

Monthly Summary of Articles on Food Fraud and Adulteration

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Food Fraud Cases

Iberian pigs are fed with acorns during October–March, thus contributing to the distinct characteristics of Iberian ham (pata negra). It is estimated that, the low acorns harvest over the past years of 2016/2017 would be adequate to feed only 500 000 pigs, or even less. Nevertheless, the season 2016/2017 witnessed the registration of more than 700 000 Iberian pigs. This raised the question of potential fraud taking place in the sector.

[Agroinformación](#): 06/03/19



According to a report published by Oceana, one out of five fish sold in the USA is not what is indicated on the labels or the menu. Oceana carried out controls in 24 different US states from March to August 2018. Other types of fraud besides the mislabelling of fish species include origin masking and fish from illegal catches..

[The Hill](#): 07/03/19



Italian authorities have seized 25 tons of cod that did not fulfil the legal traceability requirements.

[Genova24](#): 08/03/19



Italian authorities have seized 9000 tons of crushed grapes that were set aside for producing Aceto di Modena, a PDO product that can only be produced with seven grape varieties sourced in certain areas of Italy. The seized grapes did not fulfil those requirements. The low grape production rate last year in Italy could have caused the problem.

[The Guardian](#): 09/03/19



Indian police have seized tea intended to counterfeit some reputed brands.

[Business Standard](#): 12/03/19



A survey conducted in Ciudad de México, Cancún and Mazatlán (Mexico) showed that 95 % of fish declared as Marlin were, in fact, different species.

[La Silla Rota](#): 12/03/19



Argentinian authorities have restricted the commercialisation of milk powder of a specific brand because of its lack of the fat and protein levels required by legislation. Also, the labels were manipulated to unduly extend the expiry date, and the indicated registration number of the production plant was faked.

[Crónica](#): 14/03/19



Milk



Mislabelling/
Intentional
distribution of
expired goods

Italian Carabinieri dismantled a criminal organisation that counterfeited trademarks and labels of a famous winery in Florence during a raid carried out under the auspices of Europol. The labels were intended to be used on bottles containing low quality wine, which were foreseen to be exported.

[AgenParl](#): 15/02/2019



Wine



Counterfeit/
Substitution/
Mislabelling

Duties are levied on chicken breast when imported into the EU. In Ukraine, a new cut has been developed and is classified as a generic product to evade import duties. Once on the EU market, the product is sold to consumers and restaurants as chicken breast, thus affecting EU producers due to unfair competition.

[La Sicilia](#): 18/03/19



Meat



Theft

Brazilian authorities have trialled a company for marketing adulterated cheese, prepared with products not apt for human consumption. Samples were mislabelled, proper sanitary conditions were not respected, and extraneous substances such as water and starch were added during production.

[Ministério Público](#): 19/03/19



Cheese



Intentional
distribution of
products not fit for
consumption/
Mislabelling

Police have arrested two people for selling adulterated saffron.

[Rising Kashmir](#): 20/03/19



Saffron



Counterfeit

Pakistani authorities have seized 1000 kg dyed bran in a spice company. It is a regular occurrence to find wheat husk intended to be added to spices. Within a year, two tons of bran has been seized in installations associated with spices production.

[The News](#): 20/03/19



Spices



Substitution

Indian authorities have found a truck that transported tea waste to a company producing tea. The tea waste was apparently intended to be mixed with green tea. In India, it is forbidden to use tea waste for any other purpose than for the production of fertilisers.

[The Times of India](#): 23/03/19



Tea



Substitution

Spanish Guardia Civil dismantled a production plant where saffron was adulterated. Genuine saffron was mixed with parts of the plant not considered as food, as well as with extracts from other plants and chemical reagents. In total, 87 kg of adulterated saffron has been seized.

Information gathered in collaboration with the EU Food Fraud Network

[ABC](#): 24/03/19

[La Vanguardia](#): 24/03/19



Saffron



Substitution

Controls carried out by the Direction Générale de la Concurrence, de la Consommation et de la Répression des Fraudes (DGCCRF) showed that 12 % of kiwis sold in France as being French are Italian kiwis. French kiwis fetch a 30 % higher price than imports on the French market.

Information gathered in collaboration with the EU Food Fraud Network

[Economie. Gouv.fr](#): 25/03/19

[France 3](#): 25/03/19



Kiwi



Origin masking

The UK Food Standards Agency has warned consumers that honey sold under the label of certain supermarket brands could be adulterated. A British honey trader requested a laboratory in Germany to test honey samples that he had imported and the results triggered the warning.

[The Times](#): 31/03/19



Honey



Substitution



Intentional distribution of contaminated products

Collaboration with EU Food Fraud Network

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Kiwi



Origin masking

Other interesting articles

05/03/2019 – Mandatory Information about the geographical origin of honey required in Spain.

Spain will require an indication of the geographical origin of honey placed on the Spanish market. In case honey from different geographic origin is blended, the countries concerned have to be listed alongside the percentage of each in the blend.

[Efe:Agro](#)



Spain



Honey

08/03/2019 – Irish food authority introduces Next Generation Sequencing to detect all species in food.

Irish food authorities have developed a scanning tool to identify all the ingredients and their biological sources in food based on their DNA. The technique will help to detect food adulteration.

[Agro Media](#)



Ireland



All food

18/03/2019 – Substitution affects only 1 % of the Eco-labelled fish.

A study carried out by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) showed that only 1 % of the fish sold under the "Eco" label was misdescribed. Out of 1400 samples analysed, only 13 were of a species that were different from the one indicated on the label. Only 2 of the 13 presented a clear case of fraud. This shows that the strict controls implemented in the "Eco" sector serve to eliminate fraud. The equivalent substitution record in the non-Eco sector is about 30%.

[Undercurrent News](#)



World



Fish

21/03/2019 – Italy introduces strict traceability rules for goat and sheep milk.

In Italy, goat and sheep milk will have to fulfil strict traceability requirements. The first business operator will be responsible for registering monthly the origin (Italy, from the EU and third countries) of all the raw milk purchased.

[Blog Sicilia](#)



Italy



Milk

26/03/2019 – Chocolate with "pedigree" 50 % more expensive than without it.



World

Only 11 % of chocolate brands indicate on their label the origin of the cocoa. However, a recently published study found that chocolate whose cocoa origin is mentioned is on average 51 % relatively more expensive than without the information.



Chocolate

[Confectionary](#)

Disclaimer: The presentation of articles reflects their media coverage. In any case, it does not reflect the frequency of food fraud in a particular country and/or concerning a specific food product. The European Commission does not take any responsibility for the validity of the information extracted from the media channels scanned. The views expressed shall not be regarded as stating an official position of the European Commission.

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