

IFS Trend Risk Report February 2024



Dear readers,

The February edition includes 20 food fraud cases from around the world. Cases of fraud range from smuggling / grey market activities to adulteration with harmful substances. Refer to page 3 for more details.

The guest article by AFC Risk & Crisis Consult on page 4 entitled "European Green Deal's first setback" talks about the withdrawal of the Sustainable Use Regulation (SUR), which was part of the EU's Green Deal and Farm to Fork strategy, and how opinions from exposing interest groups differ in the acceptance of this decision.

"Recalls around the world" can be found on page 5.

Our pesticide analysis shows details of deviations of the following three products: strawberries, mangos and bell / sweet peppers.

The RASFF analysis is on page 7, where we analysed the latest notifications for you, separated by IFS product scope and a list of the Top-10 of countries with the most notifications.

In our Noteworthy Publication section, you will find a link to "A toolkit to support weight of evidence approach for food authenticity investigations" by Defra. The toolkit aims to support anyone who is required to make an assessment on the authenticity of a food or drink sample based on a combination of information from several independent sources.

In the last section, you can get many interesting news and scientific publications in the field of food safety and packaging.

We hope you enjoy reading our report. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact us.

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1. Update on food fraud cases

In the following table, you find the food fraud cases **detected** in February 2024. Please be aware that cases are not limited to the month and may have occurred over a longer period.

IFS Product Scope	Ingredient	Reason	Country or Region	Detected in	Source
	Meats	Contraband	Cambodia	Feb 2024	Link
	Buffalo meat	Contraband	Thailand	Feb 2024	Link
	Chicken	Document forgery	UK	Feb 2024	Link
	Bushmeat	Grey market	Belgium	Feb 2024	Link
	Fish	Grey market	Italy	Feb 2024	Link
	Octopus and fish	Grey market	Spain	Feb 2024	Link
	Seafood	Product tampering	Italy	Feb 2024	Link
	Fish and Seafood	Adulteration	Mexico	Feb 2024	Link
	Eggs	Grey market	Burkina Faso	Feb 2024	Link
	Rice	Misbranding	India	Feb 2024	Link
	Honey	Adulteration	Brazil	Feb 2024	Link
	Flour	Product tampering	Brazil	Feb 2024	Link
	Traditional dairy products	Adulteration	Pakistan	Feb 2024	Link
	Mineral Water	Product tampering / Mislabelling	France	Feb 2024	Link
	Liquor	Grey market	India	Feb 2024	Link

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IFS Product Scope	Ingredient	Reason	Country or Region	Detected in	Source
	Liquor	Adulteration	Kenya	Feb 2024	Link
	Olive oil	Adulteration	Greece	Feb 2024	Link
	Olive oil	Misbranding	Portugal	Feb 2024	Link
	Supplements	Document forgery	Italy	Feb 2024	Link
	Cocoa beans	Grey market	Ivory Coast	Feb 2024	Link

Issue of the month: European Green Deal's first setback

Last month, there were tumultuous events across Europe. [Farmers](#) mobilized in unprecedented numbers to protest a range of issues, including the burdens created by environmental legislation. They demanded a swift response from policymakers. Coinciding to the protests, on 6 February 2024, Ursula von der Leyen, the President of the European Commission, made a significant announcement. She declared the withdrawal of the [Sustainable Use Regulation \(SUR\)](#), which was part of the EU's Green Deal and Farm to Fork strategy. This regulation aimed at [reducing pesticide use](#) by 50 % by 2030. The initiative is now on hold, but the College of Commissioners still has to ratify the retraction of the proposed legislation.

Formally introduced in June 2022, the proposal underwent voting by the European Parliament in November 2023, resulting in its [rejection](#). The proposal formed a critical component of the broader ambition to achieve [climate neutrality](#) across the European continent by 2050. Its objective was to diminish the environmental impact of the EU's food system and address the adverse effects of chemical plant protection products. The proposal further aimed at completely banning such products in areas like urban green spaces and Natura 2000 areas, while advocating for the adoption of low-risk alternatives.

The leading [farmers' interest group](#) voiced approval for the failing pesticide bill, arguing that the proposal was poorly designed and funded. Already last year, the new regulation was actively opposed by farmers, food and agrochemical companies. Their campaign was supported by the centre-right [European People's Party](#) (EPP), which led to the rejection in the vote. Agricultural associations often invoke [food security](#) concerns in pesticide debates. Particularly in the context of global conflicts, they highlight the notion that fewer pesticides means lower yields and less food resonates. However, several factors, such as crop type, weather conditions and pest infestations, affect actual harvests.

The decision has been criticised by [environmental organisations](#), scientists and organic farmers, who are calling for action to address the dangers of pesticides and help farmers move away from toxic chemicals. They argue that the increasing toxicity of chemical pesticides and the significant [pollution risks](#) pose a significant threat. The risks associated with these pesticides include water degradation, soil erosion, and pest resistance. All these factors together endanger the wellbeing of both humans and wildlife. Furthermore, they claim that the decision made by the European Commission regarding SUR would exacerbate [biodiversity loss](#), directly affecting the biomass of insects and arable herbs, and indirectly affecting bird populations in agricultural landscapes across Europe.

Von der Leyen suggested that the Commission could draft a [new proposal](#) with input from farmers, agri-food stakeholders and environmental groups to shape the future of EU agricultural policy. However, quick results are not expected, as the future European Commission and the European Parliament will most likely have to revisit the issue after the European elections in June.



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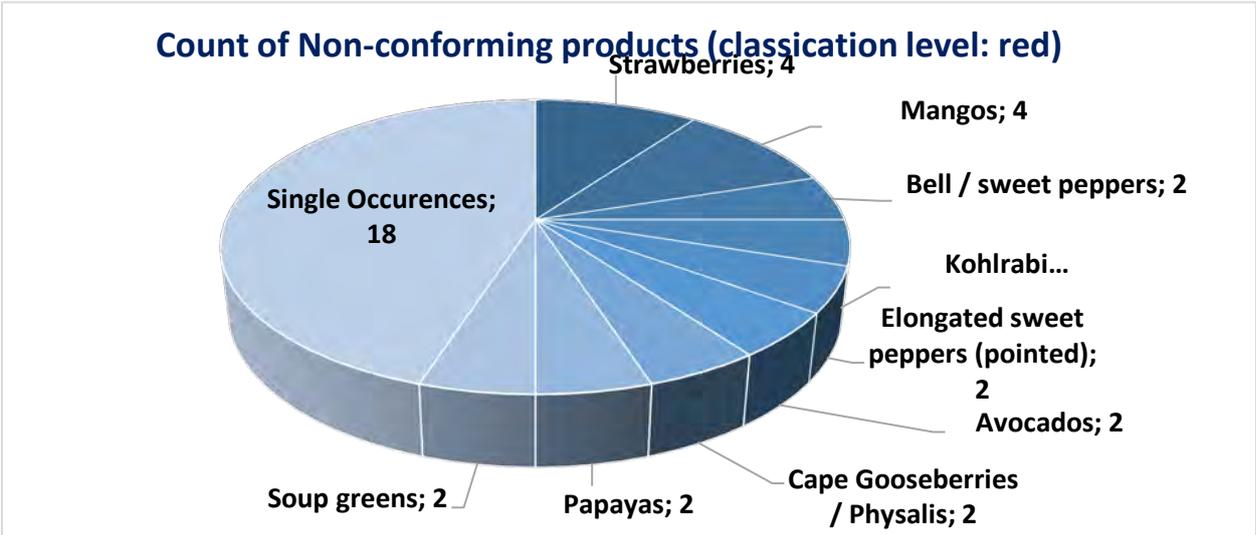
3. Recalls around the world from country/region specific databases (click on the country/region name to visit the source)



Let us complete the map! Share your sources with us and send an email to riskmanagement@ifs-certification.com

4. Evaluation of pesticide analyses

The following analysis was conducted using data from fruitmonitoring.com, which is a joint residue monitoring system for pesticides in fruit and vegetables operated by a group of trading companies in Germany. The data from fruitmonitoring.com is not publicly available. As a service to IFS stakeholders, we provide you with a monthly overview of compliance with maximum residue levels (MRLs) of goods traded in Germany. In the illustration, we show you all samples that have been classified as red because of "Exceeding maximum residue levels".



In February 2024, a total number of 3338 **samples** (Date: 11.03.2024) were monitored.

Product/Country/Parameter	Total number analysed in February 2024	Count of deviation February 2024	Historic count (previous 2 years)
Strawberries	112	4	15
Greece	14	2	4
Flupyradifuron	-	1	0
Cyflufenamid	-	1	0
Spain	90	2	5
Milbemectin (sum)	-	1	0
Trifloxystrobin	-	1	3
Mangos	48	4	9
Brazil	21	2	4
Acephate	-	1	0
Omethoate	-	1	0
Peru	25	1	3
Imidacloprid	-	1	0
South Africa	2	1	0
Fosetyl-AI (sum)	-	1	0
Bell / sweet peppers	54	2	11
Egypt	6	2	3
Clofentezine	-	2	0

In the table above, you can see the countries and parameters of the first 3 products which had MRLs >100% for February 2024 and next to it the "historic count" to show how many times the product/country/substance combination were non-conforming (classification level: red) in the last 2 years (01.02.22 -31.01.2024) prior to the current month.

5. RASFF Data evaluation

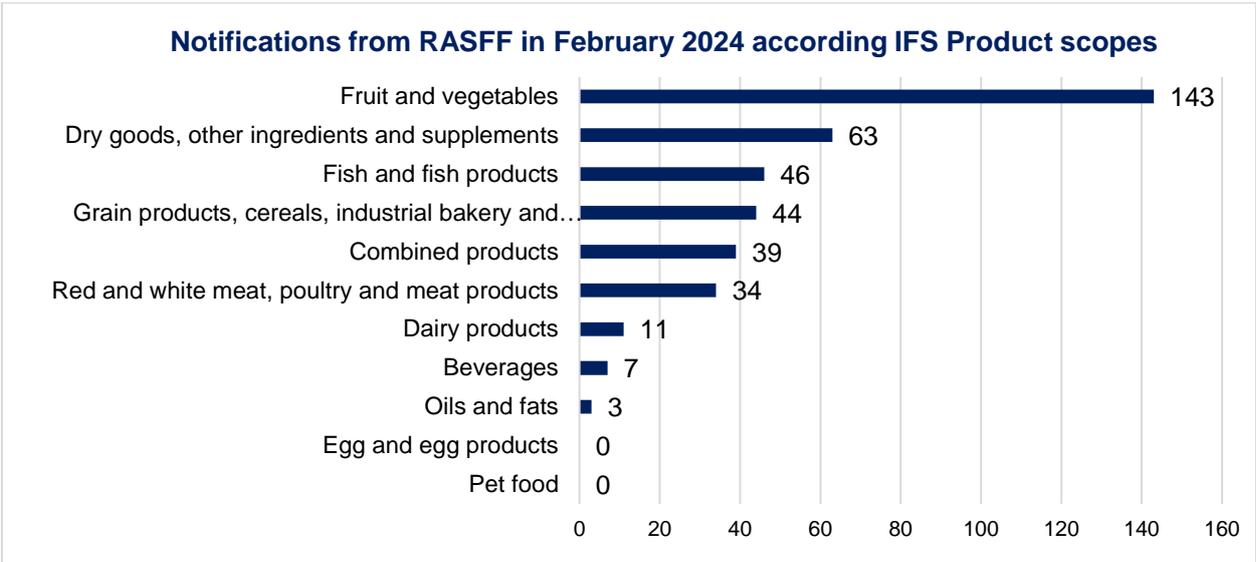
In the following section you can see an analysis of the RASFF data from February 2024. The notifications from the food category are analysed here, which, this month, amount to 390 and thus count 26 notifications less than in January 2024.

The first diagram shows the breakdown by IFS Product scope. Please do not forget that an IFS Product scope can contain several RASFF categories.

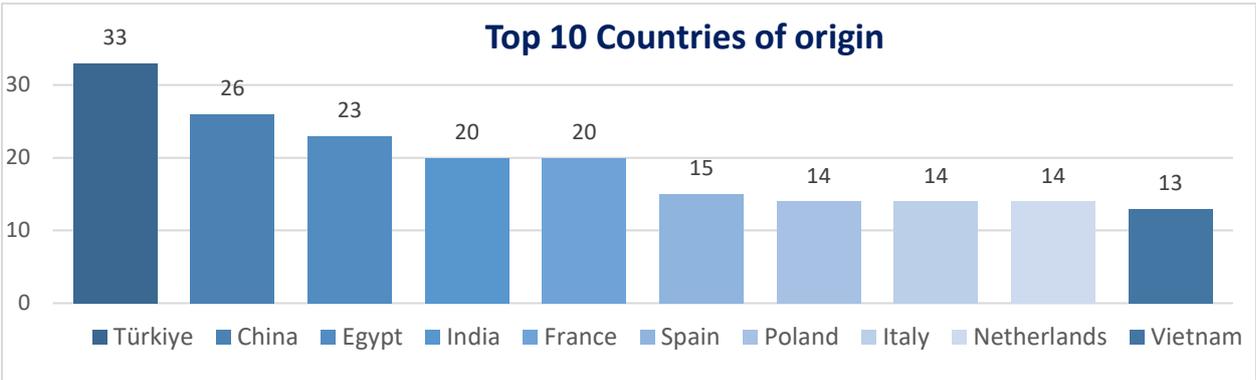
The IFS Product scopes with the most notifications are as follows: Fruit and vegetables (143;144); Dry goods, other ingredients and supplements (63;62); Fish and fish products (46;42); Red and white meat, poultry and meat products (34;32); In the brackets above, the January 2024 figures are given in second place.

The IFS Product scope fruit and vegetables includes notifications from the RASFF category: fruit and vegetables (88), nuts and nut products and seeds (48) and soups, broths, sauces and condiments (7). In Fruits and vegetables, Pesticides were mentioned 42 times and Mycotoxins 8 times. In the RASFF category nuts, nut products and seeds, salmonella were mentioned 7 times. No large cluster could be seen for the remaining areas.

The IFS Product scope dry goods, other ingredients and supplements includes notifications from the RASFF category: dietetic foods, food supplements and fortified foods (27), herbs and spices (26), cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea (9), for food additives and flavourings 2 notifications were given. The IFS scope red and white meat, poultry and meat products includes notifications from poultry meat and poultry meat products (17) and meat and meat products (other than poultry) (17). In poultry meat, there is a main cluster, namely salmonella, which is mentioned 16 times as the reason for rejection. In meat and meat products (other than poultry) pathogens are mentioned 7 times, which are divided into Listeria (4) and Salmonella (3).



In the following chart, we have listed the Top 10 countries of origin. These represent 192 of the 390 notifications and are thus responsible for ≈49,2% of all notifications.



6. European Market Observatory

The European Commission assembles information related to food products on a regular basis. Here you can find the current official market observation dashboards.



7. Noteworthy publications

The toolkit, developed by Defra, aims to support anyone who is required to make an assessment on the authenticity of a food or drink sample based on a combination of information from several independent sources. It covers both analytical evidence and product supply chain traceability evidence. It is intended as a non-exhaustive guide on how to collect useful evidence giving examples as to how that evidence may be ranked and evaluated.

The document aims to support a more consistent and harmonised approach to weight of evidence assessment by setting out a structured approach.

[Click here for the link to the toolkit](#)



8. Media articles on food safety

	Topic and Link	Source
	The antimicrobial effect of eugenol against Campylobacter jejuni on experimental raw chicken breast meat model	Wiley Online Library
	Most outbreaks in Finland are caused by Norovirus	FoodSafetyNews
	Microbiological and Toxicological Investigations on Bivalve Molluscs Farmed in Sicily	MDPI
	SFPA Issues a New Food Safety Fisheries Information Notice on the Management of Norovirus for Shellfish Producers	SFPA
	FDA issues warning about Canadian mussels because of outbreak in Northeast U.S.	FoodSafetyNews
	Tomato juice's antimicrobial properties can kill salmonella	Science Daily
	Peanuts From China Most Common Nuts Reported for Aflatoxin Contamination in EU	Food Safety Magazine
	FDA confirms contamination of children's applesauce; theorizes it was intentional	FoodSafetyNews
	Investigators confirm cheese firm's link to deadly E. coli outbreak	FoodSafetyNews
	11 sick in French cheese E. coli outbreak	FoodSafetyNews
	Unexpected SVHC phthalate metabolite found in humans, including children	Food Packaging Forum

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