



OIA18-0007
OIA18-0017

21 FEB 2018

Graham Carter
c/- FYI website

Dear Graham Carter

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your official information requests on 5 January 2018 and a transfer sent through by the Waikato District Health Board (DHB) received on 10 January 2018 relating to possible wild boar contamination.

The following information is released to you under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). I will respond to your questions for both requests in the order they were submitted. The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) understands that questions 1 and 3 have been answered by the DHB in its letter to you dated 10 January 2018.

- 2. None of the meat collected by MPI has been tested for 1080. This was confirmed in a meeting with the WDHB yesterday. Someone should ask why it was not tested, when the patients' medical notes say the wild boar meat should be tested for 1080.*

Initial samples were collected by DHB staff, and MPI staff accompanied DHB staff on a second visit to collect further food samples. A number of food items were sampled and tested by the DHB. MPI did not collect, sample or test food samples on its own accord.

The DHB is the lead agency with respect to the clinical treatment of the cases and also for leading the investigation into the cause of the family's illness. Given that a food source was not immediately apparent, MPI's role was solely to provide technical assistance to the DHB, in particular around food sampling and testing.

The MPI Wallaceville Animal Health Laboratory was contracted by the Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR Christchurch) on behalf of the DHB to test cultures of food samples (provided by ESR Christchurch) by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) for botulinum toxin genes and other associated genes.

4. *Why has neither the DHB nor MPI followed up with the person who provided the wild boar meat to Shibu's family?*

At this time, MPI and the DHB have not been provided with information about the source of the wild boar meat.

In any investigation into potential foodborne illness, agencies rely to a large extent on information from the people who are ill to focus their enquiries. This includes information on food and other substances consumed in the days before the illness.

Information on other potential causes of the illness, such as exposure to toxic plants or other environmental chemicals from their surrounds or to people with similar symptoms, depends on the peoples' recollections.

The clinical picture and information to date strongly indicates an isolated incident involving a single family without cause for wider public concern. It is worth noting that despite media reports, there is no evidence that this is linked to consumption of wild pig meat or involves 1080 poisoning. Other foods were consumed at the same time as the pork curry and these have also been sampled and tested by the DHB.

I trust this information satisfies your request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Dansted', written in a cursive style.

Paul Dansted
Director, Animal and Animal Products