

Shellfish supplementary sampling

Information about the supplementary sampling scheme for food business operators and shellfish harvesters

Shellfish harvesters can submit additional samples to be included within our official control microbiological monitoring programme for shellfish classification. These are known as 'supplementary' samples.

The continuing classification of a harvesting area (whether Class A, B or C) depends on a statistical analysis of sampling results. The more data we have, the less chance there is for one single result to affect the classification. More data also gives us information about seasonal variations in water quality.

The shellfish sampling data is repeatedly assessed and the more data we have, the more stable the classification can be. It also gives a better idea of any variations in water quality throughout the year.

Results from the additional sampling will be assessed in the same way as results from official control sampling. These will help to decide on the classification, opening and closing of production areas.

Important

References to EU legislation in FSA guidance

Directly applicable EU legislation no longer applies in GB. EU legislation retained when the UK exited the EU became assimilated law on 1 January 2024, published on legislation.gov.uk ([Opens in a new window](#)). References to any legislation in FSA guidance with 'EU' or 'EC' in the title (e.g. Regulation (EC) 178/2002) should now be regarded as assimilated law where applicable to GB. References to 'Retained EU Law' or 'REUL' should now be regarded as references to assimilated law.

For businesses moving goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, information on [the Windsor Framework](#) ([Opens in a new window](#)) is available on GOV.UK.

The Windsor Framework was adopted by the UK and EU on 24 March 2023. The Framework provides a unique set of arrangements to support the flow of agrifood retail products from Great Britain (GB) to Northern Ireland (NI), allowing GB standards for public health in relation to food, marketing and organics to apply for pre-packed retail goods moved via the NI Retail Movement Scheme (NIRMS).

The guides for supplementary sampling in England, Wales and Northern Ireland covers the application and submission process for FBOs to take part in supplementary sampling.

England and Wales

PDF

[View Shellfish supplementary sampling guide England and Wales as PDF](#) ([Open in a new window](#)) (462.54 KB)

Northern Ireland

PDF

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(272.18 KB)