



The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)

Annual Report 2006



The Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General of the European Commission manages the Rapid Alert System for food and Feed (RASFF). This report describes the activity of the RASFF in 2006.

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http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/rapidalert/index_en.htm

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FOREWORD

European consumers expect the highest level of safety when it comes to the food that they eat – and rightly so. The European Commission is constantly working to ensure that this demand is met, and our strict and comprehensive body of food safety legislation allows only food and feed which meets the highest safety standards to be put on the EU market. As a result, we can proudly say that the level of food safety in the EU is amongst the highest in the world.

However, with the globalisation of trade and the ever expanding food chain, new threats to the health and safety of consumers do sometimes arise. These need to be quickly and efficiently addressed when they occur. This is where the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) comes into play. The RASFF is one of the great success stories of the EU's integrated approach to food safety. By providing a system for the swift exchange of information between Member States and the coordination of response actions to food safety threats, the RASFF has become an indispensable tool for protecting and reassuring European consumers.

The Annual Report on the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed provides useful data on the number of notifications received in 2006, as well as details on the origin of the notifications, the products and countries involved, and the identified risks. It also details the follow-up actions carried out in response to various food safety problems.

There was a new development in 2006, as the tasks of the RASFF were expanded to include pet food and animal health issues, following the implementation of the feed hygiene Regulation 1831/2003. This is an important step forward and will further improve the safety guarantees that we seek to provide throughout the food and feed chain. The report also outlines the work that the Commission and Member States are doing to further improve the functioning of the RASFF in the future, and to promote this system as a model for other regions of the world.

I am sure that this report will be of great use and interest to all stakeholders and that it will serve to further strengthen support for the RASFF. In this sense, the collaboration from public authorities, business and consumers has proven essential. Our goal is to keep this valuable system running smoothly, so that European consumers can rest assured that when risks to food safety do arise, swift and effective measures will be taken to protect them.

Markos Kyprianou

European Commissioner for Health

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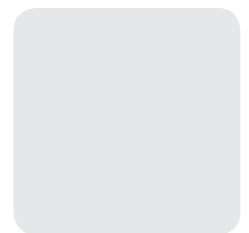
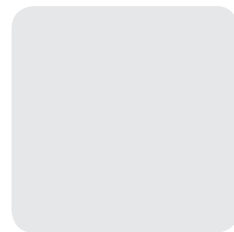
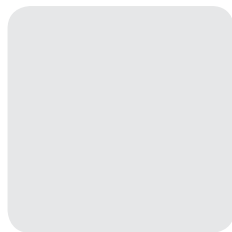
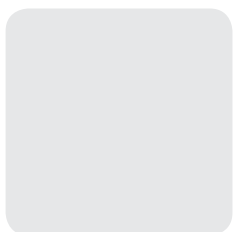
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Acronyms used in this report

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| AMOZ | 3-amino-5-morpholinomethyl-2-oxazolidinone (furaltadon) |
| AOZ | 3-amino-2-oxazolidinone (furazolidone) |
| ASP toxins | Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning toxins |
| AZP toxins | Azaspiracid Shellfish Poisoning toxins |
| BCS | Bayer CropScience |
| CS | Commission Services |
| DSP toxins | Diarrhoeic Shellfish Poisoning toxins |
| EEA | European Economic Area |
| EFTA | European Free Trade Association |
| EFSA | European Food Safety Authority |
| FVO | Food and Veterinary Office |
| FYROM | Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia |
| GMO | Genetically Modified Organism |
| HACCP | Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points |
| ICBA | International Council of Beverage Associations |
| ITX | Isopropylthioxanthone |
| 3-MCPD | 3-monochlor-1,2-propanediol |
| MPA | Medroxyprogesterone acetate |
| MRL | Minimal Risk Levels |
| NSAID | Non Steriodal Anti-Inflammatory Drug |
| PAA | Primary Aromatic Amines |
| PAH | Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons |
| PCB | Polychlorinated Biphenyls |
| PSP toxins | Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning toxins |
| RASFF | Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed |
| SEM | Semicarbazide (nitrofurazone) |
| TEQ | Toxic Equivalent Quantity |
| TSE | Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies |
| UNESDA | Union of European Beverages Associations |
| WHO | World Health Organisation |

1

The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)



1. The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)



The legal basis

The legal basis of the RASFF is Regulation (EC) N° 178/2002. Article 50 of this Regulation establishes the rapid alert system for food and feed as a network involving the Member States, the Commission and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Also the EEA countries: Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland, are longstanding members of the RASFF.

Whenever a member of the network has any information relating to the existence of a serious direct or indirect risk to human health, this information is immediately notified to the Commission

under the RASFF. The Commission immediately transmits this information to the members of the network.

Article 50.3 of the Regulation gives further criteria for when a RASFF notification is required.

Without prejudice to other Community legislation, the Member States shall immediately notify the Commission under the rapid alert system of:

- a** any measure they adopt which is aimed at restricting the placing on the market or forcing the withdrawal from the market or the recall of food or feed in order to protect human health and requiring rapid action;
- b** any recommendation or agreement with professional operators which is aimed, on a voluntary or obligatory basis, at preventing, limiting or imposing specific conditions on the placing on the market or the eventual use of food or feed on account of a serious risk to human health requiring rapid action;
- c** any rejection, related to a direct or indirect risk to human health, of a batch, container or cargo of food or feed by a competent authority at a border post within the European Union.

The members

All members of the system have out-of-hours arrangements (7 days/7, 24 hour/24) to ensure that in case of an urgent notification being made outside of office hours, on-duty

officers can be warned, acknowledge the urgent information and take appropriate action. All member organisations of the RASFF are listed below. Their home pages on the Internet can be consulted from the following RASFF web page:

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/food/food/rapidalert/members_en.htm.



EUROPEAN UNION

- European Commission - Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General
- European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)



EFTA

EFTA Surveillance Authority



AUSTRIA

Österreichische Agentur für Gesundheit und Ernährungssicherheit GmbH und Bundesamt für Ernährungssicherheit



BELGIUM

A.F.S.C.A.- Agence Fédérale pour la Sécurité de la Chaîne Alimentaire
F.A.V.V. - Federaal Agentschap voor de Veiligheid van de Voedselketen



BULGARIA

Министерство на земеделието и горите
(Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry)



CYPRUS

Ministry of Health (Medical and Public Health Services)



CZECH REPUBLIC

Státní zemědělská a potravinářská inspekce
(Czech Agriculture And Food Inspection Authority)



DENMARK

Fødevaredirektoratet (Danish Veterinary and Food Administration)

**ESTONIA**

Veterinaar- ja Toiduamet (Veterinary and Food Board)

**FINLAND**

Elintarviketurvallisuusvirasto (Finnish Food Safety Authority)

**FRANCE**

- Ministère de l'Économie, des Finances et de l'Industrie
- Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et de la Pêche

**GERMANY**

Bundesamt für Verbraucherschutz und Lebensmittelsicherheit (BVL)

**GREECE**

Hellenic Food Authority (EFET)

**HUNGARY**

Magyar Élelmiszer-Biztonsági Hivatal (Hungarian Food Safety Office)

**ICELAND**

UST - Umhverfisstofnun (Environment and Food Agency of Iceland)

**IRELAND**

F.S.A.I. (Food Safety Authority of Ireland)

**ITALY**

Ministero della Salute

**LATVIA**

Partikas un Veterinārais Dienests (Food and Veterinary Service)

**LIECHTENSTEIN**

Amt für Lebensmittelkontrolle Landesveterinäramt
(Office for Food Inspection and Veterinary Affairs)

**LITHUANIA**

Valstybine maisto ir Veterinarijos Tarnyba
(State Food and Veterinary Service)

**LUXEMBOURG**

Sécurité Alimentaire Grand-Duché de Luxembourg

**MALTA**

Food Safety Commission

**NETHERLANDS**Voedsel en Waren Autoriteit
(Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority)**NORWAY**Statens tilsyn for planter, fisk, dyr, og Næringsmidler
(Norwegian Food Safety Authority)**POLAND**

Główny Inspektorat Sanitarny (Chief Sanitary Inspectorate)

**PORTUGAL**Ministério da Agricultura, Desenvolvimento Rural e Pescas (MADRP)
(Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries)**ROMANIA**Autoritatea Nationala Sanitar-Veterinara si pentru Siguranta
Alimentelor (National Sanitary Veterinary And Food Safety
Authority)**SLOVAKIA**Štátna veterinárna a potravinová správa SR
(State Veterinary and Food Administration)**SLOVENIA**

Ministrstvo za zdravje (Ministry of Health)

**SPAIN**Ministerio de Sanidad y Consumo - Agencia Española de Seguridad
Alimentaria Y Nutrición**SWEDEN**

Livsmedelsverket (National food Administration)

**UNITED KINGDOM**

Food Standards Agency

The system

To assist the members of the network, information is classified under three different headings:



alert notifications

Alert notifications are sent when the food or feed presenting the risk is on the market and when rapid action is required. Alerts are triggered by the Member State that detects the problem and that 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.

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 for which a risk has been identified, but for which the other members of the network do not have to take rapid action, because the product has not reached their market. These notifications mostly concern food and feed consignments that have been tested and rejected at the external borders of the EU.

Products subject to an information notification have not reached the market or the product has expired, or all necessary measures have already been taken or are in the process of being taken. For both types of notifications follow-

up notifications are sent by members of the network giving details of the distribution or the origin of the product, additional analytical results, documents accompanying the consignment, measures taken etc. These follow-up notifications are referred to as "additional information notifications".



news notifications

Any type of information related to the safety of food or feed which has not been communicated by a Member State as an "alert" or an "information" notification, but which is judged interesting for the food/feed control authorities in the Member States, is classified and made available as a news notification.

As far as alert and information notifications are concerned, two types of notifications are identified:

- original notifications, representing a new case reported on a health risk detected in one or more consignments of a food or feed;
- additional information notifications that are reactions from RASFF members reporting follow-up of an original notification.

An original notification sent by a member of the RASFF system can be rejected from transmission through the RASFF system, after evaluation by the Commission, if the criteria for notification are not met or if the information transmitted is insufficient. The notifying country is informed of the decision not to transmit the information through the RASFF system and is invited to provide additional information allowing the rejection to be reconsidered by the Commission. An alert or information notification that was transmitted through the RASFF system can be withdrawn by the

Commission at the request of the notifying country if the information, upon which the measures taken are based, turns out

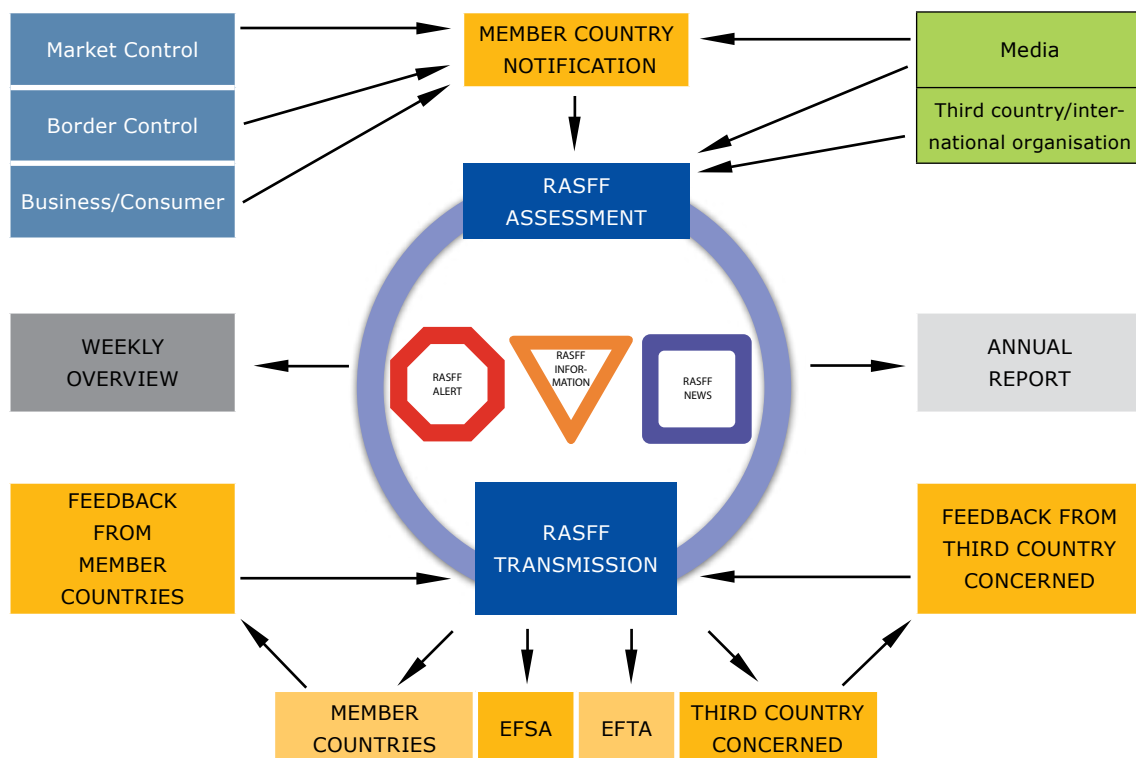
to be unfounded or if the transmission of the notification was made erroneously.

The report

This report provides information on the functioning of the RASFF in 2006 and, in particular, on the number of notifications, the origin of the notifications, the countries involved, the products and the identified risks. Some caution needs to be exercised when drawing conclusions from these figures. For example, it is not because a Member State has a relatively high number of notifications that the situation regarding food safety would be bad in that country. On the contrary, it could indicate that a greater number of food checks are carried out or that the communication systems in that Member State function well.

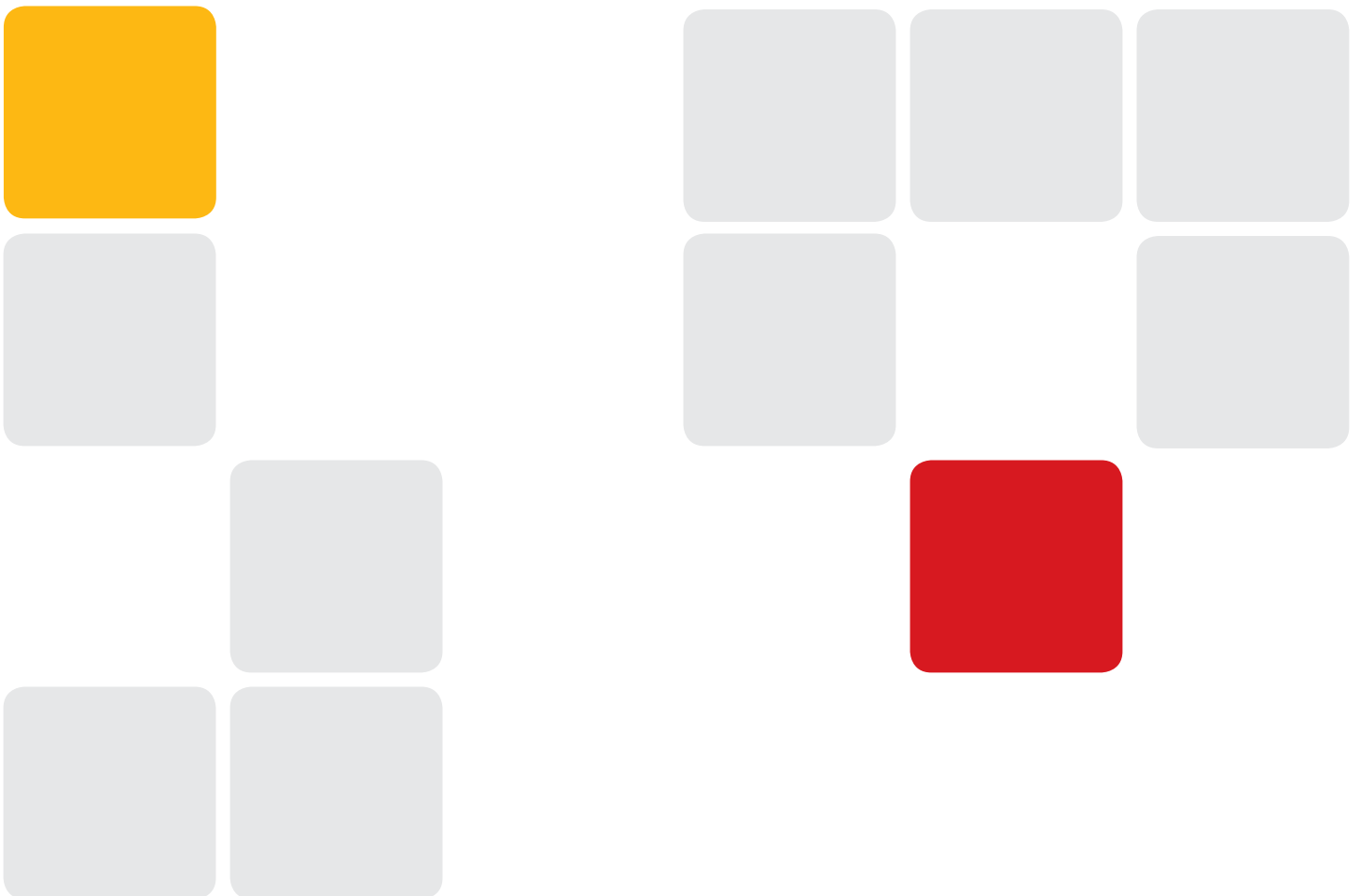
The number of notifications concerning third countries cannot be compared with those concerning Member States. For third countries, official controls can only be carried out on the product as it enters the Community. On the other hand, within the EU, official controls are performed throughout the entire food and feed chain, and therefore food or feed hazards are often detected at an early stage of production. For all these hazards detected during production, there is no RASFF notification if the product did not reach the market.

Schematic representation of the information flow of the RASFF:



2

RASFF notifications in 2006



2. RASFF notifications in 2006

The number of notifications transmitted through the RASFF rose from 698 in 1999, 823 in 2000, 1567 in 2001, 3024 in 2002, 4414 in 2003, 5562 in 2004 to 7170 in 2005. In 2006 for the first time since the system is in operation the number of notifications showed a decrease to 6840¹. The reason for this decrease lies with the reduced number of notifications for **microbiological contamination** and for the use of **illegal dyes**.

In 2006, a total of 2923 **original notifications**, classified as 934 **alert** and 1989 **information** notifications, were received through the RASFF, giving rise to 3845 **additional information** notifications, representing on average about 1.3 follow-ups per original notification.

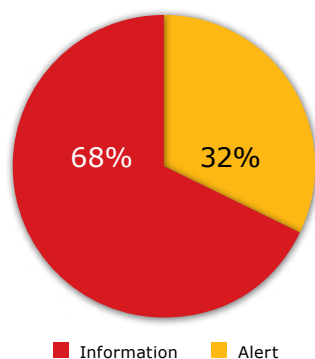
During 2006, the Commission sent 72 **news notifications** through the system. After receipt of additional information, 18 information notifications were upgraded to an alert notification. Also after receipt of additional information, 22 alert notifications and 27 information

notifications were withdrawn. Notifications that were **withdrawn** are excluded from charts and tables in this report.

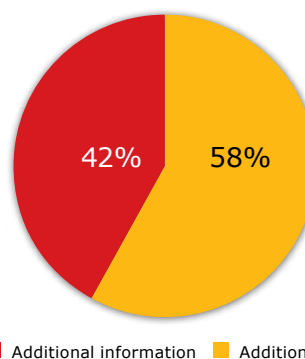
The European Commission decided not to upload 139 notifications onto the system since, after evaluation, they were found not to satisfy the criteria for a RASFF notification (**rejected notifications**).

When notifications are classified according to the type of control carried out, the chart on the right is obtained. The largest category of notifications concerns controls at the border posts of the outer EU (and E.E.A.) borders when the consignment was not accepted for import ("import rejected"). In some cases, a sample was taken for analysis but the consignment was meanwhile released to the market ("screening sample"). All other notifications concern official controls on the internal market ("market control") with two special cases identified when a consumer complaint or a company notifying the outcome of an own-check were at the basis of the notification. Food poisoning outbreaks are classified in the category of consumer complaints.

Alert and Information notifications in 2006

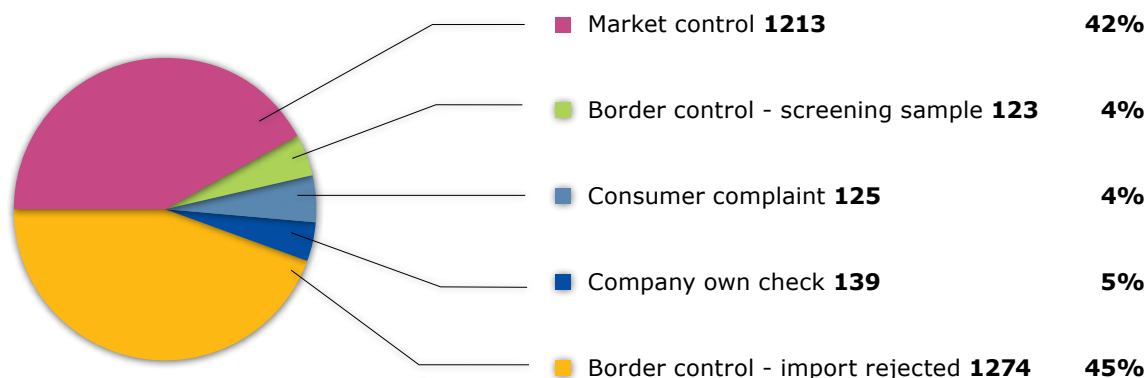


Additions to Alert and Information notifications in 2006



¹ From 2003 on, this figure includes all notifications (alert, information, news and additional information), including notifications that were afterwards withdrawn, but not the rejected notifications. The figure published for 2005 in the RASFF annual report 2005 erroneously excluded the notifications that were withdrawn after transmission.

2006 notifications according to type of control



Analysis of trends in hazards notified through the RASFF in 2006

(see next pages)

Explanation of the symbols used

- ↑ Slow/little increase in the number of notifications received.
- ↑↑ Quick/significant increase in the number of notifications received.
- ↓↓ Quick/significant decrease in the number of notifications received.
- Number of notification follows the same trend as the year before.
- 2003 Year in which a "peak" number of notifications was received.
- 2004 Year in which a very high "peak" number of notifications was received.
- 2003 ↓↑ Year in which a "peak" number of notifications was received, but the number of notifications is on the rise again.
- new** New hazard in the RASFF system with a significant number of notifications.

Remark: to take any trends into account there needs to have been at least one year with "double figure" numbers of notifications in the period reviewed.

Data from 2001 onwards were taken into account for the analysis of the trends.

Analysis of trends in hazards notified through the RASFF in 2006

| 2006 | | food of animal origin | | | | | | food of plant origin | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| | | fishery products | honey and royal jelly | eggs and egg products | meat and meat products (other than poultry) | milk and milk products | meat, game and poultry | cereals | cocoa, coffee and tea | confectionery |
| veterinary drug residues | (leuco)malachite green | ↓↓ | | | | | | | | |
| | chloramphenicol | 2002 | ↓↓ | | 2003 | 2002 | | | | |
| | nitrofuran metabolite SEM | 2003 ↓ ↑ | | | | | 2003 | | | |
| | nitrofuran metabolite AOZ | 2003 | | 2003 | 2003 | | 2002 | | | |
| | nitrofuran metabolite AMOZ | | | | | | 2002 | | | |
| | sulphonamides | | 2003 | | | | | | | |
| | streptomycin | | 2002 | | | | | | | |
| food additives | too high content of sulphites | ↓ | | | | | | | | |
| | too high content of E 210 - benzoic acid | | | | | | | | | |
| | E 452 - polyphosphates | ↑ | | | | | | | | |
| | too high content of colour additives | | | | | | | | | ↑ |
| | unauthorised use of colour additives | | | | | | | ↓↓ | | ↓↓ |
| composition | unauthorised colour Sudan 1 | | | | | | 2004 | | | |
| | unauthorised colour Sudan 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| | unauthorised colour Para Red | | | | | | | | | |
| | carbon monoxide treatment | ↓↓ | | | | | | | | |
| | suffocation risk | | | | | | | | | 2004 ↓ ↑ |
| heavy metals | cadmium | 2003 | | | | | | | | |
| | mercury | ↑↑ | | | | | | | | |
| | lead | | | | | | | | | |
| mycotoxins | aflatoxins | | | | | | | | | |
| | fumonisin | | | | | | 2004 ↓ ↑ | | | |
| | ochratoxin A | | | | | | ↑ | ↑ | | |
| pesticide residues | pesticide residues | | | | | | | 2002 | | |
| | chlormequat | | | | | | | | | |
| | methamidophos | | | | | | | | | |
| food contact materials | migration of chromium | | | | | | | | | |
| | migration of lead | | | | | | | | | |
| | migration of nickel | | | | | | | | | |
| | migration of isopropyl thioxanthone | | | | | | | | | |
| | migration of primary aromatic amines | | | | | | | | | |
| | migration of formaldehyde | | | | | | | | | |
| | too high level of total migration | | | | | | | | | |
| microbiological hazards | histamine | 2004 ↓ ↑ | | | | | | | | |
| | parasites | 2004 | | | | | | | | |
| | Listeria monocytogenes | ↓↓ | | | ↓↓ | ↓↓ | 2004 | | | |
| | Salmonella spp. | ↓↓ | | | ↓↓ | | ↓↓ | | 2003 | |
| | Campylobacter spp. | | | | | | ↓↓ | | | |
| | Vibrio | ↓↓ | | | | | | | | |
| | DSP/PSP/ASP/AZP toxins | ↑↑ | | | | | | | | |
| | moulds | | | | | | | | | |
| | too high count of Escherichia coli | ↓↓ | | | | | | | | |
| | too high count of Enterobacteriaceae | 2002 | | | | | | | | |
| | too high count of aerobic mesophiles | 2003 | | | | | | | | |
| too high count of faecal coliforms | 2004 | | | | | | | | | |
| foreign bodies other | foreign bodies | | | | | | | ↑ | | |
| | feed additives | | | 2003 | | | | | | |
| | polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons | ↑↑ | | | | | | | | |
| | polychlorobiphenyls | | | | | | | | | |
| | high content of iodine | | | | | | | | | |
| | undeclared ingredients | | | | | | | | ↑ | |
| | irradiation | | | | | | | | | |
| | illegal import/unauthorised transit | | | | ↓ | | ↓↓ | | | |
| | unauthorised placing on the market | | | | | | | | | |
| | unauthorised genetically modified | | | | | | | ↑↑ | | |
| | dioxins | | | | | | | | | |
| | animal constituents | | | | | | | | | |
| | 3-monochlor-1,2-propanediol (3-MCPD) | | | | | | | | | |
| | spoilage | ↑↑ | | | | | | | | |
| erucic acid | | | | | | | | | | |



>> Analysis of trends in hazards notified through the RASFF in 2006

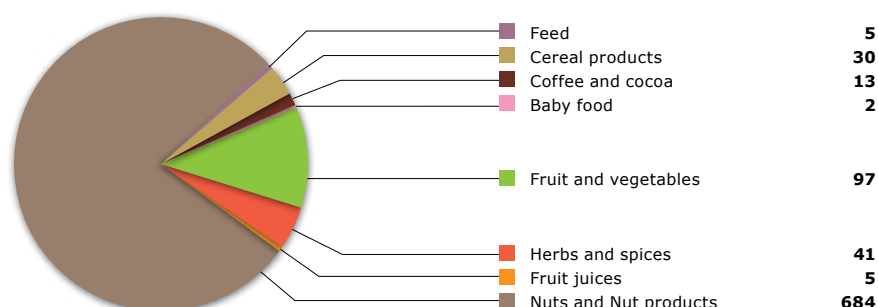
| 2006 | | food of plant origin | | | | | mixed | | other | |
|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------------|-------|------------------------|
| | | fruit and vegetables | herbs and spices | food supplements | non-alcoholic beverages | nuts and nut products | fats and oils | soups, broths and sauces | feed | food contact materials |
| veterinary drug residues | (leuco)malachite green | | | | | | | | | |
| | chloramphenicol | | | | | | | 2002 | | |
| | nitrofurantoin metabolite SEM | | | | | | | | | |
| | nitrofurantoin metabolite AOZ | | | | | | | | | |
| | nitrofurantoin metabolite AMOZ | | | | | | | | | |
| | sulphonamides | | | | | | | | | |
| food additives | streptomycin | | | | | | | | | |
| | too high content of sulphites | ↓ | | | | | | | | |
| | too high content of E 210 - benzoic acid | | | | 2003 ↓ ↑ | | | | | |
| | E 452 - polyphosphates | | | | | | | | | |
| | too high content of colour additives | | | | | | | | | |
| composition | unauthorised use of colour additives | 2004 ↓ ↑ | ↑ | | | | | | | |
| | unauthorised colour Sudan 1 | | ↓↓ | | | | ↓↓ | | | |
| | unauthorised colour Sudan 4 | | ↓↓ | | | | | | | |
| | unauthorised colour Para Red | | ↓↓ | | | | | | | |
| | carbon monoxide treatment | | | | | | | | | |
| heavy metals | suffocation risk | | | | | | | | | |
| | cadmium | ↑ | | | | | | | | |
| | mercury | | | | | | | | | |
| mycotoxins | lead | | | | | | | | | |
| | afatoxins | ↑ | ↑ | | | ↓ | | | | |
| | fumonisin | | | | | | | | | |
| pesticide residues | ochratoxin A | ↑ ↑ | ↑ | | | | | | | |
| | pesticide residues | 2002 ↓ ↑ | 2001 | | | | | | | |
| | chlormequat | 2002 | | | | | | | | |
| food contact materials | methamidophos | 2002 | | | | | | | | |
| | migration of chromium | | | | | | | | ↓ | |
| | migration of lead | | | | | | | | ↓ | |
| | migration of nickel | | | | | | | | → | |
| | migration of isopropyl thioxanthone | | | | | | | | ↓ | |
| | migration of primary aromatic amines | | | | | | | | → | |
| | migration of formaldehyde | | | | | | | | ↑ | |
| too high level of total migration | | | | | | | | ↓ | | |
| microbiological hazards | histamine | | | | | | | | | |
| | parasites | | | | | | | | | |
| | Listeria monocytogenes | | | | | | | | | |
| | Salmonella spp. | ↓↓ | ↓↓ | | | | | ↑ | | |
| | Campylobacter spp. | | | | | | | | | |
| | Vibrio | | | | | | | | | |
| | DSP/PSP/ASP/AZP toxins | | | | | | | | | |
| | moulds | ↑ | | | | | | | | |
| | too high count of Escherichia coli | | ↓↓ | | | | | | | |
| | too high count of Enterobacteriaceae | | ↓↓ | | | | | | | |
| foreign bodies other | too high count of aerobic mesophiles | | | | | | | | | |
| | too high count of faecal coliforms | | | | | | | | | |
| | foreign bodies | ↑ | | | | | | | | |
| | feed additives | | | | | | | 2004 | | |
| | polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons | | | | | | 2001 | | | |
| | polychlorobiphenyls | | | | | | 2001 | | | |
| | high content of iodine | ↓ | | | | | | | | |
| | undeclared ingredients | | | | | | | | | |
| | irradiation | | | ↑ | | | | | | |
| | illegal import/unauthorised transit | | | | | | | | | |
| | unauthorised placing on the market | | | ↑ | | | | | | |
| | unauthorised genetically modified | | | | | | | | | |
| | dioxins | | | | | | | 2003 | | |
| animal constituents | | | | | | | ↓ | | | |
| 3-monochloro-1,2-propanediol (3-MCPD) | | | | | | | 2003 | | | |
| spoilage | | | | | | | | | | |
| erucic acid | | | | | | | 2004 | | | |

A selection of topics recurring in the RASFF in 2006

Mycotoxins

Mycotoxins are naturally occurring metabolites produced by certain species of moulds (e.g. *Aspergillus* spp, *Fusarium* spp) which develop at high temperatures and humidity levels and may be present in a large number of foods. This group of toxins includes a number of compounds

of varying toxicity and frequency in food. The mould may occur on the growing crop or after harvesting during storage or processing. Whilst the moulds can be considered as plant pathogens, the ingestion of the toxin can result in disease in animals and humans. Mycotoxins like aflatoxins and ochratoxin A are known to be carcinogenic.



| Substance | Feed | Cereal products | Coffee and cocoa | Baby food | Fruit and vegetables | Herbs and spices | Fruit juices | Nuts and nut products | Total |
|--------------|----------|-----------------|------------------|-----------|----------------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Aflatoxins | 4 | 5 | 1 | - | 69 | 37 | - | 684 | 800 |
| Fumonisin | - | 14 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 15 |
| Ochratoxin A | - | 11 | 12 | - | 27 | 4 | - | - | 54 |
| Patulin | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | 5 | - | 7 |
| Zearalenone | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Total | 5 | 30 | 13 | 2 | 97 | 41 | 5 | 684 | 877 |

Aflatoxins

in general

As in previous years, also in 2006 mycotoxins are the hazard category with the highest number of notifications. The RASFF received in 2006 a total of 874 notifications on mycotoxins, of which 802 concerned aflatoxins. Compared to 2005, this means a reduction with 119 notifications on mycotoxins, and 145 less on aflatoxins. Also in 2006 most of these notifications concerned pistachio nuts (276) primarily originating from Iran (234).

pistachio nuts

The number of notifications as regards pistachios from Iran has drastically reduced in 2006 in comparison with 2005 in which nearly a double number of notifications (457) was observed while on the basis of preliminary figures the import quantities remained about the same (30-35 000 tons). A more in depth analysis on these findings will be performed in 2007.

- peanuts** Aflatoxins are also frequently reported in peanuts and derived products (257 notifications) originating from a significant number of countries: China (69), Argentina (45), Brazil (24), Ghana (20, of which 18 peanut butter), Egypt (17), United States (15), Sudan (10), Israel (8), Vietnam (7), South Africa (7), India (6), Nigeria (5) and Paraguay (5).
- hazelnuts** Within the group of nuts and nut products, 85 notifications concern hazelnuts and derived products, originating from Turkey (79) and Azerbaijan (5) and 43 notifications concern edible almonds and derived products, primarily originating from the United States (37). Aflatoxins have also been found in bitter almond kernels originating from Morocco (3) and in bitter apricot kernels from Turkey (4).
- almonds** The high number of notifications on aflatoxins in almonds originating from the United States in 2005 (28) and in 2006 (37) and the outcome of an FVO inspection in September 2006 triggered the discussion within the EU on imposing special conditions on the import of almonds from the United States to protect public health. At the end of 2006, this discussion was still ongoing.
- Brazil nuts** Only one notification on aflatoxins concerned Brazil nut kernels originating from Brazil and none on Brazil nuts in shell although EU legislation requires 100 % testing at import for Brazil nuts in shell originating from Brazil. This can be explained by the fact that there was, as in 2005, nearly no import of Brazil nuts in shell from Brazil into the EU in 2006.
- dried figs**
melon seeds Within the group of fruit and vegetables, 57 notifications concerned dried figs and derived products primarily originating from Turkey (54) and 10 notifications concerned melon seeds primarily originating from Nigeria (6) and Ghana (3).
- Turkey** Of particular concern is the sharp increase of notifications on aflatoxins in products originating from Turkey since 2005: 83 notifications in 2004, 118 notifications in 2005 and 163 notifications in 2006, showing that the number of notifications has doubled compared to 2004.
- spices** Within the group of herbs and spices (38 notifications), primarily the following products (and derived products) were found to be contaminated with aflatoxins at levels above the EU-maximum level: chilli (18), kebab powder (7), paprika (4), nutmeg (3), ginger (2) and hot pepper powder (2). All notifications on kebab powder and hot pepper powder concerned products originating from Ghana (9), while notifications on chilli concerned products mainly originating from India (15). Other notifications concerned products originating from Ethiopia, Spain, Pakistan, Grenada, Egypt, Lebanon and Eritrea.

ogbono 6 notifications on aflatoxins concerned ogbono kernels originating from Nigeria (5) and Ghana (1). Ogbono are kernels from wild mango trees native to tropical Atlantic coast regions of Africa.

feed Finally 4 notifications on aflatoxins concerned feed materials. In this report, on page 26, the contamination of dog food by aflatoxins is highlighted given the rather unusual nature of the notification and the fact that the contamination has resulted serious animal health problems and death of dogs.

Other mycotoxins

in general In 2006, 77 notifications concerned mycotoxins other than aflatoxins (in 5 notifications, high levels of aflatoxins and ochratoxin). The large majority of notifications concern ochratoxin A (54) and to a much lesser extent fumonisins (15) and patulin (7).

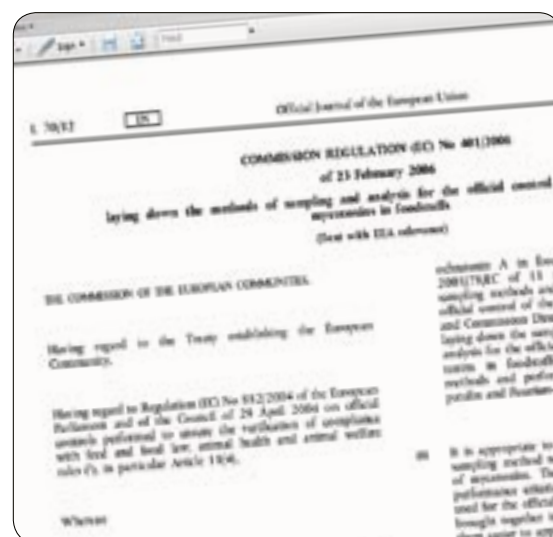
ochratoxin A The ochratoxin A notifications concerned mainly dried vine fruit (22), cereals and cereal products (11), green coffee (6), instant coffee (5), dried figs (5), spices (4) and one sample of roasted coffee. In particular the 15 notifications on dried vine fruit originating from Uzbekistan are a reason for concern and will require a close follow-up in 2007.

fumonisin As regards fumonisins, 9 notifications concerned maize products originating from Italy. 4 notifications on patulin concerned concentrated apple juice originating from Iran.

New EU-measures as regards mycotoxins in 2006

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 foodstuffs¹.

This Regulation replaces four existing Directives on sampling and analysis for official control on mycotoxins. With this Regulation, the existing sampling procedures and requirements as regards methods of analysis are not substantially modified but provided by category of foodstuffs. The bringing



together of the sampling provisions and performance criteria for the methods

¹ OJ L 70, 9.3.2006, p. 12.

of analysis to be used for the official control of all mycotoxins into one legal text significantly improves the clearness and applicability of the legal provisions. The four Commission Directives which are replaced by this Regulation are Directive 98/53/EC (aflatoxins), Directive 2002/26/EC (ochratoxin A), Directive 2003/78/EC (patulin) and Directive 2005/38/EC (Fusarium-toxins).

Of importance for the reporting of analytical results in the RASFF, is the requirement that the analytical result must be reported corrected for recovery. The analytical result corrected for recovery shall be used for controlling compliance. Also the expanded measurement uncertainty has to be reported as only an analytical result which is beyond reasonable doubt above the maximum level is considered to be non-compliant.



Commission Decision 2006/504/EC of 12 July 2006 on special conditions governing certain foodstuffs imported from certain third countries

due to contamination risks of those products by aflatoxins¹

This Decision merges the special conditions for imports of certain foodstuffs from Egypt, China, Turkey, Brazil and Iran covered respectively by Decisions 2000/49/EC, 2002/79/EC, 2002/80/EC, 2003/493/EC and 2005/85/EC. Changes include the extension of the scope to processed and compound foodstuffs and reduction of the frequency of controls for hazelnuts originating from Turkey.

Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/ 2006 of 19 December 2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs²

This Regulation replaces Commission Regulation (EC) No 466/2001 of 8 March 2001 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs as amended 18 times. By bringing together the numerous different provisions into one single Regulation, the readability and applicability of legislation in the field of contaminants has been significantly improved. Apart from consolidating the existing provisions, some additional provisions have been introduced to improve the enforceability of legislation and to take into account developments in Codex Alimentarius.

Guidance document for competent authorities for the control of compliance with EU legislation on aflatoxins

The guidance document has been updated and is available on the website of the Health and Consumer Protection DG of the Commission³. The guidance document focuses mainly on the official control of aflatoxin contamination in food products which are covered by Com-

1 OJ L 199, 21.7.2006, p. 21.

2 OJ L 364, 20.12.2006, p. 5.

3 http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/chemicalsafety/contaminants/comm_dec_2006_504guidance_en.pdf



Aflatoxins in dog food from the United States

In the very first days of 2006, the RASFF was alerted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration that dog food was recalled in the US because of high levels of aflatoxins. The presence of high levels of aflatoxins can cause severe liver damage leading to acute aflatoxicosis. The cause was the use of highly contaminated maize for the production of dog food. In the US, the

death of 23 dogs and the illness of another 18 dogs had been related to the feeding of dog food contaminated by aflatoxins. The levels found in dog food causing death and serious illness were in the range of 200 to 250 µg/kg total aflatoxins and the levels in the range of 100 µg/kg were reported to result in less severe dog health problems. In the EU, a regulatory maximum level has been established for maize used for the production of animal feed of 20 µg/kg aflatoxin B1 and a maximum level of 10 µg/kg aflatoxin B1 in pet food (the level of aflatoxin B1 is about 50-80 % of the total aflatoxin).

The contaminated dog food was exported to more than 10 EU countries and rapid action was undertaken by the competent authorities in the EU to trace and detain the possibly contaminated consignments of dog food originating from the involved company in the US. In Europe, no cases of serious illness or death of dogs were reported to the RASFF.

mission Decision 2006/504/EC. Nevertheless, the provisions in this guidance document are also applicable, where relevant, to the control of aflatoxins in food products not subject to special conditions.

Dioxins

In 2006, 17 notifications concerned dioxins of which 10 are feed and 7 are food related.

The 10 notifications reporting dioxins in feed were on the feed additives zinc oxide (3), copper sulphate (1), choline chloride (1) and sepiolite (1). Three notifications related to palm oil fatty acid distillates,

a by-product intended for animal feed from the production of edible palm oil. One notification related to the presence of dioxin in pig fat intended for animal feed and this contamination incident is more extensively reported hereafter.

The 7 notifications on dioxins in food mainly related to the presence at unacceptable levels of dioxins in fish oil supplements (5). One notification related to significant levels of dioxins in canned cod liver in oil and one involving poultry meat originating from Portugal. This contamination of poultry meat was due to the use of wood pellets/dust made of burned wood from forest fires for bedding (litter) on the floors of the chicken holdings.



Dioxins in pig fat from Belgium

On 15 December 2005, the Dutch authorities had taken a sample of animal fat (pig fat) from a silo at a compound feed manufacturer in the Netherlands in which deliveries from a Belgian fat supplier were stored. A level of 50 ng TEQ dioxin /kg pig fat (EU maximum level for dioxins in fat intended for use in animal feed is 2 ng TEQ/kg fat) was found. The analytical result was available on 24 January 2006.

The Belgian authorities immediately started an investigation at the involved company and measures were immediately taken to avoid further contamination of the feed and food chain. As a precaution, the Belgian and Dutch authorities blocked the feed manufacturers which had received the possibly contaminated fat as well as the farms that had received feed, in which the possibly contaminated fat was incorporated, from the affected feed

manufacturers during the risk period.

Five feed manufacturers were found to be affected by the contamination incident and were blocked (4 in Belgium and 1 in the Netherlands). In Belgium, 445 farms (400 pig, 40 poultry and 5 rabbit farms) and in the Netherlands 275 farms (233 pig and 42 poultry farms) were affected by the contamination incident and were blocked. The blocked farms were only released when the levels found in samples taken from the animals present on the farm were compliant with EU legislation (for pig meat 1 pg TEQ/gram fat, poultry meat 2 pg TEQ/gram fat) or if an in-depth analysis indicated that the feed received by these farms was not contaminated. In a few cases, the animals were destroyed.

Source of the contamination was the high level of dioxins in the hydrochloric acid used in the extraction process for the production of gelatine from pig bones with fat as a by-product. Normally the hydrochloric acid is filtered before use through two active carbon filters placed in sequence whereby the dioxins are removed. However during a short period both filters failed and the hydrochloric acid continued to be used for the extraction process leading to a concentration of dioxins in the fat while the produced gelatine was found to contain only low levels of dioxins.

The quick finding of the source, the effective traceability and the existence of EU maximum levels resulted in an effective management of this contamination incident.

In 2006, new legislation has come into force setting new maximum levels for the sum of dioxins, furans and dioxin-like PCBs in feed and food. In order to ensure a smooth transition, the existing

maximum levels for dioxins and furans have been maintained for a temporary period, in addition to newly proposed maximum levels for the sum of dioxins, furans and dioxin-like PCBs.



Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) in fishery products

In 2006 the number of notifications of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in fishery products above the maximum level rose to 40. This is significantly more than in previous years (5 notifications in 2005, 4 in 2004, 12 in 2003).

Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons are a group of diverse organic compounds which are potentially genotoxic and carcinogenic. They enter food via the environment (e.g. combustion processes or contaminated waters) or are formed as a result of certain food preparation methods, such as grilling, roasting and smoking. One representative of this group, benzo(a)pyrene, has been found to be a good marker for occurrence and effects of carcinogenic PAH in foods.

About half of the notifications for benzo(a)pyrene in fishery products (19) relate to sprats (sold as canned sprats in oil or sprat paste), the other half to other smoked and/or dried fish and crustaceans. In smoked sprats in oil, the use of contaminated vegetable oil may contribute towards PAH levels. Indeed, 5 notifications reported on too high levels of

PAH in vegetable oils. The majority of sprat products notified originated from Latvia (14), others from Poland (4). Other types of smoked and/or dried fish were mainly from African countries and from Thailand.

Since 1 April 2005 Commission Regulation (EC) No. 208/2005 amending Commission Regulation (EC) No. 466/2001 applies. In this Regulation, maximum levels for PAH are set in several foodstuffs including fishery products. For muscle meat of smoked fish and smoked fishery products, excluding bivalve molluscs, a maximum level of 5.0 µg/kg is laid down. For muscle meat of other than smoked fish, a maximum level of 2.0 µg/kg applies. A review of these levels is required by 1 April 2007.

In order to provide information for this review, Commission Recommendation 2005/108/EC of 4 February 2005 has been issued which recommends to the Member States to collect occurrence data and data on potential sources of PAH contamination in food. The data collected are currently being compiled by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

Mercury in fishery products

In 2006 the notifications for mercury above the legal limit in fish increased to 71, compared to 46 in 2005 and 45 in 2004. Swordfish was the fish species with the highest number of notifications (36) followed by shark (17 notifications) and tuna (7 notifications).

Fish and seafood contain mercury as a result of its natural presence in the environment and from pollution. Methyl mercury, the organic and most toxic form of mercury, can make up more than 90% of the total mercury in fish and seafood.

Large predatory fish such as swordfish, shark and tuna accumulate higher levels of mercury through intake over a long lifetime.

According to Commission Regulation No 466/2001, a maximum level of 0.5 mg/kg mercury applies to fishery products. For certain species (e.g. some large predatory fish such as swordfish, shark, tuna) a higher maximum level of 1.0 mg/kg applies. For processed fish (e.g. smoked, dried or canned fish), the mercury level must be recalculated for the fresh fish to be compared with the legal limit. This is done taking into account changes of concentration of the

contaminants caused by processing. There were 9 notifications on smoked swordfish in 2006.

Indonesia was the country of origin with the highest number of rapid alerts for mercury in fishery products in 2006 (18 notifications). This is a significant increase compared to 2005 (4 notifications). A likely reason for this increase is the reinforced import control on heavy metals in Indonesian fish by way of Commission Decision N° 2006/236¹ of 21 March 2006, which requires importing Member States to check every consignment of fish from Indonesia for heavy metals.

Residues of veterinary medicinal products and feed additives

legislation

Community legislation on residues of veterinary medicinal products provides that only substances that have undergone a human safety evaluation with a positive result according to Regulation 2377/90 may be used in food producing animals. The use of substances that have not undergone a human safety evaluation is not authorised. Moreover, the use of some specific substances is expressly prohibited in Community legislation. As a consequence, residues of unauthorised or prohibited substances are not to be present in food offered for sale on the Common Market.

fishery products

80 RASFF notifications in 2006 compared to 104 in 2005 shows a decrease in the total number of notifications on fishery products.

chloramphenicol

Chloramphenicol is an antibiotic banned in the EU for food safety reasons. The number of notifications for chloramphenicol has increased from 2 in 2005 to 5 in 2006 (2 for shrimps farmed in Vietnam, in both cases together with residues of nitrofurans metabolites AMOZ and SEM), 1 from farmed tilapia from Myanmar and 2 for fish from Vietnam. This number is significantly lower than the peak number of 113 notifications for chloramphenicol, reached in 2002.

¹ OJ L 83, 22.3.2006, p. 16-17.

| | |
|---|--|
| malachite green | Malachite green is a fungicidal dye with pharmacological activity whose use as a veterinary medicinal product for food-producing animals is not authorised in the Community. The number of RASFF notifications for malachite green and its main metabolite leucomalachite green in fish has decreased from 50 to 17 (8 from Vietnam, 7 from Indonesia, 1 from Spain and 1 from China). To be noted the increased number of notifications from 2 in 2005 to 5 in 2006 for another dye, crystal violet, found in fish (4 from Indonesia and 1 from Thailand). |
| crystal violet | |
| nitrofurans metabolites | 57 RASFF notifications compared to 36 in 2005 were issued for nitrofurans metabolites, most of them in shrimps (27 from Bangladesh, 20 from India, 3 from Vietnam, 1 from China, 1 from Indonesia, 1 from Thailand and 1 from Venezuela). In terms of substances found, 40 notifications reported nitrofurazone metabolite (SEM), 15 furazolidone metabolite (AOZ) and 2 furaltadone metabolite (AMAZ). |
| honey and royal jelly | There is no MRL established for honey for antibacterial substances classified in Annex I, II or III of Council Regulation 2377/90 and therefore there are no authorised antibacterial substances for the treatment of bees in the EU. In 2006, a decrease was observed in the number of RASFF notifications, from 55 in 2005 to 20 in 2006, for residues of different unauthorised or prohibited substances. |
| chloramphenicol | In particular the number of notifications for chloramphenicol has decreased from 25 in 2005 to 7 in 2006 (in honey: 1 from China and 1 from Russia; in royal jelly: 2 from China, 1 from USA, 1 from Switzerland and 1 of unknown origin). Traceability information is sometimes not appropriate: Switzerland is mentioned in 1 notification as the country of origin although this country does not produce royal jelly. Switzerland is most likely a trading focal point where honey and honey products are imported from third countries and re-exported to the EU. |
| nitrofurans metabolites sulphonamides other residues | Only 1 notification was issued in 2006 for nitrofurans metabolites (in Argentinean honey) compared to 8 in 2005; 8 for sulphonamides in 2006 (1 for Russian, 2 for Ukrainian and 3 for Turkish honey, plus 2 for Chinese royal jelly) compared to 18 in 2005. Additionally the presence of residues of the antibiotics trimethoprim (honey from Russia), tylosin (honey from Argentina) and tetracycline (honey from China) were the origin of three RASFF notifications. |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| eggs | Four RASFF notifications were issued for the coccidiostats nicarbazin (3) and salinomycin (1). These substances are not authorised for use as feed additives in feed for laying hens and the presence of residues in eggs is sometimes due to a cross contamination. |
| meat | There were 2 RASFF notifications for chloramphenicol (none in 2005) and 1 for nitrofurans metabolites (2 in 2005). The unauthorized NSAID (Non Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drug) phenylbutazone in horse meat was the origin of 2 notifications from the United Kingdom. 1 notification was issued due to the finding of residues of tetracycline above the MRL. |
| poultry | In 2006 there were 2 RASFF notifications for the banned feed additive nicarbazin and 1 for ronidazol, as well as for chloramphenicol. No RASFF notifications were issued for nitrofurans metabolites in poultry in 2006. |
| milk | Only one RASFF notification was issued for chloramphenicol in a milk product in 2006 (chloramphenicol in whey powder from Poland). |
| feed | During 2006 the presence of residues of hormones dexamethasone, medroxyprogesterone acetate (MPA) and prednisolone were detected in feed originated from the Slovakia. |
| feed additives | Ten RASFF notifications were issued for the presence of unauthorised feed additives monensin, chromium yeast, colistin, flavophospholipol, organic selenium, oxytetracycline, salinomycin and superoxide dismutase. |

Illegal use of dyes in spices

According to the data collected through the RASFF, a sharp decrease in numbers of notifications about the fraudulent use of dyes in food has been observed since 2003, i.e. respectively 390 notifications in the period 2003-2004, 213 notifications in 2005 and 60 in 2006.

In the period 2003-2004, most cases of adulteration with illegal dyes identified India as the country of origin of the chilli or curry powder, followed by Turkey. In 2005, notification levels dropped considerably for these countries, while the Russian Federation emerged as another source of adulterated spices. While in 2006, notification numbers continued



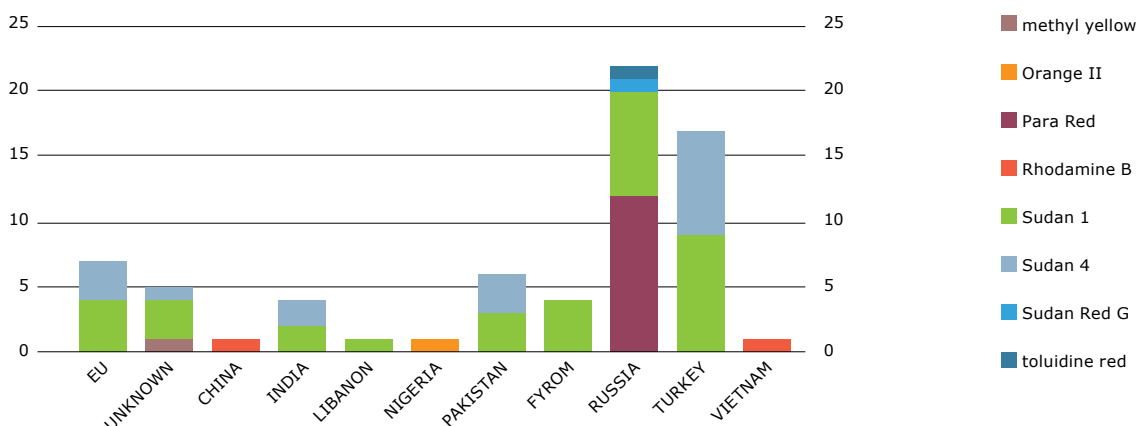
mixtures to be added to specific meat products or dishes.

Different patterns of illegal dyes used appear when classifying the notifications according to the origin of the product. Spices from the region of India and Pakistan usually show a contamination with either Sudan I or Sudan IV or a combination of both. With spices from Turkey, the same pattern appears, but more often a combination of both dyes is found and at higher levels. Taking into account that Turkey is not a big producer of spices, this could lead to the supposition that Turkey is a trading hub for spices from the East. As such older stocks in Turkey with higher contamination levels are still present. The mixing of different spices would lead to a more frequent detection of combinations of illegal dyes. In some notifications, EU Member States were identified as the origin of the product, in absence of traceability information tracing back to where the spice was imported from.

to decrease in general and in particular for India, they were maintained for the Russian Federation and for Turkey. Compared to India which has exported approximately 80 % of the curry powder to the EU in 2006, the Russian Federation is not listed as an exporting country of chilli nor curry powder according to recent data provided by EUROSTAT. Data for Turkey show Turkey exporting only a fraction of the total import of spices in the EU. This can possibly be explained from the type of product notified: for the Russian Federation and for Turkey it usually concerns packaged spice

A few notifications on spices from the Far East (Vietnam, China) show the detection of another dye: Rhodamine

2006 - notifications on illegal dyes by country of origin



B. Four notifications on chilli from the FYROM show high levels of Sudan 1. In chilli from Nigeria, higher levels of Orange II were detected.

Fifteen notifications were received on spice mixtures from the Russian Federation, often for the preparation of traditional recipes like adjika or plow, containing Sudan I, Para Red or combinations of both. A few times, other dyes (toluidine red, Sudan Red G) were detected also.

Because notifications on spices from the Russian Federation and from Turkey often report on more than one illegal dye, Russia and Turkey appear more prominent in the chart above than the number of notifications would warrant (15 for Russia and 10 for Turkey).

A large number of products have been tested since 2003. From the reports sent to the European Commission, it appears that the percentage of unfavourable analyses dropped to a few percent in most countries in 2005. In 2006, many Member States did not find any contamination with illegal dyes among the consignments tested. 11 Member States still reported unfavourable results through the

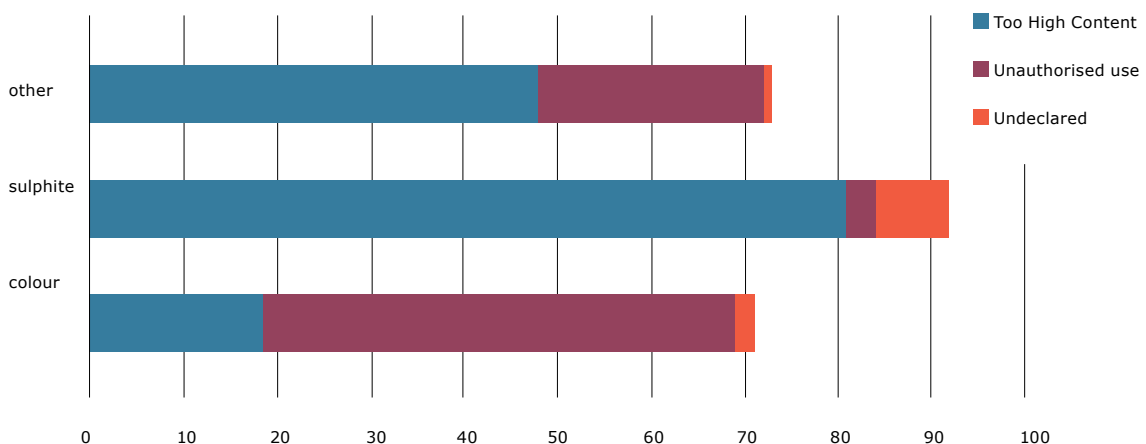
RASFF. Germany was the most frequent notifier (22) in 2006, confirming its importance as an importer of spices into the EU.

Food additives

Notifications relating to high levels of sulphites have continued in 2006 (80 notifications compared to 101 in 2005), a number of which relate to high levels in crustaceans (45 in 2006, 63 in 2005) although the number of notifications has reduced since previous years as a result of changes in the legislation brought about by the adoption of European Parliament and Council Directive 2006/52/EC. This amendment changed the maximum permitted levels of sulphites in cooked crustaceans to reflect the evidence provided that the level of sulphite was not reduced as expected during cooking. Levels of sulphites should however continue to be checked in such products to ensure that they do not exceed the maximum levels for the cooked and raw products.

The chart below shows that also notifications of infringements in relation to colour additives have reduced (from 92 in 2005 to 71 in 2006).

2006 - notifications on food additives



Benzene in soft drinks in the United Kingdom

In early 2006 the United Kingdom informed the Commission of the potential formation of benzene in soft drinks as a result of a reaction between the food additive benzoic acid and other ingredients (such as ascorbic acid). At this time the Commission made contact with the relevant European trade associations including UNESDA to obtain further information.

The industry explained that they had been aware of this issue and had undertaken a number of studies to identify the critical parameters relating to the formation of benzene. These parameters had then been used by soft drink manufacturers to reformulate soft drinks to limit the potential formation of benzene under normal conditions. The industry reported that from their internal testing the levels of benzene in products was typically reported at the limit of detection (between 1-5 ppb depending on methodology used) and always below 10 ppb (parts per billion, or microgram/litre).

Following this work the International Council of Beverage Associations (ICBA) had produced a guidance document which they have shared with all soft drink manufacturers and other interested parties. The document contains information to



guide producers in eliminating or reducing benzene formation to the fullest extent possible (e.g. where possible by replacing benzoic acid with another preservative when ascorbic acid is also present in high amounts).

The Commission invited UNESDA to present the ICBA guidance document to Member States at the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Food Chain and Animal Health on 31 March 2006. Prior to and following this meeting a number of Member States carried out surveillance and analysis of products and took action based upon the 10 ppb level which led to 6 rapid alerts in total. The Commission and Member States will continue to monitor the situation and consider whether any further action is necessary.

Food contact materials

PAA/nylon

Rapid alerts on primary aromatic amines (PAA) relate to the migration from kitchen utensils made of nylon imported from China. The number of notifications (30) has kept constant in comparison to 2005.

PAAAs are suspected human carcinogens. They can be formed primarily from substances used in glues, adhesives or as colorants. Other sources for formation of PAAAs may exist. Directive 2002/72/EC on plastic materials and articles specifies that these materials should not release PAAAs into food in detectable quantities.

A mission of the Food and Veterinary Office to China took place in 2006 to increase communication and cooperation in the area of control of food contact materials. In 2007 a further mission is planned to assess the Chinese controls in place and to identify training needs in the area of food contact materials production and control.

**lead, cadmium/
ceramic ware** Directive 84/500/EEC lays down migration limits for lead and cadmium from ceramic ware into 4 % acetic acid. Notifications on non compliance with migration limits for lead and cadmium have slightly decreased in 2006 (15) compared to 2005 (21).

**heavy metals/
metal ware** Heavy metals migrating from metal ware such as chromium and nickel is not specifically regulated at Community level. It is covered by the Framework Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 on materials and articles in contact with food. This Regulation stipulates that food contact materials should not endanger human health or cause unacceptable changes in the food. Specific national legislation on metal ware exists in some Member States. The rapid alerts originate all from the Member States that have national legislation in place. The number of notifications has maintained at the same level (36) compared to 2005 (37).

ITX In 2005, the substance isopropylthioxanthone, in short ITX, was detected in baby milk, milk products and cloudy juices packaged in beverage cartons. ITX, a photoinitiator used in printing inks for printing on the outside of beverage cartons, was transferred into food due to the manufacturing process in which the substance was unintentionally transferred from the outer printed surface to the inner food contact surface prior to the construction of the individual cartons.¹

Industry committed to cease the use of ITX in packaging for all baby milk as from the end of September 2005, for fatty products by the end of December 2005 and for other concerned products by the end of January 2006. In the first half of 2006 notifications on ITX were still received but decreased significantly in the second half of 2006.

¹ See also RASFF Annual Report 2005.

GMP

To avoid similar contamination incidents, the Commission adopted Regulation (EC) No 2023/2006¹ on good manufacturing practice for materials and articles intended to come into contact with food. The Regulation is laying down general rules on quality assurance, quality control and documentation. It is setting down specific rules for printing and handling of non-food contact surfaces. The Regulation will apply from 1 August 2008.

Food supplements

The number of RASFF notifications reporting on food supplements and dietetic foods has increased in the last three years (21 in 2004, 54 in 2005 and 91 in 2006). Only a minority of the notifications were issued for a problem with the composition of the food supplement (14), e.g. the detection of hormones and substances with pharmacological properties. More notifications were counted for unauthorised irradiation (19). Another important increase is to be noted for notifications about the unauthorised placing on the market of a food supplement (22), often because of the marketing of an unauthorised novel food or novel food ingredient (13) but also of products that are considered to be medicinal in some Member States e.g. Senna extracts (8). On the other hand, there were less reports of the contamination of food supplements with heavy metals (18 in 2005, 10 in 2006).

Existing EU legislation

Directive 2002/46/EC² establishes harmonised rules for the labelling, presentation and advertising of food supplements. It also introduces specific rules on vitamins and minerals; Annex II of Directive 2002/46/EC contains a list of permitted vitamin or mineral



preparations that may be added for specific nutritional purposes in food supplements.

There is a wide range of vitamin preparations and minerals substances used in the manufacture of food supplements that are currently marketed in Member States and which have not undergone a scientific safety evaluation. In order to allow the necessary time for this safety evaluation, Member States may provide derogations until 31 December 2009 for vitamins and minerals and their forms not included in the Directive¹, in view of the future addition to the Annexes of the Directive, as long as the following conditions are fulfilled:

- a** the substance in question was used in food supplements marketed in the Community prior to 12 July 2002;

¹ OJ L 384, 29.12.2006, p. 75–78.

² Directive 2002/46/EC of the European Parliament and Council of 10 June 2002 on the approximation of the laws of Member States relating to food supplements.

b the European Food Safety Authority has not given an unfavourable opinion in respect of the use of the substance, or its use in that form, in the manufacture of food supplements, on the basis of a dossier supporting use of the substance that has to be submitted to the Commission by the Member State by 12 July 2005.

There is a wide range of substances with nutritional or physiological functions other than vitamins and minerals, which are used in food supplements. At present their use is not harmonised at Community level but subject to the general provision of the Treaty concerning the free movement of goods.

Genetically modified rice

With a total of 127 notifications in 2006, the issue of the presence of unauthorised genetically modified food is back on the food safety agenda in the EU. 126 of these notifications refer to genetically modified rice.

In the whole 2006 period 42 alerts and 52 information notifications have been introduced via the RASFF system on the issue of GM LL RICE 601. For 2 notifications, the exact strain was not identified and 3 information notifications concerned a different unauthorised genetically modified rice coming from the United States (LL RICE 62). To this we have to add 10 notifications on the presence of the unauthorised genetically modified Bt63 strain in rice products coming from China.

On the basis of these data it can be concluded that the RASFF system

proved to be a necessary instrument for providing the European Commission and the Member States with a way to enforce the respect of the European legislation on GM food and feed and to intervene (and adjust if necessary their intervention) in those cases when the presence of an unauthorised food or feed on the market raises specific safety concerns.

Feed

In 2006, 129 notifications concerned feed. Of these, 74 notifications concerned *Salmonella* spp. contamination, of which 58 notifications for by-products from the vegetable oil production with the large majority concerning by-products of the production of soybean oil (35) and to a lesser extent of rapeseed oil (17) and of palm oil (6). *Salmonella* spp. contamination was also found in fish meal (3), dog chews (3), meat and bone meal (3) and different other products intended for animal feed and compound feed (7).

The other 55 notifications related to the presence of:

- aflatoxins (4, see chapter on aflatoxins);
- dioxins (10, see chapter on dioxins);
- unauthorised veterinary drugs and feed additives (12, see the topic on residues of veterinary medicinal products);
- unauthorised genetically modified feed (9, see the topic on GM rice);
- prohibited animal constituents (7);
- heavy metals: lead (3), cadmium (3) and arsenic (1)(see framed topic).
- fluoride (1) in phosphates and zearalenone (1) in maize;
- millet seeds contaminated with thorn apple seeds (*Datura stramonium*);
- fraudulent health certificate (2) and foreign bodies (1);

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/labellingnutrition/supplements/food_supplements.pdf



Genetically modified long grain rice

The European Commission was informed on 18 August 2006 by the US government that traces of the unauthorised genetically modified rice LL RICE 601 produced by Bayer CropScience (BCS) for resistance to the glufosinate herbicide had been found in commercial rice samples in the US.

Following the communication from the US authorities, the Commission immediately adopted an emergency decision on 23 August to ensure that only shipments of long grain rice certified as free from the unauthorised rice strain could enter the EU market. In accordance with the Decision appropriate control measures should be taken at national level to verify the absence

of LL RICE 601 in rice products already on the EU market. The emergency measures have been unanimously confirmed by the Standing Committee for Food Chain and Animal Health two days later with the approval of Decision 2006/601/EC, which entered into force on 5 September 2006.

Member States have been urged to intensify testing of products on the market - using two detection methods which were made available by BCS and verified by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) - and to provide an extensive report back on the results. Unfavourable results were notified to the Commission and the other Member States via the RASFF.

On 19 September, the Commission was informed via the RASFF that two barges arrived on 25 August, accompanied by US certificates attesting absence of GM rice (and issued by the European laboratory Eurofins), tested positive in random sampling done in The Netherlands. As this finding raised doubts about the reliability of the certificates and the sampling activities carried in the US, the Commission adopted a new Decision (2006/754/EC) amending Decision 2006/601/EC and imposing systematic countertesting of each consignment of products originating from the US.

Cadmium in zinc sulphate

In 2004, zinc sulphate contaminated with extreme levels of cadmium was imported from China into France. Due to the late detection of the contamination in January 2006, the highly contaminated zinc sulphate was already to a certain extent incorporated in premixtures and compound

feed and fed to animals. The levels of cadmium found in the zinc sulphate were 3.7 to 7.6 % (37 to 76 g/kg).

All premixtures and compound feed containing this highly contaminated zinc sulphate were detained. In France about 1 500 farms were affected. The kidneys and the livers of the slaughtered >>>

animals from the affected farms were systematically detained for analysis. A very wide variation in the levels of cadmium in the kidneys and livers could be observed.

Also Belgian farms were affected by the contamination incident. As in France, all contaminated compound feed was detained as well as kidneys and livers of animals fed with contaminated feed and sampled for analysis. A significant cadmium level was frequently observed in kidneys of bovines older than one year, not only as a consequence of this contamination incident but also because of environmental contamination. Much less frequent positive results were found in livers. Following these results, the Belgian authorities introduced a ban on using kidneys of bovines older than one year for human consumption.

The Commission has written to the Chinese authorities asking for more information as regards the origin of this extremely high level of contamination and asking to take measures to avoid that such highly contaminated zinc sulphate can be exported to the EU in the future. According to the Chinese authorities the consignment of zinc sulphate was exported with the intention to be used for industrial or fertilizer purpose, not for feed additive. There are no legal requirements as regards cadmium in zinc sulphate if this is intended for industrial use. Therefore no controls are performed by the Chinese authorities.

Furthermore the Commission has written to all professional organisations in the EU asking to inform their members immediately of this contamination incident and to point out to the feed business operators their legal obligations to take all appropriate measures, in particular to carry out systematic controls in the context



of the HACCP procedures, to ensure that any zinc sulphate and premixtures containing zinc sulphate, in particular the zinc sulphate originating from China used for the production of feed, contains levels of cadmium below the maximum level established in EU legislation.

A similar contamination incident, fortunately with less serious consequences, occurred later in the year with a finding of a very high level of lead in zinc oxide destined for animal feed. The problem occurred because the zinc oxide in question was destined for the ceramic industry but was incorrectly labelled with a code that referred to zinc oxide feed grade. The zinc oxide destined for the ceramic industry originated from China. Measures were taken to avoid that the contaminated zinc oxide could enter the feed chain.

Legal EU-measures are being considered to prevent similar contamination incidents from happening again in the future.

New Community legislation affecting the RASFF

2006 marks a significant milestone for food safety in the EU, with the entry into application of a large updated body of food and feed legislation. The Food "Hygiene Package", the Regulation on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs, the Regulation on official feed and food controls, and the Feed Hygiene Regulation, constitute a complementary set of rules to tighten and harmonise EU food safety measures. These laws will apply at every point in the food chain, in line with the EU's "farm to fork" approach. A key aspect of the new legislation is that all food and feed operators, from farmers and processors to retailers and caterers, will have primary responsibility for ensuring that food put on the EU market meets the required safety standards.

The Commission has produced 3 guidance documents and a DVD, to provide advice and direction to food business operators and Member States on a number of different aspects of the new food safety legislation. More information is available on the [DG Health and Consumer Protection web site](#).

New rules on official food and feed control

Regulation (CE) N° 882/2004 "on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules" was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 29 April 2004. The new Regulation became binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States from 1 January 2006.

Some key elements of the Regulation are:

- to ensure that official controls on feed and food are carried out regularly, on a risk basis and with appropriate frequency;
- to establish a clear EU framework for a control system systematically setting out the rules to be respected with the aim of greater harmonisation and the integration of controls across the entire food and feed chain under the "farm to fork" principle;
- to establish appropriate control methods and techniques such as monitoring, surveillance, verification, audit, inspection, sampling and analysis;
- to establish a Community and national reference laboratories network;
- the requirement that the competent authorities prepare a single integrated multi-annual national control plan to ensure the effective implementation of the Regulation.

This Regulation is very relevant to the RASFF because the information sent through the RASFF is the result of the control actions carried out by the Member States. The harmonisation of the control systems in Member States will benefit the degree in which the RASFF notifications from one Member State can be used as an input to the controls carried out by another Member State.

New food hygiene rules

Adopted in 2004, the "Hygiene Package" is a streamlined body of legislation that sets down stricter, clearer and more



Improper production of curd cheese in the United Kingdom

A Community inspection carried out in June in the United Kingdom revealed serious shortcomings in an establishment manufacturing dairy products intended for human consumption. In particular, evidence was received that raw milk containing antibiotic residues was placed on the market and used for the manufacture of curd cheese. The UK authorities notified other Member States of these deficiencies in June 2006.

The presence of antibiotic residues in excess of the maximum residue limits in foods is a serious hazard for human health and raw milk containing such levels of antibiotic residues is considered as unfit for human consumption.

Given the seriousness of the situation, the failure of the UK authorities to comply with their control obligations, despite several technical discussions at Community level, and taking into account the presence of the product in several Member States, the Commission initiated an infringement

proceeding under Article 226 of the Treaty against the UK government for failure to enforce Community rules on the hygiene of milk in a correct and timely manner. At the same time, in order to counter the risk posed by non-compliant dairy products being exported to other Member States, an EU-wide restriction on the production and placing on the market of such products had to be proposed and Commission Decision 2006/694/EC was adopted on 13 October 2006 accordingly.

On 23 October 2006, the UK authorities replied to the infringement proceeding by indicating that they had taken steps to implement the Commission position on the control of antibiotic residues in milk and had issued instructions to the enforcement authorities and guidance to the dairy industry with immediate effect. These instructions also addressed other shortcomings identified by the FVO inspectors.

By letters of 25 and 30 January 2007, the UK authorities submitted to the Commission satisfactory evidence that all non-compliant products had been disposed of in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 laying down health rules concerning animal by-products not intended for human consumption¹ and that the establishment's premises had been emptied, cleaned and disinfected. The Commission also received guarantees from other Member States that curd cheese still stored on their territory was disposed of. On this basis, it was proposed to lift the restrictions imposed on the establishment in question. This decision was adopted on 2 March 2007.

¹ OJ L 273, 10.10.2002, p. 1.

harmonised rules on the hygiene of foodstuffs and specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin.

The "hygiene package" comprising Regulations (EC) No 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs, (EC) No 853/2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin and (EC) No 854/2004 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption came into application on 1 January 2006 and replaced the sector-specific Council Directives on various foodstuffs.

Under the food hygiene legislation, the onus is placed on food operators to ensure that food reaching EU consumers is safe. They will have to apply compulsory self-checking programmes and follow the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles in all sectors of the food industry, other than at farm level. The legislation foresees the establishment of guides to good practice, at either EU or national level to assist food operators with the implementation of self-checking programmes, and all food operators will have to be registered.

New feed hygiene rules

Many food crises have started with contaminated feed. Regulation 1831/2003 on Feed Additives provides rules on the production, transport, storage and handling of animal feed, with a view to ensuring safer feed and thus safer food. As with food operators, feed businesses have primary responsibility for ensuring the safety of products put on the market.

The Regulation covers all types of feed and the entire range of feed business operators. For the RASFF, the Feed Hygiene Regulation meant an enlargement of its scope: the Regulation has extended the scope of the RASFF to include all feed presenting serious human health, animal health and environmental risks. Therefore effectively since 2006 hazards related to animal health in feed, including pet food, are being notified to the RASFF. In 2006, there were 17 alert and information notifications identified for pet food. There may have been more in reality; information is not always given identifying the feed as intended for pets.

New EU food safety criteria in force for certain pathogenic micro-organisms in food

Microbiological criteria are used to measure the safety of foodstuffs based on absence, presence or the number of micro-organisms present per unit of mass/volume/area/batch. Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 of 15 November 2005 on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs¹ entered into force in January 2006, at the same time as the new food hygiene legislation. The aim of the new legislation is to ensure a high level of consumer protection with regard to food safety. The new Regulation on microbiological criteria provides harmonised criteria within the EU thus elaborating fair rules for food businesses and competent authorities, as well as for third countries exporting to the EU.

Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 contains two types of microbiological criteria, namely food safety and process hygiene

¹ Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005, OJ L 338, 22.12.2005, p. 1, corrected by OJ L 278, 10.10.2006, p. 32, and OJ L 283, 14.10.2006, p. 62.



Food unfit for human consumption in cold stores in Germany

In August and September 2006 different foodstuffs not suitable for human consumption have been detected in two cold stores and one cutting plant in Germany (Bavaria). Some of these foodstuffs were stored beyond the best before date or showed organoleptic alterations. The products – consisting of meat, meat products as well as fish, bakery products, vegetables and herbs, mainly for gastronomic use – were distributed in Germany and partly to other Member States.

Community legislation and in particular the General Food Law (Regulation (EC) No 178/2002) sets clear requirements for the consideration of products as fit for human consumption.

The incidents led to RASFF alert notifications, as well as a number of follow up messages due to investigations and measures of German and other Member States' authorities. The German competent authorities reacted by way of the initiation and monitoring over the withdrawal of products, seizure and analysis of products and, in two cases, by withdrawing the approvals of two establishments. The Commission has monitored the investigations closely and has sent inspectors from the FVO on a follow-up mission to Germany, as well as discussed the options available to reinforce the coordination of controls within Germany with the German authorities. In the light of the occurrences, the Commission is also reflecting on possible modifications to reinforce certain food hygiene requirements, in particular as regards the labelling of frozen meat which is to be placed on the market.

criteria. Food safety criteria apply to products placed on the market. Non-compliance with such criteria indicates risk to human health and the consequences are withdrawals or recalls of the food concerned. When a Community food safety criterion is exceeded a Member State should also immediately notify the Commission under the RASFF system¹.

Food safety criteria are set for certain pathogens, such as Salmonella and Listeria, in the main food categories (meat and meat products, fish, milk and dairy products, ready-to-eat foods, fruit and vegetables, etc). These criteria are based on scientific advice and a broad consensus was sought for their establishment. Other pathogens

¹ Guidance Document on official controls, under Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, concerning microbiological sampling and testing of foodstuffs, published on the the Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General website: http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/salmonella/microbio_en.htm

may be added in the future, following evaluations by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). New criteria for infant formula and follow-on formula are under discussion.

In the absence of Community microbiological criteria the evaluation of the microbiological results can be done in

accordance with Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, which provides that unsafe food must not be placed on the market. The competent authority can restrict the marketing of a product, on the basis of a case-by-case risk assessment, if there is an indication that the batch is unsafe.

Information provided to third countries



In order to avoid the recurrence of a problem detected, the RASFF informs third countries of origin in a systematic way via the Commission Delegations. Member States are informed directly through the RASFF system. In 2006, third countries were informed 1 959 times of a problem with a product originating from

their country. Following the transmission of more details in the RASFF, 183 e-mails with additional information were sent.

The RASFF also informs the third country concerned via the same channels if it has received information that a product notified in the RASFF was distributed

to a third country. Third countries were informed 318 times of a distribution of a notified product to their country.

Recurrent problems for which the Commission required specific guarantees from third countries and Member States

When a serious problem is detected on several occasions, a letter is sent to the competent authority of the country concerned. In 2006, 5 such letters were sent (see table below). As a consequence of these letters, third countries take measures such as delisting of establishments, suspension of exports, intensification of controls and change of legislation. Also, Member States

intensify checks at import. In addition to that, when the guarantees received are not sufficient, the Commission may take measures such as prohibition of import, systematic control at the EU borders, mandatory presentation of health certificates, etc. Additionally, the Food and Veterinary Office uses, among other criteria, the information transmitted through the RASFF to identify the priorities for its inspections programme.

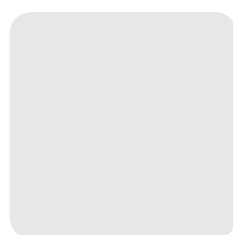
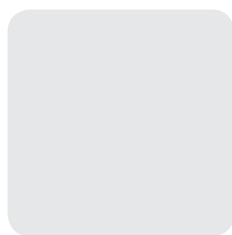
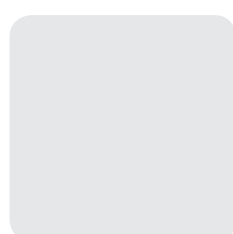
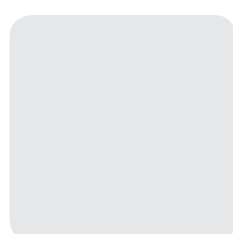
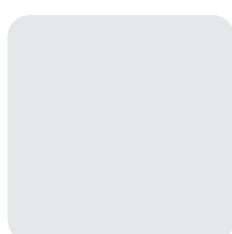
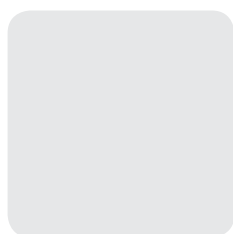
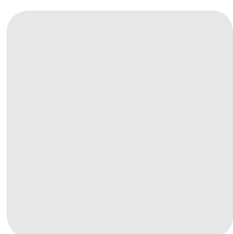
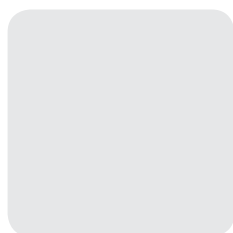
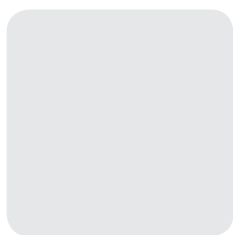
The Commission can also send a letter to a Member State when it wants to draw its attention to a recurrent problem notified in the RASFF, requesting that specific guarantees are given that the problem is being or has been dealt with.

List of letters sent

| Country | Hazard | Product |
|------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| China (Hong Kong) | unauthorised colours | candy |
| China | unauthorised irradiation | various food products |
| Vietnam | unauthorised carbon monoxide treatment | tuna and swordfish |
| Philippines | illegal import | various meat products |
| Bangladesh | unauthorised substance nitrofurans (metabolite) – nitrofurazone (SEM) | shrimps |

3

RASFF preparing for the future





After the RASFF working group meeting, delegates from the member countries, the Commission and EFSA had their picture taken for the annual report.

3. RASFF preparing for the future

Implementing measures for the RASFF

Regulation (EC) N° 178/2002 (hereafter "the Food Law"), Article 51 foresees in the adoption of implementing measures for the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) to specify, in particular, the conditions and procedures applicable to the transmission of notifications and supplementary information through the RASFF.

To date, no implementing measures have been adopted but the initiative has been planned in the European Commission's legislative work program of 2007 and the work has started. A RASFF working group with Member States has discussed the possible scope and content of a "Commission Regulation laying down implementing measures for the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed under Regulation (EC) No 178/2002".

The following chapters were defined:

1. Requirements for members of the network;
2. Criteria for notification;
3. Elaboration and transmission of a notification;
4. Assessment of a notification and follow-up;
5. Exchange of information with third countries and international organisations;
6. Confidentiality, reporting and publication.

Of the chapters discussed, clearly the chapter on criteria for notifying to the RASFF is the most difficult one as there could be diverging views on this. Also the chapter on confidentiality and publication proves to be difficult since policies for transparency of governmental

information might be different between Member States.

Role of the European Commission

The main objective of the implementing measures for the RASFF is a more harmonised operation of the RASFF between the Member States. From experience, it has become clear that the European Commission has a pivotal role to play in achieving this. For this reason, the implementing measures should provide the pieces of the puzzle that are still missing in Article 50 of the Food Law as concerns the Commission's role in the RASFF.

The document will describe the role the Commission has come to fulfil over the years it has managed the RASFF system. The Commission's first responsibility is to make certain that the information sent to the RASFF is transmitted in a fast and reliable manner to all its recipients. To that end the Commission is working on an information system that will link all members of the RASFF together and that should improve reliability, speed and security of the transmission. More information on this is provided in the next topic.

But the Commission also has the task to make a quick technical assessment of the notification. It verifies the completeness of the notification and evaluates if the subject of the notification is within the scope of the RASFF. It checks also if the notifying country applied a correct legal basis for the actions taken. The Commission's RASFF team can however not verify if the sampling and analytical procedures were carried out correctly or if an appropriate analytical method was applied.

In the end, it is not the Commission's RASFF team's task to intervene in how the Member States concerned act upon the notified cases but it watches over the information supplied and will request additional information if it thinks it necessary. Based on the information in the RASFF and on the seriousness of the situation, the Commission can propose emergency Community measures if it considers that a concerted action by all Member States is necessary. The RASFF is also a valuable source of information for the Commission's Food and Veterinary Office to decide upon its programme of inspections.

An important challenge for the Commission is to ensure that the system works effectively with the several thousands of notifications it receives yearly. Key to this is a good classification of the incoming notifications. It has become apparent that the current classification into alert and information notifications – according to the presence on the market – does not suffice. It is perceived that a classification as an 'alert' includes an appreciation of the degree of risk involved, and this is not the case at present. While it is far from straight forward to apply a quick and consistent risk assessment to a RASFF notification, the risk factor would add more value to the classification. To come to the practical realisation of such a risk classification, a good deal of thought is still needed.

Advanced discussions with Member States and EFSA will continue to finalise the draft Regulation. After stakeholders' consultation, it will be presented to the Standing Committee for approval.

Information system for the RASFF

For the past few years, the Commission has endeavoured to create an online web-based information system for the RASFF based on the idea that information should be entered by Member States' control authorities, and then verified ("validated") at least at the level of the national and Commission contact point before being distributed in the system. One principle of the chosen approach is to structure the information as much as possible. This is quite a challenge, given that a notification consists of a potentially complex set of interlinked information. To give one example: a product found on the market may have been processed

using several raw materials. Each linked product has its traceability information, lot numbers involved, samples taken, hazards found and companies producing and distributing the product. Splitting the information into structured units adds to a clearer understanding of the information in the notification and reduces the difficulties of a multilingual environment by significantly reducing the needed translation effort.

It is expected that a first version of this system will be ready for testing and implementation in 2007.

RASFF in the world



Worldwide RASFF

The globalisation of trade means that food/feed presenting a risk to human health may have a worldwide distribution. In order to ensure that all measures required to protect consumer health are taken without delay in a coordinated

manner, an international network for rapid exchange of information is essential. The project of a worldwide RASFF has been included in the Commission's financial perspectives for 2006-2013.

At the start of this project, the target is the development of national RASFF

systems in the interested third countries to improve protection of their consumers but also consumers in the EU via their exported products. Once these national RASFF systems are functional, a regional network can be established. These regional networks will be interconnected in order to obtain a worldwide RASFF.

For this project, the Commission's Directorate Health and Consumer Protection, under the programme "better training for safer food", is organizing three seminars in 2007 to take place in Thailand, Argentina and China, for officials and industry representatives, on the managing of a national RASFF. In addition, the Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General is also looking for projects with interested third countries in order to use the EU experience to set up national RASFF systems.

RASFF and INFOSAN

INFOSAN is a network for the dissemination of important information about global food safety issues at world level, set up and managed by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Each participating country has one or several INFOSAN focal points that will receive all INFOSAN general information. Each country also has one dedicated INFOSAN emergency contact point that will be activated specifically in major international emergencies involving disease from or contamination in food.

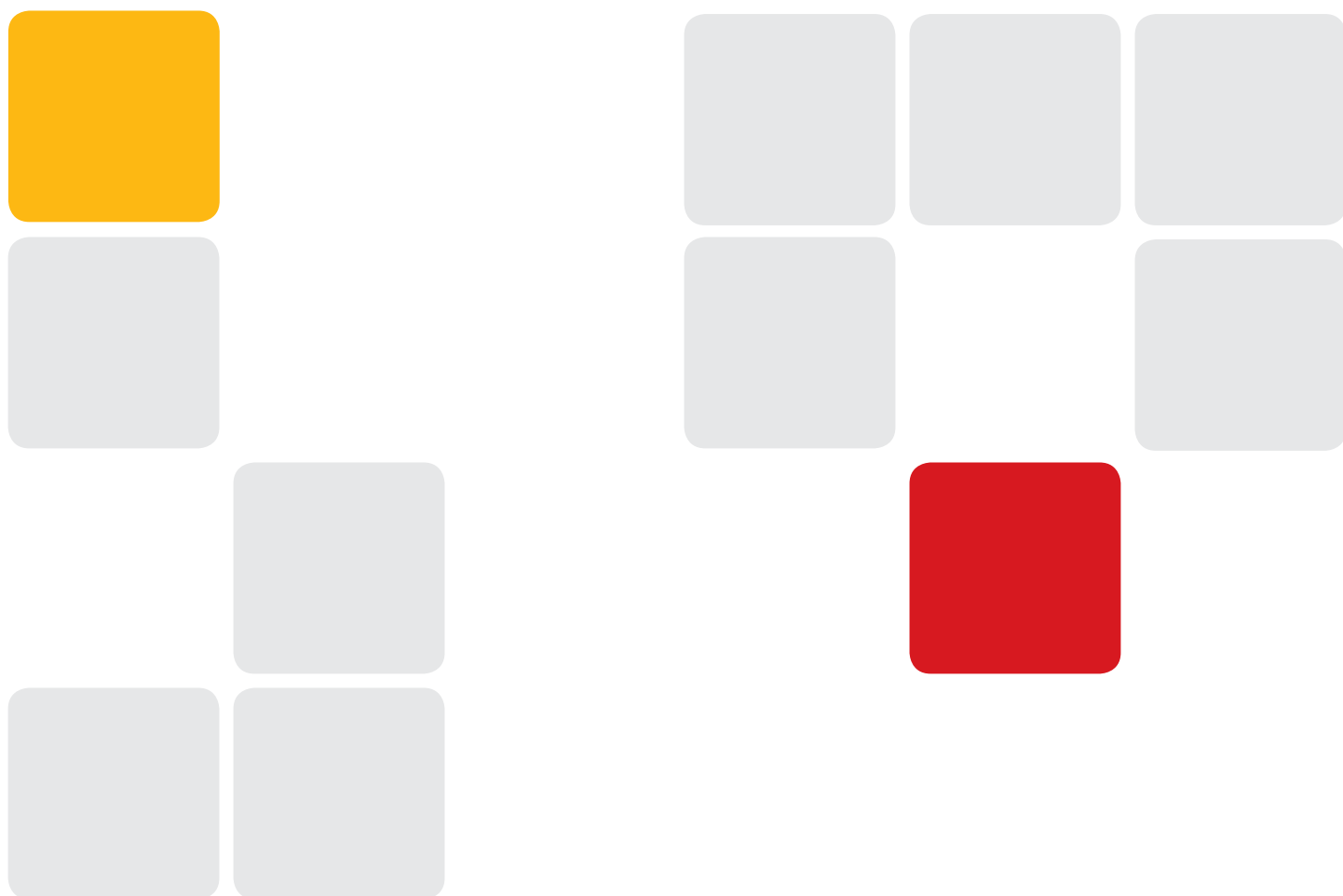
The RASFF was nominated on 18 March 2005 as INFOSAN emergency contact point for the transmission of INFOSAN food safety information. At the meeting of 20 September 2005 of the standing committee for the safety of the food

chain and animal health, all Member States of the EU and the EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries agreed that the RASFF would be the single point of information exchange for the INFOSAN network.

More close cooperation and clear procedures should be established between both systems in order to avoid overlapping and misunderstanding, particularly in relation to the information transmitted to third countries.

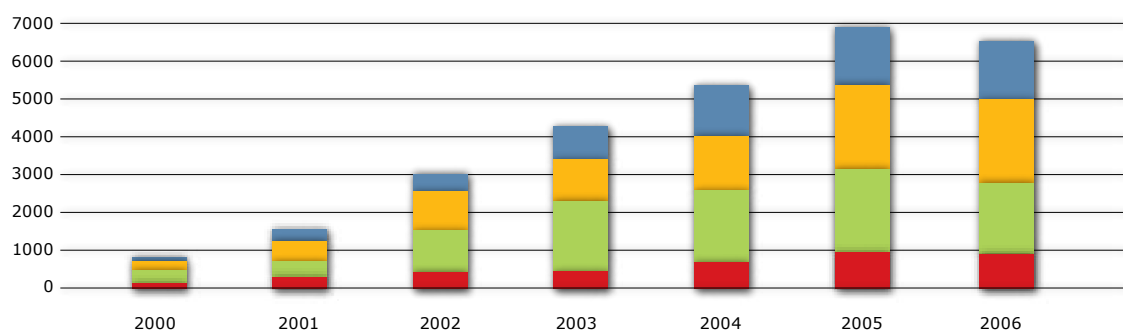
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Detailed statistical breakdown



Detailed statistical breakdown

Evolution of the number of notifications since 2000



| Year | Alert | Information | Addition To Alert | Addition To Information | Total |
|------------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---------|
| 2000 | 133 | 340 | 253 | 98 | 824 |
| 2001 | 302 | 406 | 549 | 310 | 1567 |
| 2002 | 434 | 1092 | 1032 | 466 | 3024 |
| 2003 | 454 | 1856 | 1098 | 878 | 4286 |
| 2004 | 692 | 1897 | 1449 | 1329 | 5367 |
| 2005 | 956 | 2202 | 2218 | 1521 | 6897 |
| 2006 | 912 | 1962 | 2157 | 1563 | 6594 |
| 2006 % increase/ decrease | - 4.9 % | - 11.0 % | - 3.3 % | + 2.7 % | - 4.6 % |

Rejected notifications in 2006

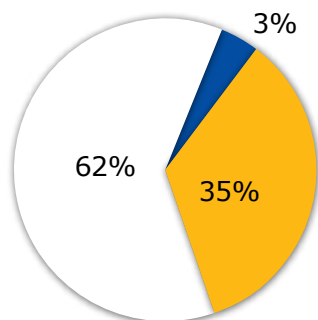
Notifications rejected for the following reasons

| | |
|---|------------|
| The problem indicated falls outside the scope of the regulation | 21 |
| There is insufficient evidence to deem the food to be unsafe as according to art. 14 of regulation (ec) no 178/2002 | 27 |
| In the context of regulation (ec) no 2073/2005, the microbiological criteria upon which the notification is based, cannot be used as food safety criteria | 26 |
| The notification contains no evidence of a direct or indirect risk to consumer health | 30 |
| In the context of regulation (ec) no 183/2005, the notification contains no evidence of a serious risk to animal health or the environment | 4 |
| Levels found are below the legal limits | 8 |
| Levels found do not pose a risk to the health of the consumer | 7 |
| The notification does not contain sufficient information to perform a proper evaluation | 9 |
| The notification is outdated | 7 |
| Total | 139 |

Type of hazards identified in the rejected notifications

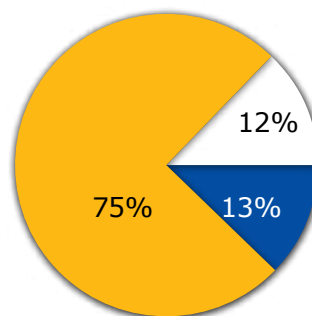
| | |
|---|------------|
| adulteration | 1 |
| composition | 1 |
| food additives | 4 |
| GMO / novel food | 1 |
| heavy metals | 1 |
| labelling absent / incomplete / incorrect | 13 |
| microbiological contamination | 12 |
| migration | 6 |
| not determined / other | 32 |
| organoleptic changes | 3 |
| packaging defective / incorrect | 3 |
| pesticide residues | 12 |
| (potentially) pathogenic micro-organisms | 47 |
| residues of veterinary medicinal products | 3 |
| Total | 139 |

2006 - Alert notifications by product origin



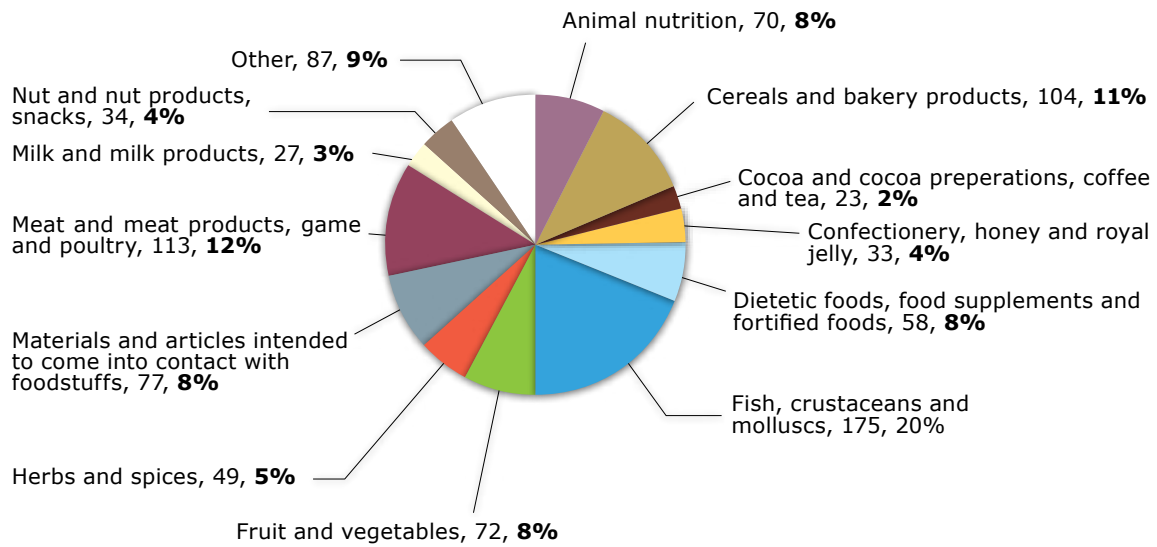
- Third countries, 330, 35%.
- Member states (EU+EFTA/EEA), 587, 62%.
- Candidate countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania and Turkey), 26, 3%.

2006 - Information notifications by product origin

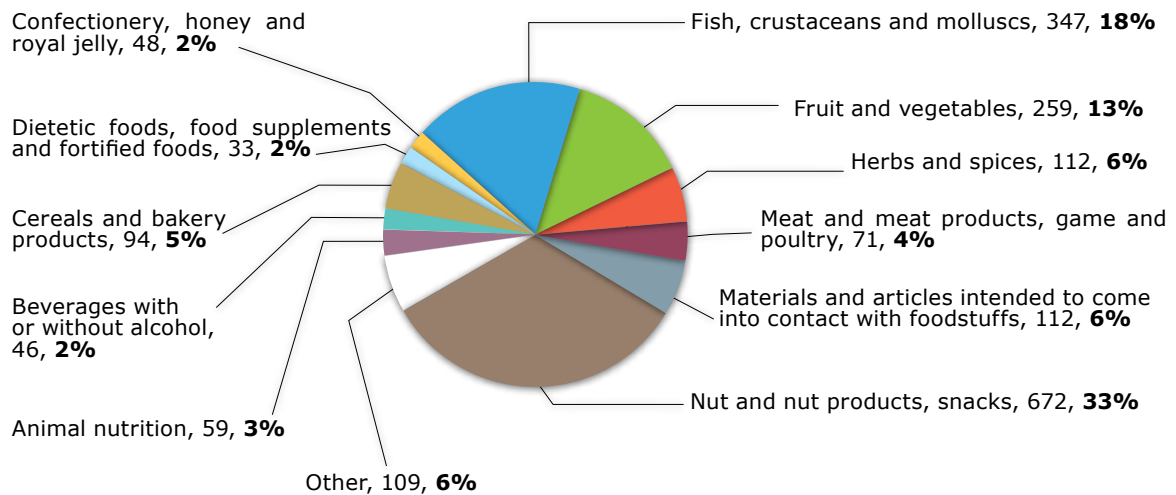


- Third countries, 1480, 75%.
- Member states (EU+EFTA/EEA), 240, 12%.
- Candidate countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania and Turkey), 254, 13%.

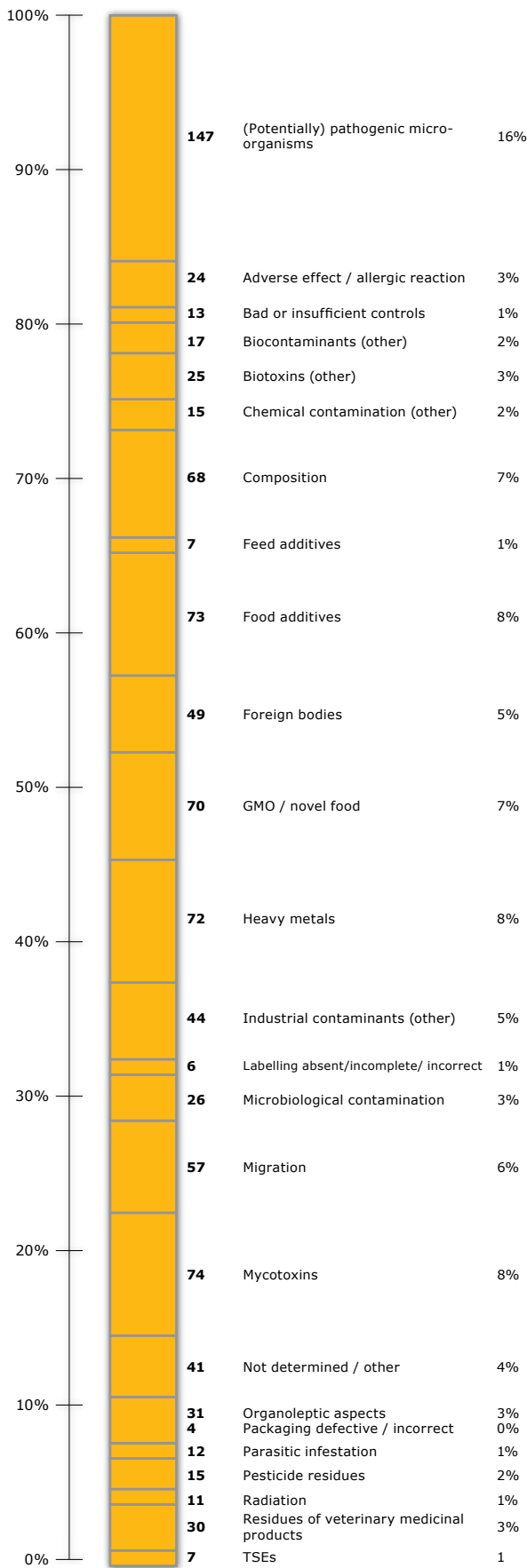
2006 Alert notifications by product category



2006 Information notifications by product category

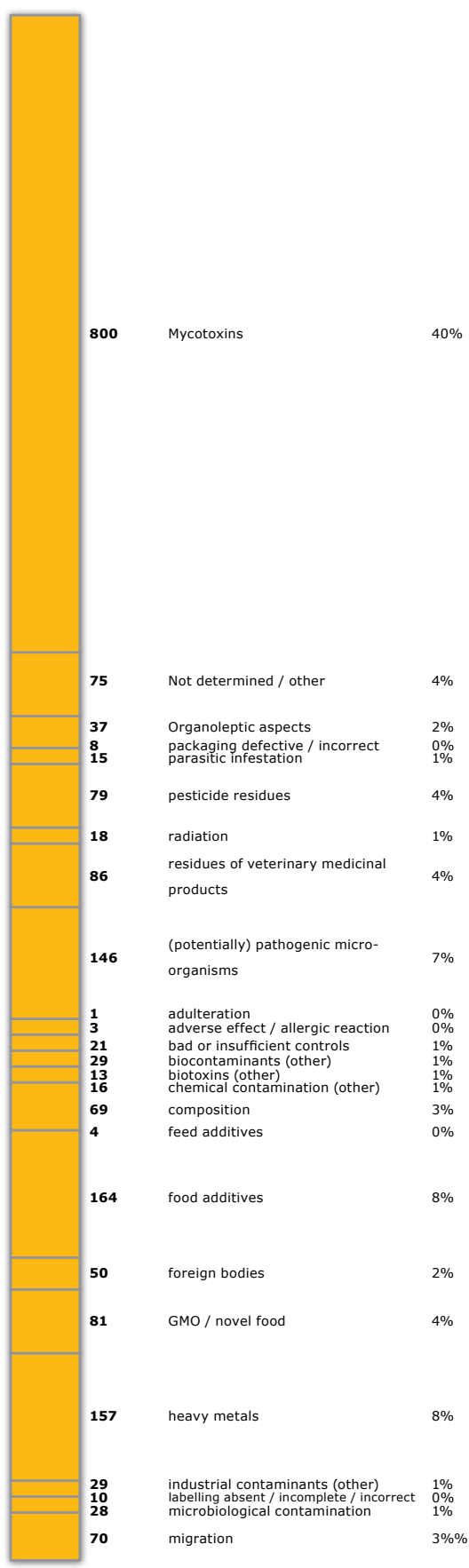


2006
Alert notifications by
identified risk



Total=938

2006
Information notifications by
identified risk



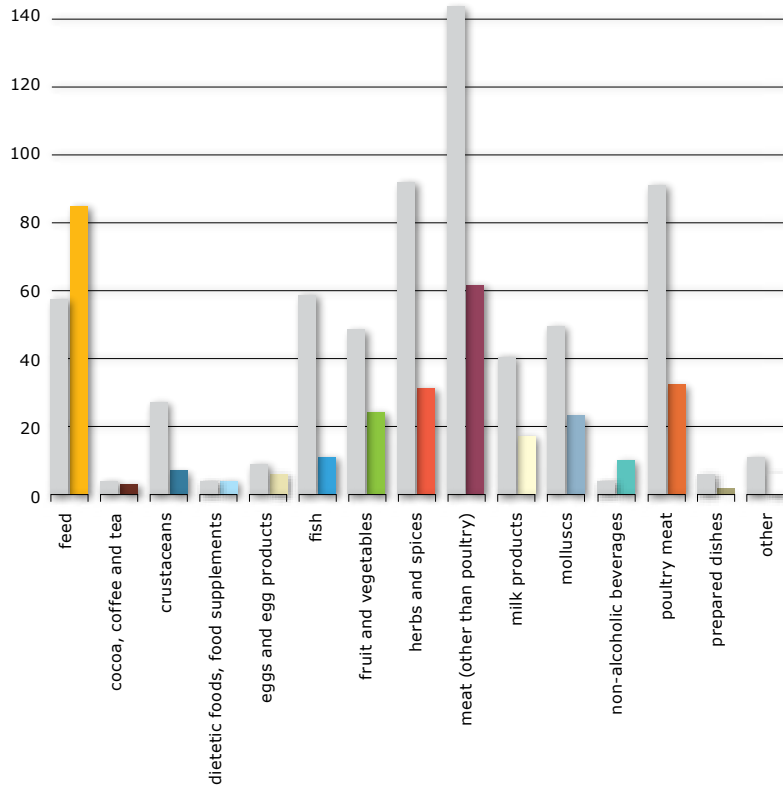
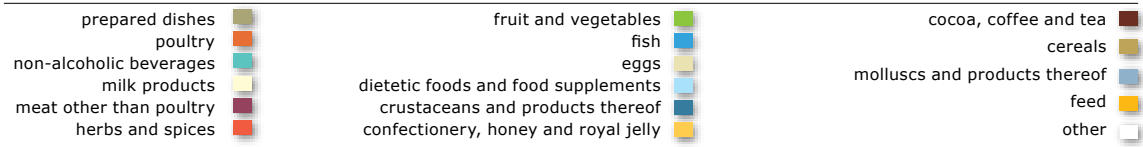
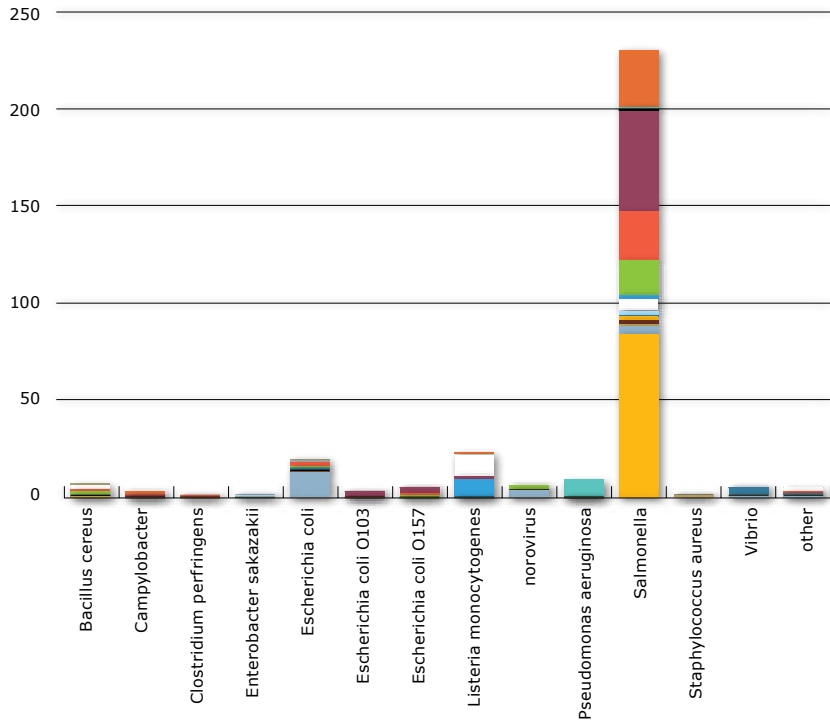
Total=2009

Breakdown of 2006 notifications by hazard and product category

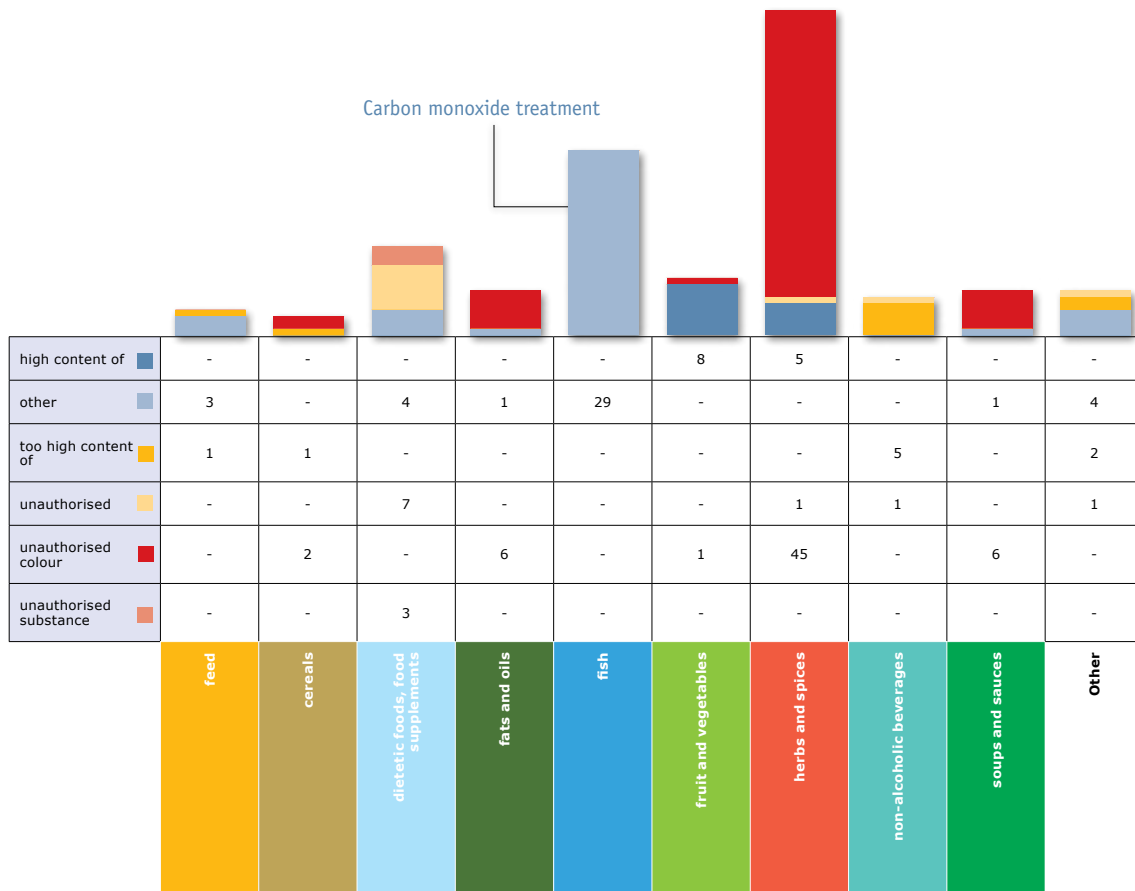
Overview

| Hazard category | feed | molluscs | crustaceans | fish | meat (other than poultry) | poultry meat and poultry meat products | milk and milk products | soups, broths and sauces | prepared dishes | confectionery, honey and royal jelly | dietetic foods, food supplements | fats and oils | cereals and bakery products | cocoa, coffee, tea | nuts, nut products and snacks | fruit and vegetables | herbs and spices | food contact materials | non-alcoholic beverages | other |
|---|------|----------|-------------|------|---------------------------|--|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| (potentially) pathogenic micro-organisms | 74 | 22 | 7 | 11 | 60 | 26 | 17 | - | 1 | 2 | 4 | - | 1 | 2 | - | 23 | 26 | - | 10 | 7 |
| adulteration | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| adverse effect / allergic reaction | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 |
| bad or insufficient controls | - | 2 | 4 | 4 | 10 | 3 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| biocontaminants (other) | - | - | - | 29 | - | - | 1 | 4 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 9 | - | - | - | 1 |
| biotoxins (other) | 1 | 25 | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 5 | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - |
| chemical contamination (other) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 | 2 | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | 10 | 8 | 2 |
| composition | 6 | - | - | 29 | 1 | 1 | - | 7 | - | 1 | 14 | 7 | 3 | - | 1 | 9 | 51 | 1 | 6 | - |
| feed additives | 4 | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 |
| food additives | - | 1 | 52 | 26 | 2 | - | - | 11 | 2 | 27 | 3 | 1 | 9 | - | 2 | 57 | 12 | 4 | 19 | 9 |
| foreign bodies | 5 | - | - | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 1 | - | 16 | 6 | 3 | 24 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 5 |
| GMO / novel food | 9 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 13 | - | 117 | - | - | 2 | 5 | - | 3 | 2 |
| heavy metals | 8 | 24 | 17 | 84 | 5 | - | - | - | - | 2 | 5 | - | 2 | 3 | 2 | 15 | 1 | 52 | 4 | 5 |
| industrial contaminants (other) | 9 | - | 2 | 39 | - | 1 | - | 10 | - | - | 6 | 5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| labelling absent / incomplete / incorrect | - | - | - | 3 | 6 | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| microbiological contamination | - | 6 | - | 4 | - | - | 5 | - | 2 | 2 | 1 | - | 2 | 1 | 7 | 14 | 7 | - | 2 | 1 |
| migration | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 125 | - | - |
| mycotoxins | 5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | 30 | 13 | 682 | 94 | 39 | - | 7 | 1 |
| not determined / other | 2 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 21 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 12 | 13 | 10 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | - | 5 | 1 | 10 |
| organoleptic aspects | - | 1 | 5 | 13 | 15 | 2 | 3 | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| packaging defective / incorrect | - | - | - | 6 | 7 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - |
| parasitic infestation | - | - | - | 17 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| pesticide residues | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 4 | 1 | - | - | 2 | 2 | 72 | 9 | - | - | 1 |
| radiation | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 17 | - | 1 | 1 | - | 6 | 4 | - | - | - |
| residues of veterinary medicinal products | 2 | - | 54 | 26 | 7 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 20 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| TSEs | 1 | - | - | - | 6 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

(Potentially) pathogenic micro-organisms:



Composition

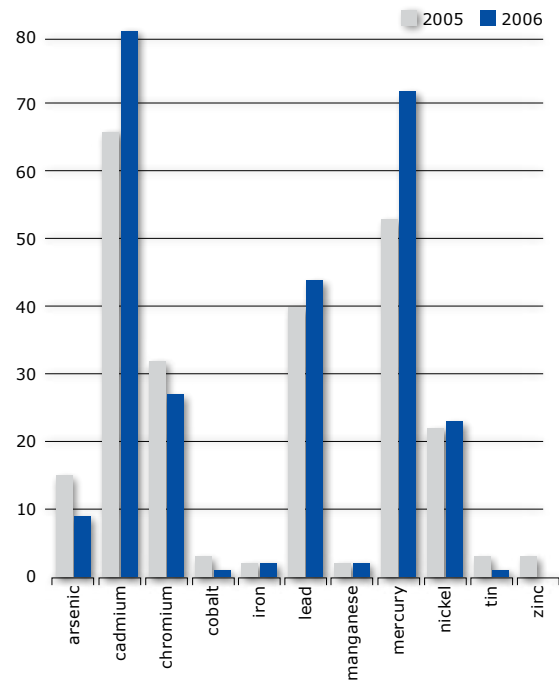
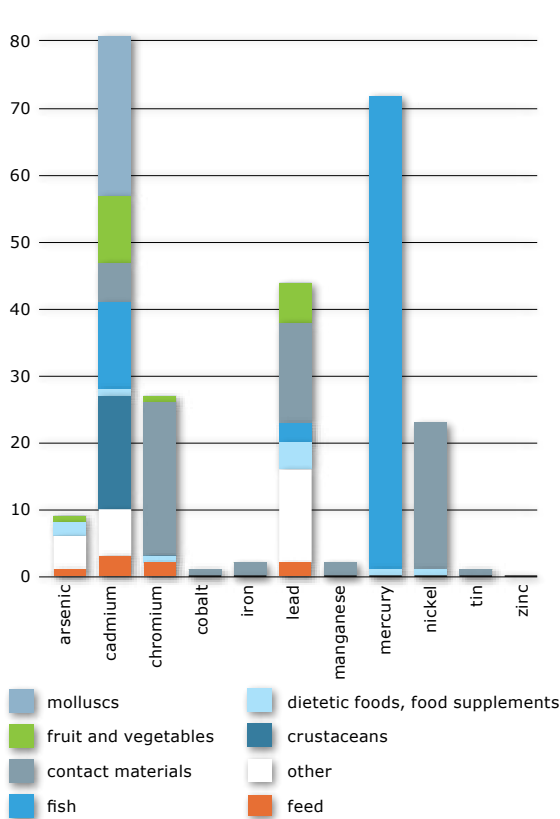


Note: the "too high content" category refers to chemical substances, other than food additives, for which thresholds existing in food law, as to the quantity present in a specific foodstuff, were exceeded, e.g. nitrates in leafy vegetables, spore elements in drinking water etc.

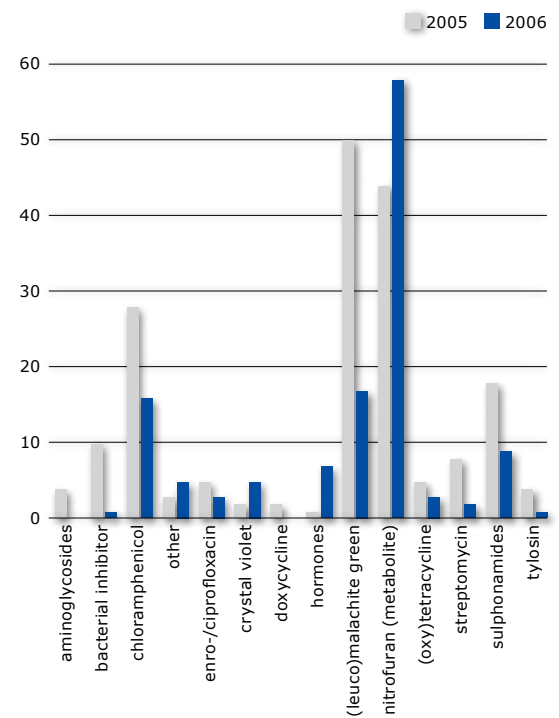
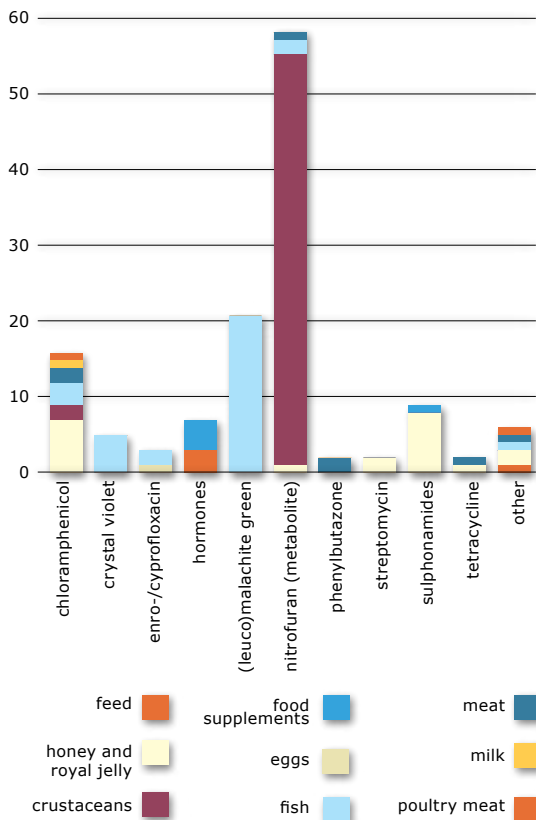
Food additives

| | alcoholic beverages | cereals and bakery products | confectionery | crustaceans | dietetic foods, food supplements | fish | food additives | fruit and vegetables | herbs and spices | non-alcoholic beverages | other food product / mixed | soups, broths and sauces | total |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-----------|----------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| too high content of colour | - | - | 11 | - | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 18 |
| too high content of sulphite | 3 | 3 | 1 | 46 | - | - | - | 24 | - | - | 1 | 3 | 81 |
| too high content (other) | - | 3 | 5 | 1 | - | 12 | 2 | 6 | - | 14 | 3 | 2 | 48 |
| unauthorised use of colour | - | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | - | 21 | 10 | - | 4 | 5 | 51 |
| unauthorised use of sulphite | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 3 |
| unauthorised use (other) | - | 2 | 5 | - | - | 6 | - | 5 | - | 4 | 2 | - | 24 |
| undeclared colour | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| undeclared sulphite | - | - | - | 5 | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 8 |
| undeclared (other) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| Total | 3 | 9 | 27 | 53 | 3 | 27 | 2 | 59 | 12 | 18 | 12 | 11 | 236 |

Heavy metals



Residues of veterinary medicinal products



Notifications by product category

| | 2004 TOTAL | 2004 Alert | 2004 Information | 2005 TOTAL | 2005 Alert | 2005 Information | 2006 TOTAL | 2006 Alert | 2006 Information |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Beverages and water | | | | | | | | | |
| Alcoholic beverages (other than wine) | 2 | - | 2 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| Non-alcoholic beverages | 23 | 8 | 15 | 39 | 13 | 26 | 64 | 22 | 42 |
| Wine | 3 | - | 3 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 4 | - | 4 |
| Feed | 63 | 24 | 39 | 86 | 22 | 64 | 129 | 70 | 59 |
| Fish, crustaceans and molluscs | (541) | (168) | (373) | (559) | (196) | (363) | (522) | (175) | (347) |
| Molluscs and products thereof | 83 | 19 | 64 | 79 | 10 | 69 | 86 | 32 | 54 |
| Crustaceans and products thereof | 161 | 36 | 125 | 168 | 43 | 125 | 145 | 32 | 113 |
| Fish and products thereof (other than crustaceans and molluscs) | 297 | 113 | 184 | 312 | 143 | 169 | 291 | 111 | 180 |
| Meat and meat products, game and poultry | (279) | (123) | (156) | (318) | (171) | (147) | (184) | (113) | (73) |
| Meat and meat products (other than poultry) | 153 | 73 | 80 | 210 | 126 | 84 | 141 | 87 | 54 |
| Poultry meat and poultry meat products | 126 | 50 | 76 | 108 | 45 | 63 | 43 | 26 | 17 |
| Other products | | | | | | | | | |
| Cereals and bakery products | 51 | 30 | 21 | 62 | 40 | 22 | 198 | 104 | 94 |
| Cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea | 19 | 5 | 14 | 18 | 09 | 9 | 43 | 23 | 20 |
| Confectionery, honey and royal jelly | 68 | 18 | 50 | 114 | 44 | 70 | 81 | 33 | 48 |
| Dietetic foods, food supplements and fortified foods | 20 | 11 | 9 | 54 | 35 | 19 | 91 | 58 | 33 |
| Eggs and egg products | 11 | 4 | 7 | 10 | 7 | 3 | 14 | 10 | 4 |
| Fats and oils | 79 | 36 | 43 | 65 | 31 | 34 | 17 | 10 | 7 |
| Food additives | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Fruit and vegetables | 242 | 49 | 193 | 332 | 74 | 258 | 331 | 72 | 259 |
| Herbs and spices | 228 | 103 | 130 | 308 | 109 | 199 | 161 | 49 | 112 |
| Ices and desserts | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| Materials and articles intended to come into contact with foodstuffs | 36 | 11 | 25 | 186 | 58 | 128 | 189 | 77 | 112 |
| Milk and milk products | 48 | 32 | 16 | 56 | 38 | 18 | 38 | 27 | 11 |
| Nut and nut products, snacks | 778 | 19 | 759 | 847 | 47 | 800 | 706 | 34 | 672 |
| Prepared dishes | 22 | 13 | 9 | 32 | 22 | 10 | 26 | 10 | 16 |
| Soups, broths and sauces | 65 | 33 | 32 | 49 | 31 | 18 | 44 | 12 | 32 |
| Other food products / mixed | 5 | 1 | 4 | 11 | 3 | 8 | 18 | 6 | 12 |
| Total | 2588 | 691 | 1897 | 3158 | 956 | 2202 | 2874 | 912 | 1962 |

Notifications by hazard category

| hazard category | total | alert | information | border control - import rejected | border control - screening sample | company's own check | consumer complaint | market control |
|---|-------------|------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| (potentially) pathogenic micro-organisms | 293 | 147 | 146 | 40 | 19 | 67 | 12 | 155 |
| adulteration | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| adverse effect / allergic reaction | 27 | 24 | 3 | - | - | 6 | 9 | 12 |
| bad or insufficient controls | 34 | 13 | 21 | 18 | - | 1 | 3 | 12 |
| biocontaminants (other) | 46 | 17 | 29 | 11 | 6 | - | 8 | 21 |
| biotoxins (other) | 38 | 25 | 13 | 4 | - | 2 | 5 | 27 |
| chemical contamination (other) | 31 | 15 | 16 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 20 |
| composition | 137 | 68 | 69 | 24 | - | 3 | 5 | 105 |
| feed additives | 11 | 7 | 4 | - | 1 | - | - | 10 |
| food additives | 237 | 73 | 164 | 112 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 113 |
| foreign bodies | 99 | 49 | 50 | 30 | - | 10 | 39 | 20 |
| GMO / novel food | 151 | 70 | 81 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 130 |
| heavy metals | 229 | 72 | 157 | 114 | 18 | 6 | 2 | 89 |
| industrial contaminants (other) | 73 | 44 | 29 | 14 | 5 | 6 | - | 48 |
| labelling absent/incomplete/incorrect | 16 | 6 | 10 | 8 | - | 1 | 5 | 2 |
| microbiological contamination | 54 | 26 | 28 | 24 | - | 2 | 13 | 15 |
| migration | 127 | 57 | 70 | 13 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 109 |
| mycotoxins | 874 | 74 | 800 | 722 | 24 | 12 | 2 | 114 |
| not determined / other | 116 | 41 | 75 | 45 | - | 2 | 1 | 68 |
| organoleptic aspects | 68 | 31 | 37 | 24 | 2 | 6 | 13 | 23 |
| packaging defective / incorrect | 19 | 4 | 15 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| parasitic infestation | 20 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 3 | - | 3 | 10 |
| pesticide residues | 94 | 15 | 79 | 15 | 10 | - | - | 69 |
| radiation | 29 | 11 | 18 | 11 | 1 | 2 | - | 15 |
| residues of veterinary medicinal products | 116 | 30 | 86 | 50 | 19 | - | - | 47 |
| TSE's | 7 | 7 | - | - | - | 4 | - | 3 |
| Total | 2947 | 938 | 2009 | 1310 | 123 | 142 | 133 | 1239 |

Please note that a consignment might originate from more than one country.

Notifications by notifying country

| COUNTRY | number of notifications 2006 | | Alert notifications 2006 | | Information notifications 2006 | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|----------|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------------|----------|
| AUSTRIA | 71 | ↑ | 38 | ↑ | 33 | ↑ |
| BELGIUM | 80 | ↑ | 44 | ↑ | 36 | ↑ |
| CYPRUS | 41 | ↓ | 15 | ↓ | 26 | ↓ |
| CZECH REPUBLIC | 76 | ↑ | 44 | ↑ | 32 | ↑ |
| DENMARK | 114 | ↑ | 61 | ↑ | 53 | ↑ |
| ESTONIA | 25 | ↓ | 17 | = | 8 | ↓ |
| FINLAND | 79 | ↑ | 30 | = | 49 | ↑ |
| FRANCE | 94 | ↓ | 43 | ↓ | 51 | ↓ |
| GERMANY | 421 | ↓ | 163 | ↓ | 258 | ↓ |
| GREECE | 110 | ↑ | 12 | ↑ | 98 | ↓ |
| HUNGARY | 33 | ↓ | 15 | ↑ | 18 | ↓ |
| ICELAND | 3 | ↓ | 1 | ↓ | 2 | ↓ |
| IRELAND | 14 | ↓ | 11 | ↓ | 3 | = |
| ITALY | 556 | ↓ | 143 | ↓ | 413 | ↓ |
| LATVIA | 19 | ↓ | 6 | ↓ | 13 | ↓ |
| LIECHTENSTEIN | - | = | - | = | - | = |
| LITHUANIA | 27 | ↓ | 5 | ↓ | 22 | ↓ |
| LUXEMBOURG | 7 | = | 5 | ↑ | 2 | ↓ |
| MALTA | 16 | ↓ | 3 | ↓ | 13 | ↓ |
| NETHERLANDS | 163 | ↑ | 30 | = | 133 | ↑ |
| NORWAY | 54 | ↓ | 18 | ↓ | 36 | ↓ |
| POLAND | 103 | ↑ | 13 | ↑ | 90 | ↑ |
| PORTUGAL | 20 | ↑ | 6 | ↓ | 14 | ↑ |
| SLOVAKIA | 49 | ↑ | 38 | ↑ | 11 | ↓ |
| SLOVENIA | 61 | ↓ | 29 | ↑ | 32 | ↓ |
| SPAIN | 223 | ↓ | 16 | ↑ | 207 | ↓ |
| SWEDEN | 61 | ↑ | 37 | ↑ | 24 | ↑ |
| UNITED KINGDOM | 351 | ↑ | 66 | ↓ | 285 | ↑ |
| COMMISSION SERVICES | 3 | ↑ | 3 | ↑ | - | = |
| Total 2006 | 2874 | ↓ | 912 | ↓ | 1962 | ↓ |

Notifications by country of origin of the product

| COUNTRY | Number | | COUNTRY | Number | | COUNTRY | Number | | COUNTRY | Number | |
|------------------------|--------|---|---------------------|--------|---|-----------------------|--------|---|--|--------|---|
| CHINA | 263 | ↑ | AUSTRALIA | 17 | ↓ | SWEDEN | 6 | ↓ | ALBANIA | 1 | ↓ |
| TURKEY | 254 | ↑ | LATVIA | 16 | ↑ | SWITZERLAND | 6 | ↓ | ALGERIA | 1 | = |
| IRAN | 244 | ↓ | HUNGARY | 14 | ↓ | F.Y.R.OF MACEDONIA | 6 | ↓ | BENIN | 1 | ↓ |
| THE UNITED STATES | 236 | ↑ | IRELAND | 12 | ↑ | ECUADOR | 5 | = | BOLIVIA | 1 | ↓ |
| GERMANY | 117 | ↑ | MALAYSIA | 12 | ↑ | GEORGIA | 5 | = | BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA | 1 | ↓ |
| SPAIN | 117 | ↓ | PORTUGAL | 12 | ↑ | GREENLAND | 5 | - | CAMBODIA | 1 | - |
| ITALY | 94 | ↓ | REPUBLIC OF KOREA | 12 | ↓ | PARAGUAY | 5 | ↓ | COMOROS | 1 | - |
| BRAZIL | 90 | ↓ | BULGARIA | 11 | = | ROMANIA | 5 | ↑ | CONGO | 1 | = |
| FRANCE | 86 | ↓ | IVORY COAST | 11 | ↑ | TAIWAN | 5 | ↑ | CUBA | 1 | - |
| INDIA | 86 | ↓ | NORWAY | 11 | ↓ | URUGUAY | 5 | ↑ | EL SALVADOR | 1 | - |
| THAILAND | 86 | ↓ | ISRAEL | 10 | ↑ | YEMEN | 5 | ↑ | ERITREA | 1 | - |
| ARGENTINA | 75 | ↑ | SUDAN | 10 | ↑ | DOMINICAN REPUBLIC | 4 | ↑ | GUINEA | 1 | = |
| VIETNAM | 68 | ↓ | SLOVAKIA | 9 | ↓ | FJI | 4 | - | HONDURAS | 1 | - |
| UNITED KINGDOM | 67 | ↑ | SRI LANKA | 9 | ↑ | PERU | 4 | = | KAZAKHSTAN | 1 | - |
| POLAND | 63 | ↑ | CANADA | 8 | ↑ | SLOVENIA | 4 | ↑ | KUWAIT | 1 | - |
| THE NETHERLANDS | 46 | ↓ | CHILE | 8 | ↓ | AFGHANISTAN | 3 | ↑ | MADAGASCAR | 1 | = |
| GHANA | 44 | ↓ | UNKNOWN ORIGIN | 8 | ↓ | CYPRUS | 3 | ↓ | MAURITIUS | 1 | ↓ |
| INDONESIA | 43 | ↓ | LEBANON | 8 | ↑ | LUXEMBOURG | 3 | = | MONGOLIA | 1 | - |
| THE PHILIPPINES | 41 | ↑ | NEW ZEALAND | 8 | ↑ | MALAWI | 3 | ↓ | MOZAMBIQUE | 1 | - |
| DENMARK | 31 | ↓ | COLOMBIA | 7 | ↑ | NAMIBIA | 3 | ↓ | MYANMAR | 1 | ↓ |
| AUSTRIA | 30 | ↑ | CROATIA | 7 | ↓ | SAUDI ARABIA | 3 | = | REUNION | 1 | - |
| EGYPT | 30 | ↑ | JAPAN | 7 | ↓ | SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO | 3 | * | SERBIA | 1 | - |
| BANGLADESH | 29 | ↑ | LITHUANIA | 7 | ↓ | VENEZUELA | 3 | ↑ | SURINAME | 1 | = |
| BELGIUM | 29 | ↑ | REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA | 7 | ↑ | ANGOLA | 2 | ↓ | THE MALDIVES | 1 | = |
| CHINA (HONG KONG) | 29 | ↓ | SINGAPORE | 7 | ↑ | KOSOVO (UNSCR1244) | 2 | = | THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES | 1 | = |
| NIGERIA | 29 | ↓ | SOUTH AFRICA | 7 | ↓ | COSTA RICA | 2 | ↓ | TOGO | 1 | = |
| THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION | 25 | ↓ | TUNISIA | 7 | ↓ | ETHIOPIA | 2 | ↑ | TONGA | 1 | - |
| MOROCCO | 23 | ↑ | AZERBIJAN | 6 | ↓ | FINLAND | 2 | ↑ | UGANDA | 1 | ↓ |
| CZECH REPUBLIC | 21 | ↑ | ESTONIA | 6 | ↑ | GAMBIA | 2 | - | ZAMBIA | 1 | - |
| PAKISTAN | 20 | ↓ | KENYA | 6 | ↑ | GRENADA | 2 | - | ZIMBABWE | 1 | ↓ |
| GREECE | 19 | ↓ | OMAN | 6 | = | MALTA | 2 | ↓ | | | |
| UZBEKISTAN | 19 | ↑ | PANAMA | 6 | ↑ | SIERRA LEONE | 2 | ↑ | | | |
| UKRAINE | 18 | ↓ | SENEGAL | 6 | ↓ | TANZANIA | 2 | = | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | Not listed in 2005 | | - |
| | | | | | | | | | Number of notifications for Serbia and Montenegro before the split | | * |

Please note that a consignment might originate from more than one country.

Notifications by notifying country and hazard category

| Hazard category | AT | BE | CY | CZ | DE | DK | EE | ES | FI | FR | GB | GR | HU | IE | IS | IT | LT | LU | LV | MT | NL | NO | PL | PT | SE | SI | SK | CS |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| (potentially) pathogenic micro-organisms | 3 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 20 | 39 | 3 | 10 | 25 | 21 | 25 | - | - | - | 1 | 45 | 2 | 2 | - | 1 | 3 | 16 | 14 | 1 | 37 | 3 | 3 | - |
| adulteration | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| adverse effect / allergic reaction | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 3 | 1 | - | 9 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 4 | - | 2 | - |
| bad or insufficient controls | 2 | - | 5 | 2 | 6 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | - | - | 7 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | - |
| biocontaminants (other) | 6 | 1 | 1 | - | 10 | 2 | - | 2 | 4 | 2 | 5 | - | - | - | - | 9 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 3 | - | - |
| biotoxins (other) | 6 | 1 | - | - | 4 | 1 | - | 6 | 1 | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 14 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| chemical contamination (other) | - | 1 | - | 3 | 3 | - | - | 1 | 4 | - | 4 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 6 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | 2 | - |
| composition | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 39 | 5 | 3 | 7 | - | 4 | 11 | 11 | 3 | - | - | 31 | - | - | - | - | - | 7 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| feed additives | 1 | - | - | - | 5 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| food additives | 2 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 14 | 5 | 10 | 40 | 7 | 8 | 17 | 21 | 1 | 2 | - | 58 | 7 | - | 4 | 1 | - | 3 | 4 | 2 | - | 5 | 12 | - |
| foreign bodies | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 3 | - | 6 | 24 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | - | 2 | - | 5 | 1 | 21 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| GMO / novel food | 42 | 3 | 3 | - | 25 | 9 | - | - | 7 | 3 | 11 | 2 | - | 4 | - | 5 | - | 1 | - | 7 | 6 | 7 | 4 | - | 8 | 4 | - | - |
| heavy metals | 3 | 13 | 3 | 3 | 21 | 1 | - | 30 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 17 | 1 | 1 | - | 86 | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | 9 | 6 | - | 8 | 2 | - |
| industrial contaminants (other) | - | 9 | 1 | 1 | 10 | - | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 22 | - | - | - | - | 4 | 3 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 3 | 1 | - | 1 | 8 | - |
| labelling absent/incomplete/incorrect | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 7 | - | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| microbiological contamination | - | - | 1 | 4 | 2 | 7 | - | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 16 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 13 | - | - | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| migration | 1 | 9 | - | 7 | 19 | 2 | - | 1 | 6 | - | - | 10 | 1 | - | - | 59 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 10 | - |
| mycotoxins | 3 | 6 | 3 | 29 | 192 | 12 | - | 96 | 10 | 32 | 127 | 34 | 6 | - | - | 141 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 120 | 5 | 18 | 4 | 8 | 10 | 11 | - |
| not determined / other | 1 | 4 | 5 | - | 14 | 3 | - | 4 | - | 1 | 8 | 3 | 6 | - | - | 36 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | 6 | 3 | 1 |
| organoleptic aspects | 1 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 8 | - | - | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 | - | - | 6 | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 9 | 1 | - | 3 | 1 | - |
| packaging defective / incorrect | - | - | - | - | - | 8 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | 5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| parasitic infestation | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 9 | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| pesticide residues | - | 1 | - | 4 | 14 | 4 | - | 3 | 3 | 1 | 13 | - | 6 | - | 1 | 11 | 3 | - | - | - | 16 | 7 | 1 | - | 2 | 4 | - | - |
| radiation | - | 1 | - | - | - | 4 | - | 5 | 9 | - | 5 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| residues of veterinary medicinal products | - | 10 | - | 2 | 10 | - | - | 6 | - | - | 50 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 14 | - | - | 4 | - | 4 | 1 | 11 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| TSEs | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 4 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total | 74 | 82 | 41 | 80 | 425 | 122 | 25 | 223 | 87 | 95 | 355 | 112 | 33 | 14 | 3 | 574 | 27 | 7 | 21 | 16 | 164 | 55 | 111 | 20 | 62 | 65 | 50 | 4 |

Please note that notifications that reported on more than one hazard category are counted more than once.

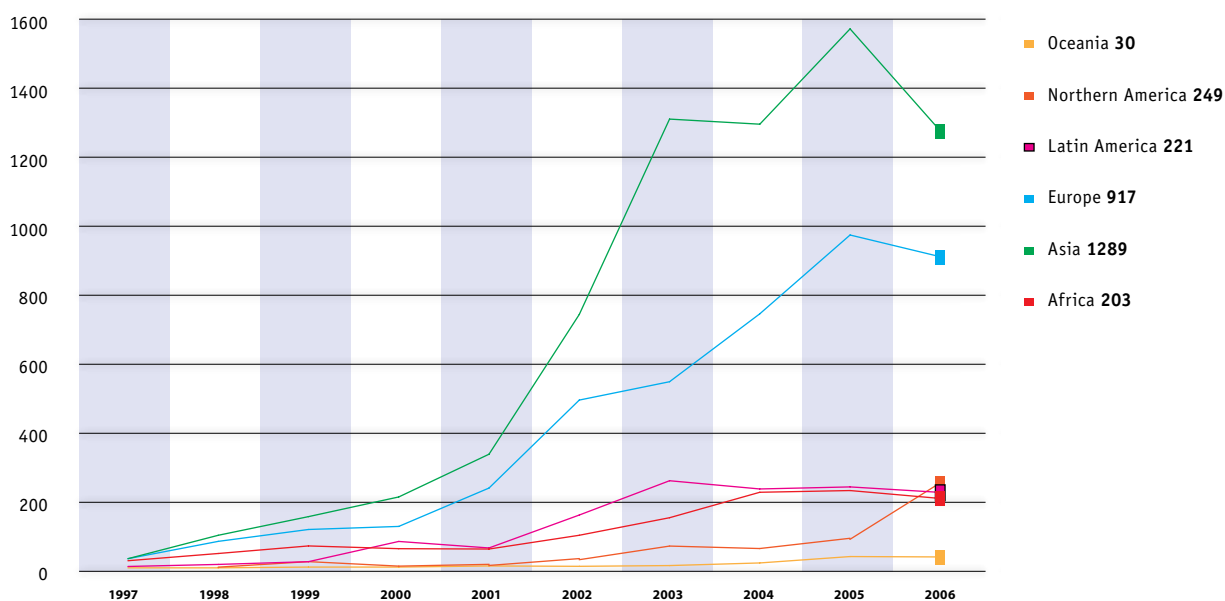
1 CS: Commission Services (RASFF team).

Notifications by origin of the product, classified by world region

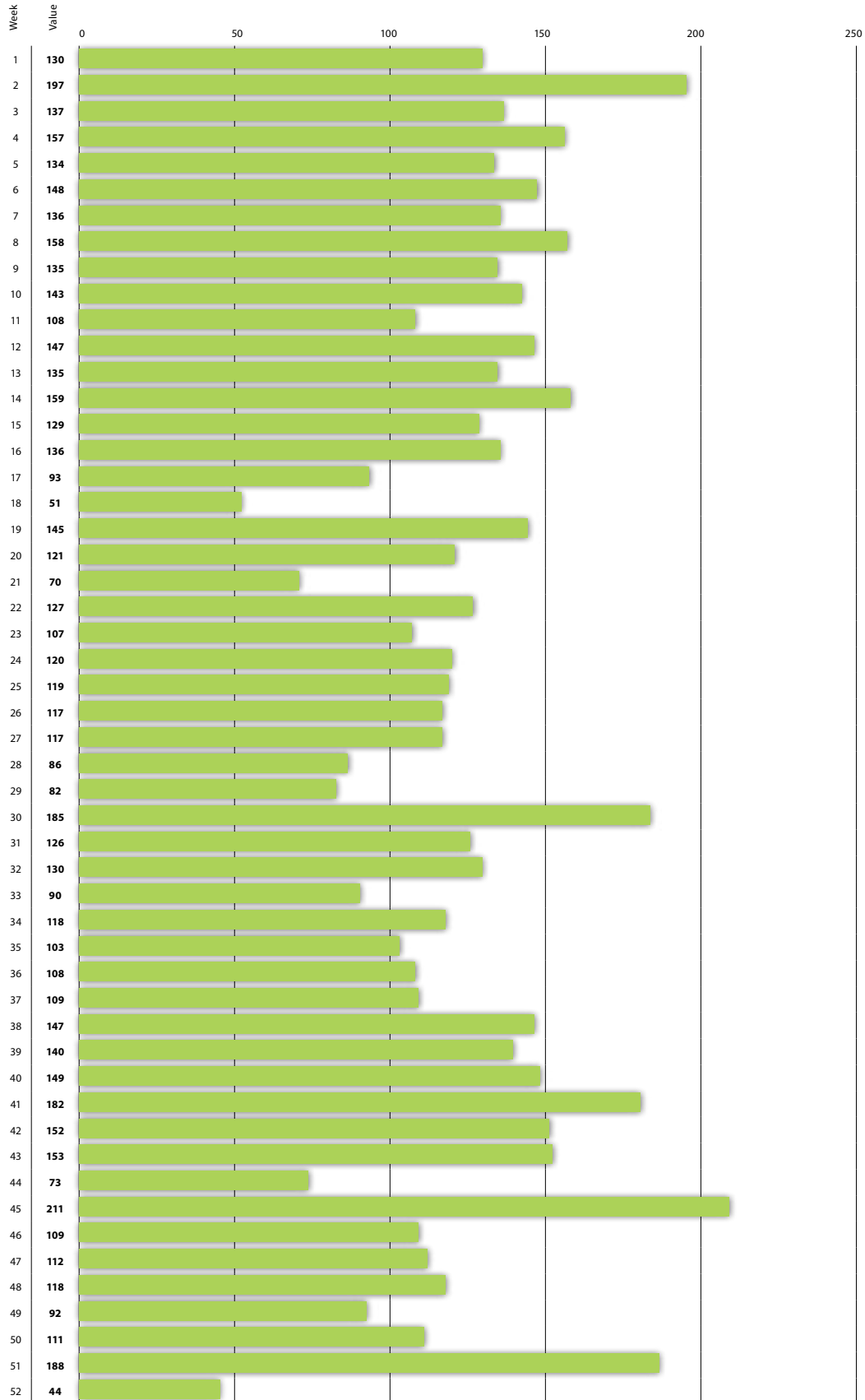
| World region | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Eastern Africa | 5 | 12 | 8 | 8 | 4 | 8 | 15 | 6 | 21 | 22 |
| Middle Africa | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | 4 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 3 |
| Northern Africa | 5 | 15 | 23 | 18 | 28 | 32 | 73 | 67 | 61 | 71 |
| Southern Africa | - | - | 22 | 6 | 7 | 32 | 25 | 33 | 25 | 10 |
| Western Africa | 12 | 16 | 11 | 23 | 17 | 20 | 33 | 114 | 109 | 97 |
| Eastern Asia | 6 | 22 | 32 | 49 | 82 | 163 | 180 | 205 | 314 | 317 |
| South central Asia | 12 | 29 | 53 | 73 | 100 | 150 | 649 | 655 | 677 | 412 |
| South eastern Asia | 7 | 31 | 37 | 53 | 100 | 280 | 270 | 224 | 324 | 259 |
| Western Asia | 3 | 15 | 30 | 35 | 54 | 155 | 225 | 225 | 277 | 301 |
| Eastern Europe | 2 | 29 | 24 | 11 | 11 | 42 | 57 | 91 | 155 | 173 |
| Northern Europe | 3 | 16 | 13 | 25 | 38 | 85 | 109 | 157 | 156 | 158 |
| Southern Europe | 9 | 12 | 25 | 28 | 108 | 145 | 162 | 221 | 330 | 269 |
| Western Europe | 14 | 22 | 52 | 59 | 79 | 223 | 221 | 280 | 338 | 317 |
| Caribbean | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 4 | 2 | 2 | 7 |
| Central America | 1 | 2 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 10 | 10 | 19 | 16 | 10 |
| South America | 4 | 9 | 17 | 68 | 56 | 145 | 241 | 210 | 219 | 204 |
| Northern America | - | 3 | 16 | 6 | 8 | 25 | 62 | 58 | 85 | 249 |
| Australia and New Zealand | 1 | - | 3 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 13 | 31 | 25 |
| Melanesia | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 4 |
| Polynesia | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |

A product might originate from more than one country/world region.

Notifications by world regions 1997 - 2006



Overview of total exchanges in 2006





The Commission's RASFF Team members are:



From left to right:

Adrianus ten Velden, Paola Ferraro, Magdalena Blaszkowska, Jan Baele,
Magdalena Havlíková, Anna Mlynarczyk, José Luis De Felipe.

European Commission

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