

# Radioactivity in Food and the Environment (RIFE) report 2023

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

Project status: Completed

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Date published: 7 November 2024

This report covers sampling and analysis carried out in 2023 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. It is available on [Radioactivity in food and the environment reports page \(gov.uk\)](#).

## Key findings

The key findings of the RIFE report 2023 are:

- the total radiation dose to members of the public in the UK is significantly below the annual dose limit of 1 millisievert for all exposures
- the exposure of consumers to radioactivity in 2023 was similar than in 2022 for most nuclear sites

## Where the results come from

The report combines our monitoring results with those of the Environment Agency, Natural Resources Wales the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Food Standards Scotland. 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 2023, [habits surveys](#) were carried out at:

- Low Level Waste Repository: [Radiological Habits Surveys: Low Level Waste Repository, 2023](#)
- Sellafield: [Radiological Habits Surveys: Sellafield, 2023](#)
- Wylfa: [Radiological Habits Surveys: Wylfa 2023](#)

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. Most of the radioactivity found in food results from natural rather than man-made sources.