

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Consumers can be reassured that products subject to an alert notification have been withdrawn or are in the process of being withdrawn from the market.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
20/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.0564	zearalenone (4; 3.8 mg/kg - ppm) in soya hulls from Argentina via the United States	border control - screening sample	distribution on the market (possible) / informing recipients
20/08/2007	Italy	2007.0565	histamine (1.484 mg/kg - ppm) in tuna fillets in glass jars from Portugal	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
20/08/2007	Cyprus	2007.0566	altered organoleptic characteristics of breadsticks with olive oil from Italy	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
20/08/2007	Italy	2007.0567	mercury (1.99 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen swordfish from Spain	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
21/08/2007	Denmark	2007.0568	food poisoning suspected (Shigella sonnei) to be caused by baby corn from Thailand	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
21/08/2007	France	2007.0569	food poisoning (Salmonella enteritidis) suspected to be caused by eggs from Spain	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
21/08/2007	Germany	2007.0570	Bacillus cereus enterotoxigenic (550000 CFU/g) and Salmonella typhimurium in dried Mu-Err mushrooms via the Netherlands	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
22/08/2007	Belgium	2007.0571	omethoate (0.066 mg/kg - ppm) in plums from Belgium	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
22/08/2007	Italy	2007.0572	mercury (1.87 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh swordfish (Xiphias gladius) from Spain	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) returned to dispatcher
23/08/2007	Belgium	2007.0573	prohibited substance nitrofurans (metabolite) furazolidone (AOZ) (>1 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen peeled deveined raw black tiger shrimps (Penaeus monodon) from India	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product detained
23/08/2007	Belgium	2007.0574	lead (13020 µg/kg - ppb) in food supplement from France	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
23/08/2007	Denmark	2007.0575	unauthorised novel food noni fruit powder from unknown origin, via Germany	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
23/08/2007	Denmark	2007.0576	hazelnut kernels from unknown origin, via Germany infested with larvae of insects	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
23/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.0577	unauthorised colour Sudan (2 mg/kg - ppm) in shoarma spices from Germany	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
23/08/2007	Denmark	2007.0578	ethion (1.4 mg/kg - ppm) in passion fruit from Kenya	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
24/08/2007	Germany	2007.0579	metal fragments (+/- 3 mm) in confectionery from Germany, manufactured in Belgium	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / public warning - press release
24/08/2007	Austria	2007.0580	migration of formaldehyde (63.4; 98,8 mg/dm ²) from plastic ladle from unknown origin, via Portugal	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed
24/08/2007	Italy	2007.0581	mercury (1.6 mg/kg - ppm) in swordfish (<i>Xiphias gladius</i>) from Spain	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product detained
24/08/2007	Sweden	2007.0582	food poisoning suspected (<i>Salmonella Java</i>) to be caused by baby spinach from Italy	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product recall
24/08/2007	Belgium	2007.0583	prohibited substance chloramphenicol (>0.3 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen chickens from Belgium	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / product detained

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
20/08/2007	Italy	2007.BYS	mercury (1.7 mg/kg - ppm) in slices of fresh swordfish (<i>Xiphias gladius</i>) from Spain	market control	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / product (to be) destroyed
20/08/2007	Greece	2007.BYT	mercury (2.35 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen blue shark (<i>Prionace glauca</i>) from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
20/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BYU	cadmium (0.16; 0.15; 0.015 mg/kg - ppm) in canned sardines from Morocco	border control - screening sample	distribution on the market (possible) / destination of the product identified
20/08/2007	Italy	2007.BYV	erucic acid (43.2% of the fatty acid content) in mango pickle from Bangladesh	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
20/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BYW	aflatoxins (B1 = 41; Tot. = 62 µg/kg - ppb) in egusi seeds from Nigeria	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) destroyed
20/08/2007	Italy	2007.BYX	erucic acid (6.9% of the fatty acid content) in mango pickle from Bangladesh	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
20/08/2007	Italy	2007.BYY	mercury (1.8 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh swordfish (<i>Xiphias gladius</i>) from Spain	market control	product already consumed / reinforced checking

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
21/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BYZ	aflatoxins (B1 = 6; Tot. = 6 µg/kg - ppb) in shelled almonds from the United States	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
21/08/2007	Belgium	2007.BZA	lead (2107 µg/kg - ppb) in food supplement from the United States	market control	distribution on the market (possible) / public warning - press release
21/08/2007	Italy	2007.BZB	aflatoxins (B1 = 5.3 / B1 = 5.1 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachio kernels from Iran	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
21/08/2007	Italy	2007.BZC	aflatoxins (B1 = 4.9 / B1 = 5.1 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachio kernels from Iran	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
21/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BZD	aflatoxins (B1 = 26 µg/kg - ppb) in halwa from Pakistan	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall
21/08/2007	France	2007.BZE	histamine (236.21 mg/kg - ppm) in canned tuna from the Seychelles	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product detained
21/08/2007	Austria	2007.BZF	aflatoxins (B1 = 8.6 / B1 = 14.5 µg/kg - ppb) in roasted hazelnut kernels from Turkey	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
21/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BZG	histamine (1330 mg/kg - ppm) in clean headless dry anchovy from Myanmar	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed
22/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BZH	Listeria monocytogenes (340; 3000 CFU/g) in Scottish smoked salmon parcels and in poached salmon terrine from the United Kingdom	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall
22/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BZI	aflatoxins (B1 = 8.6; Tot. = 9.8 9.8 µg/kg - ppb) in mixed blanchable almonds from the United States	border control - import rejected	no distribution
22/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BZJ	aflatoxins (B1 = 17.0; Tot. = 19.6 µg/kg - ppb) in almonds from the United States	border control - import rejected	no distribution
22/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BZK	too high content of E 210 - benzoic acid (187 mg/l) in soft drink from Ghana	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) destroyed
22/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BZL	aflatoxins (B1 = 26.3; Tot. = 35.9 µg/kg - ppb) in peanuts from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / destination of the product changed
22/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BZM	aflatoxins (B1 = 7.5; Tot. = 8.2 µg/kg - ppb) in cleaned medium runner groundnuts from the United States	border control - import rejected	no distribution / physical treatment
22/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BZN	aflatoxins (B1 = 4.1 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnuts from the United States	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
22/08/2007	France	2007.BZO	prohibited substance nitrofurans (metabolite) furazolidone (AOZ) (1.7 µg/kg - ppb) in salted pork casings from China	border control - screening sample	no distribution / destination of the product identified
22/08/2007	France	2007.BZP	cadmium (0.615 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh shark (Xiphias gladius) from Chile	border control - screening sample	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / reinforced checking

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
22/08/2007	Spain	2007.BZQ	cadmium (130; 195 – counter-analysis 208; 195 µg/kg - ppb) in canned sardines with sauce from the Philippines	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
22/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.BZR	aflatoxins (B1 = 12.7; Tot. = 13.8 µg/kg - ppb) in shelled almonds from the United States	border control - import rejected	no distribution
22/08/2007	Italy	2007.BZS	migration of chromium (between 3.3 and 70.69 mg/l) and of nickel (0.3. 0.4 mg/l) from various glass and steel cutlery from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
22/08/2007	Italy	2007.BZU	mercury (1.68 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh swordfish (Xiphias gladius) from Spain	market control	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / no stock left
22/08/2007	Greece	2007.BZV	aflatoxins (B1 < 0.14; Tot. < 0.62 / B1 = 5.3; Tot. = 6.1 / B1 < 0.14; Tot. < 0.62 µg/kg - ppb) in peanut kernels from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
22/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.BZW	aflatoxins (B1 = 11.3; Tot. = 27.1 µg/kg - ppb) in peanut butter balls from Nigeria	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) destroyed
23/08/2007	Poland	2007.BZX	altered organoleptic characteristics of hulled sesame seeds from India	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
23/08/2007	France	2007.BZY	mercury (1.799 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh shark (Xiphias gladius) from Mauritius	border control - screening sample	product expired (exceeded use-by date) / reinforced checking
23/08/2007	Malta	2007.BZZ	unauthorised novel food dietary supplement containing Hoodia gordonii from the United States	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product seized
23/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.CAA	aflatoxins (B1 = 12.7; Tot. = 14.5 µg/kg - ppb) in blanched almonds from the United States	border control - import rejected	no distribution
23/08/2007	Italy	2007.CAB	migration of chromium (2.348 mg/kg - ppm) from spaghetti turner from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
23/08/2007	Belgium	2007.CAC	attempt to illegally import products of animal origin from China	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) destroyed
23/08/2007	Germany	2007.CAD	migration of DEHP - di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (150 mg/kg - ppm) from lids of jars containing sesame paste from Turkey	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall
23/08/2007	Lithuania	2007.CAE	undeclared soya in biscuits from Ukraine	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product seized
23/08/2007	Germany	2007.CAF	unauthorised novel food food supplement containing jojoba seeds from Germany	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / withdrawal from sale
23/08/2007	the United Kingdom	2007.CAG	aflatoxins (B1 = 15.0; Tot. = 21.0 / B1 = 14.4; Tot. = 16.7 µg/kg - ppb) in melon seeds and egusi from Nigeria	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) destroyed
23/08/2007	Italy	2007.CAH	arsenic (24 mg/kg - ppm) in dried seaweed from China (Hong Kong)	border control - import rejected	no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched
23/08/2007	Germany	2007.CAI	high content of zinc (58842 mg/kg - ppm) in grapeseed extract from Germany	market control	distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall

DATE:	NOTIFIED BY:	REF.:	REASON FOR NOTIFYING:	TYPE OF CONTROL:	STATUS
24/08/2007	the Netherlands	2007.CAJ	prohibited substance nitrofuran (metabolite) furazolidone (AOZ) (1.2 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen processed black tiger shrimps (<i>Penaeus monodon</i>) 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:
23/08/2007	inf03	2007.BVT	31	unauthorised substance malachite green in eel (<i>Anguilla anguilla</i>) from China	Since the analytical result reported was below the MRPL, the Polish contact point agreed to withdraw the notification.
22/08/2007	add01	2007.BWT	32	too high content of sulphite in cooked shrimps (<i>Penaeus vannamei</i>) from Ecuador	The Belgian contact point confirmed that the consignment has been released and that, in attendance of the transposition into national law, Belgium applies the new levels for sulphite in cooked shrimps as per Directive 2006/52/EC. Under these circumstances, Belgium has asked for withdrawal of the notification.