

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Consumers can be reassured that products subject to an alert notification have been withdrawn or are in the process of being withdrawn from the market.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 2008/31

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
28/07/2008	Italy	2008.0911	mercury (2.80 mg/kg - ppm) in smoked marlin fillets from Spain	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumers
28/07/2008	Italy	2008.0913	Salmonella spp. (presence /25g) in chicken kebab from Germany	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
29/07/2008	Germany	2008.0915	unauthorised colours Rhodamine B (<5 mg/kg - ppm) and Orange II (700 mg/kg - ppm) and unauthorised use of colour E 124 - Ponceau 4R / cochineal red A (20 mg/kg - ppm) in dried chilli powder from Vietnam, via the Netherlands	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
30/07/2008	Slovenia	2008.0926	too high content of sulphite (180 mg/kg - ppm) and undeclared sulphite in apricot jam from Bosnia and Herzegovina	border control - consignment released	distribution on the market (possible) / public warning - press release
30/07/2008	Germany	2008.0927	migration of DEHP - di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (728 mg/kg - ppm) from lids of glass jars containing mixed pickle from India, via the Netherlands	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
30/07/2008	Germany	2008.0928	migration of DEHP - di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (935 mg/kg - ppm) from lids of glass jars containing Rogan Josh curry paste from India, via the Netherlands	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
30/07/2008	Germany	2008.0929	methamidophos (0.044 mg/kg - ppm), acephate (0.81 mg/kg - ppm) and triazophos (0.26 mg/kg - ppm) in okra pods (<i>Abelmoschus esculentus</i>) from India	border control - consignment released	distribution on the market (possible) / public warning - press release
30/07/2008	Germany	2008.0930	migration of DEHP - di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (1082 mg/kg - ppm) from lids of glass jars containing Vindaloo curry paste from India, via the Netherlands	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
30/07/2008	Denmark	2008.0931	Salmonella Dublin (in 2 out of 12 samples) in chilled beef from Denmark	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
30/07/2008	Germany	2008.0932	migration of DEHP - di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (477 mg/kg - ppm) from lids of glass jars containing tikka curry paste from India, via the Netherlands	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	NOTIFICATION BASIS	STATUS
30/07/2008	Germany	2008.0933	migration of DEHP - di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (513 mg/kg - ppm) from lids of glass jars containing garlic pickle from India, via the Netherlands	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
28/07/2008	Italy	2008.0908	Salmonella spp. (in 5 out of 5 samples /10g) in frozen chicken from France	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
28/07/2008	Poland	2008.0909	fraudulent health certificate(s) for frozen eel (<i>Anguilla anguilla</i>) from China	border control - consignment released	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) seized
28/07/2008	Spain	2008.0910	fraudulent use of health mark for fresh ovine meat from Spain	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) seized
28/07/2008	Romania	2008.0912	fragments of bones of land animals in fish meal from Poland, via Hungary	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) returned to dispatcher
29/07/2008	France	2008.0914	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> (130 CFU/g) in raw cow's milk cheese from France	company's own check	product past use-by date / product (to be) destroyed
29/07/2008	Italy	2008.0916	parasitic infestation with <i>Anisakis</i> of chilled mackerel (<i>Scomber scombrus</i>) from Spain	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed
29/07/2008	Austria	2008.0917	high content of iodine (2600 mg/kg - ppm) in dried seaweed from China	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed
29/07/2008	Poland	2008.0918	<i>Salmonella</i> (presence /25g) in soy bean meal from Argentina	border control - consignment released	information on distribution not (yet) available
29/07/2008	Sweden	2008.0919	<i>Salmonella</i> Lexington (in 9 out of 10 samples /25g) in soya pellets from Brazil, via Aruba	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / physical treatment

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	NOTIFICATION BASIS	STATUS
29/07/2008	Italy	2008.0920	patulin (25 µg/kg - ppb) in fruit based baby food from Italy	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / no stock left
29/07/2008	Sweden	2008.0921	Salmonella Yoruba (in 1 out of 8 samples /25g) in soya pellets from Brazil, dispatched from the Netherlands	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / physical treatment
29/07/2008	Sweden	2008.0922	Salmonella spp. (in 1 out of 10 samples /25g) in soya pellets from Brazil	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / physical treatment
30/07/2008	Germany	2008.0923	high content of iodine (from 21 to 480 mg/kg dry matter) in sea algae and seakale products manufactured in Germany, with raw material from China	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed
30/07/2008	Denmark	2008.0924	Salmonella Montevideo (in 4 out of 12 samples), Salmonella paratyphi b (in 3 out of 12 samples) and Salmonella typhimurium (in 5 out of 12 samples) in whole broiler chickens from Belgium	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumers
30/07/2008	Belgium	2008.0925	unauthorised use of colour E 160b - annato/bixin/norbixin (> 50 mg/kg - ppm) in curry powder from Vietnam, via the Netherlands	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed
30/07/2008	Hungary	2008.BER	esfenvalerate (from 0.20 to 0.23 mg/kg - ppm) in grapes from Turkey	border control - consignment released	no distribution / destination of the product identified
31/07/2008	Germany	2008.0934	unauthorised feed additive monensin (between 2.6 and 34 mg/kg - ppm) in yeast produced from sugar cane molasses from Brazil	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from recipient(s)
31/07/2008	Italy	2008.0935	Salmonella typhimurium (group B- 1,4 [5],12:1:1,2) in frozen whole hens from Italy	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
31/07/2008	Spain	2008.0936	Pseudomonas aeruginosa (108; 6 CFU/100g) in bottled drinking water from Spain	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) returned to dispatcher
31/07/2008	Italy	2008.0937	too high content of sulphite (177 mg/kg - ppm) in cooked prawns (Penaeus vannamei) from France, with raw material from Brazil	official control on the market	product past use-by date / no stock left
01/08/2008	Germany	2008.0938	unauthorised feed additive monensin (0.5; 0.2 mg/kg - ppm) in yeast produced from molasses from Brazil	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from recipient(s)
01/08/2008	Romania	2008.0939	pearl barley from Romania infested with insects (Tribolium castaneum)	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	NOTIFICATION BASIS	STATUS
01/08/2008	Slovenia	2008.0940	bulging packaging of hen pate from Slovenia	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) recalled from consumers
01/08/2008	Germany	2008.0941	too high content of cyanide (430 mg/kg - ppm) in linseed pellets from Germany, with raw material from Belgium	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / no stock left
01/08/2008	Norway	2008.0942	Staphylococcal enterotoxin and Vibrio cholerae NON O:1/NON O:139 in frozen pangasius fillets from Vietnam	consumer complaint	distribution restricted to notifying country / public warning - press release
01/08/2008	Belgium	2008.0943	too high content of salinomycin (116 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen roasted IQF chicken thighs and drumsticks from Brazil, via France	border control - consignment released	distribution on the market (possible) / destination of the product identified
01/08/2008	Malta	2008.0944	bad temperature control (rupture of the cold chain) of frozen beef from Denmark	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed

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
28/07/2008	Poland	2008.BEN	too high level of total migration (in 3% acetic acid: 34.3, in isooctane: 86.8 mg/dm ²) from cake holder from China	product (to be) re-dispatched
28/07/2008	Finland	2008.BEO	Salmonella infantis (presence /25g) in rabbit food from Canada	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
29/07/2008	Denmark	2008.BEP	improper health certificate(s) for shucked oysters from the United States	product (to be) destroyed
30/07/2008	Denmark	2008.BEQ	improper health certificate(s) for live oysters from the United States	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
30/07/2008	the Netherlands	2008.BES	aflatoxins (B1 = 2.3; Tot. = 2.5 / B1 = 0.4; Tot. = 0.4 / B1 = 11.0; Tot. = 18.7 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnut kernels from Argentina	product (to be) detained
30/07/2008	the Netherlands	2008.BET	aflatoxins (B1 = 4.2; Tot. = 5.4 / B1 = 0.6; Tot. = 0.7 µg/kg - ppb) in wasabi nori coated peanuts from Thailand	product (to be) destroyed
30/07/2008	Italy	2008.BEU	Salmonella spp. in frozen whole cuttlefish from Malaysia	product (to be) re-dispatched
30/07/2008	Cyprus	2008.BEV	too high content of chromium (67.2 µg/l) and of boron (6.7 mg/l) in carbonated natural mineral water from Georgia	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
31/07/2008	Cyprus	2008.BEW	E 210 - benzoic acid (385 mg/kg - ppm) unauthorised in strawberry jam from Syria	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	ACTION (TO BE) TAKEN
31/07/2008	Italy	2008.BEX	fenpropathrin (0.12; 0.29; 0.28 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh mint tea, black lemon tea and earl black tea from India	product (to be) re-dispatched
01/08/2008	Norway	2008.BEY	improper health certificate(s) for frozen boneless beef fillets from Brazil	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
01/08/2008	Spain	2008.BEZ	aflatoxins (B1 = 0.5; Tot. = 2.0 / B1 = 6.3; Tot. = 7.3 / B1 = >0.5; Tot. = >2.0 µg/kg - ppb) in almond kernels from the United States	product (to be) re-dispatched
01/08/2008	the United Kingdom	2008.BFA	aflatoxins (B1 < 0.25; Tot. < 1.0 / B1 = 56; Tot. = 290 / B1 = 2.2; Tot. = 10 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnuts in shell from China	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
01/08/2008	Germany	2008.BFB	aflatoxins (B1 = 65; Tot. = 69.5 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachios from Iran	product (to be) re-dispatched
01/08/2008	the United Kingdom	2008.BFC	E 385 - calcium disodium ethylene diamine tetra acetate (CDEDTA) unauthorised in orange flavour drink from Lebanon	product (to be) destroyed
01/08/2008	Italy	2008.BFD	aflatoxins (B1 = 2.8 / B1 = 4.16 µg/kg - ppb) in melon and ogbono seeds from Nigeria	product (to be) re-dispatched
01/08/2008	France	2008.BFE	aflatoxins (B1 = 3.8; Tot. = 7.5 / B1 > 0.3; Tot. > 0.8 / B1 = 1.8; Tot. = 2.9 µg/kg - ppb) in dried figs from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
01/08/2008	France	2008.BFF	aflatoxins (B1 = 0.4; Tot. = 0.75 / B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.3 / B1 = 8.0; Tot. = 8.8 µg/kg - ppb) in almond kernels from the United States	product (to be) re-dispatched

TABLE 4: CORRIGENDA TO PREVIOUS NOTIFICATIONS

DATE:	REF.:	NOTIFI-CATION:	OF WEEK	SUBJECT	CORRIGENDUM:
29/07/2008	inf02	2008.0679	24	Bacillus pumilus in frozen ginger processed in Norway, with raw material from Thailand	Following the additional information provided by Norway, the subject of the notification was updated to: "Bacillus pumilus (51000 CFU/g) in frozen ginger processed in Norway, with raw material from Thailand".