

## 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**Consumers can be reassured that products subject to an alert notification have been withdrawn or are in the process of being withdrawn from the market.** The Member States have their own mechanisms to carry out such actions, including the provision of detailed information through the media if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 EEA<sup>1</sup>).

**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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 2007/36

**TABLE 1: ALERT NOTIFICATIONS**

Notifications in blue typeface concern feed, all other notifications concern food.

| <b>DATE:</b> | <b>NOTIFIED BY:</b> | <b>REF.:</b> | <b>REASON FOR NOTIFYING:</b>  | <b>TYPE OF CONTROL:</b> | <b>STATUS</b>  |
|--------------|---------------------|--------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| 03/09/2007   | Spain               | 2007.0606    | melamine (27; 936 mg/kg - ppm) in yeast protein concentrate from Italy, via Spain                             | market control          | distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) returned to dispatcher |
| 04/09/2007   | Slovenia            | 2007.0607    | altered organoleptic characteristics of UHT skimmed milk from Austria   | consumer complaint      | distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale                   |
| 04/09/2007   | Belgium             | 2007.0608    | Listeria monocytogenes (>100 CFU/g) in cooked ham from Italy  | market control          | distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed              |
| 04/09/2007   | the Czech Republic  | 2007.0609    | unauthorised substance tylosin (30.1 µg/kg - ppb) in honey from Spain   | market control          | distribution on the market (possible) / product detained                       |
| 05/09/2007   | Austria             | 2007.0610    | undeclared gluten (700; 548; 598; 612 mg/kg - ppm) in pea cream soup labelled as gluten free from Germany     | market control          | distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) returned to dispatcher |
| 05/09/2007   | the Slovak Republic | 2007.0611    | too high content of E 210 - benzoic acid (37,0 mg/kg - ppm) in dried pitted prunes from the Czech Republic    | market control          | distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale                   |
| 05/09/2007   | the Slovak Republic | 2007.0612    | aflatoxins (B1 = 3.53; Tot. = 4.18 µg/kg - ppb) in roasted and salted peanuts from China, via the Netherlands | market control          | distribution on the market (possible) / product recall                         |
| 05/09/2007   | Austria             | 2007.0613    | presence of thorn-apple (Datura stramonium L) fruit (whole) in canned green beans from Hungary                | consumer complaint      | distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) returned to dispatcher |
| 05/09/2007   | Denmark             | 2007.0614    | Salmonella paratyphi b (multiresistant in 11 out of 12 samples) in frozen whole chicken from Germany          | market control          | distribution on the market (possible) / product recall                         |
| 05/09/2007   | Italy               | 2007.0615    | mercury (1.21 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen swordfish (Xiphias gladius) from Spain                                   | market control          | distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) returned to dispatcher |
| 05/09/2007   | Germany             | 2007.0616    | aflatoxins (B1 = 24.8 µg/kg - ppb) in mixture of 5 spices from China  | market control          | distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall                  |
| 06/09/2007   | Denmark             | 2007.0617    | Salmonella (multiresistant S.4,5,12:i: - presence /25g) in turkey breast fillet from Germany                  | market control          | distribution on the market (possible) / product recall                         |

| DATE:      | NOTIFIED BY:       | REF.:     | REASON FOR NOTIFYING:   | TYPE OF CONTROL:    | STATUS   |
|------------|--------------------|-----------|---|---------------------|--|
| 06/09/2007 | Germany            | 2007.0618 | Enterobacter sakazakii in infant formulae from Germany  | market control      | distribution on the market (possible) / public warning - press release         |
| 06/09/2007 | the United Kingdom | 2007.0619 | foreign bodies (food grade rubber particles) in confectionery from the United Kingdom   | company's own check | distribution on the market (possible) / product recall                         |
| 06/09/2007 | Denmark            | 2007.0620 | too high content of colour E 110 - Sunset Yellow FCF (120 mg/kg - ppm) in Easter season lolly pops from China, via the United Kingdom | market control      | distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale                   |
| 06/09/2007 | the United Kingdom | 2007.0621 | foreign bodies (food grade rubber particles) in confectionery from the United Kingdom   | company's own check | distribution on the market (possible) / product recall                         |
| 06/09/2007 | Belgium            | 2007.0622 | spoilage of canned cat food from France   | consumer complaint  | distribution on the market (possible) / product recall                         |
| 07/09/2007 | Ireland            | 2007.0623 | undeclared milk ingredient (casein 11.9 mg/kg - ppm) in fish paste from Greece  | market control      | distribution on the market (possible) / product recall                         |
| 07/09/2007 | Italy              | 2007.0624 | cadmium (9.96 mg/kg - ppm) in scallops (Pecten maximus) from France   | market control      | distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) returned to dispatcher |
| 07/09/2007 | Cyprus             | 2007.0625 | traces of hazelnut in fine milk chocolate bar from Italy  | market control      | distribution on the market (possible) / product detained                       |
| 07/09/2007 | Germany            | 2007.0626 | Campylobacter coli in frozen duck breast from France  | market control      | distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale                   |
| 07/09/2007 | Germany            | 2007.0627 | unsuitable organoleptic characteristics (freezer burn) of frozen pork from Spain  | market control      | distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed              |

## 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   |
|------------|--------------------|----------|--|----------------------------------|--|
| 03/09/2007 | the United Kingdom | 2007.CBT | aflatoxins (Tot. = 5.81 µg/kg - ppb) in blanched peanut kernels from China               | border control - import rejected | no distribution / destination of the product changed |
| 03/09/2007 | the United Kingdom | 2007.CBV | aflatoxins (B1 = 18; Tot. = 29 µg/kg - ppb) in peanuts from Nigeria                      | border control - import rejected | no distribution / product (to be) destroyed          |
| 03/09/2007 | the United Kingdom | 2007.CBW | too high content of E 210 - benzoic acid (190 mg/l) in orange flavour drink from Nigeria | border control - import rejected | no distribution / product (to be) destroyed          |

| <b>DATE:</b> | <b>NOTIFIED BY:</b> | <b>REF.:</b> | <b>REASON FOR NOTIFYING:</b>   | <b>TYPE OF CONTROL:</b>           | <b>STATUS</b>   |
|--------------|---------------------|--------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| 03/09/2007   | Austria             | 2007.CBX     | aflatoxins (B1 = 1.8; Tot. = 13 µg/kg - ppb) in roasted hazelnut kernels from Turkey   | border control - import rejected  | no distribution   |
| 04/09/2007   | Italy               | 2007.CBY     | aflatoxins (B1 = 3.13; Tot. = 3.8 / B1 = 1.31; Tot. = 1.63 / B1 = 4.58; Tot. = 5.37 µg/kg - ppb) in almonds without shell (Prunus dulcis) from the United States | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched                           |
| 04/09/2007   | Finland             | 2007.CBZ     | benzo(a)pyrene (7.3 in oil phase µg/kg - ppb) in fatty acid food supplement from China, via Canada   | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched                           |
| 04/09/2007   | Italy               | 2007.CCA     | unauthorised genetically modified (presence of GM rice BT 63) rice spaghetti from China  | market control                    | distribution restricted to notifying country                              |
| 04/09/2007   | Slovenia            | 2007.CCB     | Salmonella in confectionery from Serbia  | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product detained  |
| 04/09/2007   | the Netherlands     | 2007.CCC     | aflatoxins (B1 = 7.8; Tot. = 7.8 µg/kg - ppb) in blanched almonds from the United States   | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched                           |
| 04/09/2007   | the United Kingdom  | 2007.CCD     | lead (0.43 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh mango from Pakistan   | border control - screening sample | no stock left / no action taken   |
| 04/09/2007   | the United Kingdom  | 2007.CCE     | lead (0.82 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh mango from Pakistan   | border control - screening sample | no stock left / no action taken   |
| 04/09/2007   | Germany             | 2007.CCF     | pentachlorophenol (35.4 mg/kg - ppm) in ice cream stabiliser containing 15% guar gum from Switzerland  | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product detained  |
| 04/09/2007   | Italy               | 2007.CCG     | benzene (20.4 µg/l) in grapefruit flavour soft drink from Italy  | market control                    | product expired (exceeded use-by date) / prohibition to trade - sales ban |
| 05/09/2007   | Estonia             | 2007.CCH     | too high content of volatile mustard oil (between 4129 and 6367 mg/kg - ppm) in rapeseed meal from Ukraine   | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched                           |
| 05/09/2007   | France              | 2007.CCI     | aflatoxins (B1 = 6.9; Tot. = 7.4 / B1 = 5.2; Tot. = 5.6 / B1 = 8.7; Tot. = 9.3 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachio nuts from Iran  | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched                           |
| 05/09/2007   | France              | 2007.CCJ     | aflatoxins (B1 = 4.9; Tot. = 6.6 / B1 = 3.5; Tot. = 3.8 / B1 = 3.1; Tot. = 3.4 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachio nuts from Iran  | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched                           |
| 05/09/2007   | Italy               | 2007.CCK     | mercury (2.06 mg/kg - ppm) in vacuum packed swordfish fillets (Xiphias gladius)  | market control                    | product already consumed / no stock left                                  |
| 05/09/2007   | the United Kingdom  | 2007.CCL     | Salmonella in frozen salted chicken breast from Brazil   | border control - screening sample | distribution restricted to notifying country / no action taken            |
| 06/09/2007   | the Netherlands     | 2007.CCM     | aflatoxins (B1 = 34; Tot. = 124 µg/kg - ppb) in almonds without shell from the United States   | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched                           |
| 06/09/2007   | Spain               | 2007.CCN     | mercury (1.9 mg/kg - ppm) in shortfin mako (Isurus oxyrinchus) from Uruguay  | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched                           |
| 06/09/2007   | Portugal            | 2007.CCO     | mercury (1.54 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen Mora moro from Panama   | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched                           |

| DATE:      | NOTIFIED BY: | REF.:    | REASON FOR NOTIFYING:  | TYPE OF CONTROL:                  | STATUS  |
|------------|--------------|----------|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| 06/09/2007 | Denmark      | 2007.CCP | too high content of trans fatty acids (3.31g / 100g fat) in chocolate cake with icing from Ireland                               | market control                    | distribution on the market (possible) / withdrawal from sale              |
| 06/09/2007 | Italy        | 2007.CCQ | too high content of sulphite (115 mg/kg - ppm) in vacuum packed cooked prawns  | market control                    | product expired (exceeded use-by date) / no stock left                    |
| 06/09/2007 | Slovenia     | 2007.CCR | dimethoate (0.26 mg/kg - ppm) in peaches from Serbia   | border control - screening sample | product already consumed / reinforced checking                            |
| 06/09/2007 | Lithuania    | 2007.CCS | use-by date exceeded of frozen whole round squid ( <i>Illex illecebrosus</i> ) from Argentina                                    | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product (to be) destroyed                               |
| 07/09/2007 | Belgium      | 2007.CCT | Salmonella (presence /25g) in extruded pet food from Canada  | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched                           |
| 07/09/2007 | Greece       | 2007.CCU | aflatoxins (B1 = 3.9; Tot. = 3.9 µg/kg - ppb) in halawa from Syria   | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product (to be) re-dispatched                           |
| 07/09/2007 | Italy        | 2007.CCV | too high content of coumarin (25 mg/kg - ppm) in milk chocolate with cinnamon manufactured in Italy, raw material from Sri Lanka | market control                    | distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall             |
| 07/09/2007 | Norway       | 2007.CCW | Salmonella (present) in fresh herbs (kayang leaf; cockscomb mint; houthuynia; perilla leaf) from Vietnam                         | market control                    | product expired (exceeded use-by date) / prohibition to trade - sales ban |
| 07/09/2007 | Hungary      | 2007.CCX | high content of morphine (60 mg/kg - ppm) in poppy seed from Hungary   | company's own check               | distribution restricted to notifying country / physical treatment         |
| 07/09/2007 | Cyprus       | 2007.CCY | traces of hazelnut in white chocolate couverture from Cyprus   | market control                    | distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall             |
| 07/09/2007 | Norway       | 2007.CCZ | Salmonella Augustenborg in doksadao (Cassia) from Thailand   | market control                    | distribution restricted to notifying country / product recall             |
| 07/09/2007 | Lithuania    | 2007.CDA | unauthorised use of colour E 127 - erythrosine (0.65 mg) in vitamins supplement from the United States                           | border control - import rejected  | no distribution / product detained  |