

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Consumers can be reassured that products subject to an alert notification have been withdrawn or are in the process of being withdrawn from the market.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 2008/9

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
25/02/2008	Germany	2008.0208	glass fragments in meatballs with vegetables from Germany	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / public warning - press release
25/02/2008	Austria	2008.0209	Salmonella group D in frozen sliced meat from turkey legs from Germany	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from sale
25/02/2008	Greece	2008.0212	undeclared sulphite (2255 mg/kg - ppm) in dried figs from Greece	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumer
26/02/2008	the Netherlands	2008.0215	dioxin-like polychlorobiphenyls (sum of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs = 2.5 pg WHO TEQ/g) in copper chelate from the United States	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible)
26/02/2008	the Slovak Republic	2008.0216	aflatoxins (B1 = 0.91; Tot. = 5.6 µg/kg - ppb) in roasted salted peanut kernels from the Russian Federation, via the Czech Republic	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from sale
27/02/2008	Belgium	2008.0219	migration of cadmium (between 0.81 and 1.52 mg/l) from ceramic bowls from China (Hong Kong)	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / public warning - press release
27/02/2008	Italy	2008.0220	Listeria monocytogenes (3600 CFU/g) in sliced smoked salmon from Denmark	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) detained
28/02/2008	France	2008.0236	Listeria monocytogenes (3500 CFU/g) in pasteurised goat cheese from France	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumer
28/02/2008	Italy	2008.0238	too high count of Escherichia coli (1300 MPN/100g) in striped Venus clams (Venus gallina) from Italy	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumer
29/02/2008	Belgium	2008.0243	oxamyl (0.11; 0.12 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh aubergines from Dominican Republic	border control - screening sample	distribution on the market (possible) / destination of the product identified

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
25/02/2008	Latvia	2008.0210	stones (1 <--> 2 cm) in ice tea with lemon taste from Poland, via Lithuania	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumer
25/02/2008	Austria	2008.0211	procymidone (12.041 mg/kg - ppm), thiamethoxam (1.020 mg/kg - ppm), cymoxanil (0.214 mg/kg - ppm) and clothianidin (0.045 mg/kg - ppm) in lettuce from Italy	official control on the market	product already consumed / no stock left
25/02/2008	Slovenia	2008.0213	migration of formaldehyde (3.0 mg/dm ²) from melamine kitchen utensil (spoon) from China, via Taiwan	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from sale
25/02/2008	Belgium	2008.0214	Salmonella in processed pet food (other than canned) from the United States	border control - screening sample	distribution on the market (possible) / destination of the product identified
26/02/2008	Sweden	2008.0217	Salmonella Senftenberg (presence /25g) in sunflower seeds from China	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / physical treatment - heat treatment
26/02/2008	the United Kingdom	2008.0218	prohibited substance chloramphenicol (1.0 µg/kg - ppb) in royal jelly capsules from Turkey	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from sale
27/02/2008	Sweden	2008.0221	unauthorised genetically modified (LL Rice 601) dry pet food for dogs from the United States	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from sale
27/02/2008	Sweden	2008.0222	unauthorised genetically modified (LL Rice 601) dry pet food for dogs from the United States	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from sale
27/02/2008	Sweden	2008.0223	Salmonella Livingstone (in 1 out of 10 samples) in rapeseed meal from Poland	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / physical treatment
27/02/2008	Sweden	2008.0224	Salmonella Livingstone (in 1 our of 10 samples) in rapeseed meal from Poland	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / physical treatment
27/02/2008	Finland	2008.0225	Salmonella Mbandaka (in 8 out of 50 samples) and Salmonella Senftenberg in rapeseed meal from Germany	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / physical treatment
27/02/2008	Italy	2008.0226	mercury (1.94 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh chilled swordfish (Xiphias gladius) from Spain	official control on the market	product already consumed

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	NOTIFICATION BASIS	STATUS
27/02/2008	Ireland	2008.0227	psyllium husks from India contaminated with mouse faeces	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from recipient(s)
27/02/2008	Italy	2008.0228	Trichinella (spp) in live horses for slaughter from Poland	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed
28/02/2008	Norway	2008.0229	prohibited substance nitrofurans (metabolite) furazolidone (AOZ) (3 µg/kg - ppb) in black tiger prawns (Penaeus monodon) from India	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) detained
28/02/2008	Denmark	2008.0230	Salmonella Indiana (in 12 out of 12 samples) in frozen chicken wings from the Netherlands	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed
28/02/2008	Italy	2008.0231	undeclared sulphite in frozen shelled shrimps from Tunisia	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) recalled from consumer
28/02/2008	Italy	2008.0232	undeclared sulphite in frozen shelled shrimps from Tunisia	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) recalled from consumer
28/02/2008	Italy	2008.0233	undeclared sulphite in frozen prawns (Penaeus kerathurus) from Tunisia	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) recalled from consumer
28/02/2008	Poland	2008.0234	aflatoxins (B1 = 3.197 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnuts kernels from Argentina	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / physical treatment - sorting
28/02/2008	Lithuania	2008.0235	fraud - expiry dates changed (extended from 06-07-2007 till 06/2009) in Lithuania of candy, which originates from Colombia	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) destroyed
28/02/2008	Sweden	2008.0237	Salmonella cubana (1 out of 10 samples /25g) in soya pellets from Aruba	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / physical treatment
29/02/2008	Italy	2008.0239	undeclared sulphite (38; 49 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen prawns (Penaeus kerathurus) from Tunisia	border control - screening sample	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) recalled from consumer
29/02/2008	France	2008.0240	Salmonella in dried pork sausages from France, via Monaco	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / public warning - press release

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	NOTIFICATION BASIS	STATUS
29/02/2008	Finland	2008.0241	Salmonella Mbandaka in dog chews from China	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from sale
29/02/2008	Belgium	2008.0242	Salmonella in dry pet food from Canada	border control - screening sample	distribution on the market (possible) / destination of the product identified
29/02/2008	Spain	2008.0244	suffocation risk as a result of the consumption (screw cap can come off while drinking) of soft drink from Spain	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumer
29/02/2008	Denmark	2008.0245	altered organoleptic characteristics of cream cheese from Denmark	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from sale

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
25/02/2008	Poland	2008.AIY	aflatoxins (B1 = 63.95; Tot. = 68.36 / B1 = 32.74; Tot. = 41.93 / B1 = 25.89; Tot. = 64.38 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnuts from India	product (to be) re-dispatched
25/02/2008	Germany	2008.AIZ	specified risk material (SRM) in dog chews from India	product (to be) re-dispatched
25/02/2008	Italy	2008.AJA	parasitic infestation with Anisakis of chilled Atlantic horse mackerel (Trachurus trachurus) from Croatia	product (to be) destroyed
25/02/2008	Greece	2008.AJB	too high content of sulphite (2520; 2920 mg/kg - ppm) in dried apricots from Turkey	product (to be) returned to dispatcher
25/02/2008	Italy	2008.AJC	migration of nickel (8.00 mg/l) from toasters from China (Hong Kong)	product (to be) re-dispatched
26/02/2008	Spain	2008.AJD	mercury (0.77 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh yellow grouper from Brazil	product (to be) re-dispatched
26/02/2008	Spain	2008.AJE	oxytetracycline (67.6; 45.6 mg/kg - ppm) unauthorised in honey from Argentina	product (to be) re-dispatched
27/02/2008	the United Kingdom	2008.AJF	bad hygienic state of frozen denton from Morocco	product (to be) re-dispatched
27/02/2008	Italy	2008.AJG	migration of nickel (8.42 mg/l) from toasters from China (Hong Kong)	product (to be) re-dispatched
27/02/2008	Italy	2008.AJH	aflatoxins (B1 = 47.6; Tot. = 55.1 / B1 = 42.9; Tot. = 50.4 / B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.1 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnuts in shell from Egypt	product (to be) re-dispatched
27/02/2008	Italy	2008.AJI	bad state of preservation of fresh strawberries from Tunisia infested with moulds	product (to be) re-dispatched
27/02/2008	Poland	2008.AJJ	altered organoleptic characteristics (untypical smell) of yellow mustard seeds from Canada	product (to be) re-dispatched
27/02/2008	Poland	2008.AJK	altered organoleptic characteristics of sunflower seeds from China infested with moulds	product (to be) re-dispatched
28/02/2008	the United Kingdom	2008.AJL	aflatoxins (B1 = 4.6; Tot. = 26 / B1 = 1.6; Tot. = 9.1 / B1 = 3.5; Tot. = 11 / B1 = 3.2; Tot. = 15 µg/kg - ppb) in blanched peanuts from China	physical treatment

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	ACTION (TO BE) TAKEN
28/02/2008	the United Kingdom	2008.AJM	aflatoxins (B1 = 4.9; Tot. = 6.2 / B1 = 3.4; Tot. = 4.8 / B1 = 1.4; Tot. = 2.1 / B1 = 3.2; Tot. = 4.3 µg/kg - ppb) in blanched peanuts from China	physical treatment
28/02/2008	Germany	2008.AJN	aflatoxins (B1 = 3.14; Tot. = 4.68 µg/kg - ppb) in dried figs from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
28/02/2008	Poland	2008.AJO	bad hygienic state of sunflower kernels from China infested with moulds	product (to be) re-dispatched
29/02/2008	Spain	2008.AJP	aflatoxins (B1 = 1.88; Tot. = 6.28 / B1 = 3.9; Tot. = 4.4 µg/kg - ppb) in peanuts from China	product (to be) re-dispatched
29/02/2008	Germany	2008.AJQ	aflatoxins (B1 = 6.20; Tot. = 19.08 µg/kg - ppb) in hazelnut kernels from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
29/02/2008	Italy	2008.AJR	bad hygienic state of frozen shrimps (<i>Penaeus kerathurus</i>) and improper health certificate(s) for various frozen fishery products from Tunisia	product (to be) re-dispatched
29/02/2008	Germany	2008.AJS	aflatoxins (B1 = 9.6; Tot. = 10.1 / B1 = 7.3; Tot. = 7.8 / B1 = 0.3; Tot. = 0.3 µg/kg - ppb) in raw pistachio nuts with shell from Iran	product (to be) re-dispatched
29/02/2008	Italy	2008.AJT	aflatoxins (B1 = 12.0; Tot. = 14.3 µg/kg - ppb) in peanuts in shell from Egypt	product (to be) re-dispatched
29/02/2008	Germany	2008.AJU	aflatoxins (B1 = 50.5; Tot. = 54.2 / B1 = 1.3; Tot. = 1.3 / B1 = 39.1; Tot. = 41.0 µg/kg - ppb) in raw pistachio nuts with shell from Iran	product (to be) re-dispatched
29/02/2008	Spain	2008.AJV	aflatoxins (B1 = 3.0; Tot. = 3.0 / B1 < 0.5; Tot. < 2.0 / B1 > 24; Tot. > 24 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachios in shell from the United States	product (to be) re-dispatched

TABLE 4: CORRIGENDA TO PREVIOUS NOTIFICATIONS

DATE:	REF.:	NOTIFICATION:	OF WEEK	SUBJECT	CORRIGENDUM:
26/02/2008	add02	2007.CCS	36	best before date exceeded of and absence of health certificate(s) for frozen whole round squid (<i>Illex illecebrosus</i>) from Argentina	The product exceeded the best before date (erroneously reported as "use-by date" in the original notification) and was not accompanied by a health certificate. The subject of the notification is modified accordingly.
25/02/2008	inf01	2008.AIG	8	suffocation risk as a result of the consumption of fruit jelly mix from Taiwan, containing unauthorised E 406 - agar	The goods were not dispatched from Sweden, therefore "via Sweden" has been removed from the title.

TABLE 5: WITHDRAWALS OF PREVIOUS NOTIFICATIONS

DATE:	REF.:	NOTIFI- CATION:	OF WEEK	SUBJECT	REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL:
25/02/2008	add01	2007.COX	46	Salmonella Weltevreden in frozen cuttlefish (<i>Sepia pharaonis</i>) from India	As the results of the counter analysis are favourable this notification is withdrawn.
29/02/2008	add04	2008.0011	1	benzo(a)pyrene in smoked sprats in oil from Latvia	Request for withdrawal of this notification as a result of an incorrect evaluation performed in Germany. This notification is therefore withdrawn.