



Food Risk Insights

Eurofins Food Testing Ireland Ltd
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In Focus

Emerging issues, trends and legislative changes

'Forever chemicals' in cereal products

More infant formula product recalls

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Dietetic, food supplements and fortified food safety

RASFF 2025 Report Roundup

Welcome to the February 2026 food risk insights from Eurofins Food Testing Ireland Ltd.'s Compliance and Risk Management Team. This edition features the latest in pesticide bans, recalls, food fraud and foodborne diseases. Plus the 2025 RASFF roundup.

We are here to offer expert advice and support; to help you manage the ever-evolving risks faced by food businesses.

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'Forever chemicals' in everyday cereal products

Recent studies have highlighted increasing levels of trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) in plant derived foods and beverages. TFA is one of the ultrashort PFAS (ultrashort-chain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances). Ultrashort PFAS are defined as PFAS containing one to three carbon atoms and are of growing concern due to their environmental persistence and widespread occurrence.

TFA is the simplest perfluorinated carboxylic acid and has been extensively studied and reviewed over the last few years. Its formation is partly linked to the atmospheric degradation of modern refrigerants and the breakdown of pesticides containing trifluoromethyl groups.

In a recent report by Pesticide Action Network Europe, based on a study in which they analysed both processed products and raw materials purchased across European countries, several key findings were highlighted, including:

- Contamination with TFA, which appeared in more than four fifths of all samples taken across 16 countries
- Levels were often high, averaging 78.9 µg/kg and reaching up to 360 µg/kg, with wheat-based foods showing the greatest contamination
- Food was identified as the dominant exposure route, with concentrations more than a thousand times higher than those typically found in tap water
- Children were seen as particularly at risk to TFA exposure.

At the request of the European Commission, the EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) Pesticide Peer Review Unit re-evaluated the acceptable daily intake (ADI) and introduced, for the first time, an acute reference dose (ARfD) for TFA.

The proposed values are:

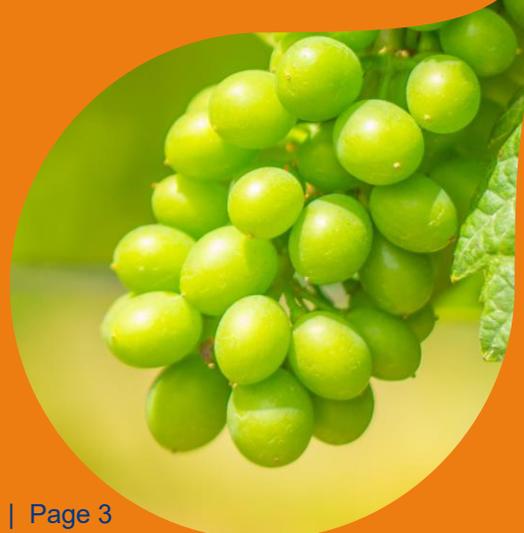
- ADI: 0.03 mg/kg body weight per day
- ARfD: 0.6 mg/kg body weight

(Both expressed as sodium trifluoroacetate)

France bans imports of foods containing EU-prohibited pesticides

France has announced that it will ban foods containing residues of pesticides prohibited by the EU. In practice, this will greatly restrict imports of products such as mangos, guavas, avocados, grapes, apples and citrus fruits, particularly from South America. French farmers are citing "unfair competition" from cheaper South American imports, particularly beef, poultry, and sugar, which they argue do not meet strict European environmental or health standards. France has long

been a critic of the upcoming Mercosur-EU trade deal, which will reduce trade barriers between Europe and many South American countries.



⚠️ More infant formula products recalled

Two more of the world's largest dairy companies have blocked and recalled batches of infant formula following concerns around Nestle's larger multicounty recall.

In Singapore Danone blocked a batch of formula from release at the request of local authorities. At the same time Lactalis withdrew products from several markets, among them France, China, Australia and Mexico.

All these recalls are due to the possible presence of cereulide toxin. Cereulide is a toxin produced by certain *Bacillus cereus* strains that is extremely heat resistant and cannot be destroyed through boiling or normal formula preparation. If ingested, it can cause symptoms to appear quickly, including nausea, vomiting, and abdominal cramps.

Current reports have suggested that the contamination was traced to **arachidonic acid (ARA) oil**, a raw ingredient supplied internationally and used in formulas across multiple brands.

ARA is a long chain omega 6 polyunsaturated fatty acid that is naturally present in human breast milk. Infant formula manufacturers add ARA to better mimic the nutrient profile of breast milk. It plays an important role in early development supporting brain development and nervous system function.

ISO 14060 International standard on net zero

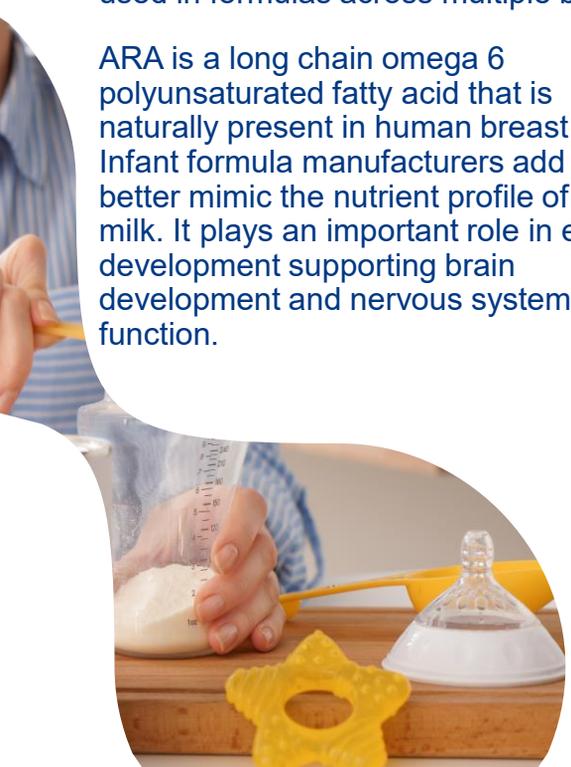
ISO 14060 is the upcoming standard for food businesses to define, measure, report, and verify their net zero emissions, to ensure credible climate action across complex supply chains. with expected publication in mid-to-late 2026.

Key aspects for Food Businesses:

- Common language
- Credible strategies
- Supply chain consistency
- Paris Agreement alignment
- Verification

ISO 14060 refers to a developing family of standards for net zero aligned organisations, with the current key standard, ISO 14064-1, providing principles and requirements for organisations to quantify and report their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and removals; forming a framework for credible reporting and verification.

While ISO 14064-1 (the organisational level standard) and related standards (like -2 for projects, -3 for verification) are established, ISO 14060 itself is a new, standard aimed at defining what it means for an organisation to be "net zero," building on existing guidance to offer an assessable framework for credible net zero strategies.



CFA publishes guidance on *Listeria monocytogenes*

New industry-led guidance has been released to help manufacturers, retailers and other FBOs (Food Business Operators) manage the risk of *Listeria monocytogenes* in certain RTE (Ready To Eat) foods.

Developed by the Chilled Food Association (CFA) in conjunction with regulators, it reinforces that food safety must be ensured through HACCP supported by Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), Good Hygienic Practice (GHP) and Pre-Requisite Programs (PRPs).

It is aimed at supporting businesses to get ready for the EU change to the criterion for *L. monocytogenes* in many ready-to-eat (RTE) foods from the **1st July 2026, EU Regulation 2024/2895 amending Regulation (EC) 2073/2005**

Under the new EU rules, these RTE foods that support the growth of *Listeria monocytogenes* must either

- Meet the legal microbiological criterion of not detected in 25g, which will apply for the entire shelf-life of the product, not just while it is under the control of the manufacturer as it did previously

- Demonstrate that levels will not exceed 100 cfu/g throughout shelf-life

Although this regulation has not been adopted into GB law, it will apply to all food products placed on the EU or Northern Ireland markets. If your products are exported or distributed across Europe, food businesses will need to demonstrate compliance.

In linked legislation, specifically Regulation (EU) 2025/179, during official controls at food and feed businesses suspected of being implicated in a foodborne illness outbreak, EU competent authorities will be required to collect isolates of *Salmonella enterica*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Escherichia coli* (including Shiga Toxin-producing *E. coli* [STEC]), *Campylobacter jejuni*, and *Campylobacter coli* and to carry out WGS (Whole Genome Sequencing) on those isolates.

The EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) will be able to compare WGS data for food-related isolates with WGS data from human isolates. Authorities in the UK and Republic of Ireland already conduct these checks as part of their investigations, as may other EU member countries.

Dairy cattle and avian influenza

The EU have assessed the risk of infection of dairy cattle in the EU with highly pathogenic avian influenza virus which has affected dairy cows in the United States.

EU authorities have evaluated how likely it is for the virus to spread to dairy cattle and concluded that the overall risk is low, though not zero. Their assessment suggests that cattle are far less susceptible than sheep or goats, but

continued monitoring and biosecurity measures are still recommended to prevent any potential disease crossover.

The recommendations included:

- Awareness raising
- Targeted outbreak investigations
- Regional active surveillance
- Follow up monitoring

Food Risk Insights

Company fined for extending shelf-life dates

A ready to eat fruit and vegetable supplier has been fined after Environmental Health Officers uncovered serious food safety breaches, including the use of false 'use-by' and packing dates on produce destined for customers such as airline caterers. The company admitted failing to follow HACCP based procedures and applying misleading labels, with some items even marked as packed in the future.

One third of food fraud cases a food safety risk

Researchers examined fraud issues collected by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission from September 2016 to March 2023 and concluded that roughly one third of documented food fraud cases are regarded as posing a considerable food safety risk.

The majority of more serious risks were found to be microbiological or chemical in nature. The food category with the most cases is seafood, followed by wine and alcoholic beverages and meat and meat products.

Issues included: Sale of expired foods or items unfit for consumption, document forgery, meat products where slaughter took place in illegal facilities.



Investigations target meat, honey and wine in Portugal

Portugal's food agency has highlighted several concerns during recent operations into the meat, honey and wine sectors. Issues raised:

1. **Meat** - Suspicions of poor practices in the freezing and packaging processes of meat, lack of traceability for the fresh meat which was then frozen
2. **Fish/Seafood** - traceability, information on batches and weight, and non-compliance with hygiene requirements
3. **Wine** - Authenticity and quality of wines with Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Controlled Designation of Origin (DOC), and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI)
4. **Honey** - Packaged honey with a false veterinary control number (NCV), document forgery on origin

Landfill cheese

New Zealand Food Safety has issued a warning about unauthorised cheese sales. The cheese, originally deemed unsuitable for sale by its producer was disposed of at landfill but was later retrieved and found being sold.

Potential feta shortage

A viral outbreak that emerged in August 2024 forced Greece to cull almost half a million sheep and goats, losing roughly 5% of the country's herd. Because the vast majority of this milk supply is dedicated to feta production, producers are warning that feta output will fall and international shortages could follow in 2026. Authentic Greek feta, protected under PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) rules is made in specific regions of Greece from sheep's milk or a mixture of sheep's and goat's (with a minimum of 70% sheep's).

EU Foodborne diseases report

The 2024 EFSA–ECDC (European Food Safety Authority and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control) report reviews zoonoses surveillance across 27 EU Member States, the UK (Northern Ireland), and eight non-EU countries.

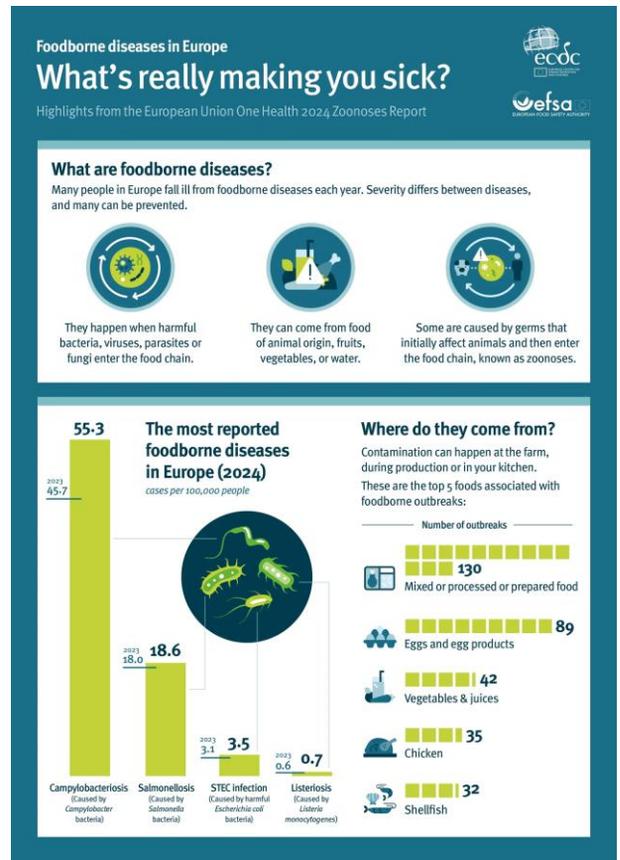
Campylobacteriosis and salmonellosis remained the most frequently reported human zoonoses, followed by STEC infections. Listeriosis, while less common, had the highest hospitalisation and fatality rates. All four major zoonoses campylobacteriosis, salmonellosis, STEC infection and listeriosis showed increasing trends over the past five years.

Most countries met *Salmonella* reduction targets in poultry, but competent authority testing detected higher positivity rates in carcass samples than operators' own checks.

Foodborne outbreaks, cases and hospitalisations increased compared with 2023, though deaths fell. *Salmonella* in eggs and egg products was the most significant risk, and *Salmonella* also dominated multi-country outbreaks. Foods of non-animal origin, especially vegetables, led to the most deaths in strong evidence outbreaks.

Retailers respond to weight loss drugs trend

UK retailers are rolling out and adjusting meal ranges for the rising number of consumers using weight loss medication. The products offer nutrient dense, smaller portions rich in protein and fibre to address reduced appetites and potential nutrient deficiencies from a lower calorie



Source: <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/infographics/foodborne-diseases-europe-whats-really-making-you-sick>

Zoonoses are infectious diseases naturally transmitted from animals to humans, caused by pathogens like viruses, bacteria, parasites, or fungi. They can spread through direct contact, contaminated food/water, or vectors like mosquitoes.

Full report can be accessed [here](#).

intake; providing convenient, balanced nutrition for individuals on these medications.



FSA food supplements safety

The newly issued Food Standards Agency guidance outlines what food supplements are, describes the various types available, and offers practical advice on how to buy and use them safely. It's top tips include:

- Check the label for dosage instructions and never exceed recommended amounts
- Check safe levels of food supplements and seek advice on how long you should take them for
- Seek medical advice if you are pregnant, breastfeeding, have a medical condition, or take prescription medicines
- Be wary of online bargains, unusually cheap products may be counterfeit
- Only buy from reputable sellers and take extra care buying from online marketplaces
- If you feel unwell after taking a supplement, stop immediately and seek medical advice
- Supplements shouldn't replace a balanced diet

Food supplements and fortified foods: EU's highest food-fraud risk category in 2025

European Commission Agri-Food Fraud Network data (see pages 9 and 10 of this issue) identifies **dietetic foods, food supplements and fortified foods** as the EU's most frequently reported product category for suspected food fraud throughout 2025. This reflects a persistent vulnerability in this high-value sector which is reliant on complex supply chains and trusted label claims.

Aggregated monthly reporting shows over 500 cross-border fraud suspicions within this category alone over the year, with a marked increase in cases during the final quarter.

The most common issues involved misleading nutrition and health claims, unauthorised or non-compliant ingredients, and compositional irregularities; together posing significant regulatory, reputational and consumer safety risks.

Risk management support for supplements & fortified foods

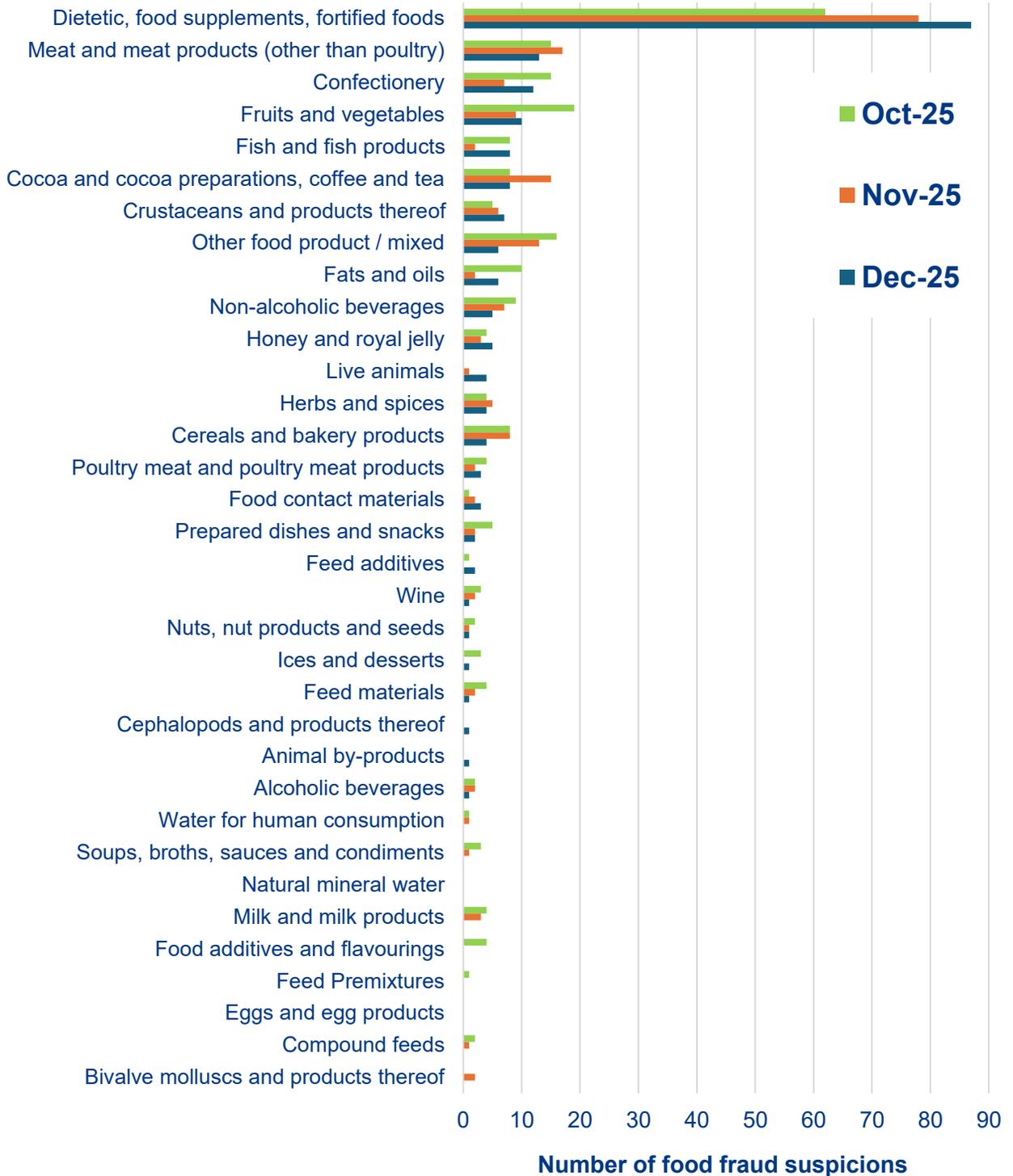
Eurofins Food Testing Ireland Ltd, together with Eurofins competence centres, supports proactive fraud risk management. This includes targeted authenticity and compositional testing, label and claim verification, and screening for undeclared or unauthorised substances.

Through these services, we help businesses strengthen due diligence, protect brand integrity, and respond effectively to the evolving EU fraud landscape.



RASFF latest quarter's report

Summary of Food Fraud Suspicions



RASFF 2025 Report Roundup

RASFF EU Agri-Food Fraud Suspicions | 2025 Total



Source: https://food.ec.europa.eu/food-safety/acn/ffn-monthly_en



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The Eurofins Compliance and Risk Management Team can work with you to identify and mitigate risks within your business, whether they be microbiological, contaminants, allergens, pesticides, authenticity (food fraud) or risks to your supply chain such as price changes or climate fluctuations.

We are here to work with you to protect your customers, brand and reputation.



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