

October 2020

# Monthly Summary of Articles on Food Fraud and Adulteration

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



## Food Fraud Cases

Within the context of the “Operation Bacchus”, the Moroccan authorities (DGSN) seized 1.2 million bottles of wine, closed 87 establishments and arrested at least 45 people. The wine was adulterated, imported illegally, expired or unlabelled, and could have endangered consumer health.

[Telquel](#) 28/09/2020

[En News 24](#) 28/09/2020



Morocco



Alcoholic beverages  
Wine



Mislabelling



Missing documents  
Unapproved treatment  
and/or process

The Italian Coast Guard seized 600 kg of fish products not complying with hygiene requirements and lacking the required traceability documentation.

[Geos News 24](#) 01/10/2020

[Sicilia News 24](#) 01/10/2020



Italy



Fish and fish products



Missing documents

Two companies from Bangladesh have been fined for food fraud. The authorities have destroyed 5 tonnes of noodles adulterated with expired food colours and flavours, and 2 tonnes of counterfeited ghee.

[The Daily Star](#) 03/10/2020



Bangladesh



Cereals and bakery  
products

Food additives and  
flavourings

Milk and milk products



Unapproved treatment  
and/or process

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Authority seized 3 tonnes of substandard spices adulterated with hay, hazardous colours and other unhealthy materials, potentially comprising consumer health.

[Urdu Point](#) 05/10/2020



Pakistan



Herbs and spices



Unapproved treatment  
and/or process

The Italian authorities seized 60 000 litres of wine (mostly Cabernet and Merlot) and 100 litres of vinegar missing any traceability documentation, for a total amount of 350 000 euros. According to the law, vinegar cannot even be stored together with wine.

[Repubblica](#) 07/10/2020

In Argentina, the authorities and a NGO discovered an illegal 750-hectare “horror farm”, where apparently stolen horses were kept until being illegally slaughtered and either sent for export or consumed illegally inside the country. Five hundred injured and malnourished horses were kept together with corpses or bones. Last year a similar case was discovered as well.

[Clarín](#) 07/10/2020 **[Sensitive pictures inside the article]**

[Diario26](#) 08/10/2020 **[Sensitive pictures inside the article]**

A joint operation from the Civil Guard and the Xunta Coast Guard Service lead to the seizure of 6 tons of sardines lacking the required traceability documentation.

[La Voz de Galicia](#) 08/10/2020

Colombian authorities are investigating two dairy companies adulterating cow milk with whey.

[Occidente](#) 08/10/2020

In Turin, the Italian authorities seized 7 tons of food products mislabelled as “Made in Italy” but actually imported from Africa. In addition, vast amounts of crustaceans were supposed to be grinded and fraudulently sold as fish derivatives. Hygienic conditions were simply non-existent.

[ANSA](#) 09/10/2020

[Ambiente & Ambienti](#) 09/10/2020

[Torino Oggi](#) 09/10/2020

[Sky TG24](#) 09/10/2020

The Italian Coast Guard, within the context of the operation “*Cephalopoda*”, seized almost 1 700 kg of seafood products, mostly mislabelled or missing the required traceability documentation, for a total amount of around 34 000 euros.

[Il Centro](#) 09/10/2020



Italy



Soups, broths, sauces and condiments

Wine



Missing documents



Argentina



Meat and meat products (other than poultry)

Missing documents



Spain



Fish and fish products



Missing documents



Colombia



Milk and milk products



Replacement/ dilution/ addition/ removal in product



Italy



Cereals and bakery products

Crustaceans and products thereof



Mislabelling

Forgery



Italy



Bivalve molluscs and products thereof

Cephalopods and products thereof

Crustaceans and products thereof

Fish and fish products

Gastropods



Mislabelling




Missing documents

The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) destroyed almost 2.5 tons of milk diluted with water and/ or adulterated with chemicals.

[The News](#) 12/10/2020




In another operation, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety and Halal Food Authority destroyed 2 000 litres of milk adulterated with chemicals and water.

[The News](#) 17/10/2020

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

The Italian authorities seized 3.5 tons of frozen meat, 7 tons of truffle products, and honey lacking any traceability or origin documentation.

[Abruzzo Web](#) 13/10/2020

-  Italy
-  Fruits and vegetables
- Honey and royal jelly
- Meat and meat products (other than poultry)
- Poultry meat and poultry meat products
-  Missing documents

The Italian authorities arrested two persons who mislabelled and sold common wine from Sicily as a prestigious Geographical Indication from Tuscany. The bottles were imported from Turkey whereas labels, corks, wooden boxes and papers were produced in Bulgaria. Each month the criminal organisation was falsifying 4 200 bottles of wine, for a total monthly turnover of 400 000 euros. Falsified bottles were 70% cheaper than the original Geographical Indication.

[Italia a tavola](#) [Agricoltura](#) [Gazzetta del Sud](#) [GoNews](#) [Il Sole 24 Ore](#) 14/10/2020

[The Guardian](#) 15/10/2020




[Il Cittadino](#) 16/10/2020

[Wine-searcher](#) 19/10/2020

-  Italy
-  Wine
-  Intellectual property rights infringement

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety and Halal Authority seized 700 kg of tea adulterated with non-food grade colouring, representing a potential hazard for consumer health.

[Securing Industry](#) 14/10/2020

-  Pakistan
-  Non-alcoholic beverages
-  or process




A US-Brazil NGO uncovered frauds in the beef and dairy sectors, as cows were fraudulently mislabelled as organic, although they were subjects to clear abuses in terms of animal welfare. Organic meat prices are substantially higher than conventional ones.

[The Guardian](#) 15/10/2020

-  USA
-  Meat and meat products (other than poultry)
- Milk and milk products
-  Mislabelling

The Spanish Civil Guard seized 45 000 conventional eggs (5 000 tons) fraudulently mislabelled as organic.

[RTVE](#) 16/10/2020

-  Spain
-  Eggs and egg products
-  Mislabelling

The Indian Food Safety Department seized 13.8 tons of jaggery (an unrefined sugar product) adulterated with refined sugar.

[The Hindu](#) 19/10/2020



India



Other food products/  
mixed



Replacement/ dilution/  
addition/ removal in  
product

Researchers at the Institute for Global Food Security (IGFS) discovered that at least 25% of sage samples were adulterated with olive leaves and/or leaves from other trees, with the level of bulking ranging from 29% to 58%. Apparently, no safety risks were recorded for consumers.

[New Food Magazine](#) 21/10/2020

[Queen's University Belfast – News](#) 21/10/2020

[Indian EducationDiary](#) 21/10/2020

[Securing Industry](#) 22/10/2020

[Food Navigator](#) 23/10/2020

[Green Me](#) 27/10/2020

[New Food Magazine](#) 30/10/2020



United Kingdom



Herbs and spices



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

The Italian authorities seized 5 000 eggs where the expiry date and the lot numbers were falsified. According to the EU legislation, the expiry date cannot exceed the 28<sup>th</sup> day after laying.

[Stretto web](#) 21/10/2020

[Il Salvagente](#) 21/10/2020



Italy



Eggs and egg products



Mislabelling

The Italian authorities seized 18.5 tons of mushrooms, valued 39 000 euros, imported from outside the European Union but missing any traceability documentation.

[Il Fatto Alimentare](#) 25/10/2020



Italy



Other food products/  
mixed



Missing documents

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety and Halal Authority seized 700 kg of herbs and spices adulterated with sawdust and other hazardous chemicals.

[Urdu Point](#) 29/10/2020



Pakistan



Herbs and spices



Unapproved treatment  
and/or process

During the month of October, eighty people have died in Turkey because of bootleg alcohol. According to the Ministry, the counterfeited alcohol was produced from surface cleaners and products containing high levels of methanol, which may cause permanent blindness or death once consumed.

[Hurryet Daily News](#) 25/10/2020



Turkey



Alcoholic beverages



Forgery  
Unapproved treatment  
and/or process

## Other interesting articles

06/10/2020 – 2019 Report from Finland about food fraud and safety

The Finnish Food Authority (Ruokavirasto) has published the 2019 report on food fraud and safety. Examples include: illegal labelling of eggs, incorrect naming of meat products, misleading marketing and date markings, origin mislabelling on berries.

[Elintarviketurvallisuus Suomessa 2019](#)  
[Food Safety News](#)



Finland



Food

07/10/2020 – 2019 Report from Ireland about food fraud and safety

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) has published the 2019 report on food fraud and safety. Examples include: equines slaughtered illegally, alcohol, meat, dairy and fish.

[2019 FSAI Annual Report](#)  
[Food Safety News](#)



Ireland



Food

07/10/2020 – A South African perspective on food fraud

A South African food fraud expert provides his views on food fraud and possible impacts in his country.

[Daily Maverick](#)



South Africa



Food

14/10/2020 – Cheeses and yogurts affected by false labels, Ministry says

The Mexican government decided to partially prohibit the sale of cheeses and other dairy products in self-services store, because of ravaging misleading information, possible adulteration with chemicals and consequent deception of consumers.

[El Financiero](#) [El Economista](#) [Tiempo Xeu](#) [Quadratin](#) [El Financiero](#)  
[Lopez-Doriga](#) [Milenio](#) [MVS Noticias](#) [AM](#)



Mexico



Milk and milk products

20/10/2020 – Food fraud raises concerns in most consumers

According to a recent poll by Mérieux NutriSciences and bioMérieux, 61% of Americans are worried about food fraud. Food fraud is also the second most rated concern for consumers in France and India.

[Food Safety News](#)



World



Food

20/10/2020 – Depleted milk thistle ongoing problem, according to the Adulterants Bulletin

According to the Botanical Adulterants Bulletin, there are concrete risks that the active substances (e.g. silymarin) are removed from milk thistle before being sold to consumers.

[American Botanical Council](#)  
[Nutra Ingredients](#)



World



Dietetic foods, food supplements, fortified foods

27/10/2020 – Food Fraud in UK: the perspective of an expert

A recent article highlights current challenges and possible future developments as regards the food fraud situation in UK.

[Food Service Footprint](#)



UK



Food

30/10/2020 – Cuba defines food frauds

The Cuban authorities have approved a new Decree establishing definitions and sanctions in case of food frauds. Food fraud occurs in case of: 1) mixing or dilution with other liquids; 2) replacement of ingredients with something different or equal ingredients of lower value; 3) labelling with false claims; 4) addition of substances not required or not approved to improve or mask its taste, odour or other qualities; 5) copy of a brand name, a product or a process.

[Cibercuba](#) [Radio Reloj](#) [Granma](#) [Juventud Rebelde](#)



Cuba



Food

*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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