

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Consumers can be reassured that products subject to an alert notification have been withdrawn or are in the process of being withdrawn from the market.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 2009/4

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
19/01/2009	Denmark	2009.0055	high content of DEHP - di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (40.6 and 40.8 %) in plasticized lid-gaskets used for jars containing mango chutney from India, via Sweden	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumers
19/01/2009	Slovenia	2009.0057	migration of chromium (0.36; 0.15 mg/l) from inox cookware sets from China (Hong Kong), dispatched from the United States	border control - consignment released	distribution on the market (possible)
21/01/2009	Denmark	2009.0060	histamine (440 mg/kg - ppm) in sardines in tomato sauce from Portugal	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumers
21/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.0063	peanut butter flavoured snack bars from the United States possibly contaminated with Salmonella typhimurium	food poisoning	distribution on the market (possible) / public warning - press release
22/01/2009	Spain	2009.0068	traces of milk ingredient (19.3 mg/kg - ppm) in sweet nut snack from Italy	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) relabelled
23/01/2009	Italy	2009.0074	parasitic infestation with Anisakis of chilled monkfish tails (<i>Lophius piscatorius</i>) from France	official control on the market	no distribution / no action taken
23/01/2009	the Netherlands	2009.0075	Salmonella (presence /25g) in basil leaves (<i>Ocimum americanum</i>) from Thailand, via France	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / no stock left
23/01/2009	the Netherlands	2009.0076	Salmonella (present /25g) in morning glory from Thailand	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / no stock left
23/01/2009	Luxembourg	2009.0077	3-monochlor-1,2-propanediol (3-MCPD) (1480 µg/kg - ppb) in soya sauce dispatched from Belgium	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
19/01/2009	Finland	2009.0054	Salmonella Agona (in 1 out of 25 samples /25g) in rapeseed extraction from Poland	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / physical treatment
19/01/2009	Sweden	2009.0056	Salmonella Mbandaka (in 1 out of 8 samples CFU/g) in soybean meal from Brazil	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / physical treatment - acid treatment
20/01/2009	Ireland	2009.0058	methomyl (0.09 - 0.06 mg/kg - ppm) in Crimson seedless bagged table grapes from the United States	official control on the market	product already consumed / no stock left
21/01/2009	the Slovak Republic	2009.0059	inner coating peeling off from baking pans with black non-stick coating from Ukraine, via Poland	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
21/01/2009	Italy	2009.0061	mercury (3.2 mg/kg - ppm) in chilled fillets of swordfish (Xiphias gladius) from Vietnam, via the Netherlands	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
21/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.0062	histamine (between 79 and 175 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen dried anchovy from Vietnam	border control - consignment released	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed
21/01/2009	Belgium	2009.0064	Salmonella (presence /25g) in greaves meal from the Netherlands	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / physical treatment - heat treatment
21/01/2009	Germany	2009.0065	aflatoxins (B1 = 14.2; Tot. = 15.5 / B1 = 19.0; Tot. = 43.3 µg/kg - ppb) in dried figs from Turkey	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from recipient(s)
21/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.0066	BSE tests not conducted on bovine meat from the United Kingdom	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
21/01/2009	Denmark	2009.0067	Salmonella Reading (presence in 12 out of 12 samples) in pork tenderloins from the United Kingdom	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
22/01/2009	Spain	2009.0069	undeclared milk ingredient (>25 mg/kg - ppm) in food supplement containing bacteria cultures from the United States	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / no action taken

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	NOTIFICATION BASIS	STATUS
22/01/2009	Denmark	2009.0070	histamine (1113 mg/kg - ppm) in canned tuna fish from Thailand	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) recalled from consumers
22/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.0071	Salmonella typhimurium (presence /25g) in mixed salad containing spinach, red chard and baby leaf with raw material from Italy, Spain and the Netherlands	official control on the market	product past use-by date / no stock left
22/01/2009	Portugal	2009.0072	semicarbazide (SEM) (2.5 µg/kg - ppb) in dobrada (tripe dish) from Brazil	border control - consignment released	distribution restricted to notifying country / no action taken
23/01/2009	Germany	2009.0073	Salmonella infantis in salami (bauernmettwurst) from Germany	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
23/01/2009	Italy	2009.0078	too high count of Escherichia coli (5400 MPN/100g) in clams (Tapes semidecussatus) from Italy	official control on the market	product past use-by date
23/01/2009	Italy	2009.0079	insufficient labelling (missing ingredients list) of breaded pangasius fillet from Vietnam	border control - consignment released	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
19/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.ACX	aflatoxins (B1 = 13; Tot. = 16 µg/kg - ppb) in chanachur from Bangladesh	product (to be) destroyed
19/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.ACY	aflatoxins (B1 = 11; Tot. = 14 µg/kg - ppb) in chanachur from Bangladesh	product (to be) destroyed
19/01/2009	Finland	2009.ACZ	too high content of sulphite (380 mg/kg - ppm) in palm seed in syrup from Thailand	product (to be) detained
19/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.ADA	aflatoxins (B1 = 46; Tot. = 58 µg/kg - ppb) in chanachur from Bangladesh	product (to be) destroyed
19/01/2009	Ireland	2009.ADB	melamine (3.53 mg/kg - ppm) in strawberry flavoured roll cake from China	product (to be) destroyed
19/01/2009	Germany	2009.ADC	unauthorised genetically modified (MIR 604; MON 88017) pet food for dogs from the United States	product (to be) re-dispatched
19/01/2009	Italy	2009.ADD	bad temperature control (not corresponding with the requirements on the label) of pickled anchovies from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
19/01/2009	Belgium	2009.ADE	prohibited substance nitrofurans (metabolite) nitrofurazone (SEM) (> 1 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen raw headless shell on easy peel freshwater shrimps (Macrobrachium rosenbergii) from Bangladesh	product (to be) re-dispatched
19/01/2009	Ireland	2009.ADF	melamine (13.06; 2.62 mg/kg - ppm) in red bean creamy candies & biscuits from China	product (to be) destroyed

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	ACTION (TO BE) TAKEN
20/01/2009	Slovenia	2009.ADG	migration of formaldehyde (8,8 mg/dm ²) from melamine round spoon from China (Hong Kong)	product (to be) destroyed
20/01/2009	Italy	2009.ADH	aflatoxins (B1 = <0.1; Tot. = <0.3 / B1 = 5.35; Tot. = 6.18 / B1 = <0.1; Tot. = <0.3 µg/kg - ppb) in shelled almonds from the United States	product (to be) re-dispatched
20/01/2009	Finland	2009.ADI	unlabelled irradiation and irradiation in an unauthorised facility of fajita seasoning from the United States	product (to be) detained
20/01/2009	Lithuania	2009.ADJ	parasitic infestation (Philometra spp. and trematode larvae) of frozen pike (Esox lucius) from the Russian Federation	product (to be) re-dispatched
20/01/2009	Finland	2009.ADK	migration of chromium (9.6-33 mg/dm ²) from metallic egg-slicer from China	product (to be) detained
20/01/2009	Poland	2009.ADL	bad temperature control of frozen pangasius fillets (Pangasius hypophthalmus) from Vietnam	product (to be) destroyed
20/01/2009	Poland	2009.ADM	bad temperature control of frozen pangasius fillets (Pangasius hypophthalmus) from Vietnam	product (to be) re-dispatched
20/01/2009	Belgium	2009.ADN	prohibited substance nitrofurantoin (metabolite) nitrofurazone (SEM) (3.6 mg/kg - ppm) in raw frozen shrimps (Macrobrachium rosenbergii, Metapenaeus monoceros) from Bangladesh	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
20/01/2009	Belgium	2009.ADO	prohibited substance nitrofurantoin (metabolite) nitrofurazone (SEM) (4.8 µg/kg - ppb) in raw frozen fresh water headless shrimps (Macrobrachium rosenbergii, Metapenaeus monoceros) from Bangladesh	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
20/01/2009	Belgium	2009.ADP	prohibited substance nitrofurantoin (metabolite) nitrofurazone (SEM) (5 mg/kg - ppm) in raw frozen fresh water headless shrimps (Macrobrachium rosenbergii) from Bangladesh	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
20/01/2009	Belgium	2009.ADQ	prohibited substance nitrofurantoin (metabolite) nitrofurazone (SEM) (5.4 µg/kg - ppb) in raw frozen fresh water headless shrimps (Macrobrachium rosenbergii, Metapenaeus monoceros) from Bangladesh	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
21/01/2009	Germany	2009.ADR	aflatoxins (B1 = 26.1; Tot. = 29.1 / B1 = ND; Tot. = ND / B1 = ND; Tot. = ND µg/kg - ppb) in raw pistachio nuts with shell from Iran	product (to be) re-dispatched
21/01/2009	Germany	2009.ADS	aflatoxins (B1 = ND; Tot. = ND / B1 = 4.0; Tot. = 4.2 / B1 = ND; Tot. = ND µg/kg - ppb) in raw pistachio nuts with shell from Iran	product (to be) re-dispatched
21/01/2009	Slovenia	2009.ADT	attempt to illegally import various products of animal origin from China	product (to be) destroyed
21/01/2009	Slovenia	2009.ADU	attempt to illegally import various products of animal origin from China	product (to be) destroyed
21/01/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.ADV	aflatoxins (B1 = 2.7; Tot. = 4.0 / B1 = 3.2; Tot. = 4.8 / B1 = 3.2; Tot. = 4.5 / B1 = 3.0; Tot. = 4.4 µg/kg - ppb) in fig paste from Turkey	
21/01/2009	Poland	2009.ADW	dead insects in puerh tea from China	product (to be) re-dispatched
21/01/2009	Italy	2009.ADX	melamine (2.71; 3.5; 1.4; 1.3; 1.4; 1.9; 3.7; 2.53; 1.2; 4.2 mg/kg - ppm) in rice chilli crackers from China	product (to be) re-dispatched
22/01/2009	Italy	2009.ADY	aflatoxins (B1 = 1.18; Tot. = 1.35 / B1 = 32.77; Tot. = 36.79 / B1 = <0.1; Tot. = <0.3 µg/kg - ppb) in shelled pistachio nuts from the United States	product (to be) re-dispatched
22/01/2009	France	2009.ADZ	aflatoxins (B1 = 14.5; Tot. = 16.7 / B1 = 0.3; Tot. = <0.4 / B1 = 26.1; Tot. = 29.3 µg/kg - ppb) in unshelled almonds from the United States	product (to be) re-dispatched
22/01/2009	Spain	2009.AEA	spoilage of bananas and melons from Brazil	product (to be) destroyed
22/01/2009	Spain	2009.AEB	bad hygienic state of common beans (Phaseolus vulgaris) from Bolivia	product (to be) re-dispatched

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	ACTION (TO BE) TAKEN
23/01/2009	Denmark	2009.AEC	insufficient labelling of porcine cartilage from the United States with improper packaging	product (to be) redispached or destroyed
23/01/2009	Denmark	2009.AED	insufficient labelling of bovine cartilage from the United States with improper packaging	product (to be) redispached or destroyed
23/01/2009	Denmark	2009.AEE	insufficient labelling of porcine cartilage from the United States with improper packaging	product (to be) redispached or destroyed
23/01/2009	Spain	2009.AEF	bad hygienic state of bass from Senegal	product (to be) destroyed
23/01/2009	Spain	2009.AEG	bad hygienic state of bass from Senegal	product (to be) destroyed
23/01/2009	Spain	2009.AEH	bad hygienic state of fresh courgettes from Morocco	product (to be) re-dispached
23/01/2009	Italy	2009.AEI	aflatoxins (B1 = 0.7; Tot. = 1.2 / B1 = 7.8; Tot. = 9.7 / B1 = 0.7; Tot. = 1.2 µg/kg - ppb) in peanut kernels from China	product (to be) redispached or destroyed
23/01/2009	Finland	2009.AEJ	aflatoxins (B1 = 5.8; Tot. = 6.9 µg/kg - ppb) in peanut butter with roasted honey nut from the United States	product (to be) detained
23/01/2009	Finland	2009.AEK	aflatoxins (B1 = 31; Tot. = 46 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnut kernels from South Africa	product (to be) detained
23/01/2009	Finland	2009.AEL	aflatoxins (B1 = 49; Tot. = 120 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnut kernels from South Africa	product (to be) detained
23/01/2009	Spain	2009.AEM	altered organoleptic characteristics (bad smell) of fish preparations and conserves from Chile	product (to be) re-dispached
23/01/2009	Spain	2009.AEN	bad hygienic state of frozen whole shrimps (<i>Penaeus vannamei</i>) from Ecuador	product (to be) re-dispached
23/01/2009	Spain	2009.AEO	aflatoxins (B1 = 4.0; Tot. = 4.6 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachios from the United States	product (to be) re-dispached

TABLE 5: WITHDRAWALS OF PREVIOUS NOTIFICATIONS

DATE:	REF.:	NOTIFI- CATION:	OF WEEK	SUBJECT	REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL:
22/01/2009	add02	2008.1665	51	benzo(a)pyrene in extra virgin olive oil from Spain	Analyses showed results below the legal limits. Therefore this notification is hereby withdrawn.