

# Food Safety Management System

## C.1 Food Sampling Policy

The Public Protection Team carries out food sampling to monitor compliance with legal standards for food safety and hygiene. An annual sampling programme is drawn up annually and published in line with FSA CoP requirements.

Food and water sampling also provides useful information to:

- Assist in making local risk based decisions on the food work programme
- inform businesses and reassure the public about food safety issues.
- provide evidence to food businesses on the effectiveness their management systems and procedures
- address local and national food safety campaigns and concerns

In devising the annual programme we consider:

- the resources available
- previous years' sampling results
- local businesses that either manufacture or retail high risk products
- food complaints
- national or local programmes and issues

### Types of Sampling

**1. Routine sampling** as part of a structured programmed devised by the PHLS/LACORS and Sussex Food Liaison Group. Detailed protocols are developed to ensure consistency of sampling and results. In determining foods to be sampled, the following are considered:

- National and Regional surveys – e.g. PHLS/LACORS and Sussex Food Liaison Group Shopping Basket survey.
- Local food safety concerns.
- product testing to verify food has been produced safely and in compliance with legal standards, usually in manufacturing and higher risk premises
- Premises for which the authority is the Home/Originating Authority.

**2. Investigative sampling** carried out as required, for example:

- before, during or after routine inspections for the purposes of enforcement, process monitoring, or to assess the safety of particular foods,
- following a complaint
- as part of a special investigation, e.g. a suspected food poisoning outbreak

Where results are unsatisfactory or suggest a problem during handling, manufacture or cleaning, officers will normally visit the premises to investigate further and take appropriate action to protect public health.

All sample results are interpreted using the PHLS Guidelines for microbiological quality, and EC Regulations on food safety and microbiological criteria