Annual Report of Incidents 2015

This report acts as a public record of incident levels for reference purposes. It presents numbers and types of incident notifications to the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) during 2015 that had the potential to impact on the safety of food or feed.

Incidents are defined broadly, and differ widely in types, causes, severity and the route of reporting. The report includes breakdowns of the number of reported food and feed incidents by incident categories, notifier, and food commodity type. Due to changes in the data processing, the contents of this report differ from previous years. Further details of the changes can be found in the Comparability section of the accompanying quality report.

The FSA and FSS will investigate incidents to determine whether there are any food safety implications. Where appropriate, they will then take action to safeguard the public. Their Incident Database records the official audit trail of the investigations. It is the main source of the figures in the report.

The FSA also arranges the issue of food alerts to local authorities, other government departments, trade organisations, and Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) notifications to the European Commission. Furthermore, as part of its incident prevention strategy, the FSA monitors food and feed safety patterns in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and promotes awareness, good practice and information sharing. From 1 April 2015, the FSS has taken over these responsibilities in Scotland.

We try to always meet the needs of our users. If you have any feedback on the publication please send it to robin.clifford@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk.

Executive summary

In 2015, the Food Standards Agency and Food Standards Scotland were notified of and investigated 1,514 foods, feed and environmental contamination incidents in the UK. The overall number of incidents was similar to those seen in recent years. However, in most categories, the numbers of incidents differ considerably from year to year.

The four largest contributors to the total number of recorded incidents in 2015 were:

- Pathogenic micro-organisms (18%)
- Allergens (14%)
- Chemical contamination (other) (12%)
- Residues of veterinary medicinal products (8%)

Pathogenic micro-organisms: In 2015, 67% of the *pathogenic micro-organism* incidents were related to either *Salmonella* species or *Escherichia coli*. However, 49 of the 75 *E. coli* incidents resulted from shellfish bed monitoring. There are many different types of *E. coli*. Some live harmlessly in the intestines of humans and animals, whereas pathogenic strains can cause illness if contaminated food is consumed. High counts of *E. coli* can signify a risk that faecal pathogens are present and are used as an indicator of poor hygiene conditions but are not necessarily harmful.

Allergens: The number of *allergen* incidents has increased from 89 in 2013 to 206 in 2015. This may be related to new rules on providing allergen ingredients information from December 2014. See *Known issues 1* for more details.

Residues of veterinary medical products: Following a change in reporting procedures, the frequency of *veterinary medicine* incidents in 2014 and 2015 is much higher than in 2013. This is due to more notifications from on-going surveillance programmes since late 2013.

Chemical contamination (other): In 2015, fires were the cause of almost all *chemical contamination (other)* incidents.

More than half of the incidents in 2015 were reported by local authorities (409), EU Member States and the European Commission (213) or central government bodies (210). In addition, Industry reported 154 incidents in 2015.

Action taken to protect consumers in relation to food safety included issuing 156 alerts and information notices to local authorities. The UK also sent 337 notifications to the European Commission, via the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF).

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Context of the statistics

An incident is defined as:

Any event where, based on the information available, there are concerns about actual or suspected threats to the safety or quality or integrity of food and feed that could require intervention to protect consumers' interests.

Incidents fall broadly into two categories:

- Incidents involving accidental and deliberate contamination of food or animal feed in the processing, distribution, retail and catering chains. These incidents may result in action to withdraw the food from sale and, in certain circumstances, to recall, alerting the public not to consume potentially contaminated food.

- Environmental pollution incidents, (for example: fires, sewage/chemical/oil spills, radiation leaks) that may involve voluntary or statutory action (such as orders made under the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985).

The number of food incidents notified is affected by various factors:

- Many types of incidents occur sporadically and so tend not to be spread evenly across time.

- The number of notifications related to a given issue will depend on the level of testing and investigation being carried out. This in turn is influenced by changing concerns and priorities as new issues emerge and issues are managed.

- Food business operators and local authorities are legally obliged to report every food incident that they identify. However, the frequency of notifications by other organisations and government bodies can be affected by revisions to reporting practices and policies.

- Natural chemical contamination and microbiological incidents are likely to be influenced by the weather, as are fires and other environmental contamination incidents.

- The correct classification of notifications can be a matter of judgement, particularly where an incident involves multiple threats to safety or quality.

Therefore the number of notifications will not generally be a reliable indicator of the underlying level of food risk. It is more a measure of how many incidents that the FSA and FSS have been made aware of, rather than the extent of their response.

Known issues that may have influenced the number of notifications in 2015

1. In December 2014 the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation (No. 1169/2011) introduced new rules on providing allergen ingredients information for non-prepacked food and on packaging. Some requirements for nutritional and other labelling information also changed. These new requirements may have resulted in products being placed on the market post December 2014 with non-compliant labelling thereby increasing the number of allergy and labelling incidents during 2015.

2. In 2015 and 2016, the National Trading Standards feed delivery programme included additional sampling for coccidiostat carryover during the production process, and in final feeds. Furthermore, the annual National Enforcement Priorities document has directed local authorities to target coccidiostats in their feed control activity. This follows concerns identified by the 2014 audit of the UK's animal feed controls by the European Commission Food and Veterinary Office (FVO).

3. Recent world weather patterns are believed to have increased the levels of mycotoxin contamination (particularly aflatoxin B_1) in certain crops harvested in 2013 and 2014. The primary concern is groundnuts (peanuts) from South America, Africa, Asia and the USA destined for market as wild-bird feed. However, other food and feed goods may also be affected.

4. Each year the National Coordinated Food Standards sampling programme (http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/sampling/samplingandsurveillance) sets different priorities for Enforcement Authority risk-based sampling and surveillance. The levels of investigation may influence the numbers and types of incidents identified. The priorities for 2015/16 included:

   - Chloramphenicol and nitrofurans in imported farmed fish, crustaceans and rabbit.
   - Aflatoxins in maize and maize products particularly Africa and India.
   - Ergot Alkaloids in oat and rye based foods
   - Hyoscyamine, atropine and scopolamine in cereal products, particularly those for infants and young children.
   - Ochratoxin A in imported spices including capsicum species.
   - Chlorates in various foods of plant origin
   - Melamine, arsenic (total and inorganic arsenic), cadmium and lead in imported infant formula
   - Arsenic in rice, rice products and fruit juice
   - Dioxins, furans and PCBs in UK free-range and organic eggs & Chinese mitten crab,
   - Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in smoked meat and fish from UK small-scale producers and banana chips fried in coconut oil
   - Irradiated herbs and spices, food supplements and dried noodle type meals particularly those originating from Asia, the Far East, and South America.
   - Acrylamide in chips/fries and crisps from takeaways, restaurants and food service.
   - Composition of raw minced meat
   - Species of meat and fish in takeaway meals, other food services and at retail/wholesale

Full details can be found at http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/sampling

5. Commission Implementing Decision 2014/88/EU imposed a temporary suspension of imports of betel (paan) leaves from Bangladesh from 13th February 2014 (subsequently extended to 30th June 2016) following persistent evidence of high levels of *Salmonella* contamination. This has most likely led to a decrease in such incidents from that country.

6. Prior to the introduction of this temporary suspension, additional official controls were already in place for importing betel leaves originating from India and Thailand, again because of concerns about *Salmonella* contamination. Betel leaves from these two countries were listed under Commission Regulation (EU) 669/2009 from 1st April 2014 where ten percent of all consignments had to be sampled and tested for *Salmonella.* The frequency of these checks was increased to 50 percent from January 2015, although betel leaves from Thailand were delisted from October 2015. This may have improved detection of non-compliant consignments and may have deterred others from being imported.

Total number of incidents

In 2015, the FSA and FSS were notified of and investigated 1,514 incidents. This is a similar number to the previous three years. Overall, the frequency of reported incidents has increased over the last nine years. There were 170 more incidents reported in 2015 than in 2006.

Figure 1: Incidents notified to the UK Food Standards Agency, 2006 – 2015

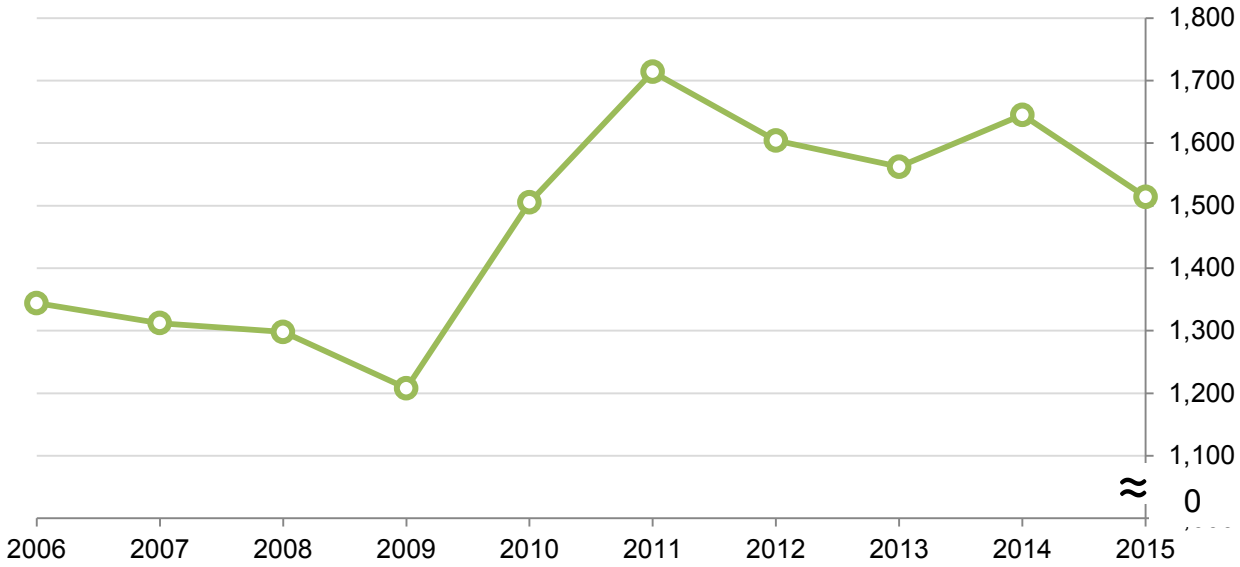
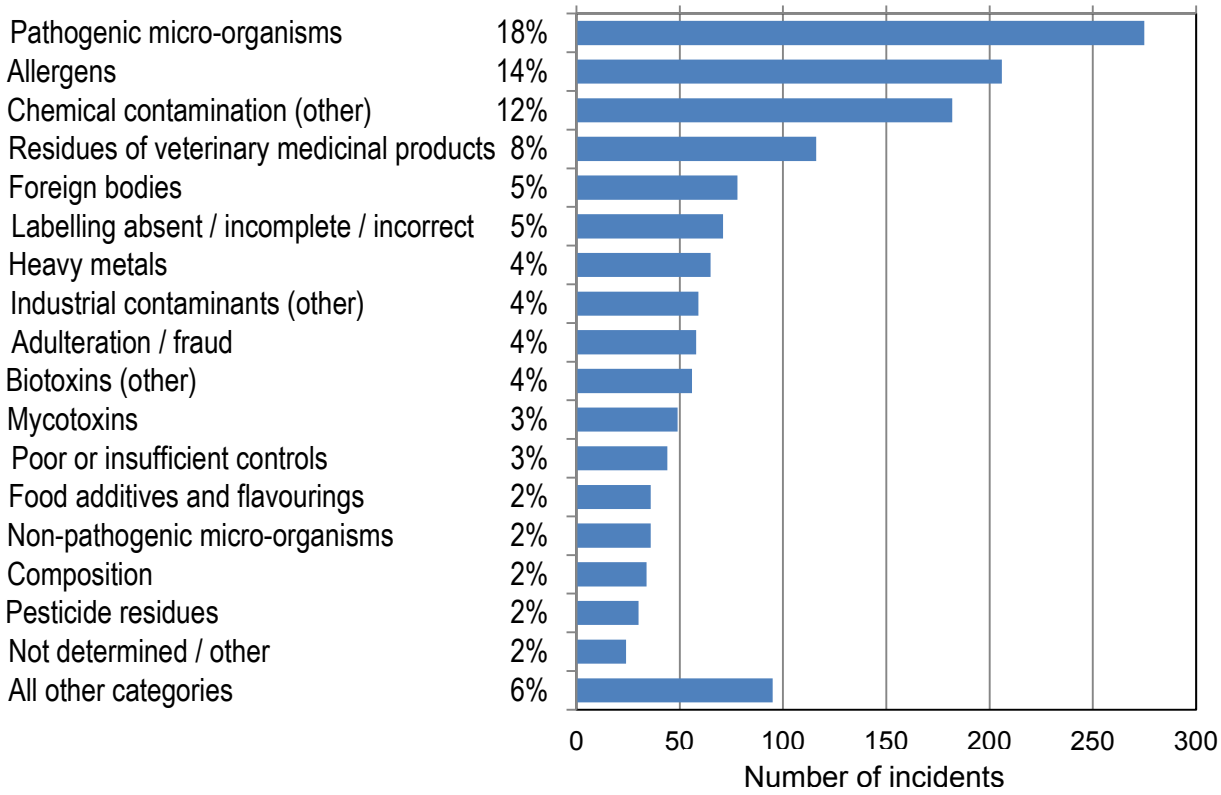


Figure 2: Incidents by incident category: UK, 2015



Incidents by Hazard type

In 2015, 18% of all notifications fell into the largest Hazard category: *pathogenic micro-organisms*. Together the four largest categories accounted for over half of the incidents.

Table 1: Number of Incidents by RASFF hazard category: UK, 2013- 2015

Category	2013	2014	2015
Biological origin			
Pathogenic micro-organisms	307	377	277
Non-pathogenic micro-organisms	26	18	34
Mycotoxins	88	64	49
Biotoxins (other)	52	68	56
Parasitic infestation	4	1	3
Biocontaminants (other)	0	19	24
Farming practices			
Residues of veterinary medicinal products	75	207	116
Pesticide residues	114	49	30
Feed additives	11	4	12
TSEs	10	-	3
Industrial / Chemical			
Heavy metals	75	77	65
Migration	29	21	9
Radiation	4	7	5
Industrial contaminants (other)	20	32	59
Chemical contamination (other)	241	155	182
Other			
Allergens	89	127	206
Adulteration / fraud	63	69	58
Labelling absent / incomplete / incorrect	97	80	71
GMO[1] / Novel Food	10	16	16
Food additives and flavourings	52	59	36
Composition	18	49	34
Foreign bodies	105	69	78
Poor or insufficient controls	34	30	44
Organoleptic aspects	5	6	9
Packaging defective / incorrect	1	6	15
Not determined / other	32	35	23
Total	**1,562**	**1,645**	**1,514**

1. Genetically modified organisms

Pathogenic micro-organisms incidents relate to suspected or actual contamination by harmful bacteria, viruses or fungi. (Those incidents associated with *Salmonella* or *E. coli* are described in more detail in the "Key movements for individual incident categories" section.) In contrast, *Non-pathogenic micro-organisms* incidents chiefly relates to moulds or bacteria of a non-pathogenic or unidentified species.

The concern for *Mycotoxin* and *Biotoxin (other)* incidents is contamination by toxins produced by living organisms. *Mycotoxins* such as aflatoxin are produced by certain moulds that grow on crops and other feedstuffs. *Biotoxin (other)* incidents include algal toxins in shellfish, which are mainly reported as part of the regular monitoring of shellfish beds. *Biocontaminants (other)* incidents include sewage spills and toxins produced by the degeneration of animal or vegetable material.

Residues of veterinary medicinal products incidents accounted for most of the notifications in the "Farming practices" group. This includes those incidents that are routinely reported from the long-standing Statutory Surveillance Programme of residues of veterinary medicines in food producing animals.

Most of the incidents in the "Industrial / Chemical" group relate to *chemical contamination (other)*. In 2015, all but three of such incidents related to fires. Fires are recorded as a potential risk as combustion can produce polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which are potentially carcinogenic. *Heavy metal* incidents chiefly involve lead and copper poisoning, usually occurring to livestock.

Of the final group of Hazards, the largest categories in 2015 were *Allergens*, *Labelling absent / incomplete / incorrect* and *Foreign bodies*. *Allergens* incidents concern the presence of specified allergens, either as unintended contamination or unlabelled ingredients. Labelling issues can include improper health claims, incorrect date labels and misleading food descriptions or usage instructions. *Foreign bodies* incidents involve contamination by materials such as plastic, metal and glass or the presence of pests and animal parts.

Key movements for individual incident categories

The overall number of incidents in 2015 was similar to recent years. This section summarises the key changes for individual incident categories in 2015.

Pathogenic micro-organisms

Most of the *pathogenic micro-organisms* incidents were related to either *Salmonella* or *E. coli*. Many of the *Salmonella* incidents in this period were associated with contaminated paan leaves from the Indian subcontinent, with 46 such incidents in 2013, falling to 18 and 22 respectively in 2014 and 2015. This fall may be related to the regulatory changes explained in *Known issues 5*.

However the number of other *Salmonella*-related incidents also increased from 56 and 50 in 2013 and 2014 to 88 incidents in 2015. These 2015 incidents do not appear to be related to any particular cause, country of origin or foodstuff.

Reporting of shellfish monitoring accounts for most of the incidents related to *E. coli*. In this context, high indicator *E. coli* counts are used to identify poor hygienic conditions in harvesting areas, and are not necessarily pathogenic. There are many different types of *E. coli*. Some live harmlessly in the intestines of humans and animals, whereas pathogenic strains can cause illness if contaminated food is consumed. High counts of *E. coli* can signify a risk that faecal pathogens are present and are used as an indicator of poor hygiene conditions, but are not necessarily harmful.

There were 123 such incidents in 2014, more than double the numbers in 2013 and 2015 (31 and 49 incidents respectively The fluctuation may be due to natural factors such as variation in weather, as there has been no change in reporting policy or monitoring.

The numbers of other *pathogenic micro-organism* incidents show no obvious patterns over time, but can show considerable year-to-year variation.

Residues of Veterinary medicines

The increase in *residues of veterinary medicine* incidents between 2013 and 2014 is largely due to the change in reporting practices. Exceedances of veterinary medicines residues detected by the Statutory Surveillance Programme were not routinely recorded as incidents until late 2013.

Of the 2015 incidents, 43% relate to coccidiostats or other pesticides applied to expel parasitic worms. This may reflect the actions described in *Known issues 2*.

Allergens

The number of allergen incidents has risen from 89 in 2013 to 206 in 2015. Part of this increase may be due to the regulation changes described in *Known issues 1.* However, many of these incidents are not directly related to the new legislation.

Chemical contamination (other)

As almost all *chemical contamination (other)* incidents relate to fires, their frequency can vary considerably depending on weather conditions and the level of reporting by Fire Services.

Pesticide residues

The number of *pesticide residue* incidents was much higher in 2013 than 2014 and 2015. Pesticide incidents reported at border inspection points have fallen and this may in part be due to the introduction in August 2014 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 885/2014. This requires all consignments of okra (and curry leaves) imported into the EU from India to be accompanied by a valid health certificate and results of sampling and analysis demonstrating that the consignment has been found to be compliant in relation to pesticide residues.

Incidents by notifier type

Local authorities reported over 27% of all incidents in 2015. Together with central government and EU Member States, they accounted for 55% of all notifications. The number of notifications by the other group in 2014 and 2015 is more than double that reported in earlier years. This increase seems to be mainly caused by increased reporting of shellfish and veterinary residue monitoring (see *Known issues 1 and Key movements for individual incident categories*). Many of these incidents are reported via the laboratory that analyses the results.

Table 2a: Incidents by notifier type: UK, 2010 – 2015

Notifying Organisation	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Local authorities[1]	376	297	346	359	403	409
EU Member States & EU Central bodies [3]	166	155	163	197	246	213
Listed Central Government bodies [2]	192	231	176	227	266	210
Industry	95	113	139	119	125	154
Fire services	223	246	179	177	154	148
Border Inspections Posts	233	426	397	270	93	63
General public	13	14	16	23	19	29
Single Liaison Body[6]	83	85	71	31	14	19
Scottish Agricultural College	12	5	6	4	5	7
Police	7	7	2	14	5	3
Water companies	0	28	5	6	2	1
Nuclear Power Stations	3	1	1	1	0	1
Third country[4]	3	1	6	1	2	0
Other[5]	99	105	97	133	311	257
Total	**1,505**	**1,714**	**1,604**	**1,562**	**1,645**	**1,514**

1. Including Port Health Authorities (21 incidents in 2015).

2. This comprises of all bodies listed in Table 2b.

3. Includes the European Commission plus RASFF notifications.

4. Any country outside the European Union and the EEA-EFTA (European Economic Area - European Free Trade Association).

5. Includes incidents recorded as being notified by laboratories.

The breakdown by notifiers should be treated with caution. For instance, two identical incidents originating from the same monitoring program may be recorded as having different notifiers. This is because several organisations are involved, and can be thought of as the notifier. See Appendix 2 for a detailed description of the notifier types.

Table 2b: Incidents notified by certain central government bodies: UK, 2006 – 2015

Notifying Organisation	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Department of Agriculture & Rural Development[1]	6	7	25	38	80	73
Animal and Plant Health Agency [2]	68	115	80	76	87	59
Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs	35	28	5	16	14	40
Public Health England (PHE)	26	21	15	18	26	13
Environment Agency (EA)	20	15	10	16	5	6
Food Standards Agency	19	19	19	25	10	5
Health Protection Scotland (HPS)	-	-	-	3	3	5
National Health Service (NHS)	5	1	2	4	1	4
HM Revenue and Customs	0	0	1	1	1	2
Veterinary Medicines Directorate	9	5	8	19	28	1
Marine Management Organisation (MMO)	0	0	0	7	7	1
Department of Health (DH)	0	0	0	4	1	1
National Crime Agency (NCA)	-	-	-	0	3	0
Maritime & Coastguard Agency	4	3	0	0	0	0
Ambulance Service	0	2	0	0	0	0
Former government bodies	0	15	11	-	-	-
Total	**192**	**231**	**176**	**227**	**266**	**210**

1. Northern Ireland government body.

2. Previously the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency.

“-" indicates a period where this notifier was not in existence.

Incidents by food and feed type

The two food types associated with the most incidents are *meat and meat products (other than poultry)* and *bivalve molluscs and products thereof*. Many of the incidents related to these food groups relate to monitoring programmes of primary production.

Table 5a: Incidents attributable to a food commodity type: UK, 2015

Food commodity type	Number of incidents
Meat and meat products (other than poultry)	254
Bivalve molluscs and products thereof	107
Fruits and vegetables	97
Cereals and bakery products	87
Milk and milk products	70
Herbs and spices	70
Dietetic foods, food supplements, fortified foods	61
Nuts, nut products and seeds	60
Poultry meat and poultry meat products	53
Other food product / mixed	51
Soups, broths, sauces and condiments	49
Feed for animals[1]	42
Fish and fish products	36
Non-alcoholic beverages	31
Confectionery	30
Prepared dishes and snacks	29
Alcoholic beverages	17
Fats and oils	14
Water for human consumption (other)	11
Crustaceans and products thereof	11
Eggs and egg products	11
Honey and royal jelly	10
Food additives and flavourings	7
Wine	5
Ices and desserts	5
Natural mineral water	3
Cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea	3
Not attributable to a particular food commodity	290
Total incidents	**1,514**

1. Includes feed pre-mixtures, feed materials, compound feeds, pet food and feed additives.

About two-thirds of *meat and meat products (other than poultry)* incidents were notified by the Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA), the NI Department of Agriculture & Rural Development and Other notifiers (mainly laboratories). Such incidents almost exclusively relate to on-farm livestock and many will have been identified by statutory surveillance programmes.

Regular monitoring of UK shellfish beds accounted for about 90% of *bivalve molluscs and products thereof* incidents. They mainly related to exceedances in *E. coli* and presence of algal toxins in harvesting areas. The majority of incidents involving *fruits and vegetables* related to pesticides, allergens and microbiological contamination.

Table 5b: Incidents not attributable to a specific food: UK, 2015

Type of non – attributable incident	Number of incidents
Related to environmental contamination	220
Related to food contact materials	8
Other	62
Total	**290**

About 20% of incidents were not attributable to a specific commodity type. Most of these were caused by fires and events potentially contaminating areas of food production. A few involved contamination through food contact materials. They include cooking and eating utensils that can come into contact with a wide range of foods. The remaining 62 incidents were not attributed to a particular food. For instance, it is not possible to identify the contaminated food in all cases of food poisoning.

Food alerts and information notices

The FSA and FSS may, in the light of the information received, issue a food alert to local authorities, who enforce food law. Only a small proportion of food incidents will lead to a food alert. These alerts are used during incidents where, for example, the distribution of a product is wide and will potentially involve many local authorities.

- Food Alerts for Action (FAFA) are issued when an incident requires enforcement action by Local Authorities.
- Product Recall Information Notices (PRIN) is issued to inform consumers and local authorities that a food product is being 'recalled' (when customers are asked to return the product).
- Withdrawal Information Notices (WINs) are issued to inform consumers and local authorities that a food product is being 'withdrawn' from sale (taken off the shelves).
- Allergy Alerts are issued in cases where foods are being withdrawn or recalled, either because the allergy labelling is missing or incorrect, or if there is any other risk specific to consumers with an intolerance or a food allergy,.

In 2015, the FSA and FSS issued a total of 145 alerts and information notices, plus 11 updates of previous alerts and notices. More than half of the alerts and notices were allergy alerts, which chiefly arose from the undeclared presence of allergens or from incorrect allergen labelling. Of the 58 Product Recall Information Notices, 27 related to microbiological contamination and 24 to physical contamination (foreign bodies).

Table 6: Food Alerts and Information Notices by Alert Category, UK 2015

Alert category	Number of alerts & notices	Number of updates	Total
Allergy Alerts (AA)	86	6	92
Product Recall Information Notice (PRIN)	58	5	63
Food Alert for Action (FAFA)	1	0	1
Withdrawal Information Notice (WIN)	0	0	0
Total	145	11	156

EU RASFF Notifications

The FSA, FSS and UK Port Health Authorities also inform the Commission and other Member States of matters that they need to act on. The information is passed on using the European Commission's RASFF System. In 2015, the UK issued a total of 338 RASFF notifications, although four were later withdrawn. The remainder comprised 35 rapid alerts, 248 border rejection notifications and 51 information notices (source: RASFF Portal, accessed 02/03/2015).

Appendix 1: Who tells the FSA and FSS about incidents?

Food business operators

Food business operators have a statutory obligation to report incidents. European legislation[1] specifies the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and lays down procedures in matters of food safety.

Food business operators are required, under Article 19 of Regulation No. 178/2002, to inform the competent authorities where they have reason to believe that a foodstuff that they have imported, produced, manufactured or distributed is not in compliance with food safety requirements. In the case of the UK, the competent authorities are the Food Standards Agency, Food Standards Scotland and the food authorities (local and port health authorities). Both industry and local authorities can report incidents online. Online report forms are available on both the FSA and FSS websites (see Appendix 2).

Local authorities

Under the Food Law Code of Practice[2], local authorities have a requirement to notify the FSA and/or FSS of food incidents. The code of practice provides instructions and criteria that food authorities should have regard to when engaged in the enforcement of food law. Food authorities must follow and implement the provisions of the code that applies to them.

Local authorities regularly undertake inspections of premises and sample products from wholesale or retail outlets. Where breaches of food safety requirements are identified, the authority will contact the Incidents Branch using our incident report form. In 2015, Local authorities provided information to the FSA and FSS under the Single Liaison Body (SLB) system. The Food Standards Agency is the SLB for the UK as designated under Article 35 of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004.

The Single Liaison Body:

- assists and coordinates communication between EU member states on food issues.
- forwards complaints and requests for information to member states.
- receives incoming requests for assistance and directs these to the appropriate originating authority (local authority).
- resolves difficulties in communication and liaison.

[1] *Regulation (EC) No. 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 ('the Regulation')*

[2] *The FSA and FSS each publish a version of this document, which provides instructions and criteria to which local authorities should have regard to when carrying out their food law regulatory and enforcement duties.*

Port health authorities (PHAs) have somewhat different responsibilities from inland LAs. In particular, several act as EU-approved entry points for imports that are of non-animal origin. This function is similar to the role that Border Inspection Posts take for products of animal origin (see below).

The European Commission

The European Commission operates the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF). The RASFF is a network of member states, the European Commission and the European Food Safety Authority. Whenever a member of the network has any information relating to the existence of a serious direct or indirect risk to human health, this information is immediately forwarded to the Commission using a rapid alert form. The Commission then immediately transmits this information to the members of the network. Likewise when the FSA or FSS finds an issue that affects or could affect other member states or third (non-EU) countries, they notify the Commission through the RASFF system.

Members of the public

Occasionally, the FSA or FSS will receive notification of food incidents and quality issues from members of the general public, although the public should always contact their local authority first. To find your nearest food enforcer, use the search facility on our website at: www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/enforceessential/yourarea/

Regarding food complaints from consumers who may have suffered food poisoning, or found food on sale past its use-by date, investigation of isolated complaints of this kind is the responsibility of local authority food enforcement officials. The FSA and FSS will promptly forward any complaints they receive to the relevant local authority to investigate.

Emergency services

Notifications are regularly received from the police, fire service and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. These notifications usually relate to fires, oil or sewage spills or chemical leaks where there is the potential for contamination in the food chain.

Other government departments/agencies

Notifications may be received from many government departments or agencies: for example, the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Environment Agency, Public Health England, Health Protection Scotland and the Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA).

Organisations in devolved countries

Notifications are also received from Public Health Wales, the Scottish Agricultural College and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland.

Border inspection posts (BIPs)

BIPs are EU-approved entry points for products of animal origin, originating from countries outside the EU. UK BIPs routinely sample incoming consignments of foodstuffs to ensure compliance with legislation. Adverse results are notified to the FSA and/or the FSS and action is taken to ensure that the incoming consignment is destroyed, re-exported or re-processed where permissible.

Border Rejection Notifications are sent by the FSA and the FSS to the European Commission via RASFF for circulation to all member states. Information circulated in this manner is used by BIPs to determine which incoming consignments to sample. Following the rejection of a consignment at a BIP, the responsible manufacturer or exporter can expect to have further consignments sampled to ensure compliance with legislation.

The FSA and the FSS also receive rejection notifications from Designated Points of Entry (DPEs) for consignments of food of non-animal origin. They are treated in the same way, but the notifier may be recorded as "Local Authority".

Miscellaneous organisations and facilities

Groups such as the Anaphylaxis Campaign, Coeliac UK and Allergy UK will notify the FSA if they become aware of any issues relating to food allergies. Nuclear Power stations[3] and independent laboratories will also notify the FSA or FSS of incidents.

[3] These relate to statutory notifications when advisory levels are exceeded, usually due to routine maintenance shut-downs of the reactors. These shut-downs result in short-term increases in gaseous discharges but typically remain within overall authorised limits.

Appendix 2: How can you get in touch with us?

We try to always meet the needs of our users. If you have any feedback on the publication please send it to robin.clifford@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk.

How to report a food incident
Food Incidents should be reported using an incident report form located at:
incidents.foodapps.co.uk/IncidentReportForm/login.aspx

Food Incidents in Scotland can be reported via:
http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/food-safety-standards/food-incidents

Contact details for FSA headquarters (England)
Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH
Tel: 020 7276 8448 (out of hours: 0345 051 8486)
Fax: 020 7276 8788 email: foodincidents@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Contact details for FSA Wales
11th Floor, Southgate House, Wood Street, Cardiff CF10 1EW
Tel: 029 2067 8999 (out of hours: 07789 926573)
Email: wales.foodincidents@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Contact details for FSA Northern Ireland
10a- 10c Clarendon Road, Belfast, BT1 3BG
Tel: 028 9041 7739/7708 (out of hours: 07784 473022)
Email: incidents.ni@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Contact details for Food Standards Scotland
4th Floor, Pilgrim House, Old Ford Road, Aberdeen, AB11 5RL
Tel: 01224 288 379 or 01224 285 138 (out of hours: 07881 516867)
Email: incident@fss.scot

Appendix 3: Glossary of terms

AA	Allergy Alert
APHA	Animal and Plant Health Agency
BIP	Border Inspection Post
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland
Defra	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DH	Department of Health
DPE	Designated Point of Entry
E. coli	*Escherichia coli*
EA	Environment Agency
EC	European Commission
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EU	European Union
FAFA	Food Alert – For Action
FSA	Food Standards Agency
FSS	Food Standards Scotland
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
HPS	Health Protection Scotland
ID	Identification
LA	Local Authority
MMO	Marine Management Organisation
NCA	National Crime Agency
NHS	National Health Service
PAA	Primary aromatic amines
PAH	Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons
PHA	Port Health Authority
PHE	Public Health England
RASFF	Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed
RIN	Recall Information Notice
SLB	Single Liaison Body
TSE	Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
WIN	Withdrawal Information Notice