

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Consumers can be reassured that products subject to an alert notification have been withdrawn or are in the process of being withdrawn from the market.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 2007/31

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
30/07/2007	Germany	2007.0511	risk of overdosage with nicotinic acid (40 mg/5 g daily portion) from consuming a food supplement containing vitamins and caffeine from Germany	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
31/07/2007	Latvia	2007.0512	prohibited substance chloramphenicol (0.42 µg/kg - ppb) in fatty processed semihard cheese from Lithuania	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
31/07/2007	Sweden	2007.0513	Salmonella (presence /25g) in prepared salads from Denmark	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
31/07/2007	Norway	2007.0514	Listeria monocytogenes (31800 CFU/g) in gorgonzola cheese from Italy	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / prohibition to trade - sales ban
01/08/2007	the Czech Republic	2007.0516	too high content of E 200 - sorbic acid (1607 mg/kg - ppm) in dried pitted prunes from the United States via Poland	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / prohibition to trade - sales ban
01/08/2007	Italy	2007.0517	lead (0.05 mg/kg - ppm) in cheese from Germany	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
01/08/2007	Hungary	2007.0518	melamine in protein concentrate from Spain	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
01/08/2007	Germany	2007.0519	migration of DINP - di-isononyl phthalate (360; 615 mg/kg - ppm) from lids of jars containing red curry paste from Thailand	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
02/08/2007	Cyprus	2007.0520	traces of almond in semi sweet chocolate from Greece	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
02/08/2007	France	2007.0521	Salmonella spp (presence /25g) in spreadable sausages from Germany	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
02/08/2007	Austria	2007.0522	histamine (690 mg/kg - ppm) in and carbon monoxide treatment (558 µg/kg - ppb) of frozen tuna from Costa Rica via the Netherlands	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed
02/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.0523	prohibited substance nitrofurans (metabolite) nitrofurazone (SEM) (1.2 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen fresh water headless shrimps (<i>Machrobrachium rosenbergii</i>) from India via the Netherlands	border control - screening sample	distribution on the market (possible) / destination of the product identified
03/08/2007	Germany	2007.0524	migration of DINP - di-isononyl phthalate (670 mg/kg - ppm) from lids of glass jars containing red chilli paste from the United Kingdom	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / no stock left

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
03/08/2007	Austria	2007.0525	dioxins (66.78 pg WHO TEQ/g) in cod liver in oil and own juice from Poland via Germany	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
03/08/2007	Austria	2007.0526	dioxins (43.35 pg WHO TEQ/g) in cod liver in own oil from Poland via Denmark	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / no stock left

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
30/07/2007	Italy	2007.BVE	illegal import of various food products and cosmetics and bad state of preservation of fresh vegetables from Ghana	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
30/07/2007	Lithuania	2007.BVF	too high content of the sum of E 210 - benzoic acid and of E 200 - sorbic acid (Sa + Ba = 2530mg/kg - ppm) in food supplement from the United States	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
30/07/2007	France	2007.BVG	aflatoxins (B1 = 0.9; Tot. = 0.9 / B1 = 0.6; Tot. = 0.6 / B1 = 4.7; Tot. = 5 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachio kernels from Iran	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
30/07/2007	Italy	2007.BVH	unauthorised use of colour E 127 - erythrosine in chewing gum from Syria	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
30/07/2007	Greece	2007.BVI	too high content of sulphite (187 mg/kg - ppm) and undeclared sulphite in sundried tomatoes in oil from Turkey	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall
30/07/2007	Greece	2007.BVJ	E 210 - benzoic acid (96 mg/kg - ppm) unauthorised in roasted eggplant puree from Turkey	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
30/07/2007	Italy	2007.BVK	too high count of faecal coliforms (6900 CFU/ml) in pasteurised cow's milk from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / physical treatment - heat treatment
30/07/2007	Italy	2007.BVL	erucic acid (43% of the fatty acid content) in pickled olives from Bangladesh	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
30/07/2007	Germany	2007.BVM	aflatoxins (B1 = 49.5; Tot. = 54.8 mg/kg - ppm) in raw pistachios in shell from Iran	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
31/07/2007	Poland	2007.BVN	Salmonella (present /25g) in soyabean meal from Argentina	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / product detained

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
31/07/2007	Denmark	2007.BVO	Salmonella typhimurium (DT 104 b multiresistant) in fresh pork tenderloins from the United Kingdom	market control	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / withdrawal from sale
31/07/2007	Lithuania	2007.BVP	dried capsicum from China infested with moulds	border control - import rejected	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed
31/07/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BVQ	food poisoning outbreak suspected to be caused by norovirus in Pacific oysters from the United Kingdom	consumer complaint	product already consumed / withdrawal from sale
31/07/2007	Germany	2007.BVR	aflatoxins (B1 = 6.5; Tot. = 10.1 µg/kg - ppb) in ground hazelnuts from Turkey	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / no stock left
31/07/2007	Spain	2007.BVS	mercury (1.2; 1.4; 2.1 mg/kg - ppm) in swordfish (Xiphias gladius) from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
01/08/2007	Poland	2007.BVT	unauthorised substance malachite green (1.72 µg/kg - ppb) in eel (Anguilla anguilla) from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product seized
02/08/2007	Italy	2007.BVU	aflatoxins (B1 = 6.7; Tot. = 7.4 / B1 = 10.6; Tot. = 11.8 / B1 = 7; Tot. = 8 µg/kg - ppb) in basmati rice (Oryza sativa) in bulk from Pakistan	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
02/08/2007	Bulgaria	2007.BVV	aflatoxins (B1 = 21.8; Tot. = 24.3 / B1 = 12.5; Tot. = 8 / B1 = 8.6; Tot. = 12.3 µg/kg - ppb) in curcuma powder, chilli powder and cracked chilli from India	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product detained
02/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BVW	bulging cans of sardines in sunflower oil and in brine from Morocco	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) destroyed
02/08/2007	Italy	2007.BVX	mercury (2.2 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh swordfish (Xiphias gladius) from Spain	market control	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / product seized
02/08/2007	Germany	2007.BVY	methiocarb (3.1; 2.8; 1.9 mg/kg - ppm) in aubergines from Dominican Republic	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed
02/08/2007	Greece	2007.BVZ	aflatoxins (B1 = 2.1; Tot. = 5.2 / B1 = 1.2; Tot. = 3.6 / B1 = 7.2; Tot. = 60.0 µg/kg - ppb) in peanut kernels from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
02/08/2007	Italy	2007.BWA	bad state of preservation of beer from Ghana	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
02/08/2007	Cyprus	2007.BWB	histamine (between 207.2 and 372.2 mg/kg - ppm) in salted/dried queen fish and Maldives fish chips from Malaysia	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
02/08/2007	Cyprus	2007.BWC	histamine (6/9 unfavourable: between 300.9 and 466.0 mg/kg - ppm) in dried/salted mackerel and dried/salted scad (Selar) from Malaysia	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
02/08/2007	Cyprus	2007.BWD	histamine (5/9 unfavourable: between 286.2 and 1198.1 mg/kg - ppm) in dried anchovies from Malaysia	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
02/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BWE	mercury (1.625 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh chilled vacuum packed swordfish loins (Xiphias gladius) from Sri Lanka	border control - import rejected	no distribution

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
03/08/2007	Poland	2007.BWF	robusta raw coffee from Tanzania infested with insects and moulds	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
03/08/2007	Slovenia	2007.BWG	too high level of total migration (251 mg/dm ²) from soft spoon set from China via Switzerland	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall
03/08/2007	Germany	2007.BWH	mercury (0.823 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh red snapper fillet (<i>Lutjanus purpureus</i>) from Brazil	border control - screening sample	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / product recall
03/08/2007	Spain	2007.BWI	aflatoxins (B1 = 14.54; Tot. = 16.91 µg/kg - ppb) in whole almonds from the United States	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
03/08/2007	Spain	2007.BWJ	imazalil (5.67 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh lemons from Argentina	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
03/08/2007	Spain	2007.BWK	too high content of sulphite (183; 177 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen crabs (<i>Gerion maritae</i>) from Angola	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
03/08/2007	Spain	2007.BWL	too high content of sulphite (240.71 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen crabs (<i>Gerion maritae</i>) from Angola	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
03/08/2007	Luxembourg	2007.BWM	unauthorised irradiation of food supplement from the United States	market control	product already consumed / no stock left
03/08/2007	Luxembourg	2007.BWN	unauthorised irradiation of jasmin tea from the United States	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) returned to dispatcher
03/08/2007	Norway	2007.BWO	carbaryl (0.80 mg/kg - ppm) in pineapple from Costa Rica	market control	product already consumed / product recall