

RAPID ALERT SYSTEM FOR FOOD AND FEED

The legal basis of the system is Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety (O.J. No L 31 of 1 February 2002).

The purpose of the rapid alert system for food and feed (RASFF) is to provide the control authorities with an effective tool for exchange of information on measures taken to ensure food safety.

To assist the members of the network, information is classified under two different headings:

- **ALERT NOTIFICATIONS**

Alert notifications are sent when the food or feed presenting the risk is on the market and when immediate action is required. Alerts are triggered by the Member State that detects the problem and has initiated the relevant measures, such as withdrawal/recall. The notification aims at giving all the members of the network the information to verify whether the concerned product is on their market, so that they also can take the necessary measures.

Consumers can be reassured that products subject to an alert notification have been withdrawn or are in the process of being withdrawn from the market. The Member States have their own mechanisms to carry out such actions, including the provision of detailed information through the media if necessary.

- **INFORMATION NOTIFICATIONS**

Information notifications concern a food or feed for which a risk has been identified, but for which the other members of the network do not have to take immediate action, because the product has not reached their market. These notifications mostly concern food and feed consignments that have been tested and rejected at the external borders of the EU (and the EEA¹).

Consumers can be reassured that products subject to an information notification have not reached the market or that all necessary measures have already been taken.

The Commission publishes a weekly overview of alert and information notifications. As it is necessary to strike the balance between openness and the protection of commercial information, the trade names and the identity of individual companies are not published. This is not detrimental to consumer protection, as a RASFF notification implies that measures have been or are in the process of being taken.

The public must be aware that the Commission is not in a position to release more information other than that published here. However, in exceptional circumstances where the protection of human health requires greater transparency, the Commission takes the appropriate action through its usual communication channels.

The Commission informs the authorities of third countries of notifications concerning products manufactured in, distributed to or dispatched from these countries. However, the fact that a country is

¹ European Economic Area

mentioned as the origin of a product does not necessarily imply that the identified hazard(s) originated in the country concerned.

The notifications reported in the weekly overviews published on the European Commission's web site are so-called "original notifications", representing a new case reported on a health risk detected in one or more consignments of a food or feed. On these cases, control authorities are exchanging additional information on measures taken and outcome of investigations. This information does not appear in the publicly accessible weekly overviews.

Newly added columns are the "type of control" and "status" columns.

The type of control column indicates what type of control lay at the basis of the notification:

- border control – import rejected: controls at the border posts of the outer EU (and EEA.) borders when the consignment was not accepted for import (“import rejected”);
- border control – screening sample: notification initiated through a sample taken at a border post for analysis but the consignment was meanwhile released to the market (“screening sample”);
- market control: official control on the EU (and EEA) internal market;
- company own-check: notification initiated through a company notifying the outcome of an own-check to the competent authority;
- consumer complaint: notification initiated through a consumer lodging a complaint with the competent authority; notifications initiated through reported food poisoning outbreaks are classified under this category.

The status column is a combination of two values, "distribution status" and "action taken".

The distribution status indicates knowledge existing **at the time of notification** about the possible distribution of the product on the market. The concept "market" is to be interpreted in a geographical way: "the internal Community market" i.e. this does not necessarily mean that the product is already on the shelves available to consumers, as often it is not.

The action taken represents the action already taken by the notifying country **at the time of notification**. If "no action taken" is given for an alert notification, this normally indicates that the product is not on the market of the notifying country (therefore: no action taken by the notifying country) but it may be on the market of other member countries.

Another addition to the table is the insertion between brackets of the outcome of the analysis to the "reason for notifying" column, whenever that information is available. This information allows evaluating the seriousness of the notified finding.

Week 2007/17

TABLE 1: ALERT NOTIFICATIONS

Notifications in blue typeface concern feed, all other notifications concern food.

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
23/04/2007	Germany	2007.0285	dioxins (113 pg WHO TEQ/g) in smoked cod liver in own oil from Denmark	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
23/04/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.0286	too high content of E 450(i) - disodium diphosphate (50 g/kg) in potato croquettes from the United Kingdom	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
23/04/2007	Latvia	2007.0287	unsuitable organoleptic characteristics of green peas in cans from Poland	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / recall from recipients
23/04/2007	Spain	2007.0288	cadmium (0.07-0.1 mg/kg - ppm) in sliced pineapple in its own juice from the United Kingdom	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
23/04/2007	Italy	2007.0289	glass fragments in yoghurt in glass jars from Italy	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / recall from recipients
24/04/2007	the Slovak Republic	2007.0290	E 210 - benzoic acid (802.75 mg/kg - ppm) unauthorised in sour cabbage (Sauerkraut) from Poland	market control	distribution on the market (possible)
24/04/2007	Lithuania	2007.0291	Salmonella infantis (presence /25g) in poultry meat and bone meal from Germany	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) returned to dispatcher
25/04/2007	the Czech Republic	2007.0292	unauthorised substance sildenafil thiono analogue in food supplement from Sweden	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product detained
25/04/2007	the Czech Republic	2007.0293	migration of primary aromatic amines (2.18; 3.79 mg/kg - ppm) from nylon kitchen tools from China (Hong Kong)	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
26/04/2007	Germany	2007.0294	ochratoxin A (75.2 µg/kg - ppb) in instant coffee from the Czech Republic via Austria	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
26/04/2007	the Slovak Republic	2007.0295	aflatoxins (B1 = 30.40; Tot. = 30.60 µg/kg - ppb) in sweet paprika powder from Spain	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / prohibition to trade - sales ban

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
26/04/2007	France	2007.0296	Salmonella enteritidis (presence) in eggs from France	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / recall from recipients
27/04/2007	Denmark	2007.0297	aflatoxins (B1 = 20; Tot. = 22.2 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachio nuts from Iran via Germany	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
27/04/2007	Belgium	2007.0298	Salmonella and too high count of Enterobacteriaceae in dog chew from Brazil	border control - screening sample	distribution on the market (possible) / public recall
27/04/2007	the Czech Republic	2007.0299	migration of DEHP - di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate from thermos from China via Austria	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
27/04/2007	the Netherlands	2007.0300	migration of primary aromatic amines (0.087 mg/kg - ppm) from black nylon skimmer from China	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale

TABLE 2: INFORMATION NOTIFICATIONS

Notifications in blue typeface concern feed, all other notifications concern food.

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
23/04/2007	France	2007.BAA	aflatoxins (B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.4 / B1 = 2.9; Tot. = 8.2 / B1 = 7.7; Tot. = 14.1 µg/kg - ppb) in roasted chopped hazelnuts from Turkey	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
23/04/2007	Spain	2007.BAB	Escherichia coli O157 (presence) in endive hearts from Spain	market control	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / product (to be) returned to dispatcher
23/04/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BAC	benzo(a)pyrene (9.8; 10.1 µg/kg - ppb) in dry smoked Sphyræna spp. from Suriname	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
23/04/2007	Italy	2007.BAD	bad state of preservation of various fresh fruit and vegetables from Sri Lanka	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
23/04/2007	Malta	2007.BAE	aflatoxins (B1 = 51.5; Tot. = 59 / B1 = 71.7; Tot. = 79.09 / B1 = 67.5; Tot. = 75.01 µg/kg - ppb) in turmeric powder from India	border control - screening sample	no distribution / product (to be) destroyed
23/04/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BAF	Salmonella ouakam (presence /25g) in lambs lettuce from the United Kingdom	company's own check	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / recall from recipients
23/04/2007	Greece	2007.BAG	attempt to illegally import frozen octopus from Indonesia exported from Thailand	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
23/04/2007	Finland	2007.BAH	migration of lead (4 mg/dm ²) from plates from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
23/04/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BAI	too high content of E 210 - benzoic acid (185 mg/l) in soft drink from Nigeria	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
23/04/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BAJ	too high content of E 210 - benzoic acid (192 mg/l) in soft drink from Nigeria	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
23/04/2007	Germany	2007.BAK	Salmonella Java (presence /25g) in dried Mu-Err mushrooms from Vietnam	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / prohibition to trade - sales ban
24/04/2007	Germany	2007.BAL	presence of bacterial inhibitor in royal jelly from China	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / destination of the product identified
24/04/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BAM	illegal import of sardine products (washi ajitsuke and washi miso) and mackerel product (saba miso ni) from Japan	market control	information on distribution not (yet) available / withdrawal from sale
24/04/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BAN	illegal import of various fishery products from Japan	market control	information on distribution not (yet) available / withdrawal from sale
24/04/2007	Poland	2007.BAO	missing identification code on individual packaging of groundnut in shell from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
24/04/2007	Italy	2007.BAP	improper health certificate(s) for live clams (Tapes decussatus) from Tunisia	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) destroyed
24/04/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BAQ	cadmium (0.148 mg/kg - ppm) in canned pilchards from Morocco	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) returned to dispatcher
24/04/2007	Poland	2007.BAR	missing identification code on individual packaging of groundnuts in shell from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
24/04/2007	Italy	2007.BAS	aflatoxins (B1 = 1.3; Tot. = 2.5 / B1 = 04.; Tot. = 2.5 / B1 = 17.4; Tot. = 18.7 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachios in shell from Iran	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
24/04/2007	Spain	2007.BAT	aflatoxins (B1 = 3.5 / B1 = 1.1 / B1 = 1.1 µg/kg - ppb) in blanched peanuts from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
24/04/2007	Germany	2007.BAU	unauthorised colour Sudan 4 (0.03 mg/kg - ppm) in palm oil from Ghana	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product detained
24/04/2007	Germany	2007.BAV	aflatoxins (B1 = 0.6; Tot. = 0.6 / B1 = 160.4; Tot. = 175.4 / B1 = 41.1; Tot. = 44.3 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachios in shell from Iran	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
24/04/2007	Germany	2007.BAW	aflatoxins (B1 = 7.7; Tot. = 8.3 / B1 = 11.3; Tot. = 11.7 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachios in shell from Iran	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
24/04/2007	Germany	2007.BAX	aflatoxins (B1 = 6.9; Tot. = 9.3 / B1 = 0.9; Tot. = 1.1 / B1 = 2.1; Tot. = 2.3 µg/kg - ppb) in blanched peanut kernels from Argentina	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
25/04/2007	Malta	2007.BAY	undeclared peanut in ground almond substitute from Malta	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / withdrawal from sale
26/04/2007	Germany	2007.BAZ	unauthorised colours Sudan 1 (0.279 mg/kg - ppm) and Sudan 4 (0.077 mg/kg - ppm) in curry powder from unknown origin via Germany	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / withdrawal from sale
26/04/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BBA	dioxins (3.15 pg WHO TEQ/g) in choline chloride 60% on corn cob from China	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / product detained
26/04/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BBB	unauthorised substance isofenphos-methyl (0.14 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen mixed green and red peppers from Spain	market control	product already consumed / product detained
27/04/2007	Italy	2007.BBC	mercury (1.64 mg/kg - ppm) in tuna fillets in olive oil from Colombia	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / public recall
27/04/2007	Spain	2007.BBD	too high content of sulphite (18 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen king prawns from Brazil	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
27/04/2007	Spain	2007.BBE	unauthorised substances nitrofurans (metabolite) - furazolidone (AOZ) (2 µg/kg - ppb) and nitrofurans (metabolite) - nitrofurazone (SEM) (counter analysis: 1.8 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen shrimps (<i>Penaeus vannamei</i>) from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
27/04/2007	Spain	2007.BBF	unauthorised substance nitrofurans (metabolite) - furazolidone (AOZ) (9.2; 2.1; 6.2 µg/kg - ppb) in raw shrimps (<i>Penaeus vannamei</i>) from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / reinforced checking

TABLE 3: CORRIGENDA TO PREVIOUS NOTIFICATIONS

DATE:	REF.:	NOTIFICATION:	OF WEEK	SUBJECT	CORRIGENDUM:
26/04/2007	inf01	2007.0208	12	melamine in wet cuts and gravy style cat food from the United States	Press releases from the United States' Food and Drug Administration have identified melamine as the chemical with which the pet food was contaminated through the wheat gluten that was used as an ingredient.

TABLE 4: WITHDRAWALS OF PREVIOUS NOTIFICATIONS

DATE:	REF.:	NOTIFI- CATION:	OF WEEK	SUBJECT	REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL:
24/04/2007	inf01	2007.AVJ	14	Campylobacter in duck liver pâté from France	The Campylobacter isolate from the duck liver pate was identical to the laboratory control strain. The positive Campylobacter result, was therefore, likely to be a false positive due to cross-contamination at the laboratory. For this reason, the notification is withdrawn.