



Food Risk Insights

Eurofins Food Testing UK Ltd.
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In Focus

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issues, trends
and legislative
changes

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

In this issue, emerging food safety risks, food fraud investigations, regulatory developments and the latest updates from the UK and EU.

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



Salmonella linked to Italian tomatoes

Authorities in the Italian region of Puglia have suspended the sale of tomatoes in canteens after reports of *Salmonella* infections. Following a notification from officials in the Puglia region regarding cases of salmonellosis linked to the consumption of tomatoes the Lecce Local Health Authority (ASL) has taken these precautionary measures.

A temporary suspension has been ordered on the use and serving of raw fresh tomatoes in all food preparation centres for institutional catering. This includes nurseries, preschools, primary schools, and secondary schools, social care and healthcare facilities, residential care homes and hospitals. The order takes effect immediately and will remain in force until further notice.

Officials in the Puglia region said there has been a recent rise in salmonellosis

cases and outbreaks. Epidemiological investigations have linked some illnesses to the consumption of cherry tomatoes. Investigations detected an increase in *Salmonella* Strathcona sequence type (ST) 2559 infections and identified *Salmonella* in a batch of tomatoes from Caltanissetta.

In the 2025-2026 season there was a matter of a similar nature. Where investigations into a *Salmonella* Strathcona outbreak, involving 116 cases in Germany, also pointed to Italian tomatoes as the source.

The Robert Koch Institute (RKI) said despite previous coverage over several years, cases of *Salmonella* Strathcona are again being identified this season involving isolates that are closely related to the outbreak cluster from previous years. With interviews again pointing to stays in Italy during the exposure period and to consumption of tomatoes.

Standard method for detecting previously frozen poultry

A new European standard, EN 18179:2026, Food authenticity — Method for detecting previously frozen poultry meat by determination of HADH activity, has been published, providing the food industry and enforcement authorities with a harmonised method for verifying whether poultry sold as chilled has previously been frozen.

Believed to be the first published standard to specify a chemical/biochemical analytical method for verifying the storage history of poultry meat

The method is specifically validated for chicken breast meat and can be used to verify compliance with poultry marketing requirements, which distinguish between fresh (chilled), frozen and quick frozen products. The standard is not applicable to minced poultry meat or poultry preparations.



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Horse meat fraud investigation

An international investigation has uncovered suspected horse meat fraud involving over 1,000 horses. Some of which may have entered the food chain despite being ineligible for human consumption. The network allegedly used forged passports and altered microchips to conceal animal identities, treatment histories and slaughter eligibility. Investigators believe retired medicated racehorses and sport horses were falsely presented for slaughter, raising concerns over veterinary drug residues in meat.

In September 2026, authorities conducted 24 coordinated searches across Belgium, France, Ireland and the Netherlands, resulting in multiple arrests, horse seizures and the recovery of over €100,000 in cash. Investigations are ongoing to trace affected animals and determine whether contaminated meat entered the market.



Italian seafood crackdown uncovers widespread noncompliance

The Carabinieri NAS (National Anti-Adulteration and Health Unit), in coordination with the Italian Ministry of Health, recently completed a nationwide inspection campaign targeting the fish and shellfish supply chain as part of efforts to reduce the risk of hepatitis A transmission through food. The inspections focused on shellfish dispatch and purification centres, fishmongers, restaurants and local markets.

A total of 1,104 inspections were carried out, with 38% revealing irregularities. Authorities reported 15 criminal offences, issued 638 administrative violations and suspended 44 businesses due to serious hygiene, structural or licensing deficiencies. More than 16 tonnes of food products were seized, with an estimated value exceeding €320,000.

The most common issues identified included poor hygiene standards, failures in HACCP implementation, inadequate traceability records and labelling noncompliance's. Several cases also involved the sale of thawed fish presented as fresh and the marketing of products without adequate traceability documentation.

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NFCU investigations and enforcement

Arrest targeting illegal 'smokies'

As part of a coordinated enforcement operation, officers from Leicestershire Police, the East Midlands Special Operations Unit Disruption Team, the National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) and the Local Authority arrested a Leicester man suspected of selling illegal 'smokies' through online platforms.

'Smokies' are sheep or goat carcasses produced by singeing the fleece from an unskinned animal, giving the meat its characteristic golden brown appearance and flavour. Their production is prohibited in the UK because the process does not meet the required hygiene and food safety standards.

Fake wine

A man was arrested on suspicion of fraud by false representation, linked to the supply of suspected counterfeit wine.

Suspected counterfeit wine was sold to an unsuspecting victim. The alleged sale of 55 bottles came to a total of over half a million pounds; an average of over £9,000 per bottle.

Officers from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and its National Food Crime Unit (NFCU), supported by the Metropolitan Police, executed a search warrant at a property in Essex. The suspect was arrested on suspicion of fraud by false representation

Businesses and collectors are being encouraged to undertake thorough supplier due diligence and verify product provenance before making high value purchases, as increasingly sophisticated packaging and labelling can make counterfeit wines difficult to identify.

EU developments

EU authorisation GMO soybean MON94313

In September the genetically modified soybean MON94313 was approved in the EU. In addition, the soybean stacked event GMB151 x DAS-44406-6 was authorised and the authorisation of genetically modified maize MON87460 was extended for a further 10 years.

EU expanding monitoring for Pyrrolizidine Alkaloids

The European Commission has published Commission Recommendation (EU) 2026/1210, calling on Member States to strengthen monitoring of pyrrolizidine alkaloids (PAs) in animal feed. The recommendation follows concerns that livestock may be exposed to these toxins through contaminated feed, particularly grazing animals and species consuming significant amounts of lucerne (alfalfa), such as horses and rabbits.

Pyrrolizidine alkaloids are naturally occurring plant toxins found in a range of weed species and can contaminate forage, roughage, herbs and other feed materials.

The improved monitoring will help support a better understanding of occurrence data, contamination levels, exposure risks and the potential transfer into animal derived products with the potential for future maximum limits.

Maximum levels for PAs in food are already regulated in Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/915 on maximum levels for certain contaminants in food.

EU developments cont.

EU recommends monitoring of quinolizidine alkaloids (QAs)

The European Commission (EC) has also published Commission Recommendation (EU) 2026/1241, calling for increased monitoring of quinolizidine alkaloids (QAs) in lupins and lupin derived foods. The initiative aims to improve understanding of consumer exposure, identify factors contributing to elevated QA levels and generate data to support future risk assessments and potential regulatory action.

Quinolizidine alkaloids are naturally occurring compounds present in lupins

that may pose health concerns at elevated concentrations. In a 2019 assessment, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) concluded that available occurrence and consumption data were insufficient for a comprehensive risk assessment, although the evidence suggested a potential risk from acute exposure for some consumers. As a result, EFSA recommended the collection of additional occurrence data across lupin products

The Recommendation highlights the importance of robust supplier controls, raw material monitoring and validated processing measures to minimise consumer exposure and support preparedness for any future regulatory developments.

FSA & FSS developments

FSA publishes BPA guide

The Foods Standards Agency (FSA) guide aims to help businesses understand EU rules on Bisphenol A (BPA) in food contact materials (FCMs), including application in Northern Ireland, and outlines the current legal position in Great Britain.

The EU has restricted the use of bisphenol A (BPA) in certain food contact materials (FCMs) through Commission Regulation (EU) 2024/3190. These requirements apply to products placed on the EU market and, under the Windsor Framework, the Northern Ireland market.

In Great Britain, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) have consulted on proposals to restrict BPA in food contact materials. Following the consultation, the

FSA published a summary of responses indicating its intention to introduce similar BPA restrictions in Great Britain, subject to the necessary policy development and legislative processes.

The guide is not a substitute for the applicable legislation and businesses should ensure they refer to the relevant legislation where appropriate.



FSA & FSS developments cont.

FSA/FSS guidance to support innovative food businesses

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) have published a new package of supplementary guidance for businesses developing cell-cultivated products.

The guidance, part of the Cell-Cultivated Products (CCP) sandbox programme, provides detailed information on regulatory authorisation, as well as the assessment of growth media components and toxicology, for cell-cultivated products. These documents offer food businesses greater clarity on how existing regulations apply in Great Britain, helping applicants prepare more robust submissions and understand the safety and regulatory requirements needed to bring cell-cultivated products to market.

FSS launches novel foods consultation

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) has launched a consultation on the proposed authorisation of 16 novel foods. Stakeholders are invited to comment on the authorisations, including proposed uses in supplements for infants and young children, as well as related conditions of use and labelling requirements. Feedback will inform advice to the Cabinet Secretary.

The 16 regulated products in the consultation (run jointly with the Food Standards Agency) comprise 6 new authorisations for novel foods and 10 applications to modify existing authorisations, which largely consist of human milk oligosaccharides (HMOs) produced via microbial fermentation, alongside specific algal extracts.



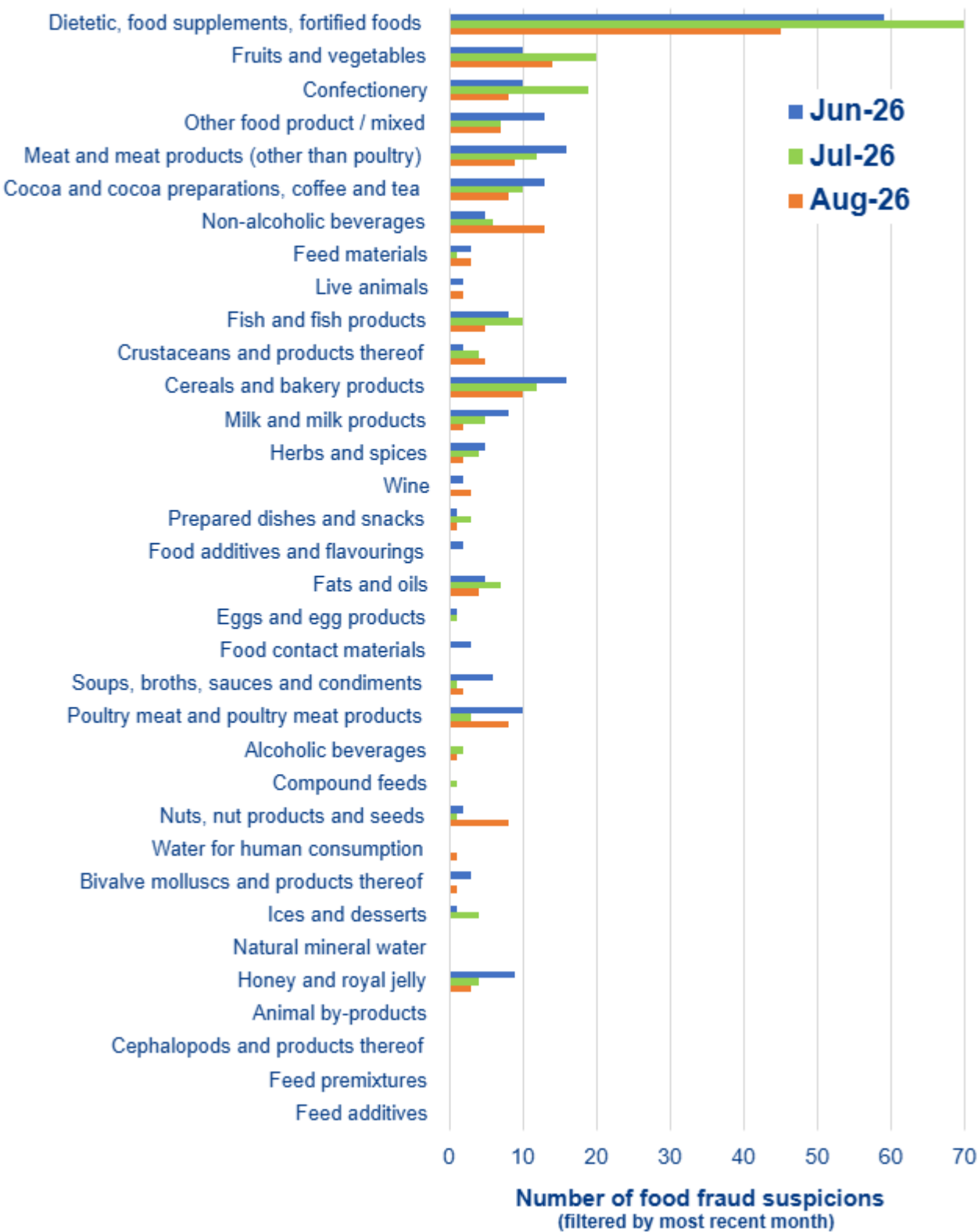
October in brief | Food Safety, food fraud and regulatory update

Recent food safety and authenticity developments include a Salmonella outbreak linked to Italian tomatoes, prompting restrictions on serving raw tomatoes in schools and healthcare settings in parts of Italy. A new European standard has also been introduced to help verify whether chilled poultry has previously been frozen, supporting food authenticity controls. Meanwhile, an international investigation has uncovered suspected horse meat fraud involving more than 1,000 horses, while authorities in Italy have seized over 16 tonnes of seafood following widespread compliance failures across the supply chain.

Regulatory and enforcement activity continues across the UK and EU, with the NFCU taking action against illegal meat sales and suspected counterfeit wine fraud. The FSA and FSS have released new guidance on BPA restrictions and cell-cultivated products, while Food Standards Scotland is consulting on 16 novel food authorisations. In the EU, new GMO soybean approvals have been granted, and Member States have been advised to strengthen monitoring of pyrrolizidine and quinolizidine alkaloids in feed and food products.

RASFF latest quarter's report

Summary of Food Fraud Suspicions





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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.



eurofins.com/en-uk/food-testing/



risk@ftuki.eurofins.com



+44 (0) 845 604 6740