

Issue | August 2026



NEWS LETTER

Dear Safefood-Online users,

In August, a total of 395 notifications were published in the European Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF). The key findings and analyses are presented in Section 1 of this newsletter.

Section 2 provides information on new maximum levels for Δ 9-THC, glycidol and 3-MCPD, as well as for furan, 2-methylfuran and 3-methylfuran in certain foodstuffs. In addition, we provide information on planned changes to maximum residue limits for pesticides, the review of maximum residue limits for phosphonic acid, as well as the results of a study from the Joint Research Centre regarding economic impacts of stronger alignment of production standards applied to imported products

Section 3 contains the latest news on food safety and food fraud.

Topic of the Month: The EU's new recommendation on the monitoring of chemical contaminants and naturally occurring toxins (Section 4).

EU-EmpCo Directive

Germany has implemented the so-called EU-EmpCo Directive 2024/825, which aims to empower consumers in the transition to a green economy through better protection against unfair practices and through better information, by means of the Third Act Amending the Unfair Commercial Practices Act. The key new provisions will apply from September 27, 2026. The aim is, in particular, to provide better protection against misleading environmental and sustainability claims.

In future, for example, general environmental claims such as "environmentally friendly", "green" or similar blanket statements without proven outstanding environmental performance, as well as claims about an

entire product that in fact relate only to a specific aspect, will be prohibited.

Labels that are not based on a recognised certification scheme or have not been established by government bodies will be prohibited in future. Claims such as "climate-neutral" or "CO₂-neutral" are also prohibited if they are based solely on the offsetting of greenhouse gas emissions. Claims regarding future environmental performance must also have verifiable targets and be regularly reviewed by an independent external expert.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the Safefood-Online Newsletter and, as always, we look forward to receiving your feedback.

Your Safefood-Online Team

1. RASFF-Notifications August 2026

The number of new RASFF-notifications was significantly lower in August than in the previous two months:

- **August 2026:** 395
- July 2026: 512
- June 2026: 499
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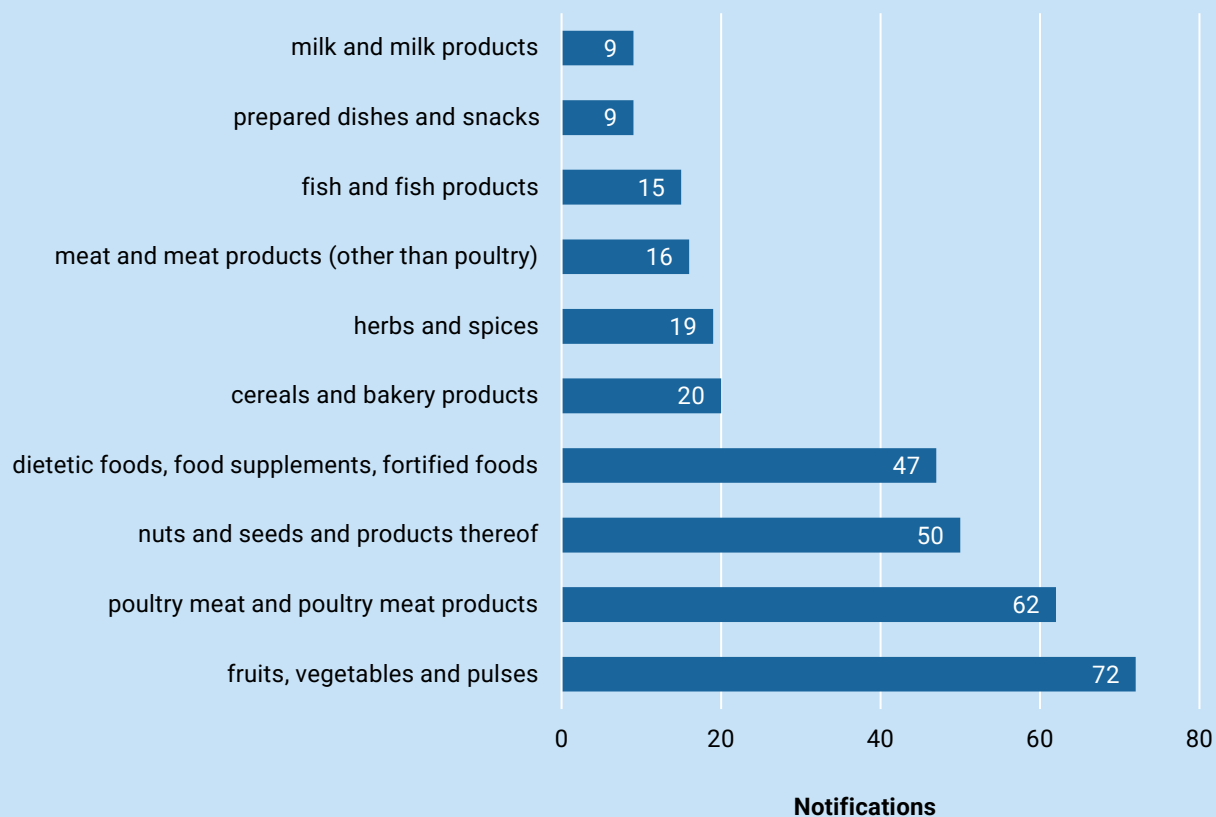
The RASFF-notifications are divided as follows:

- Alert notifications: 96
- Border rejections: 104
- Information messages: 194
- Non-compliance notifications: 1



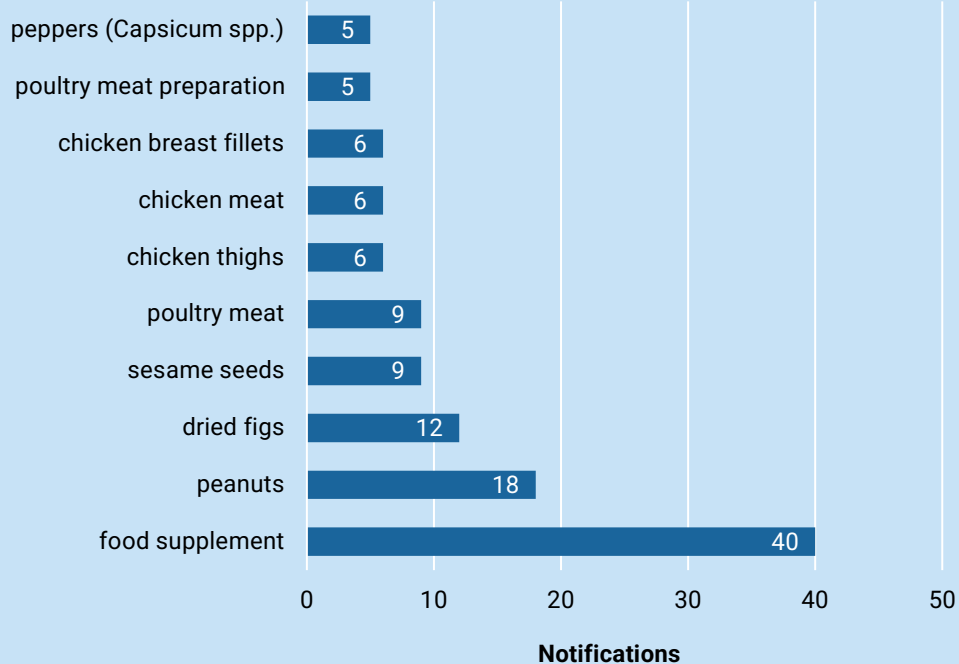
With 72 notifications, fruit, vegetables and legumes topped the RASFF statistics by product category. They were followed by poultry meat and poultry meat products (62 notifications) in second place and nuts, seeds and products thereof (50 notifications) in third place:

RASFF-Notifications August 2026: Top 10 product categories



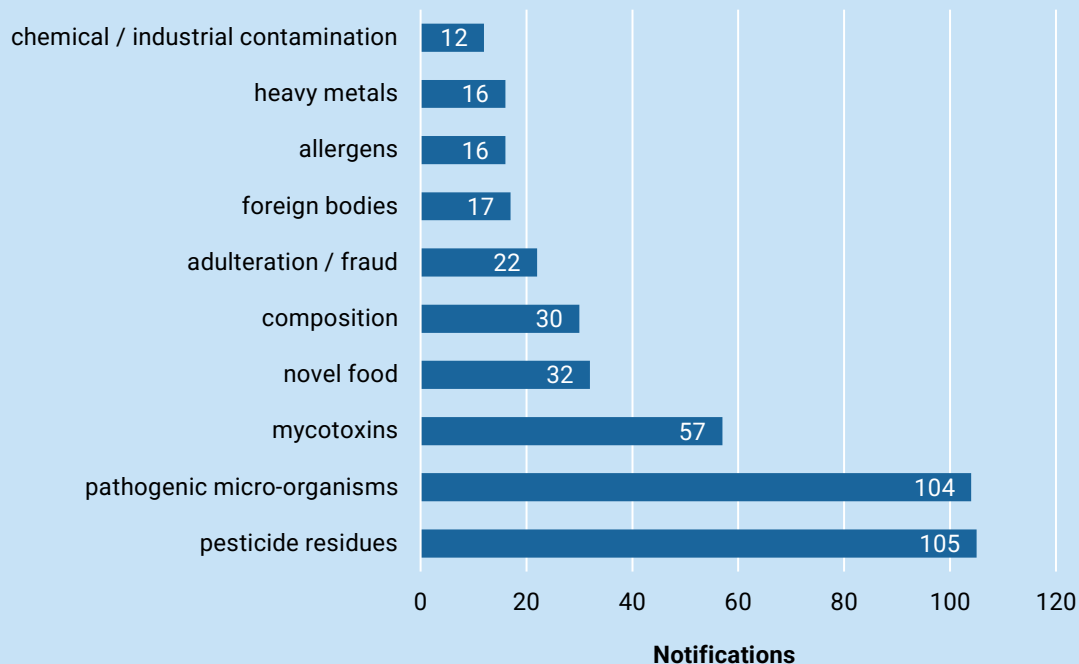
Among individual products, food supplements accounted for the highest number of notifications (40). Peanuts ranked second with 18 notifications, followed by dried figs with 12 notifications:

RASFF-Notifications August 2026: Top 10 products



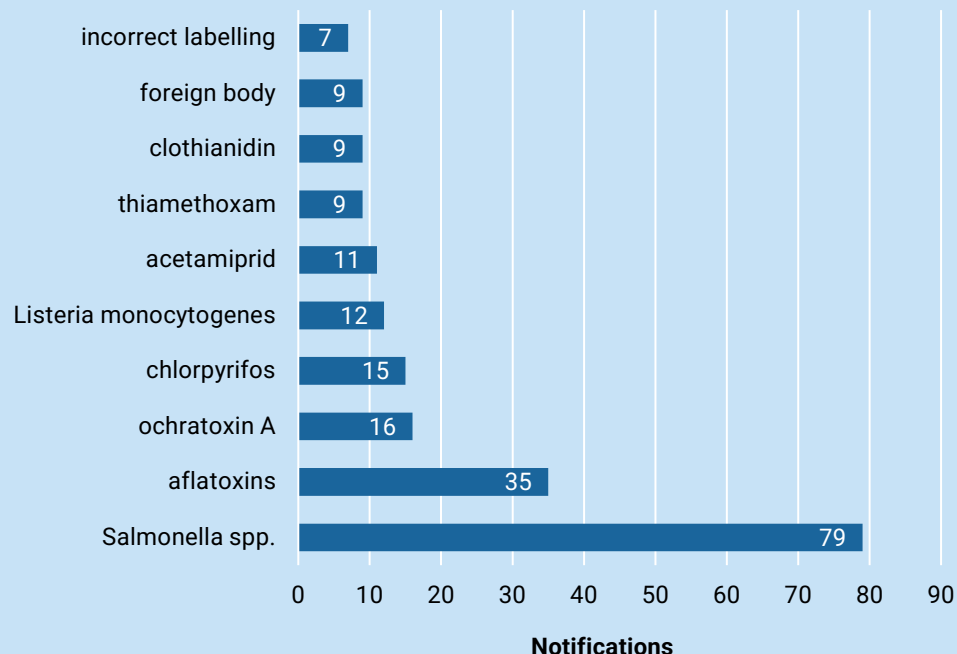
With 105 notifications, pesticide residues once again represented the largest hazard category in the RASFF. Most cases involved exceedances of maximum residue levels (MRLs) or the detection of non-authorised active substances. Several notifications reported multiple pesticide residues in a single product. Nine different pesticide residues were detected in one notification concerning cumin, while two notifications concerning mangoes reported seven and four different pesticide residues, respectively. Pathogenic micro-organisms ranked second with 104 notifications, followed by mycotoxins with 57 notifications:

RASFF-Notifications August 2026: Top 10 hazard categories



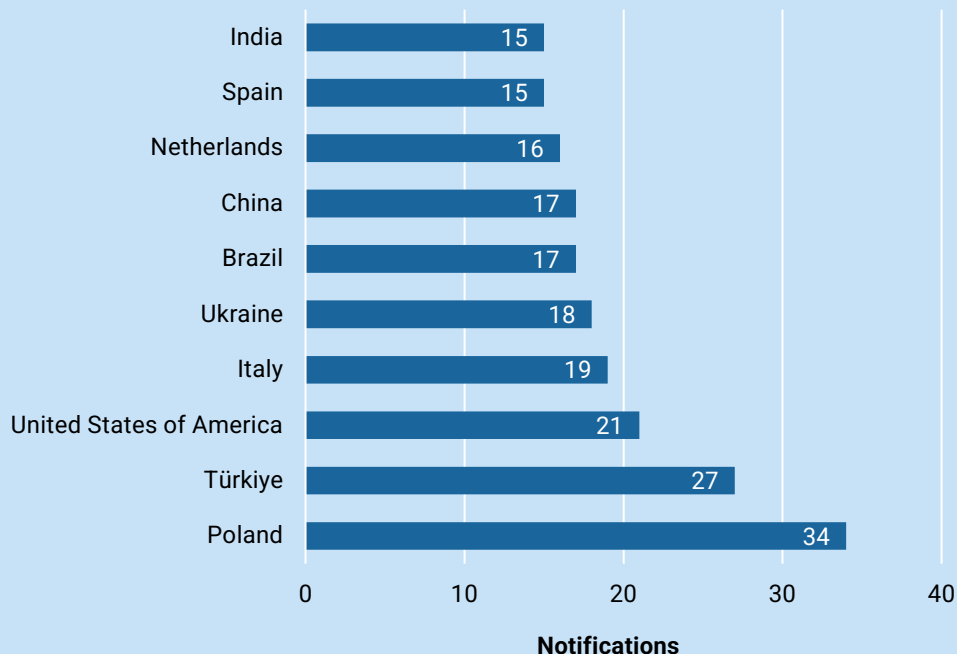
Salmonella spp. were once again the most frequently reported hazard in the RASFF, with 79 notifications, followed by aflatoxins (35 notifications) and ochratoxin A (16 notifications):

RASFF-Notifications August 2026: Top 10 hazards



The following chart shows the ten most frequently reported countries of origin:

RASFF-Notifications August 2026: Top 10 countries of origin



With 34 notifications, Poland ranked first among the countries of origin. It was followed by Türkiye with 27 notifications and the United States of America with 21 notifications.

2. Update on pesticides and contaminants

New EU-draft regulations to amend maximum residue levels for pesticides

The European Commission has published a draft regulation to amend Annexes II and III to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 with regard to maximum residue levels for:

- Diazinon

in or on certain products. For further information on the proposed amendments, please refer to the linked [draft regulation](#) and the linked [annex](#).

EFSA recommends a review of existing maximum residue limits for phosphonic

In its [peer review](#) of August 20, the EFSA concluded that, when assessing the active substance choline hydrogen phosphonate, it cannot be excluded that the acceptable daily intake may be exceeded by certain consumer groups. The assessment is based on the lower ADI for phosphonic acid – 1 mg/kg body weight per day – which was scientifically derived in 2018 and confirmed in 2023. The EFSA therefore recommends a review of the existing maximum residue limits (MRLs) for phosphonic acid and its salts.

JRC assesses impact of stricter maximum residue levels for imported products

The European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) has assessed the potential economic impacts of lowering maximum residue levels (MRLs) for particularly hazardous pesticides not approved in the EU to the limit of quantification (LOQ), including for imported products. The analysis supports the Commission's objective of preventing pesticides banned in the EU for health or environmental reasons from re-entering the EU market through imported food and feed.

The [study](#) identifies **18 relevant active substances** for which current MRLs are partly above the LOQ. A total of **235 commodities from 86 exporting countries** could be affected. Model simulations indicate that stricter MRLs

could lead to lower EU imports, increased EU crop production and higher consumer prices. However, the magnitude of these effects depends strongly on the ability of producers in third countries to adapt to the new requirements. Depending on the scenario, the estimated impact on total EU agricultural imports ranges from –41% where no adaptation takes place, to –8% with partial adaptation and only –0.4% where adaptation costs are low. In the latter scenario, changes in EU production and consumer prices remain below 1% for all commodities examined. Importantly, the JRC stresses that the study is not a full impact assessment and its results should not be interpreted as forecasts. The scenarios are intended to illustrate the range of possible economic impacts. Environmental and social impacts were not assessed.

EU Regulation 2026/1828 on Δ9-THC in hemp leaves

With [Regulation \(EU\) 2026/1828](#), the European Commission has set maximum levels for the sum of delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (Δ9-THC) and delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinolic acid (Δ9-THCA), expressed as Δ9-THC, in hemp leaves for water-based infusions and ready-to-drink herbal teas made from hemp leaves (see Table 1). The aim is to ensure a high level of health protection for adults when consuming these products. The new maximum levels will apply from 1 January 2027.

The EU is lowering the maximum levels for glycidol and 3-MCPD in infant formula and certain foods used in the manufacture of infant formula

We had already reported on the corresponding draft regulation in the April issue of the SafeFood Online Newsletter. [Regulation \(EU\) 2026/1825](#) was published on 30 July. The maximum levels for 3-monochloropropanediol (3-MCPD - (the sum of 3-MCPD and 3-MCPD fatty acid esters) and for glycidyl fatty acid esters (expressed as glycidol) in certain processed cereal products for infants, young children and children have been revised. In addition, the EU has set maximum levels for these contaminants in certain compound foods. Furthermore, the maximum levels for 3-

2. Update on pesticides and contaminants

MCPD and glycidol in fats and oils intended for the manufacture of these foods have been reduced to ensure that the new maximum levels are not exceeded. The new maximum levels will apply from 1 January 2027.

Maximum levels for furan, 2-methylfuran and 3-methylfuran in processed cereal products for infants and young children, and in baby food

Due to concerns that the presence of furan and methylfurans in food could lead to potential long-term liver damage, the EU has set maximum levels for these substances in processed cereal-based foods for infants and young children, as well as in baby food, by **Regulation (EU) 2026/1890** of 29 July 2026. The new requirements will apply from 01 January 2028.

**Single Notifications:**

- 🕒 33 cheeses recalled in Canada because of Listeria concerns
- 🕒 US: Cyclospora outbreak linked to iceberg lettuce

Food Safety

EFSA:

- 🕒 To support implementation of dietary cumulative risk assessment (CRA) methodology, the Monte Carlo Risk Assessment (MCRA) platform, a web-based platform for chemical risk assessment, has been continuously improved through three framework partnership
- 🕒 Food contamination incident linked to Salmonella Enteritidis ST11 in egg-based products
- 🕒 A retail prevalence study to investigate microbiological contamination levels in ready-to-eat (RTE) plant-based dairy, meat and fish substitutes

German BfR:

- 🕒 Vitamin D poisoning in infants - Vitamin D overdose can be potentially life-threatening



- UK: wine suspected of being counterfeit, worth nearly 600,000 euros, seized

Food Fraud

- The University of Portsmouth estimates the annual economic cost of food fraud at between £0.4 and £2 billion. The research examines, amongst other things, product substitution, mislabelling and document fraud
- United Kingdom: As part of a joint operation targeting an unauthorised meat-cutting plant, four men were arrested and over 4 tonnes of illegal meat were seized.
- Authenticity verification and fraud detection in turmeric powder based on aroma and taste profiles using electronic nose, electronic tongue and artificial intelligence
- Non-Destructive Quantification of Urea Adulteration in Bovine Milk Using Transmittance Multispectral Imaging
- US: More than 2.5 tonnes of frozen, breaded catfish products have been recalled due to illegal importation
- US: Almost 15 tons of imported beef recalled because of lack of reinspection
- As part of an operation by the National Food Crime Unit, a total of more than 33 tonnes of suspected illegal frozen food was seized in England, Wales and Scotland

EU strengthens monitoring of contaminants in the food chain

In June 2026, the European Commission published several new recommendations on the monitoring of chemical contaminants and naturally occurring toxins in food and feed. The focus is on pyrrolizidine alkaloids, quinolizidine alkaloids, ergot alkaloids and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

- **Pyrrolizidine Alkaloids:**

With **Recommendation (EU) 2026/1210**, the Commission calls for enhanced monitoring of pyrrolizidine alkaloids (PAs) in animal feed.

The monitoring programme covers a broad range of pyrrolizidine alkaloids, including their N-oxides. The data obtained are intended in particular to improve the assessment of exposure in farm animals and to close existing data gaps.

- **Quinolizidine-Alkaloids:**

Quinolizidine alkaloids are naturally occurring constituents of lupins. Their concentrations may depend, among other factors, on the lupin species and variety as well as the processing methods used.

In its risk assessment, EFSA concluded that the available data were insufficient to fully characterise the health risk. For acute exposure, a lowest effective oral single dose of 0.16 mg sparteine per kg body weight was used as a reference point. For chronic exposure, however, no health-based guidance value could be established.

With the Recommendation (EU) 2026/1241, the EU calls for a comprehensive monitoring. This should cover not only lupin seeds and lupin flour but also foods produced from them, including bread and bakery products, baking mixes, egg and coffee substitutes, as well as plant-based milk and meat alternatives and lupin protein powders for shakes and smoothies.

At the same time, the causes of high alkaloid concentrations and the effects of processing should be investigated. Particular attention should be paid to the extent to which processes such as soaking and cooking can reduce alkaloid levels.

The potential transfer of quinolizidine alkaloids from lupin-containing animal feed into food of animal origin should also be investigated. Milk, in particular, should therefore be included in relevant monitoring programmes.

- **Ergot Alkaloids:**

Recommendation (EU) 2026/1243 updates and expands the existing monitoring of ergot alkaloids in animal feed. This follows, among other factors, more recent EFSA findings indicating that exposure may give rise to health concerns, particularly in cattle and pigs.

Monitoring should focus primarily on cereals and cereal products, grasses and products derived from them, including green forage, as well as compound feed. In addition to the established ergot alkaloids, further compounds should be included in the analyses.

Of particular interest is the recommendation to determine, wherever possible, both the content of ergot sclerotia and the concentrations of individual ergot alkaloids. This is intended to improve understanding of the relationship between visible ergot contamination and the actual alkaloid burden.

The monitoring results should be submitted to EFSA by 30 June 2028 at the latest.

▪ PFAS:

A further focus is set by **Recommendation (EU) 2026/1307** on the monitoring of PFAS in animal feed. Due to their high persistence and widespread occurrence, PFAS have been the subject of European risk assessment and regulatory action for many years. Maximum levels are already established for various foods of animal origin.

Together with feed business operators, Member States are requested to monitor, in particular, the four substances PFOS, PFOA, PFNA and PFHxS during the period from 2026 to 2028.

Monitoring should include, among other matrices, fish and other aquatic animals used for feed production, seaweed, feed materials of mineral origin, green forage, silage, hay, fresh grass and certain compound feeds.

Particular importance is attached to identifying the sources of contamination. Where elevated PFAS levels are detected, potential sources should be identified and measures to prevent or reduce contamination should be considered. In addition to animal feed, soil and drinking water for animals, as well as other potential sources where appropriate, may be included in these investigations.

Overview of the recommendations:

- Recommendation (EU) 2026/1210: Monitoring of pyrrolizidine alkaloids in feed
- Recommendation (EU) 2026/1241: Monitoring of quinolizidine alkaloids in lupins and foodstuffs derived therefrom
- Recommendation (EU) 2026/1243: Monitoring of ergot alkaloids in feed
- Recommendation (EU) 2026/1307: Monitoring of PFAS in feed
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Conclusion: With these new monitoring recommendations, the EU is expanding the data base on chemical contaminants and natural toxins.

The recommendations do not introduce any new maximum levels. However, the monitoring data can be used for further regulations.

Feedback

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