



11 March, 2021

Deputy Réada Cronin
Dáil Eireann
Leinster House
Dublin 2

REF: PQ ref 11509/21

‘To ask the Minister for Health if Covid-19 testing is continuing at meat plants, in particular those in north County Kildare; if so, the frequency and reporting of such testing; the rates of infection found; and if he will make a statement on the matter’.

- Réada Cronin TD

Dear Deputy Cronin,

The HSE wishes to acknowledge your representation. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position:

The National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE) requested a planned programme of Serial Testing of all Staff in Food Production Facilities, with the first cycle of testing commencing on August 21st, 2020 in Kildare, Laois and Offaly on a weekly basis before rolling out nationally to all counties in October 2020.

Serial Testing of Staff in Food Production Facilities continues for each facility in all counties once every four weeks. The programme is currently in its 7th cycle.

Decisions regarding continuation of the programme are made by NPHE and no timeline has been proposed or agreed in terms of this testing programme to be concluded. Results are communicated individually to staff following each round of testing. Public Health also track results in each facility.

Below is a summary of asymptomatic Serial Testing of staff in Food Production Facilities in County Kildare as of 10:00am on 5th March 2021.

County	Facilities Tested	Referrals	Swabs	Detected	Detection Rate %
Kildare	13	25525	16368	128	0.8%

In response to outbreaks Public Health teams direct more frequent or targeted testing in some facilities to manage outbreaks. This testing is in addition to the routine serial testing results reported.

I trust this information may be of assistance to you.

Margaret McQuillan
Head of Service, Health & Wellbeing
Dublin South, Kildare & West Wicklow Community Healthcare