

# National Reference Laboratories (NRLs)

The role of National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) and details of the UK and Northern Ireland (NI) NRLs for food and feed testing

NRLs are specialist laboratories responsible for maintaining standards for the routine testing of feed, food and animal health. They provide advice and support on methods for official control testing, ensuring the delivery of risk-based and proportionate food enforcement to protect consumers.

Food Standards Agency (FSA) has a legal obligation to designate NRLs for food and feed. FSA and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) designated food and feed NRLs for UK. FSA designated food and feed NRLs providing specific EU requirements for Northern Ireland.

Defra has a legal obligation to designate NRLs for animal health and live animals in Great Britain (GB). This role is undertaken by [DAERA](#) for Northern Ireland (NI).

In GB, NRLs are designated under the [Official Control Regulation \(EU\) 2017/625 for Official Feed and Food Controls](#), as amended and retained in UK legislation under [Statutory Instrument 2020/1481](#).

## Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, EU law continues to apply post EU exit in respect of the majority of food and feed hygiene law, as listed in the [Northern Ireland Protocol \(NIP\)](#). This includes the [Official Control Regulation \(EU\) 2017/625 for Official Feed and Food Controls](#). In accordance with the Northern Ireland Protocol (NIP), the FSA has designated laboratories based in EU Member States to provide required NRL functions under Regulation 2017/625 for Northern Ireland.

However, Northern Ireland may still refer to UK NRLs for other functions such as assistance with technical questions and support with proficiency testing beyond that provided by NI specific NRLs.

## FSA and FSS designated food and feed NRLs for UK

### Additives for use in animal nutrition

[Laboratory of the Government Chemist Ltd](#)

Teddington  
Middlesex  
TW11 0LY  
Tel: 020 8943 7000

### Antimicrobial resistance

Food, Water & Environment (FWE) Microbiology Network  
[UK Health & Security Agency \(UKHSA\)](#)  
61 Colindale Avenue  
London  
NW9 5EQ

Tel: 020 8327 7160/7325

## **Campylobacter**

FW&E Microbiology Network

[UKHSA](#)

61 Colindale Avenue

London

NW9 5EQ

Tel: 020 8327 7160/7325

## **Coagulase positive Staphylococci, including Staphylococcus aureus**

FW&E Microbiology Network

[UKHSA](#)

61 Colindale Avenue

London

NW9 5EQ

Tel: 020 8327 7160/7325

## **Escherichia coli, including Verotoxigenic E. Coli (VTEC)**

FW&E Microbiology Network

[UKHSA](#)

61 Colindale Avenue

London

NW9 5EQ

Tel: 020 8327 7160/7325

## **Foodborne viruses**

[Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science \(CEFAS\)](#)

The Nothe

Barrack Road

Weymouth

DT4 8UB

Tel: 01305 206600

## **Genetically modified organisms**

[Laboratory of the Government Chemist Ltd](#)

Queens Road

Teddington

Middlesex

TW11 0LY

Tel: 020 8943 7000

## **Halogenated Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)**

[Food and Environment Research Agency \(FERA\) \(Dioxins\)](#)

Sand Hutton

York

YO41 1LZ

Tel: 01904 462000

## **Listeria monocytogenes**

FW&E Microbiology Network  
[UKHSA](#)  
61 Colindale Avenue  
London  
NW9 5EQ  
Tel: 020 8327 7160/7325

## **Material intended to come into contact with foodstuffs**

### [FERA \(Materials\)](#)

Sand Hutton  
York  
YO41 1LZ  
Tel: 01904 462000

## **Metals and nitrogenous compounds**

### [FERA \(Heavy metals\)](#)

Sand Hutton  
York  
YO41 1LZ  
Tel: 01904 462000

## **Monitoring of marine biotoxins**

### [Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute \(AFBI\)](#)

Shellfish Toxin Unit - VSD Stormont  
Stoney Road  
Belfast  
BT4 3SD  
Tel: 028 9052 5636

## **Monitoring the bacteriological contamination of bivalve molluscs**

### [CEFAS](#)

The Nothe  
Barrack Road  
Weymouth  
DT4 8UB  
Tel: 01305 206600

## **Mycotoxins and plant toxins**

### [FERA \(Mycotoxins\)](#)

Sand Hutton  
York  
YO41 1LZ  
Tel: 01904 462000

## **Parasites (Trichinella and Echinococcus)**

[Animal & Plant Health Agency \(APHA\)](#)  
National Agri-Food Innovation Campus  
Sand Hutton  
York  
YO41 1LZ  
Tel: 01904 462000

## **Processing contaminants**

[FERA \(Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons\)](#)  
Sand Hutton  
York  
YO41 1LZ  
Tel: 01904 462000

## **The analysis and testing of Zoonoses (Salmonella)**

FW&E Microbiology Network  
[UKHSA](#)  
61 Colindale Avenue  
London  
NW9 5EQ  
Tel: 020 8327 7160/7325

## **FSA designated food and feed NRLs for Northern Ireland**

### **Additives for use in animal nutrition**

[Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety \(AGES\)](#)  
Institute for Animal Nutrition and Feed  
Spargelfeldstrasse 191  
1220 Vienna  
Austria  
Tel: +43 50555 33216  
Email: [nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at](mailto:nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at)

### **Antimicrobial resistance**

[Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine](#)  
Agriculture House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin  
DO2 WK12  
Tel: +353 (0) 1 607 2000  
Email: [info@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:info@agriculture.gov.ie)

### **Campylobacter**

### [Foodborne pathogens, Sciensano](#)

Rue Juliette Wytmanstraat 14  
Brussels  
Belgium  
1050  
Tel: +43 50555 35107  
Email: [NRL.NI@sciensano.be](mailto:NRL.NI@sciensano.be)

## **Coagulase positive Staphylococci, including Staphylococcus aureus**

### [Laboratorio Nazionale di Riferimento Stafilococchi coagulasi positivi, compreso S.aureus S.C. Sicurezza e Qualità degli Alimenti](#)

Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale del Piemonte Liguria e Valle d'Aosta  
Via Bologna 148  
Torino  
Italy 10154  
Tel: 0039 0112686234 / 225 or 335  
Email: [nrlstafilococco@izsto.it](mailto:nrlstafilococco@izsto.it)

## **Escherichia coli, including Verotoxigenic E. Coli (VTEC)**

### [Foodborne pathogens, Sciensano](#)

Rue Juliette Wytmanstraat 14  
Brussels  
Belgium  
1050  
Tel: +43 50555 35107  
Email: [NRL.NI@sciensano.be](mailto:NRL.NI@sciensano.be)

## **Foodborne viruses**

### [Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety \(AGES\)](#)

Institute for Food Safety Vienna  
Spargelfeldstrasse 191  
1220 Vienna  
Austria  
Tel: +43 50555 35107  
Email: [nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at](mailto:nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at)

## **Food Contact Materials**

### [Health Service Executive](#)

Public Analyst Laboratory  
Sir Patrick Dun's  
Lower Grand Canal Street  
Dublin 2  
DO2 P667  
Tel: +353 (0) 16612022  
Email: [info.dpal@hse.ie](mailto:info.dpal@hse.ie)

## **Genetically modified organisms**

### [Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety \(AGES\)](#)

Institute for Food Safety Vienna

Spargelfeldstrasse 191  
1220 Vienna  
Austria  
Tel: +43 50555 35107  
e-mail: [nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at](mailto:nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at)

## **Halogenated persistent organic pollutants (POPs)**

[Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment \(BIOR\)](#)

Lejupes iela 3  
Riga  
Latvia  
LV-1076  
Tel: +37167620513  
Email: [bior@bior.lv](mailto:bior@bior.lv)

## **Listeria monocytogenes**

[Foodborne pathogens, Sciensano](#)

Rue Juliette Wytmanstraat 14  
Brussels  
Belgium  
1050  
Tel: +43 50555 35107  
Email: [NRL.NI@sciensano.be](mailto:NRL.NI@sciensano.be)

## **Metals and nitrogenous compounds**

[Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety \(AGES\)](#)

Institute for Animal Nutrition and Feed  
Wieningerstraße 8  
4020 Linz  
Austria  
Tel: +43 50555 33216  
e-mail: [nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at](mailto:nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at)

## **Monitoring of marine biotoxins**

[Wageningen Food Safety Research \(WFSR\)](#)

Akkermaalsbos 2  
Wageningen  
Netherlands  
6708 WB  
Tel: +31317 481603  
e-mail: [mirjam.klijnstra@wurl.nl](mailto:mirjam.klijnstra@wurl.nl)

## **Mycotoxins and plant toxins**

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Institute for Food Safety Linz  
Wieningerstraße 8  
4020 Linz  
Austria  
Tel: +43 50555 35107

e-mail: [nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at](mailto:nrl-ni-fsa@ages.at)

## **Parasites**

[Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine](#)

Agriculture House

Kildare Street

Dublin

DO2 WK12

Tel: +353 (0) 1 607 2000

Email: [info@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:info@agriculture.gov.ie)

## **Processing contaminants**

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