

House of Commons
Environment, Food and Rural
Affairs Committee

ILLEGAL MEAT IMPORTS

Seventh Report of Session 2001–02

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*Report, together with
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Minutes of Evidence and Appendices*

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The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and its associated public bodies.

Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No.152. These are available on the Internet via www.parliament.uk. The Committee has the power to appoint two Sub-committees.

The Committee agreed on Wednesday 22 May 2002 that it would nominate an Illegal Meat Imports Sub-committee to undertake this inquiry.

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* These Members were nominated as members of the Sub-committee. Mr Paddy Tipping was the Chairman of the Sub-committee.

Publications

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at www.parliament.uk/commons/selcom/efrahome.htm.

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to The Clerk of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Committee Office, 7 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA. The telephone number for general inquiries is: 020 7219 3262; the Committee's e-mail address is: efracom@parliament.uk.

Footnotes

In the footnotes of this Report, references to oral evidence are indicated by the date on which the evidence was taken, followed by 'Q' and the question number. References to written evidence give the author of the memorandum, followed by 'Ev' and the page number.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Summary	4
Introduction	4
Conduct of the inquiry	5
The scale of the problem	5
The Government Action Plan	7
Risk assessment	7
Co-operation and intelligence	10
Search powers	10
European Union and the personal allowance	11
Publicity	12
Other measures	13
The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs's co-ordinating role ...	14
Resources	16
Conclusions and recommendations	17
The Government Action Plan	21
PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE RELATING TO THE REPORT	23
LIST OF WITNESSES	24
LIST OF MEMORANDA INCLUDED IN THE MINUTES OF EVIDENCE	24
LIST OF APPENDICES TO THE MINUTES OF EVIDENCE	25
LIST OF UNPRINTED MEMORANDA	25
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE	Ev 1
APPENDICES TO THE MINUTES OF EVIDENCE	Ev 67

SEVENTH REPORT

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee has agreed to the following Report:

ILLEGAL MEAT IMPORTS

Summary

The illegal importation of meat into the United Kingdom is the most likely cause of the outbreaks of classical swine fever in 2000 and foot and mouth in 2001. Such imports may also have implications for human health. Therefore in this Report we welcome the Government's Action Plan for addressing the problem, although it should have been developed sooner. We make a number of recommendations in relation to the Action Plan, and we focus on five main areas. We believe that the Government should consider providing additional powers to port health authority officers. We recommend that the Government seek to end the personal allowance for bringing meat into this country. We urge it to improve publicity about the problem both at airports and on board aircraft. We seek improved co-ordination between the various agencies concerned. And we conclude that resources available to deal with the problem are not sufficient, and seek increases.

Introduction

1. Concern about the import of illegal meat and animal products has grown following the outbreaks in the United Kingdom of classical swine fever in 2000 and of foot and mouth disease in 2001. In March 2001, Rt Hon Nick Brown MP, then Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, told the House that:

“The Ministry is taking a hard look at the importation of meat for personal use in our review of all the possible causes of the current outbreak [of foot and mouth disease]. We were already considering the issue in the context of the classical swine fever outbreak.”¹

Subsequent inquiries into the origins of those diseases concluded that “the genome of the [classical swine fever] virus isolated from 15 of the premises showed that these outbreaks were caused by the same virus, which had not been previously isolated in the European Union”;² and that “the source of the virus for the 2001 [foot and mouth disease] epidemic was most probably infected or contaminated meat or meat products but it is unlikely that the origin of this material or the route by which it entered the United Kingdom and reached Burnside Farm [the first infected premise] will ever be identified”.³

2. Recent widespread media coverage of “suitcases, some leaking blood”, and illegal meat imports including “bush rat, bat, monkey, antelope, chicken and pork”,⁴ coupled with

¹ HC Deb, 8 March 2001, col 418.

² MAFF, *Animal Health 2000: the report of the Chief Veterinary Officer*, Chapter B1:GB Disease Reporting, see: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/publications/pubcat/cvo/2000/index.htm>.

³ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, *Origin of the UK Foot and Mouth Disease epidemic in 2001*, June 2002; see <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/inquiries/lessons/findorigins.pdf>.

⁴ *Meat smugglers target UK airports*, Environmental Health News, 25 January 2002.

commitments made in the last Parliament have prompted the Government to introduce a number of measures to tackle the problem of illegal meat. It launched an Illegal Imports Action Plan on 28 March 2002.⁵

Conduct of the inquiry

3. Following the announcement of the Government's Action Plan, the Committee agreed to appoint a Sub-committee to examine:

“the adequacy of the Government's Action Plan, published on 28 March 2002, intended to address concerns about the risk of disease from meat and other food products illegally smuggled into the United Kingdom. In particular it will make use of examples of policies and practices adopted by other countries in assessing the Action Plan”.⁶

We received written submissions from seventeen interested parties and took oral evidence on two occasions, from the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, the National Farmers' Union, the Association of Port Health Authorities and The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. In addition we visited Heathrow Airport, where we met local port health officials and HM Customs and Excise officers. We are grateful to all those who helped us in any way during our inquiry.

4. In this brief Report, we begin by commenting on the scale of the problem. We then consider the initial reaction to the Government's Illegal Imports Action Plan and comment on different aspects of the Plan. Finally we comment on the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs's co-ordinating role and on the review that the Government is currently undertaking of the roles, structure and financing of the various agencies involved in tackling illegal meat imports.⁷

5. We also take note of the report of the Royal Society inquiry into *Infectious diseases in livestock*, which was published on 16 July 2002.⁸ In part the report addresses the problem of illegal meat imports, and we welcome its observations, many of which chime with our own. In particular, we note its concern that “as a result of globalisation, the risk of invasion by exotic (ie. non-endemic) animal diseases has increased”, and its conclusion that “the United Kingdom, and the European union, should seek to retain ‘*disease-free*’ status with respect to foot and mouth disease and the other most serious infectious diseases”.⁹

The scale of the problem

6. The very fact that illegal meat imports are illegal means that it is impossible to establish exactly the size of the problem.¹⁰ What is clear is that many countries are faced by this problem. On a recent visit to New Zealand the Select Committee was apprised of the difficulties that it has in protecting itself from illegal imports. Both the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Association of Port Health Authorities were able to provide us with some data and estimates that, at least, enable an indication of the scale of the problem in the United Kingdom:

⁵ *Illegal Imports: Government Action Plan published*, DEFRA News Release 127/02, 28 March 2002; see p.21.

⁶ Press Notice No. 25, Session 1999, 18 April 2002, <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/selcom/efrapnt25.htm>.

⁷ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.220.

⁸ See *Infectious diseases in livestock*, The Royal Society, 22 July 2002; see <http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk/inquiry/>.

⁹ *Infectious diseases in livestock*, p.vii.

¹⁰ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.4 and Q.88.

- between three and five million tonnes of bush meat is produced in Central and Western Africa annually;¹¹
- "after narcotics and arms, the trade in unfit and illegal meat is the third most lucrative illegal enterprise in this country, netting over £1 billion worth of trade illegally";¹²
- flights at Gatwick Airport were targeted in thirty special operations between 31 March 2001 and 30 March 2002 – a total of 257 passengers were detected carrying illegal meat and there was at least one instance of importing illegal meat on each of the thirty occasions;¹³
- whilst we were at Heathrow we were told of three operations in which a total of 681 kilogrammes of illegal meat imports were detected in personal baggage; and
- the Port of London Port Health Authority told us that he did not believe that "the problem has diminished at all in London in the last year".¹⁴

Table 1: Illegal Meat Imports – Seizures Reported by the Association of Port Health Authorities¹⁵

Location	No. of Detections	Weight (kg)	Time period
Gatwick Airport — Cargo	16	202	Since 1/1/02
Gatwick Airport — Passenger Baggage (in the airport terminal)	257	2,784	30/2/01– 30/3/02
Heathrow Airport	176	14,766	05/01– 06/02
Manchester Airport (cargo centre)	20	1,690	05/01–
Merseyside	8	152	05/01–
Southampton	38		05/01–
Felixstowe Border Inspection Post	118	32,072	01/01– 05/02
London City Airport	77	971	2001
London City Airport	67	632	2002*

Note:

*Figures prepared 1 July 2002

Figures include commercial imports – especially those for Heathrow, Manchester and Felixstowe.

7. There are several different reasons why a consignment of imported meat is deemed to be illegal, and different legislation applies in different cases. There are also a number of routes by which the illegal import can enter the country. All of the following examples would count as an illegal meat import:

- personal imports exceeding the limits laid down for such imports (an individual from a non-European Union country can carry into the United Kingdom one kilogramme of cooked meat in a sealed container, or one kilogramme of fish);¹⁶

¹¹ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.4 and Q.10.

¹² Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.1.

¹³ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.107, and QQ.109–110.

¹⁴ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.105.

¹⁵ Derived from information provided by Association of Port Health Authorities.

¹⁶ Personal limits on the importation of food from non-European union states are currently 1.0 kg of meat cooked in a hermetically sealed container; 1.0 kg of fish; 1.0 kg of milk powder (from specified countries only); 2.0 kg of fruit/raw vegetables; 1 bouquet of cut flowers; 5 retail packets of seeds; 2.0 kg of bulbs, corms, tubers and rhizomes; and 5 other

- any personal import of bush meat (ie. wild meat), on a semi-commercial basis;¹⁷
- ‘legal’ imports that fail health checks;
- imports originating from unapproved establishments;
- incorrectly declared consignments, i.e. commercial smuggling;¹⁸
- imports that are labelled as containing vegetable products or plants but which contain illegal shipments of meat; and
- “food imports of an exotic nature in particular in contravention of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)”.¹⁹

The Government Action Plan

8. On 28 March 2002, the Government published an Action Plan to “to address concerns at the risk of disease from meat and other food products smuggled into Britain”.²⁰ The Action Plan followed a forum on illegal meats, held on 21 March (originally convened by the National Farmers’ Union but subsequently hosted by the Government²¹), and the discussions in Downing Street on 26 March on taking forward the recommendations of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food.²² We have appended a copy of the Government’s Action Plan to the end of our report but for ease of reference – its key points are:

- a full risk assessment of disease threat posed by illegal meat imports;
- more cooperation to achieve effective inter-agency enforcement;
- strengthened intelligence to counter smuggling;
- increased powers to search for illicit produce;
- liaison with Europe to reform rules on personal imports;
- increased public awareness through more publicity.

The Government is also exploring the use of detector dogs and the use of x-ray machines to scan containers.²³ In the following paragraphs we review the progress that the Government has made in each of the key areas of its Action Plan.

Risk assessment

9. We received a number of comments on the risks associated with illegal meat imports. Firstly, we were reminded that “the current system of import controls cannot provide a 100 per cent safeguard”,²⁴ and that “it is not feasible to establish a level of import control that would eliminate the risk of illicit meat importation”.²⁵ **We agree that risk will never be eliminated, and that proportionate steps need to be taken.** Secondly, we were told that there were different degrees of risk to human and/or animal health according to the type of

plants (from certain countries); see the Memorandum submitted by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, [F14], para 13.

¹⁷ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, QQ.10–11.

¹⁸ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.3.

¹⁹ Memorandum submitted by the Food Standards Agency, [F4], para 13.

²⁰ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs News Release, 127/02, *Illegal Imports: Government Action Plan published*, see: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2002/020328b.htm>.

²¹ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.92.

²² *Sustainable Food and Farming: Working Together PM and Margaret Beckett in Key Number Ten Talks*, DEFRA News Release 117/02, 26 March 2002, see: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2002/020326a.htm>.

²³ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs News Release, 127/02, *Illegal Imports: Government Action Plan published*, see: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2002/020328b.htm>.

²⁴ Memorandum submitted by the Food Standards Agency, Ev 68, para 3.

²⁵ Memorandum submitted by HM Customs and Excise, Ev 74 para 9.

product,²⁶ the origin of the product,²⁷ the way it got into the United Kingdom,²⁸ the size of the consignment,²⁹ and its ultimate destination.³⁰ Thirdly, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pointed out that the “perception of risk and the actual risk posed by these likely routes [by which foot and mouth disease entered the United Kingdom] may be very different”.³¹ But at present port health authority officers “do not make any assessment of whether there is any danger in them [illegal imports], it is the fact that they are illegal and we are there with the duty to control illegal imports”.³²

10. The first element of the Government’s Action Plan addresses the area of risk. The Government has commissioned a risk assessment which addresses the question:

“For each specified hazard [foot and mouth disease, classical swine fever, swine vesicular disease and African swine fever], what is the probability per year that the importation of meat will result in at least one infection with the specified hazard in the Great Britain livestock population?”³³

The risk assessment, being undertaken by the Veterinary Laboratories Agency, is expected to be completed in September.³⁴

11. Dr Wooldridge, who is overseeing it, outlined for us the principles, elements and outcomes of the risk assessment. She began by saying that the risk assessment was about probability “because you can never be one hundred per cent certain that something will not happen”. The risk assessment will work out how likely a disease outbreak is under a given set of circumstances. Under each set of circumstances (or ‘pathway’) one, or a number of, crucial points will be identified. If safeguards can be put in place at those crucial points then the risk along a ‘pathway’ can be reduced.³⁵

12. The National Farmers’ Union highlighted the border as one of those crucial points: it told us that biosecurity “starts at our borders with the outside world and that border is in some cases ... the European Union border”.³⁶ Lord Whitty acknowledged that before and during the foot and mouth epidemic, the Government “did point to the problems of border control, but the far more important issue is if there is a risk of that coming in, how do we stop it getting into the food chain”.³⁷ Dr Wooldridge acknowledged that there is uncertainty with every risk assessment but in this case “uncertainties may be rather larger than in most [because] people are not rushing to tell you about illegal imports”.³⁸ **The degree of uncertainty about the scale of the problem at the border, particularly if greater certainty can be achieved through the risk assessment about other points on the ‘pathway’, such as preventing a disease spreading to animals, may mean that changes to policy focus on, for example, the farm gate rather than the port of entry. Nevertheless, we recommend that the Government continue to retain and upgrade the**

²⁶ Memorandum submitted by the Food Standards Agency, Ev 68, para 7.

²⁷ Memorandum submitted by British Ports Association, Ev 72, para 2.

²⁸ Memorandum submitted by Airport Operators Association, Ev 75, para 2; and Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.19.

²⁹ Memorandum submitted by the British Retail Consortium, Ev 78.

³⁰ Memorandum submitted by The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Ev 39, para 18.

³¹ Memorandum submitted by The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Ev 39, para 18.

³² Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.114.

³³ Memorandum submitted by The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Ev 40, para 28.

³⁴ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.178.

³⁵ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.212.

³⁶ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.81.

³⁷ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.178.

³⁸ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.213.

information it gathers about illegal meat imports to enable it to keep the results of its risk assessment under review.

13. The National Farmers' Union point that the border is "the first line of protection"³⁹ remains true. Despite the difficulty in quantifying the risk, it should be possible to determine which particular types of illegal meat imports pose the greatest risk and target them accordingly. **We therefore recommend that full details of the risk assessment, including assumptions made and information that would improve the assumptions, are published with the risk assessment so that it is clear to all stakeholders why particular actions are pursued. Whatever measures are agreed they must not be seen as an alternative to effective bio-security at home.**

14. A number of witnesses were concerned that the risk assessment was focussing on just four hazards. The Chartered Institute for Environmental Health wanted the risk assessment "to be extended to public health issues",⁴⁰ and the National Farmers' Union were concerned about plant diseases,⁴¹ as well as potential human health risks.⁴² Dr Wooldridge told us that the Food Standards Agency, which has responsibility for human health issues relating to food, had been informed of the study, and that the methodology being used "would be equally applicable to human health risks". The Agency was, though, "otherwise occupied". Lord Whitty added that the Food Standards Agency "do indicate that there is a public health risk but ... they reckon that risk is extremely small indeed".⁴³ Given the degree of overlap between the methodologies for human and animal health risk assessments and the concern expressed to us about public health risks from illegal meat, **we believe that the Food Standards Agency should re-examine its decision not to undertake a risk assessment on the human health implications of illegal meat imports in parallel with the current study.**

15. One further issue must be taken into account in interpreting and using the results of the risk assessment. The Food Standards Agency highlighted the benefits of imported food, including nutritional benefits and consumer choice, which could be lost if food imports were to be curtailed.⁴⁴ The Food and Drink Federation considered that necessary tightening of controls of illicit trade should not "unduly penalise or delay licit commercial (or personal) trade, not least to avoid deterioration/loss of perishable products or the addition of extra costs to industry".⁴⁵ Lord Whitty reiterated that, once the risk assessment is completed, "we will have an indication of what measures you can take to reduce the risk from X parts per million to Y parts per million and we can probably cost the measures that will be needed in order to do that".⁴⁶ We commend this approach but **we recommend that the costs considered when assessing new policies to deal with illegal meat imports do not just include those faced by Government, but also those faced by the whole food chain. To put any measures into context there were more than 60 million passenger movements through Heathrow alone last year.**⁴⁷ This demonstrates the scale of the tasks involved and the risk/benefit relationship.

³⁹ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.86.

⁴⁰ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.1.

⁴¹ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.80.

⁴² Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.87.

⁴³ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, QQ.208–209.

⁴⁴ Memorandum submitted by the Food Standards Agency, Ev 71, paras 25--28.

⁴⁵ Memorandum submitted by the Food and Drink Federation, Ev 67, para 4c.

⁴⁶ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.215.

⁴⁷ See BAA plc statistics at http://www.baa.co.uk/main/corporate/about_baa_frame.html.

Co-operation and intelligence

16. The Government's Action Plan seeks to improve targeting of anti-smuggling measures and "action has already been taken to strengthen intelligence gathering and sharing between enforcement agencies".⁴⁸ This was confirmed by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health who thought the situation was getting better and that "networking is getting better".⁴⁹ We were told that members of the Association of Port Health Authorities "electronically advise one another of what is going on".⁵⁰ However, we were also told that "unfortunately there is not a central, co-ordinating point that ought to be disseminating in a cohesive fashion".⁵¹ **The United Kingdom Government must enter into international discussions aimed at ensuring effective monitoring of the export trade in order to bear down on any illegality. To assist such discussions it must demonstrate that its own house is in order, by making sure that inspections of exports from the United Kingdom are effective. We are moreover pleased that port health authority officers already have some form of system for advising each other of developments but are concerned that it is not centrally co-ordinated – we hope that the establishment of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs's Illegal Animal Products Seizures (ILAPS) database will assist this process.**

Search powers

17. On 22 May 2002, the Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) Regulations 2002 came into force.⁵² These new Regulations gave port health authority officers the power to search passengers.⁵³ However, both the Chartered Institute for Environmental Health and the Association of Port Health Authorities believed that officers should also have been granted the powers to stop as well as search.⁵⁴ Checks undertaken previously have required the presence of Customs officers because they do have such powers.⁵⁵ Lord Whitty told us that he did not exclude a change in the powers of port health authority officers.⁵⁶ He commented, however, on the fact that Customs officers enjoy "quasi police powers", and that giving the power to stop and detain suspects to port health authority officers would have practical implications, particularly in terms of them having proper reinforcements available.⁵⁷ **Granting the power to stop people to port health authority officers is not entirely straightforward. Nevertheless, we recognise the strength of the case made for such new powers. We therefore welcome the fact that the powers available to port health authority officers will be reviewed, and we recommend that the Government report the outcome of that review to Parliament within a year.**

18. Another concern about the new Regulations was that no guidance about the implications and use of the new powers they confer had been issued.⁵⁸ Lord Whitty said that such a protocol would be produced but that Government first needed "some experience of how [the new powers] are used and the problems [port health authorities] engage in

⁴⁸ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs News Release, 127/02.

⁴⁹ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.56.

⁵⁰ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.138.

⁵¹ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.56.

⁵² Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Statutory Instrument 2002, No 1227 *Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) Regulations 2002*, <http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/si/si2002/20021227.htm>.

⁵³ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.118.

⁵⁴ Memorandum submitted by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Ev 1, para 4.0, and Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.118.

⁵⁵ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.119.

⁵⁶ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.238.

⁵⁷ See evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.237.

⁵⁸ Memorandum submitted by Hillingdon Borough Council, Ev 82, Q.2.

when using those powers”. The guidance should be available by the beginning of August.⁵⁹ **We are concerned that no guidance was issued with the new powers. At the very least draft guidance should have been prepared, to help officers understand the new powers available to them, on the understanding that detailed guidance would be based on that draft guidance and experience of how the new powers worked. We hope that the new guidance published in August will address our concerns, and that it will be regularly reviewed and updated to take account of the experience of using the new powers.**

19. We note that the Action Plan promised the powers under the Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) Regulations 2002 would come into force in April. In the event they were delayed until 22 May. **We ask that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs explain that delay.**

20. We were also told of the differences in requirement for different types of imports. All imports of products of animal origin from third countries must enter Britain through a border inspection post and a manifest for each consignment must be presented to port health authority officials ahead of the consignment’s arrival.⁶⁰ The Chartered Institute for Environmental Health told us that it would welcome prior notification of all imports – not just those of meat.⁶¹ **We recommend that the Government assess the costs and benefits of this proposal against the findings of the risk assessment.**

European Union and the personal allowance

21. The Government has committed itself to “work with European authorities to clarify and potentially tighten enforcement of rules on third country imports reaching the United Kingdom via other European Union member states; and to reform rules on personal imports”.⁶² We welcome this constructive approach to working with other Member States.

22. The present rules on personal imports from third countries are set out below. The Association of Port Health Authorities told us that it believed that the current rules were “very confusing to the public” and that the Association would like a total ban on personal imports.⁶³ The Association was supported in this call by the Chartered Institute for Environmental Health,⁶⁴ and the National Farmers’ Union, although the latter suggested that milk for babies and essential medical items should be exempted.⁶⁵ The Government was also of the view that there was “a clear problem” about the personal import limits for meat and fish, and agreed that a ban on personal meat imports was needed.⁶⁶

⁵⁹ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.236.

⁶⁰ Memorandum submitted by the Food Standards Agency, Ev 68, para 7.

⁶¹ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.1.

⁶² Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs News Release 127/02.

⁶³ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.122.

⁶⁴ Memorandum submitted by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Ev 2, para 6.0.

⁶⁵ Memorandum submitted by the National Farmers' Union, Ev 12, para 1.5.4.

⁶⁶ Q.238.

Personal import limits⁶⁷

1.0 kg of meat cooked in a hermetically sealed container
 1.0 kg of fish
 1.0 kg of milk powder (from specified countries only)
 2.0 kg of fruit/raw vegetables*
 1 bouquet of cut flowers
 5 retail packets of seeds*
 2.0 kg of bulbs, corms, tubers and rhizomes* **
 5 other plants* **

Notes:

* not potatoes

** Euro-Mediterranean region only

23. Lord Whitty told us that the Government had raised the question of personal limits for meat imports with Commissioner Byrne (Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection), and that the European Scientific Committee on Veterinary Measures relating to public health has discussed the issue.⁶⁸ The Government hoped that the Commission would propose changes to the rules on personal imports. **The current allowances for personal imports of food, particularly meat and fish, are very confusing. We therefore firmly support the Government in their objective of securing a ban on the personal import of meat products. However, if the European Union does not bring forward better and more effective measures to deal with this potential abuse the United Kingdom should give notice that it will introduce unilateral action.**

Publicity

24. Lord Whitty acknowledged that publicity about the issue of illegal meat imports “has not achieved the level of awareness I would have liked”.⁶⁹ He accepted that Government still needed to raise awareness and said that more information would be available at airports, in travel agencies, with airlines and at the point of embarkation shortly. Whilst we were at Heathrow, we saw the posters in the arrivals’ area. We believe that they have a number of limitations: they are only in English;⁷⁰ they contain too much information; and they are not well located. We welcome Lord Whitty’s “determination to get the message on the carousel” but are concerned about the costs he mentioned in doing this.⁷¹ **We believe that it is in the airports’, the airlines’ and the Government’s interest to have passengers flowing freely at airports and believe that the greater availability of information and consequent lesser need for checks of passengers would facilitate this.**

25. We recently visited New Zealand, and flew via the United States. On approach to both countries we were made very aware by information provided on-board the flight that personal imports of meat and other foods were not permitted. The Association of Port Health Authorities commented that “more work that could be done with the airlines themselves. All the people coming in are the customers of the airlines and [they] ... could have a role in ensuring that people are aware of the controls. They do on duty-free allowances, so why not for products of animal origin?”⁷² Lord Whitty told us that the Government intended to “persuade the airlines to do as they do in other countries, to make

⁶⁷ Memorandum submitted by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Ev 38, para 13.

⁶⁸ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.239.

⁶⁹ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.180.

⁷⁰ Memorandum submitted by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Ev 2, para 6.0.

⁷¹ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.191.

⁷² Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.167.

announcements themselves. Part of the next stage of our public awareness campaign will be to provide in-flight messages".⁷³ He also said that "we will have to get legal authority to enforce it on airlines but we are hoping they will co-operate on this, and to produce a video which could be used on long-haul flights".⁷⁴ Written information might be made available in a leaflet to be handed out with landing cards. **We believe that the provision of information in-flight is essential, and we recommend that the Government urgently seek to persuade airlines to distribute written leaflets, and show videos as appropriate, setting out the restrictions on personal imports of meat and other foods. If airlines will not do so voluntarily we recommend that the Government take steps to obtain legal powers to compel them to do so.**

Other measures

26. The Government has also announced "other specific measures", including:

- Pilot use of detector dogs to be underway by summer 2002.
- Examination of the potential benefits of using x-ray equipment to scan containers and personal baggage to detect illegal imports, leading if successful to a trial.
- Provision of 'amnesty' bins or equivalent measure to encourage the surrender of unintended illegal personal imports.
- Research into available technologies which might help detect illegal imports.⁷⁵

It is worth noting that all of these proposals will heighten public awareness and raise the profile of the issue.

27. We note the Chartered Institute for Environmental Health's observation that "enforcement officers have suggested that initially money be spent on supporting their additional activities and that the use of detector dogs be considered at a later stage".⁷⁶ A pilot project using detector dogs has just started.⁷⁷ It will be important to integrate the use of these dogs with the use of dogs for other purposes (such as detecting drugs). **Although we welcome the trial use of dogs to detect illegal meat imports it would be helpful if the Government were to publish the objectives of the pilot scheme and the criteria against which its success will be judged.**

28. Lord Whitty suggested that the x-ray system "is not very effective at picking out meat as distinct from other things" and its role would be limited.⁷⁸ The provision of 'amnesty' bins also appears to be getting bogged down in the minefield of the collection and disposal of goods surrendered.⁷⁹ Lord Whitty suggested that they would be "symbolic".⁸⁰ **We accept that there are limitations and problems with the proposals to use x-ray equipment and provide amnesty bins, but we agree with Lord Whitty that both could be valuable in raising public awareness. We therefore recommend that both be carefully piloted and assessed for their efficacy in terms of addressing the problem of illegal meat imports and of raising public awareness of the problem.**

⁷³ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.187.

⁷⁴ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.187.

⁷⁵ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs News Release 127/02.

⁷⁶ Memorandum submitted by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Ev 3, para 9.0.

⁷⁷ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.186.

⁷⁸ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.186.

⁷⁹ Memorandum submitted by the Airport Operators Association, Ev 75, para 5.

⁸⁰ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.187.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs's co-ordinating role

29. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has “an overarching role to co-ordinate measures against illegal imports”,⁸¹ although it is just one of a number of organisations with responsibilities for the importation of foodstuffs. The others are: the Food Standards Agency, Local Authorities, port health authorities, the State Veterinary Service, the Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate, HM Customs and the Meat Hygiene Service.⁸² In short, organisation of the management of food import controls is complex, with different agencies leading on particular issues. We received representations in favour of a single border control authority from among other the Airport Operators Association,⁸³ and the Food Standards Agency proposed that imports of products of animal origin should come under its control.⁸⁴ The Association of Port Health Authorities argued that “there should be one agency to co-ordinate” but suggested that whilst the control of imports of products of animal origin should rest with the Food Standards Agency, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs should retain responsibility for animal health.⁸⁵

30. In the Action Plan, the Department undertook to “provide a published guide on the roles, responsibilities and powers of relevant agencies for preventing and detecting illegal consignments of products of animal origin”.⁸⁶ *Protecting our Livestock and Plants from Pests and Diseases* was published on 1 July 2002.⁸⁷ The guide summarises the controls on imports into Great Britain of animal products, plants and plant products from non-European Union countries, and explains the roles of the agencies who enforce those rules.⁸⁸ Lord Whitty told us that the Government is currently “reviewing the roles of the various agencies” and that the process would “last into the autumn”.⁸⁹ He did not rule out structural changes but highlighted that whatever the structure there will need to be “serious management and co-ordination”.⁹⁰ **We agree. In the longer term there is a case for greater integration of agencies and management, and we recommend that Government bring forward a model of a single agency. In the medium term agencies should commit themselves to improving the way they work together. In the short term it would be helpful if the terms of the review of the roles of the agencies involved in dealing with food imports was published.**

31. During our visit to Heathrow, we were surprised to learn about the difficulties in organising operations to target specific flights on which large quantities of illegal personal imports were suspected. The Association of Port Health Authorities described a similar process being followed at Gatwick Airport. The decision on which flights to target was made “on the basis of information received and experience”, and each operation was undertaken in co-operation with HM Customs and Excise⁹¹ because they have the powers to stop and search. However, the co-ordination of such exercises was, in Gatwick at least, down to a port health authority official who rang around to check the availability of staff of the other agencies concerned.⁹² In contrast, at Heathrow we were told that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs had begun to be involved in co-

⁸¹ Memorandum submitted by The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Ev 40, para 26.

⁸² Memorandum submitted by The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Ev 37, para 5.

⁸³ Memorandum submitted by the Airport Operators Association, Ev 75, para 3.

⁸⁴ Memorandum submitted by the Food Standards Agency, Ev 69, para 15.

⁸⁵ Evidence taken on 2 June 2002, Q.156.

⁸⁶ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs News Release 127/02.

⁸⁷ *Protecting our Livestock and Plants from Pests and Diseases – A New Guide for Importers*, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs News Release 260/02, 1 July 2002.

⁸⁸ The new guide is available on DEFRA's website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/illegal/topics/enforcement.htm>.

⁸⁹ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.220 and Q.227.

⁹⁰ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, QQ.220--221.

⁹¹ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.108 and Q.106.

⁹² Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, QQ.159–161.

ordinating such activities. **We are concerned that despite well-placed, intelligence-based suspicion, operations to check flights are often only mounted when a team can be put together through the efforts of one official from the port health authority. There is clearly a need for much higher level co-ordination of such activity, since it appears that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is not currently fulfilling its ‘overarching role’ in this area. Operations against particular flights would also benefit from agreed commitments, from all the agencies involved, to the amount of time they are able to devote to operations against illegal meat imports. We acknowledge that there may be times when HM Customs and Excise officers, in particular, would be diverted to more critical work but feel that the higher-level co-ordination we propose would be better able to take account of such problems. Moreover, although we acknowledge that other agencies, including the Food Standards Agency, feel that they should become responsible for these matters, we are inclined to believe that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs should be the lead body in dealing with illegal imports of meat and other foods.**

32. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is already the central competent authority, in European Union terms, for the co-ordination of border inspection posts. The National Farmers’ Union drew our attention to the European Commission Food and Veterinary Office’s report on such posts,⁹³ which considered that “the performance of the competent authorities in respect of overall efficiency of the import control system in the United Kingdom need considerable improvement”.⁹⁴ We summarise below the Food and Veterinary Office team’s main findings. Lord Whitty contended that some of the criticisms were “exaggerated” although “we do accept that we do need a better system to allow the oversight of the effort, and we have agreed with the port operators, with the [inspection post] operators, a detailed action plan”.⁹⁵ The report, together with the team’s recommendation that the European Commission consider the withdrawal of approval for all the border inspection posts examined,⁹⁶ does give rise to concern about overall co-ordination and direction. That said, we welcome the Government’s response to the report.⁹⁷

33. We heard evidence that at small ports and airports there was no regular presence of port health officers. This does not mean that this channel for illegal importation of meat products is unimportant. Indeed if more effective measures are taken at the larger ports and airports the threat of greater use being made of these channels will grow. It is vital that a full investigation is undertaken of both the scale of illegal imports through this source and of the measures that are in place to deal with them. There is a particular need to improve co-ordination in these localities and to recognise the resource implications of increased demands.

⁹³ Memorandum submitted by the National Farmers’ Union, Ev 13, para 1.5.8.

⁹⁴ Memorandum submitted by the National Farmers’ Union, Ev 13, para 1.5.8, citing *Final Report of a Mission to the United Kingdom from 15 to 26 October 2001 concerning Border Inspection Posts*, p. 25. The FVO Report is available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/inspections/vi/reports/united_kingdom/vi_rep_unik_3387-2001_en.pdf.

⁹⁵ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.240.

⁹⁶ EC pp. 31–32.

⁹⁷ Memorandum by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Ev 57-66, Annex 2 and Annex 2.1.

Table 2: Border Inspection Posts – Food and Veterinary Office Inspection Findings⁹⁸

Border Inspection Post	Number of Staff	Training Staff	Facilities		Equipment	Hygiene*	Documentation	Registration	Identification/Selection	Procedures
			P	LA						
Belfast port	C	M	M	-	C	M	m	m	m	M
Belfast airport	C	M	M	-	m	M	m	m	m	m
Aberdeen	C	m	M	-	C	M	m	m	m	M
Milford Haven	C	M	M	-	m	M	M	M	m	M
Bristol	C	m	M	M	M	M	m	m	m	M
Hull	C	M	M	-	m	M	m	m	m	M
Grimsby Immingham	C	m	M	-	M	M	m	m	m	M
Thamesport	m	m	M	-	M	M	C	C	C	m
Heathrow	M	m	M	M	M	M	m	m	M	M

M = Major non-compliance

m = minor non-compliance

C = Compliance

- = not applicable

* Hygiene covers the observed situation on the spot including e.g. cleaning, maintenance and hygienic necessities as well as the hygienic operation of the BIP

Resources

34. The port health authorities are funded through local authorities. They therefore have to compete for funding with the whole range of services provided by local government. The Association of Port Health Authorities said that, despite finding passengers with illegal meat on every flight checked at Gatwick in the last year, more checks were not undertaken because of the “question of resources”.⁹⁹ Those checks that had taken place relied on overtime being paid to allow officers to work “outside their normal jobs”.¹⁰⁰ The Chartered Institute for Environmental Health called for an increase in resources.¹⁰¹ The Association of Port Health Authorities convened a meeting in April which concluded that the suggestion should be put to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs that the Department “should control the funding”, and that “teams of six qualified officers should be based at the major sea and airports across the country”.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ *Final Report of a Mission to the United Kingdom from 15 to 26 October 2001 concerning Border Inspection Posts*, p. 25.

⁹⁹ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.117.

¹⁰⁰ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.117.

¹⁰¹ Evidence taken on 18 June 2002, Q.1.

¹⁰² Memorandum submitted by the London Port Health Authority, Ev 27, para 13.

35. Lord Whitty acknowledged that “in this area there is a resource issue”,¹⁰³ but that debate about the matter would be better informed following the completion of the risk assessment. He also acknowledged that there was an argument for funding the system nationally – but suggested that this would be influenced by the review of the role of agencies that is taking place. **We accept that resources currently allocated to dealing with the problem of illegal meat imports are not adequate, and are not secure at port level. We recommend that, once the risk assessment and the review of the roles of the agencies involved in dealing with illegal food imports have been completed, the Government provide adequate funds to meet their recommendations, and consider how they can be secured to the functions required.**

Conclusions

36. The Government’s Action Plan has been generally welcomed. The Association of Port Health Authorities thought that “the Government has done an awful lot in the last year to improve on the situation as it existed”.¹⁰⁴ However, organisations that have welcomed the general thrust of the Plan have criticisms of specific aspects of it.

37. We too broadly welcome the Action Plan as an important first step but, in addition to the comments we have already made, we would reiterate our concern about the overall co-ordination of the Government’s approach to the issue of illegal meat imports. **We are concerned about the long delay between the problem being acknowledged by Government – action was being considered in March 2001 – and substantive action being taken a year later.** Indeed, it seems that without the prompting of and bringing together of interested parties by the National Farmers’ Union, the forum on illegal meats which agreed the Action Plan may never have come together.

38. However, **since the Action Plan was published we have generally been impressed with the speed with which the Government and stakeholders have acted to address the various elements of the Plan. We hope that the publication of the risk assessment in September will provide another stimulus to take the Plan further forward with urgency.**

39. Our main recommendations are:

- (a) **We agree that risk will never be eliminated, and that proportionate steps need to be taken (paragraph 9).**
- (b) **The degree of uncertainty about the scale of the problem at the border, particularly if greater certainty can be achieved through the risk assessment about other points on the ‘pathway’, such as preventing a disease spreading to animals, may mean that changes to policy focus on, for example, the farm gate rather than the port of entry. Nevertheless, we recommend that the Government continue to retain and upgrade the information it gathers about illegal meat imports to enable it to keep the results of its risk assessment under review (paragraph 12).**
- (c) **We therefore recommend that full details of the risk assessment, including assumptions made and information that would improve the assumptions, are published with the risk assessment so that it is clear to all stakeholders why particular actions are pursued. Whatever measures are agreed they must not be seen as an alternative to effective bio-security at home (paragraph 13).**

¹⁰³ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.247.

¹⁰⁴ Evidence taken on 2 July 2002, Q.149.

- (d) **We believe that the Food Standards Agency should re-examine its decision not to undertake a risk assessment on the human health implications of illegal meat imports in parallel with the current study (paragraph 14).**
- (e) **We recommend that the costs considered when assessing new policies to deal with illegal meat imports do not just include those faced by Government, but also those faced by the whole food chain. To put any measures into context there were more than 60 million passenger movements through Heathrow alone last year. This demonstrates the scale of the tasks involved and the risk/benefit relationship (paragraph 15).**
- (f) **The United Kingdom Government must enter into international discussions aimed at ensuring effective monitoring of the export trade in order to bear down on any illegality. To assist such discussions it must demonstrate that its own house is in order, by making sure that inspections of exports from the United Kingdom are effective. We are moreover pleased that port health authority officers already have some form of system for advising each other of developments but are concerned that it is not centrally co-ordinated – we hope that the establishment of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs’s Illegal Animal Products Seizures (ILAPS) database will assist this process (paragraph 16).**
- (g) **Granting the power to stop people to port health authority officers is not entirely straightforward. Nevertheless, we recognise the strength of the case made for such new powers. We therefore welcome the fact that the powers available to port health authority officers will be reviewed, and we recommend that the Government report the outcome of that review to Parliament within a year (paragraph 17).**
- (h) **We are concerned that no guidance was issued with the new powers. At the very least draft guidance should have been prepared, to help officers understand the new powers available to them, on the understanding that detailed guidance would be based on that draft guidance and experience of how the new powers worked. We hope that the new guidance published in August will address our concerns, and that it will be regularly reviewed and updated to take account of the experience of using the new powers (paragraph 18).**
- (i) **We ask that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs explain that delay [in putting in place new Regulations] (paragraph 19).**
- (j) **We recommend that the Government assess the costs and benefits of this proposal against the findings of the risk assessment (paragraph 20).**
- (k) **The current allowances for personal imports of food, particularly meat and fish, are very confusing. We therefore firmly support the Government in their objective of securing a ban on the personal import of meat products. However, if the European Union does not bring forward better and more effective measures to deal with this potential abuse the United Kingdom should give notice that it will introduce unilateral action (paragraph 23).**
- (l) **We believe that it is in the airports’, the airlines’ and the Government’s interest to have passengers flowing freely at airports and believe that the greater availability of information and consequent lesser need for checks of passengers would facilitate this (paragraph 24).**

- (m) **We believe that the provision of information in-flight is essential, and we recommend that the Government urgently seek to persuade airlines to distribute written leaflets, and show videos as appropriate, setting out the restrictions on personal imports of meat and other foods. If airlines will not do so voluntarily we recommend that the Government take steps to obtain legal powers to compel them to do so (paragraph 25).**
- (n) **Although we welcome the trial use of dogs to detect illegal meat imports it would be helpful if the Government were to publish the objectives of the pilot scheme and the criteria against which its success will be judged (paragraph 27).**
- (o) **We accept that there are limitations and problems with the proposals to use x-ray equipment and provide amnesty bins, but we agree with Lord Whitty that both could be valuable in raising public awareness. We therefore recommend that both be carefully piloted and assessed for their efficacy in terms of addressing the problem of illegal meat imports and of raising public awareness of the problem (paragraph 28).**
- (p) **We agree. In the longer-term there is a case for greater integration of agencies and management, and we recommend that Government bring forward a model of a single agency. In the medium term agencies should commit themselves to improving the way they work together. In the short term it would be helpful if the terms of the review of the roles of the agencies involved in dealing with food imports was published (paragraph 30).**
- (q) **We are concerned that despite well-placed, intelligence-based suspicion, operations to check flights are often only mounted when a team can be put together through the efforts of one official from the port health authority. There is clearly a need for much higher level co-ordination of such activity, since it appears that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is not currently fulfilling its ‘overarching role’ in this area. Operations against particular flights would also benefit from agreed commitments, from all the agencies involved, to the amount of time they are able to devote to operations against illegal meat imports. We acknowledge that there may be times when HM Customs and Excise officers, in particular, would be diverted to more critical work but feel that the higher-level co-ordination we propose would be better able to take account of such problems. Moreover, although we acknowledge that other agencies, including the Food Standards Agency, feel that they should become responsible for these matters, we are inclined to believe that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs should be the lead body in dealing with illegal imports of meat and other foods (paragraph 31).**
- (r) **We accept that resources currently allocated to dealing with the problem of illegal meat imports are not adequate, and are not secure at port level. We recommend that, once the risk assessment and the review of the roles of the agencies involved in dealing with illegal food imports have been completed, the Government provide adequate funds to meet their recommendations, and consider how they can be secured to the functions required (paragraph 35).**
- (s) **We are concerned about the long delay between the problem being acknowledged by Government – action was being considered in March 2001 – and substantive action being taken a year later (paragraph 37).**

- (t) **Since the Action Plan was published we have generally been impressed with the speed with which the Government and stakeholders have acted to address the various elements of the Plan. We hope that the publication of the risk assessment in September will provide another stimulus to take the Plan further forward with urgency (paragraph 38).**

*Illegal Imports: Government Action Plan*¹⁰⁵ACTION PLAN 2002-03

The Illegal Imports programme aim is to:

Reduce the risk of exotic animal and plant disease entering the country and then threatening our public health, and livestock, agriculture and horticulture industries

The key elements of the programme are:

- Risk assessment - to inform decisions about the nature of the risks from imports (personal and commercial), and where are the critical points for taking action. As recommended by the Policy Commission on Food and Farming, a thorough risk assessment of meat imports led by the Veterinary Laboratories Agency is underway. Results will start to be available from May. More data is needed to inform this process. External stakeholder groups will be established to help inform and guide the risk assessment process. Targeted sample checks will be undertaken, in agreement with the enforcement agencies involved, where necessary to establish relevant risks.
- Co-operation between agencies - the central and local government agencies involved in importation of food and other goods are working closely together to achieve effective inter-agency co-ordination of checks. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs will provide a published guide on the roles, responsibilities and powers of relevant agencies for preventing and detecting illegal consignments of products of animal origin.
- Effective intelligence - to improve targeting of anti-smuggling measures. Action has already been taken to strengthen intelligence gathering and sharing between enforcement agencies. External stakeholder groups are being established to assist the Government in this work.
- Legal powers - enforcement officers will be given new powers (already available to customs officers) in April to search baggage, etc for illegal imports of meat.
- European action - work with European authorities to clarify and potentially tighten enforcement of rules on third country imports reaching the United Kingdom via other European Union member states; and to reform rules on personal imports.
- Publicity - for the United Kingdom's rules on imports of animal and plant products, and the reasons for them. As results from the risk assessment and current market research on consumer impact come in, discussions will continue with representatives of airlines and others about how they can help.
- Deterrence - work to ensure both a greater awareness of the consequences of bringing illegal food imports into the United Kingdom in terms of information to passengers and shippers; and, taking account of the risk assessment, to establish the appropriate level and type of checks, and effective penalties.

¹⁰⁵ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs News Release, 127/02, *Illegal Imports: Government Action Plan published*, see: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2002/020328b.htm> .

Other specific measures will include:

- Pilot use of detector dogs to be underway by summer 2002
- Examination of the potential benefits of using x-ray equipment to scan containers and personal baggage to detect illegal imports, leading if successful to a trial.
- Provision of 'amnesty' bins or equivalent measure to encourage the surrender of unintended illegal personal imports.
- Landing card - pursue with interested parties possible amendment to the landing card to draw attention to import prohibitions.
- Research into available technologies which might help detect illegal imports.

Following the successful Illegal Imports Forum chaired by the Secretary of State of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs on 21 March, leading stakeholders and interest groups in the private sector and local government are committed to supporting this work, and will be closely associated with work affecting their interests, or where they have expertise to offer.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE RELATING TO THE REPORT

WEDNESDAY 17 JULY 2002

Members present:

Mr David Curry, in the Chair

Mr David Borrow	Diana Organ
David Burnside	Mrs Gillian Shephard
Mr David Drew	Mr Keith Simpson
Mr Michael Jack	David Taylor
Mr David Lepper	Paddy Tipping
Mr Austin Mitchell	Mr Mark Todd

* * *

The Committee deliberated.

Draft Report [*Illegal Meat Imports*], proposed by Mr Tipping, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 39 read and agreed to.

Summary read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Seventh Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman do make the Report to the House.

Several Papers were ordered to be appended to the Minutes of Evidence.

Ordered, That the Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Illegal Meat Imports Sub-committee be reported to the House.—(*The Chairman*).

Several Papers were ordered to be reported to the House.

The Committee further deliberated.

* * *

[Adjourned till Tuesday 23 July at Ten o'clock.]

LIST OF WITNESSES

Page

Evidence taken Tuesday 18 June 2002

CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Mr Graham Jukes, Mr Brendan Brockway, Mrs Jenny Morris and Mr Shaheen Zar Ev 3

NATIONAL FARMERS' UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES

Mr Ben Gill, Mr Michael Seals and Mrs Elizabeth Hogben Ev 19

Evidence taken on Tuesday 2 July 2002

ASSOCIATION OF PORT HEALTH AUTHORITIES

Mr Doug Bloomfield, Mr Mike Young and Mr Jon Averbs Ev 29

DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Lord Whitty, Dr Marion Wooldridge and Ms Jill Wordley Ev 44

LIST OF MEMORANDA INCLUDED IN THE MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

Page

1. Memorandum by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (F11) Ev 1
2. Memorandum by the National Farmers' Union OF England and Wales (F8) Ev 11
3. Memorandum by the Corporation of London (F10) Ev 26
4. Association of Port Health Authorities (F15) Ev 28
5. Memorandum by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (F14) Ev 36
6. Supplementary memorandum by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (F14(a)) Ev 55

LIST OF APPENDICES TO THE MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

	<i>Page</i>
1. Memorandum by the Food and Drink Federation (F2)	Ev 67
2. Memorandum by the Food Standards Agency (F4)	Ev 68
3. Memorandum by the British Ports Association (F5)	Ev 72
4. Memorandum by H M Customs and Excise (F6)	Ev 73
5. Memorandum by the Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers (F7)	Ev 74
6. Memorandum by The Airport Operators Association (F9)	Ev 75
7. Memorandum by the British Rail Consortium (F12)	Ev 77
8. Memorandum by British Air Transport Association in conjunction with British Airways plc and Virgin Atlantic Airways Ltd (F13)	Ev 78
9. Memorandum by the Chairman of the UK Association of Frozen Food Producers (F16)	Ev 80
10. Memorandum by Hillingdon Borough Council (F17)	Ev 80

LIST OF UNPRINTED MEMORANDA

The following Memoranda were received and have been reported to the House. Copies have been placed in the House of Commons Library where they may be inspected by Members. Other copies have been placed in the Record Office, House of Lords, and are available to the public for inspection. Requests for inspection should be addressed to the Record Office, House of Lords, London SW1A OPW (tel 020 7219 3074). Hours of inspection are from 9.30 am to 5.30 pm on Mondays to Fridays.

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