

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, notifications are classified under three different headings¹:

- **ALERT NOTIFICATIONS**

Alert notifications are sent when a food or feed presenting a serious 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Consumers can be reassured that products subject to an alert notification have been withdrawn or are in the process of being withdrawn from the market.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 that was placed on the market 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 or is no longer present on their market or because the nature of the risk does not require any immediate action.

- **BORDER REJECTIONS**

These notifications concern food and feed consignments that have been tested and rejected at the external borders of the EU (and the EEA²) when a health risk was found. The notifications are transmitted to all EEA border posts in order to reinforce controls and to ensure that the rejected product does not re-enter the Community through another border post.

The Commission publishes a weekly overview of RASFF notifications belonging to the above three categories. 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 all required 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

¹ This classification was put in place on 1 January 2008 and differs from the classification used until then.

² European Economic Area

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 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 additional information does not appear in the publicly accessible weekly overviews.

A short explanation about some of the notification tables' columns follows.

The "notification basis" column, appearing in the alert and information notifications tables, indicates what type of control, report or investigation lay at the basis of the notification:

- 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”);
- official control on the market: 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;
- food poisoning outbreak: reports of a food poisoning leading to the notification of a risk in a food on the market that has caused the food poisoning.

The status column is a combination of two values, "distribution status" and "action (to be) 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 (to be) taken represents the action already taken or to be 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.

Week 2009/2

TABLE 1: ALERT NOTIFICATIONS

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

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	NOTIFICATION BASIS	STATUS
05/01/2009	Denmark	2009.0009	metal fragments in bakery product from Poland	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumers
06/01/2009	Germany	2009.0011	prohibited substance nitrofurans (metabolite) furazolidone (AOZ) (22 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen king prawns from Belgium	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) detained
09/01/2009	Italy	2009.0018	mercury (1.37 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen blue shark (<i>Prionace glauca</i>) fillets from Spain	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) detained
09/01/2009	the Czech Republic	2009.0021	migration of cadmium (0.61; 1.7; 0.037; 1.4; 0.832 mg/item) from red enamelled mug from Romania	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market

TABLE 2: INFORMATION NOTIFICATIONS

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

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	NOTIFICATION BASIS	STATUS
05/01/2009	Norway	2009.0004	omethoate (0.07 mg/kg - ppm) in mangoes from Thailand	official control on the market	product already consumed / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
05/01/2009	Italy	2009.0005	aflatoxins (B1 = 5.9 µg/kg - ppb) in roasted pistachio nuts from Iran	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
05/01/2009	Lithuania	2009.0006	unauthorised use of colour E 127 - erythrosine in food supplement from the United States, via Poland	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	NOTIFICATION BASIS	STATUS
05/01/2009	Slovenia	2009.0007	too high content of coumarin (11.5 mg/kg - ppm) in breakfast cereals from Austria	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
05/01/2009	Poland	2009.0008	melamine (183 mg/kg - ppm) in ammonium bicarbonate (E503ii) from China	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / destination of the product changed
05/01/2009	Denmark	2009.0010	unauthorised placing on the market of maca capsules and powder (<i>Lepidium meyenii</i> Walp) from Germany	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumers
06/01/2009	Germany	2009.0012	lead (0.176; 0.172; 0.166 mg/kg - ppm) and tin (702; 767; 815 mg/kg - ppm) in canned stuffed olives from Germany, with raw material from Spain	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
06/01/2009	Denmark	2009.0013	fenitrothion (0.08 mg/kg - ppm) in celery from Spain, via the Netherlands	company's own check	product past use-by date / informing recipients
07/01/2009	Denmark	2009.0014	too high content of colour E 110 - Sunset Yellow FCF (350 mg/kg - ppm) and of colour E 151 - Brilliant Black Bn / Black Pn (630 mg/kg - ppm) in black lumpfish roe from Iceland	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible)
07/01/2009	Finland	2009.0015	unauthorised novel food food supplement containing miraculin derived from <i>Synsepalum dulcificum</i> from Taiwan	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) detained
08/01/2009	Italy	2009.0016	too high content of sulphite (227 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen cooked shrimps (<i>Penaeus vannamei</i>) from France	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) detained
08/01/2009	Belgium	2009.0017	oxamyl (0.23; 0.63 mg/kg - ppm) in lettuce from Belgium	official control on the market	product already consumed / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
09/01/2009	Belgium	2009.0019	cadmium (2.5; 3.2 mg/kg - ppm) in squid meal from Peru	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) detained
09/01/2009	France	2009.0020	histamine (262.98 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen dolphinfish steaks (<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>) from Peru	border control - consignment released	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
09/01/2009	Italy	2009.0022	incorrect labelling (presence of the warning "poison" inside the packaging) on follow-up formula (milk powder) from Germany	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) detained
09/01/2009	Malta	2009.0023	Salmonella Livingstone (presence /10g) in beef burgers from Malta	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	NOTIFICATION BASIS	STATUS
09/01/2009	France	2009.0024	histamine (432.6; 388.74 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen dolphinfish fillets (Coryphaena hippurus) from Peru	border control - consignment released	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from the market

TABLE 3: BORDER REJECTIONS

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

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	ACTION (TO BE) TAKEN
05/01/2009	Italy	2009.AAK	aflatoxins (B1 = 20.0; Tot. = 30.3 / B1 = 19.7; Tot. = 43.6 / B1 = 20.7; Tot. = 45.8 µg/kg - ppb) in apricot kernels from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
05/01/2009	Germany	2009.AAL	aflatoxins (B1 = 3.9; Tot. = 4.5 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachio nuts from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
05/01/2009	Italy	2009.AAM	aflatoxins (B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.1 / B1 = 4.8; Tot. = 5.4 / B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.1 µg/kg - ppb) in almond kernels from the United States	product (to be) re-dispatched
05/01/2009	Italy	2009.AAN	bad hygienic state of chilled tuna fillets from Sri Lanka	product (to be) destroyed
05/01/2009	Italy	2009.AAO	bad hygienic state of chilled tuna fillets from Sri Lanka	product (to be) destroyed
05/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.AAP	suffocation risk as a result of the consumption of and E 407 - carrageenan unauthorised in mini jelly cups from Vietnam	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
05/01/2009	Lithuania	2009.AAQ	parasitic infestation with Anisakis simplex of frozen skinless hake fillets from China	product (to be) detained
05/01/2009	Poland	2009.AAR	dead insects in puerh fanning tea from China	product (to be) re-dispatched
05/01/2009	Italy	2009.AAS	aflatoxins (B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.1 / B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.1 / B1 = 7.8; Tot. = 8.9 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnuts in shell from Egypt	product (to be) re-dispatched
05/01/2009	Poland	2009.AAT	incorrect labelling on frozen cleaned mackerel from Thailand	product (to be) destroyed
05/01/2009	Germany	2009.AAU	unauthorised genetically modified (BT63 Rice) instant rice noodles from China	product (to be) re-dispatched
05/01/2009	Poland	2009.AAV	unauthorised establishment for frozen Nile perch (Lates niloticus) dish from Israel	product (to be) destroyed
05/01/2009	France	2009.AAW	aflatoxins (B1 = 0.8; Tot. = 1.8 / B1 = 5.8; Tot. = 12.7 µg/kg - ppb) in roasted hazelnut kernels from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
05/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.AAX	bad hygienic state of chilled fish from Brazil	product (to be) destroyed
05/01/2009	Italy	2009.AAY	bad hygienic state of chilled tuna fillets from The Maldives	product (to be) destroyed
05/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.AAZ	prohibited substance nitrofurans (metabolite) furazolidone (AOZ) (1 µg/kg - ppb) in raw frozen cultivated black tiger shrimps (Penaeus monodon) from India	product (to be) re-dispatched
06/01/2009	Italy	2009.ABA	bad hygienic state of chilled tuna fillets from Sri Lanka	product (to be) destroyed
06/01/2009	Italy	2009.ABB	bad hygienic state of chilled tuna fillets from The Maldives	product (to be) destroyed
06/01/2009	Belgium	2009.ABC	prohibited substance nitrofurans (metabolite) nitrofurazone (SEM) (3.6 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen raw shrimps (Macrobrachium rosenbergii, Penaeus monodon) from India	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
06/01/2009	Italy	2009.ABD	bad hygienic state of chilled tuna fillets from Sri Lanka	product (to be) destroyed

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	ACTION (TO BE) TAKEN
06/01/2009	Germany	2009.ABE	unauthorised genetically modified (BT 63 Rice) rice vermicelli from China	product (to be) redispached or destroyed
06/01/2009	Italy	2009.ABF	bad hygienic state of chilled tuna fillets from The Maldives	product (to be) destroyed
06/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.ABG	rodent excrements in various fruit and vegetables in bulk from Egypt	product (to be) destroyed
06/01/2009	Poland	2009.ABH	attempt to illegally import frozen bovine meat from Ukraine	product (to be) re-dispached
06/01/2009	Cyprus	2009.ABI	too high content of boron (6.70 mg/l) in carbonated natural mineral water from Georgia	product (to be) redispached or destroyed
06/01/2009	Belgium	2009.ABJ	prohibited substance nitrofurane (metabolite) nitrofurazone (SEM) (5.6 µg/kg - ppb) in raw frozen fresh water headless shrimps (<i>Macrobrachium rosenbergii</i>) from Bangladesh	product (to be) redispached or destroyed
08/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.ABK	<i>Bacillus cereus</i> (3.2*10 ⁸ CFU/g) in bean curd from China	product (to be) destroyed
08/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.ABL	<i>Bacillus cereus</i> (9*10 ⁵ CFU/g) in bean curd from China	product (to be) destroyed
08/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.ABM	<i>Bacillus cereus</i> (5.9*10 ⁸ CFU/g) in bean curd from China	product (to be) destroyed
08/01/2009	Germany	2009.ABN	histamine (281; 221; 228 mg/kg - ppm) in canned tuna fish from India	product (to be) re-dispached
08/01/2009	Belgium	2009.ABO	aflatoxins (B1 = 42.4 / B1 = 1870 / B1 < 0.5) in pistachios from Turkey	product (to be) redispached or destroyed
08/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.ABP	too high content of colour E 110 - Sunset Yellow FCF (420 mg/kg - ppm) and unauthorised colour (not identified) in sugar coated fennel seeds from India	product (to be) destroyed
08/01/2009	Spain	2009.ABQ	bad hygienic state of frozen perch fillets from Tanzania	product (to be) re-dispached
09/01/2009	Slovenia	2009.ABR	too high level of total migration (263 (1st cycle); 155 (2nd cycle); 94 (3rd cycle) mg/dm ²) from baby spoon from China, via Croatia	product (to be) re-dispached
09/01/2009	Finland	2009.ABS	migration of lead (between 2.8 and 16 mg/dm ²) from ceramic soup set from China	product (to be) detained

TABLE 4: CORRIGENDA TO PREVIOUS NOTIFICATIONS

DATE:	REF.:	NOTIFI-CATION:	OF WEEK	SUBJECT	CORRIGENDUM:
07/01/2009	inf01	2008.BJJ	36	improper health certificate(s) for and insufficient labelling of frozen chicken dispached from Germany and redispached by Ukraine	The subject of this notification has been modified, because the product was dispached by Germany to the Ukraine. The recipient in the Ukraine rejected the consignment and redispached it to Germany. The product was intercepted at the border post in Poland were it was rejected for re-entering the EU and sent for destruction.

TABLE 5: WITHDRAWALS OF PREVIOUS NOTIFICATIONS

DATE:	REF.:	NOTIFI- CATION:	OF WEEK	SUBJECT	REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL:
06/01/2009	add01	2008.1692	52	Bacillus cereus in mare's milk in capsules from Belgium	Taking into account the analytical results and the opinion of EFSA on Bacillus cereus this notification is hereby withdrawn.