

To: Lead Food Officers
Cc: REHIS, CoSLA, SFELC

12 August 2015

FSS/ENF/15/008

Dear Colleague,

Sprouts and Seeds Intended for Sprouting

As you are aware, the European Commission introduced a legislative package of four regulations in 2013 in order to enhance controls following an outbreak of E. coli O104:H4 in Germany and France in 2011, which identified sprouts and seeds for sprouting as the most likely source of contamination. These included the introduction of requirements for producers of sprouts to be approved, microbiological criteria, traceability and for import controls via the requirement of a health certificate. Although establishments need approval, there is no requirement for an identification mark to be displayed on the product or an approval number to be issued.

As part of a general review of the lists of approved establishments in the UK, we are updating our records of establishments which are approved by LAs for the production of sprouted seeds. Therefore, we are asking local authorities to provide this information on establishments in their area. Please provide this information to Doreen Tawse: Doreen.tawse@fss.scot

The Q & A for sprouts and seeds intended for sprouting has been developed over the period since the regulations have been in place. The aim of the document is to capture and provide information on some of the questions we have been asked by local authorities and businesses.

It is grouped by the four areas of legislation:

- approval of establishments

- microbiological criteria
- traceability
- imports

It will be placed on the Food Standards Scotland website and kept under review as a living document, so as well as views on the model answers provided we would welcome any additional questions or comments from your own experiences if you feel these could assist others. We have also provided a copy of the Q&A to industry stakeholders but we would be grateful if local authorities could bring this to the attention to the relevant FBOs in their areas.

The derogation contained in Regulation (EU) No 704/2014 allowing seeds for sprouting to be imported into the EU from third countries, if accompanied by the results of Enterobacteriaceae testing, came to an end on 1 July 2015. This means that all incoming consignments must now be accompanied by the signed attestation on the import certificate. The attestation confirms that seeds were produced under conditions complying with Regulation (EC) No 852/2004. The Commission has indicated that it will not be producing an amended certificate, as the model certificate contained in Regulation (EU) No 704/2014 is clear that the derogation is only applicable until 1 July 2015.

If you would like any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me
(Jacqueline.angus@fss.scot, 01224 285175)

Yours faithfully



Jacqui Angus
Food Standards Scotland