

Text to be Distributed Following/During Sample Purchase From the Internet, Mail Order Establishments, etc.

THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY IS CARRYING OUT A FOOD SURVEY

The Food Standards Agency conducts regular tests to ensure that food sold in the UK does not create an unacceptable risk for public health or mislead the consumer. This text has been [given, posted, emailed, etc] to you by someone collecting samples, on behalf of the Food Standards Agency. They have obtained a sample of product (e.g. food, drink, supplements, etc.) from your [include details, e.g. internet site, mail order, etc] as part of a survey.

This text explains why the Food Standards Agency undertakes surveys and how it will publish the results.

Why is the Food Standards Agency doing food surveys?

- To check that food is safe for consumers and that they are not being misled.
- To collect information on the composition of food.
- To help develop the Agency's policies on food safety.
- To check if current laws, codes of practice and other measures are working.

Why did the Food Standards Agency choose your [include details as above]?

Your [include details as above] was chosen because it is one of the places where people buy the type of sample the Food Standards Agency are looking at in their current survey.

What will happen to the sample?

The sample will be sent to a laboratory where it will be analysed. The results will then be sent to the Food Standards Agency. Where possible, a portion of the sample will be kept in case the manufacturer of the product asks for further, independent analysis.

How will I know which products have been taken?

A list of all the samples taken for the survey will be held by the Food Standards Agency. This includes the brand names and details of when and where they were bought. Details of the samples purchased from your [include details as above] will be sent to the brand owner as soon as practicable. Those purchased from retail chains will also be sent to the Head Office for that chain.

What will happen if the results are unusual?

The Food Standards Agency will contact the brand owner to explain what happens next. Normally the result of the sample will be sent for comment well before the information is due to be published. However, if there is an urgent need to withdraw or recall the product because its sale is illegal or in order to protect public health, the brand owner will be notified quickly of the action required. The results would then be published without delay. This survey is being carried out to collect information rather than for enforcement purposes but if the results show a hazard to health, or breach relevant legal requirements, your local authority will be informed and they may wish to take enforcement action based on these results or collect further samples as part of an investigation.

What will happen with the results?

At the end of the survey, the results, and all the information about the sample, will be published on the Food Standards Agency's web site (www.food.gov.uk). Sometimes the results need to be considered by one of the committees of independent scientific experts. This usually happens where the implications of the findings for public health are not completely clear. The expected publication date will be put on our web site. You can call the Food Standards Agency on +44 (0) 207 276 8000 to be told when this has happened or to be sent a copy.

How can I find out more?

If you want more information you can call the Food Standards Agency on: +44 (0) 207 276 8000, and tell them that a sample was taken from your establishment for the following survey.

[Print sticky labels with title of survey – to be provided to distributor prior to dispatch]