

# NewsLetter



## Fraudulent lab test results NFCU Amber Alert

Last week, the National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) issued an Amber Alert, warning food businesses to be wary of potentially fraudulent laboratory test reports and certificates.

The NFCU stated that they had become aware of an increase in the following issues:

- The adulteration of genuine lab documents where key information such as dates or results were changed
- Second hand sources of data being presented, such as spreadsheets where out of specification results were amended or omitted entirely and did not match the original results when checked against certificates.
- False certificates being created using details of a closed lab.

Relevant ABC Food Law resources:

Webinars:

- [Introduction to Food Fraud](#)
- [Preventing Food Fraud](#)
- [Detecting Food Fraud](#)
- [Investigating Food Fraud](#)

## What do the NFCU recommend?

They have issued the following advice to businesses who have suspicions that a test result may be false:

1. Review the document carefully. Look for any errors in wording or layout, including differences between dates that appear on the certificates.
2. Layout issues could include shadowing or misalignment around key data including dates, signatures or data values.
3. If reviewing the documentation on site, ask to see original emails or review the results directly through result portals (if available). Do not rely on second hand references to results such as excel spreadsheets - these may be used legitimately for companies to consolidate and present trends but should not be accepted as an alternative to sample certificates.
4. Consult the laboratory name on the certificate if in doubt, or report to the National Food Crime Unit
5. Where there are concerns that testing results are false or not authentic, consideration should be given whether this introduces a food safety concern, or food safety non-compliance, in particular when the test results are a legal requirement.
6. Be aware of the risks of document fraud for other certificates such as third party assurance certificates, Protected Designation certificates or product specifications and report any other concerns around document fraud using the information above.

## More Information

- [NFCU Amber Alert: Risk of document fraud in laboratory results](#)