029). The NRL supports and participates in a Quality Assurance (QA) Scheme for *Trichinella* through collaboration with colleagues at APHA Sutton Bonington QA Unit (VetQas). Additionally, the York laboratory takes part in an annual External Quality Assurance EQA Scheme for *Trichinella* and *Echinococcus* run by the European Reference laboratory for Parasites (EURLP).

1.2 Core functions and duties of the NRL for *Trichinella* and *Echinococcus*

1.2.1 Core Activity 1 - Secretariat Services

- a) All relevant information/advice was reviewed, assessed and either discussed verbally with the FSA for immediate action/dissemination or included in quarterly interim reports if more appropriate.
- b) Contact information for the UK OLs was held on a central database and this information was regularly reviewed and updated. Contacts are well established with regular electronic as well as face to face communication through dissemination of proficiency testing results, technical enquiries, sample management and contract management. All new OLs were required to participate in one-to-one training and familiarisation visits by NRL technical staff, initiating an ongoing transparent and supportive relationship with OL staff.
- c) Results of initial and ongoing audits of OLs were communicated to the FSA within 4 weeks of each visit. All NRL/OL activity were formally reported to the FSA at least quarterly and more regularly (monthly) if appropriate and were documented:
 - PT results for each laboratory as well as results for a rolling 12-month period.
 - OL communications.
 - EURL ring trial results.
 - Scientific developments.
- d) A dedicated website was maintained by the NRL on the GOV.UK site and this will be reviewed at least quarterly to ensure that information on methods of analyses, SOPs, latest developments and other background information is up to date and relevant. The website will be revised on receipt of any relevant changes to regulations or standards for testing or upon change of any relevant contact details.

1.2.2 Core Activity 2 - Advice and representation within UK and Internationally

- e) Scientific and technical advances in testing methodology and analysis (for both *Trichinella* and *Echinococcus*) was subject to ongoing (and documented) review by the NRL lead/test consultant via literature searches, participation in relevant research

and surveillance and via APHA CPD training for disease consultants. The NRL lead/test consultant maintains awareness of any emerging analytical issues or developments at a national or international level and recommended action to address them, advising the FSA, OLs and other relevant laboratories accordingly.

- f) The NRL lead was available to provide technical assistance and advice on best scientific practice to the FSA for the implementation of coordinated control plans and was available to the OLs to provide technical advice and training for the duration of the contract. The NRL lead/test consultant and their deputy are conversant with the Trichinella Contingency Plan for the UK and the testing regimes in place for confirmation of suspect/ non-negative cases. The NRL will be available to respond to and notify the FSA in such cases.
- g) The NRL lead/test consultant has not been attending the annual Workshop of the National Reference Laboratories for Parasites, typically held in May and hosted by the EURL at the Istituto Superiore di Sanità. Due to ongoing issues related to Brexit, the NRL was not included on the invitation list for the Annual Workshop of the National Reference Laboratories for Parasites hosted by the EURLP.

1.2.3 Core Activity 3 - Compliance Assessment via Audits and Ring trials

- a) The NRL maintained a pool of competent staff at ISO:17025 level for diagnostic testing and NRL function. These staff were available to carry out initial and ongoing training of OL laboratory staff during the period of the contract. Auditing of all OLs will be carried out on a biannual basis.
- b) Proficiency testing of all the OLs will be coordinated as follows:
 - The NRL liaised with the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) for continuation of the existing PT scheme and assure participation of all registered OLs.
 - The NRL maintained a supply of Trichinae for PT sample spiking using reference material purchased from the EURL.
 - The NRL provided the QAU with spiked reference material for use in quarterly proficiency test distributions (March, June, September and December).

- The NRL advised on, directed and co-ordinated these 4 distributions per year of the PT scheme samples.
- PT data and results were stored on a database.
- The NRL evaluated, analysed and commented on the results and reported these to the labs involved and the FSA following collation of the results.
- Underperforming laboratories were visited for audit and retraining in the first and second instance if appropriate.

1.3 Proficiency Testing

A significant part of the NRL function is to train, audit and monitor approved *Trichinella* testing facilities in the UK. The NRL is responsible for reporting to the FSA who grant and maintain designations and it is a requirement that all designated *Trichinella* testing laboratories to participate in a Proficiency Testing (PT) scheme, which is an External Quality Assurance EQA scheme to monitor performance. The PT scheme is run by APHA Quality Assurance Unit (QAU). This is an independent unit that prepares, distributes and collates the results from a wide range of PT schemes. The NRL provides the trichinae samples for the *Trichinella* PT (PT0111) scheme to order. Trichinae of *Trichinella spiralis* are harvested from an infected mouse.

Trained staff in designated laboratories are required to examine the samples and participation in the PT scheme will test their ability to detect and discern the presence or absence of trichinae in the samples. Four distributions are sent to participating laboratories throughout the year in March, June, September and December when each laboratory is sent 4 test samples. Trichinae are spiked into each of the 4 formalised samples and the concentration of trichinae (sample target) is varied between distributions and samples (with the numbers determined by the VetQas QAU). Sample targets are the same for all laboratories at each distribution.

The sum of total number of trichinae spiked into each of the 4 samples is then used as the target result and the sum of the actual recovery for each sample is used to calculate the percentage recovery for each laboratory. The results of the distributions are made available to the NRL by Vetqas QAU for scrutiny, comment and feedback to laboratories each quarter. Specific advice is given if low recovery was achieved. The pass criteria for acceptable

recovery rates are taken from the publication by Rossi and Pozio (2008) and Rossi et al. (2015). For samples spiked with 4 or more larvae, the detection of at least 50% is considered acceptable whereas for samples spiked with 1 to 3 larvae, the detection of at least 1 larva is considered acceptable. The UK *Trichinella* PT scheme is based on the use of formalized trichinae and the FSA stipulates that a result of at least 75% recovery rate is regarded as satisfactory. If this standard is not achieved, the NRL investigates the reasons why and if necessary, undertakes a visit and makes a recommendation to the FSA on the course of action.

To ensure consistent action and to ensure that all self-testing laboratories are clear about the course of action, should their recovery drop below the required standard, a decision tree is used (Table 1).

Table 1: Action Decision Tree for assessing results from the quarterly PT exercises

First Instance

Result	Action
Nil Return	Not operational* – NRL recommendation to FSA to revoke designation
Nil Return	Operational – NRL to investigate and make recommendation to FSA
Below 50%	NRL to investigate and make recommendation to FSA
Below 75%	NRL to investigate and make recommendation to FSA
75% or above	Satisfactory result received – No action by NRL

Second Instance (following an unsatisfactory first instance outcome)

Result	Action
Nil Return	Not operational – NRL recommendation to FSA to revoke designation

Nil Return	Operational – NRL recommendation to FSA to revoke designation
Below 50%	NRL recommendation to FSA to revoke designation
Below 75%	NRL to investigate and make recommendation on reason and course of action to FSA

Third Instance (following an unsatisfactory second instance outcome)

Result	Action
Below 75%	NRL recommendation to FSA to revoke designation. FSA to subsequently make the decision on removal of designation and send letter.

*Not operational can be defined as a change in circumstance resulting in no legal requirement for *Trichinella* testing. It can also be defined as non-participation or consistent failure within the VetQas Proficiency testing scheme.

Reference material such as formalised trichinae, photographs of apparatus and videos of live trichinae are kept at the NRL and are readily available to testing laboratories for refresher training of staff. The laboratories continue to have the opportunity to request further interim QA samples from the NRL to assist with internal training and may request help with training or further inspection from the NRL to help identify problem areas at any time.

1.4 Official Laboratories

In March 2025, there were 10 designated *Trichinella* self-testing facilities and 3 contracted government laboratories in operation, including the NRL. Table 2 shows the list of all designated operational laboratories during 2025 to 2026 and a full list of contact details is maintained by the NRL and is also available on the [FSA website](#).

Table 2: List of approved government contracted and self-testing official laboratories (OL) carrying out *Trichinella* testing in 2025 to 2026

OL ID	OL Type
1706	Government
1787	Government
1921	Government
1150	self-tester
1443	self-tester
1447	self-tester
1632	self-tester
1824	self-tester
2475	self-tester
2658	self-tester
2993	self-tester
3145	self-tester
3638	self-tester

2.0 Results for the *Trichinella* EQA PT scheme distribution between April 2025 to March 2026

Results of the *Trichinella* EQA PT scheme for this reporting period will cover the performance of 13 testing laboratories (10 self-testers and 3 government contracted labs).

2.1 Results of the *Trichinella* EQA PT scheme distribution in March 2025

A total of 13 *Trichinella* testing facilities participated in the March 2025 distribution (Table 3). Of the participating laboratories, 92% successfully passed the March 2025 *Trichinella* PT distribution scoring an overall trichinae recovery rate between 89 to 100%.

Laboratory 2993 recorded a recovery rate of 67% which is below the 75% recovery rate required to pass the distribution.

No false positive or false negative results were recorded by any of the participating facilities.

Table 3: Individual sample results (raw data and %) from the March 2025 *Trichinella* EQA PT scheme for government contracted and self-testing laboratories (Note: results marked (F) and (O) denote failure and overcounting respectively)

Sample ID	25/4018	25/4019	25/4020	25/4021	Overall score (%)
Intended	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	9 (100%)
1150	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	9 (100%)
1443	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	9 (100%)
1447	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	9 (100%)
1632	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	1 (50%)	8 (89%)
1706	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	9 (100%)
1787	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	9 (100%)
1824	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	9 (100%)
1921	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	9 (100%)
2475	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	9 (100%)
2658	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	9 (100%)
2993	3 (75%)	0 (100%)	2 (67%)	1 (50%)	6 (67%) F
3145	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	1 (50%)	8 (89%)
3638	4 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	9 (100%)

2.2 Results of the *Trichinella* EQA PT scheme distribution in June 2025

A total of 12 *Trichinella* testing facilities participated in the June 2025 distribution (Table 4). Of the participating laboratories 100% successfully passed this *Trichinella* PT distribution scoring between 78 to 100% in overall *trichinae* recovery rate.

Testing facilities 1150 and 3638 both overcounted sample 25/4031 by 1 trichinae, resulting in an overall recovery rate of 111%.

No false positive or false negative results were recorded by any of the participating facilities.

Testing facility 1824 did not participate in this distribution. On investigation by the NRL, the reason behind the nil return was due to an issue with recording the results onto the VetQas system.

Table 4: Individual sample results (raw data and %) from the June 2025 *Trichinella* EQA PT scheme for government contracted and self-testing laboratories. (Note: results marked (F) and (O) denote failure and overcounting respectively)

Sample ID	25/4028	25/4029	25/4030	25/4031	Overall score (%)
Intended	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	3 (100%)	9 (100%)
1150	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	4 (133%) O	10 (111%) O
1443	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	3 (100%)	9 (100%)
1447	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	3 (100%)	9 (100%)
1632	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	2 (67%)	8 (89%)
1706	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	3 (100%)	9 (100%)
1787	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	3 (100%)	9 (100%)
1824					
1921	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	2 (67%)	8 (89%)
2475	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	3 (100%)	9 (100%)
2658	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	1 (33%)	7 (78%)
2993	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	3 (100%)	9 (100%)
3145	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	3 (100%)	9 (100%)
3638	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	1 (100%)	4 (133%) O	10 (111%) O

2.3 Results for the *Trichinella* EQA PT scheme distribution in September 2025

A total of 12 *Trichinella* testing facilities participated in the September 2025 distribution (Table 5). A total of 10 laboratories (83%) successfully passed this *Trichinella* PT distribution scoring between 80 to 100% in overall *trichinae* recovery rate.

Laboratory 2993 failed the distribution by recording a false negative in sample 25/4041, also contributing to a total recovery rate of 71%, below the required $\geq 75\%$ recovery rate required by FSA meat hygiene facilities. On investigation by the NRL- due to insufficient larvae recovery, which was attributed to operator error. The NRL offered assistance.

Laboratory 1706 recorded a total recovery rate of 114% and also failed the distribution by overcounting 1 larva in a sample (25/4038) spiked with 2 larvae. This result falls outside the acceptable criteria outlined by the European Reference Laboratory for Parasites. The EURLP states that the maximum permissible overcount of 1 larva is only acceptable in samples spiked with at least 3 larvae- An internal review was carried out following this finding. The member of staff preparing the samples was relatively new, while the operator conducting the testing was highly experienced. It is therefore likely that the error occurred during sample preparation rather than during reading. The NRL will therefore implement two changes in the process: • For newly trained staff, on their first batch an extra 2 tubes could be prepared, allowing five rather than three samples to be checked during the first '10% check'. Additionally, PT sample plates will be read by a 2nd member of staff who isn't aware of the intended spike levels (when possible) and a consensus can be reached prior to submission if there are discrepancies in the results. This practice is commonly used by other participants.

Lab 1824 was unable to test on this occasion due to ongoing issues related to the Windsor Framework.

Table 5: Individual sample results (raw data and %) from the September 2025 *Trichinella* EQA PT scheme for government contracted and self-testing laboratories. (Note: results marked (F) and (O) denote failure and overcounting respectively)

Sample ID	25/4038	25/4039	25/4040	25/4041	Overall score (%)
Intended	2(100%)	4(100%)	0(100%)	1(100%)	7(100%)
1150	2(100%)	4(100%)	0(100%)	1(100%)	7(100%)
1443	2(100%)	3(75%)	0(100%)	1(100%)	6(86%)
1447	2(100%)	4(100%)	0(100%)	1(100%)	7(100%)
1632	2(100%)	4(100%)	0(100%)	1(100%)	7(100%)
1706	3(150%) O	4(100%)	0(100%)	1(100%)	8 (114%) O
1787	2(100%)	4(100%)	0(100%)	1(100%)	7(100%)
1824					
1921	2(100%)	4(100%)	0(100%)	1(100%)	7(100%)
2475	2(100%)	4(100%)	0(100%)	1(100%)	7(100%)
2658	2(100%)	3(75%)	0(100%)	1(100%)	7(100%)
2993	2(100%)	3(75%)	0(100%)	0 (F)	5(71%) F
3145	2(100%)	4(100%)	0(100%)	1(100%)	7(100%)
3638	2(100%)	4(100%)	0(100%)	1(100%)	7(100%)

2.4 Results for the *Trichinella* EQA PT scheme distribution in December 2025

A total of 13 *Trichinella* testing facilities participated in the December 2025 distribution (Table 6). Of the participating laboratories 10 (77%) successfully passed this *Trichinella* PT distribution scoring between 75 to 100% in overall *trichinae* recovery rate.

Lab 1921 failed the distribution by recording an overall recovery rate of 100% by underscoring by 1 in a 3 *Trichinae* intended sample (25/4053) and overscoring by 1 in a 2 *Trichinae* intended sample (25/4054).

Lab 2658 overscored by a single *Trichinae* in a 2 *Trichinae* intended sample (25/4054) resulting in an overall recovery of 110% and failed the distribution. The NRL has contacted the laboratory regarding the failure and is currently awaiting a response.

Lab 1443 failed the distribution by recording a total recovery rate of 60%, below the required $\geq 75\%$ recovery rate required by FSA meat hygiene facilities. On investigation by the NRL, The failure was the result of a submission error, Lab had entered a value of two instead of five. NRL advised Lab management to take extra care when submitting results for the next distribution to prevent further errors.

Table 6: Individual sample results (raw data and %) from the December 2025 *Trichinella* EQA PT scheme for government contracted and self-testing laboratories. (Note: results marked (F) and (O) denote failure and overcounting respectively)

Sample ID	25/4051	25/4052	25/4053	25/4054	Overall score (%)
Intended	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	10 (100%)
1150	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	10 (100%)
1443	2 (40%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	1 (50%)	6 (60%) F
1447	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	10 (100%)
1632	4(80%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	9(90%)
1706	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	10 (100%)
1787	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	2 (67%)	1(50%)	8(80%)
1824	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	10 (100%)
1921	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	2 (67%)	3(150%) O	10(100%) O
2475	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	10 (100%)
2658	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	3 (150%) O	11 (110%)O
2993	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	10 (100%)
3145	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	10 (100%)
3638	5 (100%)	0 (100%)	3 (100%)	2 (100%)	10 (100%)

2.5 Results for the *Trichinella* EQA PT scheme for a 12-month rolling period

Table 7: Overall trichinae recovery rate (%) recovered by government contracted and self-testing laboratories over a 12-month rolling period. (Note: results marked (F) and (O) denote failure and overcounting respectively). 12-month average only includes samples

OL ID	March 2025	June 2025	September 2025	December 2025	Over 12 months
1150	100	111 (O)	100	100	100
1443	100	100	86	60 (F)	87
1447	100	100	100	100	100
1632	89	89	100	90	92
1706	100	100	114 (O)	100	100
1787	100	100	100	80	95
1824	100			100	50
1921	100	89	100	100 (O)	97
2475	100	100	100	100	100
2658	100	78	100	110 (O)	95
2993	67 (F)	100	71 (F)	100	85
3145	89	100	100	100	97
3638	100	111 (O)	100	100	100

participated in and without overcounting, false positives and false negatives.

3.0 NRL EQAs for 2026

3.1 *Trichinella* EQA March 2026

The NRL participated in the EURLP led International Proficiency Testing in March 2026 (week 17 to 21 March 2026). Meatballs inoculated with live *Trichinella* larvae, fish fillets spiked with *Anisakis* sp. larvae and *Echinococcus* (worms for sedimentation and DNA for molecular diagnosis and speciation) were received at the NRL on 17 March 2026 and processed by the NRL technical staff at York. Three samples were received for each test and results were reported within the deadline submission date. The live *Trichinella* digests were conducted on the 17 March 2025 and reported onto the EURLP website using the provided logon details. The result of the EURLP led International Trichinella Proficiency Testing Scheme (PT-01) from March 2026 published online on 29 May 2026.

Table 8: EURLP PT-01 distribution from March 2026 showing trichinae recovery rate (raw data and %), and the difference between observed and reported result (Λ).

Meat	Weight (g)	Code	Spiked Larvae	Recovered Larvae (Raw data and %)	Λ (Delta)
Pork	100	3939	0	0(100%)	0
Pork	100	3717	5	4(80%)	1
Pork	100	4703	0	0(100%)	0

3.2 *Anisakis* EQA March 2026

The *Anisakis* digests were conducted and reported on 18 March 2026. The NRL received a qualitative evaluation here the Λ (Delta) value equates to the number of missed larvae. The result of the EURLP led International Trichinella Proficiency Testing Scheme (PT-04) is shown in Table 9.

Table 9: EURLP PT-04 distribution from March 2026 showing *Anisakis* sp. recovery rate (raw data and %), and the difference between observed and reported result (Λ).

Meat	Weight (g)	Code	Spiked Larvae	Recovered Larvae (Raw data and %)	Λ (Delta)
Fish	100	A1439	0	0 (100%)	0
Fish	100	A1440	1	1(100%)	0
Fish	100	A1441	2	2(100%)	0

3.3 *Echinococcus* EQA March 2026

The *Echinococcus* Sedimentation and Counting Technique (SCT) for the detection of adult worms in the mucosa (PT-05) was conducted and reported on 19 March 2026. The NRL received a final evaluation of “negative” with 10 *Echinococcus* spp. adult worms reported for sample spiked with 20 worms and 6 worms reported for the samples which were not spiked (Table 10).

Table 10: Results of the EURLP PT-05 showing the recovery of *Echinococcus* spp. adult worms from each sample.

Sample	Number of Spiked Worms	Number of Recovered Worms	Evaluation
Emu16	20	10	correct
Emu17	0	6	Incorrect
Emu18	0	6	Incorrect

The results for the molecular identification of *Echinococcus* at the species level (PT-08) were completed and reported on 25 March 2025. The NRL received a final evaluation of “positive” as all species were correctly identified (Table 11).

Table 11: Results from the EURLP PT-08 showing the recovery of *Echinococcus* spp. adult worms from each sample.

Item Code	Result Observed	Result Expected	Evaluation
Emol25	Negative	Negative	Correct
Emol26	<i>E. multilocularis</i>	<i>E. multilocularis</i>	Correct
Emol27	<i>Taenia</i> spp.	<i>Taenia</i> spp.	Correct
Emol28	<i>E. granulosus</i>	<i>E. granulosus</i>	Correct

4. Other NRL Activities

4.1 NRL recruitment

The NRL successfully recruited two Assistant Parasitologist during the year. One Parasitologist joined in X 2025 and the other joined in 2026.

5. References

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Date: 06/04/2026

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Appendix 1 - Additional *Trichinella* and *Echinococcus* Surveillance Contracts

1. *Trichinella* testing of wild boar (WB) in England and Wales (contract OG0236)

Summaries detailing wild boar sample ID, collection date, sample origin, kill date, test date, report date, digest number and results are provided to FSA operations on a monthly basis. Numbers of wild boar samples submitted per month from April to the following March have been consistent throughout the year to date (Table 11). Numbers of wild boar samples submitted per month from April 2025 to March 2026 are shown in Table 12. No *Trichinella* species were isolated from any of the submitted samples.

2. *Trichinella* testing of wild boar in Scotland (Project OG0248)

The Service Level Agreement (SLA) for monitoring *Trichinella* in Feral Wild Boar in Scotland signed between APHA and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) remains ongoing. Summaries detailing wild boar sample ID, collection date, sample origin, kill date, test date, report date, digest number and results are provided to FSS operations on a monthly basis. Between April 2025 and March 2026, the NRL received a total of 56 samples. No *Trichinella* species were isolated from any of the submitted samples.

Table 12: Monthly figures for *Trichinella* Testing of Wild Boar from April 2025 to March 2026

Month	Sample Number	Cumulative Samples
April 2025	14	14
May 2025	14	28
June 2025	8	36
July 2025	11	47
August 2025	15	62
September 2025	35	97
October 2025	23	120
November 2025	20	140
December 2025	14	154
January 2026	10	164
February 2026	15	179
March 2026	5	184

3. *Echinococcus multilocularis* surveillance in UK foxes 2024 to 2025

For the 2024 to 2025 surveillance, the NRL collected a total of 765 foxes provided by a network of pest controllers between March 2024 to February 2025. Foxes underwent post-mortem and NRL technical staff retrieved faecal samples which were frozen for subsequent analysis. A total of 382 faecal samples retrieved from foxes across GB were spatially selected as unique and were included in the 2024 to 2025 surveillance. An additional 60 duplicate samples were also tested for *E. multilocularis* using the methodology described by

Learmount et al. (2012). The final report was sent on 2 June 2025 with the conclusion that no positive result for *E. multilocularis* was observed.

4. *Echinococcus multilocularis* surveillance in GB foxes 2025 to 2026

For the 2025 to 2026 surveillance, the NRL had collected a total of 558 foxes provided by a network of pest controllers between March 2025 to February 2026. Foxes underwent post-mortem and NRL technical staff retrieved 483 faecal samples from which were frozen for subsequent analysis. Total faecal sample list for the 2025–26 surveillance year to be sent to GIS for retrieval of spatially selected candidate samples from across Great Britain. These samples will be tested for *Echinococcus multilocularis* using the methodology described by Learmount et al. (2012).