

Issue | December 2023



NEWS LETTER

Dear Safefood-Online users,

We hope you had a good start to the New Year and would like to wish you all the best for 2024, especially good health and a lot of success.

With the December issue of our Safefood-Online newsletter, you receive the annual evaluation of the notifications for 2023 (point 1).

News on pesticides and contaminants provides information on new regulations on the sampling and analysis of mycotoxins and plant toxins (point 2).

Also, in this issue we have compiled interesting news on Food Safety and Food Fraud (point 3).

The topic of the month informs about the "Food Safety Forum" and "Food 2030", two events that took place at the end of November/beginning of December 2023. (point 4).

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has published issue 2/2023 of the [science magazine BfR2GO](#):



Issue 2/2023 of the EFSA-Journal: Food Risk Assess Europe (FRAE)

presents scientific contributions from the food safety authorities of the EU-Member States.

We hope that this issue of the Safefood-Online newsletter will also be of interest to you and, of course, we look forward to receiving your comments.

Your Safefood-Online Team

1. Notifications in Safefood-Online: December 2023

In December 2023, the number of new notifications in Safefood-Online decreased slightly compared to the previous two months:

- December: 398 notifications
- November: 432 notifications
- October: 455 notifications

The notifications in December 2023 are broken down as follows:

- 112 alerts
- 110 border rejections
- 176 information



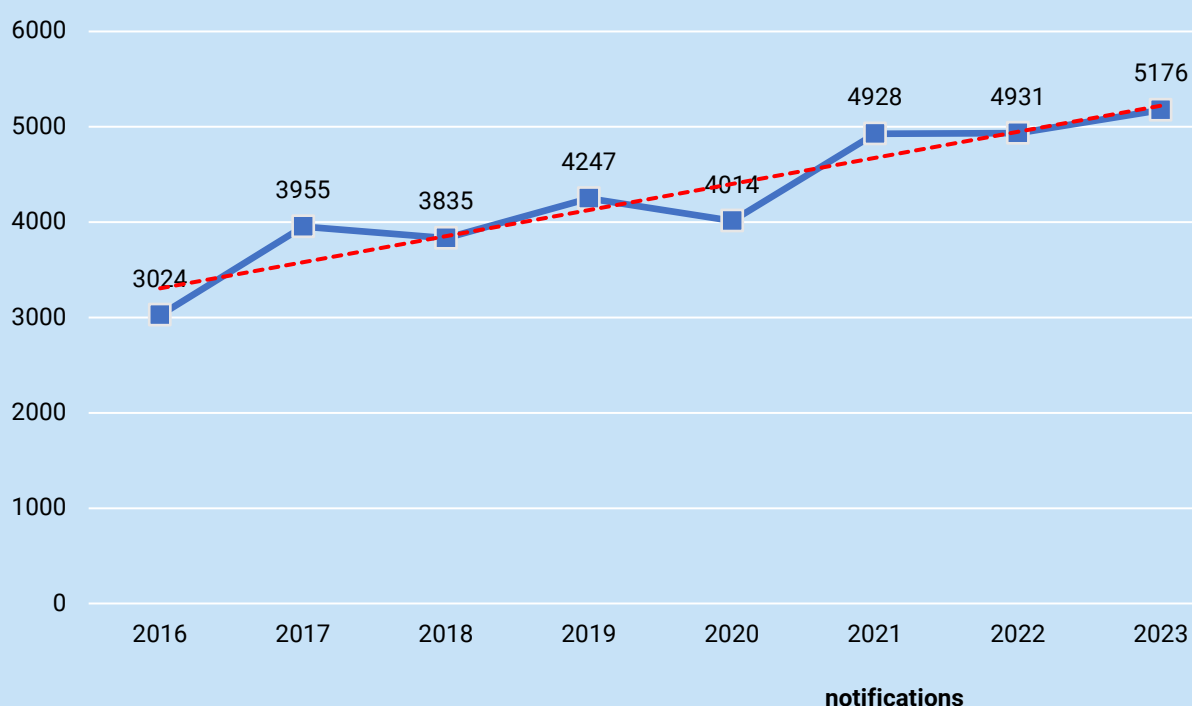
Remark:

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.

1.1 Development of the notifications in Safefood-Online: 2016 - 2023

The number of new notifications in Safefood-Online increased again in 2023 and is now with 5176 notifications at the highest level since the beginning of the data collection:

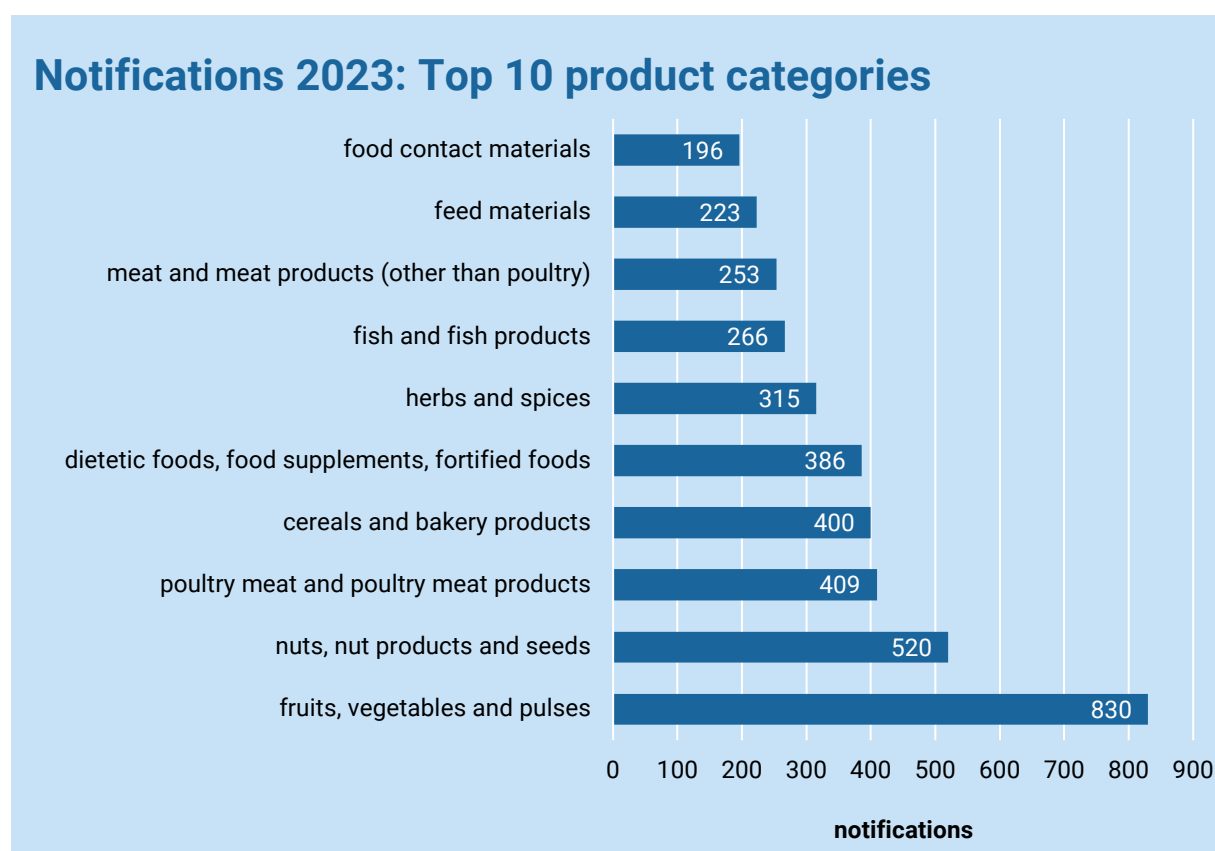
Notifications in Safefood-Online 2016 - 2023



1. Notifications in Safefood-Online: December 2023

1.2 Notifications 2023 according to product categories

The product category fruit, vegetables and pulses had in 2023 again with 830 notifications the highest number of notifications. As in the previous year, the product category nuts, nut products and seeds was in second place (520 notifications), followed by the product category poultry and poultry meat products (409 notifications). In the product category fruit, vegetables and pulses, notifications of chlorpyrifos decreased from 291 notifications in 2022 to 196 in 2023, but continue to represent around 24% of notifications in this product category. With 222 notifications, around 42% of notifications in the product category nuts, nut products and seeds relate to findings of aflatoxins. 74% of notifications in the product category poultry and poultry meat are due to salmonella:



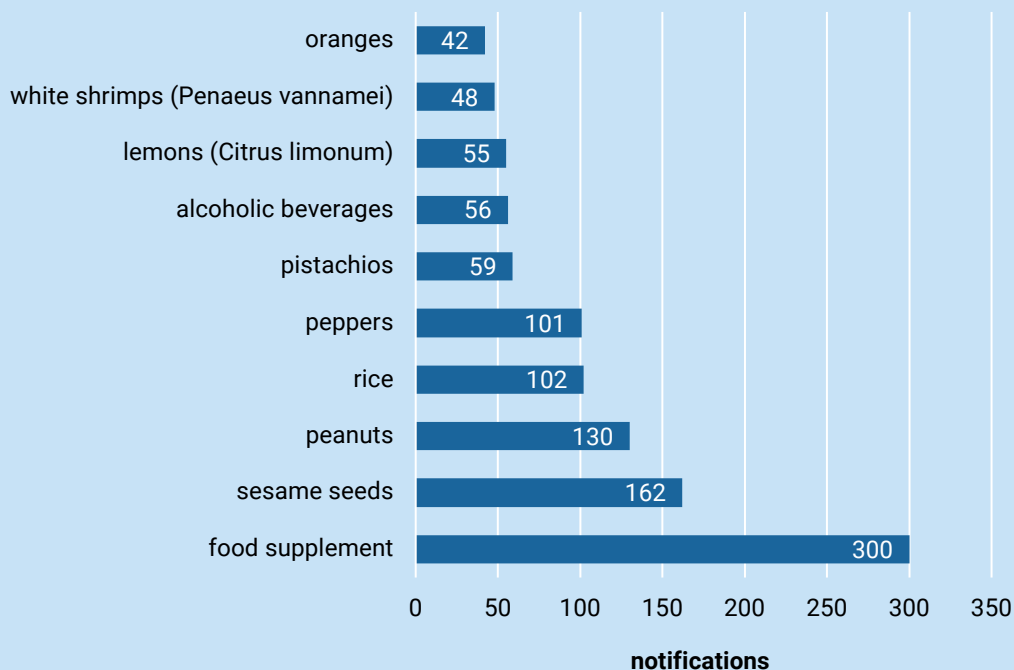
1.3 Notifications 2023 according to products

In 2023, dietary supplements continue to lead the evaluation of notifications by product with 300 notifications, 119 of which were novel food notifications:

- 16 notifications on L-alpha glycerylphosphorylcholine (GPC)
- 13 notifications on Mitragyna speciosa (kratom tree)
- 15 notifications on cannabidiol

Sesame seeds are following in second place with 162 notifications, including 84 notifications due to missing (health) certificates and 62 notifications due to salmonella. Peanuts are in third place with 130 notifications. Almost all notifications (125) concerned findings of mycotoxins:

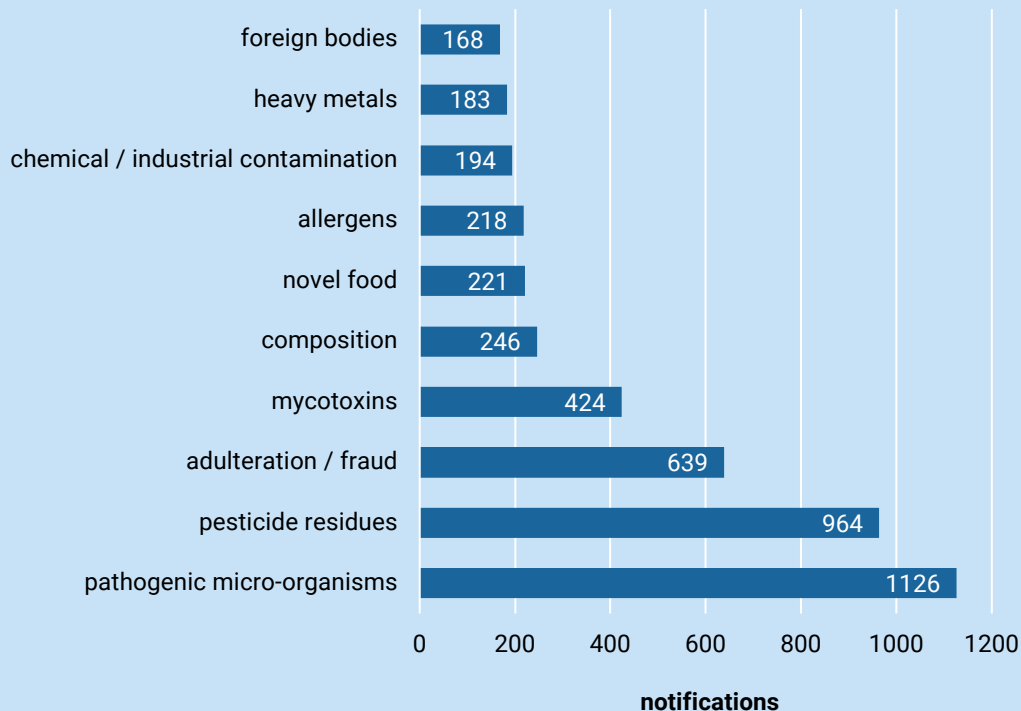
Notifications 2023: Top 10 products



1.4 Notifications 2023 according hazard categories

Compared to the previous year, there were no changes in the top 3 places in the evaluation by hazard category: Pathogenic microorganisms are in first place with 1126 notifications, followed by pesticides with 964 notifications and adulteration/ fraud with 639 notifications:

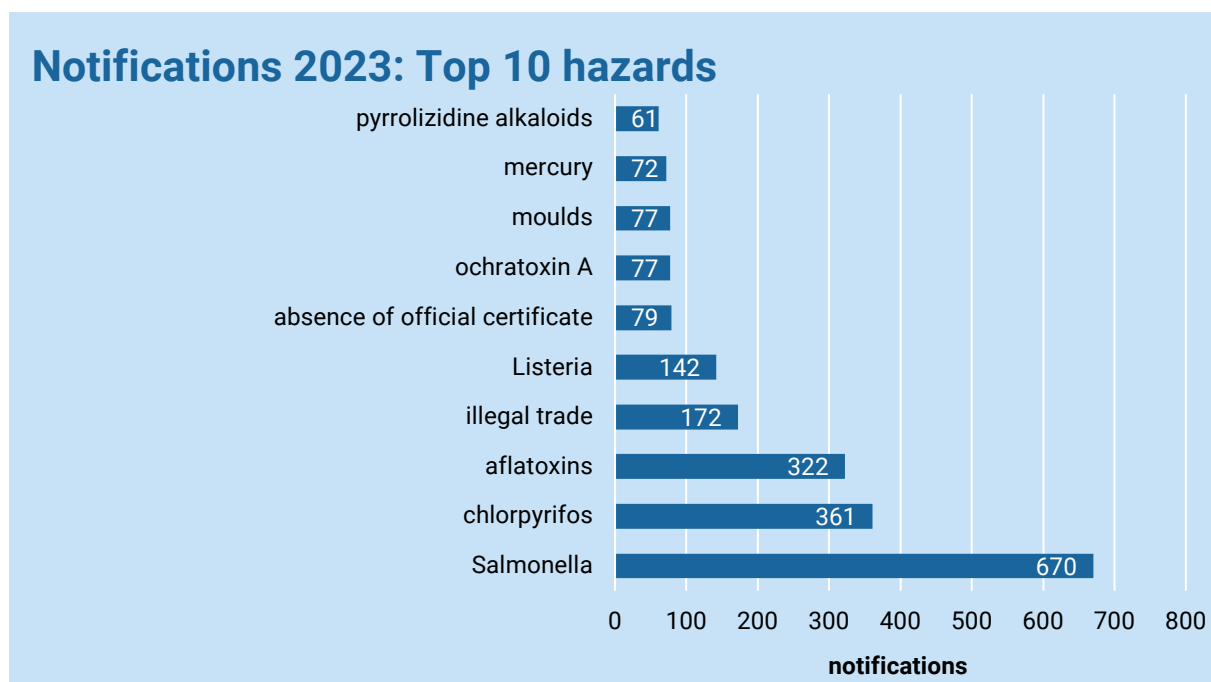
Notifications 2023: Top10 hazard categories



1. Notifications in Safefood-Online: December 2023

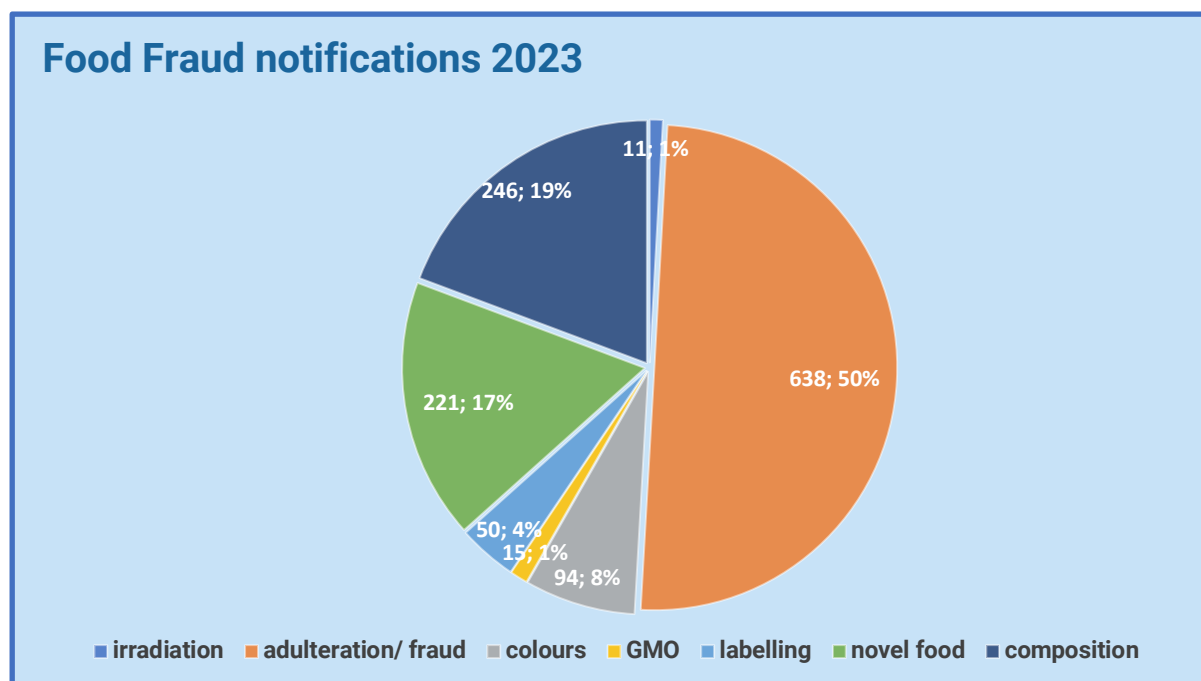
1.5 Notifications according hazards

By hazards, the number of notifications (670) due to salmonella findings was highest in 2023. Notifications for chlorpyrifos are in second place with 361 notifications, almost unchanged compared the previous year with 376 notifications. Aflatoxins are following with 322 notifications:



1.6 Food Fraud notifications 2023

In 2023, Safefood-Online recorded 1275 notifications for Food Fraud. Below the distribution according to the hazard categories assigned in Safefood-Online to Food Fraud:



1. Notifications in Safefood-Online: December 2023

Remark:

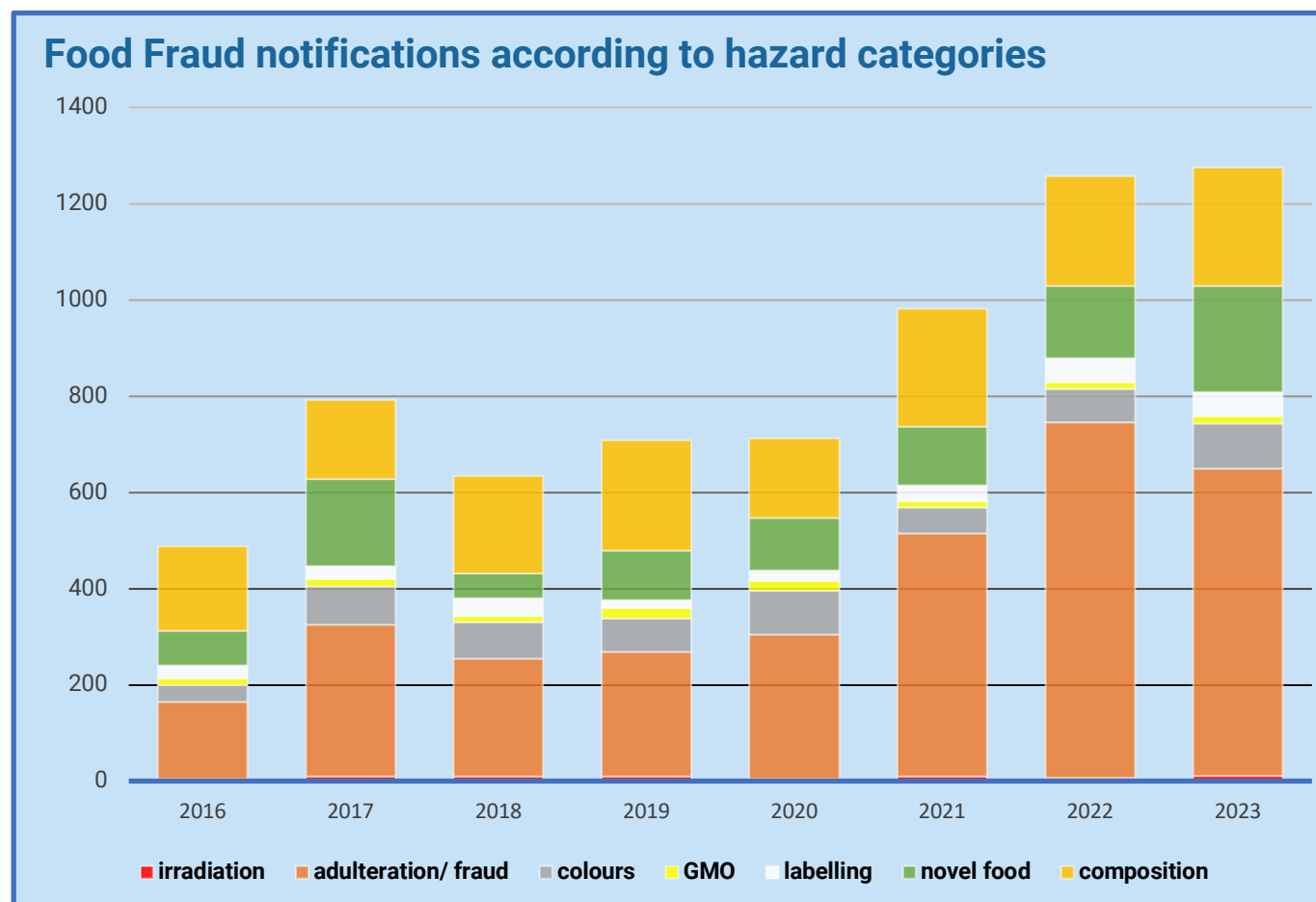
The following notifications are included in the "Food Fraud" query:

- Irradiation (e.g. illegally irradiated food).
- Adulteration/Fraud (e.g. illegal import, fraudulent use of identity marks or brand names)
- Colours (e.g. illegal addition or improperly labelled food)
- GMO (e.g. notifications of genetically modified organisms that are not approved in the EU)
- labelling (e.g. incorrect labelling or falsified health certificates)
- novel food (e.g. use of unauthorized novel foods according to Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 (Novel Food Regulation))
- composition (e.g. addition to the formulation or directly to the food).

In the Safefood Online dashboard (module "Evaluation Hazard Category"), you can see the Food Fraud notifications according to your own requirements (period, number, percent).

1.7 Food Fraud notifications 2016 -2023

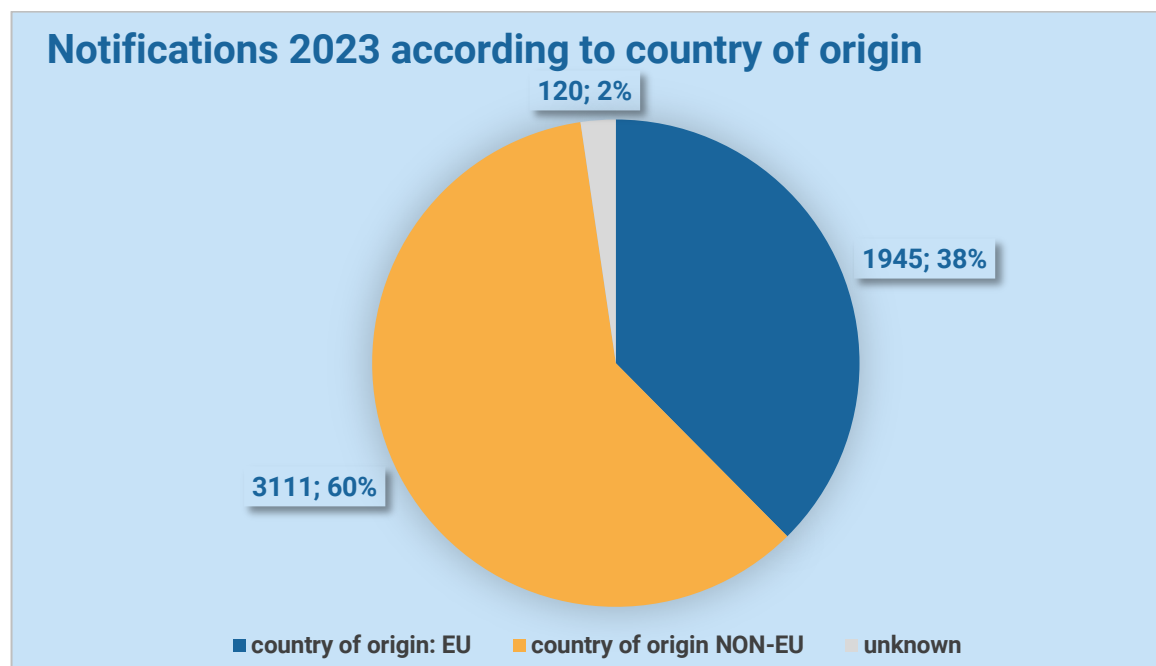
The following figure shows the development of the Food Fraud notifications for the period 2016 – 2023:



Food fraud notifications are, compared to the previous year, on a similar level but have more than doubled since 2016 (2016: 490 notifications, 2023: 1275 notifications).

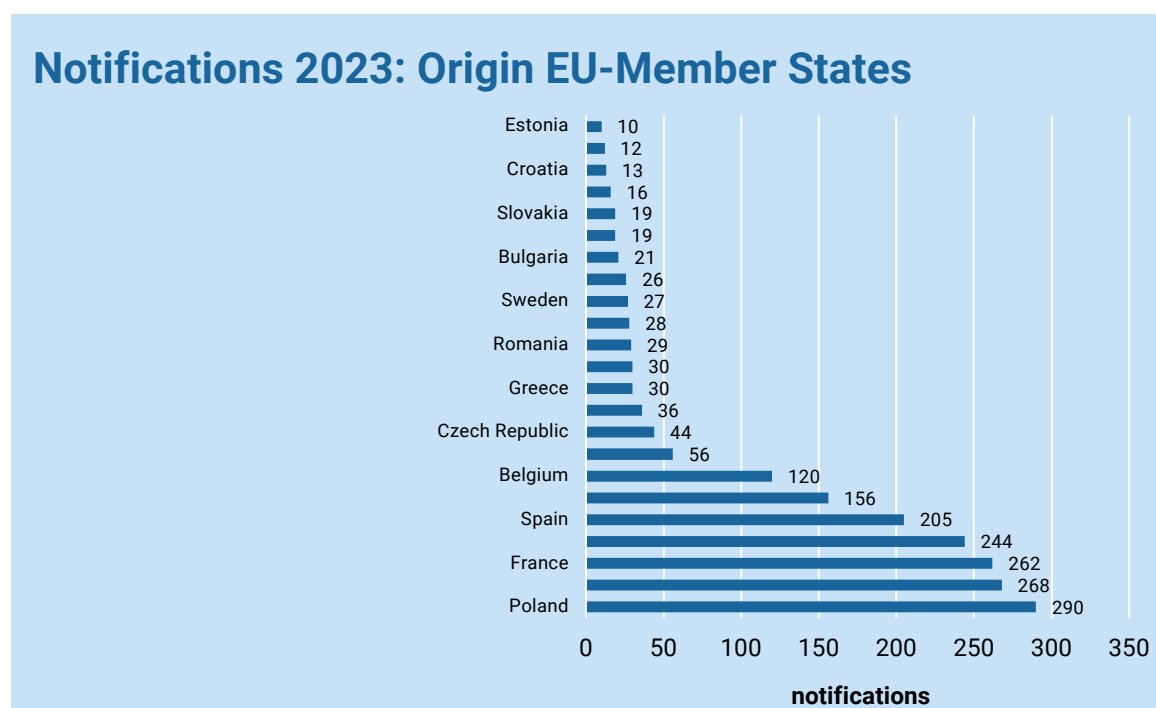
1.8 Notifications 2023 according to country of origin

Of the 5176 notifications, 38% came from EU member states and 60% from non-EU member states. In 2% of the notifications, the origin of the articles was unknown or not specified:



1.8.1 Notifications (≥ 10) with origin from EU-Member States

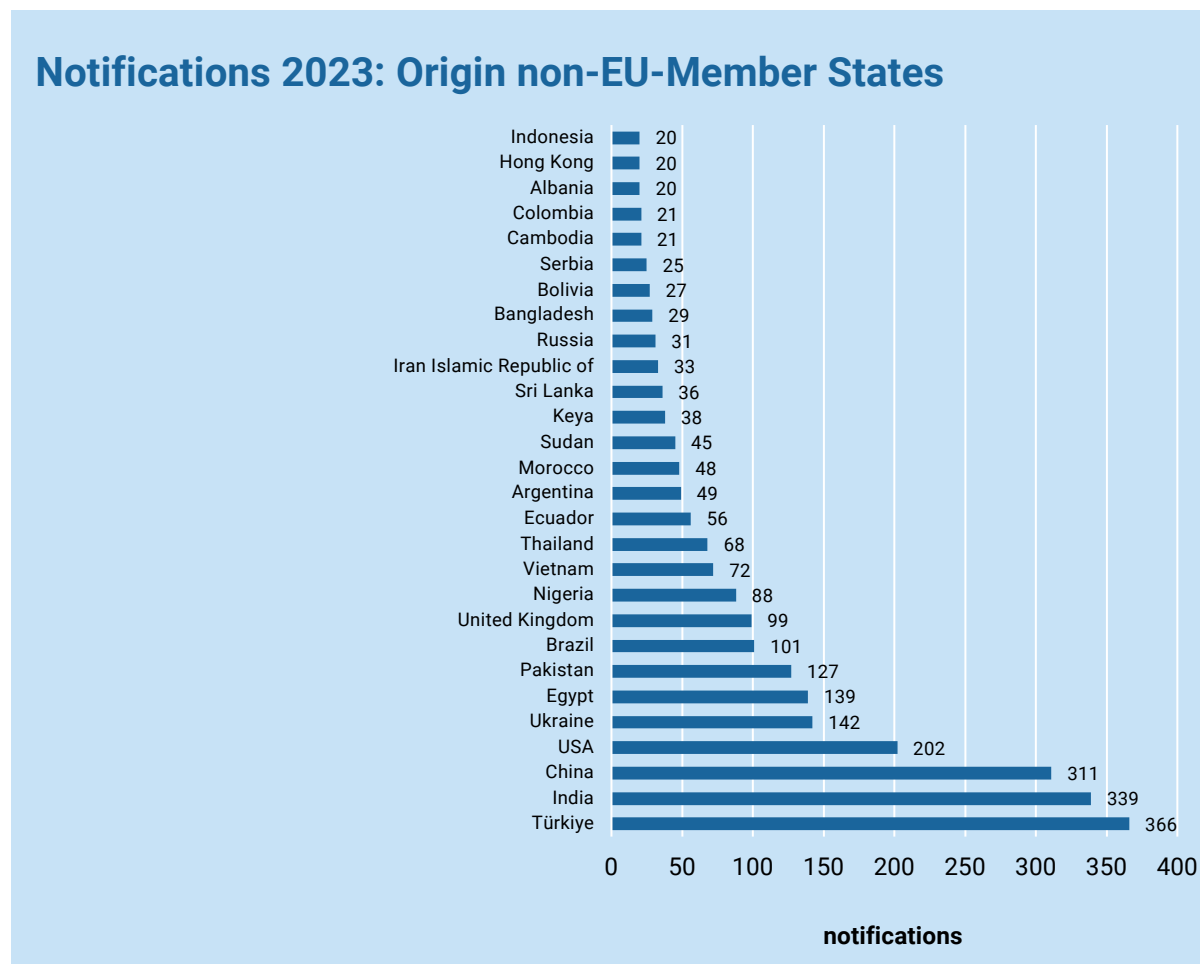
Below the notifications ≥ 10 originating within the EU:



As in the previous year, Poland is ranking first with 290 notifications, followed by the Netherlands with 268 and France with 262 notifications.

1.8.2 Notifications (≥ 20) with origin from non-EU Member States

The distribution of notifications according to the origin from non-EU countries gives the following picture:



As in the previous year, Türkiye (366 notifications), India (339) and China (311) are at the top of the list.

2. Update on pesticides and contaminants



New EU-Regulations on the sampling and analysis of mycotoxins and plant toxins in food

The previous **EU Regulation (EC) 401/2006** on the sampling and analysis of mycotoxins will be replaced on April 1, 2024 by a **new regulation**. For further information, please refer to the linked final draft.

In addition, there will also introduced a **regulation** with criteria for sampling and analysis of plant toxins (pyrrolizidine alkaloids, tropane alkaloids, opium alkaloids) on April 1, 2024. For further information, please also refer to the linked final draft.



- 🕒 EFSA: Prolonged multi-country cluster of *Listeria monocytogenes* ST155 infections linked to ready-to-eat fish products
- 🕒 German BfR: Omega-3 fatty acid supplements can increase the risk of atrial fibrillation in heart patients
- 🕒 EFSA: 2023 Crisis Preparedness Training: Annual Report
- 🕒 Spain sees decline in alerts for 2022

Food Safety

- 🕒 EFSA: Risk assessment of food contact materials
- 🕒 EFSA: Threat or treat: Exposure assessment and risk characterisation of chemical contaminants in soft drinks and chocolate bars in various Polish population age groups
- 🕒 Lithuania: Several operations find hygiene breaches in
- 🕒 EU-Commission: EU reports on food safety progress in Ukraine and other nations
- 🕒 EFSA: Risk Assessment Strategies for Contaminants in Seafood (RASCS)
- 🕒 EFSA: Guidance on the assessment of the safety of feed additives for the users
- 🕒 UK: Salmonella infections prompt renewed Polish poultry warning
- 🕒 France: *Campylobacter fetus* Invasive Infections and Risks for Death, France, 2000–2021
- 🕒 EFSA: The European Union One Health 2022 Zoonoses Report



- 🕒 Brazil: Authorities in Brazil Seize 9,000 Bottles of Fraudulent Olive Oil
- 🕒 UK: Some confectionery products imported from the United States aren't meant to be sold in the UK, and they might contain unauthorized additives
- 🕒 US: Investigation of Elevated Lead Levels: Cinnamon Applesauce Pouches (November 2023)
- 🕒 Portugal: Olive oil featured heavily in a range of operations conducted in recent months by authorities in Portugal

Food Fraud

- 🕒 Portugal: Operation “Gota D’Água” led to the arrest of 19 people for allegedly falsifying analyses of water intended for human consumption
 - 🕒 Incidents and Potential Adverse Health Effects of Serious Food Fraud Cases Originated in Asia
 - 🕒 UK: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has warned people not to buy or eat several types of counterfeit chocolate bars
 - 🕒 Spain: The Guardia Civil, in a recent operation named Delta India, has executed a significant crackdown on crimes involving Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indications (PGI), and Traditional Specialties Guaranteed (TSG) products
- Italian and Spanish authorities have seized more than 260,000 liters of counterfeit extra virgin olive oil and arrested 11 individuals suspected of mixing high-quality oil with low-quality “Lampante oil,” previously used as fuel for oil lamps.
- 🕒 India: After blockade of inter-provincial smuggling and misreporting of the quantity of flour produced, a large number of mills in Punjab have begun mixing maize and broken rice in the wheat to earn illegal profits

EU Food Safety Forum and Food 2030 conference



Source: EU foodsafety4EU

The first **European Food Safety Forum** took place on November 28 and 29, 2023 in Brussels. As part of the **FoodSafety4EU** project funded by the European Commission, the event brought together experts from science, politics and society to work on innovative approaches and solutions to develop the European food safety system.

Information on the event and the project Foodsafety4Eu can be also found under the links above.



source: EU

On December 4 and 5, 2023, the European Commission hosted a conference in Brussels entitled "**Food 2030: Green and resilient food systems**" to present the results of EU projects in the field of food systems and explore future research and innovation directions and levers for change.

The programme of the event and the presentations can be found at the link above.



Source:: EU

In this context, we would also like to draw your attention to the European Commission's report "**Food 2030 Research & Innovation - Pathways for Action 2.0**", which identifies areas of action where research and innovation in the field of food systems can bring benefits for nutrition, climate and the circular economy to shape a holistic and sustainable food future.



Feedback

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