

Monthly Summary of Articles on Food Fraud and Adulteration

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Food Fraud Cases

The Ministry of Commerce's General Department of Consumer Protection, Competition and Fraud Prevention destroyed 11 tonnes of seafood contaminated with chemical substances.

[Khmer Times](#) 31/05/20



Cambodia



Seafood



Intentional distribution of contaminated products/ Artificial enhancement

Two shipments of horsemeat were seized recently in Denmark and Netherlands intended for unauthorised placing on the market. The article is also linking the increased vulnerabilities of some specific sectors with the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

[Farming independent](#) 19/05/20



Denmark/ Netherlands



Horsemeat



Intentional distribution of products not fit for consumption

Pakistani authorities have seized products (pickle, candies, etc.) in different production plants for not fulfilling legal production requirements. Authorities also closed a plant that produced bottles and labelled them with counterfeited labels of known brands.

[The News](#): 08/05/20



Pakistan



Pickle and other foods



Counterfeit/ Intentional distribution of products not fit for consumption

Food distributor placed on the market misbranded meat and poultry meat that has not undergone the inspections requested by law. The fraudulent activities started back in 2013 and continued until January 2018.

[Foreign Affairs](#): 14/05/20



USA



Meat



Counterfeit/ Mislabelling/ Intentional distribution of products not fit for consumption

Since beginning of April, 105 and 177 people died in Mexico and Dominican Republic after drinking fraudulently produced alcoholic drinks that contained methanol. In Mexico most of the casualties occurred after having attended a funeral where the illegal alcoholic drink was distributed. Following the measurements taken to stop the spread of COVID-19 in Mexico, a supply shortage of alcoholic drinks has opened the door to fraudsters. In the same context, the production of ethanol has been distorted and methanol could have been used as a replacement in illegal circuits.

[De Standaard](#): 15/05/20

-  Mexico and Dominican Republic
-  Alcoholic drink
-  Intentional distribution of contaminated products




Italian authorities seized one ton of rotten meat to be distributed in some Sicilian restaurants.

[La Sicilia](#): 16/05/20

-  Italy
-  Meat
-  Intentional distribution of products not fit for consumption

Italian authorities seized almost 40000 eggs for being mislabelled with an extended expiry date.

[BlogSicilia](#): 19/05/20

-  Italy
-  Eggs
-  Mislabelling/ Substitution

Other interesting articles

30/05/2020 – The latest annual report on food fraud in EU shows increased cooperation among Member States

The EU Commission published the latest (2019) annual report of the Administrative Assistance and Cooperation System (AAC-FF), highlighting an increased cooperation among the various bodies fighting food fraud in the European Union, also due to new legislative initiatives and technology frameworks.

[DG SANTE website](#)

-  EU
-  Food

30/05/2020 – Element profiles to distinguish Pinot wine

The University of California and the Pennsylvania State University jointly developed new elemental profiles to distinguish commercial Pinot wines from sub-regional appellations. Of 62 monitored elements that were quantified with fully validated methods, 24 and 32 elements differed significantly across the growing regions and vintages.

[MDPI](#)

-  USA
-  Wine

29/05/2020 – Shark sold as swordfish

According to the Italian Coastguard, shark meat sold as swordfish is one of the three most common frauds in the seafood sector in Italy. Especially the protected shark Mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*) is quite often subject to 'accidental' capture by fishermen and then sold off as swordfish. The Mediterranean sea harbours the highest percentage of endangered sharks and rays of the world.

[Adnkronos](#)

-  Italy
-  Seafood

21/05/2020 – UK report on food fraud

The United Kingdom Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) published a comprehensive report on food fraud in UK (drivers, impacts, methods for testing, prevention strategies and the impacts of EU exit), highlighting the most adulterated products and analysing challenges and opportunities to increasingly detect fraudulent activities, especially when online shopping is rising.

[UK Parliament POST](#)

-  United Kingdom
-  Food

22/05/2020 – The global saffron market size expected to increase by 2027



World



Saffron

The increased saffron global market may lead to an increase in related fraudulent activities. Beet or pomegranate fibres, dyed silk fibres, saffron stamens, paprika, turmeric and other fillers may be mixed with the authentic crocus spice. Dipping in honey or oil is also used to mask the bitter taste.

[Yahoo News](#)

22/05/2020 – Food fraud cases numbers increase because of Covid-19, according to the Food Authenticity Network



UK



Food

The Food Authenticity Network, established by the UK Government and aiming at bringing together those involved in food authenticity testing, declared that rise in food frauds reported cases will be inevitable because of disruptions in the food chains following the Covid-19 pandemic. The Food Authenticity Network also launched a resource base for food fraud in order to harmonise and combat frauds in the global food chains resulting from the pandemic.

[Food Safety News](#)

20/05/2020 – Food fraud one of the priorities of the Farm-to-Fork Strategy



EU



Food

The EU Commission published the Communication “Farm to Fork Strategy” that, together with the “Biodiversity Strategy”, will shape the future of the European food systems. Under point 2.6, it is stated that the EU Commission, together with Member States, Europol, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and other bodies, will increase the fight against food fraud.

[DG SANTE website](#)

19/05/2020 – Advantages of proteomics in fighting food fraud



World



Food

Proteomics may be better tailored to fight food fraud in highly-processed foodstuffs and drink products, in comparison to DNA-based techniques. While genetic material may be vulnerable to processing techniques commonly utilised by the food industry, proteins and peptides are usually more resistant to degradation.

[Fera](#)

14/05/2020 – EFSA risk assessment of beeswax adulterated with paraffin and/or stearin/stearic acid



EU



Honey

EFSA has established purity criteria and technical specifications for beeswax used in apiculture. The risks to honey bees and humans that are exposed to beeswax adulterated with paraffin and/or stearin/stearic acid and their possible contaminants was assessed. The consumption of beeswax adulterated with paraffin would result in an increased exposure to certain contaminants for which a potential concern has already been identified, however exposure to food-grade stearin and its contaminants would not be of concern.

[EFSA website](#)

13/05/2020 – Application of blockchain technology in the seafood sector



World



Seafood

According to the recent FAO study document “Blockchain applications in seafood value chains”, the application of blockchain technology in the seafood sector may improve accountability and traceability, as well as help tackling food frauds and food safety issues.

[FAO website](#)

08/05/2020 – Beef fraud: a 20-years analysis



EU

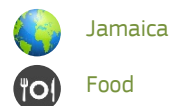


Beef

A recent report from the Queen’s University Belfast analyses 413 RASFF food fraud cases in the beef sector, covering a timeline of 20 years (from 1997 to 2017). 42.9% of identified fraud refers to counterfeiting. Notably, according to the authors, “*fraud will increase due to fewer checks and audits during the pandemic*”.

[Food Navigator](#)

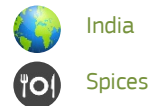
07/05/2020 – How COVID-19 can increase food fraud cases in some areas of the world



Jamaica and other Caribbean countries can be victims of an increase in food fraud cases due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 80% of food consumed in Jamaica is imported from the USA. A reduction in the supply chain inside the USA could have the effect that only low quality food will be exported, keeping the rest for the internal market.

[Jamaica Observer](#)

07/05/2020 – Turmeric quality can be affected by COVID-19



Lockdown measurements, implemented in India to fight COVID-19, limit the travelling permit of truck drivers that transport spices such as turmeric. For this reason, the processing that is normally applied to turmeric (boiling the root after harvesting) will have to be postponed. Boiling guarantees a homogeneous distribution of the colour in the final product and diminishes the risk of contamination with mycotoxins. In the future, there could be the risk that extraneous colorants, some of them dangerous for human health, could be added to intensify the colour of this spice.

[New Food](#)

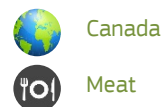
05/05/2020 - Traceability platform launched in the Netherlands



A Dutch NGO has developed a new user-friendly and accessible Platform – “Trace” – based on the blockchain technology which claims to improve the transparency in the whole food chain, ultimately empowering farmers. The technology will use a simple app on the consumers’ smartphone required to scan a QR code specific to the product.

[Food Ingredients First](#)

17/04/2020 - Covid-19 threatens the stability of the Canadian meat chains



The Canadian meat industry is experiencing disruptions in the meat chain because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Farmers face difficulties to deliver their animals to slaughterhouses with consequent shortages of animal products experienced by consumers when shopping in grocery stores.

[The Globe and Mail](#)

11/05/2020 – American-European hybrid lobsters found in wild waters



American lobsters have been freed in European waters during some commercial activities. Previous studies seem to point that they would not cross with wild European lobsters, a species more expensive than the American ones. Recently this theory has been proven to be wrong. Now scientists must develop a method to identify the hybrid lobsters.

[EurekaAlert!](#)

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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