



The EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed

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**DRINK
COFFEE**
*Do Stupid
Things
Faster
with More
Energy*



European food law

RASFF
Rapid Alert System for *Food and Feed*

General food law: regulation (EC) No 178/2002
Article 5.1
Food law shall pursue... a high level of protection of human life and health and the protection of consumers' interests...

Food shall not be placed on the market if it is unsafe



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**25 Israeli oranges in Maastricht, NL
Injected with mercury
Also found in 9 towns in West Germany**

**Arab Revolutionary Army – Palestine Command
"to disrupt Israel's economy"**

**West German imports from Israel
140 million tonnes citrus products p.a.
Halted completely**



Other early threats

- 1985. Diethylene glycol (antifreeze) in Austrian wine: damage to industry reputation
- 1986. Methanol adulteration of Italian wine: killed 23 people
- 1986. Radioactive fallout on crops after Chernobyl



BSE and European food law

- Mad cow disease
- UK 1995
- Major concern for human health
- Caused restructuring of Commission
- 1997: DG Health & Consumer Protection
- Food & Veterinary Office
- Animal feed included in RASFF



Current legal basis

- Regulation EC No 178/2002
- “General food Law” Article 50
- Establishes membership of RASFF
- Requires reporting of threats: food & feed
in transit
at a BIP
on the market



Members of the RASFF

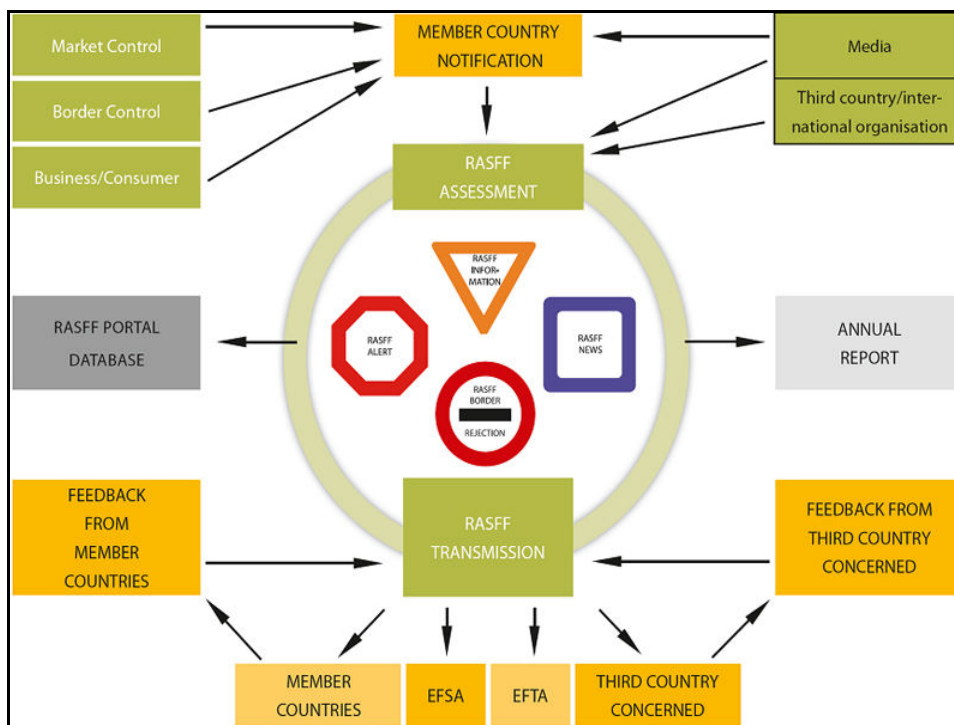
- European Commission
- European Food Safety Authority
- European Free Trade Area Surveillance Authority
- 27 EU Member States
- Iceland
- Switzerland
- Liechtenstein
- Norway



Scope of RASFF



- Any member of the network
- Information on a threat
- To food, feed & pet food
- Any product recalls
- Any Border Inspection Post rejections
- Commission informs all BIPs, and
- Informs source country (if non-EU/EEA)



Alert notification

- Food or Feed incident
- Serious health risk
- Product in the market
- Rapid action needed
- RASFF members – is the product on the market in your country?



Border rejection

- Food & feed incidents
- Tested at EU/EEA border
- Health risk found
- Not allowed into EU/EEA
- RASFF members – make sure that it does not enter at another BIP



Information

- Risk to food or feed identified
- Not on the market
- All used up
- Rapid action not required



RASFF News

- Not related to a threat
- Food & feed related news
- That may be of interest



Actions



- Usually delegated to Member States
- Factors to consider
 - Risk to health*
 - Distribution on the market*
 - Special Import Conditions*

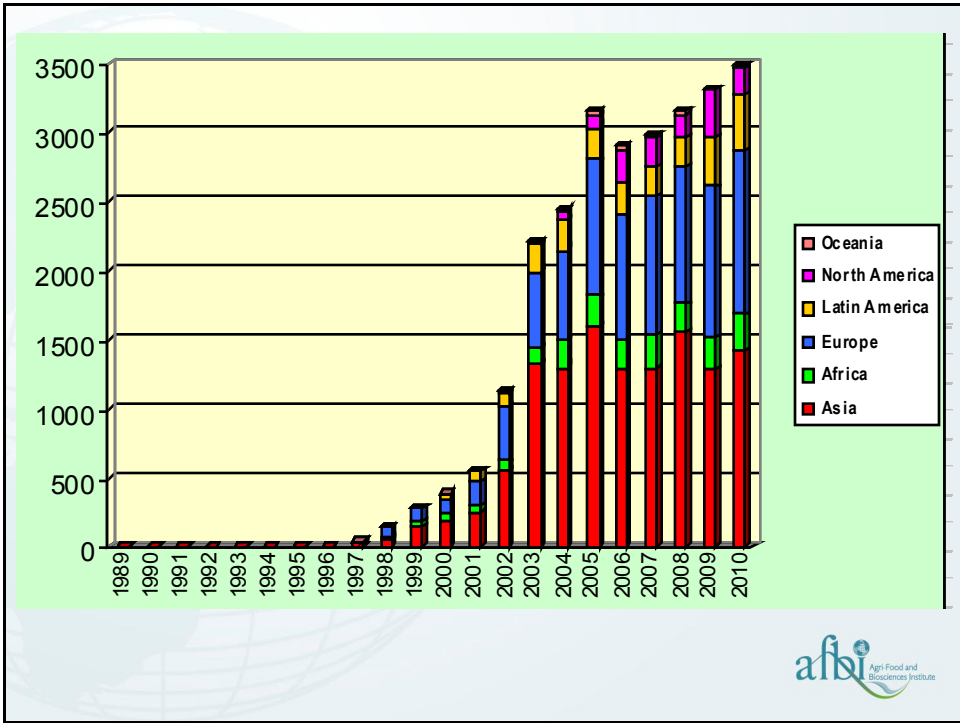
Product recall **destroy**
return to source **physical treatment**
nothing



Annual report

- Alert summary
- Highlights





Source of RASFFs 2010



25 Specified alert categories

GMO/novel food	TSE	Adulteration or fraud	Allergens	Biocontaminants
Biotoxins	Chemical contamination	Composition	Feed additives	Food Additives & flavourings
Foreign bodies	Heavy metals	Industrial contaminants	Labelling problems	Migration
Mycotoxins	Non-pathogenic microorganisms	Organoleptic aspects	Packaging defective or incorrect	Parasitic infestations
Pathogenic microorganisms	Pesticide residues	Poor or insufficient controls	Radiation	Residues of VMPs



Origin of RASFFs

- China
- Turkey
- India
- USA
- Argentina
- Germany
- Spain
- Thailand
- Italy
- France
- Brazil
- Elsewhere



Food & Veterinary Office

- Part of DG Health & Consumers
- Located in Trim, Ireland
- Audits of EU MS and 3rd countries
- Sanitary & Phytosanitary arrangements
- Desk review of countries
- On-the-spot audits
- Review of RASFF data



Conclusion

- RASFF system 33 years old
- Acts on threats to food & feed
- Most threats identified before they go on the market at BIP inspection
- Actions taken to remove threat

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