Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)

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Outline

1. RASFF Principles and Objectives
2. Members and Networks
3. Types of Notifications
4. Notification Template and Platform
5. Link with EFSA & International Collaboration (WHO)
6. RASFF at Work: example
6. Publications
The system principles
Objective

To provide a **rapid exchange of information** among European countries and the European Commission **about direct or indirect risks** detected in relation to food or feed
RASFF members

31 European countries:
- 27 Member States of the EU
- 3 EFTA/EEA countries (IS, LI, NO)
- Switzerland – partial participation

European Commission; European Food Safety Authority and EFTA Surveillance Authority

http://ec.europa.eu/rasff
RASFF networks

European level:
• 31 RASFF Contact Points
• 1 single Contact Point per MS

National level network includes:
• RASFF National Contact Point
• Market surveillance authorities
• Border control authorities
RASFF networks

Simple structure:

- clearly identified contact points
- Organised way of information exchange by means of template

In case of an urgent notification outside of office hours all members have out-of-office hours arrangements (24/7)
RASFF - Legal basis

Articles 50-52 of Regulation (EC) No. 178/2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of **Food Law**

Commission Regulation (EU) 16/2011 laying down implementing measures for the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed
Criteria for notification

Food and feed for which exists a direct or indirect risk to human health

Since 2006 also animal health and environmental threat for feed: this includes pet food (Regulation (EC) N° 183/2005)
Types of notifications

Types of notifications based on seriousness of the risk and distribution status in the EU

- Alert
- Information
- Border rejection
- News

Each of above notifications is usually accompanied by follow-ups informing about actions taken by member or third countries.
Alert Notifications

- Food or feed for which a serious risk has been identified
- Product is on the market
- Immediate action is required by members of the network
Information Notifications

- Food or feed for which a serious risk has been identified but no rapid action required on the product
  
  Or

- Not a serious risk but useful for food/feed control in other member countries
Border Rejection Notifications

- Any rejection, related to a direct or indirect risk, of a batch, container or cargo of food or feed at a border post
News Notifications

- Information related to the safety of food/feed
- Not communicated as an ‘alert’, ‘information’ or ‘border rejection’
- But judged as interesting for the control authorities
What triggers RASFF notifications

Usually triggered by:

- A control on the market
- A control at the EU border

Usually an official control but it can be an own-check, verified by official authorities and followed up by an official control if necessary

Consumers’ complaint – minority of the cases:

- e.g. food poisoning
Templates – main content

General information
Hazards
Product
Risk/measures
Traceability of the lot(s)
Border control
Other information
### General Information:

- **Notification type:**
- **Notifying country:**
- **Contact point reference n°:**
- **Basis for the notification:**
- **Related RASFF notification n°:**
- **Date of notification:**
- **Countries flagged for action:**

### Hazards:

- **Hazard category:** other:
- **Hazard found:**
- **Results of the tests:** / / /
- **Counter analysis:** /
- **Sampling dates:** / / /
- **n° of samples:**
- **Method:**
- **Place:** other/name:
- **Laboratory:**
- **Analysis sample treatment/analytical matrix:**
- **Method of analysis:**
- **Persons affected:**
- **Type of illness/symptoms:**

### Product:

- **Product category:**
- **Product relation to the product notified in linked notification:** other/more info:
- **Product name (on label):**
- **Product description (brand / trade name):**
- **Product aspect (e.g. packaging):**
- **Barcode n°:**
- **Other labelling info:**
- **Unit weight/vol.:** units

### Risk / Measures:

- **Distribution status:**
- **Risk:** checkedserious (human health)
- **Motivation:**
- **Legislation in breach:**
- **Scope:**
- **Max. permitted level:**
- **Analytical units:**

#### Voluntary measures:

- product (to be)
- product (to be)
- product (to be) used as
- physical treatment - informing recipients
- public warning / press release: other/more info:

#### Compulsory measures:

- product (to be)
- product (to be)
- product (to be) used as
- physical treatment - informing recipients
- public warning / press release: other/more info:
- reinforced checking other/more info:

- **Date of entry into force:**
- **Duration:**

### Traceability of the lot(s):

- **Consignment(s) / lot number(s):** / / /
- **Durability dates:**
  - **Use-by date:**
  - **Sell-by date:**
- **Description of the lot:**
  - **Number of units:**
  - **Total gross weight/volume of lot:**
- **Public health certificate number(s):**
- **CVED/CEG number(s):**
- **Date(s):**
- **Country of origin:**
- **Select company type:**
  - name:
  - street + nr:
  - country:
  - postal + city:
  - Approval / reg number:

### Distribution:

- **Distributed by:**
- **Select company type:**
  - name:
  - street + nr:
  - country:
  - postal + city:
  - Approval / reg number:

### Border Control:

- **Point of departure:**
- **Point of entry:**
- **Product CN code:**
- **Country of destination:**
- **Consignee name:**
- **Address:**
- **Container n°(s)/barrel n°(s):** / /

### Other Information:

- **Organization / ministry:**
- **Contact person:**
- **Other information:**
Exchange of information with third countries

If the notified product originates from or is distributed to a third country, the Commission contact point shall inform the third country without undue delay.

The Commission contact point shall send notifications to a single designated contact point in the third country for attention or for follow-up based on the seriousness of the risk.
Use of RASFF Window platform to inform countries that are not member of RASFF

Information published within 24 hours

Presently more than 90 countries use RASFF Window

Restricted access provided to a single contact point responsible for further coordination of information in its country

Engaged towards observing confidentiality and providing feedback on actions taken
2000-2011 Notifications by World Region

- Africa
- Asia
- Europe
- Latin America
- Northern America
- Oceania
RASFF Portal Database

Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed

What's New?

1979-2009 RASFF celebrates its 30th anniversary.

International RASFF conference - 10 conclusions of Robert Madelin

RASFF annual report 2008

The Annual Report on the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed provides useful data on the number of notifications received in 2006, as well as details on the origin of the notifications, the products and countries involved, and the identified risks. It also details the follow-up actions carried out in response to various food safety problems.

Press release: The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed more efficient than ever on its 30th birthday

RASFF Portal database

On 16 July 2009, Commissioner for Health Androulla Vassiliou opened the RASFF Portal website and its new online searchable database of RASFF notifications. This database replaces the weekly summary of notifications published on this website. Users of the RASFF Portal database can now produce their own tables based on a multitude of criteria.
RASFF Portal Database

Through the Portal anyone can search RASFF notifications based on a set of parameters

The Portal will at first only make public the information that was already present in the previous weekly overview

In a second phase it may link through to public recalls
RASFF Link with EFSA & WHO

- EFSA assesses and communicates on risks associated with food chain

- EC and RASFF work with WHO alert system – International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN)
RASFF at work: example

- **Irish**
  - Pig meat originating in Ireland in September 2008
  - Detected by routine monitoring by Irish authorities
  - Notified by Irish authorities
  - Appropriate actions taken

- **UNIDO using RASFF notifications to inform policy making**
Publications

Annual report
Leaflet
Special booklet on 30 years of RASFF
Annual report

The Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)
Annual Report 2010
RASFF website

http://ec.europa.eu/rasff

- Information regarding the system, its legal basis, members, news...
- Publicly accessible database – RASFF Portal
- Publications
Thank you!