



# NEWS LETTER

## Dear Safefood-Online users,

In February 2026, the EU Rapid Alert System recorded 362 new notifications. The evaluation can be found under point 1 in this newsletter.

Under "Latest news on residues and contaminants" (point 2), we report on changes to the maximum levels of pesticides.

We also inform on the work of the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) on the updated assessment of the health risks of plant-based drinks and on a proposal for health-based reference values for 2-chloroethanol.

News around food safety and food fraud can be found under point 3.

The topic of the month (point 4) is the finding of cereulide in infant formula.

### Bavaria: Demonstration against "new genetic engineering" in beer

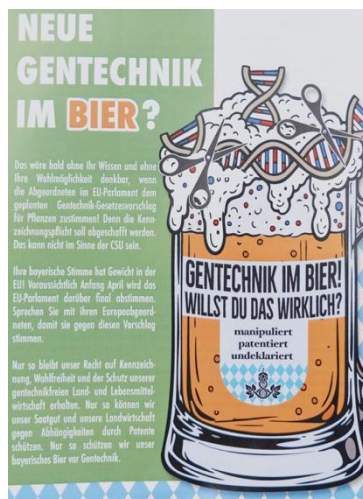
At the world's largest regulars' table – at least according to the party CSU – the topic was (once again) beer, or more precisely, genetic engineering in beer.

Two weeks ago, several associations and organisations demonstrated against the regulations on EU-level planned for "new genetic engineering" and called on politicians to campaign for "GMO-free and patent-free beer".

In this context, we would also like to refer to the [overview of the Science Circle for Genomics and Genetic Engineering on the trilogue procedure](#).

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

Your Safefood-Online Team



Source: Bioland e.V.

# 1. RASFF Notifications February 2026

The number of new RASFF notifications in February 2026 is significantly lower than in January:

- **February 2026:** 362
- January 2026: 369
- December 2025: 521

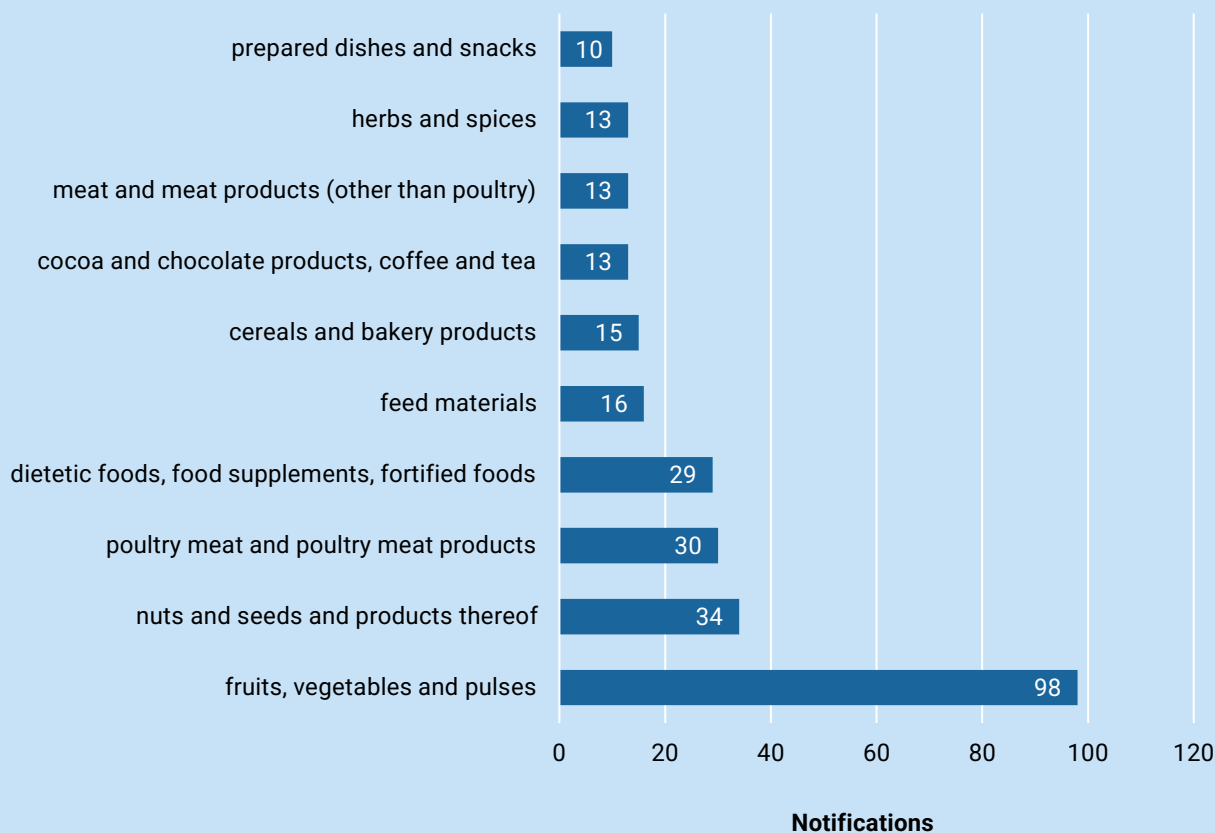
The RASFF-notifications are divided as follows:

- Alert notifications: 99
- Border rejections: 106
- Information messages: 157



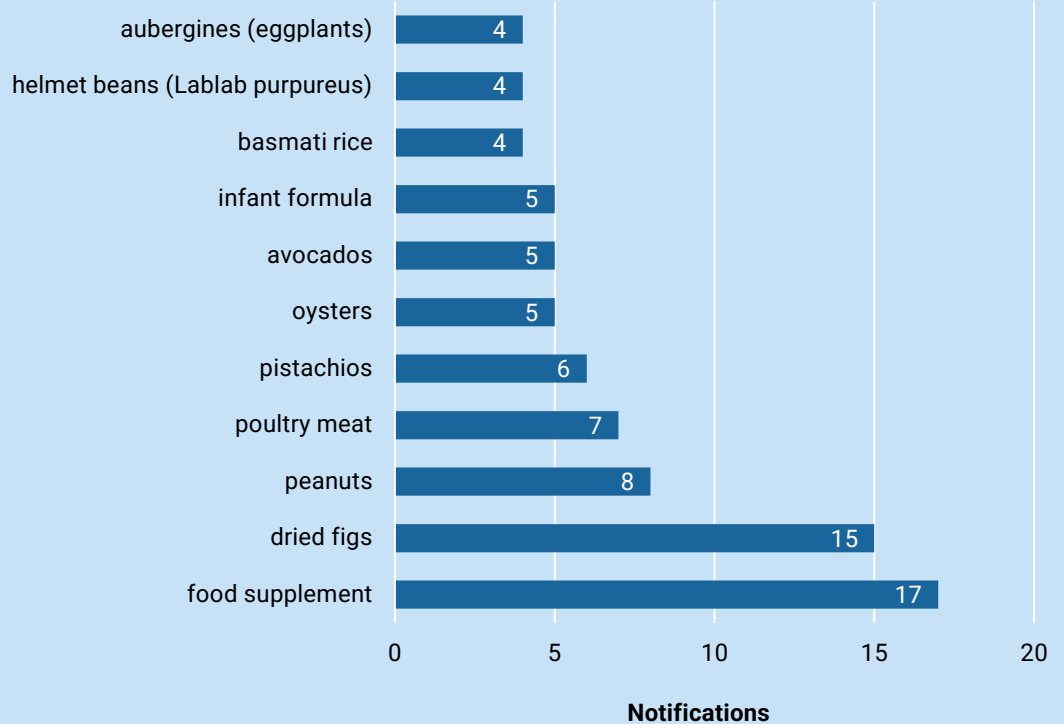
The product group fruit, vegetables and pulses is first in the evaluation by product category with 98 notifications, followed by the product categories nuts, seeds and products thereof and poultry meat and poultry meat products in second and third place with 34 and 30 notifications respectively:

## RASFF-Notifications February 2026: Top 10 product groups



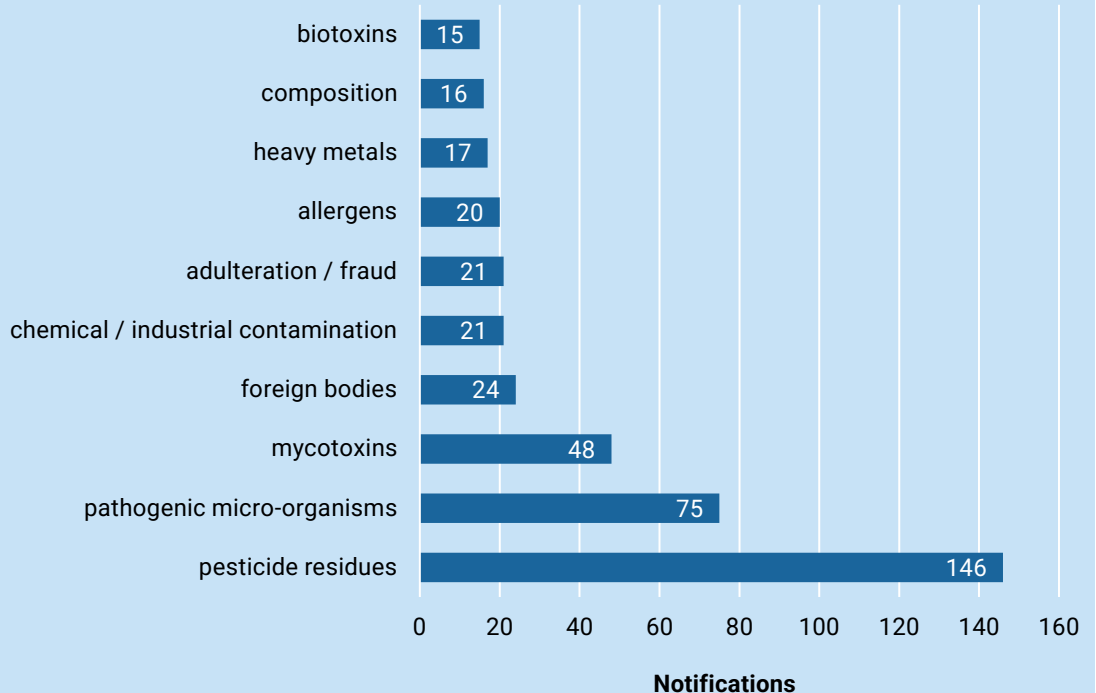
In terms of products, food supplements are once again at the top of the list with 17 notifications, followed by figs (dried) with 15 notificationas and peanuts with 8 notifications:

### RASFF-Notifications February 2026: Top 10 products



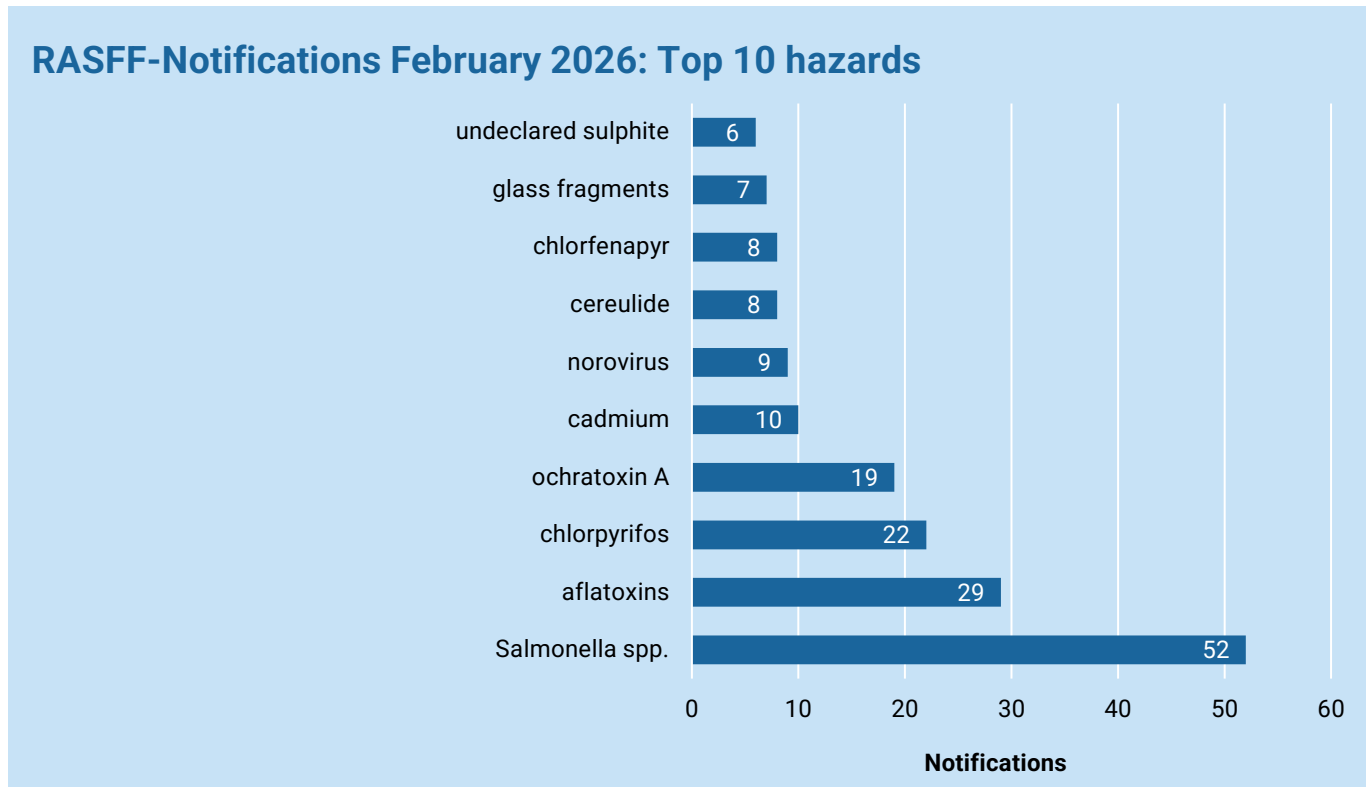
When evaluated by hazard category, pesticides are ranking first with 146 cases of maximum levels being exceeded or unauthorised pesticides being found. Pathogenic micro-organisms are following in second place with 75 notifications and mycotoxins in third place with 48 notifications:

### RASFF-Notifications February 2026: Top 10 hazard categories

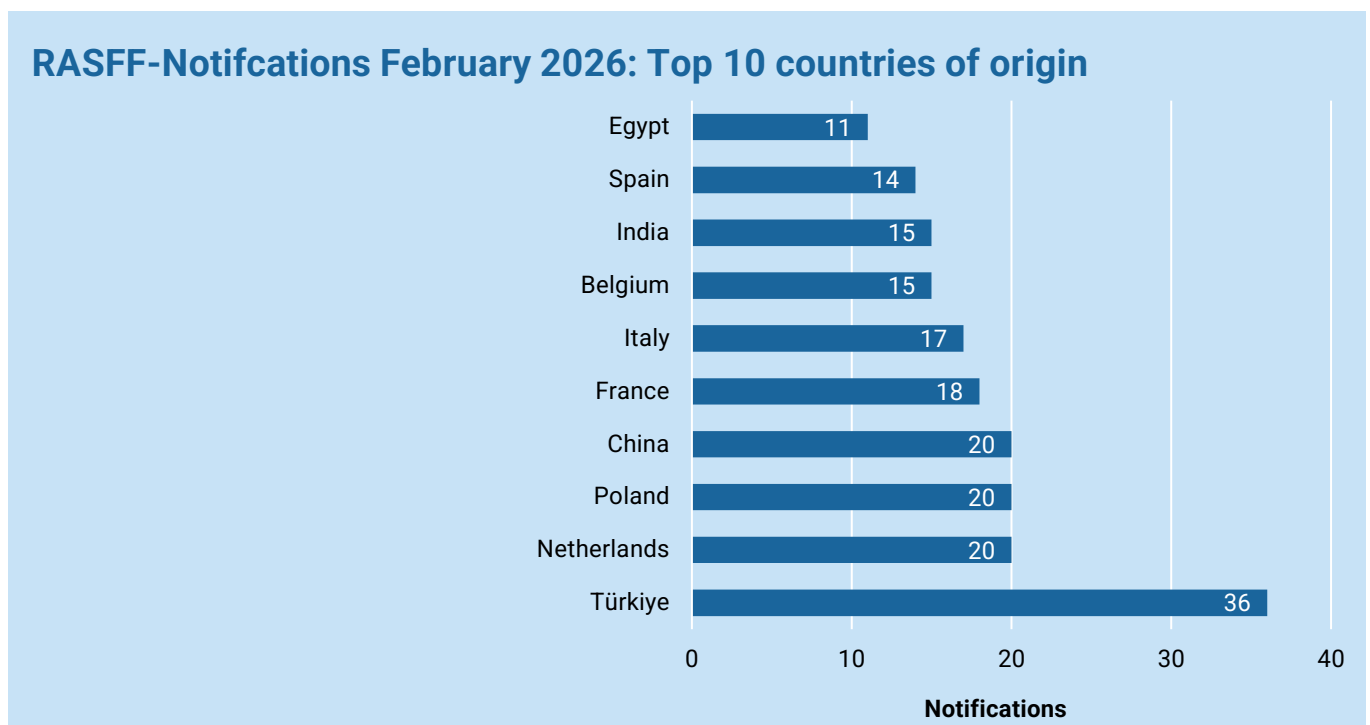


# 1. RASFF Notifications February 2026

In terms of hazards, salmonella are on top with 58 notifications, followed by aflatoxins and ochratoxin A with 29 and 22 notifications:



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



In 36 notifications, the products came from Türkiye. The Netherlands and Poland are following, each with 20 products.

## 2. Update on pesticides and contaminants



- amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) 396/2005 as regards maximum residue levels for **azoxystrobin, etofenprox, fenpropidin, flupyradifuron, hexythiazox, imazalil, spinosad and tebufenozide** in or on certain products
- amending Annexes II, III and V to Regulation (EC) 396/2005 as regards maximum residue levels for **carbofuran, imazalil, mandipropamid, propaquizafop, quizalofop-P-ethyl and quizalofop-P-tefuryl** in or on certain products

For further information, please refer to the proposed regulation.

### Regulation (EU) 2026/215

Regulation (EU) 2026/215 amended Annexes II and V to Regulation (EC) 396/2005 with regard to maximum residue levels for:

- Dimoxystrobin
- Ethephon
- Propamocarb

in or on certain products. The new limits will apply from August 19, 2026.

For further information on the new maximum levels, please refer to the linked text of the Regulation.

### New proposals from the European Commission to amend the maximum levels for pesticides

The European Commission has presented several proposals to amend the maximum levels for pesticides:

- amending Annexes II, III and V to Regulation (EC) 396/2005 as regards maximum residue levels for **benomyl, carbendazim and thiophanate-methyl** in or on certain products
- amending Annexes II, III and V to Regulation (EC) 396/2005 as regards maximum residue levels for **diazinon** in or on certain products

### Mycotoxins in soy, almond or oat drinks: The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) updates its assessment of the health risks of plant-based drinks

In an **updated opinion**, the German BfR has reassessed the health risks of mycotoxins and selected plant toxins in plant-based drinks based on data from 2024/2025. A total of 162 products (oat, almond and soy drinks) were analysed. Only the vulnerable group of children aged 0.5 to <6 years was considered.

Due to the aflatoxin B1 content (in 31 of the 39 products analysed), the German BfR concludes that "long-term realistic consumption by children may lead to health impairments with a medium probability of occurrence. Ochratoxin A was found in 33 of 39 almond drinks and in 23 of 29 soya drinks. The German BfR considers health effects to be unlikely or rather unlikely.

### Re-assessment of the mutagenic potential and derivation of provisional acute and chronic oral reference values for 2-chloroethanol

On February 27, the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) presented a **statement** on health-based reference values for 2-chloroethanol. The German BfR has now concluded that relevant genetic damage caused by 2-chloroethanol is unlikely. Based on new data, the German BfR has derived the following provisional reference values:

- ARfD (acute reference dose): 0.13 mg/kg body weight
- ADI (acceptable daily intake) 0.02 mg/kg body weight

In the EU, maximum residue levels for the sum of ethylene oxide and the degradation product 2-chloroethanol in all foods are currently set at the limit of determination. In its opinion of August 2, 2019 on ethylene oxide, the EFSA concluded that no safe exposure limits or toxicological reference values can be established. Based on the new findings, it is proposed to initiate a procedure within the EU to establish a separate residue definition for ethylene oxide and 2-chloroethanol as well as harmonised maximum residue levels for the European market.



## Food Safety

- 🕒 EU-food safety Campaign "love it, hate it, trust it"
- 🕒 ECDC/EFSA: The European Union Summary Report on Antimicrobial Resistance in zoonotic and indicator bacteria from humans, animals and food in 2023–2024
- 🕒 EFSA: Literature horizon scan for new scientific data on plants, microorganisms and animals, and their products obtained by new genomic techniques (October 2025)
- 🕒 EFSA: Re-evaluation of sucralose (E 955) as a food additive and evaluation of a new application on extension of use of sucralose (E 955) in fine bakery wares
- 🕒 EFSA: Report for 2024 on the results from the monitoring of residues of veterinary medicinal products in live animals and animal products

- 🕒 FAO/WHO: Call for experts and data on microbiological risk assessment on powdered formulae for infants and young children
- 🕒 EFSA: Update of the statement on safety of cannabidiol as a novel food
- 🕒 Inf'OGM: The deregulation of GMO microorganisms is underway
- 🕒 Danish authorities are trying to find the source of a Salmonella outbreak that has sickened 14 people
- 🕒 Hydrogen water: Is 2026 the breakout year for a new functional beverage category?



## Food Fraud

- 🕒 [FAO: Food fraud in the fisheries and aquaculture sector](#)
- 🕒 [Canada: Food Fraud Annual Report 2023 to 2024](#)
- 🕒 [Fish Fraud threatens industry profits and consumer safety](#)

## Cereulide in infant formula

In recent weeks, several manufacturers worldwide have recalled batches of infant formula because the toxin **cereulide** was detected in the products. This toxin can be produced by certain strains of *Bacillus cereus*. Cereulide is not inactivated by heating and, when ingested via food, can cause nausea and vomiting—hence the name “emetic strains,” i.e., vomiting-inducing. According to current knowledge, the contamination was identified in infant formula to which arachidonic acid had been added, and which is believed to originate from a supplier in China.

In this context, the EU-Commission requested urgent scientific advice from the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). On February 4, 2026, EFSA published a “Rapid risk assessment of the acute reference dose (ARfD) for cereulide in infants and information on the acute consumption of infant formula.”

(The ARfD value indicates the estimated maximum amount of a substance that can be ingested with food over the course of one day—either in a single meal or across several meals—without a detectable health risk.)

In its risk assessment, the scientists considered vomiting to be the critical and adverse effect. This served as the basis for deriving an ARfD, which is stated in the opinion as 0,014 µg/kg body weight. For estimating short-term (24 h) exposure, EFSA confirmed the following consumption amounts:

- Infant formula: 260 ml/kg body weight
- Follow-on formula: 140 ml/kg body weight

EFSA concludes that cereulide concentrations in reconstituted (i.e., liquid) form above:

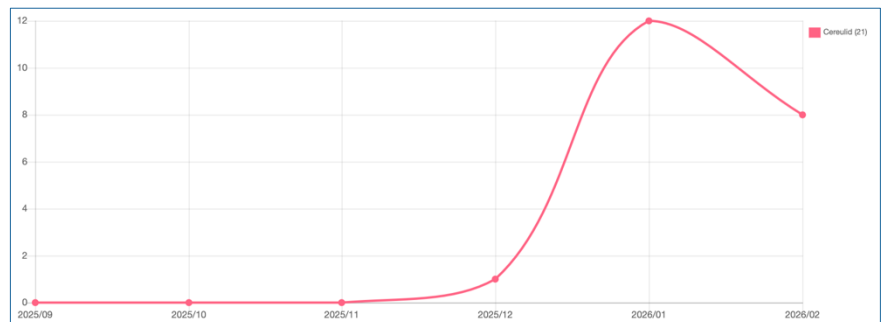
- 0,054 µg/L for infant formula
- 0,1 µg/L for follow-on formula
- 

would lead to an exceedance of the ARfD value.

Further information on cereulide can be found here:

- [EFSA: Rapid risk assessment of the acute reference dose \(ARfD\) of cereulide in infants and information on the acute consumption of infant formula](#)
- [EFSA/ECDC: Multi-country foodborne event caused by cereulide in infant formula products](#)
- [German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment \(BfR\): Following the recall of infant formula, the German BfR compiles basic information](#)

Up to November 2025, there were no notifications on cereulide in the EU RASFF. The first notification was then published in December 2025. In total, there are 21 notifications by the end of February.



## Feedback

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

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