



# Fraudulent and deceptive practices on seafood products

MARE Market Advisory Council meeting – 30 January 2024

**Directorate General For Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE)**

Unit G5 - Food Hygiene, Feed and Fraud

# EU Agri-Food Fraud Network



**Administrative authorities**  
OCR Competent Authorities  
and Delegated Bodies



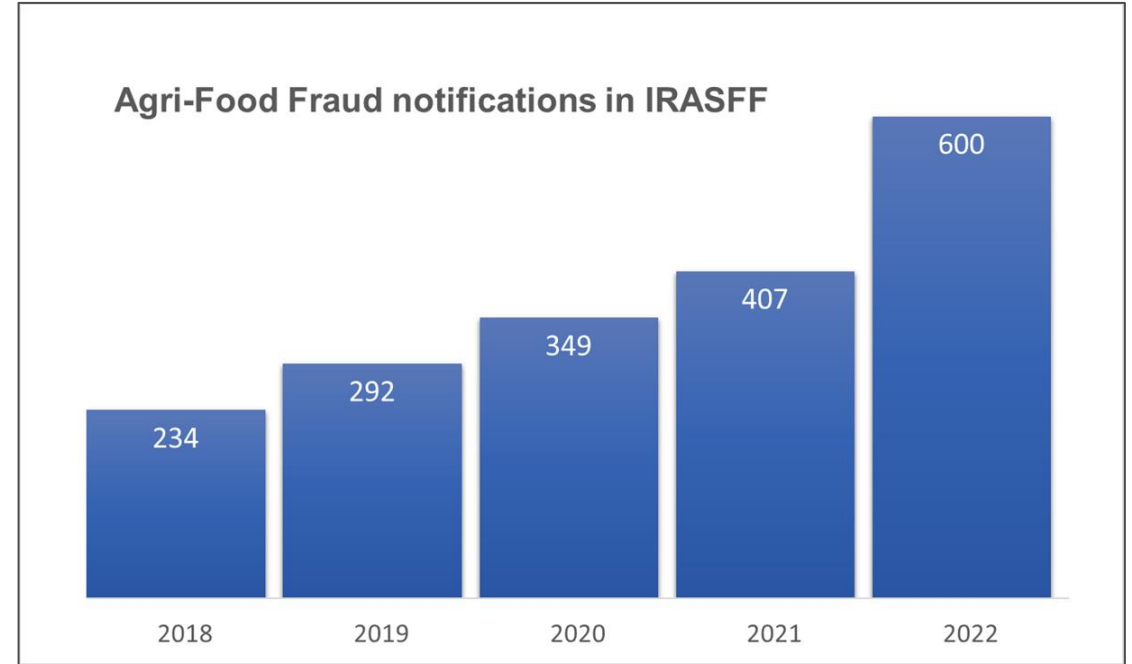
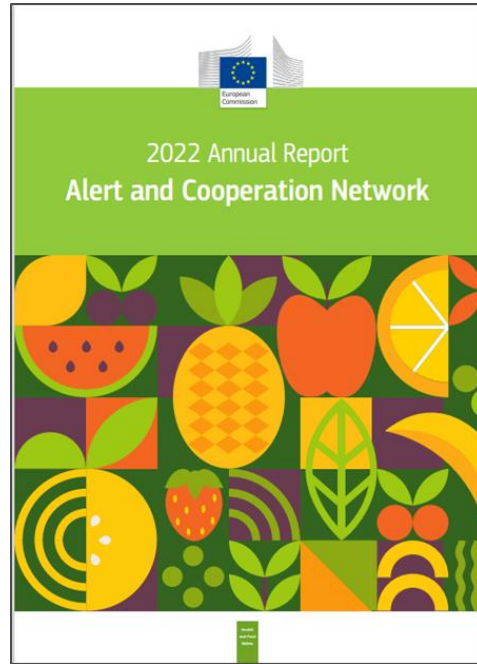
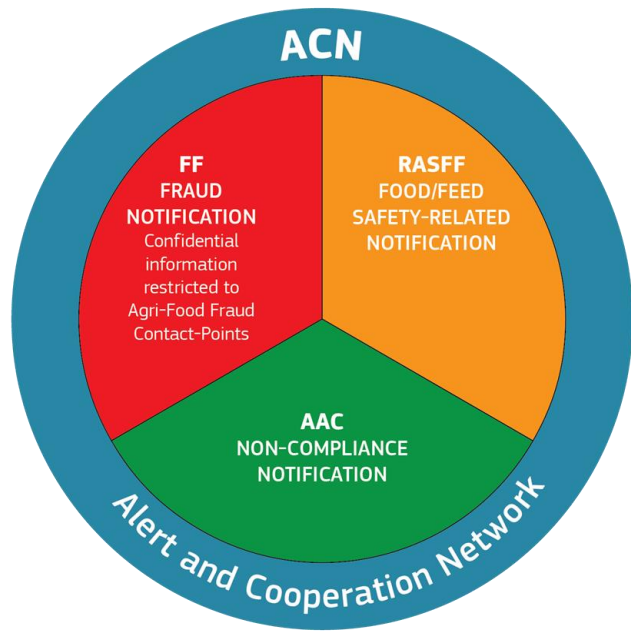
**Judicial authorities**



**Law enforcement authorities**  
Police and customs services



# Alert and Cooperation Network



(1) Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed notifications (RASFF)  
**4361**

(2) Administrative Assistance notifications (AA)  
**2554**

(3) Agri-Food Fraud notifications (FF)  
**600**

[https://food.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-08/acn\\_annual-report\\_2022.pdf](https://food.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-08/acn_annual-report_2022.pdf)



Violation of  
EU rules



Deception of  
customers



Economic  
gain



Intention

## EU (Agri) Food Fraud criteria

**Suspicion of intentional actions taken by businesses or individuals for the purpose of deceiving purchasers and gaining an undue advantage therefrom, in violation of the rules referred to in Article 1(2) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625.**



Brussels, 22 February 2023

**IRASFF ANNOTATED REPORT  
WEEK 7**

**(BASED ON 181 NOTIFICATIONS REPORTED)**

**SENSITIVE INFORMATION: EU FOOD FRAUD NETWORK RESTRICTED USE**

**1. FOOD FRAUD SUSPICIONS - HEALTH RISKS IDENTIFIED BY AUTHORITIES (RASFF)**

*Unapproved/undeclared treatment, process or product*

- Ethylene oxide in salsa dip sauce from Mexico (DE).
- Pesticide residues of chlorpyrifos, carbendazim and ethion in raisins from India (GR), chlorpyrifos, carbendazim, hexaconazole and tricyclazole in cumin from India (GR), chlorpyrifos, carbendazim and tricyclazole in cumin seeds from India (GR), chlorpyrifos-methyl in vine leaves, in peppers and in mandarins from Türkiye (BE, BG, HU), chlorpyrifos in tomatoes and in quinces from Türkiye (IT, DE), chlorfenapyr in chili peppers from Vietnam (DE), methamidophos in blackberries from Mexico (SE, BE), butachlor in grapefruits from Türkiye (RO), tricyclazole in rice from India (CH).
- Non-authorized food and food ingredients Japanese pepper from Japan (ES), 5-hydroxytryptophan in food supplement from Poland (ES), CBD in food supplements from Austria and in chewing gum, raw hemp oil and energy drink from Czechia (DE), hemp extracts in CBD oil from Czechia and from Austria and in herbal tea from Czechia (DE), Tongkat ali, Epimedium sagittatum and Eurycoma longifolia in food supplements from the USA (BE), Gevuina avellana and Drymis winteri in salt from Chile (ES).
- Tertiary-butyl hydroquinone (antioxidant) in biscuits from Bangladesh (IT).
- Bamboo (filler) in kitchenware from China (ES).

*Grey market activities*

- Recall (for destruction) of meat from four cattle found with forged identification after their slaughter in the Netherlands (NL).
- Poor temperature control of and poor traceability records for different varieties of food (including products of animal origin) from Romania and Bulgaria (UL).

**2. FOOD FRAUD SUSPICIONS - NO HEALTH RISK IDENTIFIED BY THE AUTHORITIES**

*Unapproved/undeclared treatment, process or product*

- Pesticide residues of thiamethoxam, imidacloprid and acetamiprid in rice from Pakistan (NL), chlorpropham and cyfluthrin in oranges from Egypt (NL), fenbutatin oxide and fenvalerate in lemons, famoxadone in peppers and prochloraz in mandarins from Türkiye (BG), chlorfenapyr in tomatoes from Morocco (ES).
- Hemp extracts (non-authorized ingredient) and brilliant blue (colouring) in biscuits (DE).

*Dilution*

- Extraneous sugars in honey (EE).

*Substitution*

- Sunflower oil substituted by rapeseed oil (DE).
- Undeclared water, citric acid and citrates (water retention agents) in shrimps (DE).
- Mechanically separated meat in turkey skewers (AT).
- Food supplements with lower vitamin C and D than declared (DE, LV).

*Document forgery*

- Transport of horses to a competing event: four horses were without identification and health certificates and two horses had mismatches between their microchips and passports (DK).

*Counterfeit*

- Misuse of the PGI 'Aceto Balsamico di Modena' (IT).
- Conventional cheese sold as an organic one (DK).

*Grey Market activities*

- Three horses neither identified nor registered that have never arrived to their alleged destination (BE).
- Unregistered food supplements sold online (LV, BG).

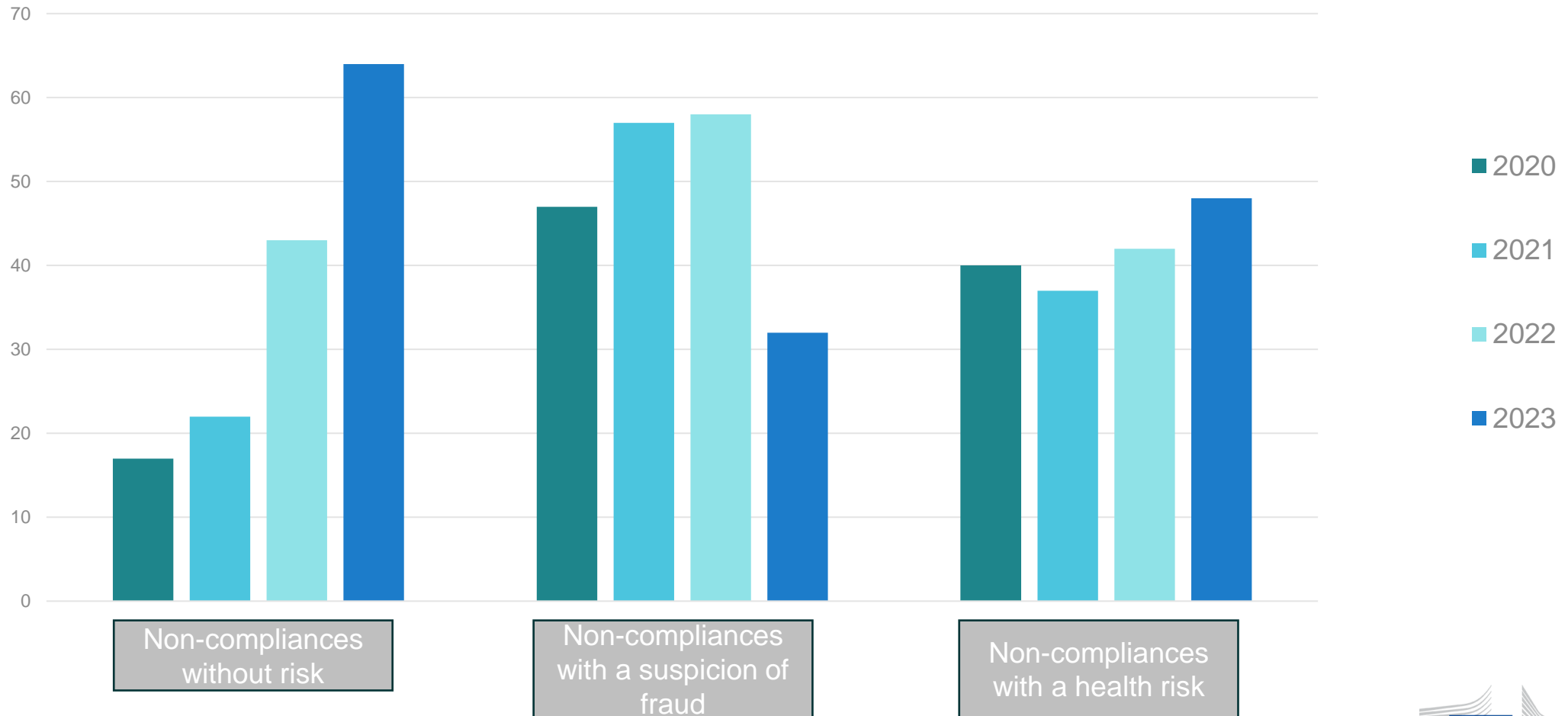
*Misdescription/Mislabelling/Misbranding*

- Undeclared phosphates (additive) in kebab meat (DE), yellow orange S (colouring) in gummy sweets (DE).
- Unauthorized health claims in food supplements sold online (HR, ES).

\* Non-EU country asked for follow-up investigations via SANTE letter.

**weekly**  
REVIEW

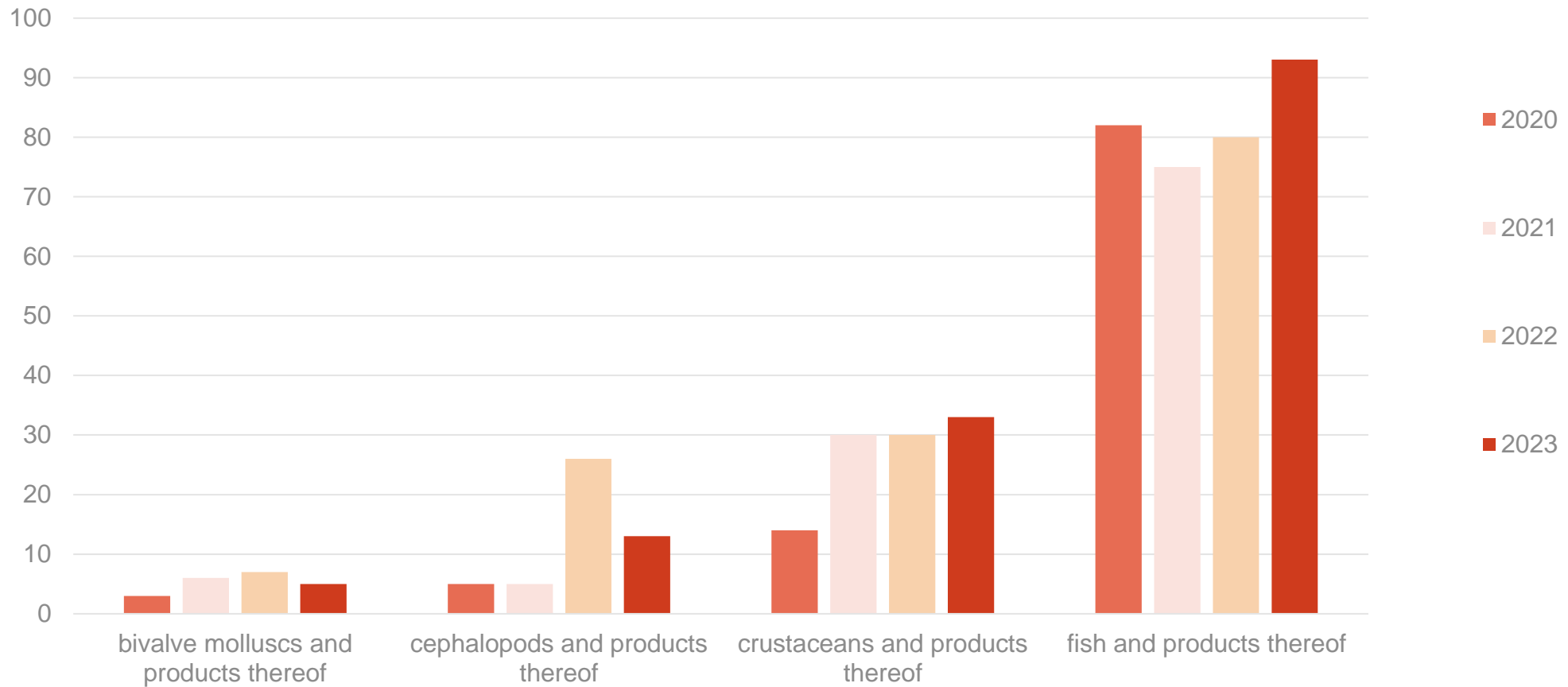
# Count of notifications



# Fraudulent and deceptive practices

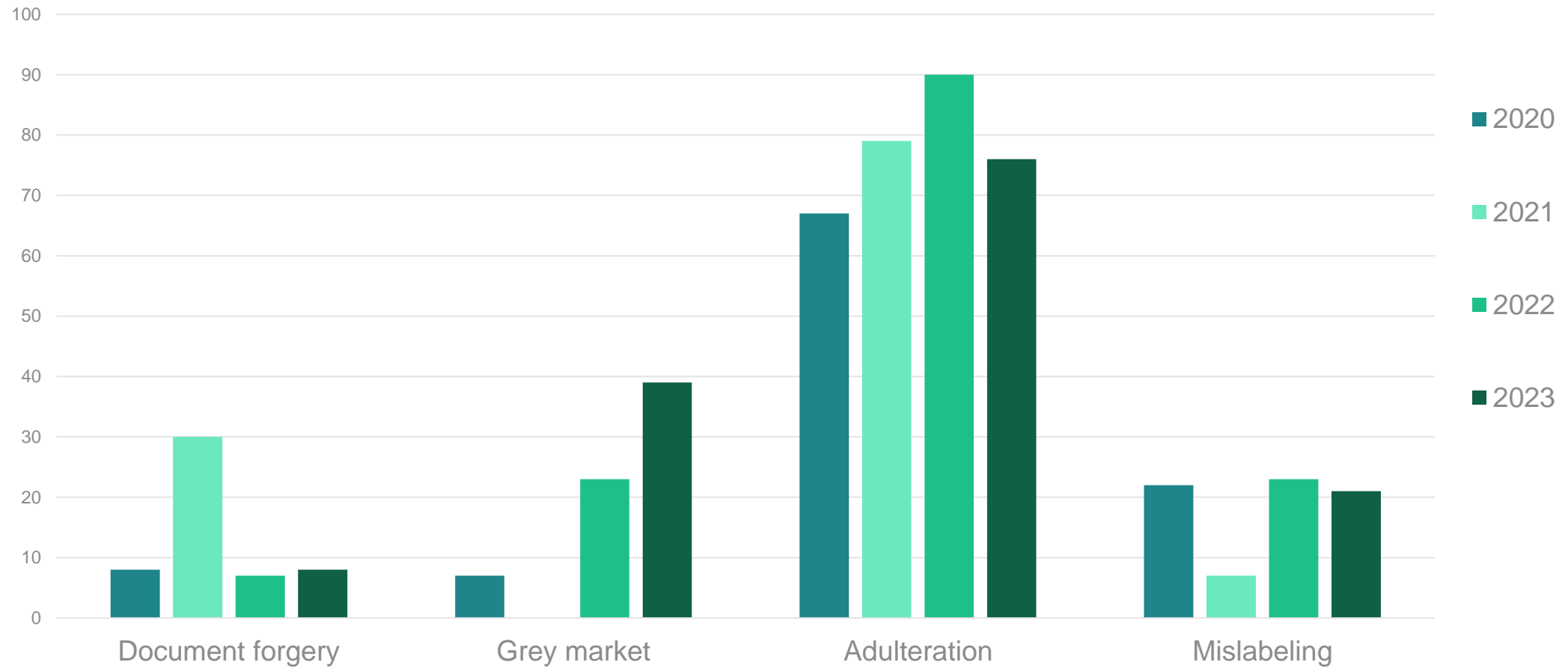


# Count of notifications (fraud suspicions)





# Count of notifications (fraud suspicions)



# GoldFish

EU Coordinated Action on  
Short-weighting of fishery  
products



# Short-weighting

***“To give less than the weight charged for”***

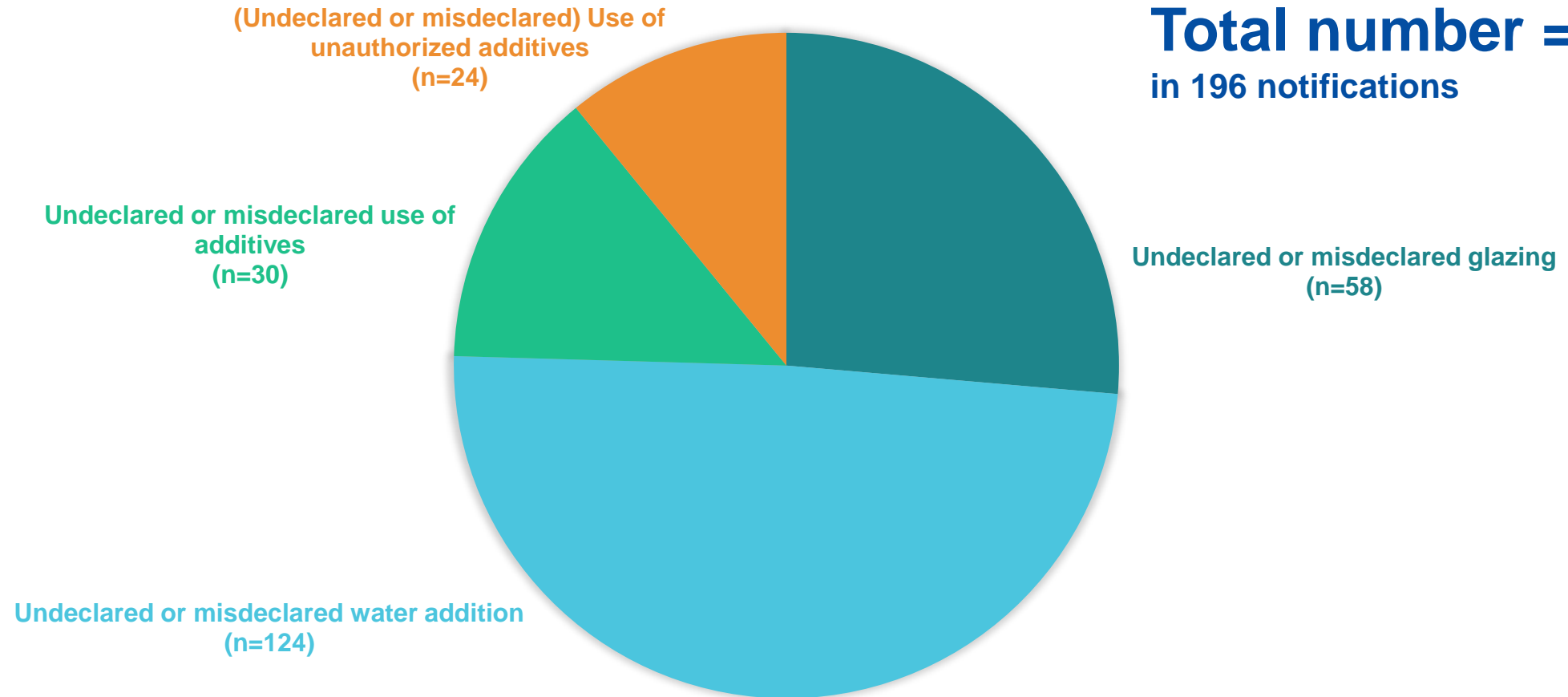
When processors misrepresent the weight of a seafood product by including the weight gained through practices such as over glazing, soaking, and breading to the net weight of the seafood.



# Short-weighting

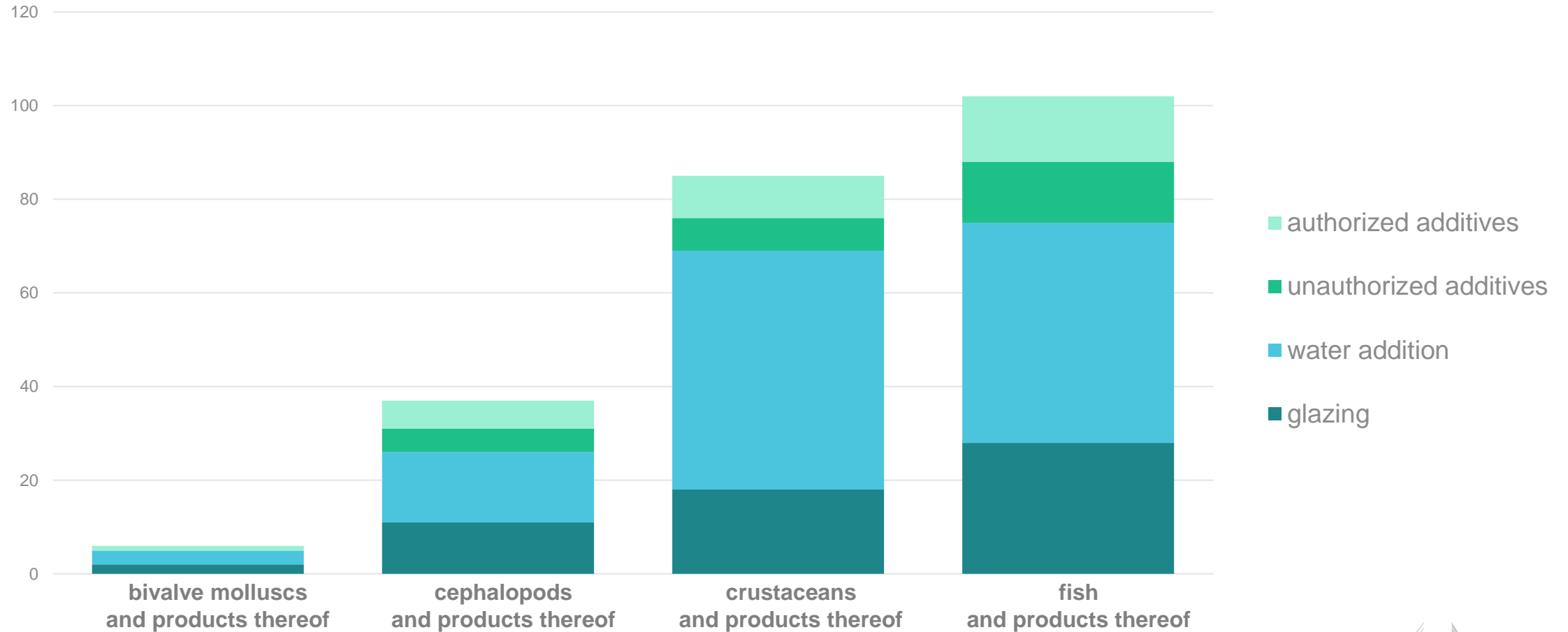
- Undeclared or misdeclared **glazing**
- Undeclared or misdeclared **water addition**
- Undeclared or misdeclared **authorised use of additives**
- Undeclared or misdeclared **unauthorised use of additives**
- Undeclared or misdeclared **addition of proteins and hydrolysed proteins**
- **Carboxymethyl cellulose** injected into shrimps
- Misdeclared **breeding**

# Fraud suspicions in the ACN (2019-2023)

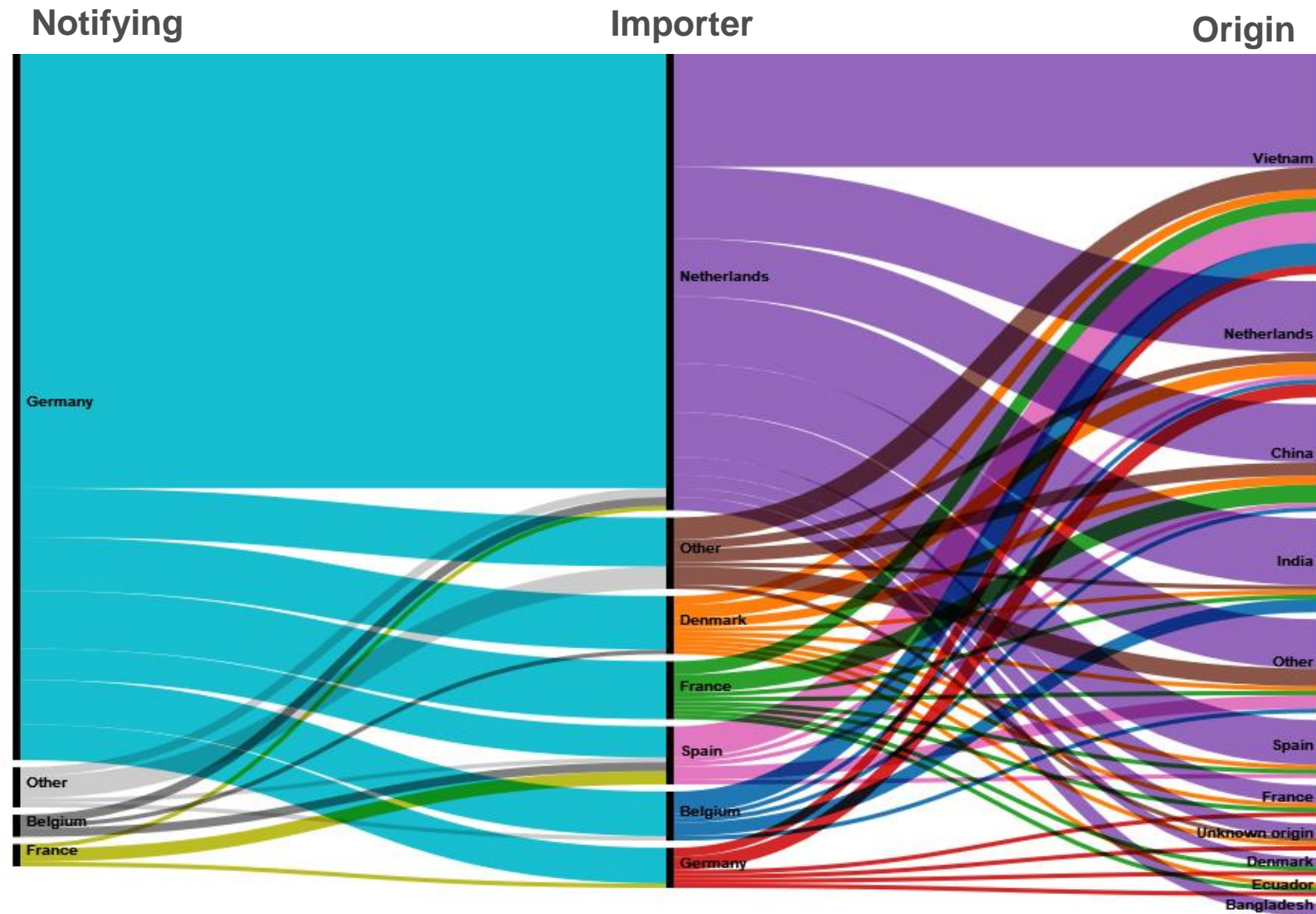


**Total number = 236**  
in 196 notifications

# Fraud suspicions in the ACN (2019-2023)



# Fraud suspicions in the ACN (2019-2023)



# EU Survey findings

Overall rates on non-compliances:

- 12% for water addition and additives (on 4462 samples in 4 MS)
- 7% for glazing (on 1627 samples in 9 MS)
- 6% for breasting (on 457 samples in DE)



# EU Coordinated action

1. **Type(s) of frauds:** glazing - water addition - additives - breading
2. **Products:** frozen, filleted/cut packed and labelled products
3. **Species:** salmon, alaska pollock, cod, pangasius, shrimps – all species for breading
4. **Sampling:** two months – one year campaign
5. **Sampling points:** Retail and BCPs (if labelled)
6. **Control methods:** TBD – W/P

# Keep in touch



[SANTE-FOOD-FRAUD@ec.europa.eu](mailto:SANTE-FOOD-FRAUD@ec.europa.eu)



[https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/agri-food-fraud\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/agri-food-fraud_en)