

Issue | September 2026



NEWS LETTER

Dear Safefood-Online users,

In September, a total of 471 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 planned changes to the maximum residue limits for pesticides, the introduction of maximum limits for cereulide in baby food, and acrylamide levels in homemade crisps made from potato peelings. We also provide information on the DG Sante audit concerning peanuts from the USA.

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

This month's featured topic is the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) survey on mycotoxins in food, carried out in spring 2026 (point 4).

ECJ Clarifies the Scope of the Information Requirements under Article 10(2) of the Health Claims Regulation

The case concerned the mandatory information accompanying health claims under Article 10(2) of the Health Claims Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006, in particular the statement on the importance of a varied and balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle. While these mandatory statements were included on the food supplement's label, they were omitted from the printed advertisement. The European Court of Justice (ECJ) first clarified that printed advertising for a food supplement does not constitute "labelling" within the meaning of Article 10(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006. The concepts of labelling and advertising are separate and must be interpreted independently. More importantly, the Court held that where the mandatory information required by Article 10(2) is properly provided on the product's labelling,

Article 10(2) does not require that the same information be repeated in printed advertising for that product. The judgment clarifies that the information obligations laid down in Article 10(2) are satisfied where the mandatory statements accompany the product through its labelling. Consequently, the provision does not establish an additional obligation to reproduce these statements in separate printed advertising materials. This interpretation provides greater legal certainty for the design of print advertising and is likely to be relevant for other forms of written commercial communications.

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 September 2026

Compared with August, the number of new RASF notifications increased in September:

- **September 2026:** 471
- August 2026: 395
- July 2026: 512
-

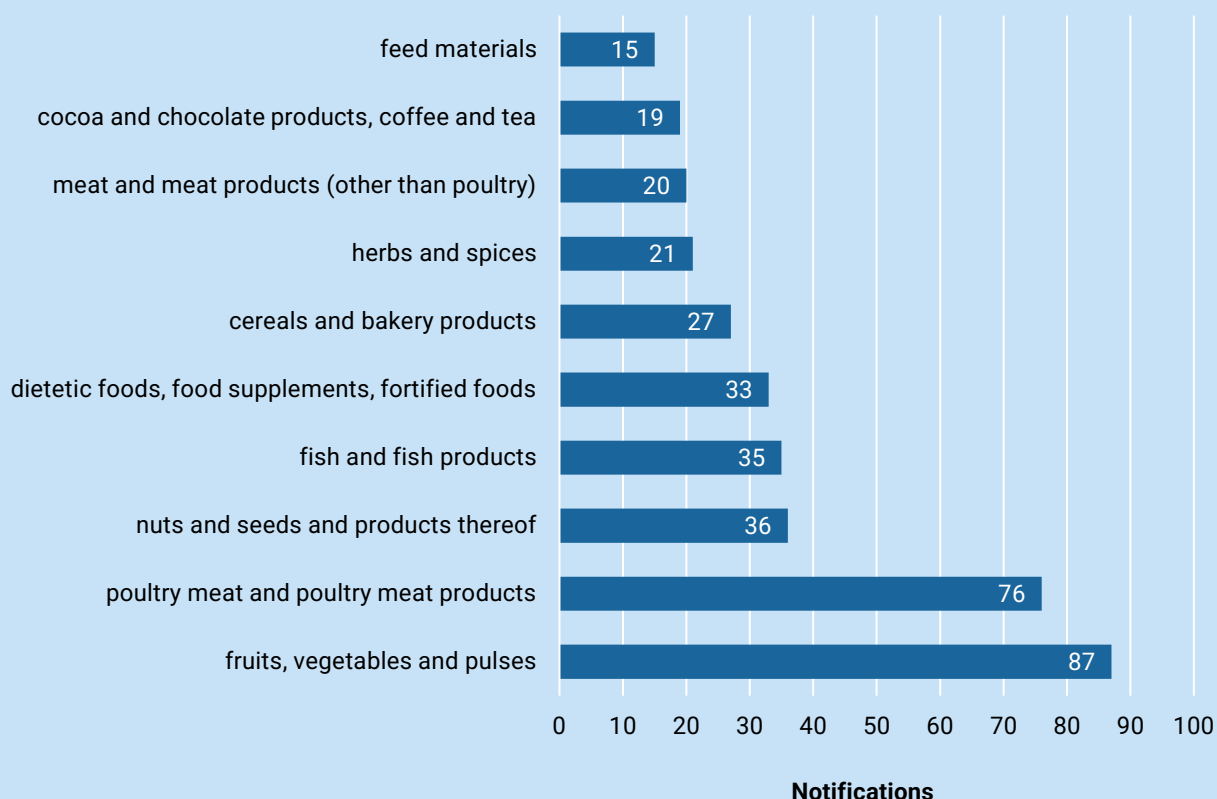
The RASFF-notifications are divided as follows:

- Alert notifications: 98
- Border rejections: 132
- Information messages: 242



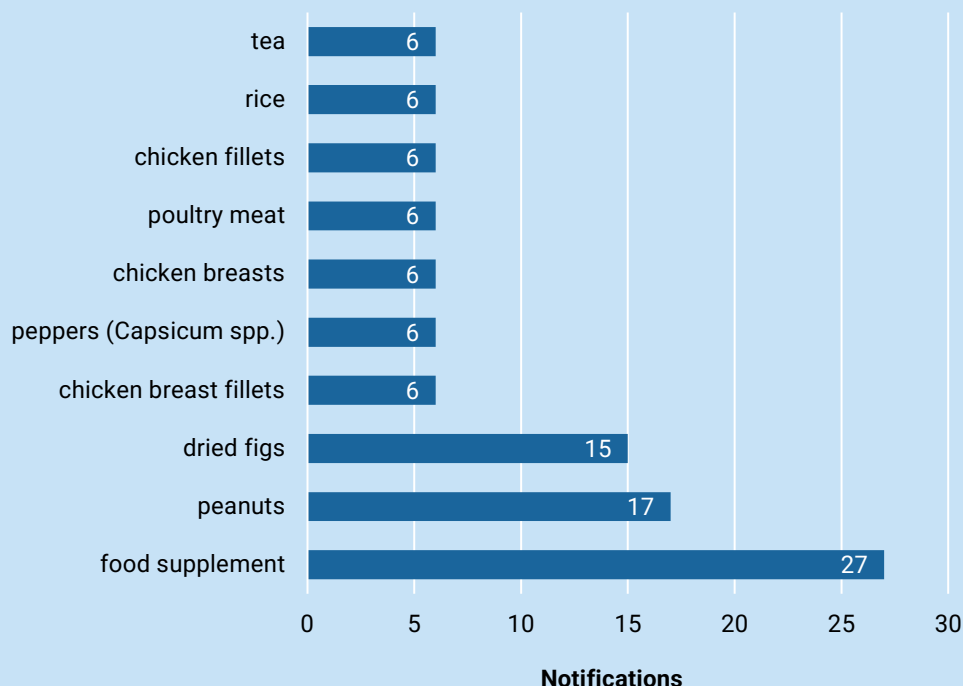
With 87 notifications, fruit, vegetables and legumes topped the RASFF statistics by product category, followed by poultry meat and poultry meat products (76 notifications) in second place and nuts, seeds and products thereof (36 notifications) in third place:

RASFF Notifications September 2026: Top 10 product categories



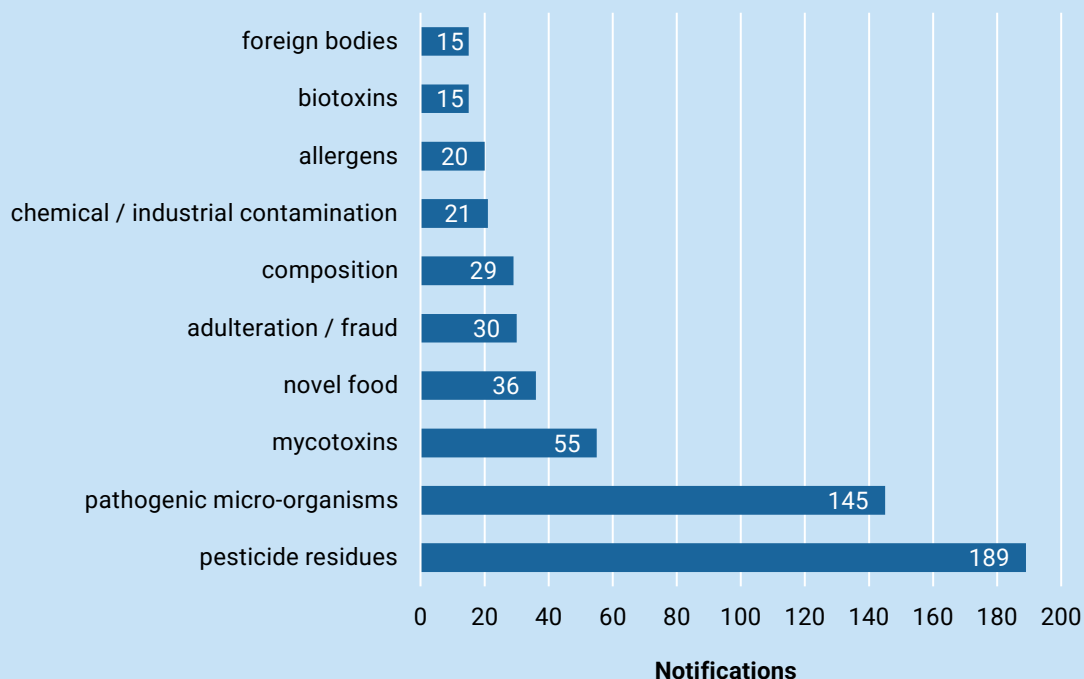
Among individual products, food supplements accounted for the highest number of notifications (87). Peanuts ranked second with 17 notifications, followed by dried figs with 15 notifications:

RASFF Notifications September 2026: Top 10 products



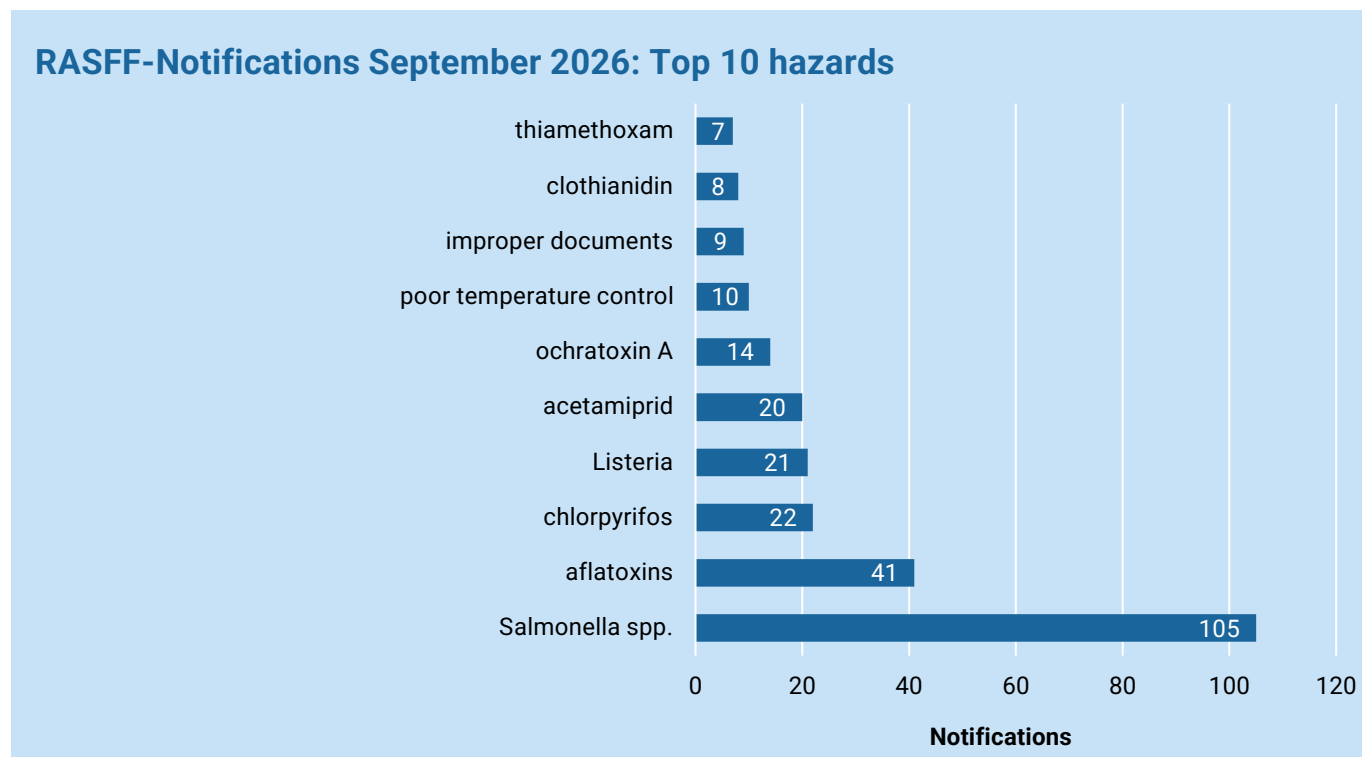
With 189 notifications, pesticide residues once again represented the largest hazard category in the RASFF. Most cases involved exceedances of maximum residue levels (MRLs) or the detection of non-authorised active substances. Several notifications reported multiple pesticide residues in a single product. In one notification concerning vine leaves from Egypt, 20 different pesticide residues were detected; in three notifications concerning mangoes from Egypt, there were five residues in two cases and six residues in one case. In second place were pathogenic micro-organisms with 145 cases, followed by mycotoxins with 55 cases:

RASFF Notifications September 2026: Top 10 hazard categories

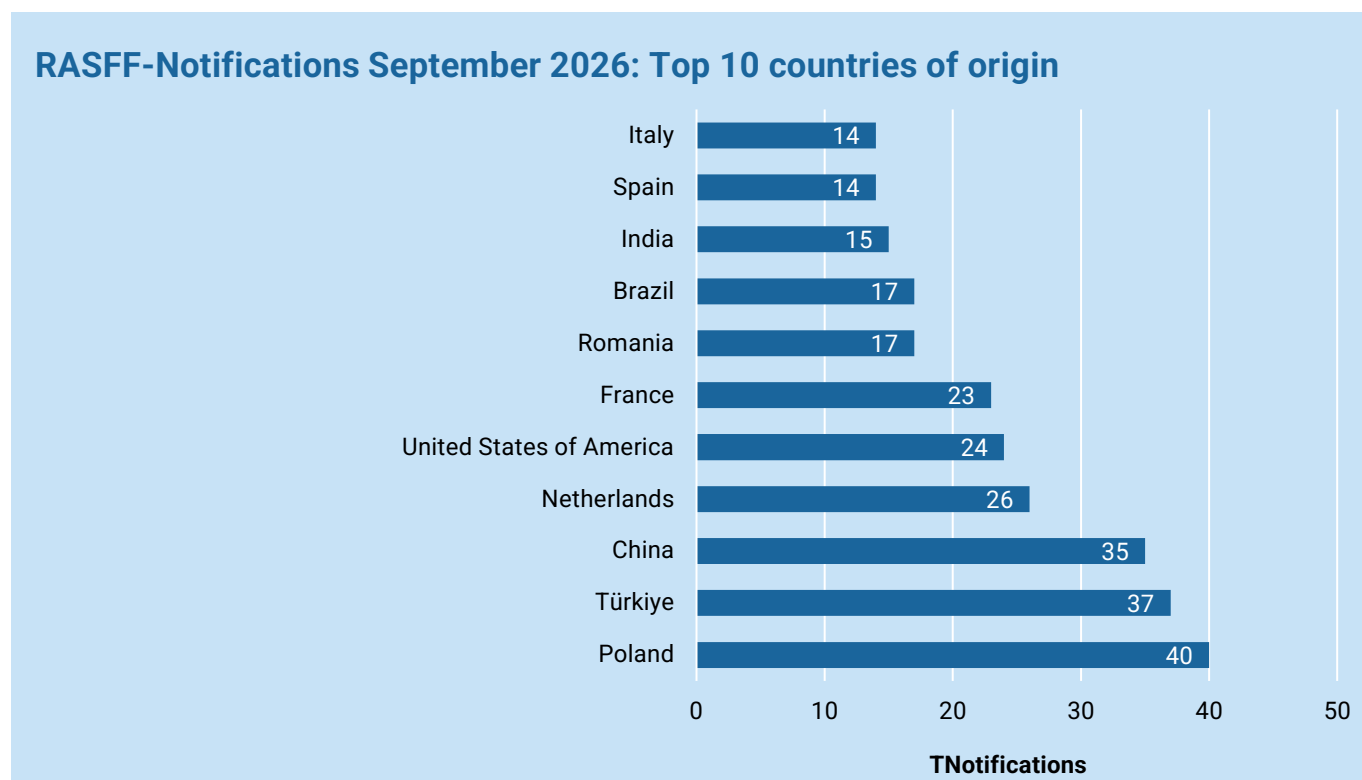


1. RASFF Notifications September 2026

Salmonella were once again the most frequently reported hazard in the RASFF, with 105 notifications, followed by aflatoxins (41 notifications) and chlorpyrifos (16 notifications):



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



With 40 notifications, Poland ranked first among the countries of origin. It was followed by Türkiye with 37 notifications and China with 35 notifications.

2. Update on pesticides and contaminants

EFSA publishes opinion on maximum residue levels for difluoroacetic acid (DFA)

On September 2, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published an **opinion** on maximum residue levels (MRLs) for difluoroacetic acid (DFA).

During the original pesticide risk assessment in 2015, both flupyradifurone and its metabolite DFA were identified as toxicologically relevant residues. Consequently, the EU residue definition for risk assessment includes both substances. By contrast, the Codex Alimentarius (JMPR/Codex) has so far considered only flupyradifurone, and no Codex maximum residue limits (CXLs) have been established for DFA.

Additional residue data generated during recent evaluations conducted by the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) are now available. Based on these data, EFSA has proposed, for the first time, specific MRLs for DFA.

European Commission proposes maximum levels for cereulide in infant foods

The European Commission has published a draft Regulation proposing maximum levels for cereulide, a toxin produced by certain strains of *Bacillus cereus*, in infant formula, follow-on formula and foods for special medical purposes intended for infants. The proposed maximum level is 0.1 µg/kg. Further information is available in the **draft Regulation and its Annex**.

CVUA Stuttgart examines acrylamide levels in homemade potato peel chips

On September 12, 2026, the Official Food Control Laboratory of Stuttgart (CVUA Stuttgart) published the results of a **study** evaluating acrylamide levels in homemade potato

peel chips prepared according to recipes available on the internet.

The measured acrylamide concentrations exceeded the European benchmark level for potato crisps (750 µg/kg). Samples prepared in an air fryer reached levels of more than 20 times the benchmark value, while samples prepared in a conventional oven exceeded the benchmark by more than tenfold. The CVUA comes to the conclusion that, based on the laboratory analysis, the potato peel crisps examined here would be deemed unfit for consumption due to their high levels of acrylamide.

DG SANTE: audit of peanuts from the USA

According to **reports** summarising the findings of a European Commission audit conducted in March 2026, the US authorities operate an overall effective control system, supported by risk-based sampling and accredited laboratories. The report also includes recommendations to:

- further harmonise official controls between individual states;
- improve the documentation of official control activities;
- enhance the oversight of exporters;
- improve the follow-up of corrective actions; and
- further reduce aflatoxin contamination at the primary production stage.



Food Safety

EFSA:

- 🕒 Safety of S-acetyl glutathione as a novel food pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2015/2283
- 🕒 Re-evaluation of salt of aspartame-acesulfame (E 962) as food additive
- 🕒 A retail prevalence study to investigate microbiological contamination levels in ready-to-eat (RTE) plant-based dairy, meat and fish substitutes
- 🕒 Safety evaluation of the food additive rebaudioside M produced via enzymatic conversion of purified steviol glycosides leaf extracts

German BfR:

- 🕒 Determination of cannabinoids in hemp flour, hemp oil cake, hemp tea, and hemp seed pesto: Report on the

2025 Proficiency Test of the German Reference Laboratory for Mycotoxins and Plant Toxins

- 🕒 Microplastics in brain tumour tissue: study does not allow conclusions regarding the development of cancer
- 🕒 Glycerol in food: The health-based guidance value applies not only to slush ice, but also to solid foods
- 🕒 BfR Guideline for risk assessment of non-intentionally added substances (NIAS) in the area of food contact materials

Individual reports:

- 🕒 The UK Food Standards Agency has published its annual scientific report. According to the report, 172 risk assessments were carried out to assist with food incidents (compared with 147 the previous year)
- 🕒 United Kingdom: More than 600 people have fallen ill and two have died as a result of three salmonella outbreaks in the United Kingdom. The genetic similarity between the clusters, as well as information about the foodstuffs involved, suggests that the cases are linked to the consumption of imported eggs



Food Fraud

- 🕒 A US sauce manufacturer is alleged to have produced products without an approved scheduled process and without the required regulatory approval. The competent authority issued a cease-and-desist order, noting that improperly processed acidified or low-acid canned foods, including hot sauces, may permit the growth of *Clostridium botulinum* and the formation of botulinum toxin, posing a risk of botulism. According to the competent authority, the company initially declined to undertake a voluntary recall
- 🕒 The European Commission has introduced EU Trace-Map, an artificial intelligence-supported platform designed to strengthen cooperation and information exchange between competent authorities involved in cross-border food fraud investigations
- 🕒 A recent US study found that 48 of 54 processed food products labelled as containing avocado oil did not correspond to the composition of genuine avocado oil, indicating possible substitution or adulteration
- 🕒 A US company recalled approximately 76 tonnes of raw pork, beef and goat meat after the products were found to have been produced without the required federal inspection. The products also bore incorrect USDA inspection marks and/or an incorrect establishment number
- 🕒 European authorities have uncovered a network suspected of involvement in the slaughter of horses that were not eligible for human consumption. According to the investigation, forged documents and manipulated microchips were allegedly used to conceal the identity and status of the animals
- 🕒 In August 2026, the European Commission recorded 165 cross-border suspicions of fraudulent and deceptive practices among 665 iRASFF notifications. Food supplements and fortified foods accounted for the highest number of cases (45), followed by fruit and vegetables (14), non-alcoholic beverages (13), and cereals and bakery products (10). Reported cases included honey containing undeclared foreign enzymes, the addition of water to poultry and shrimp, undeclared animal species in sausages, carbon monoxide treatment of tuna, and misleading quality claims for olive oil. Numerous food supplements were reported to contain substances not authorised in the EU, including CBD, yohimbine, *Mucuna pruriens*, *Huperzia serrata* and creatine malate. One product was reported to contain 222 g/kg sildenafil
- 🕒 Czech Republic: Expired eggs trigger severe salmonella outbreaks in a school in Prague

German BfR public survey on mycotoxins in food

In spring 2026, the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) conducted a representative public survey on **mycotoxins in food**. The aim was to assess public knowledge, risk perception and information needs and to derive recommendations for future risk communication. The survey results were published at the end of August 2026.

▪ Limited Public Awareness

The survey found that public awareness of mycotoxins remains limited. While microbiological hazards such as *Salmonella* and chemical hazards such as pesticide residues are widely recognised, mycotoxins play only a minor role in public risk perception. Respondents who were familiar with the term primarily associated mycotoxins with visibly mouldy food rather than with naturally occurring contamination of cereals and other agricultural commodities.

▪ Perception of Health Risks Depends on Knowledge

Only around one-third of respondents expressed concern about the potential health risks associated with mycotoxins. The survey showed that risk perception is closely linked to prior knowledge. Participants with a better understanding of the subject assessed the risks more accurately and were more familiar with the pathways through which mycotoxins can enter the food chain. By contrast, respondents with limited knowledge tended to underestimate the risks or assumed that simply removing visible mould would eliminate any health concern.

▪ High Confidence in Food Control Systems

The survey also found a generally high level of confidence in Germany's official food control system and in the food industry's quality assurance and control measures. At the same time, many respondents expressed a need for clearer and more accessible information on:

- how mycotoxins are formed;
- which foods are most likely to be affected;
- how risks are managed throughout the food supply chain; and
- how consumers can reduce exposure through appropriate storage practices and by avoiding the consumption of mouldy foods.

Feedback

Please forward your suggestions, questions and requests regarding this newsletter directly to:
info@safefood-online.de

Conclusion

The BfR survey demonstrates that, although mycotoxins remain an important food safety issue, public awareness is still relatively low. At the same time, consumers place considerable trust in the existing food control systems. The findings underline the importance of effective risk communication by regulatory authorities and the food industry. Providing scientifically sound information in a clear and accessible manner can help improve public understanding of mycotoxins and support informed consumer behaviour.



Safefood-Online GmbH
Birkenweg 18
D-68723 Schwetzingen

Phone: +49 (0) 62 02 / 923 697
Fax: +49 (0) 62 02 / 923 696
Email: info@safefood-online.de
Internet: www.safefood-online.de

Managing Director: Dr. Bernhard Müller

Registered Office: Schwetzingen, Germany
Commercial Register: Local Court Mannheim, Germany
Commercial register No.: HRB 710365

VAT identification Number (VAT ID): DE 274 106 454

Responsible for editorial content:
Dr. Bernhard Müller

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