The EU Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)

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Health and Consumers (DG Sanco)
European Commission
Structure

1. Directorate General "Health and Consumers"
2. EU structure and risk analysis
3. Objective and network RASFF
4. Legal basis
5. RASFF notifications
6. Share of information
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8. Future of RASFF: iRASFF
EU Structure and risk analysis

- E. Parliament
- Council
- Commission
- DG SANCO
- EFSA

Risk management
Risk assessment
Risk communication
RASFF
Objective

to provide a **rapid exchange of information** among European countries and the European Commission **about direct or indirect risks** detected in relation to food or feed
RASFF member countries

31 European countries:

- 27 Member States of the EU
- 3 EFTA/EEA countries (IS, LI, NO)
- Switzerland – partial participation

European Commission; European Food Safety Authority and EFTA Surveillance Authority

http://ec.europa.eu/rasff
RASFF networks

*Simple structure:*

- clearly identified contact points (1 per member country)
- organized way of information exchange by means of template transmitted via E-Mail

*In case of an urgent notification outside of office hours all members have out-of-hours arrangements (24/7)*
Legal basis I

What should be notified?

Food and feed for which exists a direct or indirect risk to human health (Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 – Art. 50-52)
Art. 50: Rapid alert system
Art. 51: Implementing measures
Art. 52: Confidentiality rules for the rapid alert system

Feed (including pet food) if it presents a serious risk to human or animal health or the environment (Regulation (EC) No 183/2005 – Art. 29)
Legal basis II

How should be notified?

Implementing rules for RASFF Regulation (EC) No 16/2011 (complemented with Standard Operating Procedures – SOPs in draft stage)

Duties of members of the network
Classification and submission of notifications
Follow-up notifications
Commission’s verification
Notification withdrawal and amendments
Exchange of information with third countries
Publication of information
Types of notifications

Types of notifications based on seriousness of the risk and distribution status in the EU

- alert
- information
- border rejection
- news

Each notification starts with an original notification and can be updated by follow-up notifications informing about outcome of investigations in member countries or third countries.
Classification of notifications

Alert notifications: rapid action required/serious risk

Information notifications: rapid action not required

Border rejection notifications: product stopped on the border

News: info interesting for the control authorities – transmitted informally and not as a notification
What triggers RASFF notifications

**Control on the market:**

Usually triggered by:
- A control at the EU border
- A control on the market

Can also be triggered by:
- Consumer's complaint
- Food poisoning
- Other reasons, e.g. monitoring of the media

Usually an official control (in most cases including sampling, analysis and official report) but it can also be a company's own-check, verified by official authorities and followed up by an official control if necessary.
Important RASFF notifications of the past

Antifreeze and methanol in wine in Italy - 1986
Chernobyl nuclear accident - 1986
BSE: “mad cow disease” - 1997
“Rotten” meat and cheese scandals - 2007
Melamine in feed and in food - 2008
Dioxins in pork from Ireland – 2008
Listeria monocytogenes in quargel Käse from Austria – 2010
Fukushima nuclear accident Japan 2011
Verotoxin-producing Escherichia coli in fenugreek sprouts from Egypt – 2011
Norovirus (suspected) in strawberries from China 2012
RASFF notifications

Brussels, 8 October, 2012

FOOD

VERY URGENT - TRES URG

ALERT NOTIFICATION: 2012.1409

ORIGINAL NOTIFIC

SUBJECT: SALMONELLA THOMPSON IN S1 FROM GREECE

PAGES: COVER PAGE (1) + 6

FAXNUMBER: +32-2-296 76 74
EMAIL: sanco-rasff@ec.europa.eu
HTTP://CIRCA.EUROPA.EU/

FOOD

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

INFORMATION NOTIFICATION FOR ATTENTION: 2012.1409

ORIGINAL NOTIFICATION

SUBJECT: SALMONELLA STANLEY IN HUNGARY, VIA AUSTRIA

PAGES: COVER PAGE (2) + 7 + 1 attached file

FAXNUMBER: +32-2-296 76 74
EMAIL: sanco-rasff@ec.europa.eu
HTTP://CIRCA.EUROPA.EU/

FOOD

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

INFORMATION NOTIFICATION FOR ATTENTION: 2012.1409

ORIGINAL NOTIFICATION

SUBJECT: FOODBORNE OUTBREAK SUSPECTED TO BE CAUSED BY FROZEN STRAWBERRIES FROM CHINA

PAGES: COVER PAGE (1) + 30

FAXNUMBER: +32-2-296 76 74
EMAIL: sanco-rasff@ec.europa.eu
HTTP://CIRCA.EUROPA.EU/

official control on the market - information on distribution & consumer
Product distributed to the Netherlands
producer:
supplier:
The contact point in Netherlands is kindly requested to provide information about lot numbers concerned
The contact point from Greece is kindly requested to provide possible distribution

food poisoning - no distribution - withdrawal from the market

The contact point from Austria is kindly requested to provide the relation to the outbreak and the damaging of the packaging concerning the official sample (as mentioned in the analytical report)
The contact point from Hungary is kindly requested to provide the outcome of investigations
Exchange of information with third countries

If the notified product originates from or is distributed to a third country, the Commission contact point shall inform the third country without undue delay.

The Commission contact point shall send notifications to a single designated contact point in the third country for attention or for follow-up based on the seriousness of the risk.
Information provided within 24 hours

Presently more than 90 countries use RASFF Window

Restricted access (to the EU RASFF database) provided to a single contact point responsible for further coordination of information in its country

Engaged towards observing confidentiality and providing feedback on actions taken

Use of RASFF WINDOW to inform Third countries
2011 RASFF notifications classification

- Alert
- Border rejection
- Information
- Information for attention
- Information for follow-up

Follow-up
Original
Total notifications 2006-2011

- Follow-up border rejection
- Follow-up information
- Follow-up alert
- Original border rejection
- Original information
- Original alert
2000-2011 notifications by world region (origin of the products)
New IT platform iRASFF

Online notifications
Working in a collaborative way
Consolidation of information
Notifications are submitted and notified according to levels and groups
### General Information

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<th>Value</th>
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### Risk

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<td>Motivate serious risk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of people affected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness / patient's symptoms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other hazards</td>
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### Follow-up

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### Countries notified for the notification and associated follow-up

For attention: IT, GR, NL

For follow-up: GB, CH, LU, FR, BE, NO, DE

### Products

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<td>smoked salmon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Product category</td>
<td>fish and products thereof</td>
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</table>
Thank you very much for your attention!

DG Health & Consumers
Visit our webpage:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/index_en.htm