

Monthly Summary of Articles on Food Fraud and Adulteration

Retrieved mainly from the JRC tool Medisys (<http://medisys.newsbrief.eu>)



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.

Food Fraud Cases

Eleven people died in the Kampot province after drinking home-brewed rice wine contaminated with high levels of methanol.

[Xinhuanet](#) [Manila Metro](#)



Cambodia



Alcoholic beverages



Unapproved treatment and/or process

As part of “Operación Slice”, the Civil Guard seized 63 000 packages of ham and loin (total value of 967 000 euros) wrongly labelled as “Iberian” and unfit for human consumption. Documents and certificates were falsified as well.

[Voz Populi](#)



Spain



Meat and meat products (other than poultry)



Documents
Mislabelling

The Italian operation “Ghost Wine” led to the seizure of 30 000 litres of counterfeit wine, 60 litres of synthetic aromas, caramel and other substances usually used to adulterate wine (total value of 500 000 euros). The criminals added several substances to low-quality wine, ultimately selling their products mislabelled as Geographical Indications.

[Il Fatto Alimentare](#) [Geos News](#) [Roma Today](#) [Salute Gov](#) [Rinnovabili](#)
[Il Fatto Alimentare](#)



Italy



Food additives and flavourings
Wine



IPR – Intellectual property rights
Unapproved treatment and/or process

A Bulgaria-based criminal organisation imported rice from Ukraine and Egypt and falsified the label with the logo of the famous Australian rice brand “SunRice”. Products were exported from Romania to EU, UK, Canada, Israel, and Saudi Arabia. The Australian company estimated that hundreds of tonnes of their rice have been falsified, especially because the company was unable to sell the SunRice brand into the EU (thus all European products were virtually counterfeit).

[Securing Industry](#)



Bulgaria



Cereals and bakery products



IPR – Intellectual property rights

The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), together with the national authorities of the affected countries, dismantled a criminal organisation selling fake rum. The products were produced in the Dominican Republic, bottled in Honduras (with fake labels from China), shipped from Honduras and Guatemala to Netherlands, and transported to Spain for being sold. The authorities seized 340 000 bottles, for a total value of 4.5 million euros.

[Food Safety News](#)

-  World
-  Alcoholic beverages
-  Counterfeit
Mislabelling

The Lithuanian authorities seized 2 tons of food products lacking the required traceability documentation and in poor storing conditions, plus 2 tons of butter from Germany with labels not complying with the legislation.

[Food Safety News](#)

-  Lithuania
-  Food
- Milk and milk products
-  Documents
Mislabelling

The data of the OPSON X operation (December 2020 – June 2021) have been published. Europol and INTERPOL, together with DG OLAF, DG SANTE, EUIPO and 72 countries (including 26 Member States), coordinated the international investigation, ultimately leading to the seizure of 15.5 tons of illicit products (total value of almost 54 million euros) and the disruption of 42 criminal networks. The most seized goods in Operation OPSON X were alcohol and food supplements, followed by cereals and grain products.

[EUROPOL](#) [INTERPOL](#) [OLAF](#) [BVL](#) [IDW Online](#) [SAPO](#) [Market](#)
[Screener](#) [Food Safety News](#) [Food Ingredients First](#) [Herd-und-Hof.de](#)
[Securing Industry](#) [Agrodigital](#) [AgenParl](#) [Guardia Civil](#)
[Noticiaspress](#) [Diario de Leon](#) [La Sexta](#) [Food Navigator](#) [Euro Weekly](#)
[News](#) [Euro News](#) [Merkur](#) [Food Safety News](#) [AFSCA](#)
[RTBF](#) [Brussels Times](#) [Food Safety News](#) [Consumatore](#)

-  World
-  Food
-  All

The Pakistan authorities seized 2100 litres of milk diluted with water.

[Urdu Point](#)

In a second operation, The Pakistan authorities seized other 3000 litres of milk adulterated with water and chemicals.

[Urdu Point](#)

-  Pakistan
-  Milk and milk products
-  Replacement/ dilution/
addition/ removal
Unapproved treatment
and/or process

The Saudi Food and Drug Authority seized 412 tons of shrimps, as they were repackaged changing their expiry dates and with falsified labels, potentially threatening consumer health.

[Arab News](#)

-  Saudi Arabia
-  Crustaceans and products thereof
-  Mislabelling

Oceana Canada published their latest report, highlighting that seafood fraud affected 46% of the samples (43 out of 94) collected in spring in four major cities (Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto). Whereas the mislabelling rate at the retail stage was 6.5%, the percentage rose dramatically to 56-65% at restaurants.

[Oceana Canada](#) [Oceana press release](#) [Seafood Source](#) [Market Scanner](#)
[Montreal Gazette](#) [National Observer](#) [Chatman Daily News](#) [CTV News](#)
[Radio-Canada](#) [Saltwire](#) [Global News](#) [Toronto Sun](#) [Affidia](#)
[Securing Industry](#) [Decernis](#) [Food Safety Tech](#)

-  Canada
-  Bivalve molluscs and products thereof
Cephalopods and products thereof
Crustaceans and products thereof
Fish and fish products
Gastropods
-  Mislabelling
Replacement/ dilution/
addition/ removal

The Italian authorities seized 1 ton of pigmeat products lacking any traceability documentation.

[Stretto Web](#)



Italy



Meat and meat products (other than poultry)



Documents

The Italian authorities seized 500 kg of frozen fish for sushi (mostly salmon) lacking any traceability documentation and sold as fresh. Products were also failing to comply with the hygiene requirements.

[Il Reggino](#) [Calabria 7](#) [Tempo Stretto](#) [City Now](#) [LAC News](#)
[Approdo Calabria](#) [Nuova Cosenza](#) [Il Dispaccio](#) [Reggio](#)
[TV del Sud](#) [CN 24](#) [Strill.it](#) [Zoom24](#) [Il Meridio](#) [Il Quotidiano](#)
[Il Metropolitan](#) [Stretto Web](#) [ANSA](#) [Reggio Today](#)
[Soverato Web](#) [Green Me](#) [TeleClub Italia](#) [CDN](#)
[Fanpage](#) [Blitz quotidiano](#) [Il Messaggero](#) [Il Gazzettino](#)
[ZeroUno TV](#) [Il Sussidiario.net](#) [Urban Post](#) [Il Sole 24 Ore](#)
[Cosenza Page](#) [Corriere Adriatico](#) [Day Italia News](#) [Libero](#)
[Quotidiano](#) [Oggi Notizie](#) [Pubblicità Italia](#)



Italy



Bivalve molluscs and products thereof
Cephalopods and products thereof
Crustaceans and products thereof
Fish and fish products
Gastropods



Documents
Mislabelling

In a second operation, Italian authorities seized 1 ton of fish not respecting the traceability legislation.

[Itaca Notizie](#) [Blog Sicilia](#) [Live Sicilia](#) [Giornale di Sicilia](#) [Sicilia Oggi](#)
[Notizie](#) [Tp24](#)

In a third operation, authorities seized 1.2 tons of seafood not compliant as well with the food traceability legislation.

[Giornale di Sicilia](#) [QdS](#) [Blog Sicilia](#)

In a fourth operation, 11 swordfishes (for a total weight of 350 kg) have been seized because lacking any documentation required by the law.

[Agricoltura](#)

A recent study shows that in the capital city Pristina 32% of beef- and 8% of chicken-based products contain pigmeat (based on 62 samples), according to real-time PCR and ELISA methods.

[Agriculture Journals](#)



Kosovo



Meat and meat products (other than poultry)
Poultry meat and poultry meat products



Replacement/ dilution/ addition/ removal

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of India analysed through NMR a total of 86 honey samples from producers, sellers and distributors. The authorities discovered that 52 samples were altered with sugars (e.g. mannose, maltose, maltotriose) and artificial molecules. The authorities seized 3.5 tons of honey stock.

[FNB News](#) [Times of India](#)



India



Honey and royal jelly



Replacement/ dilution/ addition/ removal

In the context of the operation "Aquaris", the Brazilian authorities seized 770 kg of seafood products lacking the required traceability documentation.

[G1 Globo](#)



Brazil



Bivalve molluscs and products thereof
Cephalopods and products thereof
Crustaceans and products thereof
Fish and fish products
Gastropods

The Indian authorities seized 13.5 tons of sago (a starch extract from palm stems) adulterated with wet starch, sulphuric acid, hydrogen peroxide, phosphoric acid, and calcium hypochlorite. Chemicals were mostly used for whitening sago.

[The Hindu](#)

The Brazilian authorities seized 173 000 litres of juices, nectars and coconut water adulterated with water and exogenous sugars (up to 30%).

[Gov.br](#)

The operation “Fitofake” by the Brazilian authorities led to the discovery of a criminal network counterfeiting plant health certificates, required to import live plants into the national territory. The five criminal exporting companies were targeting Brazilian products as coffee, rice and pepper.

[Gov.br](#)

[Bem Parana](#)

[Opovo](#)

[Istoe](#)

[Jornal de Brasilia](#)

[Economia](#)

[G1 Globo](#)

The Spanish Seprona, the French Gendarmerie and EUROPOL are investigating the main Spanish marketer of nuts for selling pistachios mislabelled as “organic”. The products were mostly sold in France. The economic gain of such fraud is valued around 6 million euros.

[Diario de Aila](#)

[La Tribuna de Albacete](#)

[Andalucia informacion](#)

[el](#)

[Periodico Extremadura](#)

[La Opinion](#)

[El Dia](#)

[Levante](#)

[Diari](#)

[de Girona](#)

[el Periodico de Aragon](#)

[Cordoba](#)

[Emporda](#)

[Diario](#)

[de Burgos](#)

[Voz populi](#)

[Diario Palentino](#)

[Libre Mercado](#)

[El](#)

[Nacional](#)

[Fresh Plaza](#)

[Diario de Avila](#)

The Dairy Safety team of Punjab food Authority (PFA) destroyed 550 litres of milk adulterated with various thickening chemicals.

[Urdu Point](#)

The French Directorate General for Competition, Consumption and Fraud Control (DGCCRF) carried a survey between July and October 2019 in order to analyse the quality of spices sold on the French market, especially pepper, paprika and chili, cumin, turmeric, saffron and oregano. 26.4% of samples were characterised by some non-compliances:

- Addition of other botanical parts to partly replace the spice
- Adulteration with exogenous colouring dyes
- Mislabelling of the species
- Inability to prove the traceability requirements to claim Geographical Indications

[Reussir](#)

[Economie.gouv](#)

[Economie Matina](#)

[Sud Ouest](#)

[Midi](#)

[Libre](#)



Documents



India



Cereals and bakery products



Replacement/ dilution/ addition/ removal
Unapproved treatment and/or process



Brazil



Non-alcoholic beverages



Replacement/ dilution/ addition/ removal
Unapproved treatment and/or process



Brazil



Cereals and bakery products
Cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea
Herbs and spices
Documents



Spain



Nuts, nut products and seeds



Mislabelling



India



Milk and milk products



Unapproved treatment and/or process



France



Herbs and spices



IPR – Intellectual property rights
Mislabelling
Replacement/ dilution/ addition/ removal
Unapproved treatment and/or process

Other interesting articles

An overview of blockchain-based traceability in food supply chains

An online review highlights advantages and limitations of using blockchain-based solutions to improve the traceability of the food supply chains.

[TIM](#)



World



Food

Review on rice fraud

An online review discusses the fraudulent practices affecting the rice sector, with a special focus on analytical techniques.

[Trends in Food Science & Technology](#)



World



Cereals and bakery products

New reference material for wine from JRC

The JRC just released a Certified Reference Material (CRM) to verify the authenticity of wines, replacing the previous batch that was sold out due to the high demand.

[JRC](#) [Agronews Castilla y Leon](#)



EU



Wine

Dual quality food in Hungary

The National Food Chain Safety Office of Hungary detected differences in 25.6% of food products analysed from Hungary, Germany and Austria.

[Telex](#) [Daily News Hungary](#) [Wienerzeitung](#)



Hungary



Food

Fake certifications under scrutiny in China

The Chinese authorities have launched a three-month campaign (between mid-July and mid-September 2021) targeting fake certifications for food and other products sold online via e-commerce websites. Apparently, fake certifications may be bought online without any need for sampling or testing.

[Food Navigator](#)



China



Food

Fighting IUU fishing in USA

An online journal discusses the future US strategy to tackle illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

[American Security Project](#)



USA



Bivalve molluscs and products thereof
Cephalopods and products thereof
Crustaceans and products thereof
Fish and fish products
Gastropods

Tea and herbs: guidelines against food fraud

Tea & Herbal Infusions Europe (THIE) has published best practice guidelines to support food business operators in tackling fraudulent and malicious activities across their supply chains.

[THIE](#) [Nutra Ingredients](#)



EU



Cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea
Herbs and spices

Consultation on boat-to-plate traceability in Canada

The Government of Canada has launched a consultation on their strategy covering boat-to-plate traceability in order to tackle frauds in the seafood sector.

Canada.gov [ENG](#) [FR](#)



Canada



Bivalve molluscs and products thereof
Cephalopods and

[Mirage News](#)
[Yahoo! Finance](#)
[Securing Industry](#)

products thereof
Crustaceans and products thereof
Fish and fish products
Gastropods

The influence of the Covid-19 pandemic over food fraud

An online article summarizes some recent reports and trends suggesting increased vulnerabilities across the food supply chains, following the Covid-19 pandemic.

[Supply Chain Brain](#)



World



Food

New 2020 RASFF Annual Report

The European Commission has published the new 2020 Annual Report dedicated to the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF). A total of 3862 notifications of food or feed risks were reported by the Member States to the European Commission last year.

[DG SANTE](#)

[Food Safety News](#)



EU



Food

Feed

Food contact materials

Food fraud: 10 years after the academic definition

An online journal highlights the contribution of vulnerability assessments and private standards in fighting food frauds at company level.

[Food Safety](#)



World



Food

Alcohol most counterfeited product in India

The Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA) published the report *The State of Counterfeiting in India – 2021*, highlighting that alcoholic beverages were the most counterfeited ones, with a 34% increase from 2019 to 2020.

[Food Navigator](#)



India



Alcoholic beverages

Wine

WWF report on shark meat

A recent report from WWF highlights that EU accounts for 22% of the global shark meat trade. Illegal trade in shark and ray meat was valued as US \$2.6 billion between 2012 and 2019. Today, almost 500 shark and ray species are threatened with extinction.

[WWF](#)

[WWF Report](#)

[EUbusiness](#)



World



Fish and fish products

The European Commission's science and knowledge service

Joint Research Centre



EU Science Hub - Joint Research Centre



Joint Research Centre

Copyrights pictures:

©graletta – stock.adobe.com

©Alex White – stock.adobe.com

©UBE – stock.adobe.com

©Africa Studio – stock.adobe.com

If you wish to receive a notification whenever any new Food Fraud Monthly Report is published on our [Knowledge Centre for Food Fraud and Quality \(KC-FFQ\)](#) website, please register here: [K4P Newsroom](#).

For any comments, questions or feedback feel free to contact us via the [K4P feedback form](#).

