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## **Kent takes part in national tests on foods**

Kent Trading Standards joined 92 other local authorities from across the UK to take part in the largest food testing survey of its kind.

Results released today by LACORS, the local government central body which oversees local authority regulatory services in the UK, show progress is being made by the food industry towards reducing salt levels in processed foods with a continued downward trend since the last survey in 2007. However there are indications that improvements are still needed in order to meet the Food Standard Agency's salt reduction targets by the 2010 deadline.

The report also shows the results of investigations into the levels of sugar and fat in pre-packed foods and the accuracy of labelling which is important to help consumers make healthy choices.

The analysis of food testing is undertaken in Kent by KCC's Kent Scientific Services public analyst laboratory based in Kings Hill which carries out weights and measures checks, food checks and toxicology testing [www.kentscientific.co.uk](http://www.kentscientific.co.uk)

KCC Director of Community Safety and Regulatory Services Clive Bainbridge said:

"We are pleased to see progress in reducing salt in food to improve the health of Kent residents. 75% of the salt we eat is already in food so if manufacturers continue to reduce salt in processed foods then this will cut salt intake further and help cut the risk of heart disease and stroke. We are keen to hear from Kent food businesses wanting advice and support to meet the FSA targets."

Chairman of LACORS Geoffrey Theobald said:

"This report should help councils work with local businesses to continue encouraging a reduction in salt content in line with FSA recommendations."

### **Notes to editors**

In May 2005 a number of councils from across the UK including Kent Trading Standards began taking samples of pre-packed food products as part of this LACORS coordinated survey. Since this time 93 local authorities have taken over 1600. In 2007 the sampling protocol was amended to include the option of sampling for fat and sugar content. This continues to be the largest survey of its kind ever carried out by local government.

KCC's Trading Standards Service involves working to monitor the composition and labelling of food to check legal limits of ingredients and that illegal substitution does not take place. Checks are also carried out to identify food sold after its use-by date.

More details on salt in foods for businesses and consumers is available at [www.kent.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://www.kent.gov.uk/tradingstandards).