



Our ref: 13/01/25/gs/046

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Health Protection Agency

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Public Information Access  
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Dear L Kingham

**Re: number of E.coli cases associated with raw carrots and pre-washed salad**

Thank you for your email dated 25 January 2013 regarding the information the Health Protection Agency (HPA) holds in relation to the number of E.coli cases associated with raw carrots and salad. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I have identified and addressed your questions.

**1. How many cases of e coli related to raw carrots there have been, in 2011 and 2012.**

In accordance with section 1 (1) (a) of the Freedom of Information Act, I can confirm that the HPA does hold the information you have requested.

The HPA has been collecting data on food and other exposures reported by cases of VTEC before they became ill since 2009. Our data shows that, 377/3539 cases (10.7%) reported handling or consuming carrots in the seven days before they were ill. This figure relates to all cases including those who reported foreign travel and who were linked to known outbreaks.

250/1717 (14.6%) of confirmed, non-travel, non-outbreak cases of VTEC reported handling or consuming carrots in the seven days before they became ill. This figure does not include secondary or asymptomatic cases.

These figures do not mean that carrots were the cause of illness, only that the case reported eating or consuming them before they became ill. Consumption may relate to raw and cooked carrots as well as those that are constituent parts of meals.

**2. The amount of cases of e coli, listeria and salmonella in pre-washed ready-to-eat carrots in the same period.**

In accordance with section 1 (1) (a) of the Freedom of Information Act, I can confirm that the HPA does not hold the information you have requested.

**3. The amount and breakdown of cases of contamination with e coli, listeria and salmonella in pre-washed 'ready to eat' salads in 2011 and 2012.**

There have been no microbiological surveys of ready to eat salads in 2011 and 2012. The attached paper provides a summary table of results from previous surveys of ready to eat salads.

If you have any queries regarding the information that has been supplied to you, please refer them to me in the first instance. If you are dissatisfied with this response and would like a copy of the HPA complaints procedure then please contact Mr George Stafford, Complaints Manager at: Health Protection Agency, 151 Buckingham Palace Road, SW1W 9SZ.

Please note that you have the right to an independent review by the Information Commissioner's Office if a complaint cannot be resolved through the HPA complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner's Office can be contacted by writing to Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

**Freedom of Information Officer**

Attached: Prepared salads and public health paper