# How to fill FoodChain-Lab backward and forward tracing templates?



The FoodChain-Lab (FCL) data collection templates follow a stepwise data collection approach ("one step back, one step forward") in a lot-based manner.

A tracing investigation is initiated using the **start templates** (always use latest version available at <a href="https://foodrisklabs.bfr.bund.de/template-for-data-collection/">https://foodrisklabs.bfr.bund.de/template-for-data-collection/</a>) which are **provided for** both **forward and** for **backward tracing investigations**. **See section "Start template"** for guidance on how to complete these templates. Fill in the upper-part of the template, then send the data collection templates to the competent authorities or directly to the inquired food business operator to have the lower part of the template filled.

To continue the tracing investigation one step forward or one step backward along the supply chain, use FCL Desktop to generate **prefilled follow-up templates** (backward tracing template, forward tracing template). Send these prefilled data collection templates to the competent authorities or directly to the inquired food business operator(s) to have them filled. **See section "Follow-up template"** for instructions on how to fill out the backward and forward tracing templates.

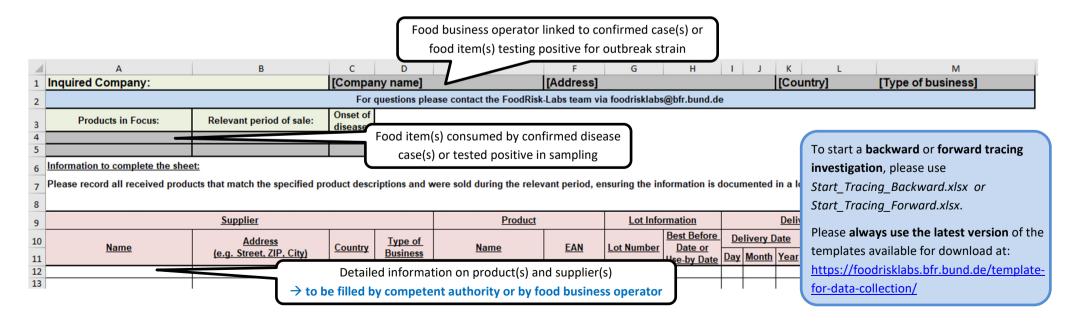
## Start template:

<u>Upper part:</u> Fill in the **information about the inquired company** — this may be a food business operator linked to confirmed disease case(s), a food business operator with food item(s) testing positive for the outbreak strain, or, in some cases, a confirmed disease case. Use a **separate start template for each company** you intend to investigate.

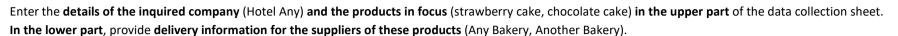
Also, provide **details on the product(s) in focus**, such as food item(s) consumed by confirmed disease case(s) or those that tested positive during sampling. Enter **each product on a separate line**. Send the data collection templates to the competent authorities or directly to the inquired food business operator to have the lower part of the template filled.

<u>Lower part:</u> Provide **detailed information for all products in focus**, including supplier details (for backward tracing) or recipient details (for forward tracing). Enter **each product on a separate line**. If a product has multiple lots within the relevant sales period, list **each lot on a separate line**.

Hints: Leave fields blank if the information is unavailable. Use two-letter country codes. Enter dates in the format DD.MM.YYYY, unless otherwise specified.



<u>Filled example</u> for a backtracing investigation starting from a company (restaurant at Hotel Any) with positive food samples taken from strawberry cake and chocolate cake:





4	Α	В	С	D	E	F	G	Н	1	J	K	L	M	
I	nquired Company:		Hotel Ar	ny		123 Any st	reet, Any Ci	ty XY1Z 2Y2	2		UK,		Restaurant	
	For questions please contact the FoodRisk-Labs team via foodrisklabs@bfr.bund.de													
	Products in Focus:	Relevant period of sale:	Onset of disease:									Lisa two lo	etter country code	
	Strawberry cake	01.0302.03.2025										USE LWO-IE	etter country code	
Щ	Chocolate cake 01.0302.03.2025 Do not change table headers													
li	information to complete the sheet:													
P	Please record all received products that match the specified product descriptions and adviring the relevant period, ensuring the information is documented in a lot-based manner.													
If	further backtracing information	is available - maybe up to the	produe	or the produc	t - please put this info	ormation into an a	dditional line	of this sheet	and m	nake a n	neani	ngful note in the	e comments field.	
	Supplier				<u>Product</u>		Lot Information		<u>Delive</u>		ery			
Ī	Name	Name Address		Type of	Name EAN		Lot Number Best Befo		Delivery Bate		Amount	Comments		
		(e.g. Street, ZIP, City)		<u>Business</u>				Use-by Date	Day !	Month \	<u>Year</u>	(e.g. 45 kg)		
A	ny Bakery	123 Sesame street, Any City AB1C 2DE	UK	Bakery	Strawberry cake	1		02.03.2025	2			2 Cakes		
A	nother Bakery	4 Baker street, Any City BC1D 2EF	UK	Bakery	Chocolate cake		654	02.03.2025	1	3	2025	3 Cakes		
		4 Baker street, Any City BC1D 2EF	UK	Bakery	Chocolate cake	7	345	03.03.2025	2	3	2025	2 Cakes		
			information is unavailable format DD.MM.YYYY added						added o	d, additional columns can be n the right side but they are tomatically read in by FCL				

The completed template can now be imported into the FCL Desktop application to visualize the data and generate two prefilled follow-up data collection templates, allowing the investigation to continue at Any Bakery and Another Bakery.





Send the two prefilled data collection templates to the competent authorities in Any City — or directly to the respective food business operators — to gather information on Any Bakery and Another Bakery.

# **Follow-up templates:**

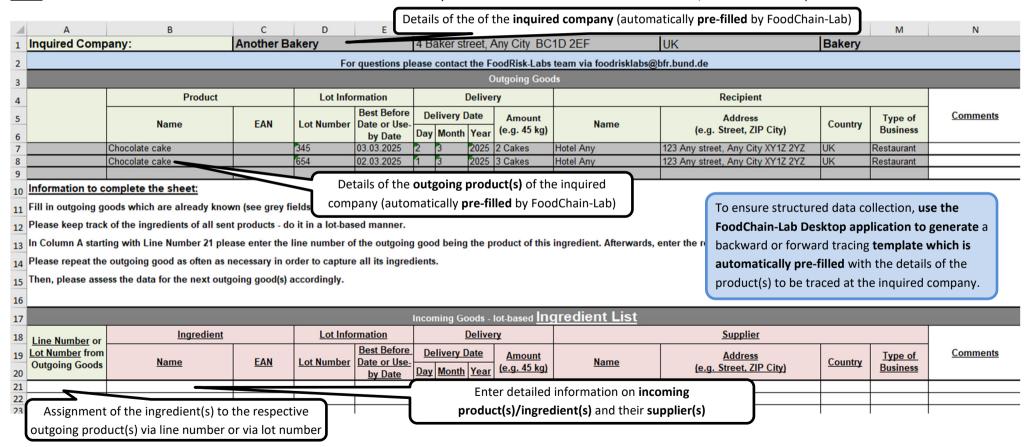
#### **Backward tracing template:**

As this is a backtracing investigation, the **outgoing product(s) of the inquired company** are already known and are prefilled by FoodChain-Lab in the grey area **in the upper part** of the template.

For each of the outgoing products, now list the respective incoming product(s)/the ingredient(s) in the lower part of the template in a lot-based manner. Starting in Column A, enter the line number or the lot number (which ever suits best for the current situation) of the outgoing product to which the ingredient belongs. Then, complete the relevant details in Columns B and onward. For each of the ingredients of the first outgoing product, use a separate line.

Once all ingredients of the first outgoing product are listed, proceed to assess and document the next outgoing product(s) in the same way using separate lines.

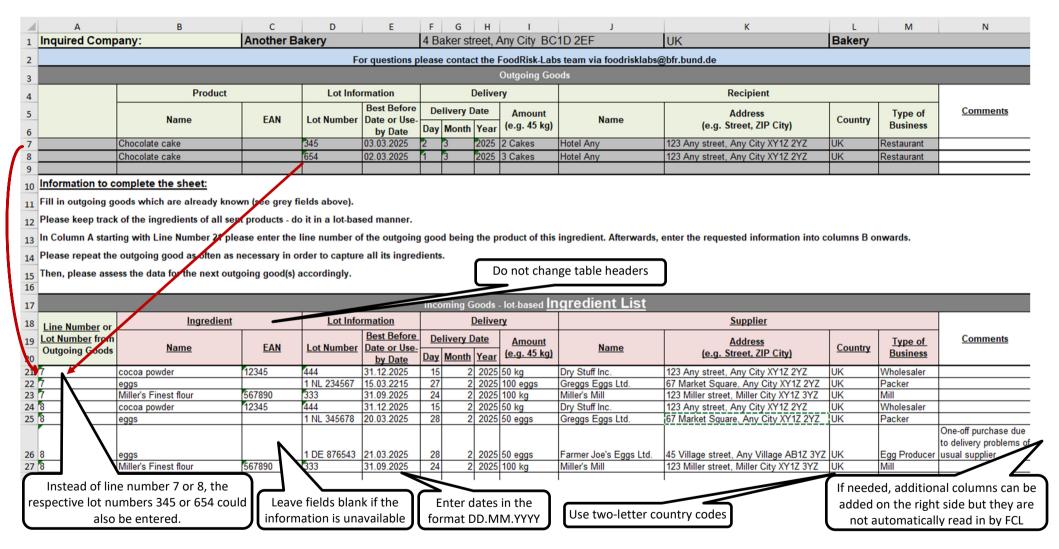
Hints: Leave fields blank if the information is unavailable. Use two-letter country codes. Enter dates in the format DD.MM.YYYY, unless otherwise specified.



**Forward tracing template:** In case of a forward tracing investigation, the forward tracing template would be completed in a similar manner, but with a focus on collecting information on outgoing product(s) and recipient(s), rather than incoming product(s) and supplier(s).

### Filled example of a backtracing follow-up template: (Continuation of backtracing investigation at Any Bakery)

The upper prefilled part of the data collection sheet (grey area) gives the details on the inquired company (Another Bakery) and the products in focus (chocolate cake lots 345 and 654). In the lower part, fill the delivery information for the ingredients and the suppliers of these products – starting with all ingredients for chocolate cake lot 345 in separate lines. Then, list all ingredients for chocolate cake lot 654 in separate lines. Use either line numbers or lot numbers to connect the outgoing goods (upper grey table) with their ingredients (lower table).



FoodChain-Lab (FCL) is a free open-access tool to support supply chain tracing investigations during foodborne incidents. FCL is hosted by the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) and received funding from the EFSA-BfR Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) GP/EFSA/AMU/2016/01 and GP/EFSA/AMU/2020/02 as well as the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No 773830 (One Health European Joint Programme, COHESIVE) and is supported by budget funds of the BfR.



More information: https://foodrisklabs.bfr.bund.de/foodchain-lab/ Contact: foodrisklabs@bfr.bund.de