



## Advice note on the sampling of rice and rice products for testing, pursuant to Commission Implementing Decision 2011/884/EU invoked in the UK by the Specified Products from China (Restriction on First Placing on the Market) (England) Regulations 2008<sup>i</sup>

### Background

Rice and rice products originating from China are currently subject to 100% checks at point of entry into the UK to determine the presence of genetically modified organisms (GMO's). The Food Safety Act 1990, the Food (Sampling and Qualification) (England) Regulations 2013 and retained EC Regulation 625/2017, allow for a three-part sample to be taken, for the purposes of i) the initial enforcement analysis, ii) the food business operator's 'defence' sample and iii) a referee sample for dispute resolution by the Government Chemist in the event there is dispute between the initial two analysis.

### Current situation

The Government Chemist has been receiving increasing numbers of samples for referee analysis in this area. It has, however, been noted that samples have been taken in the same manner as a contaminant sample, i.e., as a single part sample which is then sent to the official control laboratory for division into three parts.

The Government Chemist, in discussion with the Food Standards Agency and the UK National Reference Laboratory for GMO's, consider the potential risk of cross-contamination in preparing the three-part sample in this way, to be significant.

### Advice on taking samples

It is therefore the advice of the Government Chemist and the Food Standards Agency that all samples taken under these Regulations should be **divided into the three parts at the point of sampling**, without opening manufacturers packaging where possible. All other aspects of the sampling procedure should be compliant with the requirements of the Specified Products from China (Restriction on First Placing on the Market) (England) Regulations 2008, the Food Law Code of Practice and local sampling procedures.

For any further information on this note, or in the event of questions, please contact [Government.Chemist@lqcgroun.com](mailto:Government.Chemist@lqcgroun.com) or [SSLP@food.gov.uk](mailto:SSLP@food.gov.uk)

Paul Hancock



For the Government Chemist

David Franklin



For the Food Standards Agency

<sup>i</sup> For the purpose of brevity only the English Regulations are indicated throughout the document. However, the devolved equivalents in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are noted.