

Issue | October 2023



NEWS LETTER

Dear Safefood-Online users,

Safefood-Online recorded 455 new notifications in October, around 80 more than in the previous month. You can find the evaluations as usual under topic 1.

"News on pesticides and contaminants" provides information on changes in two regulations with new or amended maximum levels for pesticides and on the reduction of nitrites and nitrates in food. We also report on four BfR opinions of the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) regarding:

- mercury in edible fish
- Pesticide residues in cereals
- Exposure assessment on the intake of dioxins, dioxin-like PCBs as well as PFAS through the consumption of fish
- Hexahydrocannabinol (HHC) in food products

News on the topics of Food Safety and Food Fraud can be found under topics 3 and 4.

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

1. Notifications in Safefood-Online: October 2023

In October there were again more new notifications in Safefood-Online than in the two previous months:

- October: 455 notifications
- September: 373 notifications
- August: 396 notifications

The notifications are divided into:

- 120 alerts
- 137 border rejections
- 198 information messages

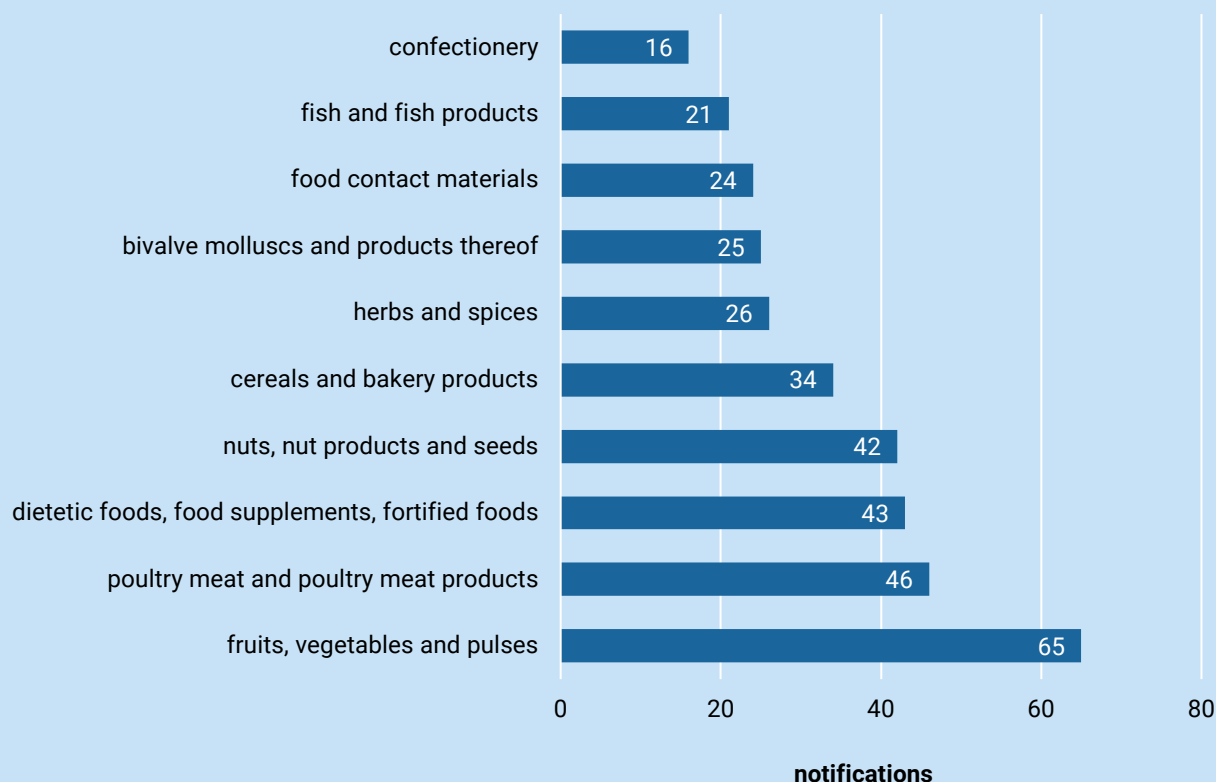


Remark:

Only the RASFF notifications are included in the comparison, as the notifications from the EU Monthly Food Fraud Summary Report are not published until the middle of the following month.

The product category fruit, vegetables and pulses is still in first place in the evaluation by product category with 65 notifications. 49 notifications concerned findings of pesticides, 15 were due to chlorpyrifos residues. The product category poultry meat and poultry meat products followed in second place with 46 notifications. 37 notifications concerned findings of salmonella. The product category dietary foods, food supplements and fortified foods is in third place with 43 notifications:

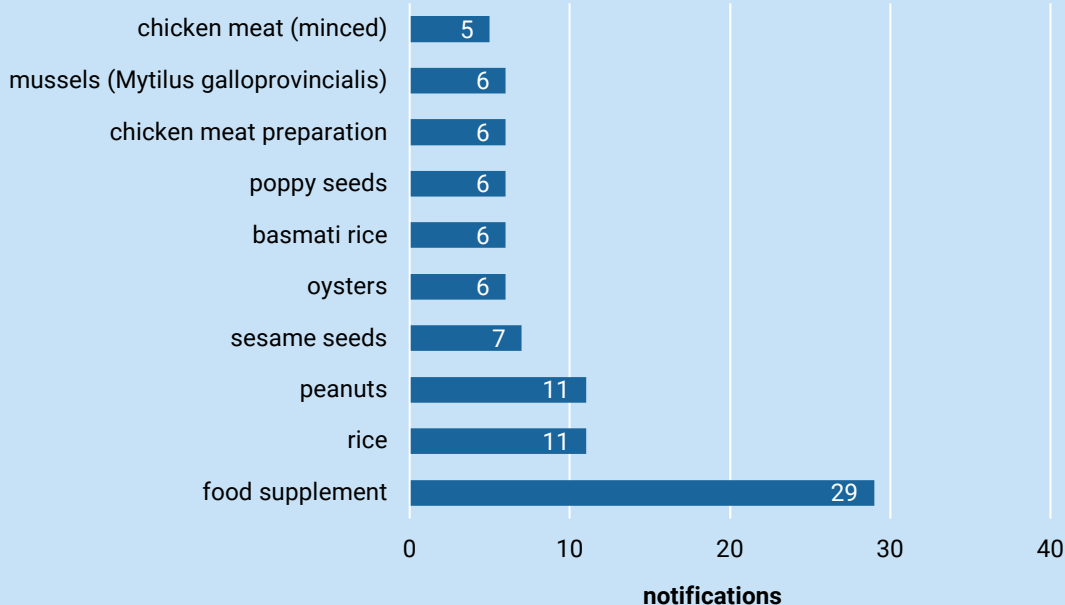
Notifications October 2023: Top 10 product categories



1. Notifications in Safefood-Online: October 2023

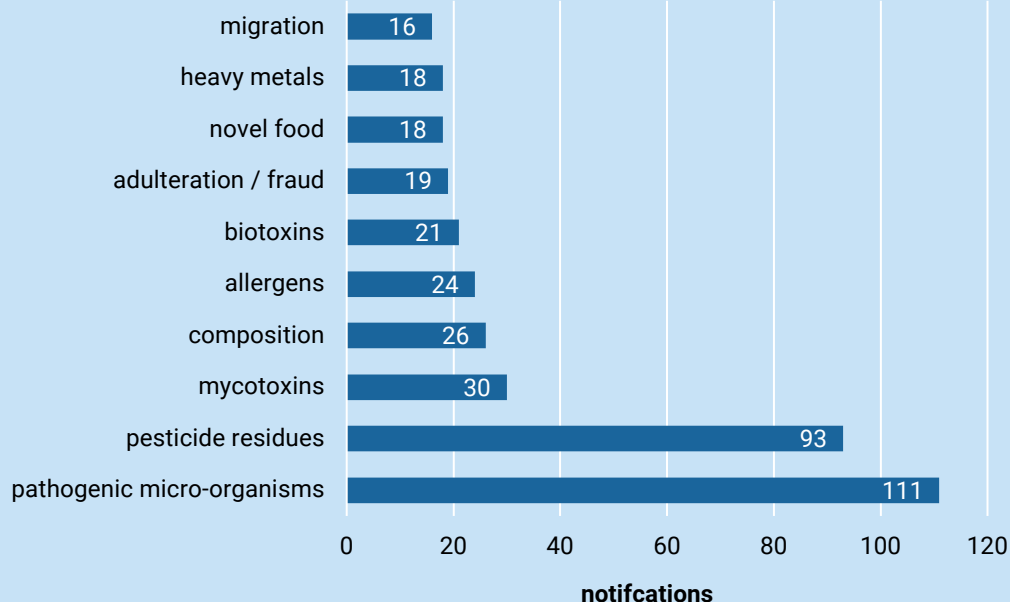
With 29 notifications, food supplements are in first place in the evaluation by product, followed by rice and peanuts, each with 11 notifications. All notifications for peanuts concerned aflatoxins, while 7 notifications for rice were due to pesticide residues:

Notifications October 2023: Top 10 products



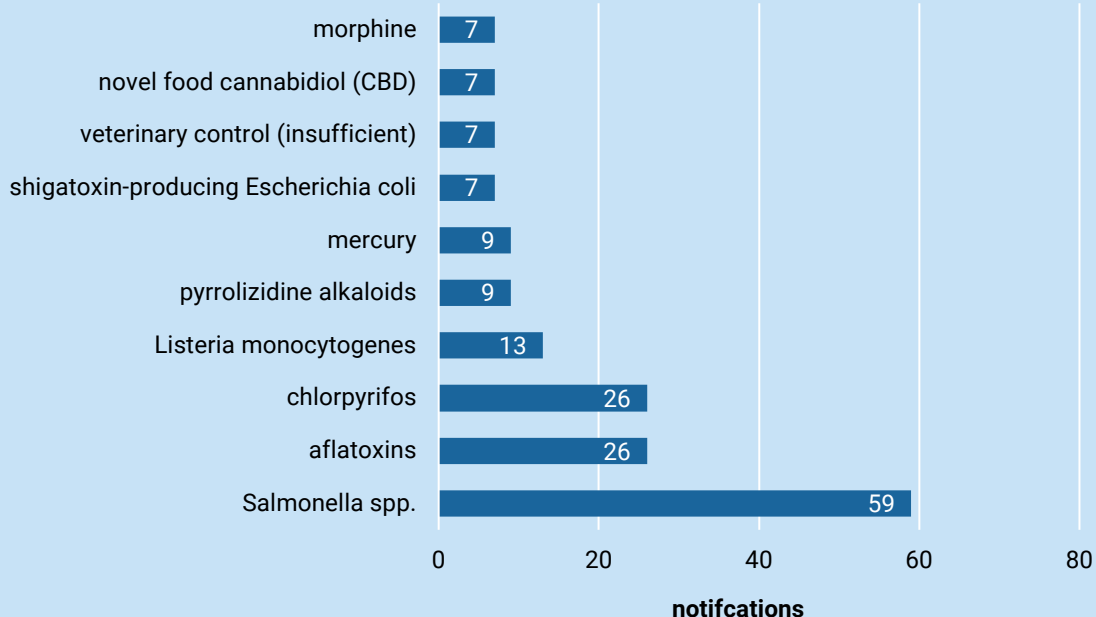
In the evaluation of the notifications by hazard category, pathogenic micro-organisms are at the top with 111 notifications, including 59 notifications due to salmonella, 13 notifications to listeria and 14 notifications to *E. coli* (with 7 notifications on *E. coli* STEC/VTEC). In the hazard category pesticides, which follows in second place, there were 93 notifications, including 13 notifications regarding chlorpyrifos and 6 notifications regarding chlorate (all notifications concerned chicken meat preparations from Thailand). In third place are notifications concerning mycotoxins with 30 notifications, including 26 notifications concerning aflatoxins, 3 notifications ochratoxin A and 1 notification fumonisin):

Notifications October 2023: Top 10 hazard categories



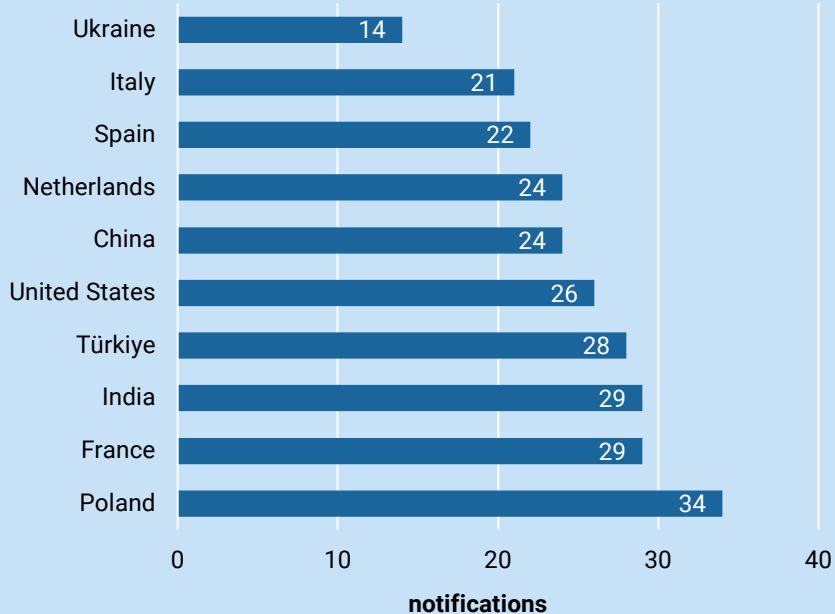
In October, the hazards with the most notifications were again due to salmonella (59 notifications), aflatoxins (26 notifications) and chlorpyrifos (26 notifications). Most chlorpyrifos notifications (15) were reported for fruits, vegetables and pulses. There were only single notifications for the affected foodstuffs:

Notifications October 2023: Top 10 hazards



Finally, the notifications are evaluated according to the country of origin of the products:

Notifications October 2023: Top 10 countries of origin



In 34 cases, the products came from Poland. India is in second place with 29 notifications and France in third place, also with 29 notifications.

2. Update on pesticides and contaminants



German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR): some fish species have high levels of methylmercury

In its **statement** of October 11, 2023, the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) concludes that for women of childbearing age (15 - 49 years) the TWI (tolerable weekly intake) is exceeded when consuming one and 2 servings of shark and swordfish.

VO (EU) 2023/2382

Regulation (EU) 2023/2382 amended Annexes II and IV of Regulation (EC) 396/2005 with regard to maximum residue levels of:

- Carbetamide
- Carboxin
- Triflumuron

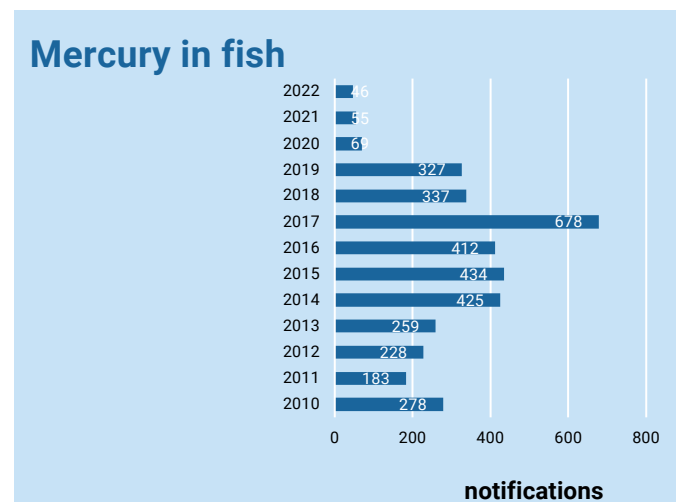
in or on certain commodities. The Regulation will apply from 25 April 2024. Regulation (EC) No 396/2005, as in force prior to the amendment by this Regulation, will continue to apply to products produced in or imported into the Union before 25 April 2024.

For further information, please refer to the linked text of the Regulation.

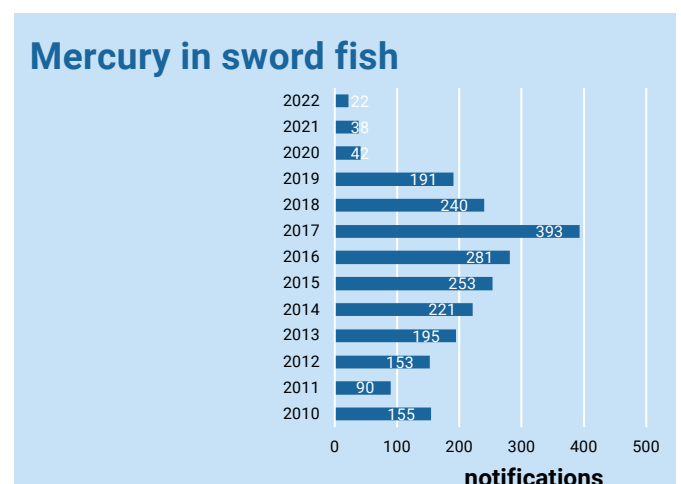
Nitrites and nitrates as additives: new maximum levels

With **regulation (EC) 2023/2108** of October 6, the maximum levels of the food additives nitrites (E 249-250) and nitrates (E 251-252) in food have been reduced. For most applications, the effective date is October 09, 2025. For more information, please refer to the linked text of the regulation.

Below you can see the number of notifications on mercury in the product category fish and fishery products from 2010 to 2022:



The following chart shows the notifications for mercury in sword fish from 2012 to 2022:



2. Update on pesticides and contaminants

Statement of the German BfR on pesticide residues in cereals

Following the evaluation of EU-wide studies on pesticide residues, Foodwatch has published the report "**The dark side of the grain**". Residues of pesticides were detected in 837 of 2,234 samples of unprocessed cereals and cereal products. According to **foodwatch**, the "high number" poses a health risk to consumers. In its **statement** of October 12, 2023, the BfR confirmed that "no adverse health effects are to be expected from pesticide active substances when used as intended."

BfR statement on the intake of PCDD/F and dioxin-like PCBs as well as PFAS through the consumption of various fish species.

In its **statement** of September 27, 2023, the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) estimated the intake of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs as well as PFAS (perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), and perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS)) from the consumption of various fish species based on currently available content data. For further details, please refer to the linked statement of the BfR.

BfR statement on hexahydrocannabinol (HHC) in foodstuffs

Like Δ^9 -tetrahydrocannabinol (Δ^9 -THC), hexahydrocannabinol (HHC) belongs to the cannabinoids, but only occurs in small quantities in the cannabis plant and is therefore mainly produced synthetically. HHC is

currently not subject to the German Narcotics Act, but is found in products such as dietary supplements. The scientific data on HHC is still insufficient. However, there are indications of psychoactive effects. The BfR has published a **statement** on this topic on October 05, 2023.

Glyphosate Update

the European Commission's proposal to renew the authorization of glyphosate, did not receive a qualified majority in the EU Commission's **Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed**. The proposal will now be referred to an appeal committee, which is expected to discuss and vote on it in November.

Germany, among others, abstained from the vote.



Food Safety

- 🕒 [UK: Salmonella in pet food reports continue to rise](#)
- 🕒 [Japan: E. coli in milk behind large outbreak](#)
- 🕒 [Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety: Draft Report on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their food and feed](#)
- 🕒 [Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances \(PFAS\) exposure and thyroid cancer risk](#)
- 🕒 [ECDC/ EFSA: Three clusters of Salmonella Enteritidis ST11 infections linked to chicken meat and chicken meat products](#)
- 🕒 [How Temperatures Affect Food Safety](#)



- 🕒 Aston University and The Scottish Bee Company have teamed up to fight the not-so-sweet practice of honey fraud using a light-based technology to detect if honey has been blended with cheaper materials like sugar syrup.
- 🕒 Spain: Two arrested in connection with theft of 56 tons of olive oil from an oil mill in Cordoba

Food Fraud

- 🕒 Pakistan: drive against adulteration in food, especially milk
- 🕒 Portugal: Meat, supplements, and wine seized
- 🕒 Pakistan: Punjab Food Authority (PFA) raided against the adulteration of milk and disposed off 540 litres of adulterated milk
- 🕒 Pakistan: 27,000kg adulterated food items discarded
- 🕒 Netherlands: Police and the food agency have uncovered an illegal slaughterhouse
- 🕒 India: Delhi police bust two factories manufacturing adulterated spices
- 🕒 USA: „Modern farmer“: It's time to stop underestimating the scope of Food Fraud
- 🕒 UK: Food fraud hotline created to tackle crimes
- 🕒 Opson Europe XII: Results of the Europol-coordinated operation between December 2022 and April 2023
- 🕒 Finland: Police is investigating fake food worker documents

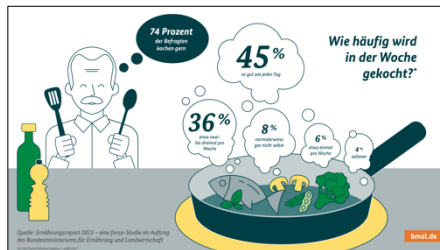
Germany's 2023 Nutrition Report (German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture)



Source: BMEL

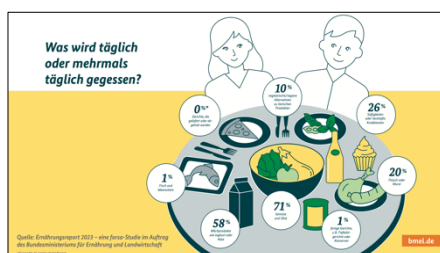
The German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) presented recently the Nutrition Report 2023:

- These were the main points in the survey:
- What is important when eating?
- How often consumers are cooking during the week?
- What we eat every day
- How often are vegetarian or vegan alternatives to animal products purchased?
- What are the most important criteria when choosing food?
- Which information on food packaging is very important or important?
- Labels on food products
- Perception of the Nutri-Score
- What is important when eating out of home?
- Expectations of politics and business
- What is important to consumers regarding farming?
- Possible actions from consumers' perspective to feed a growing world population



Source: BMEL

45% of the participants in the survey like cooking with fresh ingredients every day, 74% said they enjoy cooking.

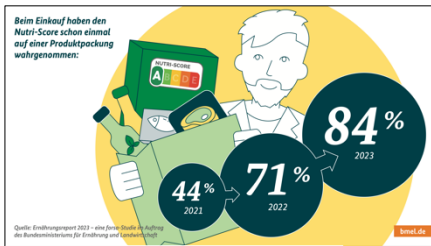


Source: BMEL

In the 2016 Nutrition Report (the data for the 2016 Nutrition Report came from the survey in October 2015), 34% still said they are eating meat or sausages every day. In the survey for the current Nutrition Report, this figure decreased to 20%.

In parallel, the proportion of consumers eating vegetarian or vegan alternatives to animal products doubled from 5% to 10%. Here, age is also playing a key role: while 65% of respondents older than 60 have not yet purchased such products, the figure for those aged up to 29 was only 19%.

When buying processed or ready-to-eat products, 62% of the participants said, they are paying attention to the sugar content, compared to 49% for the fat content and 29% for the salt content.



Source: BMEL

The results on the Nutri-Score as a purchasing decision are also interesting: 84% of the participants stated that they were aware of the Nutri-Score when shopping, but only for 37% the Nutri-Score was a decisive factor in product selection.

Against the backdrop of current food law developments in the area of genetic engineering (genome-edited plant products), only 27% are in favour of approving the cultivation of genetically modified plants.

Note:

All results of the [forsa survey](#) can be found on the BMEL website.

[Here](#) you can find the nutrition reports from previous years (2016-2022).



Feedback

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

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