

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & LICENSING

Brighton & Hove City Council **Food safety – Food Sampling Policy**

1. General

This authority considers that end product sampling and analysis is a significant control measure in promoting food safety, and protecting the final consumer.

This must accompany proactive hazard analysis and operational controls by food businesses, during the production, distribution, storage and sale or service of food.

It is the policy of this authority to ensure controls are in place during inspections and other visits to food premises.

Sampling or swabbing and analysis can be used by officers, to see if the controls used by a food business are effective.

All sampling is to be carried out according to the documented procedure no. WI/02/S/02 accredited under ISO 9001.

This policy has been prepared in consultation with the Public Analyst and the Food Examiner.

2. Sampling during routine inspections

Food sampling is not normally carried out during routine inspections, although the decision whether to take samples is at the inspecting officers discretion.

Sampling may be carried out at the time of inspection in one of the following circumstances:

- If there is a history of poor food sample analysis results from the premises
- If the officer suspects that operational food safety controls may not adequately protect the safety of the food
- If a complaint or an allegation of food poisoning has been received in respect of food at that premises

3. Co-ordinated National Sampling Programmes

This authority fully supports national and regional sampling programmes as a valuable means of identifying areas of concern, and to establish microbiological and chemical criteria for the composition of different food and food products.

It is the policy of this authority to participate in all LACORS national sampling programmes.

This authority is also willing, wherever possible, to participate in any sampling initiative, either organised by the East Sussex Food Liaison Group, the Public Health Laboratory Service, or instigated by the Food Standards Agency.

4. Local sampling programme

The food authority takes account of the number, type and risk ratings of food business in the area, The resources available also govern activity.

It is the policy of this authority to take samples for microbiological analysis from approved premises and food manufacturers to monitor process.

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Wherever possible and subject to unforeseen pressures on the food safety service, samples will be taken at least annually from these categories of premises, e.g. pies, imported foods.

5. Food Complaints

Food that is the subject of a complaint will be examined by an officer of this authority and will be dealt with according to the documented procedure no. WI/02/C/01 accredited under ISO9001.

The decision whether to send the food sample for analysis is made by the case officer, in accordance with the above procedure.

Food will normally be sent for analysis if formal action is likely as a result of the complaint, or where it is alleged that illness was caused by the consumption of the food in question.

6. Sample Results

Food businesses are informed of the results of any food sampling carried out at their premises, both resulting from a sampling programme or from the analysis of a complaint sample received from a consumer.

Where the sampling was carried out following a consumer complaint, the complainant is also informed of the analysis results.

Home Authority Principle

Brighton and Hove City Council acts as home authority for local businesses for food safety. Work Instructions should be read alongside this document. Annual sampling of food from each premises is undertaken.