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FINAL REPORT OF AN AUDIT

CARRIED OUT IN

TURKEY

FROM 09 TO 16 OCTOBER 2012

IN ORDER TO ASSESS THE CONTROLS OF AFLATOXIN CONTAMINATION IN
HAZELNUTS AND DRIED FIGS INTENDED FOR EXPORT TO THE EU AND TO FOLLOW
UP ON MISSION DG(SANCO)7858/2008

In response to information provided by the Competent Authority, any factual error noted in the draft report has been corrected; any clarification appears in the form of a footnote.

Executive Summary

This report describes the outcome of an audit carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) in Turkey from 9 to 16 October 2012.

The objective was to assess the systems in place to control aflatoxin contamination in hazelnuts and dried figs intended for export into the European Union (EU) and to follow-up on action taken by the competent authorities (CAs) in response to the recommendations made by the FVO in report DG(SANCO)/2008-7858.

This audit was included in the FVO 2012 audit programme due to the volume of exports of these commodities to the EU combined with the number of Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) notifications. Between 2009 and the time of the audit, 97 notifications relating to aflatoxin in hazelnuts and 217 notifications for dried figs from Turkey were issued through the RASFF.

Overall, Turkey has a system for official controls of hazelnuts and dried figs intended for export to the EU. Staff training and communication between CAs and with industry are adequate. Regular risk-based official controls are carried out by the CAs. The central competent authority provides written instruction, guidelines and procedures to the provincial/district CAs on implementation of the official controls.

Since the previous audit, further efforts have been made regarding implementation of Good Agricultural Practices at primary production level and proper storage and drying practices at all stages, as well regarding the export procedure. All laboratories approved for aflatoxin analysis of hazelnuts and dried figs intended for export to the EU have been accredited. Some shortcomings were still found with regard to the sampling procedure, estimation of the measurement uncertainty and customs controls at the point of export. Additionally, considering that there are authorised procedures for re-testing or re-sorting of non-compliant dried fig lots intended for export to the EU, the risk that these consignments officially cleared in Turkey for export to the EU may be still rejected at the EU border cannot be excluded.

As regards the recommendations made in the mission report DG(SANCO)/2008-7858, all have been addressed.

The report contains recommendations to the competent authorities of Turkey aimed at addressing the identified shortcomings.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND SPECIAL TERMS USED IN THIS REPORT

Abbreviation	Explanation
AEA	Aegean Exporters Association
AOAC	Association of Official Analytical Chemists
BILGE	Customs Electronic System
CA(s)	Competent Authority(ies)
CAs	Competent Authority(ies)
CAC/GL	Codex Alimentarius Commission/Guideline
CAC/RCP	Codex Alimentarius Commission/Recommended Code of Practice
CCA(s)	Central Competent Authority(ies)
CN	Combined Nomenclature
CODEX	Codex Alimentarius Commission of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and World Health Organization
DDFAL	District Directorates of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
DG (SANCO)	Health and Consumers Directorate-General
EN ISO/IEC	International Organisation for Standardization
EU	European Union
FSIS	Food Safety Inspection System
FVO	Food and Veterinary Office
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GDAR	General Directorate of Agricultural Reform

GDFC	General Directorate of Food and Control
GDPP	General Directorate of Plant Production
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practice
GSP	Good Storage Practice
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
MoFAL	Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
MS(s)	Member State(s)
LOD	Limit of Detection
LOQ	Limit of Quantification
NRL	National Reference Laboratory
PCL	Provincial Control Laboratory
PDFAL	Provincial Directorates for Food, Agriculture and Livestock
PPPs	Plant Protection Products
PPPHD	Plant Production and Plant Health Department
PTs	Proficiency Tests
RASFF	Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed
SOP	Standard Operation Procedure
TC(s)	Third Country(ies)
TÜRKAK	Turkish Accreditation Body

1 INTRODUCTION

The audit took place in Turkey from 9 to 16 October 2012 in order to assess controls on aflatoxin contamination in hazelnuts and dried figs intended for export to the European Union (EU). The audit team comprised two auditors from the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) and one national expert from a Member State (MS).

The audit was undertaken as part of the FVO's annual audit programme in the context of a series of audits in Third Countries (TCs) to evaluate the control systems and the operational standards in this sector.

The audit team was accompanied throughout the audit by three representatives of the Central Competent Authority (CCA), the General Directorate of Food and Control (GDFC) which is under the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock (MoFAL).

An opening meeting was held on 9 October 2012 with the CCA, including the representatives of: the General Directorate of Plant Production (GDPP), the General Directorate of Agricultural Reform (GDAR), the General Directorate of EU Relations and the Turkish Grain Board (all under the MoFAL), the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Customs and Trade, and the EU Delegation to Turkey. During the meeting, the audit objectives, itinerary, and the standard reporting procedures were confirmed.

2 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The objectives of the audit were to:

- verify whether their control systems in place to control aflatoxin contamination in hazelnuts and dried figs intended for export to the EU are adequate to ensure that the products concerned are within the specified contaminant limits laid down in EU legislation;
- follow-up on action taken by the competent authorities (CAs) in response to the recommendations made by FVO in the previous report (DG(SANCO)/2008-7858).

In particular, the audit aimed to determine if the relevant control systems comply with Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 or if they are at least equivalent to measures set out in this Regulation.

In terms of scope, the audit reviewed the controls on production, processing and export, including the national legislation in place, as well as the organisation of CAs, their controls and enforcement capability.

In pursuit of these objectives, the following sites were visited :

Competent Authority/ies			Comments
Competent authorities	Central	4	GDFC, GDPD, GDAR and Turkish Grain Board
	Regional/Local	3	Provincial Directorates for Food, Agriculture and Livestock (PDFALs) in Trabzon, Izmir and Aydin Provinces

Laboratory/ies		
Public laboratories	2	Provincial Control Laboratories (PCLs) in Ankara and Trabzon
Private approved laboratories	1	Approved private laboratory in Aydin
Producers		
Growers	2	Trabzon and Aydin Provinces
Processors		
Processors/Exporters	3	Trabzon, Izmir and Aydin Provinces
Exporters/Pack-Houses		
Wholesaler/Exporters	1	Aydin Province
Points of Export		
Customs office	1	Port of Trabzon
Other Sites (e.g. Research Centre)		
Association of exporters	1	Aegean Exporters Association (AEA)

3 LEGAL BASIS AND STANDARDS

3.1 LEGAL BASIS

The audit was carried out under the general provisions of EU legislation, in particular Article 46 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and the Council which stipulates that EU controls in TCs may verify compliance or equivalence of TC legislation and systems with EU feed and food law and EU animal health legislation. These controls shall have particular regard to the assurances which the TC can give regarding compliance with, or equivalence to, EU requirements.

A full list of the legal instruments referred to in this report is provided in Annex 1. EU legal acts quoted in this report refer, where applicable, to the most recently amended version.

3.2 STANDARDS

Additionally Standards, Guidelines and Codes of Practice of the Codex Alimentarius Commission of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and World Health Organization (CODEX) were taken into account in the context of the audit.

A full list of applicable standards referred to in this report is provided in Annex 2. Reference to specific provisions of these texts is provided at the beginning of each section.

4 BACKGROUND

The FVO has carried out audits to the main exporting countries to evaluate official control systems for preventing aflatoxin contamination in foodstuffs. The reports on these audits are available on the Health and Consumers Directorate-General (DG SANCO) website at:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/ir_search_en.cfm

According to Article 15 (1) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 foodstuffs imported into the EU are regularly checked by the CAs of the MSs.

Information on foodstuffs found to be affected by problems which have public health implications is disseminated as alert notifications through the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) to all MSs and to the exporting countries. Between 2008 and the time of the audit, a number of notifications relating to aflatoxins in hazelnuts and dried figs and derived products from Turkey had been communicated through the RASFF. A breakdown of these notifications is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: RASFF notifications regarding hazelnuts and dried figs from Turkey

Turkey	Number of RASFF notifications		
	2010	2011	2012 (up to Oct.)
Hazelnuts	18	17	1
Dried figs	57	76	46

Source: *RASFF Window database*

In view of the volumes of hazelnuts and dried figs imported from Turkey to the EU and the number of RASFF notifications, the FVO undertook to perform this audit and to follow up the recommendations made in report DG(SANCO)/2008-7858 .

5 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 RELEVANT NATIONAL LEGISLATION

Legal requirements

Article 46(1)(a) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 stipulates that EU controls are to have, *inter alia* particular regard to the legislation of the TC.

Article 10 of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 requires that imported food meet the hygiene requirements laid down in Articles 3 to 6 of this Regulation.

Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 (as last amended) lays down specific standards for admissible levels of aflatoxins and sets maximum levels for certain contaminants (including mycotoxins) in foodstuffs.

Regulation (EC) No 401/2006 (as last amended) lays down methods of sampling and analysis for the official control of the levels of mycotoxins in foodstuffs.

Findings

The following changes have been made to the relevant national legislation since the 2008 FVO report (SANCO/2008-7858):

- Law No 5996 on Veterinary Services, Plant Health, Food and Feed, published in Official Journal No 27610 on 13 June 2010. This is the framework law on food safety and covers the production, processing, and distribution of foodstuffs;
- Regulation on Official Controls of Food and Feed, published in Official Journal No 28145 on 17 December 2011. This sets out the principles and procedures of official controls on food of plant origin;
- Regulations on the Registry and Confirmation of the Food Businesses, published in Official Journal No 28145 on 17 December 2011. These set out the principles and procedures for the registration of food establishments after primary production level and define the registration criteria;
- Regulation on Food Hygiene, published in Official Journal No 28145 on 17 December 2011. This defines the hygiene requirements for primary production and food processing, and makes obligatory the implementation of good manufacturing practice (GMP) and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) based procedures;
- Turkish Food Codex Regulation on Contaminants, published in Official Journal No 28157 on 29 December 2011. This lays down national limits for certain contaminants in foodstuffs based on Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006. The audit team was informed that it does not yet incorporate the provisions of Regulation (EU) No 594/2012 amending Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006¹;
- Turkish Food Codex Communiqué No 2011/32 on the criteria for sampling, sample preparation and method of analysis for the official control of mycotoxin levels in foodstuffs, published in Official Journal No 28026 on 15 August 2011;
- The Regulation on Establishment, Duties, Responsibilities, Procedures and Principles of Food Control Laboratories, published in Official Journal No 28157 on 29 December 2011 setting up requirements for laboratories to carry out official analyses and on the supervision of their activities;
- Regulation on Issue of Health Certificate for Export of Food and Feed of Plant Origin and implementing Regulation for Products Returned from Export, published in Official Journal No 28123 on 25 November 2011;
- Regulation on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), published in Official Journal No 27778 on 7 December 2010 establishing provisions for general GAP;
- Regulation on Official Control on Import of Food and Feed of Plant Origin, published in Official Journal No 28145 on 17 December 2011.

¹ In their response to the draft report the CAs noted that the provisions of Regulation (EU) No 594/2012 have been transposed into the national legislation by a Regulation published in Official Journal and implemented as from 19.12.2012.

In addition, the following guideline documents were relevant in the context of this audit:

- Guide on GAP for the prevention and reduction of aflatoxins in dried figs, published by the AEA;
- GAP for fig cultivation - brochure published by the PDFAL in Aydin;
- GAP for dried figs - brochure published in the context of the FAO-TCP/TUR/3201 project;
- GAP for fig cultivation - brochure published by the MoFAL, 2010;
- Guide on cultivation of dried figs and aflatoxin management published by the MoFAL, Aegean University and the AEA, 2012;
- Guide on Good Hygiene Practice for Hazelnut Processing - under publication.

The audit team was informed that the legislation referred to above was updated in 2011 to bring it into line with the EU requirements.

Since the 2008 FVO report, the national limit for aflatoxin B1 in dried fruits for direct human consumption has been changed from 5 ppb to 8 ppb. Maximum levels for aflatoxin in dried fruits to be subject to sorting or other physical treatment are not regulated.

Conclusions

Since the last audit, SANCO/2008-7858, progress has been made in updating national legislation in line with the EU legislation relevant for this audit.

There is an adequate legal framework established for the official controls of hazelnuts and dried figs intended for export to the EU.

5.2 COMPETENT AUTHORITIES

Legal requirements

Article 46(1)(b) and (c) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 stipulate that EU controls shall have, *inter alia*, particular regard to the organisation of the TC's CAs, their powers and independence, the authority they have to enforce the applicable legislation effectively, and the training of staff in the performance of official controls.

Findings

5.2.1 Competent Authorities

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs has been restructured and re-named as MoFAL under Decree No 639 of 8 June 2011. This Decree established the organisation, duties, powers and responsibilities of the MoFAL as from June 2012. MoFAL holds overall responsibility for implementing policies and drafting legislation in the area of food safety. Three General Directorates now fall within the scope of this audit: GDFC, GDPP and GDAR, together with the Internal Audit Unit (former Inspection Board Head Office).

The GDFC is the CCA responsible for the coordination of the official controls on foodstuffs, drafting and dissemination of instructions and guidelines, supervision and training of the staff at provincial/district level and registration of food establishments (except farms at primary production). It is also responsible for authorising and auditing laboratories as required by Regulation on Food Control Laboratories No 28157 of 29 December 2011.

The GDPP is responsible for the controls on the use of plant protection products (PPPs) and the training of farmers.

The GDAR is responsible for the maintenance at central level of the 'Farmers Registration System'.

There are 81 PDFALs which are responsible for, among other things, the enforcement of food legislation. Each PDFAL heads a network of several District Directorates of Food, Agriculture and Livestock (DDFALs). Throughout the country, there are 834 DDFALs.

Within each PDFAL, there are two departments in charge of activities under the scope of the audit:

- The Food and Feed Department deals with official food controls after primary production, including: (a) registration of food establishments; (b) controls on aflatoxin levels in foodstuffs put on the domestic market, at import and export; (c) inspections at food establishments; (d) sampling of foodstuffs for aflatoxin analysis and (i) follow-up of cases of non-compliances, also in the case of RASFF notifications;
- The Plant Production and Plant Health Department (PPPHE) is responsible for enforcing the requirements pertaining to the use of PPPs and integrated pest management (IPM), and provides farmers with advice, training and guides on GAP to the farmers. PPPHE inspectors are responsible for issuing phytosanitary certificates for the exported foodstuffs.

The PDFALs are accountable:

- to the GDFC for the duties they carry out regarding official food controls;
- to the GDPP for the duties relating to the use of PPPs and the training of farmers;
- to the GDAR regarding the registration of farmers.

Agricultural engineers are recruited within the PDFALs. They are based in the villages to provide farmers with extension services. Currently, there are 7 500 agricultural engineers, and by the end of 2013, there will be 10 000. These agricultural engineers provide up-to-date know-how, professional consultation and training on GAP, as well as educational materials. The audit team saw evidence in the provinces visited of meetings with farmers and provision of training sessions, guidelines, demonstrations and circular letters.

The Internal Audit Unit within MoFAL carries out the internal audits to assess the performance of official food controls carried out by PDFALs. The audit reports are submitted to the Minister. The CCA receives only the recommendations made and transmits them to the audited PDFAL for compliance. The PDFAL has to report the corrective actions taken. Evidence was provided in the form of such a letter from the Internal Audit Unit to the GDCP. However, the letter specified neither deadlines for corrective actions nor information on whether a follow-up audit would be carried out. The audit team was informed that in 2010, the export and import control activities of the PDFAL in Izmir were subject to internal audit. However, the provincial directorate stated that they did not receive feedback from the audit².

The audit team noted that the food inspectors met have the necessary legal powers to access premises and documentation, and to take samples. Official controls were carried out at the processing establishments visited and the audit team could examine examples of inspections and actions taken. The CAs showed evidence of their powers to implement legal requirements. Examples were provided of fines imposed on processors who had not complied with the national aflatoxin limits have been provided.

2 In their response to the draft report the CAs noted that the central authority communicates the matters specified in the supervision report as instructions to the relevant Provincial Directorate. In addition, it is clarified that the case regarding Izmir PDFAL was an investigation covering staff disciplinary issues and in accordance with the national legal provisions the CCA did not provide any instructions to the Provincial Directorate.

All inspectors met by the audit team in the PDFALs visited were aware of the CCA's implementation instructions and guidelines concerning official controls of hazelnuts and dried figs intended for export to the EU. In addition, training sessions on the updated food legislation, official controls at processing establishments, including HACCP plans, use of the Food Safety Inspection System (FSIS) electronic database and sampling for aflatoxin analysis, had been organised by the CCA. At the PDFALs visited formal training activities were well documented.

Data on controls, sampling and laboratory analysis carried out by the provincial/district directorates are entered into the FSIS centralised database. The FSIS was put in place in 2010 and provides on-line information on all food control activities. Since 2012 all export procedures are carried by using this database.

There are 21 PCLs and 25 private laboratories approved by MoFAL to carry out official analysis for aflatoxins in hazelnuts and dried figs intended for export to the EU. Since the 2008 FVO report, the number of approved PCLs has gone down by 5 and the number of the approved private laboratories has gone up by 15. According to the information provided by the MoFAL, all approved laboratories have been accredited according to EN ISO/IEC 17025 for aflatoxin analysis in hazelnuts and dried figs. This indicates that recommendation number four of the report DG(SANCO)/2008-7858 '*Consider accreditation to ISO 17025 or to extend the scope of accredited approved laboratories to ensure their equivalence with Article 18 of Regulation (EC) No 2076/2005 and that these laboratories provide reliable analytical results. Equivalence to Article 12 (2) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 should be demonstrated by January 2010*' is addressed.

Under Article 13(4) of the Regulation on Official Control of Food and Feed, the MoFAL designates the National Reference Laboratory Directorate as the National Reference Laboratory (NRL) for food. However, a specific NRL for mycotoxins had not yet been designated by the time of the audit. The PCL in Ankara played a limited role as NRL up to 2011 by analysing witness (counter) samples and organising that year one national proficiency test (PT) on aflatoxins in hazelnuts with 54 participating laboratories. No NRL activities were carried out by any laboratory in 2012.

5.2.2 Customs Authorities

In the field of this audit customs authorities are responsible for the customs clearance of hazelnut and dried fig consignments for export to the EU and of consignments that have been rejected at EU borders and returned to Turkey.

5.2.3 Other Organisations

The audit team met representatives of the AEA and Ege University. The AEA is an umbrella organisation for dried figs processors and exporters. Ege University carries out ongoing research on mycotoxin contamination in figs.

The AEA has produced guidance on GAP and organises meetings to inform growers, traders and technical personnel. The Association also buys and disseminates, free of charge, drying trays (50 000 pieces in 2012), caprification bags (3 million pieces in 2010 and 2.5 million pieces in 2012) and insect baits. This equipment is designated to reduce aflatoxin formation and prevent the contamination of dried figs.

Under the *Good Agriculture:High Income* project (2010/2011), Ege University, in collaboration with the AEA, developed an on-line traceability system that is available free of charge on the internet (www.gidaizle.org) and enables farmers to select good practices, for example, or calculate the amount of fertiliser needed.

The audit team saw evidence of close cooperation between these organisations and the PDFALs in

Izmir and Aydin.

Conclusions

The CAs are clearly designated and have the necessary legal powers to carry out their tasks effectively. The communication within the CAs and between the CAs and the other organisations involved is adequate and effective.

There is a system in place for internal audits on the official food controls carried out by the PDFALs. However, the fact that sufficient details are not provided with the audit report to the audited PDFAL potentially hampers the intended outcome of the internal audits.

At present there is no laboratory specifically designated as NRL for mycotoxins and no NRL activities have been carried out by any laboratory.

Recommendation number four of the report DG(SANCO)/2008-7858 regarding the accreditation of the laboratories approved to perform official analysis of hazelnuts and dried figs intended for export to the EU was fully addressed.

5.3 OFFICIAL CONTROLS ON PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING

Legal Requirements

Article 46 (1) (e) and (b) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 stipulate that EU controls shall have, *inter alia*, particular regard to the existence and operation of documented control procedures and control systems based on priorities, and the CA's capability to enforce applicable legislation;

EU aflatoxin levels are specified in the Annex to Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006.

The Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Tree Nuts (CAC/RCP 59-2005, Rev.1-2006) sets out recommended practices based on GAP, GMP and good storage practice (GSP).

Findings

5.3.1 Cultivation (GAP)

The main area of hazelnuts production is the Black Sea region. In 2011, hazelnuts were cultivated on approximately 696 964 ha and the production volume was 430 000 tonnes. In Trabzon Province visited, there were 57 140 registered hazelnut farmers, most of whom keep small orchards (1 ha).

The main area of dried figs production is the Aegean region. In 2011, the cultivation area was 48 530 ha and production amounted to 260 508 tonnes. In Izmir and Aydin Provinces visited, there were 4 677 and 14 299 registered dried fig farmers respectively, most of whom keep small orchards (1 - 5 ha).

The primary producers (farmers) apply to the DDFALs for registration by submitting the necessary documents. If the requisite documentation is complete, their information is entered in the electronic Farmers' Registration System. Centrally, the system is maintained by the MoFAL's GDAR. According to the CAs, a small percentage (5 - 10%) of hazelnut and dried fig farmers are not registered. This is usually because they do not have the required ownership or rental document for the land they cultivate.

Farmers are required to comply with basic hygiene requirements. The audit team noted that the primary production of hazelnuts and dried figs is not subject to official controls to verify

compliance with the national hygiene requirements which are comparable to those contained in Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 852/2004. At primary production of hazelnuts and dried figs, official controls cover the use of PPPs and the IPM controls.

The audit team visited one hazelnut grower in Trabzon Province and one fig grower in Aydin Province. Both farmers were registered by the CAs. During the visits the audit team met the PPPHD inspectors and the local agricultural engineers from the respective PDFALs. The PPPHD inspectors perform controls on the presence of pests and the use of PPPs.

On the farms visited the audit team noted a high level of activity by the PDFAL staff regarding farmers' training on implementation of GAP and providing advice on how to manage with emerging problems.

The audit team confirmed that the farmers had access to advisory services. Training and guidelines have been provided by the PDFALs agricultural engineers based in the villages.

The hazelnut farmer met followed the principles of GAP, such as pruning of the trees, soil sampling and use of natural manure. Hazelnuts were collected manually from the branches and sun dried at the farmer's yard for a week. The farmer stated that the sun-drying process finishes when he considers that the hazelnuts are dry enough after breaking the kernels with fingers. Dried hazelnuts were stored in the farmer's house. The farmer stated that the storage period before sale to a middlemen or processor could be up to several months.

The fig farmer visited used a solar tunnel dryer that is a greenhouse type tunnel covered with polyethylene plastic film. He stated that 70 % of the fig farmers in his district use such dryers. He kept a logbook on the use of a certified organic manure. The logbook had three carbon copies, signed and stamped by the provincial inspector in charge. One copy was given to the buyer of the figs, one copy was for the CA and one copy stayed with the farmer.

5.3.2 Processing and Storage (GMP, HACCP, GSP etc.)

Food processors and exporters must be registered by the PDFALs. The procedure is laid down in the national legislation (see point 5.1). Food operators (excluding farmers) apply to the PDFALs by submitting the required documents. Establishments processing dried fruit and nuts and employing more than a total of 10 staff, must provide service contracts concluded with compulsory personnel (food engineers or agricultural engineers). Once the application is deemed complete, the establishment is registered in the FSIS. The entry in the register is completed by PDFALs and a Business Registration Document and an identification number are issued. By the time of the audit, there were 318 registered exporters to the EU for hazelnuts and 216 for dried figs.

There is an official control programme for inspections of processors, wholesalers, retailers, importers and exporters of food. This programme requires that inspections are risk-based and conducted without prior warning. The establishments processing hazelnuts and dried figs are categorised as low risk and the inspection frequency is once per year.

The PDFALs visited have been provided with documented procedures and implementing instruction for the registration of food establishments, official food control, risk categorisation of food establishments, export of foodstuffs of plant origin, food sampling for aflatoxin analysis and the issuing of health certificates for export to the EU.

Inspectors are required to use standard check lists during inspections in accordance with the Regulation on the Official Controls on Food and Feed. In the plants visited inspections had been carried out at the required frequency and using standard check lists for hygiene and HACCP plan checks, which include general points relating to compliance with the hygiene requirements and own-check procedures. There was no evidence that attention is paid to the implementation of the

specific measures to control aflatoxin contamination in hazelnut and dried fig at processing and distribution/storage³.

Examples of reports of plants' inspections were provided to the audit team. One of the inspectors met did not record the inspection findings, choosing to report and record only where there was non-compliance found. The inspector provided the establishment with a copy of the inspection form without inspection results and with attached an empty check list signed by the inspector and a representative of the establishment. This was not in line with the reporting requirements laid down in Article 12 of the Regulation on Inspection and Control of Food Safety and the implementing instructions provided by the CCA.

The inspectors met were able to perform traceability checks of hazelnut and dried fig lots.

The audit team visited three hazelnut processors in Trabzon Province and two dried fig processors and one dried fig wholesaler in Izmir and Aydin Provinces. The companies visited had been registered and risk-rated as low-risk establishments with inspection frequency once per year. This inspection frequency had been achieved. At all plants visited with the exception of one, there were files for the inspections carried out.

The companies visited purchase hazelnuts and dried figs from middlemen or individual farmers. All food operators visited had established traceability systems. They kept on file all information related to the products received, including the name of the seller, the analytical data at reception and the export documentation. According to the information provided by the operators, full traceability of the product back to each individual farmer was generally lost at the point of intake in the facilities or during the purchase from the middlemen. The operators met demonstrated traceability to group of farmers' level.

All the plants visited generally followed the hygiene requirements and had certified HACCP systems in place. They had in-house aflatoxins control measures involving humidity measurement of incoming lots, laser sorting machines for hazelnuts, bright greenish yellow fluorescence for aflatoxins in dried figs and aflatoxin analysis in every batch of finished product.

Sorting is the main method of aflatoxin control in the companies visited. All the processors visited checked the effectiveness of the sorting techniques by regular analysis of aflatoxin levels in the finished products.

All hazelnut and dried fig processors visited had in-house laboratories for the purposes of their own-controls.

The storage places at the two farms visited had solid structure, were dry and protected from rain and the entry of rodents, insects and birds. The hazelnuts were stored in jute bags on a wooden floor and the dried figs in plastic boxes on pallets. The storage conditions at the processors visited were adequate for short-term storage. The food operators met stated that they process to order and do not store raw materials or finished products for more than a week.

The findings above indicate that recommendation number one '*Consider reinforcing controls at all stages to prevent aflatoxin contamination in hazelnuts, pistachios and dried figs, following the recommendations made in the relevant Codes of Practice (Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Tree Nuts-CAC/RCP 59-2005, REV: 1-2006, in particular points 35, 36, 42 and 45 of the Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Dried Figs-ALINORM 08/31/41 Appendix XI, in particular points 38, 43 and 46)*' and recommendation number two '*Ensure that storage facilities for nuts and dried fruit are in line*

3 In their response to the draft report the CAs noted that in accordance with the Codex Codes of Practice for hazelnuts and dried figs they consider as the most important stages for the aflatoxin formation the cultivation in the orchard, the pre-harvest and the drying periods. Therefore, the system of controls is focused on these stages rather than on the processing stage.

or at least equivalent with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004, part A, Annex I of the report DG(SANCO)/2008-7858 are addressed.

5.3.3 Non-conforming Products

Lots rejected for export to the EU

Lots intended for export to the EU are defined as non-compliant if they contain higher levels of aflatoxins than the limits specified in the Annex to Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006. Table 2 shows the number of the applications made (sample taken) to export lots of hazelnuts and dried figs to the EU and the number of the lots found not to comply with the EU aflatoxin limits and therefore not granted a health certificate.

Table 2: Analysis results for the lots intended for export to the EU

Product	Year	No of samples taken for export to the EU	No of non-compliant samples	Rejection rate
Hazelnuts	2010	10 406	80	0.77%
	2011	10 732	32	0.30%
	2012 (up to Oct.)	9 779	26	0.26%
Dried figs	2010	6 630	195	2.94%
	2011	7 444	294	3.95%
	2012 (up to Oct.)	5 021	321	6.39%

The audit team noted that there is no requirement for exporters to inform the CAs of the destination of a lot rejected for export to the EU after the first laboratory analysis. Where a lot is rejected for export to the EU, the exporter has the following options:

- contest the result and request analysis of the witness sample (Article 12(b) of the Regulation on Official Control of Food and Feed);
- re-process (re-sort) and re-sample the lot;
- export to a country where the aflatoxin levels found comply with the legal limits;
- put on the domestic market (if the aflatoxin levels found are within Turkish legal limits); or
- destroy the lot or use it for purposes other than human consumption.

If the exporter contests the non-compliant laboratory result, the witness (counter) sample is analysed. Under the Article 14 of the Regulation on Official Control of Food and Feed, the result of the witness sample is final and the basis of the decision to be made. If the result of the witness sample complies with the EU aflatoxin limits, the export to the EU is allowed. The audit team received data that, in 2012 up to the time of the audit, the PCL in Trabzon had analysed two witness samples from hazelnuts and the the approved private laboratory in Aydin had analysed four witness samples of dried figs. In 2011 the PCL in Ankara analysed 62 witness samples of hazelnuts (one was non-compliant with the EU maximum limits) and 32 witness samples of dried figs (five were non-compliant with the EU maximum limits).

There are no national limits for aflatoxins in dried figs to be subject to sorting or other physical treatment. Exporters wishing to re-sort a lot of dried figs found non-compliant for EU export after laboratory analysis, have to submit a request to the PDFAL. If the re-sorting is allowed, the process

has to be observed by a PDFAL inspector. After the re-sorting the exporter must inform the PDFAL in writing of the new number of the lot and request new official sampling for aflatoxin analysis. If the laboratory result complies with the EU aflatoxin limits, a health certificate for export of the lot to the EU is granted. The CA stated that the lot would be destroyed if the results were still non-compliant after the re-sorting. At the PDFAL in Aydin, the audit team saw evidence of two re-sortings of dried fig lots done by one company in February and October 2012.

There are national limits for aflatoxins in hazelnuts to be subject to sorting or other physical treatment (12 ppb aflatoxin B1 and 15 ppb total aflatoxins content). One of the hazelnut processors visited stated that, where a lot was rejected for export to the EU, he would re-sort it in order to achieve compliance with the EU limits.

Lots rejected at the EU borders

According to the CAs, most hazelnut and dried fig consignments from Turkey rejected at the EU borders due to aflatoxin levels exceeding the EU limits are re-dispatched to the exporter. Alternatively, they may be re-routed to a country where the legal limits are not exceeded.

On return to Turkey, the consignments are treated as imported goods, to which customs procedures apply. The PDFAL inspectors verify through sampling and testing the consignments to verify whether the Turkish aflatoxin limits are met. The CCA has disseminated a circular letter (dated 1 June 2012) with instructions on how to proceed if a lot does not comply with the national aflatoxin limits. It is deemed appropriate to allow the company to correct the non-compliance through special treatment, except mixing in order to meet the national aflatoxin limits. For this, the company should submit a request to the CA, which should determine the process to be performed. The processed lot should be sampled and the result of the laboratory analysis should be the basis of the decision to be made. The audit team was provided with evidence of a consignment rejected at the EU border, where the CA did not allow further treatment due to the very high aflatoxin content.

According to the CAs, 17 hazelnut and 76 dried fig consignments were returned to Turkey in 2011 and all of them were sampled and analysed.

Conclusions

At the farms visited, the implementation of GAP generally followed the national GAP guidelines and principles established in the Codex Alimentarius Codes of Practice CAC/RCP-59-2005 and CAC/RCP-65-2008 for the prevention and reduction of aflatoxin contamination in tree nuts and dried figs. The CAs and all stakeholders involved have taken measures to raise hazelnuts and dried figs growers' awareness of the risk of aflatoxin contamination.

There is a system of official controls carried out in line with documented procedures, including the registration process for food establishments exporting to the EU, which is in line with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004. However, the official controls do not include verification of compliance with the hygiene requirements as laid down in Regulation on Food Hygiene (Official Journal No 28145, 17 December 2011) by hazelnut and dried fig growers.

The processors visited were subject to official control and have implemented food safety procedures based on HACCP principles, which are in line with the requirements of Article 5, in conjunction of Article 10, of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004. However, official checks on specific measures put in place by food operators to control aflatoxin contamination during the processing of hazelnuts and dried figs are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that these are implemented effectively.

The official controls on food establishments dispatching hazelnuts and dried figs to the EU are carried out in accordance with written procedures. However, it is not ensured that the procedures are followed by all inspectors met.

There is a legal framework for re-sorting dried fig lots found non-compliant for export to the EU. However, as aflatoxin contamination was found in the analysed lot and given the heterogeneous aflatoxin distribution in the lot, the risk that dried figs officially cleared in Turkey for export to the EU may be still rejected at the EU border cannot be excluded.

Recommendations number one and two of the report DG(SANCO)/2008-7858 regarding storage procedures and moisture level checks of hazelnuts and dried figs are fully addressed.

5.4 PROCEDURE FOR EXPORTING TO THE EU

Legal requirements

Article 46(1)(h) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 stipulates that EU controls shall have, *inter alia*, particular regard to the assurances which the TC can give regarding compliance with, or equivalent to, EU legislation.

Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 1152/2009 requires that consignments of foodstuffs as referred to in Article 1 of the Regulation may only be imported into the EU in accordance with the procedures laid down in this Regulation.

Findings

Since the 2008 FVO report, the number of PFALDs authorised to issue health certificates for hazelnuts and dried figs exported into the EU has increased from 27 to 31. The updated list of signatures of the authorised officials has been sent to the European Commission services.

The export procedure starts with the exporter's (or his representative's) notification to the PDFAL, through the FSIS, of the consignment intended for export to the EU. If all necessary documents have been provided, this is accepted by the authorised PDFAL inspectors, who then check the consignment, take samples and send them for aflatoxin analysis. The export to the EU is permitted on condition that the laboratory results do not exceed the EU aflatoxin limits. The PDFAL inspectors issue the health certificate required by Regulation (EC) No 1152/2009.

The health certificate is a prerequisite for the issuing of the phytosanitary certificate. Every exporter is required to submit to the PDFALs the health certificate and the results of aflatoxin analysis for each consignment destined for export to the EU.

The audit team discussed the issuing of the health certificates required under Regulation (EC) No 1152/2009 with inspectors at Aydin PDFAL and noted that their understanding regarding products consigned from Turkey was inadequate. The inspectors stated that in the case of products consigned from Turkey, they would not issue health certificates, as the origin of the hazelnuts and dried figs is another country. During the closing meeting, the CCA commented on the import of these products to Turkey. It is regulated and requires pest risk analysis results from the exporting country prior to import. The CCA declared that the MoFAL had not to date received any application for imports of hazelnuts and dried figs. Therefore, the CCA considers that the inspectors meet the requirements laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1152/2009 (see also point 5.2). The PDFALs visited have been provided with implementing instructions for issuing the health certificate required under Regulation (EC) No 1152/2009 for hazelnut and dried fig exports to the EU. However, the audit team noted that the instructions provided did not include specific explanation about the cases when the export concerns products consigned from Turkey.

The hazelnut and dried fig exporters submit the export declaration for customs clearance via the customs electronic system with the necessary information and documentation. The CN code entered determines what export documentation has to be submitted.

Customs officials cross-check the electronic and paper versions of the export documentation. By introducing the CN code of the product, they receive the list of the documents that should be presented and checked. For hazelnut and dried fig exports to the EU, the list includes the health certificate issued by the PDFALs.

The audit team observed a demonstration of the customs system in operation at Trabzon Port and confirmed that CN code 1106 30 90 for flour, meal and powder of hazelnuts, figs and pistachios and CN code 2007 99 98 for fig paste and hazelnut paste have been included. With this regard, the recommendation number three of the report DG(SANCO)/2008-7858 *'Ensure that Customs procedures include the control of the health certificate required in all products included in Article 1 of Commission Decision 2006/504/EC'* is addressed. However, the audit team noted that although the system requires a health certificate for exports to the EU of hazelnuts, dried figs and their products, these were not checked by the customs officials. In addition, in all customs declarations checked by the audit team, the health certificate was entered with the identification number of the phytosanitary certificate. This fact did not prevent the export customs clearance of the foodstuffs. The CAs explained that the data on the export declaration are entered by the exporters or their representatives. They also stated that the check of the phytosanitary certificate was sufficient, as it was issued on the basis of the health certificate. However, there is no such phytosanitary certification requirement for the export of hazelnuts and dried figs to the EU.

According to the CAs, 54% of the hazelnuts are exported by sea and 46% by road or rail.

Conclusions

There is a procedure in place for the issuing of health certificates for hazelnuts and dried figs exported to the EU. However, the procedure is not clear enough to ensure that health certificates are issued according to the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1152/2009 for hazelnuts and dried figs consigned from Turkey but originating in another country⁴.

Recommendation number three of the report DG(SANCO)/2008-7858 regarding the information on the CN codes for foodstuffs requiring health certificates under Regulation (EC) No 1152/2009 is fully addressed.

5.5 METHOD OF SAMPLING CONSIGNMENTS

Legal requirements

Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No 401/2006 requires that sampling for the official control of mycotoxin levels in foodstuffs be carried out in accordance with the methods set out in its Annex I. Concerning hazelnuts and dried figs, the methods of sampling are laid down in Annex I.D.

Codex Standard 193-1995 provides for sampling plan for total aflatoxins in hazelnuts.

4 In their response to the draft report the CAs noted that it is compulsory that a pest risk analysis for figs, pistachios and nuts to be completed in the exporting country before the export of these products to Turkey. There is a relevant provision in the Regulation on the Official Controls for the Export of Plant Feed and Food of 17 December 2011. According to the CAs there has neither been any application yet to the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock for pest risk analysis of the products in question nor any completed risk analysis. Thus, no import application may be lodged for the products in question. The CAs stated that such products have not been imported in Turkey and therefore, any practice outside the scope of the Regulation (EC) No 1152/2009 is out of the question in Turkey. The CAs noted also that the Health Certificate required under the aforementioned Regulation includes information regarding the product and its origin and that for products originated from Turkey in the Health Certificate would be indicated origin from Turkey.

Findings

Sampling procedures are described in Turkish Food Codex Communique No 2011/32 on the criteria for sampling, sample preparation and method of analysis for the official control of mycotoxin levels in foodstuffs.

All hazelnut and dried fig consignments submitted for export to the EU are sampled for aflatoxin analysis. There is a written procedure for aflatoxin sampling of foodstuffs issued by the MoFAL.

The audit team evaluated two sampling demonstrations. One was of 2 000 kg consignment of dried figs (200 boxes of 10 kg each, packed in PVC) and 2 000 kg consignment of chopped roasted hazelnuts (80 boxes of 25 kg each, vacuum packed). In both cases the inspectors used alternative sampling methods because of the commercial consequences of damage to the consignments. They took reduced number of incremental samples than the required (50% less for the dried figs and 25% less for the hazelnuts) and produced aggregate samples (12 kg and 10 kg respectively) of which the weight was the weight of the aggregate samples as foreseen in function of the size of the sampled consignments. The aggregate samples were divided into two laboratory samples. Samples were packed into non-transparent plastic bags, then sealed, labelled and delivered to the laboratory by the inspectors. After grinding, the sample is re-divided into 2 samples. Each part is labelled and sealed. One of the samples is analysed and the other is left as a witness (counter) sample to be used in case the exporter contests the first laboratory result, and is kept in a cold storage on the PDFAL's premises. If requested by the processor's representative duplicate samples are taken by the inspectors and kept in the processor's facilities.

Conclusions

The observed sampling procedures followed requirements which were in line with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 401/2006, laying down the methods of sampling and analysis for the official control of the levels of mycotoxins in foodstuffs.

5.6 LABORATORY SERVICES

Legal requirements

Article 46(1)(d) and (c) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 stipulate that EU controls shall have, *inter alia*, particular regard to the resources, including diagnostic facilities, available to CAs, and the training of staff in the performance of official controls.

Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 401/2006 requires that sample preparation and methods of analysis used for the official control of mycotoxin levels in foodstuffs comply with the criteria set out in its Annex II to the Regulation.

Codex requirements for sample preparation and criteria for analytical methods to be used for testing of aflatoxins in hazelnuts are laid down in Codex Standard 193-1995.

Points 41 and 42 of Codex Guidelines CAC/GL 26-1997 on the Design, Operation, Assessment and Accreditation of Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems lays down that inspection services should utilise laboratories that are evaluated and/or accredited under officially recognised programmes to ensure that adequate quality controls are in place to provide for the reliability of test results. In accordance with point 3 of Codex Guidelines CAC/GL 27-1997 the laboratories should comply with ISO/IEC Guide 17025.

Findings

5.6.1 *Public Laboratories*

The audit team visited two PCLs in Ankara and Trabzon.

The audit team was informed that up to 2011, the laboratory in Ankara performed only aflatoxin analysis of witness (counter) samples. In 2012, the laboratory did not analyse any samples of hazelnuts or dried figs intended for export to the EU.

Both laboratories had a quality manager and a quality manual in place and were accredited by the Turkish Accreditation Body (TÜRKAK) for the determination of aflatoxins B1, B2, G1 and G2 in hazelnuts and dried figs respectively. However, at the time of the visit, the audit team was informed that both laboratories were waiting for TÜRKAK to issue their renewed certificates of accreditation following expiry of the previous ones.

In the context of this audit, it was found that both laboratories had sufficient and well-trained staff and the premises and equipment were fit for purpose. The sample management was adequate in both laboratories which followed the 'dry' grinding approach, with the use of appropriate mills for hazelnuts and dried figs respectively. The audit team was informed in the PCL in Trabzon that aliquots of the ground laboratory samples were always kept as witness samples.

The two laboratories used rather similar analytical procedures (Methods 999.07 and the method 991.31, as described in the Official Methods of Analysis of the Association of Official Analytical Chemists (AOAC) (2005), respectively). The methods of analysis were based on the extraction of the sample with methanol/water, immunoaffinity clean-up and liquid chromatography with post-column derivatisation involving bromination and fluorescence detection. Both laboratories used 5-point calibration curves, commercial calibration standards and immunoaffinity columns.

Also, both laboratories participated on a regular basis in international PTs with satisfactory results, had in-house validation reports, quality control measures in place and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for analytical procedures and measurement uncertainty. Both performed correctly in practice the analysis for aflatoxins. The audit team detected that the limit of quantification for aflatoxin B1, expressed in the analytical reports by the laboratory in Trabzon, was 0.7 ppb which was not the lowest validated concentration. Actually, the limit of quantification was correctly estimated in the validation study at 0.3 ppb.

The results of the analyses of aflatoxins reported by both laboratories were corrected for recovery. However, the laboratory in Trabzon did not mention the manner of reporting in the analytical report. The audit team also detected also some editorial mistakes in the format used by this laboratory for issuing the analytical results: the headings of the technical data that accompanied the results had been switched in the English translation.

The audit team was informed about the number of samples analysed in 2012 which fell within the scope of this audit. The laboratory in Ankara had not analysed any official samples from consignments intended for export to the EU. As of 10 October 2012, the laboratory in Trabzon had analysed 3 099 samples of hazelnuts, two of which were found to exceed the maximum permitted levels of 2 ppb for aflatoxin B1 and/or 4 ppb for total aflatoxins.

5.6.2 *Approved Private Laboratory*

The audit team visited an approved by the MoFAL private laboratory in Aydin. As of 10 October 2012, the laboratory had analysed 3 266 samples, mainly of dried figs intended for export to the EU, of which 273 were found to exceed the EU maximum limits.

The laboratory had a quality manual in place and a general manager also acting as quality manager. The laboratory was accredited by TÜRKAK for the determination of aflatoxins B1, B2, G1 and G2

in dried figs. CCA staff visit the laboratory at least once every 2 years in order to renew its approval.

The laboratory had sufficient and well-trained staff and the premises and equipment were fit for purpose. The sample management was adequate, following the 'dry' grinding approach, with the use of appropriate mills.

The laboratory used the analytical procedure based on the extraction of the sample with methanol/water, immunoaffinity clean-up and liquid chromatography with post-column derivatisation involving bromination and fluorescence detection.

The laboratory participated on a regular basis in international PTs with satisfactory results, had in-house validation reports, quality control measures in place and SOPs for analytical procedures and measurement uncertainty. It performed correctly the aflatoxin analysis and issued analytical reports fully in accordance with EU requirements. The audit team noted that the estimation of the measurement uncertainty for the sum of the four aflatoxins was not carried out correctly.

Conclusions

The public and private laboratories visited were accredited by TÜRKAK as meeting the requirements of EN ISO/IEC 17025 and performed correctly in terms of validation, participation in PTs and having quality control measures in place. Some minor technical issues were detected in two laboratories. Otherwise, in the case of one of the official laboratories, the analytical reports are not fully in line with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 401/2006. In the case of the private laboratory, the estimation of the measurement uncertainty was carried out wrongly.

5.7 PRIVATE CONTROLS ON HAZELNUTS AND DRIED FIGS

Findings

All processing establishments visited have implemented measures to control aflatoxin levels in hazelnuts and dried figs, e.g. requirements for humidity controls on incoming raw material, applying different sorting techniques, monitoring of storage conditions, testing the finished product for aflatoxin contamination.

The effectiveness of sorting techniques was verified by regular laboratory analysis.

The processors visited have identified aflatoxin contamination as a hazard in their respective HACCP based systems.

Conclusions

All processors visited have in place well-developed control measures for aflatoxin contamination in hazelnuts and dried figs.

All establishments visited have HACCP based systems in place which meet requirements at least equivalent to those set out in EU legislation.

5.8 RESPONSE TO RASFF NOTIFICATIONS

Legal requirements

Point 6 of Codex Guidelines CAC/GL 25-1997 requires exchange of information between countries

on rejections of imported food. In particular, the food control authorities in the exporting country should undertake the necessary investigation to determine the cause of any problem that has led to the rejection of the consignment. If requested, the food control authority in the exporting country should provide the authorities in the importing country with available information on the outcome of the necessary investigation. Bilateral discussions should take place as necessary.

Findings

The MoFAL's GDFC is the authority responsible for receiving RASFF notifications and has internet access to the EU's RASFF database. It forwards all RASFF notifications concerning Turkish exported hazelnuts and dried figs to the PDFALs, which are responsible for follow-up. The audit team noted that all RASFF notifications were received and saw evidence that the relevant CAs were informed.

At the Izmir PDFAL, the audit team checked the follow-up investigation of three RASFF notifications. All notifications received were immediately forwarded from the central level to the relevant PDFAL. The provincial inspectors carried out an inspection on the notified company the next day. The origin of the raw material was traced back and the district office responsible was informed and asked to carry out further investigation. All notified consignments returned to Turkey were sampled by the PDFAL inspectors. As all of them were in compliance with the national aflatoxin limits, they were placed on the domestic market. The central level was informed in writing about the action taken by the PDFALs.

The CAs stated that the only measure applied was to subject the notified company to more frequent official controls. The audit team noted that no other measures were taken, nor sanctions applied to the companies involved, in response to the RASFF notifications.

Conclusions

There are administrative structures and procedures in place for RASFF follow-up within MoFAL. The follow-up procedure has been followed and is satisfactory.

6 OVERALL CONCLUSION

Overall, Turkey has a system for official controls of hazelnuts and dried figs intended for export to the EU. Staff training and communication between CAs and with industry are adequate. Regular risk-based official controls are carried out by the CAs. The CCA provides written instruction, guidelines and procedures to the provincial/district CAs on implementation of the official controls.

Since the previous audit, further efforts have been made regarding implementation of GAP at primary production level and proper storage and drying practices at all stages, as well regarding the export procedure. All laboratories approved for aflatoxin analysis of hazelnuts and dried figs intended for export to the EU have been accredited. Some shortcomings were still found with regard to the sampling procedure, estimation of the measurement uncertainty and customs controls at the point of export. Additionally, considering that there are authorised procedures for re-testing or re-sorting of non-compliant dried fig lots intended for export to the EU, the risk that these consignments officially cleared in Turkey for export to the EU may be still rejected at the EU border cannot be excluded.

As regards the recommendations made in the mission report DG(SANCO)/2008-7858, all have been addressed.

7 CLOSING MEETING

A closing meeting was held on 16 October 2012 with representatives of the CCA. The audit team presented the main findings and preliminary conclusions of the audit. The CA made initial comments and provided some additional information.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The CAs are invited to provide, within 25 working days of receipt of this report, details (including completion deadlines 'action plan') of actions taken and planned to address the recommendations set out below.

Nº.	Recommendation
1.	Ensure that official controls on hazelnut and dried fig producers include verification of compliance with hygiene requirements at least equivalent to the requirements laid down in Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 852/2004.
2.	Ensure that hazelnuts and dried figs intended for export to the EU comply with the relevant requirements of food law, as laid down in Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, or their equivalents, and do not contain aflatoxins at levels exceeding those set in Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006, as amended.
3.	Ensure that the deficiencies noted with regard to the analytical reports and the estimation of the measurement uncertainty are rectified to ensure that the performance criteria established in Regulation (EC) No 401/2006 are met.

The competent authority's response to the recommendations can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_inspection_ref=2012-6292

ANNEX 1 – EUROPEAN UNION ACTS QUOTED IN THE REPORT

Legal Reference	Official Journal	Title
Reg. 1881/2006	OJ L 364, 20.12.2006, p. 5-24	Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 of 19 December 2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs
Reg. 1152/2009	OJ L 313, 28.11.2009, p. 40-49	Commission Regulation (EC) No 1152/2009 of 27 November 2009 imposing special conditions governing the import of certain foodstuffs from certain third countries due to contamination risk by aflatoxins and repealing Decision 2006/504/EC
Reg. 178/2002	OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1-24	Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 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
Reg. 852/2004	OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 1, Corrected and re-published in OJ L 226, 25.6.2004, p. 3	Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs
Reg. 401/2006	OJ L 70, 9.3.2006, p. 12-34	Commission Regulation (EC) No 401/2006 of 23 February 2006 laying down the methods of sampling and analysis for the official control of the levels of mycotoxins in foodstuffs

ANNEX 2 – STANDARDS QUOTED IN THE REPORT

Reference number	Full title	Publication details
CAC/RCP 59-2005	Codex Alimentarius Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Tree Nuts (CAC/RCP 59-2005, Rev.1-2006)	http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/standard_list.jsp
CAC/RCP 65-2008	Codex Alimentarius Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Dried Figs (CAC/RCP 65-2008)	http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/standard_list.jsp
CODEX STAN 193-1995	Codex General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed	http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/standard_list.jsp
CAC/GL 25-1997	Guidelines for the exchange of information between countries on rejections of imported food (CAC/GL 25-1997).	http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/standard_list.jsp
CAC/GL 26-1997	Guidelines on the design, operation, assessment and accreditation of food import and export inspection and certification systems (CAC/GL 26-1997).	http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/standard_list.jsp
CAC/GL 27-1997	Guidelines for the Assessment of the competence of testing laboratories involved in the import and export control of food (CAC/GL 27-1997).	http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/standard_list.jsp