



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Animal and Plant Health Agency
Access to Information Team
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www.gov.uk/apha

Our Ref: ATIC1828

Richard Adey
{By Email}

01 October 2019

Dear Richard Adey

PROVISION OF REQUESTED INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information regarding the Seed Potato Classification Scheme which we received on 4 September 2019. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI).

The information you requested and our response is detailed below:

“Please could you forward the amounts of complaints for the Seed Potato Classification Scheme for the last 5 years?

[This information has been withheld citing Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please see below for details.](#)

and if any compensation has been paid?

[APHA can confirm no compensation has been paid following complaints against the Seed Potato Classification Scheme \(SPCS\) in the last five years.](#)

The levels of potato viruses found at inspections 1 and 2. Please could the data show if this is an increase or decrease year by year.

[This information has been withheld citing Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please see below for details.](#)

What is the average burn off time (in days) after final inspection? and the amount of crops inspected to check satisfactory burn off .

[This information has been withheld citing Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please see below for details.](#)

If any compensation has been paid due to a failure of the scheme.”

APHA can confirm no compensation has been paid due to a failure of the SPCS

Section 12

APHA want to be as open as possible in answering requests for information. The FOIA itself also requires APHA to provide reasonable advice and assistance to those seeking to make such a request. Unfortunately, the request for complaints, potato viruses and burn off time would cover reviewing a large number of documents. Gathering it together would therefore involve a significant cost and diversion of resources from the Department’s other work.

Section 12(1) of the FOIA allows APHA to refuse a request for information if it is estimated that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit, which currently stands at £600. On the basis of estimates, APHA consider that the cost would exceed this limit and, as such, APHA are refusing your request.

Public Interest Test

By virtue of regulation 12(2) of the FOIA, APHA may refuse to disclose information if the request for the information would involve the diversion of resources and incur excessive cost, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in applying the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. In reaching a decision with respect to the public interest, the following matters were considered:

APHA recognise that there is a public interest in disclosure of the number of complaints under SPCS and levels of potato viruses that have been made. Regulation 12(2) of the FOIA also requires public authorities to apply a presumption in favour of disclosure. However, there is a strong public interest in withholding the information. Your request covers a substantial amount of information as complaints and potato viruses are received by various methods along with complaints under further classification schemes. For potato viruses the information would need to be collated into a special report of over 10000 lines. Gathering this specific information together would involve a significant cost and diversion of resources from APHA’s other work.

APHA do not hold statistics on the number on the average burn off time and what is the amount of crops inspected to check satisfactory burn off? To provide this information would require searching through individual premise records. The records are held over four different sources and are both electronic and physical; with the physical records held in a variety of different locations.

APHA consider that your request falls under regulation 12(2) on cost and resource grounds in determining whether all the information is held. Having carried out the above

public interest test, APHA have concluded that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest falls in favour of applying the exemption.

Information disclosed in response to this FOI request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOI and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on GOV.UK, together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

I attach an Annex which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you and contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the Access to Information Team at the email address below or postal address at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

ACCESS TO INFORMATION TEAM

Email: enquiries@apha.gov.uk

Annex

Copyright

The information supplied to you is Crown copyright, unless otherwise stated, and is protected by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for the purposes of news reporting. You can find details on the arrangements for re-using Crown copyright information at:

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Complaints

If you are unhappy with the result of your request for information you may request an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this letter.

If you wish to request an internal review, please contact: The Access to Information Team at enquiries@apha.gov.uk or at the postal address at the top of this letter, who will arrange for an internal review of your case.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted APHA's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF