

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Consumers can be reassured that products subject to an alert notification have been withdrawn or are in the process of being withdrawn from the market.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

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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
06/08/2007	Italy	2007.0527	nitrite (36 mg/kg - ppm) unauthorised in smoked salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) from Denmark	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product seized
06/08/2007	Italy	2007.0528	mercury in fresh swordfish (<i>Xiphias gladius</i>) from Spain	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product seized
07/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.0529	prohibited substance nitrofurans (metabolite) furazolidone (AOZ) (1.5 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen tiger shrimps (<i>Penaeus monodon</i>) from Vietnam via Germany	border control - screening sample	distribution on the market (possible) / destination of the product identified
07/08/2007	the Czech Republic	2007.0530	unsuitable organoleptic characteristics of frozen mechanically separated poultry meat from Poland	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) returned to dispatcher
07/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.0531	Diarrhoeic Shellfish Poisoning (DSP) toxins in razor clams (<i>Ensis</i> spp.) from the United Kingdom	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / informing recipients
07/08/2007	Austria	2007.0532	benzo(a)pyrene (9.5 µg/kg - ppb) in anchovies in oil from Latvia via Germany	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed
08/08/2007	Slovenia	2007.0533	too high level of total migration (252 mg/dm ²) from heat sensing spoons for children from China via the United Kingdom	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
08/08/2007	Greece	2007.0534	migration of di(2-ethylhexyl)adipate (DEHA) (6.4-14.6 mg/dm ²) from pvc film from Germany	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
08/08/2007	Greece	2007.0535	too high level of total migration (81; 99; 57 mg/kg - ppm) from twin compartment bowl with heat sensing spoon for children from China via the United Kingdom	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
09/08/2007	Portugal	2007.0536	impurities (0.57; 0.82; 0.38 %) in rendered animal fat from Spain	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product seized
09/08/2007	France	2007.0537	Salmonella enteritidis in fresh chicken eggs from France	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
09/08/2007	Belgium	2007.0538	prohibited substance nitrofurans (metabolite) nitrofurazone (SEM) (>1 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen freshwater shrimps (<i>Macrobrachium rosenbergii</i>) from Thailand	border control - screening sample	distribution on the market (possible) / destination of the product identified

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
09/08/2007	the Slovak Republic	2007.0539	benzo(a)pyrene (6 µg/kg - ppb) in smoked sprats in oil from Latvia via the Czech Republic	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
10/08/2007	Italy	2007.0540	mercury (1.67 mg/kg - ppm) in sliced frozen blue shark (<i>Prionace glauca</i>) from Spain	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
10/08/2007	France	2007.0541	unauthorised substance guggulsterone in food supplement from the United States via Belgium and via France	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product detained
10/08/2007	France	2007.0542	unauthorised substance yohimbine in food supplement from the United States via the Netherlands and via France	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product detained
10/08/2007	France	2007.0543	unauthorised substance yohimbine in food supplement from Hungary	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale
10/08/2007	Slovenia	2007.0544	Staphylococcal enterotoxin (presence in 1/5 and in 2/5 subsamples /25g) in mozzarella cheese from Germany via France	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
10/08/2007	France	2007.0545	Listeria monocytogenes (340 CFU/g) in coppa from Italy	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall

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
06/08/2007	Germany	2007.BWP	Salmonella Senftenberg (present /25g) in tahini from Lebanon	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product seized
06/08/2007	Spain	2007.BWQ	mercury (3.67 mg/kg - ppm) in sliced dogfish from Spain	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product detained
06/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BWR	unauthorised use of colour E 160b - annato/bixin/norbixin (70 mg/kg - ppm) in paprika and chilli powder from China via Hong Kong	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) destroyed
06/08/2007	Germany	2007.BWS	monocrotophos (0.37 mg/kg - ppm) in passion fruit from Colombia	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed
07/08/2007	Belgium	2007.BWT	too high content of sulphite (56 mg/kg - ppm) in cooked shrimps (<i>Penaeus vannamei</i>) from Ecuador	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
07/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BWU	unauthorised substance crystal violet (0.9 µg/kg - ppb) in tilapia from Jamaica	market control	product already consumed / no stock left

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
07/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BWV	mercury (1.503 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh chilled vacuum packed loins of swordfish (<i>Xiphias gladius</i>) from Sri Lanka	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
07/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BWW	aflatoxins (B1 = 6.6; Tot. = 8.4 µg/kg - ppb) in peanut butter from the Philippines	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
07/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BWX	Diarrhoeic Shellfish Poisoning (DSP) toxins in razor clams (<i>Ensis</i> spp.) from the United Kingdom	market control	no distribution / withdrawal from sale
07/08/2007	France	2007.BWY	aflatoxins (B1 < 0.3; Tot. < 0.3 / B1 = 5.0; Tot. = 6.1 / B1 = 4.5; Tot. = 16.5 µg/kg - ppb) in roasted hazelnut kernels from Turkey	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
08/08/2007	Poland	2007.BWZ	unsuitable transport conditions for frozen salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i> , <i>Salmo atlantico</i>) from Chile	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product under customs seals
08/08/2007	Belgium	2007.BXA	aflatoxins (B1 = 2 / B1 = 10 µg/kg - ppb) in hazelnut paste from Turkey	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / product detained
08/08/2007	Spain	2007.BXB	aflatoxins (B1 = 102 µg/kg - ppb) in coconut cake from Côte d'Ivoire	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
08/08/2007	Germany	2007.BXC	methiocarb (0.87 mg/kg - ppm) in bitter melon (<i>Momordica charantia</i>) from Dominican Republic	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed
08/08/2007	Spain	2007.BXD	parasitic infestation with <i>Anisakis</i> of hake roe in bulk from Spain	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall
08/08/2007	Norway	2007.BXE	carbaryl (0.46 mg/kg - ppm) in pineapple from Costa Rica	market control	product already consumed / product recall
09/08/2007	Greece	2007.BXF	high content of DEHP - di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate, of DINP - diisononyl phthalate and of DNOP - di(n-octyl) phthalate in sealing ring for pressure cookers from China via Taiwan	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / withdrawal from sale
09/08/2007	Italy	2007.BXG	aflatoxins (B1 = 20.1; Tot. = 25.1 / B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.1 / B1 = 1.8; Tot. = 2.2 µg/kg - ppb) in almonds from the United States	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
09/08/2007	Germany	2007.BXH	aflatoxins (B1 = 5.1; Tot. = 20 / B1 = 0.8; Tot. = 2.3 / B1 = 4.7; Tot. = 8.5 µg/kg - ppb) in hazelnut kernels from Turkey	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
09/08/2007	Finland	2007.BXI	<i>Salmonella</i> Singapore (present /25g) in fresh packed coriander from Thailand	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) destroyed
09/08/2007	Spain	2007.BXJ	unauthorised substance norfloxacin (227.9 µg/kg - ppb) in freeze-dried royal jelly from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
10/08/2007	Germany	2007.BXK	aflatoxins (B1 = 9.6; Tot. = 10.3 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachios in shell from Iran	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
10/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BXL	oxytetracycline (31 µg/kg - ppb) unauthorised in honey in jars from Israel	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / reinforced checking

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
10/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BXM	aflatoxins (B1 = 3 µg/kg - ppb) in roasted sliced hazelnut from Turkey	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
10/08/2007	Sweden	2007.BXN	Salmonella (present /25g) in mixed salad from France	company's own check	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / product recall
10/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BXO	aflatoxins (B1 = 110; Tot. = 126 µg/kg - ppb) in almonds from the United States	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
10/08/2007	Poland	2007.BXP	Salmonella spp (presence /25g) in fish meal from India	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched

TABLE 4: WITHDRAWALS OF PREVIOUS NOTIFICATIONS

DATE:	REF.:	NOTIFICATION:	OF WEEK	SUBJECT	REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL:
08/08/2007	add04	2007.0236	13	E 284 - boric acid unauthorised in frozen Norway lobster (<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>) from the United Kingdom	The counter analyses were favourable. This notification is therefore withdrawn.
06/08/2007	inf01	2007.BIW	23	cadmium in frozen squids and cuttlefish from India	Notification 2007.BIW actually reported the results of the counter analysis for the product notified in 2007.AQT. Therefore 2007.BIW is withdrawn and renamed into 2007.AQT-add01.
07/08/2007	inf01	2007.0515	31	methomyl in lettuce from Belgium	Result of the first test: 0.46 mg/kg methomyl; result of the counter analysis: 0.124 mg/kg; maximum permitted level: 0.3 mg/kg. The maximum permitted level is therefore not exceeded and there is no exceedance of the ARfD for adults, neither for children. For this reason the notification is withdrawn.
09/08/2007	add01	2007.0517	31	lead in cheese from Germany	Reassessment of the results with the conversion factor provided lead to the conclusion that the results are favourable and that the notification can be withdrawn.