



Poundland facing huge fine after Santa chocolates chewed by rodents are found in their stores

By Matthew Cooper, December 2nd 2016, Poundland

POUNDLAND has pleaded guilty to breaching food hygiene laws after rodent-damaged chocolate Santas were found at one of its stores.

The discount chain is facing a substantial fine after admitting a total of eight offences relating to two of its outlets at Birmingham Crown Court.

West Midlands-based Poundland pleaded guilty earlier this year to four food hygiene offences after checks conducted by Birmingham City Council in February and September last year.

Poundland's barrister admitted four further charges on behalf of the firm today, including an allegation that "several chocolate items, being Father Christmas figures, had been gnawed at by a rodent or rodents".

The court heard that the second inspection - conducted at the larger of the firm's Corporation Street stores in Birmingham - also uncovered evidence of mouse activity, including droppings on boxes of chocolates and confectionery.

Further droppings were found on shelving in the shop floor area and on a trolley containing food, while a hole allowing rodents access was discovered near pipework.

Poundland, which has its head office in Willenhall, near Wolverhampton, admitted several specific breaches of EU food and hygiene regulations, including failing to ensure food was protected from contamination.

Judge Richard Bond had been expected to sentence the retailer on Friday but adjourned the case until January 20 after telling the court he needed further time to consider documents provided by the prosecution.

The judge said: "I have been in Poundland myself on many, many occasions. We are looking at a well-known limited company where the fines could be quite high."