



Issue | March 2024



NEWS LETTER

Dear Safefood-Online users,

In March, there were 505 new notifications in the Safefood-Online database. This is a significant increase compared to February. You can find the evaluation as usual under point 1.

Point 2 "News on pesticides and contaminants" provides information about new maximum levels for bifenazate. We also report on a study on PFAS in fruits and vegetables and on polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in smoked paprika powder.

News on the topics about food safety and food fraud can be found under points 3 and 4.

To monitor food offered via Internet, the German Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL) has set up the central office "G@ZIELT" (Joint Central Office for the Control of Products of the LFGB and tobacco products traded via the Internet).



Source: BVL

In 2022, 534 potentially risky products were identified in online trade. Further information can be found in the [annual report for 2022](#).

We hope that also this issue of the Safefood-Online Newsletter is interesting for you and we are of course looking forward to your opinion.

Your Safefood-Online Team

1. Notifications in Safefood-Online: March 2024

In March, the number of new notifications in Safefood-Online increased significantly compared to the previous months:

- **March 2024:** 505
- February 2024: 440
- January 2024: 389

The notifications from February 2024 are divided as follows:

- Alert notifications: 118
- Border rejections: 146
- Information messages: 241

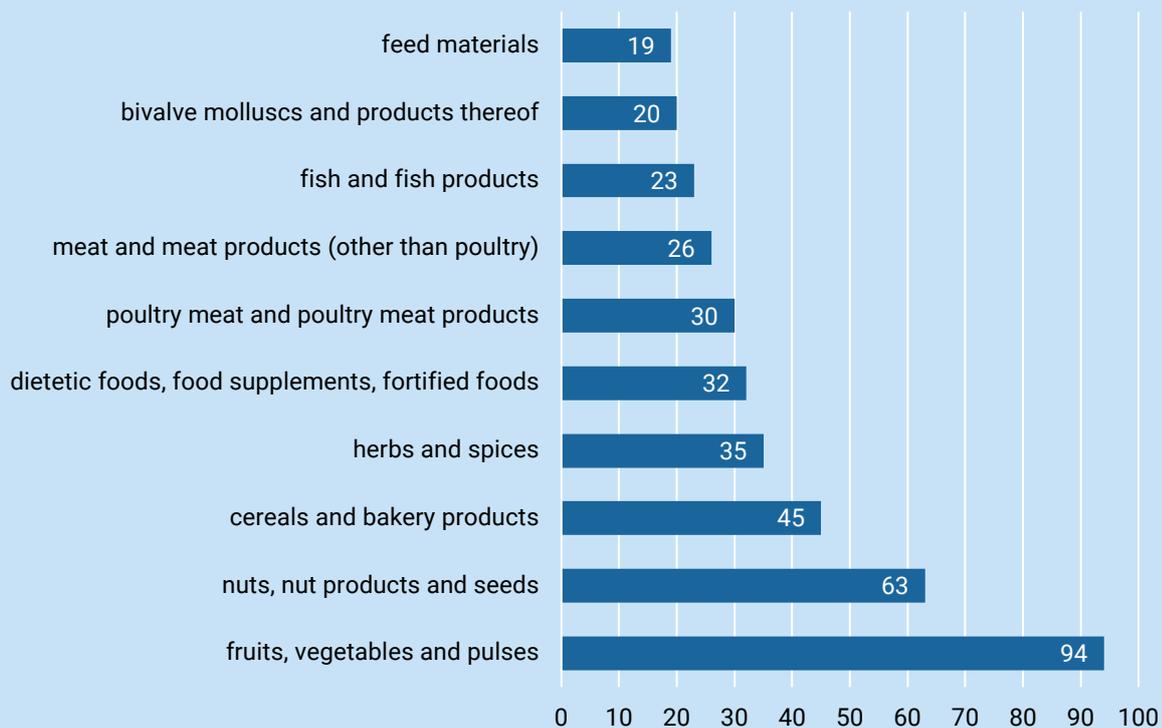


Note:

Only the RASFF notifications are included in the comparison, as the notifications from the EU Monthly Food Fraud Summary Report are not published until the middle of the following month.

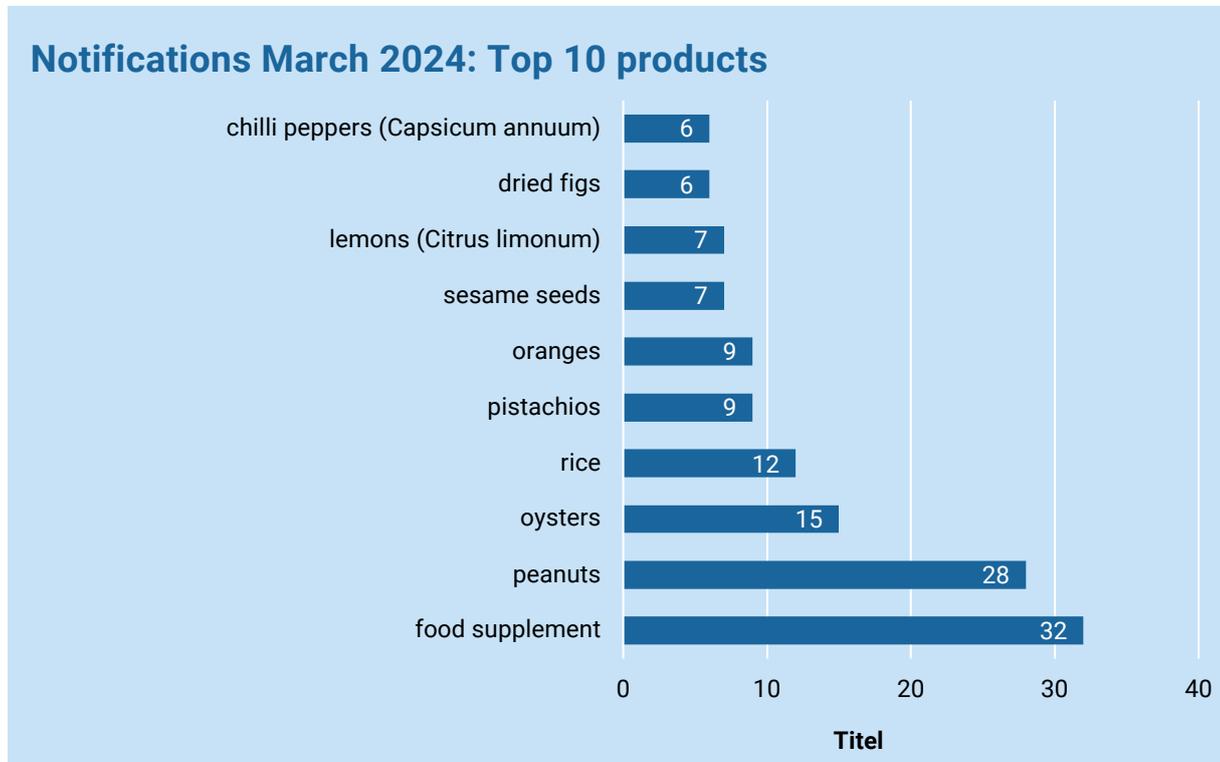
The product category fruit, vegetables and pulses came first in the evaluation by product category with 94 notifications. 65 notifications concerned findings of pesticides, 30 notifications (46% of the pesticide notifications) were due to chlorpyrifos. The product category nuts, nut products and seeds followed in second place with 63 notifications, nearly 50% were related to aflatoxins (21 notifications for peanuts and 8 notifications for pistachios). The product category cereals and bakery products was in third place with 45 notifications:

Notifications March 2024: Top 10 product categories



1. Notifications in Safefood-Online: March 2024

In March, food supplements once again took first place in the evaluation by product with 32 notifications, followed by peanuts with 28 notifications and oysters with 15. Here, all notifications were due to noroviruses. In 10 cases the oysters came from France and the Netherlands and Ireland were the country of origin in 3 and 2 cases:



In the evaluation of notifications by hazard category, pathogenic micro-organisms were ranking in first place with 120 notifications. Salmonella was the cause in 61 cases. Pesticides were in second place with 102 notifications (30 of which related to chlorpyrifos), followed by mycotoxins with 57 notifications:

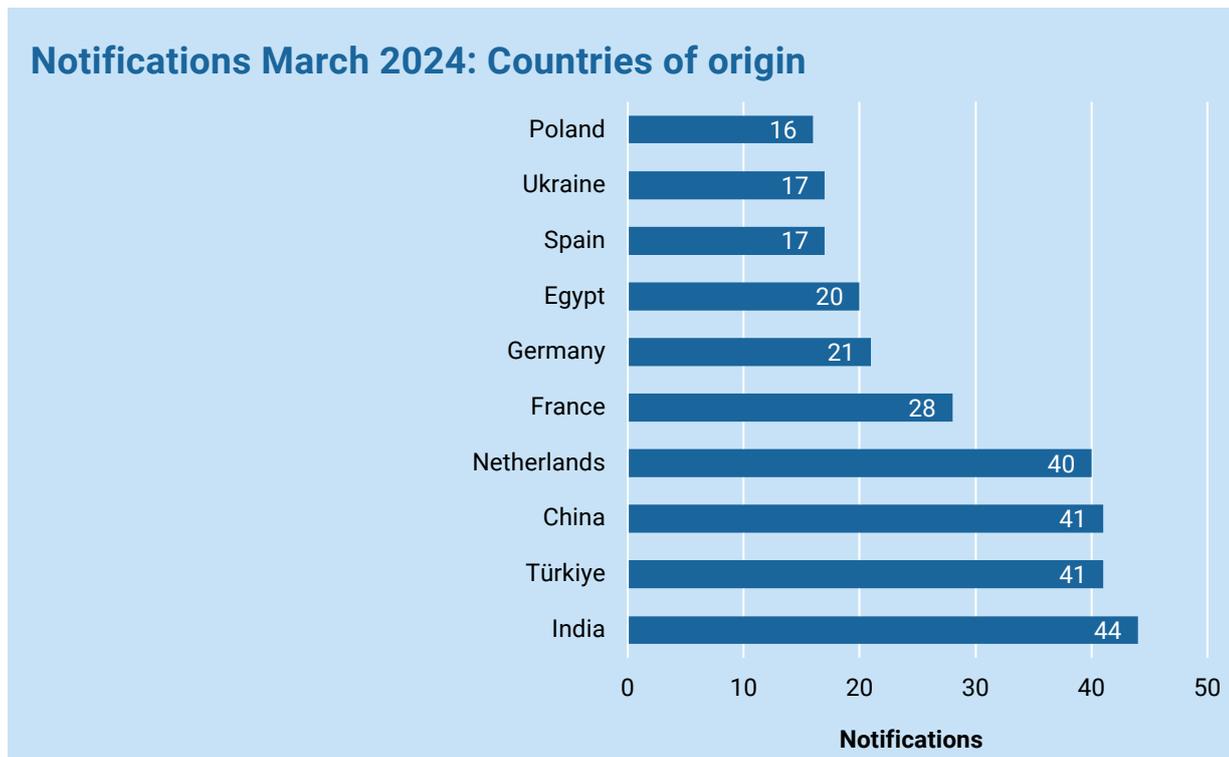


1. Notifications in Safefood-Online: March 2024

In terms of hazards, salmonella ranked first with 61 notifications, followed by aflatoxins and chlorpyrifos with 47 and 30 notifications:



Finally, the evaluation of the notifications according to the country of origin of the products:



India ranks first in terms of product origin with 44 notifications. Türkiye and China are following in second and third place each with 41 notifications.

2. Update on pesticides and contaminants



Regulation (EU) 2024/891

Regulation 2024/891 amended Annexes II and V to Regulation (EC) 396/2005 as regards the maximum residue levels of:

- bifenazate

in or on certain products. The new maximum levels apply from October 14, 2024.

PFAS in fruits and vegetables

According to a **study** recently presented by the Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe consumers in Europe are increasingly exposed to a cocktail of PFAS pesticides through food:

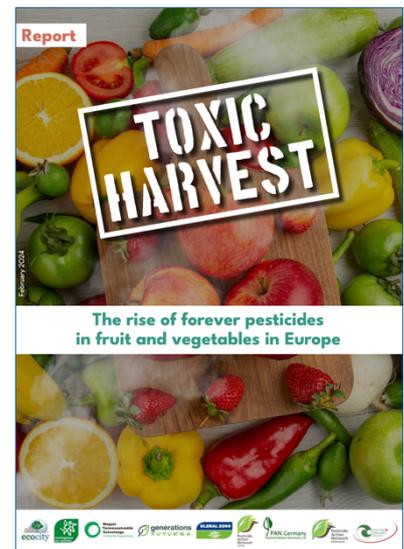
- Between 2011 and 2021, residues of 31 different PFAS pesticides were detected in fruits and vegetables
- Within 10 years, the number of fruits and vegetables containing residues of at least one PFAS has tripled
- In 2021, fruits grown in Europe such as strawberries (37%), peaches (35%) and apricots (31%) were particularly contaminated and often contained cocktails of three to four different PFAS

PAN Europe concludes that fresh fruits and vegetables represent a direct and systematic route of exposure for consumers. The results give rise to serious environmental

and human health concerns. Therefore, PAN Europe is urgently calling for a ban on all PFAS pesticides.

In light of the results of this study, the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) published a **statement** on February 29,

2024, stating that no specific concentration information is provided and therefore a risk assessment based on the available data is not possible.



Source: PAN Europe

Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) in smoked paprika powder

In connection with the findings of high levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) from official food monitoring in Germany, the German BfR published a **statement** on March 21, 2024 and concluded that "from the MOEs (**Margin of Exposure**) determined, taking into account the existing uncertainties, it can be concluded that the PAH levels in the samples tested can be considered of little concern with regard to public health. However, there is a lack of data on long-term consumption quantities and consumption frequencies for a reliable assessment of the situation".



- 🕒 Germany: 15 years of the "Ohne GenTechnik" seal: Record sales on the anniversary
- 🕒 Case reports of tropane alkaloid contamination in spinach from Italy and its potential implications for consumer health

Food Safety

- 🕒 Root-Cause-Analysis (RCA)
- 🕒 Regulation of New Genomic Techniques: Please read the fine print!
- 🕒 US: FDA confirms contamination of children's applesauce; theorizes it was intentional
- 🕒 EFSA: Report for 2022 on the results from the monitoring of veterinary medicinal product residues and other substances in live animals and animal products
- 🕒 Spain: Prevalence, identification and antimicrobial resistance of *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Listeria* spp. isolated from poultry and pork meat
- 🕒 Finland: Finnish officials are investigating the connection between a hepatitis E-positive meat product and a rise in infections in the country.
- 🕒 EFSA: Risks for animal and human health related to the presence of polychlorinated naphthalenes (PCNs) in feed and food
- 🕒 Pre-washed salad behind Swedish Salmonella outbreak



Food Fraud

- 🕒 Chemists on the trail of the food fraud
- 🕒 This is food fraud: The growing problem in Australia that 'can fool anyone'
- 🕒 Review of methods for the analysis of culinary herbs and spices for authenticity
- 🕒 Serbia and the region lose tens of billions of euros from economic food fraud
- 🕒 Operations in Portugal lead to seizures of various food products
- 🕒 Proven traceability strategies using chemometrics for organic food authenticity
- 🕒 UK: Food crime - guidance for businesses
- 🕒 US: The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is issuing a public health alert for imported frozen catfish products that were illegally imported from the People's Republic of China and are ineligible for entry into the United States.
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Agri-Food Report January 2024



Source: EU-Commission

In January 2024, the European Commission published the first **EU Agri-Food Fraud Report**. The report contains reports from the iRASSF that were classified as "suspicious" (official controls, rejections at the border, complaints from whistleblowers and media reports). Not included are "suspected cases" that were not reported outside the country of origin. The monthly report contains notifications on food, feed and food contact materials, animal welfare issues in farm animals, plant protection products, veterinary medicinal products and other substances that can lead to residues and contamination in food and feed.

With this report, the EU Commission wishes to support the official supervisory authorities in the member states and food companies in further improving their measures with regard to food fraud.

Note:

The Agri-Food Fraud Network (FFN) is part of the Alert and Cooperation Network (ACN). Food Fraud Notifications (FFN) are created when there is a suspicion of fraud, i.e. a deliberate act by companies or individuals with the aim of making an economic profit. Data has been exchanged via the iRASFF online platform since 2021.

See also the topic of the month August 2023:

["Alert and Cooperation Network \(ACN\): Annual Report 2022"](#).

The report for January 2024 contains 277 suspected cases. Most of the notifications relate to the following product categories:

- Fruits and vegetables 111 notifications
- Dietetic foods, food supplements and fortified foods 44 notifications
- Cereals and bakery products 18 notifications

For further information, please refer to the linked [report](#).



Feedback

Please forward your suggestions, questions and requests regarding this newsletter directly to:
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