

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Consumers can be reassured that products subject to an alert notification have been withdrawn or are in the process of being withdrawn from the market.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 2007/29

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
16/07/2007	Germany	2007.0477	aflatoxins (B1 = 9.4; Tot. = 12 / B1 = 21.2; Tot. = 27.8 µg/kg - ppb) in nutmeg powder from unknown origin via the Netherlands	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from recipient(s)
16/07/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.0478	unauthorised substance nitrofurantoin (metabolite) - furaltadone (AMOZ) (1.8 µg/kg - ppb) in sea bass from Greece	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
16/07/2007	Germany	2007.0479	Salmonella (present /25g) in sesame halva with pistachios from Greece via Germany	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
17/07/2007	Ireland	2007.0480	benzo(a)pyrene (28.9; 9.9 µg/kg - ppb) in dried catfish fillets from Malaysia via the Netherlands	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
18/07/2007	Belgium	2007.0481	migration of primary aromatic amines (1.55 <--> 990,69 µg/kg - ppb) from nylon kitchen utensils from Italy	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / public warning - press release
18/07/2007	the Netherlands	2007.0482	benzo(a)pyrene (134 µg/kg - ppb) in food supplement from the United States	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed
19/07/2007	Italy	2007.0483	cadmium (1.617 mg/kg - ppm) in horse liver from Italy obtained from a horse dispatched from Poland	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / reinforced checking
19/07/2007	Italy	2007.0484	incorrect labelling (plant ingredients incorrectly reported) on food supplements from China via the Netherlands	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product seized
19/07/2007	Italy	2007.0485	unauthorised herbs in food supplement from China via the Netherlands	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product seized
19/07/2007	Sweden	2007.0486	Salmonella Livingstone (present in 1 out of 10 samples) in rapeseed meal from Poland via Germany	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / physical treatment
19/07/2007	the Netherlands	2007.0487	unauthorised substance nitrofurantoin (metabolite) - furazolidone (AOZ) (1.2 µg/kg - ppb) in IQF PND shrimps (Trachypenaeus spp) from China	border control - screening sample	distribution on the market (possible) / destination of the product identified
20/07/2007	Italy	2007.0488	mercury (1.3 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen tuna (Thunnus thynnus) from Cyprus	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product seized

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
20/07/2007	Italy	2007.0489	unauthorised genetically modified (RICE BT63) rice noodles from China	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / destination of the product identified

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
16/07/2007	Italy	2007.BSQ	aflatoxins (B1 = 12.4; Tot. = 13.6 µg/kg - ppb) in rice in bulk from Pakistan	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
16/07/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BSR	aflatoxins (B1 < 370 µg/kg - ppb) in peanut brittle from Pakistan	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / withdrawal from sale
16/07/2007	Denmark	2007.BSS	Salmonella Virchow (present /10g) in chicken fillet kebab from Belgium	market control	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / withdrawal from sale
16/07/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BST	spoilage of red snapper, red sea bream and white grouper from Ghana	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) destroyed
17/07/2007	Lithuania	2007.BSU	unauthorised substance leucomalachite green (1.6 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen pangasius fillets from Vietnam	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
17/07/2007	Germany	2007.BSV	aflatoxins (B1 = 15.9; Tot. = 17.4 µg/kg - ppb) in round pistachios in shell from Iran	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
17/07/2007	Belgium	2007.BSW	polychlorobifenyls (85.5 µg/kg - ppb) in eel from the United States	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / informing recipients
17/07/2007	Greece	2007.BSX	too high count of Enterobacteriaceae (6100; 4800; 8500 CFU/100g) in sesame seeds from Ethiopia	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product detained
17/07/2007	Greece	2007.BSY	Salmonella tamberma (presence) and too high count of Enterobacteriaceae (5.2x10*5 CFU/g) in sesame seeds from Ethiopia	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed
17/07/2007	Greece	2007.BSZ	cadmium (0.76 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen prawns from Australia	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
17/07/2007	Italy	2007.BTA	histamine (3069 mg/kg - ppm) in vacuum packed yellowfin tuna loins (Thunnus albacares) from Sri Lanka	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
17/07/2007	Belgium	2007.BTB	too high count of Enterobacteriaceae in pet food from the United States	border control - screening sample	distribution on the market (possible) / destination of the product identified
18/07/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BTC	aflatoxins (B1 = 4.2; Tot. = 8.4 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnut runner from Brazil	border control - import rejected	no distribution / physical treatment - blanching
18/07/2007	Italy	2007.BTD	histamine (2198.5; 1566.2; 1425.8; 247 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen whole tuna (Thunnus albacares) from India	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product seized
18/07/2007	Poland	2007.BTE	Robusta raw coffee in bulk from Tanzania infested with insects and moulds	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
18/07/2007	Italy	2007.BTF	too high level of total migration (10.4 mg/dm ²) from stainless steel knives from China (Hong Kong)	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
18/07/2007	Germany	2007.BTG	illegal import of extracts of glands or other organs from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
18/07/2007	Italy	2007.BTH	cadmium (0.69 mg/kg - ppm) and lead (0.77 mg/kg - ppm) in dried mushrooms (Boletus edulis) from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
18/07/2007	Austria	2007.BTI	Salmonella serotype b (present /10g) in seasoned chicken grill plate from Germany	market control	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / no stock left
19/07/2007	Germany	2007.BTJ	foreign body in sugar cube with novelty item inside from Germany	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall
19/07/2007	France	2007.BTK	Escherichia coli O157:H7 in minced meat from France, raw material from Spain	company's own check	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / physical treatment - heat treatment
19/07/2007	Germany	2007.BTL	Bacillus cereus enterotoxigenic (350 000 CFU/g) in dried mushrooms from Vietnam	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall
19/07/2007	Belgium	2007.BTM	aflatoxins (B1 = 14.1; Tot. = 16.2 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachios from Iran	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product detained
19/07/2007	Italy	2007.BTN	aflatoxins (B1 = 8.7; Tot. = 9.3 / B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.1 / B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.1 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnut kernels from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
19/07/2007	Italy	2007.BTO	unauthorised substance nitrofurane (metabolite) - nitrofurazone (SEM) (1 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen fresh water headless shell on easy peel shrimps (Macrobrachium rosenbergii) from Bangladesh	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
19/07/2007	Italy	2007.BTP	mercury (1.30 mg/kg - ppm) in vacuum packed swordfish fillets (Xiphias gladius) from Spain	market control	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / product seized
20/07/2007	Spain	2007.BTQ	mercury (2.5 mg/kg - ppm) in shark from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
20/07/2007	Italy	2007.BTR	unlabeled E 210 - benzoic acid (895 mg/kg - ppm) and unauthorised colour Sudan 1 (13 mg/kg - ppm) in green chilly pickle from Bangladesh	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) destroyed
20/07/2007	Denmark	2007.BTS	Campylobacter (presence in 11/12 samples, 400 <--> 33.000 CFU/g) in fresh chicken from France	market control	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / product recall
20/07/2007	Spain	2007.BTT	unauthorised use of colour E 171 - titanium dioxide (2 mg/kg - ppm) in natural roasted chickpeas from Turkey	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
20/07/2007	Germany	2007.BTU	arsenic (59 mg/kg - ppm) and mercury (64 mg/kg - ppm) in ayurvedic herbal food supplement from India	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed