



Food Risk Insights

Eurofins Food Testing Ireland Ltd.
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In Focus

Emerging issues, trends and legislative changes

EU fish survey

EU to monitor PFAS in animal feed

Expanded infant formula hazards

Ongoing food price concerns

EFSA lowers safe level for exposure to TFA

New guidance for cell-cultivated products (CCPs) and novel food businesses

FSA STEC data

Cyclospora outbreak

RASFF food fraud suspicions

Welcome to the August 2026 Food Risk Insights from Eurofins Food Testing Ireland Ltd's Compliance and Risk Management Team.

In this issue: EU regulatory developments, emerging food safety risks, *Cyclospora* outbreaks, PFAS monitoring, food defence guidance, and the latest FSA and EFSA news.

We are here to offer expert advice and support; helping you reduce risk, strengthen compliance and protect your business.

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EU fish survey

The EU has published a report on official histamine controls in fishery products, outlining current monitoring approaches across Member States. Histamine poisoning (scombroid poisoning) remains a recurring food safety issue linked to poor temperature control during fish storage and handling, highlighting the importance of effective cold chain and hygiene practices.

Key findings include:

- Inconsistent implementation: Most Member States apply risk-based controls, but approaches to staff training and procedures vary
- Compliance challenges: Some businesses struggle to meet sampling and testing requirements, with occasional authorised departures from EU standards
- Testing flexibility: Alternative histamine testing methods are permitted if appropriately validated, although validation criteria are not applied consistently across Member States
- National laboratory support: Without an EU Reference Laboratory for histamine, several countries rely on National Reference Laboratories to promote method harmonisation

The full report Overview Report - EU Member State Survey on Histamine controls in fish 2025 can be found [here](#).

EU to monitor PFAS in animal feed

Following the monitoring of PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) in food, the EU will now also monitor PFAS in animal feed. Data on PFAS levels will be collected between 2026 and 2028. The same range of PFAS as those monitored in food shall be analysed. According to

Food defence guidance updated

British Standards Institution (BSI) has issued a new version of PAS 96:2026 ('Food defence – Protection and prevention from deliberate acts – Guide')

PAS 96:2026 provides guidance for food businesses on assessing, managing and reducing the risk of deliberate threats that could compromise food safety, authenticity or supply continuity.

The 2026 edition is a full revision of PAS 96:2017 and reflects an evolving threat landscape.

Key updates include:

- Greater recognition of cyber threats
- Lessons learned from Covid-19-related supply chain disruptions
- The potential impact of climate change on food systems
- Emerging risks associated with sustainability and food waste reduction initiatives.

this EU recommendation, the soil where animals forage for feed, as well as their drinking water, should also be tested for PFAS in follow-up investigations into high PFAS levels in food of animal origin. During such investigations, packaging materials can also be examined as a potential source of contamination.

Food Risk Insights

EFSA emerging risks report

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) most recent Annual Report on emerging risks and horizon scanning activities has been released, reporting for the year 2025.

Of the 55 topics considered, 43 were analysed in depth and 25 were assessed further using structured knowledge network processes, resulting in the identification of four emerging risks:

1. **Increased use of bio-based and biodegradable materials to manufacture Food Contact Materials (FCMs)** posing concerns for risk assessments. With the introduction of hazardous chemicals - contaminants (including environmental ones), pesticide residues, allergens, unknown chemical migration, degradation products with unknown consequences
2. **Bongkreikic acid, *Burkholderia gladioli* toxins dangers in fermented foods.** Bongkreikic acid is

a toxin produced by the bacterium *Burkholderia gladioli* pathovar *cocovenenans*. Products of concern are fermented and starchy foods

3. **Illicit use of Cafodos as a fish preservative.** Cafodos is a mixture of sodium citrate and hydrogen peroxide. It's used to mask fish spoilage by preserving its fresh appearance. Rapid decomposition of the compounds make it difficult to detect. Methods are being developed to help identify its use
4. **Antiparasitic drug resistance.** Multidrug resistance in parasitic intestinal worms (soil-transmitted helminths - roundworms, whipworms, and hookworms). The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reports economic losses in livestock-dependent low-income countries

Seventeen other issues were identified as requiring more information to make a final decision on the extent of the risk.

Expanded infant formula hazards

A Joint FAO/WHO (Food and Agriculture Organization / World Health Organization) expert meeting said powdered formula manufacturers should

implement supplier risk management programmes addressing botulinum neurotoxin (BoNT) producing clostridia (infant botulism) and cereulide toxin produced by *Bacillus cereus* in ingredients. This adds to the priority group which it already identified and includes *Salmonella* and *Cronobacter* spp.

The group also recommended surveillance of *Enterococcus*, *Pseudomonas*, and *Candida* spp., where this is not already in place, for any increase in risk potential in powdered formula.



Food Risk Insights

Dark kitchens of concern

Dark kitchens are businesses that offer a food preparation facility that has no dine in space or storefront. Meals are cooked strictly for delivery or takeaway and typically are ordered through online platforms for delivery. Dark kitchens can be based in various types of premises, such as repurposed industrial units, shipping containers, hourly rented commercial kitchens, and facilities within hotels or pubs. With multiple delivery-only food brands splitting and sharing spaces, high-cost commercial cooking equipment, storage areas, and waste disposal to lower setup costs. This has raised concerns about the impact of these outlets with particular regards to hygiene and allergen issues.

While the report from Sheffield Hallam University identified existing regulations as generally suitable for dark kitchens and with them largely having been adapted effectively to the sector. Potential problems remain regarding the use of third-party delivery platforms, particularly in relation to cross-contamination and allergen management. A key regulatory challenge is the identification of dark kitchen premises within the food business monitoring framework. With some having multiple trading names and issues with them not being registered as food businesses.

FSA updates

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published several updates, including its policy paper on regulatory approach, food and feed codes of practice, statement on approach to growth (support for economic growth).

These can be found [here](#).

Ongoing food price concerns

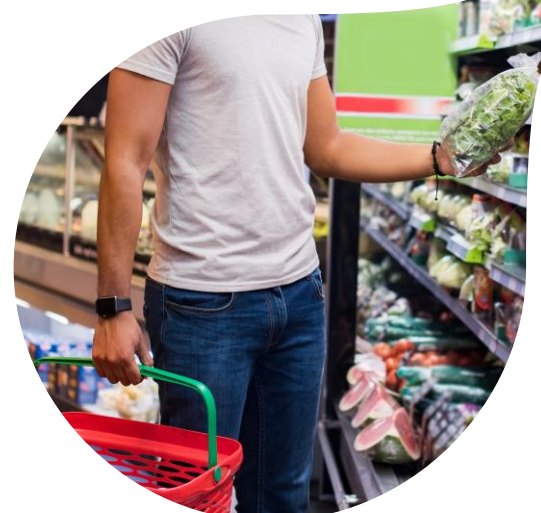
In its end of year report The Food Standards Agency (FSA) identified food prices as consistently being the most common concern.

Consumers reported having done the following behaviours in the last month (March 2026):

- Eating food past its use-by date
- Eating leftovers that had been kept in the fridge for more than two days
- Cutting down on the amount of food bought
- Reheating leftovers more than once to avoid throwing them away
- Turning off an oven or hob earlier to finish cooking in residual heat

While on-pack instructions will normally be carefully written and fit for purpose, consumer behaviours may adapt to rising costs. Understanding these unintended consequences helps food businesses make better decisions, reduce risk, and respond more effectively to evolving consumer needs.

Other common concerns from the Consumer Insights Tracker included ultra-processed food, food waste in the food chain, animal welfare in the food industry and the quality of food.



Food Risk Insights

EFSA lowers safe level for exposure to TFA

Recently the European Chemicals Agency's (ECHA) Committee for Risk Assessment (RAC) recommended that trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) be classified as toxic to reproduction as well as persistent, mobile and toxic (as detailed in Issue 23 of our Risk Insights).

Following on from this, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) have lowered the acceptable daily intake (ADI) to 0.014 milligrams per kilogram of bodyweight per day, down from the previous value of 0.05. The new ADI is about 3.5 times lower than the previous one. They also set a new acute reference dose of 0.07 milligrams per kilogram of body weight.

ADI - An estimate of the amount of a substance that can be consumed daily over a lifetime without presenting an appreciable risk to health

Acute Reference Dose - Estimate of the amount of a substance in food that can be ingested in a period of 24 hours or less without appreciable health risk to the consumer.

Four men arrested over illegal meat

A joint operation involving Dudley Council and the National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) targeted an unapproved meat cutting plant, four men were arrested and approximately four and a quarter metric tonnes of illegal meat was removed from the market. Meat that enters the food supply chain illegally avoids the strict safety and hygiene controls required in the UK, increasing the risk of disease, contamination and harm to consumers. Authorities are working to identify any other consignments produced at this plant and to remove them from the market.

New guidance for cell-cultivated products (CCPs) and novel food businesses

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) have published four new guidance documents to help businesses developing cell-cultivated products (CCPs) and other novel foods understand the regulatory requirements for bringing safe, innovative products to market. This is the second batch of publications.

The four published documents in this tranche cover:

1. Guidance on applying General Food Law and Hygiene Regulations to the production of cell-cultivated products
2. Scientific requirements for evaluating cell-cultivated products when applying for market authorisation as novel foods
3. Practical recommendations to help businesses prepare stronger, more complete applications for market authorisation
4. Additional guidance helping businesses understand their responsibilities when conducting taste trials of novel foods.

Cyclospora outbreak

US health authorities are investigating a large multistate cyclosporiasis outbreak linked to iceberg lettuce. With more than 6,000 cases now identified spreading across 15 states. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has linked the outbreak to lettuce imported from Mexico and one specific supplier. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that for every confirmed case up to approximately 80 cases go unreported.

The illness is characterised by symptoms such as prolonged watery diarrhoea, abdominal cramps, nausea, bloating, fatigue, reduced appetite, and weight loss. Without treatment, symptoms can persist for several weeks or even return after apparently clearing. It can be particularly severe in young children, older adults, and individuals with weakened immune systems and in rare cases death. Two deaths in the US have been associated with the outbreak so far.

Cyclospora is not an endemic issue in the UK because the parasite requires tropical or subtropical climates to thrive and does not naturally occur or circulate in the local environment. UK cases have only occurred as imported infections in people who travelled to regions where it is common.

UK officials have noted a rise in *Cyclospora* infections reported in the United Kingdom, but these have been linked to people returning from Mexico. Between 30th April and 15th July 2026, 67 cases of cyclosporiasis were recorded in the UK.

Cyclosporiasis is a foodborne illness caused by the microscopic parasite *Cyclospora cayetanensis* a type of protozoa, which is a single-celled organism. It is transmitted via food or water contaminated with faeces from those infected. Infection occurs when contaminated food or water is consumed, with fresh fruits and vegetables commonly associated with outbreaks. Symptoms typically appear around a week after eating or drinking something contaminated. Unlike *E.coli* and Salmonella, *Cyclospora* is found only in humans and not spread from animal faecal matter.



FSA STEC data

National enhanced surveillance of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) in England has been ongoing since 2009. This report summarises the epidemiological data on confirmed cases of STEC O157 and non-O157 STEC cases in England in 2025 and compares this data to previous years.

STEC O157 and non-O157 case numbers in 2025 remained broadly in line with 2024, ending the steady year-on-year increases seen since 2021. While previous years saw a large proportion of cases linked to significant outbreaks, fewer national outbreaks were investigated in 2025. Seasonal trends continued, with STEC O157 cases peaking in summer before declining, while non-O157 cases showed peaks in July and October. Young

children aged 1 to 4 years remained the most affected group. The proportion of STEC O157 cases developing haemolytic uraemic syndrome (HUS) fell alongside a slight reduction in hospitalisations.

For non-O157 STEC, STEC O146 and O26 were the most commonly detected serogroups. Overall STEC activity in England remained high, although rates of severe illness remained low. While no source was identified in the two national outbreaks investigated in 2025, salad leaves, fresh produce and beef products have been linked to outbreaks in previous years. Continued collaboration between public health, food safety and environmental stakeholders remains essential to improve detection, prevention and outbreak response.

August in brief | Regulatory changes, emerging risks and food safety updates

August's developments highlight continued regulatory scrutiny and evolving food safety priorities, including official histamine controls in fishery products, expanded PFAS monitoring in animal feed, updated food defence guidance, and new support for cell-cultivated product and novel food businesses.

Emerging risks remain high on the agenda, with EFSA identifying concerns around food contact materials, fermented foods, illicit fish preservatives and antiparasitic drug resistance. Updates on TFA exposure, STEC surveillance, infant formula hazards and dark kitchens also underline the need for robust monitoring, hygiene and risk management practices.

Recent enforcement activity, including action against illegal meat operations, together with ongoing food price

pressures and changing consumer behaviours, reinforces the importance of supply chain assurance, compliance checks and proactive risk management.

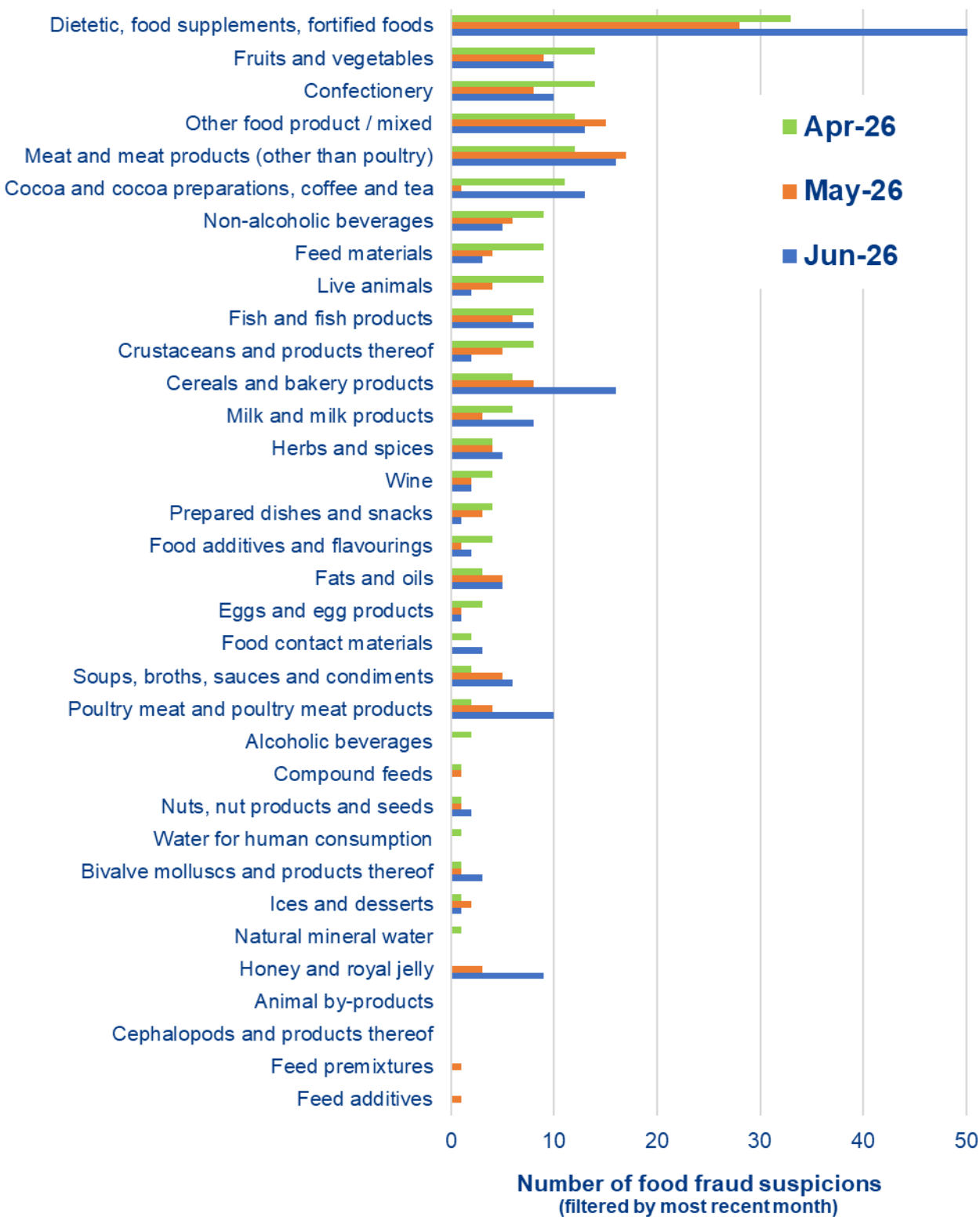
In a landscape of evolving regulation, emerging hazards and increasing scrutiny, Eurofins Food Testing Ireland provides expert consultancy and testing services to help businesses strengthen compliance, manage risk and protect brand reputation.



Rules And Regulations

RASFF latest quarter's report

Summary of Food Fraud Suspicions





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Food Risk Insights

The Eurofins Compliance and Risk Management Team can work with you to identify and mitigate risks within your business, whether they be microbiological, contaminants, allergens, pesticides, authenticity (food fraud) or risks to your supply chain such as price changes or climate fluctuations.

We are here to work with you to protect your customers, brand and reputation.



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