

FSA's National Food Crime Unit investigation results in a £50,000 fine for food business which faked disease certificates

Poultry farmer Stuart Perkins of SG Perkins Ltd, age 38 from Radstock, received a substantial fine at Bath Magistrates Court on Wednesday 3 July after pleading guilty to various offences under The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and the Animal Health Act 1981.

The FSA, working with partners including Avon and Somerset police, Environmental Health and Trading Standards, executed a search warrant at the poultry farm and abattoir in November 2023 and found evidence of traceability concerns and that Perkins had falsified Salmonella testing certificates. This meant birds had been slaughtered for the food chain without proof they were free from disease.

The Animal and Plant Health Agency supported the investigations, monitoring the welfare of the poultry on site and collecting official Salmonella samples. The FSA acted to manage the potential food safety risk by ensuring products with traceability concerns were removed from the market.

An alert was also issued to industry by the FSA's NFCU to ask food businesses to check the traceability of their suppliers to help ensure legitimate businesses maintain the integrity and safety of their food chains and protect their customers.

Perkins and SG Perkins Ltd was sentenced to a fine of £5000 for each FSA offence, £3500 for each local authority offence, costs amounting to £21,810.75, plus a victim surcharge of £2000, which came to a total of £50,830.75.

Andrew Quinn, Head of the Food Standards Agency's National Food Crime Unit (NFCU), said:

"We welcome this substantial fine as it shows the serious nature of faking documents and jeopardising food safety. This should act as a deterrent to anyone considering taking dangerous short cuts and breaching food safety and hygiene law. I want to thank Heart of the South West Trading Standards for their excellent work in securing this result, as well as Avon and Somerset Police for their assistance.

"Together, we are stronger in the fight against food crime, and we continue to work with partners to ensure food is safe and help ensure that consumers are protected."

Fakir Mohamed Osman, Head of the Heart of the South West Trading Standards Service said:

"We take breaches of this kind very seriously. The prevention of salmonella programme is there for a reason, to safeguard the public. Producers suspected of not

carrying out the required testing will be investigated”.

“The defendant’s actions presented a real risk to public health, and I am pleased that, thanks to our collaborative efforts with the Food Standards Agency, we were able to take action.”

If you are worried about the labelling or food hygiene practices of a food business, you can speak to the NFCU in confidence [by reporting a food crime online](#) or by freephone on 0800 028 1180. For non- UK mobiles or calls from overseas please use 0207 276 8787.