

Monthly Summary of Articles on Food Fraud and Adulteration

Retrieved mainly from the JRC tool Medisys (<http://medisys.newsbrief.eu/>)



Food Fraud Cases

07/02/17 - Business owner accused of counterfeiting mozzarella

The police of Pescara (central Italy) received a call denouncing the owner of a discount store chain for counterfeiting mozzarella. An on-site operation led to the discovery of labels of a well-known dairy company stored along with cow milk from other companies.

Carabinieri.it



09/02/17 - Meat company on trial for selling turkey instead of halal lamb

Four representatives of a meat selling business are on trial for selling non-halal turkey instead of halal lamb. They are accused of conspiring to defraud customers by making false statements about the type of meat being sold between 2013 and 2014. The presumed scammers all deny charges but DNA testing confirmed the presence of turkey meat in the suspicious products.

Daily mail



10/02/17 - Operation Aristeo for controlling the mozzarella business: serious malpractices found

The financial police of Caserta discovered serious cases of fraud in the production of Mozzarella di Bufala Campana (PDO). They discovered a full truck of bubbling (fermenting) milk. Further investigations concluded that the spoiled milk was treated with caustic soda to mask acidification and aging. Moreover, the companies involved had used cow's milk instead of buffalo's milk, which is mandatory for the production of the PDO mozzarella di bufala. Beside the mozzarella business, they also smoked Provolone cheese with cardboard and printed and glued paper leaflets.

Repubblica

Il Gazzettino



10/02/17 - 1300 kg of unlabelled octopus seized in Andalusia

1300 kg of octopus were seized in a warehouse near Huelva (Andalusia) because no traceability records existed. This operation led the inspection services to put the sector under close surveillance.

El Economista



15/02/17 - Sicilian tomatoes actually from Albania

An operator in the fruits and vegetables market of Sicily is suspected of transshipment of tomatoes. The investigators found proofs of purchase for 200 tons of Albanian products imported into Bari. A part of the shipment was rerouted to the Sicilian operator who would mix it with locally produced tomatoes.

Nuovo Sud



16/02/17 – British supermarkets anger consumers over lamb mislabelling

Several UK supermarkets were strongly criticized by consumers and farmers because they claimed their lamb products had been 'Produced in Britain' but in fact contained traces of imported New Zealand meat. The supermarkets announced the 'British' lamb meals will be rebranded as 'Classic'. But shoppers still shared their anger on social media over the issue.

[Farming UK](#)



16/02/17 - A Silicon Valley restaurant fined \$120 000 for selling tilapia instead of sole

A high-end restaurant from the Silicon Valley (California, USA) was fined \$120 000 for serving cheap tilapia instead of expensive petrale sole between 2014 and 2016. The fine includes \$30 000 in gift cards for the deceived consumers.

[New York Post](#)



20/02/17 - 1900 litres of diluted olive oil seized in Portugal

The Food and Economic Safety Authority (ASAE) of Portugal seized 1900 litres of fake olive oil from two distributors. The olive oil was fraudulently diluted with other vegetable oils. The commercial value of the products is estimated to 7000 EUR in total.

Official communication by ASAE available at: <http://www.asae.pt/>

(Notícias > Comunicados de Imprensa 2017 >ASAE apreende cerca 1 900 litros de azeite falsificado)

[RTP \(Rádio e Televisão de Portugal\)](#)



21/02/17 - Mafia ring exporting low quality olive oil to the US

The Italian police said they have arrested 12 people linked to the mafia and charged them for fraud. They are accused of exporting cheap olive pomace oil to the US where it was re-labelled as the more expensive "extra virgin" variety. Pomace oil is extracted from olive pulp leftovers from the production of higher quality oils using chemical solvents.

[News Trust](#)



22/02/17 - Large scale operation to control Italian PDO cured ham

The Italian authorities are investigating the whole cured ham sector (in particular the protected products San Daniele and Parma hams) in nine provinces. Thirty people are suspected of fraudulent activities aiming at using inappropriate animals to produce the cured ham and forging documents to reconstruct the traceability of the meat. However, the investigations are still in progress and the authorities refrain to give more details not to compromise further operations.

[La Tribuna di Treviso](#)



23/02/17 - Operation Pasteur: bribes for circumventing inspections of contaminated milk

In Brazil, three people are accused of developing a corruption scheme related to dairy product controls. In 2014, in exchange of bribes, a public servant avoided sanitary inspections for certain batches of milk that were either adulterated and/or unfit for consumption. Suspicious transfers of money were detected in the company's accounting books and two responsible arrested.

[ZH Noticias](#)



25/02/17 - 400 kg of adulterated snacks seized in India

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India confiscated 400 kg of adulterated snacks such as chips, samosas, tomato sticks, schezwan sticks, soan papdi... The preliminary tests showed the presence of illegal dyes and the packages lacked the required labels.

[Times of India](#)



27/01/17 – 850 kg of adulterated panela (sugar) found in Colombia

850 kg of panela (unrefined whole cane sugar) were found to be adulterated with sulphur dioxide to make it appear fresher. Moreover, laboratory tests determined that the levels of adulterant were high enough to generate risks for consumers' health.

[Cronica del Quindio](#)



Colombia



Sugar



Artificial enhancement

Other interesting articles

02/02/17 - "Grape-less" wines sold via mobile apps in China

The Beijing Zhiyunda Consumer Experience Centre probed into the Chinese wine market by sampling several products through different selling platforms: supermarket, e- and m-commerce. The two samples obtained from the latter source were found to contain no vegetable pigments at all which probably meant they were devoid of grapes.

[Asia Times](#)



China



Wine

02/02/17 - Foodwatch allowed to disclose the list of horse meat fraudster clients

The Dutch State Council confirmed that the consumer protection NGO Foodwatch is allowed to disclose all the clients of the fraudster that sold horse meat as beef in one of the biggest food scandals of the recent years.

[Foodwatch](#)

[NVWA](#)



Netherlands



Meat

06/02/17 - Endangered shark found in several fish products

A study was conducted to research the sale of shark-related products on St. Maarten. The results suggested that shark, sometimes from endangered species, was found in fish products such as sword fish, fish and chips, boneless salt fish, and sea food soup. It is supposed that these products may come from Asia as a waste product from the shark finning industry.

[The Daily Herald](#)



Netherlands (St Maarten)



Fish

06/02/17 - A food industry network set up to combat the threat of food fraud

A consortium called the Food Industry Intelligence Network (FIIN) has been set up to fight fraud in the food supply chain. Composed of food industry partners, the network aims at collecting, analysing and disseminating intelligence and information on the supply chain integrity and authenticity.

[Food Manufacture](#)



UK



All

07/02/17 - Several Spanish parties ask for a more accurate labelling of honey

Several political parties from the region of Castilla - La Mancha supported a motion to urge the central government to amend the labelling regulation for honey. They want the actual country of origin to be mentioned on the label (instead of EU or non-EU, currently). That will allow consumers to identify clearly the place of origin of the product.

[La Informacion](#)



Spain



Honey

12/02/17 - The words "Made in Italy" and the Italian flag on labels may be misleading

This article points out, through several examples, that the label "Made in Italy" and the tricolour Italian flag may not necessarily mean that the product comes from Italy. As stated by some industrials, it may also refer to the place of manufacturing or the traditional process and not always the origin of the products used.

[Libero Quotidiano](#)



Italy



All

15/02/17 - 20% of packed food may be adulterated in India

This article raises awareness on the high amount of food frauds discovered by official control laboratories in the province of Kerala, India. According to the annual report of the Public Laboratory Testing, out of 4931 samples analysed from Kerala, 923 (18.7%) were adulterated or misbranded.

[New Indian Express](#)



21/02/17 - Food fraud scares 63% of Canadian citizens

Dalhousie university (Halifax) conducted a survey among Canadian citizens to evaluate their opinion regarding food fraud. Overall, 63% of the polled people were expressing some fear about food fraud, pointing to food imported from abroad (74%). Also, 43% believe that they have somehow bought a fraudulent product at least once.

Official press release: [DAL.ca](#)

[Global News](#)

[L'Actualite](#)



22/02/17 - No major concerns for processed industrial meals in the French market

Three years after the infamous horsemeat lasagne scandal, the consumer association "60 millions de consommateurs" probed the French market of industrial meals. No major fraud was found in the analysis of 60 products. Only 2 of them contained traces of non-declared animal species but the amounts measured do not point to an intentional contamination.

[France TV Info](#)

The original article is accessible for paying members only: [60 Millions Mag](#)



22/02/17 - Half of suspicious transshipments occurs in Russian waters, Oceana report says

Oceana released a report exposing the global scale of transshipment at sea, a practice that can mask illegal fishing practices. While this transshipment practice can be legal in many cases, it also can facilitate the laundering of illegally caught fish. Of the suspected transshipment events worldwide, 50% occurred within Russian waters.

Report: [Oceana](#)

Press release: [Oceana](#)



27/02/17 - Two fishermen ending in the emergency room cast suspiciousness on the local Sicilian fish sector

On two separate occasions, fishermen ended up in the urgent care in Catania, Sicily. Diagnosed with intoxication and burns, the workers may have been in contact with a mixture of organic acids and hydrogen peroxide. These chemicals are known for having antimicrobial and antioxidant properties and be used for treating fishes and mask the lack of freshness.

[Meridio News](#)



28/02/17 - Portable infrared technique developed to test authentic South African honeys

A team from the Stellenbosch University developed a technique to test the authenticity of South African honeys based on infrared spectroscopy. The portable device is said to be fast and non-destructive which becomes handy for on-the-spot controls. The testing relies on a fingerprint typical of authentic South African honeys and can then detect foreign and adulterated products.

Scientific article: [Science Direct](#)

[Business Live](#)



Disclaimer: The selection of articles reflects their media coverage. In any case, it does not reflect the frequency of food fraud in a particular country and/or concerning a particular food product.

The European Commission's science and knowledge service

Joint Research Centre



@EU_ScienceHub



EU Science Hub - Joint Research Centre



EU Science Hub



Joint Research Centre

E-mail:

jrc-gee-info@ec.europa.eu

Copyrights pictures:

© Vertorchef - Fotolia.com

© Alex White - Fotolia.com

© UBE - Fotolia.com

© Bernd Jürgens - Fotolia.com