

Radioactivity in Food and the Environment (RIFE) report 2016

Area of research interest: [Radioactivity in Food and the Environment](#)

Project status: Completed

This report covers sampling and analysis carried out in 2016 as part of the radiological monitoring programme. The main purpose of the programme is to make sure that discharges from the UK nuclear sites do not cause unacceptable exposure to radioactivity through our food.

Key findings

The key findings of the RIFE report 2016 are:

- the total radiation dose to members of the public in the UK is significantly below the EU annual dose limit of 1 millisievert for all exposures
- the exposure of consumers to radioactivity in 2016 was similar than in 2015 for the majority of nuclear sites

Where the results come from

The report combines our monitoring results with those of the Environment Agency, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency. It brings together our data on food from habits surveys and data on environmental sources of radioactivity to provide a comprehensive picture for people who live close to nuclear sites and eat locally produced food.

Habits surveys

Habits surveys are conducted to establish the habits of people living and working near nuclear sites in the United Kingdom. This includes the food they eat and the activities they carry out in the area around nuclear sites. The information from the surveys and data on the levels of radioactivity found in food and the environment are used to calculate the level of radiation they are exposed to.

In 2016, [habit surveys were carried out at Amersham, Heysham and Sellafield in England](#). The results were used to improve the assessment of doses to the members of the public near nuclear licensed sites.

FSA Explains

?Radioactivity has been around since the Earth formed. It exists naturally in the atmosphere, soil, seas and rivers. It is also created by human activity during energy production and military operations.

Very small amounts of radioactivity get into our food and drink. The vast majority of radioactivity found in food results from natural rather than man-made sources.

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