

Annex A

Request and response

1. Can we have the total number of reported food crimes for 2013, 2014 and 2015?

The National Food Crime Unit receives intelligence reports from a variety of sources which are indexed against our seven identified techniques of food crime. However, reports do not necessarily equal offences and multiple reports may be received for one incident.

Between 01/01/2013 and 31/12/2015 there were 3208 reports from various sources that have been classified as food crime and recorded on the Food Crime Intelligence database.

01/01/2013 to 31/12/2013	1517 reports
01/01/2014 to 31/12/2014	895 reports
01/01/2015 to 31/12/2015	796 reports

2. Can you tell us where these reports come from? We do not need to know the source for each individual complaint just where they come from overall. For instance, are they largely from local police forces or complaints made directly to the FSA/Food crime unit?

The NFCU receives information directly from the public, industry, local authorities and public bodies such as the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), the Marine Management Organisation and the Animal and Plant Health Agency. The NFCU also receives referrals via the Government Agencies Intelligence Network (GAIN), and reports on qualified disclosures in relation to consumption of food or matters which concern the protection of consumers in England, Wales or Northern Ireland.

Prior to 2016 sources were not classified according to type on our intelligence database, so we are not able to provide a breakdown of this information.

3. Can you tell us how many of the complaints made each year are investigated? We do not need to know details just the total number. We believe it is in the public interest to know how many complaints are not investigated.

The National Food Crime Unit receives information about food crime from a variety of sources and all information received is subject to a standardised triaging process where information received will be recorded, sanitised and disseminated to partner agencies or operationalised for internal progression.

However, as stated above, reports do not necessarily equal offences and multiple reports may be received for one incident, therefore we are unable to provide a specific number or ratio of reports investigated.

4. Can you also tell us how many food crime prosecutions there are in total each year from 2013-2016? An estimate would be fine if you don't have definitive data.

There is no obligation for partner agencies to provide feedback to the NFCU about action taken in response to intelligence disseminated by the unit. We are therefore unable to provide figures on food crime prosecutions in total.

Questions 5 to 7

Please note that questions 5 to 7 are being dealt with outside the terms of the Act because you are asking for the FSA's opinion/explanation and not for recorded information. Requests for information under the Act are for **recorded** information i.e. information that we hold that is written down (or retained in another format if it is audio or visual information). The only instance where the FSA will provide the explanation or opinion under the Freedom of Information Act is if it already exists in recorded form (e.g. email trail, notes of a meeting, etc.).

With regards to question 5, fluctuations in the number of intelligence reports recorded on NFCU's database are not a reliable measure of trends in food crime. These figures may be influenced by several factors, including efforts in recent years to increase both the awareness of the NFCU and the reporting facility. Some reports will also be indexed to more than one category.

For context in relation to question 6 and 7, the NFCU identifies the following techniques as the main methods through which food crime can be committed.

- theft - dishonestly appropriating food, drink or feed products in order to profit from their use or sale.
- unlawful processing - slaughtering or preparing meat and related products in unapproved premises or using unauthorised techniques.
- waste diversion - unlawfully diverting food, drink or feed meant for disposal, back into the supply chain.
- adulteration - reducing the quality of food by including a foreign substance, in order to lower costs or fake a higher quality.
- substitution - replacing a food or ingredient with another substance that is similar but inferior.

- misrepresentation - marketing or labelling a product to wrongly portray its quality, safety, origin or freshness.
- document fraud - includes the making, use and possession of false documents with the intent to sell, market or otherwise vouch for a fraudulent or substandard product.