



Norfolk County Council

Community & Environmental Services

Trading Standards Service

Annex 2: Food and Feed Law Enforcement Plan 2023-24



Produced in accordance with the requirements of the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement



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The Food Standards Agency (FSA) Framework Agreement and Section 2.4 of the Food Law Practice Guidance (England) document require Food & Feed Law Enforcement Plans to be laid out in a common format but recognises that, as local authorities may have corporate service plan templates, they may use the corporate format as long as the information requirements laid out in the Agreement guidance are included and are separately identifiable. Therefore, wherever possible this Annex makes reference to the applicable sections of the Trading Standards Service Plan 2023-24 rather than replicating the information it contains.

Section One: Trading Standards Service Aims and Objectives

Aims and Objectives

- 1.1 The Trading Standards service's ambition is for a safe, fair, and legal marketplace for Norfolk, that supports and benefits local businesses and communities. In alignment with Better Together, For Norfolk - Norfolk County Council's strategy for 2021-2025, our five priorities are:
- A vibrant and sustainable economy
 - Better opportunities for children and young people
 - Healthy, fulfilling and independent lives
 - Strong, engaged and inclusive communities
 - A greener, more resilient future

Links to Corporate Strategic Ambitions

- 1.2 Our ambition and priorities accord with the County Council's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan for the County, Better Together, for Norfolk, and its vision, priorities, guiding principles and commitments:

Vision

In Norfolk, we cherish our heritage, we embrace opportunity, and offer an extraordinary place in which to spend a lifetime.

- We want Norfolk to be the place where everyone can start life well, and age well, and where no one is left behind
- We want our economy to be vibrant, entrepreneurial and sustainable, supported by the right jobs, skills training and infrastructure
- We want our communities to feel safe, healthy, empowered and connected, their individual distinctiveness respected and preserved

Priorities

- A vibrant and sustainable economy
- Better opportunities for children and young people
- Healthy, fulfilling and independent lives
- Strong, engaged and inclusive communities
- A greener, more resilient future

Guiding Principles

- No one left behind
- Prevention over cure
- A local approach

Commitments

- Forward looking
- Innovative
- Empowering
- Collaborative
- Evidence driven
- Prudent
- Developmental

- 1.3 How Trading Standards helps to deliver the County Council’s vision and strategy is captured in our plan on a page on page 12 of the Trading Standards Service Plan 2023–24.

Section Two: Background

Profile of the Local Authority

- 2.1 The population of Norfolk in 2021 was estimated to be 916,120¹. The age profile of Norfolk’s population is much older than England as a whole with 24.4% of people being aged 65 and over, compared to 18.4% for England.

Norfolk is the sixth² largest of the 25 two tier (or shire) counties in England, with a geographical area of 549,751 hectares. The population density is one of the lowest for any of these counties, giving Norfolk a predominantly rural character.

There are 33,135¹ active enterprises in Norfolk. Norfolk has a large rural economy with 74.9% of Norfolk’s SMEs being in rural areas³.

Agriculture remains a large employment sector with 9%⁴ of enterprises in this sector. The total farm labour force is large with nearly 11,838⁴ people employed on commercial holdings. In comparison with other local authority areas the county has one of the largest livestock populations of commercial poultry (16,945,780⁴) and pigs (787,583⁴).

The health and life sciences sector is also an important part of the economy in Norfolk. The Greater Norwich area in particular is home to a cluster of internationally renowned research organisations, such as the Quadram Institute. These organisations employ some 3,000 scientists, which is the largest concentration of health, food, plant and bio scientists in Europe. The Greater Norwich area has also been awarded Food Enterprise Zone Status.

Organisational Structure

- 2.2 The structure of the Trading Standards service is set out on page 3 of the Trading Standards Service Plan 2023-24.

The Trading Standards service currently reports, via the Director of Community, Information & Learning, Sarah Rhoden, to the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services. Further to staff consultation, with effect from 1 May 2023, the service will report via the Director of Norfolk Fire and Rescue, Ceri Sumner.

¹ 2022 Office of National Statistics figure – [census 2021\(estimated\)](#)

²UK Population data 2021/22 - [English Counties by Population and Area 2021/2022](#)

³ [Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy 2021-24](#)

⁴ 2022 Office of National Statistics figure from [Structure of the agricultural industry in England and the UK at June](#)

The Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services, Tom McCabe, reports to the Council's Cabinet. The cabinet member for Communities and Partnerships is Councillor Mrs Margaret Dewsbury, margaret.dewsbury@norfolk.gov.uk.

The Council has 84 elected Members. The current political make-up of the Council is: 56 Conservative council seats, 12 Labour, 10 Liberal Democrat, 3 Green, 2 Independent, 1 Independent (non-aligned).

Feed and food law enforcement is the responsibility of the Food and Farming Section of the Trading Standards service. The section's functions are:

- Providing support for Norfolk based businesses in the food and farming sectors, to further economic growth:
 - delivering targeted business information to achieve compliance, promoting self-help
 - providing business advice and support on request, including chargeable advice
 - acting as 'primary authority' for food and farming sector businesses.
- Ensuring the standards of animal health and welfare; the quality, safety and hygiene of the food chain and metrology standards through delivery of intelligence-led compliance programmes, including sampling, inspections, verifications and market surveillance enforcement activities in the following areas:
 - Animal health and welfare, including disease control and licensing
 - Primary food production including fertilizers, animal feeding stuffs and food hygiene
 - Food standards
 - Legal metrology.
- Intelligence-led criminal and civil interventions and investigations, tackling issues emerging from the tasking and coordination process and focusing on the most detrimental offending within the food and farming sectors.

2.2.1 The manager responsible for the delivery of official feed and food controls is:

Duncan Carter
Food and Farming Manager
Email: duncan.carter@norfolk.gov.uk
Tel: (01603) 222613

The Lead Feed Officer is Colin Maxwell and the Lead Food Officer is Paula Crowson, both of whom are based in the Food and Farming Team. The Food Law Code of Practice lays down the responsibilities and competencies of the Lead Food and Feed role (which may be more than one person) which are shared in the Service between Duncan Carter, Colin Maxwell (feed) and Paula Crowson (food).

2.2.2 The Authority has contracted with Public Analyst Scientific Services Ltd (PASS) to provide the public analyst and agriculture analyst functions for the county.

Scope of the Animal Feed and Food Service

2.3 The Trading Standards service delivers a range of animal feed and food enforcement services. Specific functions are detailed below:

- Programmed inspections at animal feed and high-risk food premises
- Targeted enforcement activities
- Inspections and other enforcement activities arising from complaints and referrals
- Sampling of food and animal feed for analysis and/or examination as part of national, regional and local programmes
- Primary Authority responsibilities
- Responding to food and feed safety incidents
- Provision of information, advice and support for businesses
- Publicity including public awareness campaigns
- Working in partnership with other agencies involved in the protection of the food chain including the Food Standards Agency (FSA); the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra); the Department of Health (DH); Public Health (PH); the other ten local Trading Standards authorities who together make up the East of England Trading Standards Authorities (EETSA) and the seven District Council Environmental Health Departments in Norfolk.

The animal feed and food law enforcement service is delivered exclusively by officers employed by the County Council, alongside other similar services, for example, the inspection of weighing and measuring equipment.

Demands on the Animal Feed and Food Service

2.4 Using the appropriate risk scoring profile food businesses are scored on a high, medium or low risk basis. There are 45 high-risk, 6,983 medium-risk and 4,799 low-risk food businesses recorded on the Trading Standards service's database, totalling **11,827** food businesses. There has been an overall decrease in the number of recorded food business premises from the previous year. This can be attributed in part to a Food Standards Authority funded data cleansing exercise, which removed a number of duplicate and closed premises from our database.

There are **6,864** agriculture businesses recorded on the Trading Standards service's database. The appropriate risk scoring profile for feed businesses scores them on a frequency of inspection basis from 1 to 5 years with a score of 1 being the highest risk and 5 being the lowest. The inspection programme, based on risk, is agreed with the FSA as part of the national grant funded audit and inspection programme.

A number of businesses are designated both food and feed businesses. The Trading Standards service conducts food standards, feed standards, feed hygiene

and food hygiene at primary production inspections or a combination of these interventions at these businesses.

There are 587 food manufacturers in Norfolk, 4% of the sector, ranging from major multinational companies to cottage industries. The majority of food businesses are caterers 7,427 (62.8%) such as public houses, restaurants and hotels, or retailers 3,172 (26.8%) including general stores and bakers.

The county has 46 animal feed, including pet food, manufacturers as well as a very large number of on-farm mixers.

It should be noted that this plan has been written on the premise that the impact of Covid-19 on any activities proposed for the 2023-24 year will be minimal as we adjust to living with Covid-19. However, if Covid-19 continues to impact upon planned activities to the extent and manner in which they can be delivered, the service will prioritise and adapt its delivery in line with prevailing guidance, as it has done since the beginning of the pandemic.

The Trading Standards Service has office locations at County Hall, Norwich and Priory House, Kings Lynn. These locations are open to the public 9.00 – 17:00 Monday to Friday.

Enforcement Policy

- 2.5 The Community and Environmental Services (CES) directorate is responsible for a range of regulatory functions, including Trading Standards, Planning enforcement (mineral and waste sites), Flood and Water (land drainage), Norfolk Fire and Rescue (fire safety), Highways (networks, maintenance and blue badge enforcement) and Safety of Sports Grounds, and the CES Compliance & Enforcement Policy has been implemented, having regard to the established legal framework for decision-making, the Code for Crown Prosecutors (CPS) and the “Regulators’ Code” published by the Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS).

Section Three: Service Delivery

Animal Feed and Food Premises Inspections (Interventions)

- 3.1 The Trading Standards service reviews its policy in relation to inspections (interventions) at business premises on an annual basis in accordance with the principles of better regulation, the Food Law Code of Practice (England) and the Feed Law Code of Practice (England). In relation to farm premises the service also considers the Animal Health and Welfare Framework Agreement and the Farm Regulators’ Charter.
- 3.1.1 In relation to feed businesses, this service leads the regional approach to feed enforcement with its East of England Trading Standards Authority (EETSA) partners and liaises with National Trading Standards (NTS) and the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

At the time of compiling this plan the number of feed visits required by the NTS/FSA programme for the forthcoming year, based on a full risk-based inspection programme, is not confirmed but is expected to be similar to that required for the 2022-23 service year, with an estimate of 80 inspections at Norfolk based premises, out of a total of 270 inspections required across the EETSA region. This programme is entirely financed by grant funding provided by the FSA and administered by NTS. This proposed programme now takes full account of earned recognition for businesses that are members of an assurance scheme and covers equally the full range of feed businesses. Livestock and arable farms are the main types of premises to be visited; reflecting the importance of having feed controls in place at primary production.

The NTS/FSA programme of interventions and activity is produced using agreed risk models and desktop modelling of our premises database. The programme is agreed by the FSA prior to commencement and funding. As such it is accepted that this programme satisfies the requirements for interventions laid down in the Feed Law Code of Practice (England).

- 3.1.2 In relation to food businesses, the service will inspect all food businesses in Norfolk that are deemed to be high-risk by virtue of the previous trading history or the appropriate risk scheme, on at least an annual basis. In addition, intelligence-led inspections or other interventions will be conducted at those business sectors presenting the highest risk to the food chain and consumers/other legitimate businesses. It will also be appropriate, on occasion, to respond with inspections or other interventions where intelligence is received via consumer/trader complaints or referrals from other enforcement agencies about the non-compliance with trading standards of individual businesses. In line with Hampton principles⁴ and the resources available the service will not therefore, as a matter of routine, carry out inspections at medium or low risk food businesses unless they are visited as a result of the aforementioned factors.

The above measures are intended to focus our available resources on the areas of greatest risk, using available intelligence, and as such the service will not be able to fulfil a food inspection programme in accordance with the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice (England). This discrepancy is covered in greater detail under section 4: Resources.

Whilst the Food Law Code of Practice (England) requirements remained in place in relation to inspection programmes over the last two years, the FSA produced a “Covid-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan” that recognised the pressure that local authority resources had been under in responding to Covid-19. The FSA is currently in the process of moving from the Recovery Plan towards a new inspection regime based on an ‘intelligence led’ model.

⁴ Reducing administrative burdens: effective inspection and enforcement: Philip Hampton – March 2005

3.1.3 The service has assessed the value of carrying out unannounced inspections as opposed to announced inspections. It applies the following policy on animal feed and food inspections and audits:

- (a) Where official controls take the form of an audit or there is a need to have the feed or food business operator present e.g. so that records can be examined, then such visits will be announced. In these cases, prior notification will be kept to a minimum.
- (b) In all other cases and in particular where previous visits or intelligence suggests that serious non-compliances have occurred, visits will be unannounced. All establishments will be subject to ad hoc visits which will be unannounced.

The service will keep this policy under review and, if the policy leads to a disproportionate negative impact on the use of resources of both the service and Feed and Food Business Operators, it will be revised.

The policy will also be kept under review in light of the enhanced requirements of the Official Control Regulations (EU) 2017/625 (as amended) and the requirement for competent authorities to perform regular and unannounced risk-based controls to identify fraudulent activities. The service believes that the above policy is still valid, as the requirements of the legislation are met by activities covered in part (b) of the policy.

3.1.4 The inspection programmes for food and animal feed are shown below:
(FTE means Full time equivalent)

Project Name	Project Description/Outcomes	Staffing/ Other Resources* 2022/23	Staffing/ Other Resources* 2023/24
Feed Hygiene & Standards Inspection Programme	To inspect 80 agriculture businesses, e.g. selected feed mills, importers, retailers and farms. To ensure compliance in relation to feed labelling/packaging, stock rotation/storage, feed hygiene, record keeping/traceability and sale or use of prohibited materials.	0.15 FTE	0.15 FTE
Inspection of High-Risk Food Businesses	To carry out inspections at 45 businesses identified as high risk for food.	0.80 FTE	0.60 FTE

*Excluding managerial, administrative and legal support but including revisits and follow up action

Animal feed and food inspections are carried out by suitably qualified, competent and experienced Trading Standards Officers. Some targeted enforcement activities are carried out by Trainee Trading Standards Officers, studying for qualifications under the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)'s Professional Competency Framework (CPCF) and/or the Level 6 Trading Standards Professional Apprenticeship, adequately supervised by qualified staff.

Feed/Food Standards Inspections are carried out in accordance with the Feed Law Code of Practice (England) and the Food Law Code of Practice (England).

Other intelligence-led inspections or other interventions will be conducted during the year. The majority of such inspections also involve targeted sampling and an outline of the sectors to be inspected, and the resources required, is included in 3.5 below. We will also continue to undertake focused allergens compliance project work, including the additional requirements for prepacked for direct sale products (Natasha’s Law) which came into force in October 2021. The resources for this project work, which also includes inspections and sampling, is also included in 3.5 below.

Animal Feed and Food Complaints

3.2 Anticipated resource requirements for handling animal feed and food complaints are based on the complaint/contact numbers received in previous service years, the nature of those complaints/contacts and the level of enforcement response required. The number of food complaints/contacts is anticipated to be 230 (based on 2019-20) and the number of agriculture complaints/contacts is anticipated to be 20.

The staffing resources required are given below (FTE means Full time equivalent):

Project Name	Project Description/Outcomes	Staffing/ Other Resources* 2022/23	Staffing/ Other Resources* 2023/24
Complaints and Referrals	To undertake reactive enforcement in response to complaints from other enforcement agencies, businesses and the general public in relation to animal health, agriculture and food matters to ensure legal compliance. Analysis will be undertaken to identify further proactive work, identify trends and report on significant outcomes and impacts.	0.05 FTE (feed)	0.05 FTE** (feed)
		0.80 FTE (food)	0.80 FTE** (food)

*Excluding managerial, administrative and legal support

** Forecast based on 2019/20

In addition to reactive complaints/referrals work, information and advice is made available to consumers. This is achieved through signposting to the Citizens Advice ‘Advice guide’ website via our [Trading Standards pages on our website](#) and through our social media posts on twitter and Facebook.

Home Authority Principle and Primary Authority Scheme

3.3 Following a change to our Business Services Policy in 2017, this service no longer offers the full range of functions under the Home Authority Principle. In particular, the service no longer offers free bespoke advice to businesses. Bespoke advice tailored to the individual needs of a business is now provided on a chargeable basis. The service supports Primary Authority Partnerships administered by the Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS).

The service will provide the following levels of service to Primary Authority businesses:

- Actively promote the benefits of the Primary Authority scheme to businesses within Norfolk and outside of Norfolk
- Designate Primary Authority Officer(s) to each partnered business, with the relevant competencies or access to the necessary expertise to be able to offer advice
- Respond to requests for advice and guidance
- Issue assured advice, where it is appropriate to do so
- Facilitate a response to enquiries raised by other authorities
- Maintain records of relevant incidents, business policies and diligence procedures, where known
- Maintain confidentiality in relevant circumstances
- Ensure businesses are aware of our procedure for dealing with complaints or disagreements
- Have in place arrangements to notify other authorities of indulgences relevant to “subsequently corrected” errors
- Participate in relevant sector groupings with enforcement partners where our Primary Authority Partners businesses operate in the applicable market sector
- Support national advice and conciliation procedures, where appropriate.

Primary Authority businesses will be inspected/visited or otherwise contacted:

- As part of the inspection programme for high-risk businesses, or
- As part of the planned series of targeted enforcement activities, or
- As a result of a complaint/referral received, or
- To maintain the Primary Authority Partnership relationship.

Currently, the service has Primary Authority Partnerships with one food business and one feed business. The resources required to handle complaints and service requests relating to these Primary Authority businesses are included in Sections 3.2 and 3.4.

Advice to Business

3.4 The Trading Standards service works with businesses to help them to comply with trading standards and to encourage the use of good practice. On receipt of business requests for advice we will respond in a number of ways including:

- directing the business to our website or that of a partner organisation, such as the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)’s Business Companion and/or the New Anglia Growth Hub
- referring the business to another agency
- providing leaflets produced by partner organisations, our business briefings or standard letters
- providing comprehensive bespoke information or advice via the telephone, email or a letter, on a cost recovery basis and/or
- visiting the business to provide comprehensive advice, on a cost recovery basis.

In each case, our response will be proportionate to:

- the potential risk to consumers caused by a failure on behalf of the business to understand the information/advice provided,
- the experience of the business in question, and
- the impact upon the economic prosperity of the business or its competitors in not achieving compliance in the respective area(s) of the law.

In line with our Business Services Policy, if a business requires more detailed or interpretative advice on trading standards law then we will provide the advice on a cost recovery basis at a pro-rata hourly fee. In dealing with any requests for advice we will prioritise requests for advice from new businesses, Primary Authority businesses and members of our Norfolk Trusted Trader Scheme.

The Service reviews all information and advice it provides to consumers and businesses on an annual basis. This is with a view to signposting customers to the most appropriate source of online information available to enable self-service and assisted service.

Animal feed and food service requests will be handled by virtue of the projects detailed on page 14 below and further projects developed during the 2023-24 service year. Anticipated resource requirements are based on the service request numbers received in previous service years, the nature of those service requests and the level of enforcement response required.

The number of food service requests is anticipated to be 80 (based on January – November 2022). The number of agriculture service requests is anticipated to be 187.

As outlined in Section 3.3 above the service currently has Primary Authority Partnerships with one feed business and one food business. An estimate of billable hours of advice under Primary Authority Partnerships is included in these figures. (FTE means Full time equivalent)

Project Name	Project Description/Outcomes	Staffing/ Other Resources* 2022/23	Staffing/ Other Resources* 2023/24
Business Advice	To provide enforcement and compliance information and advice in relation to agriculture (animal feed, feed hygiene, pet food, fertilisers) and food in response to requests from businesses. Analysis will be undertaken to identify further proactive work, identify trends and report on significant outcomes and impacts.	0.15 FTE (feed)	0.15 FTE** (feed)
		1.00 FTE (food)	0.75 FTE** (food)

*Excluding managerial, administrative and legal support

** Includes estimated hours of advice to be delivered under Primary Authority Partnerships

Animal Feed and Food Sampling

3.5 The Trading Standards service's Food and Feed Sampling Policy is annexed to this Plan.

The Trading Standards service targets its proactive sampling at locally produced animal feed and foods, those products/ingredients from companies that manufacture in, are based in, or import into Norfolk. In line with a letter from the FSA (ENF/E/08/061) the service is committed to ensuring that at least 10% of all food samples are of foods imported into the United Kingdom. In addition, animal feed/foods are targeted which are causing current concerns. These are identified through communication with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra); through local, regional and national intelligence held by local authorities; and through consultation with the Public Analyst. The service's sampling programmes therefore include projects run in conjunction with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the East of England Trading Standards Authorities group of local authorities (EETSA).

Listed overleaf are sampling surveys that will be carried out in 2023-24. This list will be added to as, for example, intelligence identifies other animal feed/food that should be targeted. At the time of writing this plan the service planning cycle for food and feed sampling has not been concluded and further surveys will be added as a result of this process.

Through the examination of available intelligence and data the service is already aware that compliance with allergen requirements, including the additional requirements for prepacked for direct sale products (Natasha's Law), will again be an area of high priority for 2023-24. The Service will continue to develop activities under its long-term comprehensive programme of allergen compliance work, including sampling, business and consumer engagement and enforcement, if need be.

All sampling by officers is, wherever possible, undertaken in accordance with relevant legislation and all formal animal feed and food samples are taken in accordance with the Feed Law Code of Practice (England) or the Food Law Code of Practice (England) as applicable.

Samples are analysed and/or examined by the service's nominated Public/Agriculture Analyst in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Food Safety (Sampling and Qualifications) Regulations 2013, the Food Law Code of Practice (England) and the Feed Law Code of Practice (England). Alternatively, some samples are examined/tested in house, if it is appropriate to do so. The Public/Agriculture Analysts appointed by the Authority are employed by Public Analyst Scientific Services Ltd (PASS).

(FTE means Full time equivalent)

Project Name	Project Description/ Outcomes	Staffing/ Other Resources* 2022/23	Staffing/ Other Resources* 2023/24
Agricultural Sampling	To undertake animal feed and fertilizer sampling to ensure compliance in relation to composition, safety, hygiene and labelling.	0.80 FTE £4,000 Purchase and analysis costs	0.80 FTE £2,500 Purchase and analysis costs

* Excluding managerial, administrative and legal support

Surveys under the sampling project will include:

- Feed materials which are the subject of a complaint to the service
- Imported feeds/ingredients that have been the subject of feed hazard notifications
- Lysine and methionine in pig and poultry feed
- Mineral feed for trace elements
- Livestock feed samples to check for statutory statement compliance

Project Name	Project Description/ Outcomes	Staffing/ Other Resources* 2022/23	Staffing/ Other Resources* 2023/24
Allergens project	Allergen compliance work, including pre-packed for direct sale products; including sampling, business and consumer engagement and enforcement	0.45 FTE	0.45 FTE
Food Sampling Programme (excluding Allergens Project)	Targeting food sampling at areas identified as causing the most harm to consumers in terms of food safety, quality or nutritional standards	1.20 FTE £31,500 Purchase and analysis costs	1.20 FTE £25,000 Purchase and analysis costs

* Excluding managerial, administrative and legal support

Surveys under the sampling projects will include:

- Undeclared allergens in non-prepacked foods
- Undeclared allergens in foods pre-packed for direct sale
- Sampling during the investigation of complaints
- Sampling during the investigation of food fraud
- Illicit alcohol
- Foods produced in Norfolk or imported by Norfolk based businesses
- Foods imported from outside the United Kingdom
- Foods identified by Food Standards Agency priorities

Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

3.6

Food poisoning notifications do not usually fall within the remit of the Trading Standards Service. If, however, the service becomes aware of any incident of food poisoning or infectious disease, the facts will be reported to the appropriate authority.

Animal Feed/Food Safety Incidents

- 3.7 On receipt of any animal feed or food alert, the Trading Standards service will respond as directed and as appropriate and in accordance with the Feed Law Code of Practice (England) or the Food Law Code of Practice (England).

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) issues Food Alerts and Allergy Alerts to let local authorities and consumers know about problems associated with food. In some cases, a "Food Alert for Action" is issued which requires intervention action by enforcement authorities. 69 food alerts were issued by the FSA in 2022 (January to November). The FSA also issued 69 (January to November 2022) allergy alerts.

During 2022, as a result of sampling and enforcement activity, the service raised 5 food incidents with the FSA regarding undeclared allergens in prepacked foods as well as handling 8 complaints in-relation to undeclared allergens in non-prepacked foods which caused illness/injury.

Feed alerts are far less frequent than food alerts. During 2022 the service was involved in 15 feed incidents raised by the FSA. These were predominantly as a result of the businesses notifying us of their sample failures, before then notifying the FSA themselves.

It is estimated that, for the coming service year, 0.10 FTE will be required for feed/food safety incident work.

In cases where the service receives reports of chemical contamination of food and there is a subsequent threat to human health, it will liaise with the appropriate district council environmental health department, with a view to taking over responsibility for the case, or for undertaking a joint investigation, as the situation demands.

Liaison with Other Organisations

- 3.8 The Trading Standards service works with a wide range of organisations, to varying degrees of formality, in carrying out its animal feed and food law enforcement function. These include the Food Standards Agency (FSA), the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), the Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Animal Medicines Inspectorate (AMI), National Trading Standards (NTS), the other ten local authority Trading Standards Services in the East of England (EETSA) and District Council Environmental Health Departments.

The service maintains a strong commitment to the regional work of EETSA and officers from Norfolk contribute to the EETSA Food Group and the EETSA Agriculture Group. Via quarterly meetings and regional Knowledge Hub groups, the service aims to ensure that local food and feed enforcement activity is consistent with neighbouring authorities. The service participates in the National Agriculture Panel, with that panel being chaired by an officer of this service. A recently retired officer of this service was also a long-time member and chair of the National Food Standards & Information Focus Group.

The service also ensures co-ordination with Norfolk’s Environmental Health Departments through the Norfolk Food Liaison Group (NFLG), set up to co-ordinate activities in line with the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice (England).

The service is fully committed to working with the Food Standards Agency on the development of the Achieving Business Compliance strategic redesign of food standards, to determine a future delivery model for official food controls.

The estimated staffing resource for liaison work during the year is 0.25 FTE.

Animal Feed and Food Safety and Standards Promotional Work, other non-official Controls and Interventions

3.9 Animal feed and food safety and standards promotional work for the year is linked to the results of our sampling and other enforcement projects, to any relevant prosecutions, and to information provided by our enforcement partners, primarily the Food Standards Agency (FSA). Promotional work consists of [postings on our trading standards website](#); including scam alerts, postings via our twitter feeds and Facebook pages and regular press releases, locally, regionally and nationally. In addition, we occasionally develop our own promotional material to assist with consumer and/or business education work, the most recent example being material we developed for our allergens project (resources in relation to allergens promotional work have been accounted for in 3.5).

Information and intelligence gathering work is carried out by feed and food officers as part of their ongoing duties. Information and intelligence are also gathered and analysed by our intelligence lead and technical support staff in the Intelligence and Enforcement Support Section. Such work informs our control strategy, tasking and coordination function, our service planning cycle and operational work.

Resourcing details are provided in the table below (FTE means Full time equivalent):

Project Name	Project Description/Outcomes	Staffing/ Other Resources* 2022/23	Staffing/ Other Resources* 2023/24
Promotional Work, Intelligence Gathering	Promotional work including results of market surveillance, enforcement projects, prosecutions and information dissemination. Promotion will include use of our website, social media pages and feeds, local, regional and national press releases and liaison with media organisations.	0.05 FTE** (feed)	0.05 FTE** (feed)
	Intelligence gathering work will include complaints and information monitoring, review of local, regional, national and international data to inform market surveillance and enforcement activity.	0.05 FTE** (food)	0.05 FTE** (food)

*Excluding managerial, administrative and legal support

**Intelligence gathering work also undertaken by Intelligence and Enforcement Support Section

Section Four: Resources

Financial Allocation

- 4.1 The net budget for the Trading Standards service for 2023-24 is £1,875,360. A breakdown of the Trading Standards budget for feed and food enforcement is shown below (F&F means Food and Farming Team, FTE means Full time equivalent and TS means Trading Standards):

Budget description	2022/23 Outturn*	2023/24 Estimate
Staffing	Total F&F: £486,115 Food & Feed: £284,377 (based on 5.85 FTE)	Total F&F: £535,210 Food & Feed: £294,611 (based on 5.40 FTE)
Sampling (food & agriculture purchase and analysis)	£18,144	£27,500
Subsistence/travel	Total F&F: £9,025 Food & Feed: £5,280 (based on 5.85 FTE)	Total TS: £6,000 Food & Feed: £653 (based on 5.40 FTE)

*A significant proportion of 2022/23 food and feed resourcing was diverted to avian influenza outbreak response.

At the time of writing this plan the Service is applying for grant funding for feed/hygiene audits and feed sampling to supplement the 2023/24 sampling budget. The results of any grant bid will affect surveys proposed in Section 3.5 above. Whilst the overall grant funding is likely to be slightly reduced in comparison to 2022/23 funding, changes to the timing and allocation of these resources means we are unable to confirm the exact amount at this time.

The relative amounts allocated to food and feed law enforcement are based on the staff allocation breakdown given in Section 4.2.

- 4.1.1 The Food Law Code of Practice currently requires the service to inspect its food businesses over a prescribed cycle. In addition to the inspection of all high-risk businesses and other interventions detailed in this plan, the expectation is that all medium risk businesses will be inspected every 2 years and that an inspection or alternative enforcement strategy be undertaken at low risk premises once every 5 year. As outlined in 3.1.2 above, the FSA has produced a “Covid-19 Local Authority Recovery Plan” that currently allows local authorities to diverge from the required schedule of programmed interventions, during the recovery period outlined in that plan.

The service has determined that, if it were to conduct the routine food inspection programme detailed above, the following resource would have to be redeployed from other enforcement activities, such as fair trading, animal health & welfare or product safety work:

- 7.8 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for medium risk food business inspections
- 0.2 FTE for low risk food business alternative enforcement strategies.

However, mindful of the recommendations of the Hampton⁴ and Macdonald⁵ Reviews which state the service should only carry out inspections of businesses where there is a clearly identified risk presented by that business, the service will, as in previous years, conduct intelligence-led inspections or other interventions within those business sectors or at those food business operators presenting the highest risk to the food chain and consumers/other legitimate businesses. A flexible approach to resourcing enables us to respond appropriately to incidents and our local approach to risk assessment and effective targeting of resources, rather than the execution of a routine inspection programme, will provide the necessary protection to the county's food chain. A more intelligence-led approach to inspection is currently being explored by the FSA's Achieving Better Compliance programme.

- 4.1.2 The service continues to invest in modern ICT systems. Access to the Internet, to the Civica Cx database and to other information systems is seen as a vital resource for operational staff. The service currently uses the UK FSS iNet database for recording, managing and submitting food and feed sampling data. As a result of withdrawal of funding by the FSA the service is aware that UK FSS iNet, whilst still in operation, no longer benefits from external ICT support. At the time of writing this plan the service is awaiting further instruction from the FSA as to how the replacement system for data transfer will operate.

The service has signed up to the "Register a Food Business" national online portal operated by the FSA to enable it to receive real-time food business registration data.

All food and feed law enforcement officers have been issued with hybrid laptops that incorporate detachable tablets, smart mobile telephones and digital cameras. The current devices, along with the mobile working functionality of the Cx platform, will, in time, allow officers to directly record and update database information whilst off site at business premises.

The service has issued all of its operational officers, including all food and feed officers, with purchasing cards. This has greatly enhanced our ability to undertake online market surveillance sampling activities.

The service does not have an individual budget for ICT as such matters have previously been transferred to corporate budgeting.

- 4.1.3 No fixed amount is set aside for legal costs with specific regard to food and feed law. However, a general legal cost subjective is allocated to the budget, the budgeted amount for 2023-24 being £26,000, which may be supplemented from contingency, if necessary.

⁴ Reducing administrative burdens: effective inspection and enforcement: Philip Hampton – March 2005

⁵Review of Regulation in Farming: MacDonald – May 2011

Staffing Allocation

- 4.2 The current staffing allocation to food and feed enforcement has been calculated on the basis of the projects/activities described in Section 3 above as summarised and unless otherwise stated FTE figures quoted relate to competent staff:
(FTE means Full time equivalent and n/a means non-applicable)

Plan Section	Project/Activity	FTE 2022/23 Feed	FTE 2022/23 Food	FTE 2023/24 Feed	FTE 2023/24 Food
3.1	Feed Hygiene & Standards Inspection Programme	0.15	n/a	0.15	n/a
3.1	Inspection of high-risk food businesses	n/a	0.80	n/a	0.60
3.2	Complaints and Referrals	0.05	0.80	0.05	0.80
3.4	Business advice	0.15	1.00	0.15	0.75
3.5	Agricultural sampling	0.80	n/a	0.80	n/a
3.5	Food Sampling Including Allergens Project	n/a	1.65	n/a	1.65
3.7	Food/feed alerts	n/a	0.10	n/a	0.10
3.8	Liaison	0.15	0.10	0.15	0.10
3.9	Promotional Work, Intelligence Gathering (including non-qualified staff)	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
Total	Total full time equivalents	1.35	4.50	1.35	4.05

Total FTE for 2022/23 = 5.85

Total FTE for 2023/24 = 5.40

Staff Development Plan

- 4.3 The service focuses on the needs of both specialist feed and food law enforcement officers and other staff in terms of their training and continuous professional development (CPD).

The current training arrangements are reflected in the Learning and Development Framework and the Learning and Development Plan. Over recent years the number of qualified food and feed officers within the service has reduced, as officers have left the service. The service has invested in supporting trainees to study for the Trading Standards Practitioner Diploma (TSPD) and/or Level 6 Trading Standards Professional Apprenticeship in order to attain the qualifications necessary to be able to undertake food and feed standards work. At present the Service has eleven trainees.

Skills and competency are assessed at annual staff personal development plan discussions, midyear reviews and 1-2-1 meetings and a programme of continuous professional development is implemented to ensure the maintenance of essential knowledge and skills.

The Food Law Code of Practice England (2021) lays down competency demonstration requirements for food officers (20 hours CPD per annum) The service ensures that sufficient time and resources are provided to allow food officers to attain the required 20 hours of CPD per annum. The service has developed its competency assessment process in line with the requirements of the Competency Framework and the Food Law Code of Practice (2021).

Similarly, the Feed Code of Practice (England) (2018) requires that competent officers are able to evidence 10 hours CPD per annum. Again, the service ensures that sufficient time and resources are provided to allow feed officers to attain this CPD.

Section Five: Quality Assessment

Quality Assessment and Internal Monitoring

5.1 The following arrangements will be used to assess the quality of the Authority's service:

- All procedures and work instructions relating to feed and food law enforcement are subject to established in-house quality improvements and auditing procedures which apply to the whole of the Trading Standards service
- Evaluation surveys sent out to a sample of businesses following an inspection or request for advice
- Review of a random number of inspections, service requests and complaints by section/line managers
- Feedback at 1-2-1 meetings, midyear review and personal development plan discussions on individual performance
- Feedback at team meetings.

Section Six: Review

Review Against the Service Plan

6.1 The Service uses a performance measurement toolkit, "PMR", to collate, report and review performance on a monthly basis.

At monthly intervals the Trading Standards Management Team undertakes a performance review. The meeting includes recognition of any variance from target, the reasons for variance and any appropriate measures to be put in place to address such variance.

The Trading Standards Management Team also reviews progress against our Control Strategy Priority Actions of:

- Through programmes of intelligence-led market surveillance, education and enforcement activities ensure the safety, standards and quality of the food chain, including food, animal feeds and agricultural fertilisers, and
- Support the economy during the cost of living crisis, by providing businesses with access to information and compliance advice, including through chargeable, bespoke services

at a monthly Tasking and Coordination meeting.

These priority actions include the provision of business advice, liaison with regulatory and business partners, intelligence-led market surveillance and enforcement activities, including risk-based inspection and sampling.

The allocation of suitable resources to tackle any emerging food or feed issues or trends can also be raised for consideration by the Trading Standards Management Team at the monthly Tasking and Coordination meeting.

Information on performance measures and targets is set out on pages 8, 9 and 10 of the Trading Standards Service Plan 2023-24.

Identification of any Variation from the Service Plan

- 6.2 As outlined in Section 6.1 above the Service, on an ongoing basis, monitors its performance using the above means and takes action to address variance from target throughout the year.

Areas of Improvement

- 6.3 The service is committed to addressing areas of improvement highlighted by the ongoing quality assessment and internal monitoring as outlined in Section 5.1 above and the monthly reporting as outlined in Section 6.1 above.

Food and Feed Sampling Policy

Background

Our five priorities are:

- A vibrant and sustainable economy
- Better opportunities for children and young people
- Healthy, fulfilling and independent lives
- Strong, engaged and inclusive communities
- A greener, more resilient future

Introduction

This policy outlines our general approach to the sampling of food and animal feed. This policy is produced in accordance with the service's obligations under the Framework Agreement on Official Food and Feed Controls and the respective Food and Feed Codes of Practice.

Policy

This service recognises that sampling and analysis is an essential part of food and feed standards enforcement, which enables authorised officers to assess compliance with food and feed standards, composition, safety and labelling requirements. This includes using sampling and analysis as part of proactive market surveillance and reactive responses to complaints.

The service is committed to maintaining a contract with a suitably qualified Public/Agriculture Analyst for the analysis of formal food and feed samples.

On an annual basis we will formulate and commit resources to a sampling programme for food and animal feed products. This programme will be developed taking into account factors including the nature of the food and feed businesses in the county, our intervention plan, Primary Authority functions, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) food and feed priorities and other available local, regional and national intelligence pointing to areas of most concern. We will also develop our sampling programme in consultation with the service's appointed Public/Agriculture Analyst.

This service is committed to participation in national and regional sampling surveys where proposed sampling/analysis fits in with the above-mentioned factors.

Although developed as an annual programme, this service will continue to monitor intelligence for emerging issues and will change or amend the sampling programme as necessary.

This service will target its proactive sampling at locally produced animal feed and foods, those products/ingredients from companies that manufacture in, are based in or import into Norfolk. In line with guidance issued by the FSA this service is also committed to ensuring at least 10% of all food samples are foods imported into the United Kingdom.

All formal food and feed sampling will be undertaken in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice (England) or the Feed Law Code of Practice (England), as applicable. All formal samples are analysed and/or examined by the service's nominated Public/Agriculture Analyst in accordance with the applicable legislation. Officers who take formal samples are suitably qualified and competent to do so in accordance with the respective Food and Feed Codes of Practice.

Where it is the case that informal samples are taken by officers, wherever it is possible, these samples shall be taken in accordance with relevant legislation.

All food/feed samples and the result of examination/analysis will be recorded. Food and Feed Business Operators will be notified of both the samples taken and the results of analysis. Where sample results are considered to be unsatisfactory, the service will take appropriate action to ensure compliance is achieved. Any action will be carried out in accordance with the CES Compliance & Enforcement Policy.