European Commission

RASFF
for safer food

The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed

2014 annual report

Health and Food Safety

RASFF annual report 2014

RASFF for safer food — The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed — 2014 annual report

© European Commission - Health and Food Safety - 2015

Reproduction is authorised, provided the source is acknowledged

More information about RASFF — The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed online:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/rasff/index_en.htm

Europe Direct is a service to help you find answers to your questions about the European Union.

Freephone number (*):

00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11

(*) Certain mobile telephone operators do not allow access to 00 800 numbers or these calls may be billed.

More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (http://europa.eu).

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015

Print	ISBN 978-92-79-46910-7	ISSN 1830-7302	doi:10.2875/50860	EW-AC-15-001-EN-C
PDF	ISBN 978-92-79-46909-1	ISSN 2363-0965	doi:10.2875/945461	EW-AC-15-001-EN-N

© European Union, 2015

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

Printed in Belgium

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Foreword

2014 was an important year for the team RASFF. Not only was it the year that they celebrated 35 years since the system was created, it was also a year in which significant improvements to RASFF's systems and procedures was carried out. Today, 35 years after it was created, RASFF has become more relevant than ever to Europe's food safety system.

President Juncker has identified the preparedness to face possible food crises as a priority and I believe that RASFF is the cornerstone of the system in this respect. The figures presented in this report show, indeed, that RASFF is focusing more than ever on those cases that present a significant health risk to consumers. With the future adoption by the co-legislators of the new regulation on food controls, I am sure that the vital role of the alert system will be further increased.

Already now it is possible to foresee possible areas of improvement, for instance in the integration between RASFF with other existing food safety and health systems. I am also looking forward to the outcome of the intensive review of RASFF, in the frame of the REFIT (Regulatory Fitness and Performance) programme started last year.

An important improvement is already being implemented, as part of lessons learned from the 2011 E. coli outbreak: a new faster approach to the investigation of foodborne outbreaks. This implies better coordination with public health authorities, more accurate collection of food traceability data and a precise analysis of possible causes of foodborne outbreaks. Once the cause is identified, improved traceability will allow food controllers to more swiftly target and withdraw products from the market.

Further developments in RASFF will be decided based on the results of the REFIT review, ensuring to keep the system fit for the years ahead, particularly with respect to the challenges arising from the e-commerce of foods.

I am confident to see all these developments put in place during my mandate, in line with my aim to keep the EU food chain, the safest in the world.

Acronyms used in this report

AAC	Administrative Assistance and Cooperation System
ALCON	Spanish food safety notification application
ANSES	French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety
ARfD	acute reference dose
BIP	Border Inspection Post
BTSF	Better Training for Safer Food
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
EC	European Commission
ECCP	European Commission Contact Point (for RASFF)
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
EEA	European Economic Area
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EU	European Union
EWRS	Early Warning and Response System
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDA	(US) Food and Drug Administration
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
INFOSAN	International Food Safety Authorities Network
iRASFF	RASFF's online platform
MLVA	Multiple-Locus Variable number tandem repeat Analysis
MRL	Maximum Residue Limit
NCP	National Contact Point (for RASFF)
OJ	Official Journal
ppb	parts per billion
ppm	part per million
RASFF	Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed
REFIT	Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme
SOP	standard operating procedure
STEC	shigatoxin-producing Escherichia coli
TA	tropane alkaloids
THC	tetrahydrocanabinol
TRACES	Trade Control and Expert System
TSEs	Transmissible spongiform encephalopathies
US(A)	United States (of America)
UK	United Kingdom
UVAC and USMAF	Italian food safety offices
WHO	World Health Organization

Contents

1. RASFF in 2014

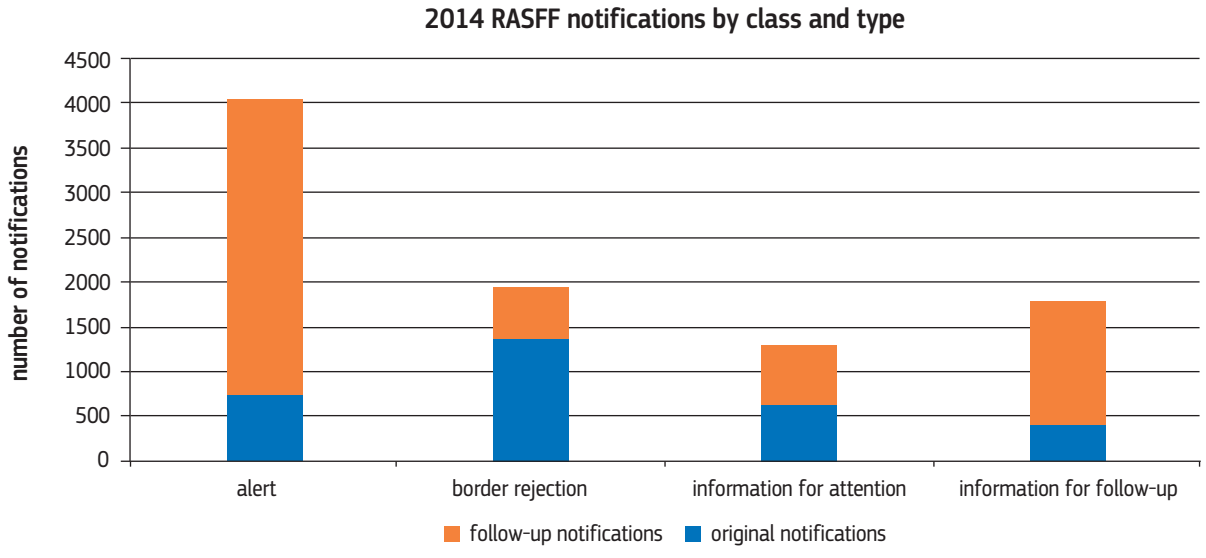
Another year onward for the RASFF, 2014 marks its 35th anniversary. It is therefore fitting that in 2014 a number of crucial initiatives for the RASFF could be successfully concluded closing a chapter for the RASFF and opening another. It has been a year of looking forward and joining efforts with other systems to face the newest challenges in the area of food safety.

More information on the successful completion of the RASFF Standard operating procedures and of the online real-time notification platform iRASFF is given under the "Focus on" section 3 of this report, together with information about the brand new "RASFF Consumers Portal" inaugurated to mark RASFF's 35th anniversary. This section 3 also reports on the progress made with the food fraud system set up after the horse meat fraud incident in 2013. You are also informed about other important work started that will shape the RASFF in the years to come. But before that we need to tell you a bit more about what was reported in RASFF in 2014.

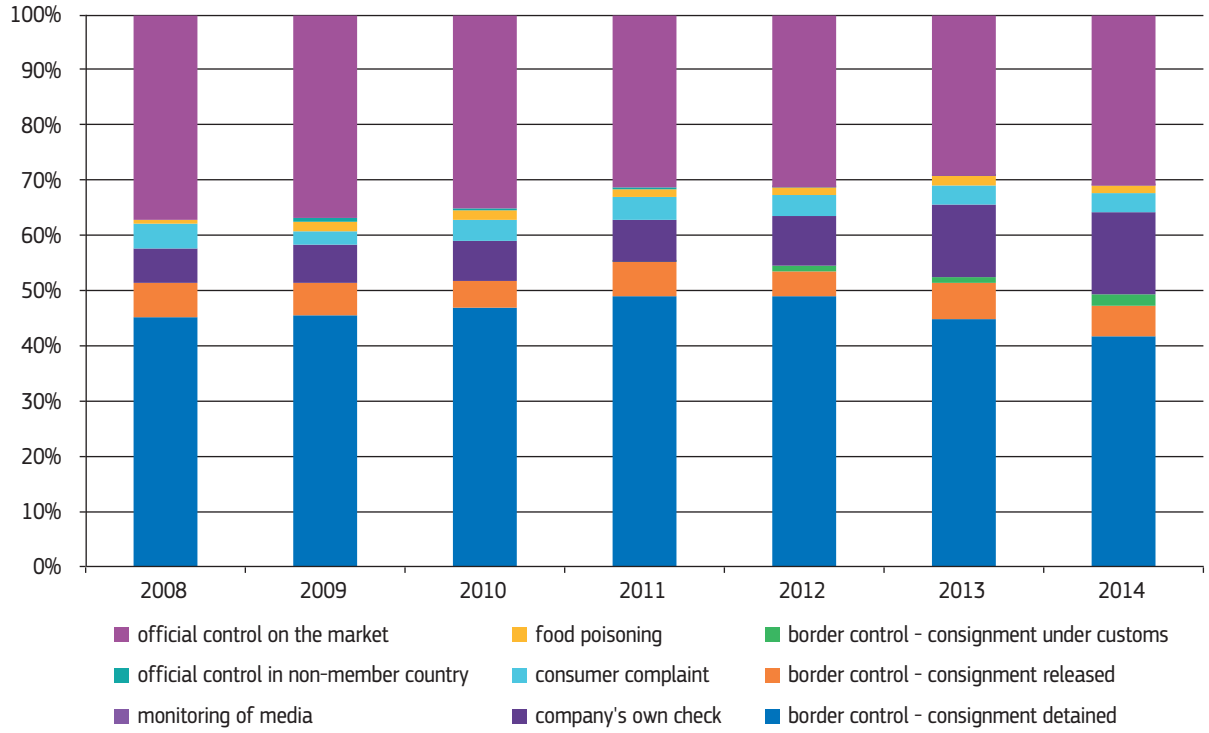
Notification numbers

In 2014, a total of 3157 original notifications were transmitted through the RASFF, of which 751 were classified as alert, 410 as information for follow-up, 623 as information for attention and 1373 as border rejection notification. These original notifications gave rise to 5910 follow-up notifications, representing an average of about 1.9 follow-ups per original notification. For alert notifications this average rises to an impressive 4.4 follow-ups per original notification.

Compared to 2013 some important differences are noticeable. The alert notifications figure has increased by more than 25% while the other notification types were reported significantly less. The overall figures present an insignificant 1.1% decrease in original notifications compared to 2013 but a 14.6% increase in follow-up notifications, resulting in an overall increase of 8.7%. The overall conclusion can thus be that in 2014, RASFF focused on its "core business" being enabling competent authorities to withdraw foods or feeds from the market presenting a significant risk to consumers, thereby increasing the efficiency of the network. Follow-ups to alerts make this possible through informing other countries and authorities about the risk, analytical results, measures taken and traceability of the products at risk.



RASFF notifications by notification basis



The RASFF news transmitted internally in the network are not counted in the above figures nor represented in the charts in this report. There have been 41 RASFF news sent together with 235 follow-ups. This means that information transmitted as RASFF news increased by 13.6% compared to 2013.

For explanation of the different notification types within RASFF please refer to the section 4 "A quick manual on the RASFF". Details of these and other figures in the form of fine charts and tables are given in section 5 "RASFF Facts and Figures".

After receipt of follow-up information, 19 alert, 26 information and 15 border rejection notifications were withdrawn. Notifications that were withdrawn are further excluded from statistics and charts.

The European Commission Contact Point (ECCP) of the RASFF decided, after consulting the notifying countries, not to upload 111 notifications onto the system because, after evaluation, they were found not to satisfy the criteria for a RASFF notification (rejected notifications). This represents a 108% decrease compared to 2013.

RASFF notifications are triggered by a variety of things. Just under half of the total number of notifications concern controls at the outer EEA borders[1] in points of entry or border inspection posts when the consignment was not accepted for import ("border control – consignment detained"). In some cases, a sample was taken for analysis at the border but the consignment was not held there but was forwarded to its destination under customs' seals ("border control – consignment under customs"). This means that it should remain stored there until the result of the analysis is available. In other cases the consignment was released ("border control - consignment released") without awaiting the analytical result, which means that the consignment would need to be retraced if the result is unfavourable and the product needs to be withdrawn from the market.

The second largest category of notifications concerns official controls on the internal market[2]. Three special types of notifications are identified: when a consumer complaint, a company notifying the outcome of an own-check, or a food poisoning was at the basis of the notification.

A small number of notifications are triggered by an official control in a non-member country. If

1 Since 2009, including Switzerland.

2 Products placed on the market in one of the member countries including the EEA countries Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland.

a non-member country informs a RASFF member of a risk found during its official controls concerning a product that may be on the market in one of the member countries, the RASFF member may notify this to the Commission for transmission to the RASFF network. In 2014 there was no such notification but there were two noteworthy RASFF news transmitted on incidents that took place in third countries:

- RASFF news 14-744 - Salmonella Hartford and Salmonella Newport in organic sprouted chia seed powder from Canada and the United States: the INFOSAN secretariat drew the attention of the Commission's RASFF team to the FDA recall notice mentioning distribution to Iceland and Slovenia. The recall notice was related to an ongoing Salmonellosis outbreak in the United States and in Canada. Further information received from Canada via INFOSAN identified distribution to the Netherlands, which informed through the RASFF of redistribution to Greece, Spain, Finland and Sweden. The US FDA informed the INFOSAN secretariat of distribution of an affected product to Bermuda, after which the INFOSAN secretariat informed the UK INFOSAN emergency contact point. The UK RASFF contact point, which performs also the role of UK INFOSAN emergency contact point, then asked the ECCP to immediately inform Bermuda through the RASFF, which it did. This incident clearly showcases the importance of the interconnectivity between RASFF and INFOSAN.

- RASFF news 14-763 - Rhizopus oryzae in probiotic dietary supplement for infants and children from the United States – ECDC informed the Commission's RASFF contact point about a US FDA recall associated with a case of infant mucormycosis with mention of distribution of the product to the UK. The Commission's RASFF contact point informed the INFOSAN secretariat, who launched an INFOSAN alert. The UK instigated a product recall of the implicated food supplement and issued a Product Recall Information Notice to consumers on their website. Around the same time, the Swedish NCP reported that they found two Swedish webpages that sold the concerned product. The UK gave information about a distribution from the UK to South Africa, Greece, Spain, New Zealand, Gibraltar, Cyprus, Portugal, Sweden, Republic of Ireland and the Isle of Man. All countries were informed through the RASFF contact points.

2. What was notified to RASFF in 2014: our selection

Heavy metals

Heavy metals can contaminate food through various sources: they can accumulate in livestock or in fish through feed consumption or due to pollution of the seas or they can migrate into food from an object used in contact with food.

Arsenic

Arsenic, which is specifically toxic in its inorganic form, was found repeatedly in food additives in 2014. It started off in the first quarter of the year with repeated notifications of arsenic (3) and lead (2) in E 153 – vegetable carbon. From July to October another 13 notifications were made of arsenic in E 331 – trisodium citrate.

Cadmium

Levels not respecting the legal limits are reported for many different foods and feeds, which is worrying. In 2014, too high levels of cadmium were most reported in squid and cuttlefish from various origins. However, in the scientific report on cadmium dietary exposure in the European population[3], EFSA found that food consumed in larger quantities had the greatest impact on dietary exposure to cadmium. As such, it calculated that water molluscs contributed for 3% to the intake whereas vegetables for 16%. In that respect, the four notifications of cadmium in spinach from Belgium may be noteworthy. A level of up to 0.39 ppm was detected which is about twice the legal limit.

Another source of cadmium notifications is migration from food contact materials such as painted glasses.

3 http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2551.htm

Lead

In all 10 notifications on cadmium migrating from food contact materials, also too high levels of lead were reported. Considering the particular risk to young children of an increased intake of lead, the use of such decorated items for drinking should be avoided if one is uncertain about the suitability of the items for food use. Other notifications reporting on transgressions of the legal limits for lead in foods were few in 2014. Three notifications on findings in game meat can perhaps be attributed to lead bullets used in hunting.

Mercury

Although mercury is occasionally reported in food supplements, the bulk of notifications (114) report on too high levels of mercury in fish. The fish species most vulnerable of having too much mercury are predatory species, such as swordfish and shark, in particular larger (and older) specimens. These fishes accumulate the mercury in the form of organic mercury (methylmercury), which is the most toxic form of mercury. It is in particular harmful for the development of the unborn child. Therefore, while the benefits of eating fish for the general population largely outweigh the risks, especially pregnant women should avoid often eating these fish species.

In 2014 more such fish was reported in RASFF coming from the EU than had been the case the previous years, 70 of the notifications concerned fish of EU origin. In 2013, there were only 51 notifications on mercury in fish of EU origin. Most of those notifications in 2014 concern swordfish, shark, tuna etc. from Spain (58) and from Portugal (15) and then from Vietnam (12), the majority of the cases having been notified by Italy (69).

Contributions from Spain and from Italy allow us to go a little deeper in the "technical" aspects of the official controls and company own-checks (only in 4 cases) that are the basis for the notifications on mercury in fish.

The Spanish experience

Spain has made an analysis of the notifications regarding mercury in fish from Spain as follows[4]:

The high incidence of RASFF notifications indicating the presence of mercury levels which exceed the legally established limits found in consignments of fish species originating in Spain and the major economic and commercial repercussions this has for our country, and also in terms of health, are reflected in the ongoing inclusion of Spain among the top ten most notified countries in the RASFF annual report in recent years. Consequently, a more detailed study of this issue is necessary with a view to detecting the real problems and thereby establishing effective solutions.

In this respect, an analysis was performed of 35 cases concerning mercury in large fish, with the detection of levels exceeding those authorised in

4 Excerpts from their report "Analysis of the RASFF notifications on the presence of mercury exceeding the legally established limits in fishery products of Spanish origin and/or provenance in 2014" sent to the ECCP in 2015

Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs notified in 2014. The files were selected on a random basis and in sufficient number to show the real situation in the previous year, since they represented more than half of total notified cases.

The fish species included in these cases are as follows:

- Shortfin mako shark (*Isurus oxyrinchus*)
- Swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*)
- Blue shark (*Prionace glauca*)
- Red snapper (*Lutjanus spp.*)
- Yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares)*
- Smooth hound (*Mustelus mustelus*)

Information was requested of the notifying country about the sampling procedure with a view to checking compliance with Regulation (EC) No 333/2007 laying down the methods of sampling and analysis for the official control of the levels of lead, cadmium, mercury, inorganic tin, 3-MCPD and benzo(a) pyrene in foodstuffs and amendments thereto. Aspects that were investigated in relation to the sampling procedure were:

- Availability of an analysis of the batch in question or raw material of origin provided by the producer
- Total quantity used for sampling
- Quantity analysed
- Prior homogenisation of the global sample
- Availability of results of the counter-analysis: whether it was performed by the company in question and also its result
- Claims by the competent authorities

According to the analysis of the Spanish contact point, the details of the sampling procedure were insufficiently covered in 95% of the notifications. For 15 of the 35 notifications investigated, these details were requested but only obtained for 11 out of the 15.

Availability of the analysis of the batch in question or raw material provided by the producer

In 24 of the 35 notifications, the companies of origin of the consignments submit favourable analyses performed in the place of origin (self-checks). In eight notifications, the analysis is double, since it was performed on the raw material and on the processed product, all with favourable results.

Total quantity on which sampling was performed: This was very variable ranging from 4.5 kg to 3800 kg. Samples of small quantities in relation to the raw material or batch of origin are unrepresentative of that batch of origin.

Prior homogenisation of the global sample

Point B.1.6. *Samples for enforcement, defence and referee purposes* of Regulation (EC) No 333/2007 states: *"The samples for enforcement, defence and referee purposes shall be taken from the homogenised global sample unless this conflicts with the rules of the Member States as regards the rights of the food business operator".*

In six notifications, it was found that there had been no prior homogenisation of the global sample and therefore that it failed to comply with the above-mentioned point of the Regulation. Consequently, it was considered that the unfavourable result affected only the sublot sampled and not the entire consignment of primary material. In one notification material from two batches was mixed to produce the sample which was therefore not in line with Regulation (EC) No 333/2007. As a result, further sampling was necessary, the result of which led to the release of batches with favourable results.

Availability of results of the counter-analysis: in five notifications, counter-analyses were performed in which favourable results were obtained. The consignments were therefore released.

The Spanish contact point made a case for "notification minimum requirements" to be more developed and systematically verified by the ECCP prior to the notification's inclusion in the RASFF, taking into consideration the provisions of the Standard Operating Procedures.

The Italian experience

Italy sent the following considerations to the ECCP relating to the subject of RASFF Notifications on mercury in fish:

It might be useful to explore if the issue is related to the fishing zone (FAO) from which Spain and Portugal source their fish. Spain and Portugal may provide data on FAO fishing areas from which the notified fish originates.

The sampling procedure followed by the Italian authorities of large consignments reflect the requirements for the sampling plans referred to in Regulation (EC) No. 333/2007.

Where sampling takes place instead in retail on lower quantities of product, the provisions of the said rules are always followed, in particular paragraph *B.3. Sampling at Retail Stage*, provides:

Sampling of foodstuffs at retail stage shall be done where possible in accordance with the sampling provisions set out in point B.2.2 of this Annex.

Where it is not possible to carry out the method of sampling set out in point B.2.2 because of the unacceptable commercial consequences (e.g. because of packaging forms, damage to the lot, etc.) or where it is practically impossible to apply the abovementioned method of sampling, an alternative method of sampling may be applied provided that it is sufficiently representative for the sampled lot or sublot and is fully documented.

In this case, the measures adopted by the Italian authorities are limited to only the batch of products sampled at retail.

Food poisoning

Since 2008, the RASFF has identified those cases where food poisoning is reported in a RASFF notification. In 2014, 50 such cases were recorded. Details are given in the table below[5].

The term food poisoning, as used in this report, covers a broader spectrum of disease symptoms than the "classical" food poisoning caused by pathogenic bacteria or viruses. As can be seen from the table below, also undesirable chemicals, the wrong composition of a food supplement or insufficient labelling not mentioning an allergenic substance can be the cause of food poisoning. In the table below, a food poisoning incident is called an outbreak when more than one person is affected by the same source of illness. It is called a multi-country outbreak if the symptoms reported in different geographical locations can be linked back to the same food. The table does not cover all outbreaks or food poisoning incidents that occurred in the EEA in 2014. It does try to cover those incidents that led to a RASFF notification. It is possible that there were food poisoning incidents that were the basis of a RASFF notification that were not identified as such. It is also possible that an incident was not reported to RASFF because the product and outbreak had a local character and had no consequences for other RASFF members.

5 There are 54 cases reported in the table but four RASFF news items were followed by RASFF notifications covering the same incidents.

case	date	reference	PA	notification type	notified by	origin	subject	distribution
1	8-Jan-14	2014.0019	?	food - information for attention	Italy	from Spain	histamine (3716 mg/kg - ppm) in vacuum packed defrozen tuna from Spain	Italy
2	17-Jan-14	2014.0070	?	food - alert	France	from Germany	Bacillus cereus (4.8x10E5; 1.5x10E5 CFU/g) in aromatic herbs mix from Germany	France and Germany
3	17-Jan-14	2014.0076	3	food - alert	France	from Spain	norovirus in fresh oysters from Spain	France
4	21-Jan-14	2014.0083	1	food - alert	Austria	from China via Belgium via Germany	anisatin (108 µg/kg - ppb) in star anise from China, via Belgium and via Germany	Austria
5	7-Feb-14	2014.0180	3	food - alert	Italy	from Italy	histamine (up to 865 mg/kg - ppm) in tuna in soya oil from Italy	Canada, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Slovakia, Switzerland and United Kingdom
6	12-Feb-14	2014.0215	1	food - alert	Italy	from Germany	hydrogen peroxide (presence in 2 out of 5 pots) in vanilla chocolate pudding from Germany	Italy
7	13-Feb-14	2014.0218	9	food - information for attention	Denmark	from the Netherlands	norovirus (GG I and GG II) in chilled oysters (Crassostrea Gigas) from the Netherlands	Denmark
8	7-Mar-14	2014.0312	8	food - information for attention	Italy	from Spain	Diarrhoeic Shellfish Poisoning (DSP) toxins - okadaic acid (190.8 µg/kg - ppb) in risotto with mussels (Mytilus galloprovincialis) from Spain	Italy
9	13-Mar-14	2014.0341	3	food - alert	Ireland	from Ireland	Diarrhoeic Shellfish Poisoning (DSP) toxins (860 µg/kg - ppb) in cooked mussel meat from Ireland	Ireland, Italy, Netherlands and United Kingdom
10	14-Mar-14	2014.0355	9	food - alert	Denmark	from France	norovirus in oysters (Crassostrea gigas) from France	Denmark
13	25-Mar-14	2014.0394	1	food - information for attention	Italy	from Italy	botulinum toxin in vegetable soup from Italy	Italy
12	25-Mar-14	2014.0405	1	food - alert	Italy	from Italy	Salmonella in wild boar sausages from Italy	Italy and United Kingdom
11	25-Mar-14	2014.0406	13	food - alert	Denmark	from France	norovirus in oysters (Crassostrea gigas) from France	
14	1-Apr-14	2014.0438	1	food - alert	Germany	from Germany	Salmonella infantis (presence /25g) in food supplement - moringa powder from Germany	Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Romania, Spain and Switzerland
15	3-Apr-14	14-736		food - news	Commission Services		foodborne outbreak (hepatitis A) caused by frozen berries	Italy and Norway
16	3-Apr-14	14-737		food - news	Commission Services		foodborne outbreak (hepatitis A) caused by frozen berries	France
17	3-Apr-14	14-738	2	food - news	Commission Services		foodborne outbreak (hepatitis A) caused by frozen berries	Sweden
18	7-Apr-14	2014.0465	3	food - alert	France	from Bulgaria and Poland via Belgium	hepatitis A virus (presence /25g) in mixed frozen berries from Poland and Bulgaria, via Belgium	Belgium and France
19	8-Apr-14	2014.0480	3**	food - information for attention	Austria	from Hungary raw material from Austria and Germany and the Netherlands	foodborne outbreak suspected to be caused by and Salmonella Stanley (1,4,5,12:d:1,2 /25g) in frozen turkey kebab from Hungary, with raw material from Austria, Germany, Hungary and the Netherlands	Austria
20	11-Apr-14	2014.0502	19	food - alert	Norway	from Germany	foodborne outbreak caused by and hepatitis A virus in berry mix buttermilk cake from Germany	Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland and United Kingdom

case	date	reference	PA	notification type	notified by	origin	subject	distribution
21	29-Apr-14	2014.0578	8	food - information for attention	Sweden	from France via the Netherlands	norovirus in chilled oysters from France, via the Netherlands	Sweden
22	14-May-14	2014.0663	9	food - information for attention	France	from Spain	Salmonella spp. (4.5.12:i : /25g) in sausage from Spain	France
23	16-May-14	2014.0681	16**	food - alert	France	from Morocco	foodborne outbreak suspected to be caused by cherry tomatoes from Morocco	Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Romania, Slovakia and United Kingdom
24	18-Jun-14	14-748		food - news	France	from Hungary	suspicion of botulinum toxin in pesto sauce with black truffles from Hungary	China, Hong Kong, Hungary and Slovakia
25	27-Jun-14	2014.0887	25	food - alert	France	from France	Salmonella kedougou in raw milk cheese Reblochon from France	Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Jordan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Caledonia, Nigeria, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom
26	30-Jun-14	2014.0891	5**	food - alert	Hungary	from Hungary	suspicion of Clostridium botulinum in pesto sauce with black truffles from Hungary	Hong Kong, Hungary and Slovakia
27	1-Jul-14	2014.09	164	food - alert	Slovakia	from Hungary	foodborne outbreak caused by and Salmonella enteritidis (presence /25g) in deep frozen pork tenderloin from Hungary	Slovakia
28	4-Jul-14	2014.0921	1	food - information for attention	Italy	from Spain	histamine (1.946 mg/kg - ppm) in chilled loins of yellowfin tuna (Thunnus albacares) from Spain	Italy
29	9-Jul-14	2014.0938	9	food - alert	France	from Germany	foodborne outbreak (Salmonella enteritidis) caused by eggs from Germany	France and Hungary
30	11-Jul-14	2014.0959	?	food - alert	Spain	from Spain	norovirus in frozen cooked mussels from Spain	Italy, Romania and Spain
31	15-Jul-14	2014.0972	23	food - alert	Sweden	packaged in Serbia via Belgium	norovirus (presence /25g) in frozen raspberries packaged in Serbia, via Belgium	Sweden
32	29-Jul-14	2014.1042	1	food - alert	Denmark	from Denmark and Spain	undeclared wheat in liquorice from Spain and relabelled in Denmark	Denmark and Germany
33	31-Jul-14	2014.1063	20	food - alert	Austria	from Germany	foodborne outbreak suspected (Salmonella enteritidis) to be caused by eggs from Germany	Austria, Croatia and Czech Republic
34	1-Aug-14	2014.1072	3	food - alert	France	from Germany	foodborne outbreak suspected (Salmonella enteritidis) to be caused by eggs from Germany	Austria, Czech Republic, France and Germany
35	13-Aug-14	14-755		food - news	Denmark	from Denmark	foodborne outbreak (20 persons affected, of which 12 died) caused by and Listeria monocytogenes in lamb-roll sausages from Denmark	Denmark, Germany, Norway and Sweden
36	15-Aug-14	2014.1150	63	food - alert	United Kingdom	from Germany	Bacillus subtilis (>3000 CFU/g) in flavoured milk from Germany	Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom

case	date	reference	PA	notification type	notified by	origin	subject	distribution
37	20-Aug-14	2014.1157	>74	food - alert	France	from Spain	Diarrhoeic Shellfish Poisoning (DSP) toxins - okadaic acid in chilled mussels from Spain	France
38	21-Aug-14	2014.1166	20	food - alert	Denmark	from Denmark	foodborne outbreak (20 persons affected, of which 12 died) caused by and Listeria monocytogenes in lamb-roll sausages from Denmark	Denmark, Germany, Norway and Sweden
39	22-Aug-14	2014.1177	1	food - alert	Norway	from Canada	Clostridium botulinum in frozen scallops from Canada	Norway
40	3-Sep-14	14-758	1	food - news	Spain	from the United States	suspicion of adverse reaction (severe cholestatic hepatitis) caused by food supplement from the United States	Spain
41	15-Sep-14	2014.1278	13	food - information for attention	Spain	from Spain	histamine (3414; 3251; 3698 mg/kg - ppm) in frozen whole tuna (Thunnus alalunga) from Spain	Spain
42	24-Sep-14	2014.1311	7	food - information for attention	Denmark	from the United Kingdom	norovirus (genogroups I and II) in oysters from the United Kingdom	Denmark
43	26-Sep-14	2014.1316	9	food - alert	Denmark	from Serbia	norovirus (G II) in raspberries from Serbia	Denmark and Germany
44	29-Sep-14	2014.1322	1	food - alert	Ireland	from the United Kingdom	traces of egg (6 mg/kg - ppm) in chocolate fudge cake kit from the United Kingdom	Ireland
45	6-Oct-14	2014.1358	1	food - alert	Hungary	from Malaysia via Romania	abnormal smell of and undeclared sulphite (37.4 mg/kg - ppm) in desiccated coconut from Malaysia, via Romania	Hungary, Romania and Slovakia
46	17-Oct-14	2014.1420	1	food - alert	Germany	from Germany via the Czech Republic	too high content of hydrogen peroxide (> 25 mg/l) in chocolate & vanilla dessert from Germany, via the Czech Republic	Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain
47	3-Nov-14	2014.1477	1**	food - alert	Netherlands	from the Czech Republic produced in Hungary	food poisoning suspected to be caused by strawberry drink from the Czech Republic, produced in Hungary	Belgium and Netherlands
48	5-Nov-14	2014.1488	?	food - alert	Norway	from Ireland processed in France	norovirus (G II) in oysters (Crassostrea gigas) from Ireland, processed in France	Norway
49	12-Nov-14	2014.1527	30**	food - alert	France	from France	food poisoning suspected to be caused by oysters from France	France, Netherlands and Sweden
50	3-Dec-14	2014.1647	2	food - alert	United Kingdom	from France	Salmonella spp. (presence /25g) in liquid egg whites from France	Italy and United Kingdom
51	5-Dec-14	2014.1661	14	food - alert	Belgium	from Spain	food poisoning suspected (trichinellose) to be caused by wild boar fillets from Spain	Belgium, France, Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden
52	10-Dec-14	2014.1687	10	food - alert	Norway	from Ireland	norovirus (GI and GII detected) in chilled oysters from Ireland	Germany and Norway
53	23-Dec-14	2014.1764	1	food - information for attention	Denmark	from Vietnam	undeclared gluten (>50 mg/kg - ppm) in dried egg noodles from Vietnam	Denmark
54	23-Dec-14	2014.1766	1	food - information for follow-up	Luxembourg	from Vietnam via Belgium	Salmonella (present /25g) and high count of Escherichia coli (550 CFU/g) in frozen tiger shrimp tails from Vietnam, via Belgium	Belgium, Finland and Luxembourg

Of the cases highlighted in the table details are given below.

anisatin in star anise from China

case 4

Star anise (Illicium verum) is a spice used in cooking or for brewing tea. The plants used should not contain any Japanese star anise (Illicium anisatum) because that plant contains the highly toxic anisatin that can be lethal if ingested.

In Germany, one person was reported with symptoms of poisoning but analysis revealed an anisatin content within the normal range of star anise intended for human consumption. It is impossible to finally determine whether Illicium anisatum fruits have been added to true star anise (Illicium verum) in this case. Illicium anisatum has a much higher concentration (approx. 10 000 x) of anisatin than Illicium verum. The sensitivity of available analytical methods for star anise is not sufficient to detect the addition of one Illicium anisatum fruit to 1 000 Illicium verum fruits. This would, however, be sufficient to trigger neurological symptoms if administered as tea, at least in infants. Germany is therefore considering placing a warning on the label of star anise for human consumption.

foodborne outbreak (hepatitis A) caused by frozen berries

cases 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20

RASFF news 14-736, 14-737 and 14-738 were created to respectively record traceability information in relation to the outbreaks with hepatitis A in Norway, France and Sweden, extending the investigations into outbreaks with an identical hepatitis A virus strain in relation to frozen (Italy, Ireland) and fresh (Netherlands) berry mixes. More information on the outcome of this investigation is given under the header *Hepatitis A*.

foodborne outbreak suspected to be caused by cherry tomatoes from Morocco

case 23

All the persons affected reported similar symptoms: a bitter and disagreeable taste, nausea and vomiting. In some cases rashes and abdominal pain have been reported. Different batches have been implicated in the cases, and two tomato varietals have been identified (round cherry tomatoes without stalks and cocktail-type round cherry tomatoes on the vine). Nevertheless, it has been ascertained that all the batches of cherry tomatoes implicated in the cases of food poisoning came from three production units located at the same place in Morocco. Contamination scenarios investigated included microbiological, pesticide residues, copper sulphate, histamine and cooling liquid used in the chiller cabinets where the tomatoes were stored. All analyses carried out were not able to confirm these hypotheses as the results were compliant.

Morocco reported on their investigations at the packing plant and production farms showing that the concerned operators comply with the requirements of food safety and traceability. The analytical results were compliant as well.

ANSES (French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety) carried out a bibliographical search in respect of three areas of 'contaminants' identified (refrigerants, pesticide residues and glycoalkaloids) as well as non-targeted analyses on the samples of tomatoes affected. The possibility of glycoalkaloids appeared to be the most plausible. The analyses conducted by ANSES highlighted the absence of tomatine and solanine but rubijervine (an alkaloid usually present in species of the Veratrum genus) has been identified to a significant extent.

foodborne outbreak (Salmonella enteritidis) caused by eggs from Germany 	cases 29, 33 and 34 *Salmonella enteritidis* had been identified in stool samples of 2 ill persons from the same French family, after a suspected meal including home-made ice cream with raw eggs from Germany. About one week later, France reported a second outbreak caused by *Salmonella*: 6 people out of 80 were ill on June 29th after a dinner in common on June 28th. Clinical signs were abdominal pain, diarrhoea and fever. The suspected product was home-made chocolate cream made with raw eggs from Germany as well. Analysis of the remaining eggs revealed presence of *Salmonella*. The eggs from the German producer were recalled. Germany reported that routine sampling for Salmonella carried out by the egg producer had tested negative. Shortly after the outbreaks in France, only Class B eggs (only to be delivered to the food and non-food industry) from this particular laying hen flock were placed on the market in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013. The flock had shortly after been removed from the livestock sheds and slaughtered. The sheds were cleaned and disinfected and were restocked only after lying empty for at least 10 days. The eggs from the newly installed young hens were at first placed on the market as Class B until testing was completed. Due to several ensuing positive Salmonella detections in B-eggs from the stables as well as from the sorting table, 150 000 delivered A-eggs were voluntarily withdrawn. MLVA sub-typing conducted by the French NRC (Pasteur institute) identified a common profile for *S. enteritidis* strains isolated from cases of the outbreaks and from shell eggs. This profile is the same as isolated from cases from the outbreaks described in another notification made by France: RASFF 2014.1072. A EWRS message about the two alerts was sent by the French authorities in charge of public health. Germany concluded that notifications 2014.0938, 2014.1063 and 2014.1072 established a connection to two plants of the same egg-producing company. Both plants were supplied by eggs from the same laying hens flock.
foodborne outbreak caused by and Listeria monocytogenes in lamb-roll sausages from Denmark	cases 35 and 38 End of June, the Danish authorities identified a possible foodborne outbreak with *Listeria monocytogenes* using the "Whole Genome Sequencing" test (WGS) showing that several of the isolates from affected patients are of the same type (MLST224). The source was unknown in this initial phase. Early July, 17 listeria isolates from food sampled in April were tested with the WGS test including 2 Listeria isolates from lamb-roll sausage from a Danish meat product producer. The positive sample at the time resulted in a recall of the product early May. The results showed a full match between the isolates from affected patients and an isolate from the lamb-roll sausage. As a consequence an investigation was started concerning other possibly affected products and distribution of these products. Following more positive samples, it was decided in August to close the factory and recall possibly contaminated products. At that point 20 persons had fallen ill of which 12 had died. Of the wide recall of products, products distributed to Germany, Norway and Sweden were included.
food poisoning suspected (trichinellose) to be caused by boar meat from Spain	case 51 Several consumers felt ill after they consumed meat of wild boar from a Belgian meat producer. It is very probable that the meat was contaminated with Trichinella. Further upward traceability of the products showed that the meat was of Spanish origin. Further to the investigation, the Belgian authority had identified the incriminated batch. The 14 ill persons had eaten Spanish boar meat from the batch in three various restaurants. Samples taken on the incriminated batch and other batches of the same supplier were compliant for trichinae. However the Belgian authority considered that the sampling cannot guarantee the conformity of all batches and decided to destroy the concerned batch. For the other batches heat treatment was imposed.

Pathogenic micro-organisms

Escherichia coli

origin/notifier	BE	BG	CH	CY	CZ	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GB	GR	IE	IT	LU	NL	NO
Argentina						3								5			
Australia																2	
Austria														2			
Belgium	2														1	1	
Brazil								4						2		4	
Bulgaria														1			
Cambodia																	3
Croatia														1			
Denmark																1	
France	1		1			2		1		12							
Germany	1													3			
Greece														2			
Hungary									1								
India											1						
Iran							1										
Ireland										1			1				
Italy										1				11			
Morocco					1												
Netherlands										1				2		5	
New Zealand		1		2		12						4		2		4	
Poland						1								1			
Portugal								1									
South Africa																1	
Spain										1				6			
Thailand											2		1				
Tunisia														3			
Turkey												1					
United Kingdom																1	
Vietnam															1		

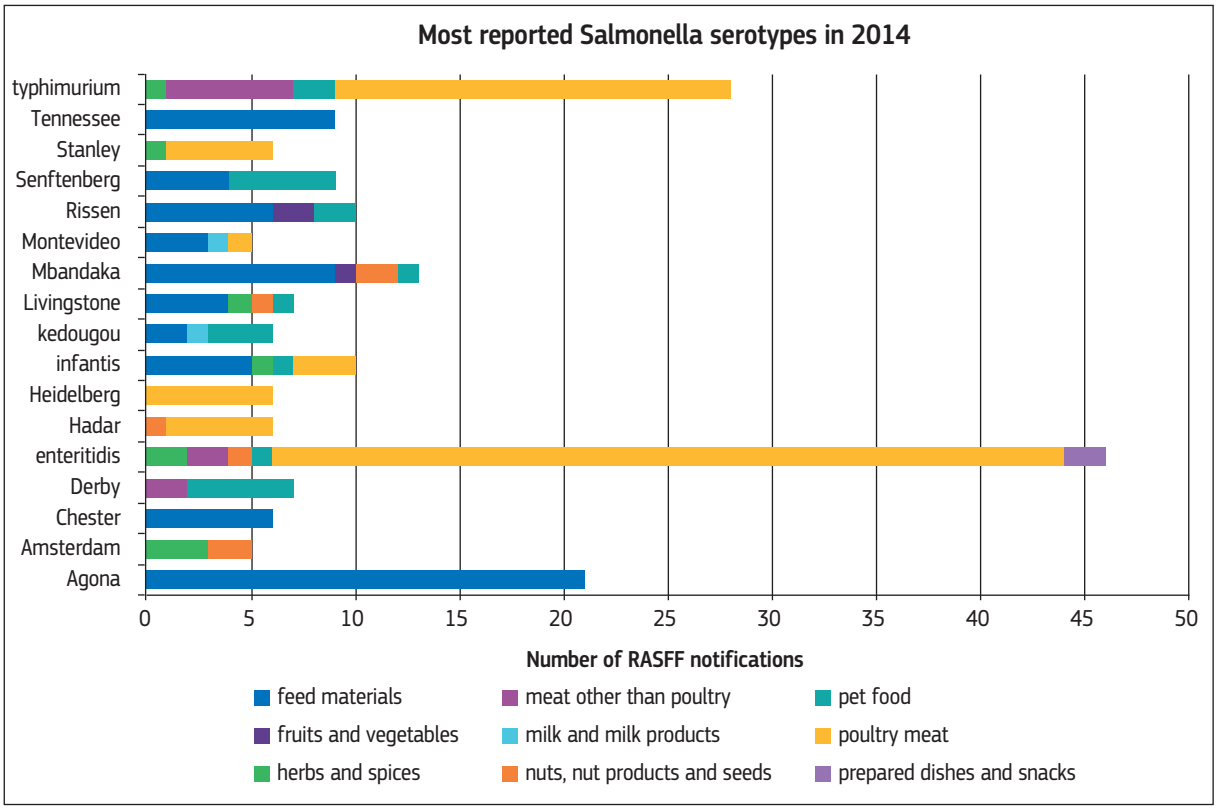
product category	high count	too high count	potentially pathogenic	entero-pathogenic	shigatoxin-producing	overall:	2011	2012	2013	2014
bivalve molluscs and products thereof	1	39					16	21	47	40
crustaceans and products thereof	2									2
fruits and vegetables	3	1			2		5	5	4	6
herbs and spices	3						4	14	13	3
meat and meat products (other than poultry)	1		1		58		23	18	72	60
milk and milk products	3			2	10			4	4	15

After the 2011 EHEC crisis, the sampling for shigatoxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) was increased in all Member States. As the table above shows, the number of STEC notifications dropped somewhat in 2014 from the peak number reached in 2013. The Commission is working on a guidance document as regards food contaminated with STEC providing Member States confronted with positive STEC results with guidance for a harmonised application of Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002. This document is currently under discussion with Member States.

Apart from meat, milk products were sporadically notified for STEC, most often raw milk cheese from France (7 notifications).

A second source of *E. coli* notifications are "too high count" findings in live bivalve molluscs for which Regulation 2073/2005 sets a food safety limit of 230 MPN/100g.

Salmonella



product category	2011	2012	2013	2014
animal by-products		7		5
bivalve molluscs and products thereof	6	4	19	9
cephalopods and products thereof	1	14	0	0
cereals and bakery products	1	3	1	2
cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea	2	4	0	1
compound feeds	3	0	2	1
confectionery	0	0	1	2
crustaceans and products thereof	4	2	2	4
dietetic foods, food supplements, fortified foods	0	0	2	4
eggs and egg products	4	8	1	2
fats and oils	0	0	0	1
feed additives	0	2	0	2
feed materials	120	119	138	134
feed premixtures	1	1	0	0
fish and fish products	2	3	3	1
food additives and flavourings	0	1	2	0
fruits and vegetables	100	72	59	39
gastropods	0	1	0	1
herbs and spices	63	43	27	34
ices and desserts			1	
meat and meat products (other than poultry)	38	69	63	40
milk and milk products	4	2	4	8
nuts, nut products and seeds	16	27	13	33
other food product / mixed		8	3	
pet food	39	20	21	49
poultry meat and poultry meat products	45	57	193	167
prepared dishes and snacks		3	2	5
soups, broths, sauces and condiments	1	1		
overall	**450**	**471**	**557**	**544**

The table above shows RASFF notifications by product category. After a continuing rise in notifications, in 2014 a modest decrease can be observed for most products. This trend is most significant for the fruits and vegetables category. Poultry and feed materials remain the most reported categories. In order to keep poultry meat *Salmonella*-free it is important to ensure that the flocks of animals do not get contaminated. It could be relevant to ensure that their feed is *Salmonella*-free as well. Looking at the table above on *Salmonella* serotypes, we observe however that serotypes that are often detected in feed, such as *S. agona* are not reported in poultry. The frequent reports of *S. enteritidis* and *typhimurium* can be attributed to the food safety criterion for the absence of these serotypes in fresh poultry meat, as set in Regulation 2073/2005.

A new kind of table shown here below gives the number of notifications set out against country of origin and notifying country. For *Salmonella*, it shows particular "patterns":

- Most notifications on *Salmonella* made by France concern products of French origin; this is to some extent also true for Germany
- Finland and Sweden, enjoying special guarantees[6] on *Salmonella*-free fresh meat, are frequently notifying fresh meat from Germany (Finland) and from Poland and the Netherlands (Sweden)
- Estonia, Malta, Iceland and Liechtenstein made no notifications on *Salmonella* in 2014
- The Netherlands reported a high number (49) of border rejections of poultry meat preparations from Brazil, all from the same producing establishment in Brazil. This establishment has been under 100% border checks since 2013 and is still frequently notified in 2015.

origin/ notifying country	AT	BE	BG	CH	CY	CZ	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GB	GR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	NL	NO	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK
Albania																	1											
Argentina		2															5				3							
Austria	2																									1		
Bangladesh												5																
Belarus										1																		
Belgium										1	2	1							2		1							
Bosnia and Herzegovina														2														
Brazil	1	1				1	2		5		1	3					1				49					3		
Bulgaria										1																		
Cambodia																						1						
Chile								1																				
China				1			4			1	1										1	4						
Czech Republic	5					1																	3					1
Denmark						1		3																		3		
Dominican Republic												1																
Ecuador									1																			
Egypt																	1						1					
France		2					1	1			22	1					2									2		
Germany	9	8				1	19	3		16	1						3				1					6		
Hungary	1																				2							2
India			1		4		3			2	2	18	8				4	3			2		6			1		
Indonesia												1	2													2		
Ireland																1	2							1		2		
Italy	8							1		1	1						3					2				1		
Latvia						1																						
Lebanon																					1							
Lithuania																											1	

6 Regulation 1688/2005

origin/ notifying country	AT	BE	BG	CH	CY	CZ	DE	DK	ES	FI	FR	GB	GR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	NL	NO	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK
Mauritania								10	1																			
Mauritius		1									1																	
Mexico		1																					2					
Morocco													6										1					
Netherlands	2	8					1	1		3	1						1		1		9					12		
New Zealand												1																
Nigeria																					1							
Pakistan							1																					
Peru											2																	
Poland	3	3				4	2	1			6						1			1		4	10		1	10	1	1
Romania																					4					2		
Russia							1																					
Senegal																	1											
Serbia														1														
Slovakia	2																						6					
Spain		1								3	2				2		3				1					3		
Sri Lanka																						1						
Sudan		1																										
Sweden										1																1		
Syria											1		1															
Tanzania							1																					
Thailand		1					3	3	3	3	1	6									4							
Tunisia																	1											
Turkey									1			1					4											
Ukraine		1								1																		
United Kingdom							1				1						1				1							
United States												2																
Uruguay																						1						
Vietnam							1			1									1			1		5				

Listeria monocytogenes

Listeria monocytogenes has been reported predominantly in fish, often smoked fish. Italy sent 16 notifications about smoked salmon from the same Polish producer in which presence of *Listeria monocytogenes* was reported. Following a dispute between Italian and Polish authorities over the shelf life studies provided by the operator, the ECCP, in agreement with the Italian contact point, decided to transmit these notifications as information for follow-up notifications. For all these notifications, the products were only destined for Italy.

overall

product category	hazard		2011	2012	2013	2014
crustaceans and products thereof	Listeria	monocytogenes	1	4	1	
fish and fish products	Listeria	monocytogenes	60	22	27	43
fruits and vegetables	Listeria	monocytogenes	2	5	1	5
meat and meat products (other than poultry)	Listeria	monocytogenes	17	17	13	13
milk and milk products	Listeria	monocytogenes	24	21	20	29
nuts, nut products and seeds	Listeria	monocytogenes				1
poultry meat and poultry meat products	Listeria	monocytogenes	1	1	3	4
prepared dishes and snacks	Listeria	monocytogenes	1	4	7	2
total			**106**	**74**	**72**	**97**

Member States

product category	hazard		2011	2012	2013	2014
crustaceans and products thereof	Listeria	monocytogenes	1	4	1	
fish and fish products	Listeria	monocytogenes	52	21	22	43
fruits and vegetables	Listeria	monocytogenes	2	5		2
meat and meat products (other than poultry)	Listeria	monocytogenes	17	17	13	12
milk and milk products	Listeria	monocytogenes	24	21	20	29
nuts, nut products and seeds	Listeria	monocytogenes				
poultry meat and poultry meat products	Listeria	monocytogenes	1	1	3	4
prepared dishes and snacks	Listeria	monocytogenes	1	4	7	2
total			**98**	**73**	**66**	**92**

Other product categories often reported for *Listeria monocytogenes* are cheeses mostly from France (11) and from Italy (10) and meat products. From the table above, comparing overall notifications with notification on products originating from Member States, it is clear that this pathogen is mostly reported on products produced in the EU. Of course, since the applicable food safety criteria[7] only apply to ready-to-eat foods, (potentially imported) raw materials are usually not reported.

Norovirus

A significant rise in the notifications for norovirus in bivalve molluscs is largely attributable to 24 notifications on boiled clams from Vietnam. Problems with these clams were already signalled in 2013, when Salmonella was frequently detected in them. Investigations showed that these clams were insufficiently heat treated to eliminate pathogens. Vietnam reported back that problems with the coastal water quality were the origin of the contamination and took measures to ensure clams were sourced from less contaminated waters. The EC also obliged Vietnam to ensure that the clams were sufficiently cooked (90°C/90s) to eliminate pathogens.

Hepatitis A

The investigations into the foodborne outbreaks with hepatitis A in 2013 that could be linked to berries[8] culminated in important efforts to collect backwards traceability information on the suspected products up to the farmer level. Because of the large incubation time before illness, many products needed to be investigated. The data were collected through templates prepared by EFSA that were based on the methodology worked out during the E. coli outbreak investigations of 2011. Data were stored on iRASFF in the form of three RASFF news items on the three outbreaks that started in 2013 in Italy, Ireland and the Netherlands. In 2014 more cases of illness associated with the same virus strain were reported in Germany, Norway, Sweden and France and led to notifications by France (mixed frozen berries), Norway (berry buttermilk cake) and Germany (frozen strawberries), extending the initial tracing dataset. EFSA published

7 Regulation 2073/2005

8 RASFF annual report 2013, page 13

a report on the analysis of the traceability data collected which aimed at finding the "hotspots" where the contamination has occurred along the production chain. A single source of contamination was not identified but a data model of the complex distribution chain was elaborated linking the various RASFF alerts with human cases of Hepatitis A via evidence from epidemiology and tracing of single lots of frozen berries[9].

Biocontaminants

Biocontaminants are defined in this report as chemical substances contaminating food or feed that were formed as a result of biological activity and that are toxic to humans or animals.

Histamine

The majority of notifications on biocontaminants concern histamine, which is typically formed in fresh or frozen fish in which spoilage has occurred, e.g. through non-respect of storage temperature. High levels of histamine are regularly reported as the (presumed) cause of food poisoning. There were 33 notifications on too high levels of histamine in fish products in 2014.

9 http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/3821.htm

Tropane alkaloids[10]

In 2013, EFSA issued a scientific opinion[11] on tropane alkaloids (TA) in food and feed. TA are secondary metabolites which occur in several plant families. Although more than 200 different TA have been identified in various plants of several families including Brassicaceae, Solanaceae (e.g. mandrake, henbane, deadly nightshade, Jimson weed) and Erythroxylaceae (including coca) respective data on toxicity and occurrence in food and feed are limited[11]. The racemic mixture of (-)-hyoscyamine and (+)-hyoscyamine is called atropine. Even at low dosage atropine can influence the heart frequency and the central nervous system. Typical symptoms are dizziness, headache and nausea[12]. Datura plants are long known for their content of TA. This plant is widely distributed in temperate and tropical regions of the world. For this reason, seeds of this plant have been found as impurities in important agricultural crops such as linseed, soybean, millet, sunflower and buckwheat and products thereof[11]. As there is not yet any legal limit set for TA, the acute reference dose (ARfD) set by the EFSA scientific opinion is used to determine whether there is a risk to human health.

10 This text was contributed by the German NCP to the RASFF annual report

11 EFSA (2013) Scientific Opinion on Tropane alkaloids in food and feed

12 BfR (2013) Hohe Tropanalkaloidgehalte in Getreideprodukten: Bei Menschen mit Herz-problemen sind gesundheitliche Beeinträchtigungen möglich

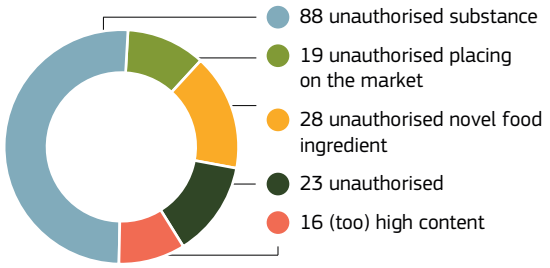
In 2014 Germany issued 4 alerts concerning TA in cereal products. Three alerts were the result of official controls on the market and one alert was issued as a consequence of the company´s own checks. The products concerned involved baby food millet with different fruit tastes, baby 4-grain cereal porridge, millet/cereal porridge with rice and brown millet and were produced out of different raw materials. Particularly organic products were involved. The products were distributed to most European countries. The companies involved immediately issued voluntary recalls and the products were withdrawn from the market as a precautionary measure. The competent authorities monitored the measures taken and informed the other Member States through the RASFF. For two baby food products, contaminated millet and corn flour from Austria could be identified as the source of the increased TA levels. Investigations by the competent authorities revealed that the contamination occurred through thornapple (Datura) seeds. For the brown millet the raw material derived from Austria, Hungary and Netherlands, however the cause of this contamination is still unknown. Contamination with thornapple seeds has been notified to RASFF several times in the past and in 2013 Finland even reported a food poisoning caused by it.

As a consequence of these findings, the companies involved perform more thorough entry checks on arrival of the raw material. As Datura seeds are the same size as grains of millet, they cannot be sifted out. Photodetectors and binoculars are used to purify the raw cereal (millet) from Datura seeds. The competent authorities monitor the companies' own checks and require extra sampling from the companies involved. Official controls on TA and sampling have increased, especially regarding infant food, but also for other products such as cereal products.

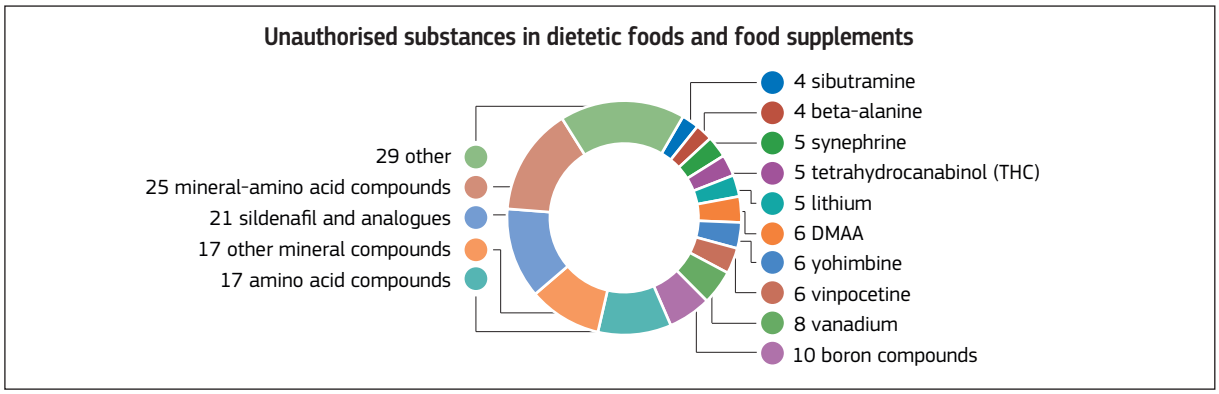
Composition of dietetic foods and food supplements

The composition of food supplements and dietetic products continues to be a big concern for food control authorities because of the health concerns in relation to some of the substances found that are often not labelled. It also remains a challenge to perform effective enforcement, due to the fact that the majority of the products notified are sold via internet.

Composition of dietetic foods and food supplements



Unauthorised substances



Authorisation of substances for dietetic foods and food supplements is regulated by EU legislation only for minerals and vitamins. For food supplements, a list of authorised mineral compounds and vitamins is given in Directive 2002/46/EC as amended. For other food products, addition of vitamin formulations and mineral compounds is regulated by Regulation 1925/2006.

Among the most frequently notified unauthorised substances in 2014 are mineral or amino acid compounds that are not listed in Directive 2002/46/EC for addition to food supplements. These substances very often are produced in the United States and can be ordered through the internet. Usually these compounds are listed on the label and the products are legally on the market in the US.

This is not necessarily the case for food supplements containing sildenafil or similar compounds where the metabolic effect of the substance is often said to be provided by "natural" plant extracts. Such products are often traceable to a Chinese manufacturer.

Vinpocetine is a pharmaceutical substance used for the treatment of cerebrovascular disorders and age-related memory impairment. It was found in food supplements from the United States.

Check the previous RASFF annual reports for information about yohimbine, DMAA, synephrine and sibutramine. There are some "newcomers" in 2014, not reported in RASFF before. Lithium is one of them. Lithium is known to be used in psychiatric medication. No risk assessments were made regarding the lithium quantities used in the food supplements notified. Tetrahydrocanabinol (THC) is the active component of the cannabis drug and therefore has no place in food supplements. In one notification, the source of the contamination appeared to be Tribulus terrestris extract from China. In all notifications, the supplements contained Tribulus terrestris. The levels of THC found were very low however, most likely too low to be psychoactive. In two other notifications, Czech Republic reported traces of an anabolic steroid compound in a Tribulus terrestris food supplement from Bulgaria.

Unauthorised placing on the market

Notifications under this description are usually food supplements, often from the United States, containing plant extracts that are not authorised according to national legislation, often because they have medicinal properties. There were 19 such notifications reported in 2014.

Unauthorised novel food ingredient

This category is similar to the previous one, only in this case a harmonised EU legislation applies[13]. Foods or ingredients that were not marketed prior to 15 May 1997 need to undergo an authorisation procedure before they can be placed on the market in the EU.

There were 28 notifications about novel food ingredients in 2014. The table below gives the novel food ingredients notified and how often they were notified in 2014.

13 Regulation (EC) No 258/97 concerning novel foods and novel food ingredients, *OJ L 43, 14.2.1997, p. 1*

Achyranthes aspera	1
betaine	8
clinoptilolite	2
Coriolus versicolor	2
Siberian ginseng	1
Gymnema syvestre	1
Hemidesmus indicus	1
Hoodia gordonii	1
Hydrastis canadensis	1
Lagerstroemia speciosa	1
milk thistle (Silybum marianum)	1
Mucuna pruriens	4
Rhodiola rosea	3
Siraitia Grosvenorii	4
Stevia rebaudiana	2
Synsepalum dulcificum	1
tongkat ali (Eurycoma longifolia)	1
Tuckahoe (Peltranda virgilica)	1
Ulmus pumila	1

Betaine was notified in food supplements by Poland but other Member States reported that it is not considered novel in food supplements. Therefore the 8 notifications from Poland should be withdrawn which was requested by the ECCP but the issue is still pending.

Unauthorised

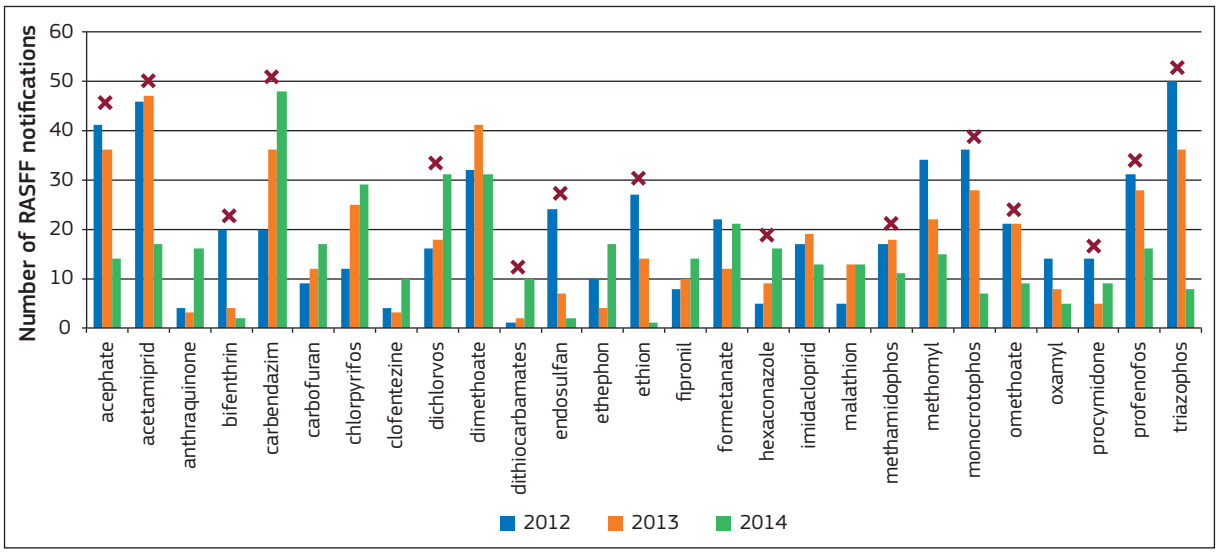
Most notifications (16) in this category concerned magnesium aspartate in food supplements. This substance is only allowed in food for special medicinal purpose.

(too) high content

There have been 11 notifications on too high levels of vitamins in food supplements from the United States, 9 of them on vitamin B6. In 2000, a tolerable upper intake level was established for vitamin B6 of 25 mg/day for adults[14]. Consistently higher intake could result in non-reversible adverse health effects of a neurological order.

Pesticide residues

In 2014, the number of RASFF notifications for pesticide residues decreased slightly further to 435. Six of these notifications concerned feed. Reinforced checks at the entry points to the EU[15] still have their pronounced effect on the RASFF notifications (and vice versa of course), which is apparent from the fact that only 41 of the notifications are about produce of EU origin.



The figure above shows the most reported residues in 2012, 2013 and 2014. The number of findings can vary significantly from year to year. There is evidence of the use of non-approved pesticides: the substances marked with a ✖ are not authorised in the EU.

14 www.efsa.europa.eu/en/ndatopics/docs/ndatolerableuil.pdf
15 According to Regulation 669/2009

Below the countries of origin for which more than 10 RASFF notifications were received for pesticide residues are given in alphabetical order indicating what kind of products and pesticides were notified. The pesticides reported have been coloured according to acute toxicity: red for highly toxic, orange for moderately toxic, green for low toxicity. This grading thus only takes into account the acute toxicity for human health, and not any chronic effects or environmental harmfulness. Some substances that have no toxicological information[16] remain in black. Only the most frequently reported residues are listed in the table. Many others were reported. Over all notifications in 2014 on pesticide residues, 138 different substances were notified.

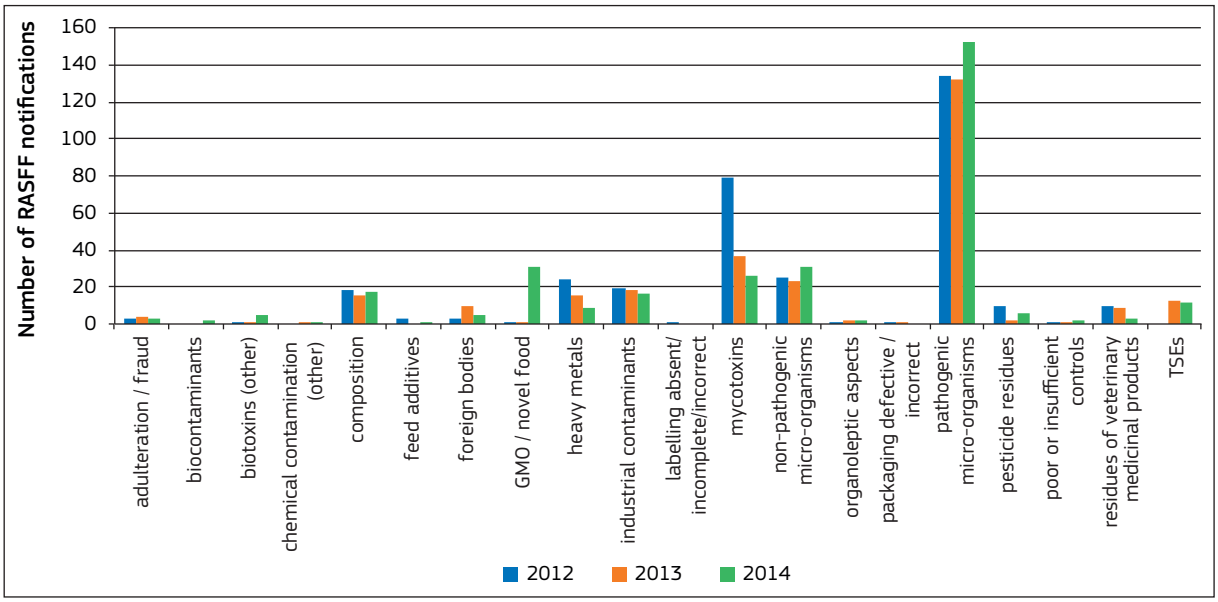
Country	Commodities	Most frequently reported pesticide residues
Cambodia	fresh coriander, Chinese celery and yard long beans	unauthorised substance hexaconazole; chlorpyrifos
China	tea, broccoli	unauthorised substances anthraquinone, carbendazim and chlorfluazuron; imidacloprid, acetamiprid
Dominican Republic	aubergines	unauthorised substance carbofuran
Egypt	olives, strawberries, oranges, spearmint leaves	chlorpyriphos, omethoate/dimethoate
India	(basmati) rice, okra	unauthorised substances acephate and carbendazim
Kenya	beans and peas	omethoate/dimethoate
Morocco	mint, jasmine tea	acetamiprid, fipronil, chlorpyriphos
Nigeria	dried beans	unauthorised substance dichlorvos
Peru	table grapes	ethephon
Sri Lanka	pennywort	tebuconazole, profenofos
Thailand	chilli peppers, beans, aubergines, coriander	unauthorised substances carbaryl and methomyl; dimethoate
Turkey	peppers, vine leaves	formetanate and clofentezine
Vietnam	dragon fruits	unauthorised substance carbendazim, iprodione

16 Information in the EU pesticides database http://ec.europa.eu/sanco_pesticides

Feed

Out of the 3097 original notifications counted in RASFF in 2014, 309 concerned feed, about 10% of the total, but rising in number for the first time in several years.

From the figure below it can be seen that 2014 feed notifications are ruled by pathogenic micro-organisms. The second reason, although significantly less, is mycotoxins.



Composition

Three cases of ragweed seeds in various feeds were reported by Germany. Three notifications were made for too high content of fluorine in complementary feed from Ireland. Copper (3), zinc (1) and selenium (4) were found in too high amounts in complementary and complete feeds from various origins.

Unauthorised genetically modified feed

Unauthorised GM rice (Bt63) was found in rice used in choline chloride feed additive from China. In total 22 notifications were made by different countries and the products were withdrawn from the market. No health risk was identified in relation to this product. Cotton seeds from Côte d'Ivoire were also identified as an unauthorised GM variety in 6 notifications from Italy. Vitamin 2 feed additives were found to contain viable genetically modified micro-organisms. The isolated bacteria were of the species Bacillus subtilis. DNA sequences which do not naturally occur were identified in the isolated bacteria. The isolated bacterium was therefore considered to be genetically modified.

Industrial contaminants

On dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs, 15 notifications were made mostly on (fatty) feed materials from diverse origins. Dioxin levels observed were only in the range of a few ppt except for fish oil. Ireland made one notification on melamine in inactive brewer's yeast from Poland and partly from Lithuania. Investigations in Poland and Lithuania could not identify the source of the contamination. In 2007, feed materials were reported with melamine, which was intentionally added to falsify analytical results measuring the nitrogen content of the feed.

Mycotoxins

All 26 notifications concerned the measured level of aflatoxins exceeding the legal limit. 12 notifications concerned groundnuts with Sudan most frequently reported as country of origin. 10 notifications concerned maize from diverse origin but with India reported 5 times and once with a very high level of 881 ppb, about 40 times the legal limit.

Non-pathogenic micro-organisms

Most notifications concerned non-respect of the legal limits for Enterobacteriaceae in the feed legislation. To ensure the safety of the final feedingstuff, Regulation (EU) No 142/2011 establishes microbiological standards, including criteria for Enterobacteriaceae, which shall apply for the processing and placing on the market of products of animal origin used for feeding purposes. 11 notifications were made for dog chews, often reported together with *Salmonella*.

Pathogenic micro-organisms

All but one of the 151 notifications in this category concerned *Salmonella*. For details, see the relevant section "Pathogenic micro-organisms" earlier in the report.

TSEs

Notifications under the TSEs header continue from 2013, due to the reporting of ruminant DNA (12 notifications), predominantly in fish feed. See RASFF annual report 2013 for further information.

3. Focus on...

Closing a chapter on RASFF...

By the end of 2014, all consultation rounds, inside the Commission, with Member States and with stakeholders on the RASFF SOPs had been concluded and version 1.4 could be published on the RASFF website[17]. As such the SOPs could serve as a complementary guidance for member of the network on how to implement the rules of the RASFF laid down in legislation[18].

The beginnings of the RASFF SOPs go back as far as 2006, when a project for RASFF implementing measures and guidelines was started by setting up a restricted working group with Member States that volunteered to work on the text of the different guidelines, rebaptised as "SOPs" later on. Work on the implementing Regulation had to be put on hold pending a verdict in a court case that dealt among other things with the role of the Commission in RASFF. As the verdict, reached in 2009, confirmed the way the Commission managed RASFF, work on the implementing Regulation could be finished in 2010 and the Regulation entered into force in January 2011. In the period that followed, the draft guidelines were reviewed and adapted to complement the implementing Regulation to comments received during several consultation rounds. After final consultation of stakeholders, they were published in December 2014.

There are ten SOPs, which is probably not a coincidence. The first SOP gives best practices for setting up an NCP in a country, in particular detailing requirements for out-of-the-office on-duty arrangements. SOP 2 is a key SOP as it gives guidance on the scope of the RASFF by providing criteria to determine whether a RASFF notification is required. SOPs 3 and 4 cover guidance on the preparation of an original and follow-up notification, while SOP 5 deals with advice on transmission of notifications to the ECCP. In SOP 6 information is given on how the ECCP verifies, validates and transmits the notifications to NCPs. SOPs 7 and 8 give advice to NCPs about how RASFF notifications should be handled and what elements of the notification need to be assessed by an NCP to enable a decision by the competent authorities responsible for enforcement action or other follow-up, where needed. SOPs 9 and 10 deal with other aspects of the system such as archiving, transparency and confidentiality of the information managed by RASFF.

And opening another one!

The publishing of the RASFF SOPs does not mean that the job's done. As living documents they will need to be adapted to developments in the RASFF tools or in the legislative framework. Also, it was not possible to conclude on part of the documents that were worked on, which are the so-called working instructions.

Working instructions

The working instructions are detailed, practical guidance documents, fitting within a SOP to provide on-the-job "instructions" about how certain functions need to be fulfilled. Two working instructions, belonging with SOP 2, were not included in the final package and will follow later: WI 2.1 dealing with risk evaluation guidelines and WI 2.2 concerning guidelines for the calculation of consumer intake and evaluation of the risk for pesticide residues. These WI will provide an important input into the decision members of the network need to take as regards the level of risk that a notification may present, which is a decisive factor in determining the correct classification of the notification into alert or information notification. Such decision needs to be based on sound science and therefore the documents require thorough preparation and consultation before they will be completed.

RASFF REFIT

Introduction

As part of its 'Smart Regulation' policy, the Commission has initiated a Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT). This is a continuous process, affecting the whole policy cycle – from the design of a piece of legislation

17 http://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/rasff

18 Regulation 178/2002, Art. 50 and Regulation 16/2011

to implementation, enforcement, evaluation and, where justified, revision.

Under the first stages of this programme, the Commission has reviewed the entire stock of Union legislation and decided on follow-up actions, including 'Fitness Checks' involving comprehensive policy evaluations aimed at assessing whether the regulatory framework for a particular policy sector is 'fit for purpose'. Fitness Checks provide an evidence-based critical analysis of whether Union actions are proportionate to their objectives and delivering as expected.

Fitness check

In 2014, the Commission launched a Fitness Check on the General Food Law Regulation, which establishes the fundamental pillars of the food and feed law. It is a comprehensive policy evaluation assessing whether the legislative framework introduced by the General Food Law Regulation for the entire food and feed sector is 'fit for purpose' and whether it captures and reflects policy trends of today. It contributes to the political agenda defined by President Juncker, giving priority to modernisation and simplification of existing legislation. As part of the Fitness check, there is a specific study and evaluation of the RASFF and Crisis Management Procedures.

The mandate

The mandate for the Fitness Check on the General Food Law Regulation, including the evaluation of RASFF and crisis management procedures and published in 2014, defines the overall scope and aim of the exercise and sets out a number of key questions that are to be addressed in relation to the Fitness Check criteria:

- Effectiveness (Have the objectives been met?)
- Efficiency (What are the costs and benefits involved?)
- Coherence (Does the policy complement other actions or are there contradictions?)
- Relevance (Is EU action still relevant?)
- EU added value (Can or could similar changes have been achieved at national/regional level, or did EU action provide clear added value?)

In doing so, the Fitness Check on the General Food Law Regulation will take into account previous evaluations already performed in the area of food and feed as well as the results of two external studies

that have been commissioned to support the Fitness check:

- External study on the general part of General Food Law Regulation (Articles 1-21)
- External study on the RASFF and the management of emergencies/crises (Articles 50 to 57)

External study on RASFF/Emergencies/Crisis management

This external study[19] focuses on Articles 50 to 57 of the General Food Law Regulation, as complemented by Regulation (EC) No 16/2011.

The main tools for the study are:

- Document research
- Questionnaires for:
  - the survey of the RASFF national contact points and other stakeholders involved in the RASFF
  - the survey of relevant competent authorities in the field of food/feed crisis management and relevant stakeholders
- Interviews with competent authorities
- Case studies.

Indicative timeframe and key milestones for the Fitness Check

- April 2014: Launch of the Fitness Check exercise on the General Food Law Regulation.
- September 2014 –June 2015: Launch of external studies in the areas of the general part of the General Food Law Regulation and on the RASFF/crisis management/emergency procedures. Start of a structured evidence gathering consultation with all Member States and stakeholders.

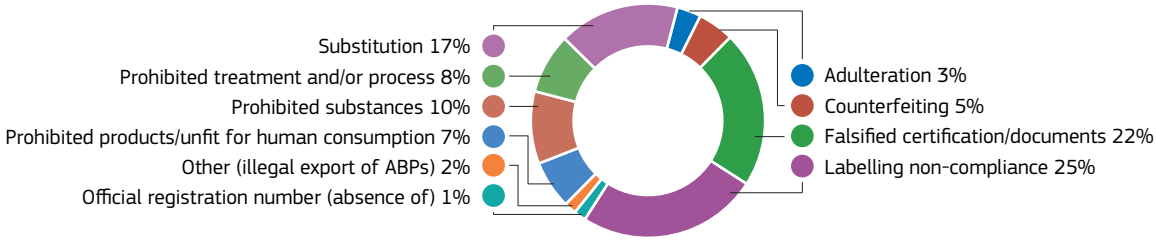
- End of 2015: Publication of the Commission Staff Working Document on the results of the Fitness Check on the General Food Law Regulation, RASFF and Crisis Management Procedures.

Food fraud network

In 2014, the RASFF continued to be used by Member States as a platform to exchange information on cases of suspicion of intentional violations of agri-food chain requirements for the purpose of financial or economic gains ("food fraud"), such as the horse meat scandal which made headline news across Europe two years ago.

In 2014, interaction on 60 cases took place through the network of national contact points responsible for cases of food fraud (Food Fraud Network). As shown in the chart, alleged violations were mostly related to labelling non-compliances (for instance with regard to durability dates, addition of water or ingredients), falsified certification and/or documents

Cases exchanged on the FFN by type of alleged violation in 2014



19 More info on http://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/docs/gfl_fitc_tor_rasff_en.pdf

and substitution, such as replacement of a higher value species with a lower value species.

Meat products are the category of foodstuffs for which the majority of exchanges through the network took place in 2014, followed by fish products and honey. Importantly, however, statistical conclusions related to potential "food fraud" cases in Europe cannot yet be drawn from these data given that Member States may also exchange information outside of the Food Fraud Network and that cases which do not have a cross-border dimension, i.e. which occur at purely national level, are not exchanged via the network.

Through RASFF, 32 cases were identified as potentially fraud related, of which 24 were transmitted as RASFF news. The RASFF news cases were considered not to be related to an identified health risk. Other notifications were related to cases where import procedures imposed by law were not respected, which may indicate an attempt to bring the product illegally into the EU. A much higher number of notifications concerned issues classified under "adulteration/fraud" which are not necessarily fraud related at all but might be. These concern mostly non-compliances such as absent or improper import documents or unauthorised imports. In only one case a fraudulent health certificate on shrimps certified as from Myanmar was confirmed thanks to feedback from Myanmar authorities. Following the investigation, the Myanmar authorities asked for the offending producer to be delisted from the list of authorised establishments for export to the EU.

The Commission is currently finalising work to equip the Food Fraud Network with a dedicated IT tool – the Administrative Assistance and Cooperation (AAC) System – for the handling of food fraud cases. This IT tool should be operational by the second semester of 2015.

For more information regarding the Administrative Assistance and Cooperation System, and to follow developments of the initiatives undertaken by the European Commission in the domain of food fraud, please refer to the following link:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/official_controls/food_fraud/index_en.htm

Better training for better RASFF

Activities for RASFF in 2014 in the frame of the Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) programme[20] started in Africa. In April 2014, a workshop of the programme BTSF World was organised to train West African countries on the EU RASFF and TRACES systems. There was a wider cooperation with FAO and WHO-INFOSAN to explore international cooperation and the setting up of such an alert system in Africa. To focus the training and exercises, the needs and operation of an alert system for reporting aflatoxin risks were discussed and the requirements for such a system in Africa were documented as an outcome of the workshop.

In 2014, a new BTSF training programme kicked off for RASFF. It provides for two types of training courses, to be given during 2014-2015:

The course 1 workshops are aimed at giving a detailed overview and explanation of the system with a focus on recent developments in food law and food controls and other relevant legislation to RASFF contact points and particularly those in non-EU countries bordering the EU and selected main trade partners. It also aims to strengthen the collaboration between EU and non-EU RASFF contact points and favour networking in order to increase feedback given in the system by the latter countries. In June 2014 training took place in Trim, Ireland, in which non-EU countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea were invited. With the help of the INFOSAN secretariat, cooperation through INFOSAN was discussed and trained using simulation exercises.

The main goals of the course 2 workshops, for RASFF member countries and candidate countries, were to raise awareness on the proper implementation of new RASFF implementing rules and on the use of Standards Operating Procedures (SOPs) developed specifically for RASFF, to improve the evaluation of risks in order to lead to more correct and harmonised classification of RASFF notifications and to facilitate the successful implementation of iRASFF in the countries. The series was kicked off with a workshop for NCPs in Prague, in which the content of the workshops was tried and discussed and some topics were deepened out. The following workshops had a smaller number of participants and focussed on practical knowledge

20 "Better Training for Safer Food" is a Commission initiative aimed at organising an EU training strategy in the areas of food law, feed law, animal health and animal welfare rules, as well as plant health rules.

of RASFF rules and procedures as well as proficient iRASFF use. Already three such workshops were held in the course of 2014 (Athens) and 2015 (Madrid) and one more to follow later in September 2015.

e-learning

The BTSF is actively developing e-learning courses to consolidate the knowledge workshop participants from competent authorities have gained and to provide alternative ways of training. In 2014, the RASFF e-learning course was completed and made available. Beneficiaries of the courses are 5000 officials from EU Member States, candidate and third countries. The RASFF e-learning module contains information regarding the functioning of RASFF, legal basis and duties of the members of the network. The e-learning module is available in English, German, and French. In 2014 there were 218 participants and in 2015 until May 479. This tool is a great way to explore the functioning of the system and its use through the internet, from a comfortable chair.

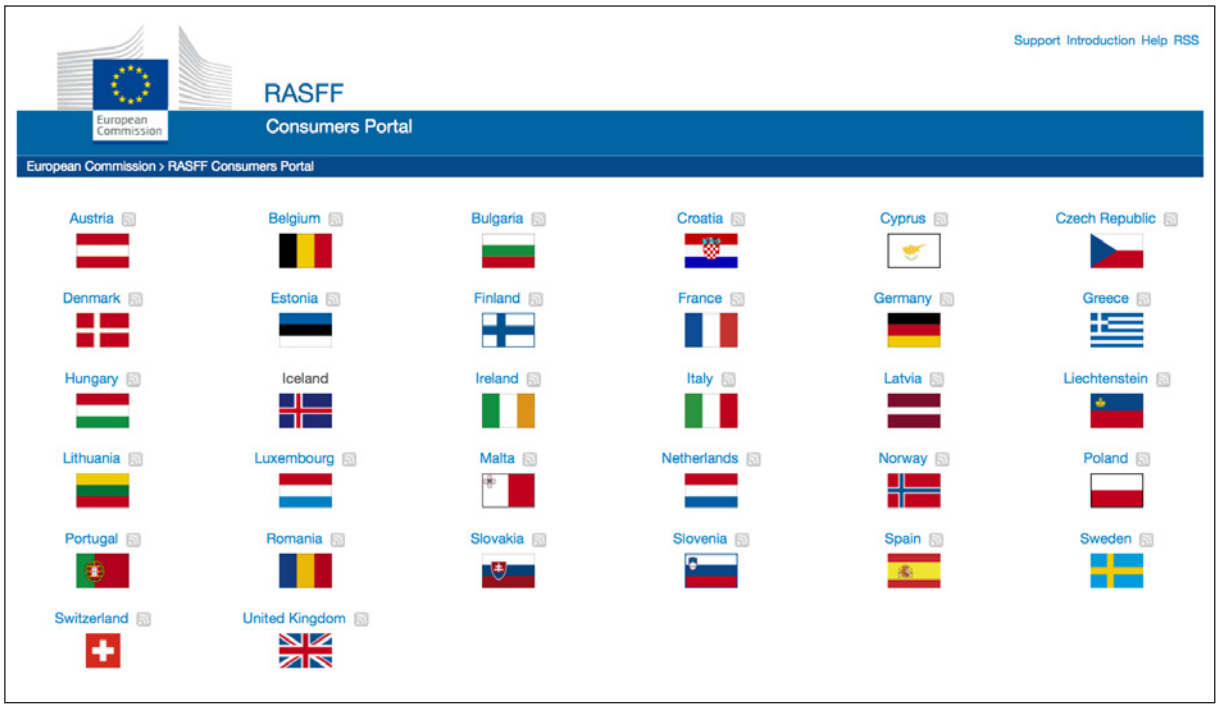
RASFF IT tools: work in progress

2014 was a year where important work from previous years could be rounded off. This was not only the case for the RASFF SOPs but also for some of RASFF IT applications that had been prepared in the previous years.

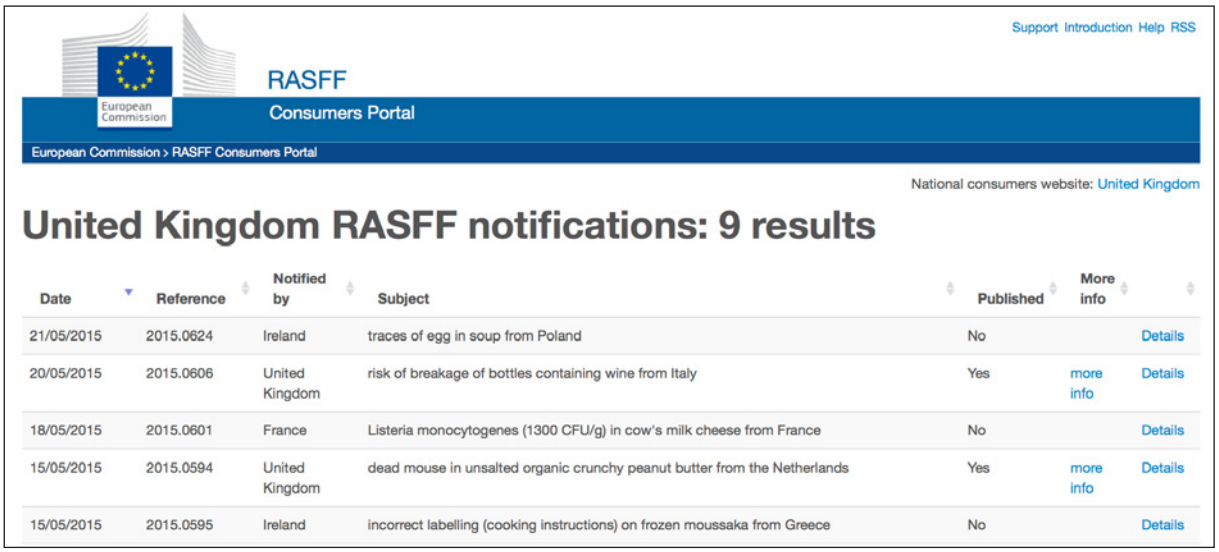
RASFF Consumers' Portal

The newest "baby" in the RASFF family! You could call it the little brother (or sister) of RASFF Portal. Just as RASFF Portal it provides summary information of RASFF notifications but the difference is that it only shows a selection of them, arranged by country.

Entering RASFF Consumers' Portal you are asked to select your country or a country of your interest.



If a country cannot be "entered", it means there are no notifications complying with the criteria. Criteria are simple: RASFF notifications for which there had been a consumers recall in the past four weeks. Clicking United Kingdom for example, that yields the following result (only top of the screen displayed):



Support Introduction Help RSS

RASFF
Consumers Portal

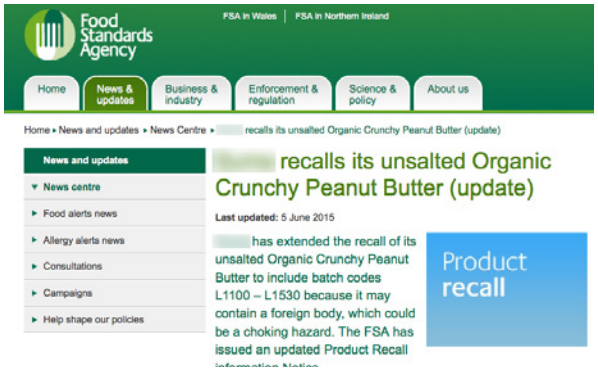
European Commission > RASFF Consumers Portal

National consumers website: United Kingdom

United Kingdom RASFF notifications: 9 results

Date	Reference	Notified by	Subject	Published	More info	
21/05/2015	2015.0624	Ireland	traces of egg in soup from Poland	No		Details
20/05/2015	2015.0606	United Kingdom	risk of breakage of bottles containing wine from Italy	Yes	more info	Details
18/05/2015	2015.0601	France	Listeria monocytogenes (1300 CFU/g) in cow's milk cheese from France	No		Details
15/05/2015	2015.0594	United Kingdom	dead mouse in unsalted organic crunchy peanut butter from the Netherlands	Yes	more info	Details
15/05/2015	2015.0595	Ireland	incorrect labelling (cooking instructions) on frozen moussaka from Greece	No		Details

Where available a hyperlink *more info* is given to the web site that provides full details of the consumer recall:



Food Standards Agency

FSA in Wales | FSA in Northern Ireland

Home | News & updates | Business & industry | Enforcement & regulation | Science & policy | About us

Home ▸ News and updates ▸ News Centre ▸ [redacted] recalls its unsalted Organic Crunchy Peanut Butter (update)

News and updates
- News centre
- Food alerts news
- Allergy alerts news
- Consultations
- Campaigns
- Help shape our policies

[redacted] recalls its unsalted Organic Crunchy Peanut Butter (update)

Last updated: 5 June 2015

[redacted] has extended the recall of its unsalted Organic Crunchy Peanut Butter to include batch codes L1100 – L1530 because it may contain a foreign body, which could be a choking hazard. The FSA has issued an updated Product Recall

Product recall

As soon as the system is informed about a consumers recall in one country that received the product, the notification will be listed for all countries in which the product was distributed, whether public recall information (column *Published*) is available for that country (*Published = Yes*) or not (*Published = No*). It can occur that the RASFF is informed that consumers recall information was published but that no hyperlink to that information was provided. In that case it may be worthwhile to check on the *National consumers website(s)* for the country in question, the hyperlink for which is given at the top right of the web page showing a country's RASFF notifications).

iRASFF

In the RASFF annual report 2012 on page 15 and next we have provided an insight in what a RASFF notification looks like in the new interactive iRASFF environment. It was quite a change compared to the previous "static" templates. Finally in 2014, integration into iRASFF of two major contributors Germany (in January) and Italy (in June) was completed and thereby every country is present in iRASFF. To be noted however that Spain, for food, has opted for a business to business solution, which is still being worked on in order to link the Spanish application ALCON to iRASFF. Italy and Germany chose to implement the *regional workflow* of iRASFF. For Germany, that means that the *Länder* (German federal states) can work on the notification in isolation (from other *Länder*) until they submit it to the NCP. By contrast in a national workflow, all persons who have the right to work on notifications can work on any draft notification of their country in the system. Italy chose to link up their border posts, national offices of UVAC and USMAF organisations to iRASFF as *regional entities* first and aims to integrate the regional offices of the ministry of health in a second step.

4. A quick manual to the RASFF

The RASFF was put in place to provide food and feed control authorities with an effective tool to exchange information about measures taken responding to serious risks detected in relation to food or feed. This exchange of information helps Member States to act more rapidly and in a coordinated manner in response to a health threat caused by food or feed. Its effectiveness is ensured by keeping its structure simple: it consists essentially of clearly identified contact points in the Commission, EFSA, EEA and at national level in member countries, exchanging information in a clear and structured way by means of an online system *iRASFF*.

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 as member and manager of the system 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 deriving from food or feed, 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 lays down additional 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.

Regulation (EC) N° 16/2011 lays down requirements for members of the network and the procedure for transmission of the different types of notifications. A difference is made between notifications requiring rapid action (alert notifications) and other notifications (information notifications and border rejection notifications). Therefore definitions of these different types of notifications are added. In addition the role of the Commission as manager of the network is detailed.

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 – for which contact points are

identified – are listed and their home pages can be consulted on the internet from the following RASFF web page:

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

The system

RASFF notifications

RASFF notifications usually report on risks identified in food, feed or food contact materials that are placed on the market in the notifying country or detained at an EU point of entry at the border with an EU neighbouring country. The notifying country reports on the risks it has identified, the product and its traceability and the measures it has taken.

According to the seriousness of the risks identified and the distribution of the product on the market, the RASFF notification is classified after verification by the Commission contact point as alert, information or border rejection notification before the Commission contact point transmits it to all network members.

- **alert notifications**

An 'alert notification' or 'alert' is sent when a food, feed or food contact material presenting a serious risk is on the market and when rapid action is or might be required in another country than the notifying country. Alerts are triggered by the member of the network that detects the problem and has initiated the relevant measures, such as withdrawal or 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 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. Member States have their own mechanisms to carry out such actions, including the provision of detailed information through the media if necessary.

- **information notifications**

An 'information notification' concerns a food, feed or food contact material for which a risk has been identified that does not require rapid action either because the risk is not considered serious or the product is not on the market at the time of notification.

Commission Regulation (EU) No 16/2011 defines two sub-types of information notification:

'information notifications for follow-up' are related to a product that is or may be placed on the market in another member country

'information notifications for attention' are related to a product that:

(i) is present only in the notifying member country; or
(ii) has not been placed on the market; or
(iii) is no longer on the market

- **border rejection notifications**

A 'border rejection notification' concerns a consignment of food, feed or food contact material that was refused entry into the Community for reason of a risk to human health and also to animal health or to the environment if it concerns feed.

- **original notifications and follow-up notifications**

A RASFF notification referring to one or more consignments of a food, feed or food contact material that were not previously notified to the RASFF is an 'original' notification, classified as alert, information or border rejection notification. In reaction to such notification, members of the network can transmit 'follow-up' notifications which refer to the same consignments and which add information to the original notification such as information on hazards, product traceability or measures taken.

- **rejected and withdrawn notifications**

An original notification sent by a member of the RASFF can be rejected from transmission through the RASFF system, as proposed by the Commission after verification and in agreement with the notifying country, if the criteria for notification are not met or if the information transmitted is insufficient.

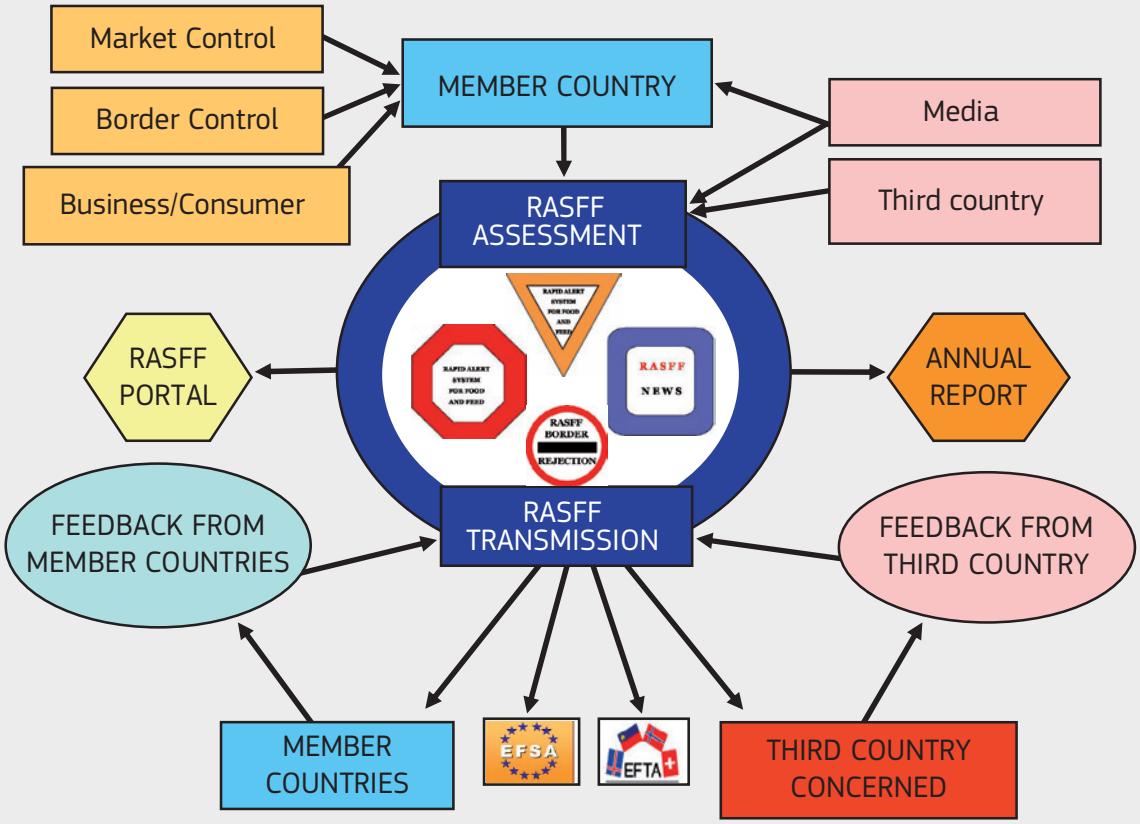
An original notification that was transmitted through the RASFF can be withdrawn by the Commission in agreement with the notifying country if the information, upon which the measures taken are based, turns out to be unfounded or if the transmission of the notification was made erroneously.

RASFF news

A 'RASFF news' concerns any type of information related to the safety of food or feed which has not been communicated as an alert, information or border rejection notification, but which is judged interesting for the food and feed control authorities in member countries.

RASFF news are sometimes based on information picked up in the media or forwarded by colleagues in food or feed authorities in third countries, EC delegations or international organisations, after having been verified with any member countries concerned.

Schematic representation of the information flow of the RASFF



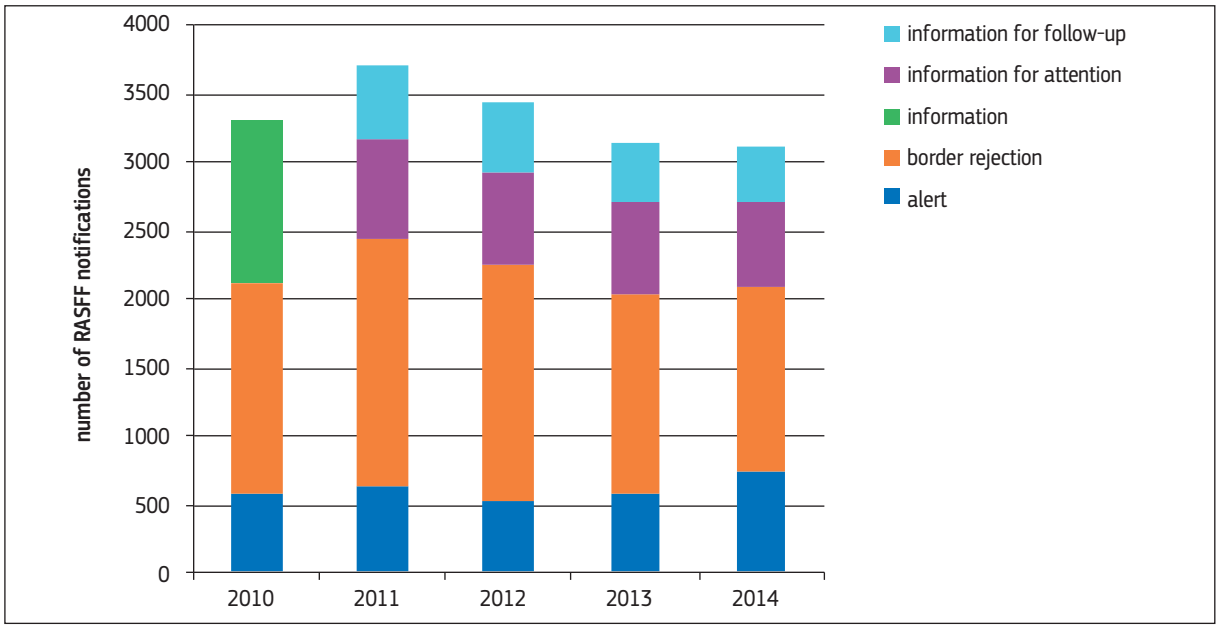
5. RASFF facts and figures

Evolution of the number of notifications since 2010

- by notification classification

Original notifications[21]

year	alert	border rejection	information	information for attention	information for follow-up
2010	576	1544	1167	0	0
2011	617	1821		719	551
2012	523	1711		680	507
2013	584	1438		679	429
2014	732	1358		609	398
% in/decrease	+25.3	-5.6		-10.3	-7.2

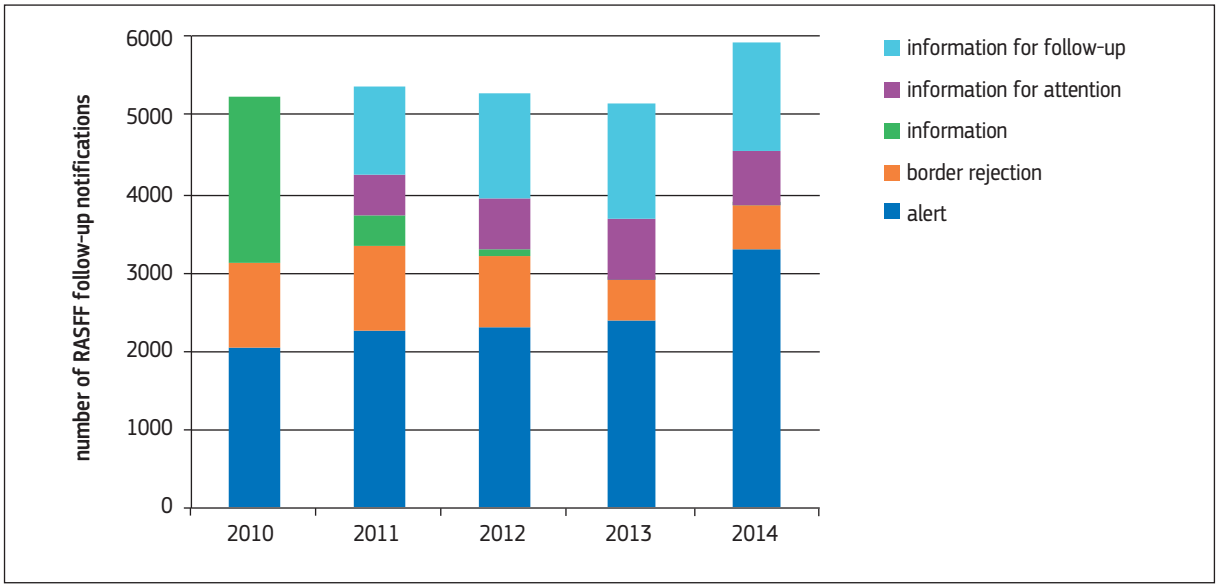


Follow-up notifications[22]

year	alert	border rejection	information	information for attention	information for follow-up
2010	2051	1069	2104	0	0
2011	2265	1060	414	480	1126
2012	2312	906	73	665	1325
2013	2376	525	1	763	1493
2014	3288	581	2	670	1369
% in/decrease	+38.4	+10.7		-12.2	-8.3

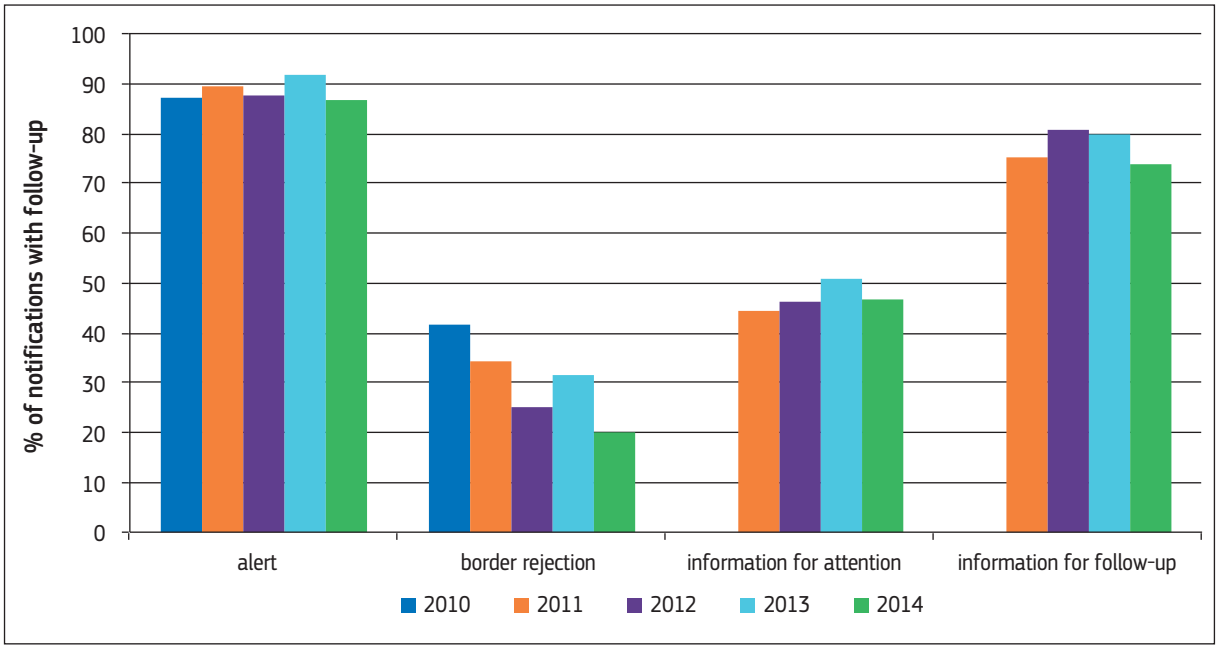
21 In this table are not counted the notifications that were afterwards withdrawn.

22 In this table all follow-ups are counted, also the follow-ups to notifications that were afterwards withdrawn.



Original notifications with follow-up

These are original notifications to which at least one follow-up was given.



The chart shows that although the number of follow-ups as a whole significantly rose in 2014, there were actually more notifications that were not followed up at all. Especially in the category alert, this should raise some concern.

- by notifying country

Original notifications

Evolution of original notifications by notifying country

country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Austria	71	62	87	110	89	65	49	46	46
Belgium	80	98	107	117	95	129	143	164	198
Bulgaria		10	22	26	34	116	75	54	88
Commission Services	3	8	6	23	12	4	1	1	
Croatia								8	11
Cyprus	41	52	65	53	52	77	48	44	55
Czech Republic	76	73	55	68	90	96	71	70	70
Denmark	113	130	127	122	131	151	130	112	99
Estonia	25	17	11	13	18	9	17	32	12
Finland	79	82	93	141	130	111	107	88	98
France	94	124	137	157	171	199	275	250	266
Germany	422	376	438	412	398	419	363	331	330
Greece	110	170	106	161	158	129	65	65	60
Hungary	33	29	17	10	20	13	10	3	15
Iceland	3	4	1	1	2	6	3	1	1
Ireland	14	24	27	30	35	49	54	40	42
Italy	555	501	470	467	543	549	518	528	506
Latvia	19	13	32	14	21	17	26	27	20
Lithuania	27	40	50	33	48	40	51	28	37
Luxembourg	7	10	11	16	23	25	8	17	12
Malta	16	38	30	18	12	27	11	12	8
Netherlands	163	156	247	212	215	204	173	264	252
Norway	54	68	50	30	23	51	62	45	44
Poland	103	123	156	141	140	226	180	120	132
Portugal	20	25	14	8	18	22	29	40	38
Romania		7	13	18	25	21	14	14	18
Slovakia	49	61	56	52	56	35	35	35	38
Slovenia	61	47	76	73	56	45	43	34	31
Spain	225	169	142	255	285	302	240	201	192
Sweden	61	55	50	60	74	72	96	91	67
Switzerland				4	7	6	20	41	34
United Kingdom	351	361	348	335	320	512	521	327	281

Follow-up notifications

Evolution of follow-up notifications by notifying country

country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Austria	49	60	52	197	71	118	79	80	117
Belgium	104	94	135	178	117	158	210	240	297
Bulgaria	8	28	28	44	57	56	60	106	147
Commission Services	78	158	177	196	307	346	340	421	424
Croatia			3	1	3		2	15	31
Cyprus	34	59	72	57	68	47	76	73	62
Czech Republic	153	175	105	194	185	199	163	210	232
Denmark	122	122	110	118	95	160	131	179	207
Estonia	6	5	7	4	17	24	23	46	60
European Food Safety Authority									2
Finland	13	17	13	25	23	19	23	64	97

country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
France	250	364	272	256	556	361	283	242	325
Germany	334	337	423	489	452	519	409	376	512
Greece	60	80	60	132	113	118	98	66	74
Hungary	48	67	51	95	85	103	120	91	143
Iceland	5	2	2	1	1	5			4
Ireland	29	36	46	27	43	60	72	154	130
Italy	342	341	321	413	520	654	486	439	433
Latvia	33	32	16	30	32	40	36	43	68
Liechtenstein		1						3	
Lithuania	26	17	21	26	51	55	72	69	70
Luxembourg	23	16	33	11	15	16	8	30	37
Malta	37	33	33	44	43	24	32	43	42
Netherlands	147	152	180	149	155	135	180	222	265
Norway	40	27	22	41	44	49	58	44	58
Poland	143	118	137	154	154	202	313	415	420
Portugal	32	51	31	28	42	25	74	85	109
Romania	8	19	27	40	48	63	85	76	137
Slovakia	36	59	49	44	68	69	76	59	70
Slovenia	33	44	35	93	42	47	86	44	68
Spain	1242	1259	911	999	1288	1077	1058	706	719
Sweden	44	38	54	60	83	84	95	161	155
Switzerland	21	42	49	51	70	62	87	85	105
United Kingdom	163	121	118	168	125	152	182	141	109

2014 notifications by hazard category and by classification

hazard category	alert	border rejection	information for attention	information for follow-up	total
adulteration / fraud	1	84	5	2	92
allergens	57	3	16	2	78
biocontaminants	14	6	17	2	39
biotoxins (other)	19		4	2	25
chemical contamination (other)	3	2	1	1	7
composition	63	44	45	64	216
feed additives	1			2	3
food additives and flavourings	13	70	23	26	132
foreign bodies	34	29	12	23	98
GMO / novel food	1	29	19	34	83
heavy metals	98	86	82	19	285
industrial contaminants	35	21	11	13	80
labelling absent/incomplete/incorrect	3	2	2	6	13
migration	12	39	28	15	94
mycotoxins	54	280	44	5	383
non-pathogenic micro-organisms	8	36	8	16	68
not determined / other	4	2	1	1	8
organoleptic aspects	4	26	2	9	41
packaging defective / incorrect	7	8	1	8	24
parasitic infestation		9	3	6	18
pathogenic micro-organisms	248	242	176	116	782
pesticide residues	43	279	95	18	435
poor or insufficient controls	4	50	2	4	60
radiation		7	1	4	12
residues of veterinary medicinal products	19	52	17	11	99
TSEs			1	11	12

2014 notifications by product category and by classification

product category	alert	border rejection	information for attention	information for follow-up	total
alcoholic beverages	3	1		1	5
animal by-products				5	5
bivalve molluscs and products thereof	35	43	41	6	125
cephalopods and products thereof	2	13	6		21
cereals and bakery products	45	43	13	15	116
cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea	6	41	6	9	62
compound feeds	3	1		12	16
confectionery	12	5	1	11	29
crustaceans and products thereof	5	40	20	7	72
dietetic foods, food supplements, fortified foods	57	50	34	63	204
eggs and egg products	5				5
fats and oils	3	12	3	1	19
feed additives		1	12	16	29
feed materials	25	55	31	98	209
feed premixtures			2	1	3
fish and fish products	118	82	92	31	323
food additives and flavourings	3	1	11	10	25
food contact materials	23	104	36	22	185
fruits and vegetables	91	369	149	11	620
gastropods	3		2		5
herbs and spices	37	51	28	5	121
honey and royal jelly		1		1	2
ices and desserts	4	1			5
meat and meat products (other than poultry)	67	53	21	16	157
milk and milk products	48	3	7	8	66
non-alcoholic beverages	3	15	1	8	27
nuts, nut products and seeds	31	250	20	7	308
other food product / mixed	9	18	8	7	42
pet food	18	10	11	8	47
poultry meat and poultry meat products	48	79	45	13	185
prepared dishes and snacks	17	7	5	1	30
soups, broths, sauces and condiments	10	9	4	4	27
wine	1			1	2

2014 – top 10 number of notifications

Number of notifications counted for each combination of hazard/product category/country.

- by origin

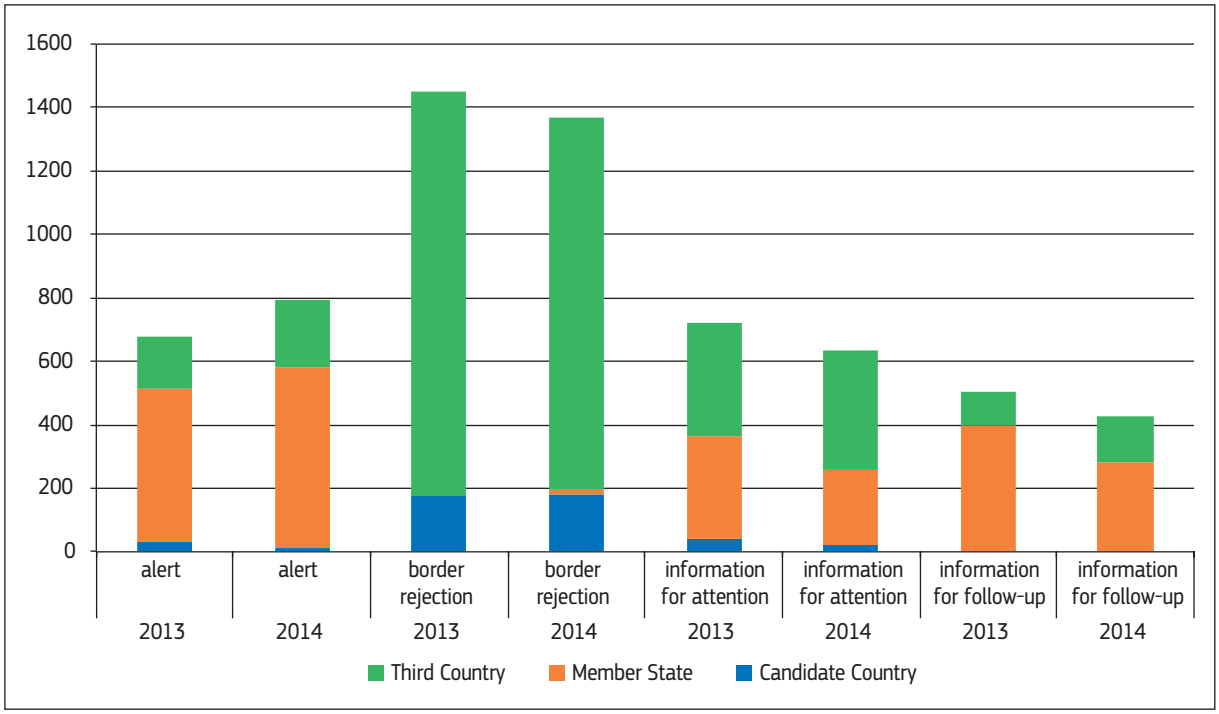
hazard	product category	origin	notifications
mercury	fish and fish products	Spain	54
aflatoxins	nuts, nut products and seeds	Iran	49
Salmonella spp.	poultry meat and poultry meat products	Brazil	45
migration of chromium	food contact materials	China	38
aflatoxins	nuts, nut products and seeds	China	38
aflatoxins	nuts, nut products and seeds	Turkey	38
aflatoxins	fruits and vegetables	Turkey	37
Listeria monocytogenes	fish and fish products	Poland	27
norovirus	bivalve molluscs and products thereof	Vietnam	25
shigatoxin-producing Escherichia coli	meat and meat products (other than poultry)	New Zealand	25
migration of manganese	food contact materials	China	25
unauthorised genetically modified	feed additives	China	25
unauthorised substance dichlorvos	fruits and vegetables	Nigeria	25

- by notifying country

hazard	product category	notifying country	notifications
mercury	fish and fish products	Italy	70
Salmonella spp.	poultry meat and poultry meat products	Netherlands	50
aflatoxins	nuts, nut products and seeds	Germany	44
migration of chromium	food contact materials	Italy	38
aflatoxins	nuts, nut products and seeds	Italy	36
aflatoxins	nuts, nut products and seeds	Netherlands	29
migration of manganese	food contact materials	Italy	28
aflatoxins	nuts, nut products and seeds	United Kingdom	25
unauthorised substance dichlorvos	fruits and vegetables	United Kingdom	24
too high count of Escherichia coli	bivalve molluscs and products thereof	Italy	22
migration of nickel	food contact materials	Italy	22

Notifications – country of origin

2013-2014 Notifications by country type (origin)



Evolution of RASFF notifications by country of origin

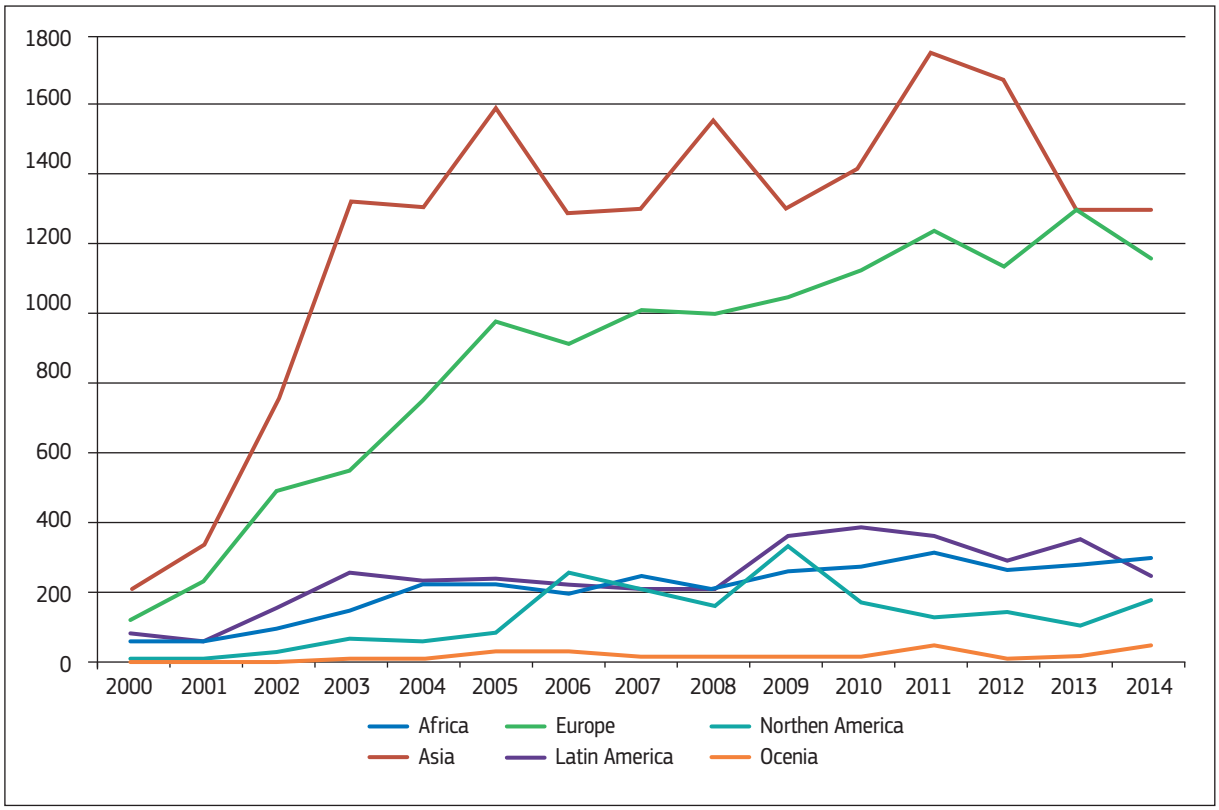
country	2012	2013	2014
Afghanistan	6	6	7
Albania		2	4
Algeria	1	3	
Argentina	51	76	40
Armenia	1	1	
Australia	6	4	11
Austria	14	22	8
Azerbaijan	3	1	
Bangladesh	56	26	18
Belarus	8	3	1
Belgium	63	60	75
Belize		1	
Benin		1	2
Bolivia	2		1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	10	3
Brazil	109	187	109
Bulgaria	7	22	17
Burkina Faso	1		
Burundi		1	1
Cambodia	1	18	23
Cameroon		1	
Canada	10	8	7
Cape Verde		1	2
Chile	20	13	12

country	2012	2013	2014
China	536	436	413
Colombia	8	2	
Costa Rica	1	7	7
Côte d'Ivoire	4	3	7
Croatia	8	11	3
Cuba	1		
Cyprus	2		1
Czech Republic	8	24	25
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1	2	1
Denmark	33	19	28
Dominica		1	
Dominican Republic	34	21	29
Ecuador	12	8	10
Egypt	45	49	55
Estonia	3	10	5
Ethiopia		5	4
Faeroe Islands		3	
Falkland Islands	3		
Finland	3	9	4
former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	3	5	1
France	90	120	106
French Polynesia			1

country	2012	2013	2014
Gambia	3	1	4
Georgia	3	1	1
Germany	104	95	136
Ghana	14	17	12
Greece	21	20	14
Greenland	3	2	1
Grenada			1
Guadeloupe	1		
Guatemala	2	1	
Guinea	1		1
Guyana	1		
Honduras			1
Hong Kong	13	15	18
Hungary	19	18	27
Iceland			1
India	340	257	199
Indonesia	35	19	29
Iran	26	21	54
Ireland	18	26	20
Israel	12	18	5
Italy	112	105	89
Jamaica	2		
Japan	15	7	7
Jordan	1	3	2
Kazakhstan	1	1	1
Kenya	3	24	20
Kosovo		3	
Laos	2	1	
Latvia	7	13	14
Lebanon	5	2	8
Liechtenstein		2	
Lithuania	18	9	6
Luxembourg		1	
Madagascar	4	3	2
Malaysia	10	11	6
Mali	2		
Malta	2	2	
Mauritania	10	16	16
Mauritius	4	2	4
Mexico	4	4	6
Moldova	1	4	4
Mongolia	1		
Morocco	60	60	37
Mozambique	8	14	1
Myanmar			1
Namibia	6	7	6
Nepal	1	1	
Netherlands	98	103	113
Netherlands Antilles			1
New Zealand	10	4	29
Nicaragua	5	5	1
Nigeria	36	22	42
Norway	12	2	7
Oman		1	

country	2012	2013	2014
Pakistan	17	11	19
Panama	1	1	1
Papua New Guinea	2	5	1
Paraguay	2	1	
Peru	22	8	24
Philippines	12	2	8
Poland	118	164	131
Portugal	13	17	22
Romania	16	28	18
Russia	24	25	8
Saudi Arabia			1
Senegal	14	11	9
Serbia	4	18	9
Seychelles	3	4	3
Sierra Leone	8	1	
Singapore	3	1	4
Slovakia	13	15	12
Slovenia	10	5	3
South Africa	11	7	11
South Korea	8	9	14
Spain	126	185	166
Sri Lanka	23	23	17
Sudan		1	8
Suriname		1	1
Swaziland	2		
Sweden	24	45	7
Switzerland	4	3	7
Syria	10	5	6
Taiwan	17	8	2
Tajikistan			1
Tanzania	1		1
Thailand	119	88	91
Togo	2	6	1
Tunisia	15	9	35
Turkey	309	226	201
Uganda	2	4	1
Ukraine	68	16	22
United Arab Emirates	1		
United Kingdom	63	55	50
United States	127	102	164
unknown origin	6	7	7
Uruguay	7	7	4
Uzbekistan	8	4	17
Venezuela	2		
Vietnam	74	76	126
Yemen	2	2	
Zimbabwe			1

2000-2014 notifications by world region



2014 notifications by follow-up type and by notifying country

Follow-up	AT	BE	BG	CH	CS[1]	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	ES	FI	FR	FS[2]	GB	GR
accompanying documents		4	4		9	1	3	12	6		10	5	7		7	1
additional information	9	60	6	11	23	5	29	112	34	7	101	18	88		28	5
additional lot(s)		4					5	5	2		2	1	4			
corrigendum	3	2		2	110	3	4	13	5	2	9	3	12		2	2
imposing systematic border checks					6											
information on sampling/analysis		9	2	2		3	5	9	7		12	3	6		6	
lifting of reinforced border checks					85											
measures taken	26	15	54	12		19	11	11	6	2	16	8	25		2	11
notification downgrade					15											
notification reclassification					7											
notification upgrade		1			15						1		3			
outcome of investigations	24	119	41	47	2	11	108	186	71	20	349	21	93		27	23
outcome of investigations and measures taken	46	53	30	26		12	52	120	45	24	155	35	69		22	20
reaction from third country		2							1						1	
re-dispatch information	7	2	1			5	4	14	1	1	8					6
request	2	20	9	5	4	3	11	24	28	2	50	3	16	2	14	6
translation					97			3			3					
withdrawal of follow-up notification					26			1		1						
withdrawal of original notification		6			25			2	1	1	3		2			
total	**117**	**297**	**147**	**105**	**424**	**62**	**232**	**512**	**207**	**60**	**719**	**97**	**325**	**2**	**109**	**74**

[1] Commission Services
[2] European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Follow-up	HR	HU	IE	IS	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	NO	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK
accompanying documents	2	2	3	1	70	4	1	1		10	2	8	3	2	5	3	3
additional information	4	21	17		87	10	6	7	6	85	11	74	10	11	19	3	7
additional lot(s)			3		6				1	4		2			3		
corrigendum	1	3	4		26	1	1			13	5	7	1	1	5	2	3
imposing systematic border checks																	
information on sampling/analysis	2		3		17					7	1	4	3		8		1
lifting of reinforced border checks																	
measures taken	4	3	11		20		6	7	9	3	5	29	7	11	25	3	1
notification downgrade					1							1					
notification reclassification							1										
notification upgrade					3												
outcome of investigations	7	75	40	3	109	31	15	27	12	114	17	159	50	41	58	33	21
outcome of investigations and measures taken	8	37	38		44	16	5	24	10	14	15	89	30	39	20	23	29
reaction from third country														1			
re-dispatch information		1			12	2			1	1		35	1	15	1	1	1
request	2	1	11		10	6	2	2	3	12	2	8	4	15	9		3
translation												1			1		
withdrawal of follow-up notification					2					2					1		
withdrawal of original notification	1				26							3		1			1
total	**31**	**143**	**130**	**4**	**433**	**70**	**37**	**68**	**42**	**265**	**58**	**420**	**109**	**137**	**155**	**68**	**70**

The coloured cells indicate the country with the highest number of follow-up notifications for a given follow-up type.

2014 non-member countries having provided follow-up

country	distribution	origin	follow-up
Afghanistan		8	2
Albania	1	4	
Algeria	4		
Andorra	16		12
Angola	2		
Argentina		43	2
Armenia	1		
Australia	11	11	4
Bahrain	4		
Bangladesh	2	18	
Belarus	7	2	
Belize	1		
Benin	2	3	
Bermuda	1		
Bolivia		1	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	10	3	14
Brazil	3	108	92
British Virgin Islands	1		
Burundi	1	1	
Cambodia	2	21	
Cameroon	1		
Canada	6	10	1
Cape Verde		2	1
Central African Republic	1		
Chile		16	4

country	distribution	origin	follow-up
China	1	421	77
Congo (Brazzaville)	1		
Costa Rica		8	3
Côte d'Ivoire	3	7	
Cuba	1		
Curaçao	1		
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1	1	1
Dominican Republic	2	27	1
Ecuador	1	10	2
Egypt		58	
Ethiopia		4	
Faeroe Islands	3		
former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	7	1	1
French Polynesia	3	1	3
Gabon	3		
Gambia	1	5	
Georgia	1	1	3
Ghana	6	12	
Gibraltar	2	1	4
Greenland	3	1	
Guadeloupe	2		
Guernsey	1		
Guinea		1	

country	distribution	origin	follow-up
Honduras		2	2
Hong Kong	20	49	65
India	3	199	3
Indonesia	1	29	7
Iran	1	54	1
Iraq	1		
Isle of Man	1		
Israel	3	5	
Japan	14	7	2
Jersey	1		
Jordan	4	2	
Kazakhstan	2	1	
Kenya	2	20	11
Kosovo	3		
Kuwait	5		
Lebanon	5	8	8
Macao	1		
Madagascar		2	1
Malaysia	3	8	1
Maldives		1	
Mali	1		
Mauritania	1	16	
Mauritius	2	5	4
Mexico	2	6	1
Moldova	9	4	
Monaco	5	1	
Mongolia	1		
Montenegro	3		1
Morocco	5	40	4
Mozambique		6	
Myanmar		1	4
Namibia		6	
Netherlands Antilles		1	
New Caledonia	2		
New Zealand	2	29	
Nicaragua		2	
Nigeria	8	42	
Oman	2		
Pakistan		18	

country	distribution	origin	follow-up
Panama	2	1	
Papua New Guinea		1	
Peru		25	
Philippines	4	8	
Poland		1	
Qatar	8		
Russia	18	9	
Rwanda	1		
Saint Martin	1		
San Marino	1		
Saudi Arabia	5	1	
Senegal	1	9	10
Serbia	12	9	2
Seychelles		3	1
Sierra Leone	2		
Singapore	9	5	
South Africa	8	12	4
South Korea	4	14	
Sri Lanka		17	2
Sudan	1	8	
Suriname	2	1	
Syria		6	
Taiwan	1	2	
Tajikistan		1	
Tanzania	1	1	1
Thailand	6	92	13
Togo	1	1	1
Trinidad and Tobago	2		
Tunisia	2	35	2
Turkey	5	212	10
Uganda		1	
Ukraine	11	25	1
United Arab Emirates	14	3	1
United States	8	167	2
Uruguay		4	1
Uzbekistan	2	17	
Vietnam	1	129	24
Zimbabwe		1	

The first column “distribution” shows the number of 2014 notifications for each country to which the Commission’s Services notified distribution of a product. The second column “origin” shows the number of 2014 notifications for each country to which the Commission’s Services notified a product originating from it. The third column “follow-up” shows the number of follow-ups received from each country in 2014.

The European Commission's RASFF team in 2014:
Jan Baele, Nathalie De Broyer, Elena Dolha, Magda Havlíková, Dawid Łacinski, Anna Młynarczyk, Enrique Beltrán Poveda, Adrie ten Velden

HOW TO OBTAIN EU PUBLICATIONS

Free publications:

- one copy:
  via EU Bookshop (http://bookshop.europa.eu);
- more than one copy or posters/maps:
  from the European Union's representations (http://ec.europa.eu/represent_en.htm);
  from the delegations in non-EU countries (http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/index_en.htm);
  by contacting the Europe Direct service (http://europa.eu/europedirect/index_en.htm) or calling 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (freephone number from anywhere in the EU) (*).

  (*) The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

Priced publications:

- via EU Bookshop (http://bookshop.europa.eu).

Publications Office