

Don Staniford

Our Reference: FOI 1968

By email: salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com

Date: 13 December 2016

Dear Don

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your request for information which was received by us on 5 December 2016; I am now in a position to respond.

I am handling your request under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act).

The information in response to your request has been provided in the annex to this letter.

Please note that all the information that has been provided in response to this request will be published on the FSA website in due course.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me on the details provided in the footer of this letter. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not satisfied with the way the FSA has handled your request for information, you should write within two calendar months of the date of this letter to the Openness Team, and ask for an internal review. They will arrange for the Complaints Coordinator to conduct the review. Their address is Food Standards Agency, Room 2C Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH (email: Openness.team@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the FSA. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or through the website at: www.ico.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely



Judith Taylor
Project Manager, UK Food Surveillance System

Annex

Request

Your original request for information was received on 5 December 2016 and you asked for the following information:

Please provide information on listeria and salmon during 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Please include testing, reports, data on prevalence, scientific papers, monitoring programmes, correspondence with retailers and industry representatives, Rapid Food Alerts to DG SANCO, food alerts, warning letters, prosecutions, health briefings, internal briefings, emails and any other information relating to listeria and salmon since 1 January 2014.

Please consider this a request for information under the relevant Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations.

For the FSA Scotland, please consider this a request for information under the relevant Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations including both the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (as well as any other new or other regulations which may be appropriate).

Please provide this information electronically.

My colleague, Bolanle Ojoye, contacted you by letter on 7 December 2016 requesting that you clarify your request for information as the scope was extremely broad. In addition she made you aware that the majority of the information you requested was not held by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) however on a search of information held we established that we held records for around 250 samples of various salmon products tested for *Listeria Monocytogenes*.

She did also mention that you may find it helpful to also direct your request to Food Standards Scotland especially as 90% of these samples were taken in Scotland.

You responded on 7 December and clarified your request as follows:

In terms of narrowing down the FOI request, please consider in the first instance the testing data (around 250 samples).

If there are any food alerts for listeria in ANY salmon products (smoked, fresh etc) please also include.

Response

We have taken data from the UK Food Surveillance System (UKFSS), which stores records of food samples taken by UK enforcement authorities. Please note that this includes information about Scottish samples, as Food Standards Scotland also use UKFSS, so if you have contacted them separately you may receive some duplicate information.

In summary, from 1 January 2014 to now, the number of sample records for salmon and salmon products relating to Listeria is:

2014 – 89 samples were tested, of which 6 (7%) were unsatisfactory
2015 – 100 samples, of which 12 (12%) were unsatisfactory
2016 to date – 64 samples, of which 4 (6%) were unsatisfactory

Further information about the unsatisfactory results is in tables on the three pages after this one.

Please see below links to food alerts for the period of 2014 to 2016 where the presence of Listeria Monocytogenes was found in salmon products:

1. <https://www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/news/2016/14952/scotch-smoked-salmon-co-ltd-recalls-smoked-salmon-products-due-to-the-presence-of-listeria-monocytogenes>
2. <https://www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/news/2016/15213/o-t-smoked-salmon-ltd-recalls-smoked-salmon-products>
3. <https://www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/news/2014/9303/fine-seafood>
4. <https://www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/news/2014/6069/salmon>
5. <https://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/alerts/2014/9286/the-fine-seafood-co-recalls-all-date-codes-of-its-smoked-salmon-and>

I have also provided a link below to the Rapid Alert notification portal where can you search for any food alerts which may be of interest to you:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/rasff-window/portal/?event=searchForm&cleanSearch=1>

**Further information from UKFSS on unsatisfactory samples from 2014-2016
relating to Listeria in salmon and salmon products**

FoI 1968

2014 samples

Of 89 samples of salmon or salmon products tested in 2014 for Listeria, 6 were unsatisfactory. The laboratory comments in respect of the 6 unsatisfactory samples have been summarised in the following table:

Sample number	UK country where sample taken	Food product	Summary of Laboratory comment
77600081625	Scotland	Smoked salmon, cream cheese & pickle roll	Listeria spp (not monocytogenes) was present at a level signifying a risk that L.monocytogenes could potentially multiply in this food
78600170057	Scotland	Hot smoked salmon	The Listeria monocytogenes level was borderline. However, the criterion for the presence of Listeria monocytogenes does not apply if the food business operator is able to demonstrate that the Listeria monocytogenes level will not exceed 100 cfu/g throughout the shelf-life of the product. Additionally this sample was taken from a retail premises and had therefore left the control of the food business operator who had produced it; further sampling at the production stage and at the end of the product shelf life would be necessary in order at assess compliance with the regulations.
761HQ0562000 6512	Scotland	Smoked salmon	The individual sample unit complied with the requirement of The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006 for Listeria monocytogenes in ready to eat food when sold by retail. However, having considered the Health Protection Agency Guidelines for Assessing the Microbiological Safety of Ready-to-Eat Food(s) (November 2009), the analyst was of the opinion that the Listeria monocytogenes level was borderline and that the presence of Listeria monocytogenes at this level was likely evidence of poor processing and/or poor quality raw materials.
784HQ0626000 3291	Scotland	Cold smoked salmon	This sample was obtained at the producers premises. Before ready-to-eat food able to support the growth of Listeria monocytogenes has left the immediate control of the food business operator who has produced it The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006 sets the following standard for Listeria monocytogenes threshold value (m): absent in 25 gram maximum value (M): absent in 25 gram number of sample units (n): 5 number of units between 'm' and 'M' (c):0 The individual sample unit comprising this sample did not satisfy this requirement. However, the above criterion does not apply if the producer is able to demonstrate that the product will not exceed 100cfu/g of Listeria monocytogenes throughout its shelf-life.
55100040008	Wales	Smoked scottish salmon(reduced)	Presence of Listeria monocytogenes on enrichment only.
510HQINET008 6242	England	Smoked salmon	Listeria monocytogenes detected in 25g (20cfu/g). This criterion applies to products before they have left the immediate control of the producing food business operator, when he is not able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Local Authority that the product will not exceed the limit of 100cfu/g throughout the shelf-life

**Further information from UKFSS on unsatisfactory samples from 2014-2016
relating to Listeria in salmon and salmon prod**

FoI 1968

2015 samples

Of 100 samples of salmon or salmon products tested in 2015 for Listeria, 12 were unsatisfactory. The laboratory comments in respect of the 12 unsatisfactory samples have been summarised in the following table:

Sample number	UK country where sample taken	Food product	Summary of Laboratory comment
76700162049	Scotland	Cold smoked Scottish salmon	Having considered the Health Protection Agency Guidelines for Ready to Eat Food(s) (November 2009), the analyst was of the opinion that the Listeria monocytogenes level was unsatisfactory and potentially injurious to health and/or unfit for human consumption.
137PLAZA31830000135	England	Smoked salmon trimmings	Detection of Listeria species should be considered borderline as presence is undesirable in a ready to eat product.
4702780052	England	Organic salmon fishcakes	Unsatisfactory results for Listeria monocytogenes and Listeria species in 25g. Listeria identified by the Reference Laboratory as L. monocytogenes Serotype 1/2a
4703100007	England	Salmon fishcakes	Unsatisfactory results for Listeria monocytogenes and Listeria species in 25g according to Commission Regulation (EC) 2073/2005 (as amended) on Microbiological Criteria for Foodstuffs 2005 and Health Protection Agency Guidelines for Assessing the Microbiological Safety of Ready to Eat Foods Placed on the Market 2009.
4703100324	England	Cooked salmon for fishcakes	This is a further report. Confirmed by the Reference Laboratory as Listeria monocytogenes serotype 1/2a. Listeria monocytogenes at any level may be of concern and should be further investigated, particularly if the product has been collected from a producer or has a long shelf life.
4702780059	England	Gluten free organic salmon fishcakes	This is a further report. Unsatisfactory results for Listeria monocytogenes and Listeria species in 25g. Listeria identified by the Reference Laboratory as L. monocytogenes Serotype 1/2a.
41700224855	England	Hot smoked salmon	This is a further report. Listeria monocytogenes at any level may be of concern and should be further investigated, particularly if the product has been collected from a producer or has a long shelf life.
4702780057	England	Organic salmon fishcakes	This is a further report. Unsatisfactory results for Listeria monocytogenes and Listeria species in 25g. Confirmed by the Reference Laboratory as Listeria monocytogenes serotype 1/2a. Listeria monocytogenes at any level may be of concern and should be further investigated, particularly if the product has been collected from a producer or has a long shelf life.
4702250559	England	Organic salmon fishcakes	Listeria identified by the reference laboratory as L. monocytogenes Serotype 1/2a Listeria monocytogenes at any level may be of concern and should be further investigated, particularly if the product has been collected from a producer or has a long shelf life.
4702780061	England	Organic salmon fishcakes	This is a further report. Unsatisfactory results for Listeria monocytogenes and Listeria species in 25g. Listeria identified by the Reference Laboratory as L. monocytogenes Serotype 1/2a

**Further information from UKFSS on unsatisfactory samples from 2014-2016
relating to Listeria in salmon and salmon prod**

FoI 1968

Sample number	UK country where sample taken	Food product	Summary of Laboratory comment
4702250557	England	Organic salmon fishcakes	Listeria isolates confirmed by Reference Laboratory as Listeria monocytogenes Serotype 1/2a. Listeria species identified as Listeria monocytogenes. Listeria monocytogenes at any level may be of concern and should be further investigated, particularly if the product has been collected from a producer or has a long shelf life.
13800330251	England	Vacuum-packed cured salmon	This is a further report. Identified by the Reference Laboratory as Listeria monocytogenes 1/2b. Listeria monocytogenes at any level may be of concern and should be further investigated, particularly if the product has been collected from a producer or has a long shelf life.

2016 samples

Of 64 samples of salmon or salmon products tested so far in 2016 for Listeria, 4 were unsatisfactory. The laboratory comments in respect of the 4 unsatisfactory samples have been summarised in the following table:

Sample number	UK country where sample taken	Food product	Summary of Laboratory comment
76000230099	Scotland	Smoked salmon	The Listeria spp level (not L.monocytogenes) was unsatisfactory. The presence of Listeria spp is strong evidence of poor processing, poor temperature control and/or an inappropriate length of shelf-life. The presence of Listeria species at this level signifies a risk that L.monocytogenes could potentially multiply in this food.
51000040353	England	Smoked salmon	Listeria monocytogenes detected in 2 out of 5 samples tested as part of this batch.
5900100384	England	Treacle Salmon	Confirmed as Listeria monocytogenes serotype 1/2a. Listeria monocytogenes at any level may be of concern and should be further investigated, particularly if the product has been collected from a producer or has a long shelf life.
51000040338	England	Smoked salmon	Listeria monocytogenes detected in 2 out of 5 samples tested as part of this batch.