

## 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 headings<sup>1</sup>:

- **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**Consumers can be reassured that products subject to an alert notification have been withdrawn or are in the process of being withdrawn from the market.** The Member States have their own mechanisms to carry out such actions, including the provision of detailed information through the media if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 EEA<sup>2</sup>) 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

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<sup>1</sup> This classification was put in place on 1 January 2008 and differs from the classification used until then.

<sup>2</sup> 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 2009/9

**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
23/02/2009	the Commission Services	2009.0222	suspicion of Salmonella in nut bars from the United States	official control in non-member country	distribution on the market (possible) / informing recipients
23/02/2009	Belgium	2009.0223	ochratoxin A (18.6; 7.2 µg/kg - ppb) in spelt flour and spelt syrup from the Netherlands	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
23/02/2009	Greece	2009.0224	foreign body (wire pieces) in sun dried tomatoes from Greece	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumers
23/02/2009	France	2009.0227	residues of nicarbazin (6; 30; 20 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen chicken livers from the United Kingdom	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
24/02/2009	the Slovak Republic	2009.0230	aflatoxins (B1 = 5.8; Tot. = 7.0 µg/kg - ppb) in dried figs from Greece	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
25/02/2009	Poland	2009.0234	unauthorised substances malachite green (2.06 µg/kg - ppb) and leucomalachite green (2.63 µg/kg - ppb) in smoked trout fillets from Poland	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) returned to dispatcher
25/02/2009	Poland	2009.0235	unauthorised substances malachite green (4.76 µg/kg - ppb) and leucomalachite green in fresh whole trout ( <i>Oncorhynchus mikiss</i> ) from Italy	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) destroyed
26/02/2009	Germany	2009.0242	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> (2100 CFU/g) in gorgonzola cheese from Italy, processed in Germany	food poisoning	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
26/02/2009	Germany	2009.0243	plastic fragments (solid +/- 3 * 2 cm) in frozen sieved spinach from Austria	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) returned to dispatcher
26/02/2009	Sweden	2009.0244	unauthorised substance nimesulide in food supplement containing an extract of <i>Curcuma longa</i> (turmeric) and DL-phenylalanine processed in Mexico, with raw material presumably from India, packaged in the United States	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	NOTIFICATION BASIS	STATUS
27/02/2009	Germany	2009.0246	migration of DEHP - di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (162 mg/kg - ppm) from lids of glass jars containing to fu soy sauce from Taiwan, via the Netherlands	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / no stock left
27/02/2009	France	2009.0247	foreign body (glass pieces) in yoghurt in glass jar from France	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
27/02/2009	Spain	2009.0248	cadmium (12.4 mg/kg - ppm) in dicalcium phosphate from Portugal	company's own check	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) detained

## 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
23/02/2009	the Netherlands	2009.0225	Salmonella (2 out of 5 samples /25g) in basil leaves from Thailand	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / no stock left
23/02/2009	the Netherlands	2009.0226	Salmonella (3 out of 5samples /25g) in acacia leaf (Cha-Om) from Thailand	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / no stock left
24/02/2009	the Slovak Republic	2009.0228	almond kernels from the United States, via Germany infested with insects	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
24/02/2009	Italy	2009.0229	Salmonella spp. in raw turkey legs from Brazil	border control - consignment released	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) seized
24/02/2009	Germany	2009.0231	high content of iodine (4770 mg/kg - ppm) in dried seaweed (intended for decoration) from China (Hong Kong)	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
24/02/2009	Italy	2009.0232	nitrite unauthorised in frozen breaded hake fish fingers from Poland	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) seized
24/02/2009	Italy	2009.0233	too high count of Escherichia coli (490 CFU/100g) in already purified mussels from Spain	official control on the market	product past best before date / product (to be) withdrawn from the market

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	NOTIFICATION BASIS	STATUS
25/02/2009	Denmark	2009.0236	Salmonella Indiana (12 out of 12 samples /25g) in frozen chicken drumsticks from the Netherlands	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) returned to dispatcher
25/02/2009	the Netherlands	2009.0237	oxamyl (0.52 mg/kg - ppm) in mini cucumbers from Turkey	company's own check	product already consumed / no stock left
25/02/2009	Sweden	2009.0238	Salmonella in sunflower kernels from China	company's own check	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
25/02/2009	Italy	2009.0239	coagulation of UHT milk from Austria	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
25/02/2009	Italy	2009.0240	E 170 - calcium carbonate unauthorised in infant formula from Germany	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) recalled from consumers
25/02/2009	France	2009.0241	3-monochlor-1,2-propanediol (3-MCPD) (1.8 mg/kg - ppm) in chocolate molten cake from France	official control on the market	distribution restricted to notifying country / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
26/02/2009	Slovenia	2009.0245	foreign body (blue plastic threads of different length) in cappuccino drink in powder from Germany	consumer complaint	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market
27/02/2009	the Czech Republic	2009.0249	unauthorised novel food dried stevia rebaudiana from Paraguay	official control on the market	distribution on the market (possible) / product (to be) withdrawn from the market

### 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
23/02/2009	Germany	2009.AJS	aflatoxins (B1 = 6.2; Tot. = 9.9 / B1 = 3.51; Tot. = 6.24 µg/kg - ppb) in roasted and salted pistachio nuts with shell from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
23/02/2009	the Netherlands	2009.AJT	aflatoxins (B1 = 8.3; Tot. = 11.2 / B1 = 13.1; Tot. = 19.9 / B1 = 8.9; Tot. = 15.1 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnuts from Brazil	
23/02/2009	Norway	2009.AJU	absence of labelling on frozen boneless beef tenderloins from Uruguay	product (to be) destroyed

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	ACTION (TO BE) TAKEN
23/02/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.AJV	Bacillus cereus (6.5x10 <sup>5</sup> ; 9.3x10 <sup>5</sup> ; 6.7x10 <sup>5</sup> CFU/g) in fermented chilli bean curd from China, via China (Hong Kong)	product (to be) destroyed
23/02/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.AJW	Bacillus cereus (3.6x10 <sup>5</sup> ; 6.0x10 <sup>4</sup> ; 7.9x10 <sup>4</sup> CFU/g) in fermented traditional bean curd from China, via China (Hong Kong)	product (to be) destroyed
23/02/2009	Germany	2009.AJX	aflatoxins (B1 = 31; Tot. = 37 µg/kg - ppb) in nut mixture from Turkey	product (to be) destroyed
23/02/2009	Germany	2009.AJY	aflatoxins (B1 = 1.6; Tot. = 2.3 / B1 = 2.3; Tot. = 3.3 / B1 = 1.5; Tot. = 2.1 / B1 = 1.59; Tot. = 2.52 / B1 = 2.54; Tot. = 4.06 / B1 = 1.64; Tot. = 2.53 µg/kg - ppb) in fig paste from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
23/02/2009	Greece	2009.AJZ	aflatoxins (B1 = 5.0; Tot. = 5.7 / B1 < 0.5 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachio kernels from the United States	product under customs seals
23/02/2009	Greece	2009.AKA	aflatoxins (B1 = 49.6; Tot. = 57.9 / B1 = 34.7; Tot. = 41.4 / B1 = 33.9; Tot. = 10.4 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnut kernels from China	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
23/02/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.AKB	aflatoxins (B1 = 56; Tot. = 95 µg/kg - ppb) in ogbono seeds from Nigeria	product (to be) destroyed
23/02/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.AKC	aflatoxins (B1 = 15.8; Tot. = 18.5 µg/kg - ppb) in melon seeds from Nigeria	product (to be) destroyed
23/02/2009	Spain	2009.AKD	altered organoleptic characteristics (smell of ammoniac) of frozen fish from Argentina	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
24/02/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.AKE	Salmonella spp. (4 out of 5 samples /25g) in dog chews from Brazil	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
24/02/2009	Greece	2009.AKF	aflatoxins (B1 = 6.3; Tot. = 6.6 µg/kg - ppb) in groundnut kernels from China	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
24/02/2009	Greece	2009.AKG	too high content of colour E 122 - azorubine (98.9 mg/kg - ppm) in soft drink from Lebanon	product (to be) destroyed
24/02/2009	Spain	2009.AKH	unauthorised use of colour E 150a - plain caramel in malt drink from Ecuador	product (to be) re-dispatched
24/02/2009	France	2009.AKI	aflatoxins (B1 = 6.0; Tot. = 7.4 / B1 = 4.7; Tot. = 5.6 / B1 = 4.2; Tot. = 5.3 / B1 = 4.4; Tot. = 5.7 / B1 = 3.7; Tot. = 4.8 / B1 = 2.8; Tot. = 3.8 µg/kg - ppb) in fig paste from Turkey	product under customs seals
24/02/2009	Germany	2009.AKJ	unsuitable organoleptic characteristics of and high content of free fatty acids (37.7 mg KOH/g fat) in palm oil from Nigeria	product (to be) re-dispatched
24/02/2009	Finland	2009.AKK	prothiophos (0.034 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh mangoes from Thailand	product (to be) detained
24/02/2009	Italy	2009.AKL	aflatoxins (B1 = 4.2; Tot. = 4.6 / B1 = 0.4; Tot. = 0.4 / B1 = 11.4; Tot. = 12.4 µg/kg - ppb) in pistachio nuts with shell from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
24/02/2009	Italy	2009.AKM	aflatoxins (B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.1 / B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.1 / B1 = 10.0; Tot. = 10.9 µg/kg - ppb) in peanuts in shell from China	product (to be) re-dispatched
24/02/2009	Greece	2009.AKN	Listeria monocytogenes in frozen pangasius fillets (Pangasius hypophthalmus) from Vietnam	product (to be) re-dispatched
24/02/2009	Spain	2009.AKO	dimethoate (0.03 mg/kg - ppm) in courgettes from Morocco	product (to be) destroyed
25/02/2009	the Netherlands	2009.AKP	parasitic infestation of frozen frogs' legs from Indonesia	product (to be) re-dispatched
25/02/2009	Greece	2009.AKQ	aflatoxins (B1 = 17.1; Tot. = 21.2 / B1 = 3.8; Tot. = 4.4 µg/kg - ppb) in blanched groundnut kernels from China	product (to be) re-dispatched
25/02/2009	the Netherlands	2009.AKR	thawing of frozen crustaceans from China	product (to be) destroyed
25/02/2009	Spain	2009.AKS	soy curd from China with defective packaging and infested with insects	product (to be) destroyed

DATE	NOTIFIED BY	REF.	REASON FOR NOTIFYING	ACTION (TO BE) TAKEN
25/02/2009	Spain	2009.AKT	too high content of sulphite (1370 mg/kg - ppm) in canned vegetables from Thailand	product (to be) destroyed
25/02/2009	Italy	2009.AKU	endosulfan (0.13 mg/kg - ppm) in fresh mint from Morocco	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
25/02/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.AKV	bad hygienic state of frozen king prawns ( <i>Penaeus vannamei</i> ) from Vietnam	product (to be) destroyed
25/02/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.AKW	aflatoxins (B1 = 2.5; Tot. = 4.2 / B1 = 1.2; Tot. = 2.8 / B1 = 5.3; Tot. = 10.5 µg/kg - ppb) in fig paste from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
25/02/2009	Italy	2009.AKX	aflatoxins (B1 = 13.0; Tot. = 14.2 / B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.1 / B1 < 0.1; Tot. < 0.1 µg/kg - ppb) in apricot kernels from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
25/02/2009	Lithuania	2009.AKY	aflatoxins (B1 = 11.5; Tot. = 13.0 / B1 = 3.1; Tot. = 3.5 / B1 = 2.4; Tot. = 2.8 µg/kg - ppb) in broken rice from Pakistan	product (to be) re-dispatched
25/02/2009	Italy	2009.AKZ	Salmonella spp. in chilled frog legs from Turkey	product (to be) destroyed
26/02/2009	Italy	2009.ALA	arsenic (28 mg/kg - ppm) in dried seaweed from China	product (to be) re-dispatched
26/02/2009	Greece	2009.ALB	Listeria monocytogenes (presence /25g) in frozen pangasius fillets ( <i>Pangasius hypophthalmus</i> ) from Vietnam	product (to be) re-dispatched
26/02/2009	Romania	2009.ALC	improper health certificate(s) for fresh crude bees propolis from Uruguay	product (to be) re-dispatched
26/02/2009	Belgium	2009.ALD	prohibited substance nitrofurans (metabolite) nitrofurazone (SEM) (2.1 µg/kg - ppb) in frozen fresh water shrimps ( <i>Macrobrachium rosenbergii</i> ) from India	product (to be) re-dispatched or destroyed
26/02/2009	Italy	2009.ALE	migration of chromium (12.8 mg/l) and of nickel (0.21 mg/l) from steel tableware from China (Hong Kong)	product (to be) re-dispatched
27/02/2009	Greece	2009.ALF	Salmonella spp. (presence /25g) in frozen whole chicken breasts from Argentina	product (to be) re-dispatched
27/02/2009	Greece	2009.ALG	too high count of Escherichia coli (16000 CFU/g) in chilled molluscs from Turkey	product (to be) destroyed
27/02/2009	Poland	2009.ALH	Salmonella (in 1 out of 5 samples) in dried sultana raisins from Turkey	product (to be) re-dispatched
27/02/2009	the United Kingdom	2009.ALI	Salmonella (4 out of 5 samples) in dog chews from Brazil	product (to be) re-dispatched