

Food and feed law

The aim of these rules is to make sure that the production of food for human consumption and food or feed that is fed to food producing animals is safe.

Food and feed safety, withdrawal and recall:

A. You must not

1. place unsafe food¹ or unsafe feed² on the market;
2. feed unsafe feed to food producing animals.

B. You must

1. arrange for unsafe food or unsafe feed to be withdrawn from the market if you believe you have supplied it, and inform both your local authority and the Food Standards Agency (FSA);
2. destroy any unsafe feed unless the competent authority tells you not to do so;
3. tell consumers of food, or the users of the feed, of the reason for any withdrawal if it may have reached them;
4. arrange for unsafe food or unsafe feed to be recalled if there is no other way of achieving a sufficiently high level of health protection;
5. immediately tell both your local authority and the FSA if food which you have supplied, or is in your possession and you intend to sell, could be harmful to health and of the actions you have taken to prevent risks to the final consumer. In the case of feedstuffs containing veterinary medicinal products (medicated feedstuffs) and/or specified feed additives (cocciostats or histomonostats) at levels greater than their prescribed or authorised levels, or feedstuffs which are contaminated with such products, which may be harmful to health, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) should also be informed.

Traceability

C. You must

1. put in place systems and procedures for the traceability of inputs³ to your farm, which identify:
 - the name and address of your supplier;
 - the type and quantity of inputs that were supplied to you;
 - the date of the delivery of these inputs to your farm;
2. put in place systems and procedures for the traceability of products when they leave your farm, which identify:
 - the name and address of the businesses you supplied;
 - the nature and quantity of the products that were supplied to those businesses;
 - the date on which the products left your farm;
3. store this information in a format which is readily available and produce it when requested.

1 'Unsafe food' is food which is harmful to human health or unfit for human consumption.

2 'Unsafe feed' is feed deemed to have an adverse effect on human or animal health or it makes the food that comes from food producing animals unsafe for human consumption.

3 'Inputs' are: food, feed, food producing animals and any other substance intended or expected to be incorporated into a feed.

Hygiene of foodstuffs and feed hygiene

D. You must

1. store and handle waste and hazardous substances⁴ in order to prevent contamination of your food products or feed products;
2. store feed away from chemicals or any other products banned for use as animal feed;
3. handle medicated and non-medicated feeds separately to prevent cross-contamination and store medicated feeds in such a way so they can't be fed by mistake to animals for which they're not intended;
4. use feed additives, veterinary medicinal products and biocides correctly (if you use them on your farm) with dosage, application and storage as stated on the label or as prescribed. This includes making sure that food you produce does not contain residues of pesticides or veterinary medicinal products that are higher than the permitted maximum residue level for the pesticide used or the maximum residue limit for the medicine used⁵;
5. take adequate measures⁶ to prevent the introduction and spread of contagious diseases transmissible to humans through food;
6. source and use feed, for food producing animals, from establishments that are registered and/or approved by your local authority. In the case of medicated feedingstuffs or feed containing specified feed additives⁷ source the feedingstuffs from establishments that are approved by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate;
7. keep up to date records on all of the following, if they are relevant to your business and make them available on request to an inspector:
 - veterinary medicinal products, or other treatments, given to your animals (including the dates of the treatment and the withdrawal period);
 - the use of plant protection products and biocides;
 - the results of any analyses carried out on samples taken from food producing animals, plants, animal feed or other samples taken for diagnostic purposes that have importance for human and animal health, and to take account of these accordingly;
 - any relevant reports on checks carried out on animals or products of animal origin;
 - any use of genetically modified seeds in feed production.

Rules D1 to D7 do not apply to the direct supply by the producer of small quantities of primary products to the final consumer (for example, farm gate sales) or to local retail establishments which then directly supply the final consumer.

- 4 There is no definitive list of 'hazardous substances'; they are any substances that have the potential to cause an adverse effect on human health or animal health.
- 5 For pesticides, residues within food you produce must not exceed the maximum residue level at the time the food is placed on the market as food. For veterinary medicinal products, residues within food producing animals must not exceed the maximum residue limit at the time the animal is sold or supplied for slaughter.
- 6 'Adequate measures' include: abiding by the statutory herd testing for bovine tuberculosis (bTB) and pre-movement TB testing of animals; not moving animals subject to movement restrictions; taking precautionary measures when introducing new animals; reporting suspected disease outbreaks to the competent authority.
- 7 'Specified feed additives' are coccidiostats, histomonostats and additives authorised to promote growth.



If you are a producer of raw milk⁸ (from any species), or handle raw milk, the following extra rules apply:

E. You must

1. make sure that raw milk comes from animals that:
 - are in a good general state of health;
 - show no sign of disease that might result in the contamination of milk;
 - do not have any udder wound likely to affect the milk;
 - are not within the prescribed withdrawal period following the administration of authorised products or substances;
 - have not been given any unauthorised substances or products;
2. make sure that raw milk comes from animals belonging to herds/holdings which have disease-free status for tuberculosis and brucellosis. If your herd or holding is not disease-free you may sell raw milk from your non-reactor animals if you are selling to a wholesaler who will heat treat the milk before marketing it for human consumption, or the raw milk is from sheep or goats and is intended to be made into cheese that has a maturation period of at least two months;
3. effectively isolate animals that are infected, or suspected of being infected, with brucellosis or tuberculosis so that there is no adverse effect on other animals' milk;
4. make sure that milking equipment and the premises where raw milk is stored, handled or cooled are located and constructed to limit the risk of contamination of milk;
5. make sure that premises used for the storage of raw milk:
 - are protected against vermin, including birds and birds' nests, and adequately separated from premises where animals are housed;
 - have suitable refrigeration equipment in order to meet the post-milking cooling rules;
6. make sure the surfaces of equipment that come into contact with raw milk are easy to clean and disinfect (where this is necessary);
7. clean (and disinfect where necessary) the surfaces of equipment that come into contact with raw milk after use, and maintain in a sound condition;
8. carry out milking hygienically, especially making sure that:
 - before milking starts the teats, udder and adjacent parts are clean;
 - you satisfactorily identify animals undergoing any medical treatment which is likely to transfer residues to the milk;
 - raw milk from any animals that are still within the withdrawal period after receiving medication is not used for human consumption;

⁸ 'Raw milk' means milk produced by the secretion of the mammary gland of farmed animals that has not been heated to more than 40 °C or undergone any treatment that has an equivalent effect.

9. hold raw milk in a clean place, designed and equipped to avoid contamination, immediately after milking. The milk must be cooled immediately to:
 - not more than 8°C if it is collected daily;
 - not more than 6°C if it is not collected daily.

You will not break the rule to cool raw milk immediately after milking if the milk is going to be processed within 2 hours of milking or you have received permission from the competent authority because of the dairy products that will be made from this milk.

If you are an egg producer the following additional rules apply:

F. You must

1. keep eggs clean and dry, free of strong odour, effectively protected from shocks and out of direct sunshine.



Further advice and guidance

You can get information about food and feed safety, including reporting of incidents, from the Food Standards Agency by calling 020 7276 8829 or visiting their website at www.food.gov.uk

The Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products gives information and guidance on record keeping for pesticides. To get a printed copy (PB11090) or a CD (PB11090CD) telephone the Chemicals Regulation Directorate of the Health and Safety Executive on 01904 455709, or visit the CRD website at www.pesticides.gov.uk

Milk Hygiene on the Dairy Farm – A Practical Guide for Milk Producers, available from the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency.

Food Standards Agency: 020 7276 8829