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Food
Risk Insights

Eurofins Food Testing Ireland Ltd.

Issue 23 | July 2026

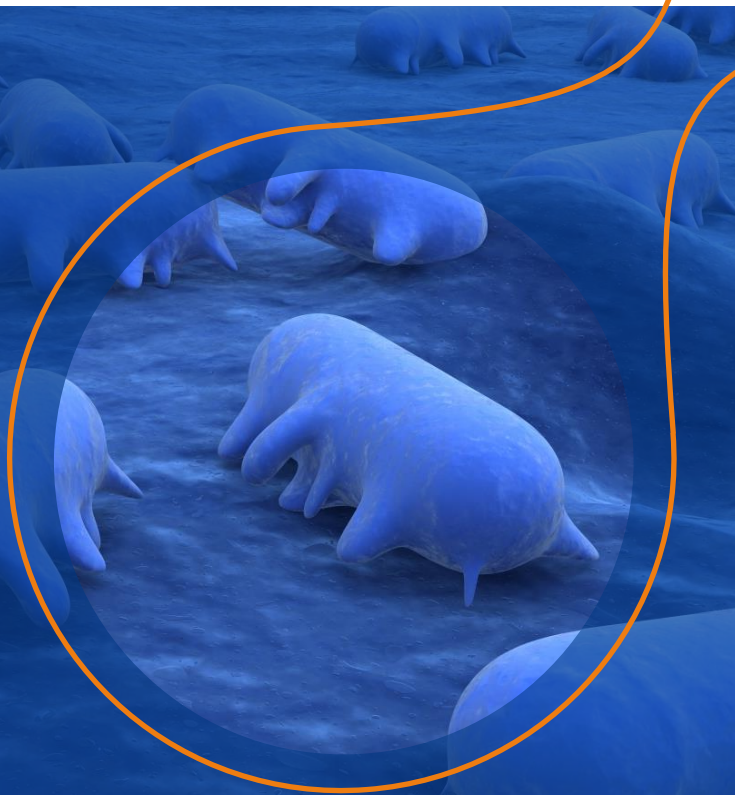
In Focus

Emerging issues, trends and legislative changes

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

In this issue; rising pathogen rates, major *Salmonella* outbreak investigations, key UK/EU regulatory updates, food fraud and emerging food safety risks.

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



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Irish and UK data shows more reports of pathogens

The Irish Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HSPC) reported pathogen increases in 2025 over previous years with *Salmonella* at its highest level since 2008. There were also higher notification rates for *Campylobacter*, hepatitis A virus, norovirus, *Shigella*, pathogenic *E. coli* and *Yersinia*. It was noted that the higher rates for *Yersinia* maybe due to changes in testing methods.

For cases of salmonellosis the most common serotypes were *Salmonella* Typhimurium and *Salmonella* Enteritidis.

STEC infections increased with 863 cases reported compared with 799 in 2024. Childcare settings continue to be a key concern due to person-to-person transmission.

No new listeriosis outbreaks were identified, although five cases were linked to the 2024 outbreak associated with ready meals.

Campylobacter infections continued an upward trend and Hepatitis A cases also increased significantly.

A similar report from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) revealed that *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* remain at consistently high levels in England. With salmonellosis cases rising marginally to its highest annual total in a decade, while campylobacteriosis cases also remained high. Both infections are commonly linked to contaminated food and poor kitchen hygiene, with young children, older adults, and immunocompromised individuals at greatest risk. Listeriosis cases remained stable.

In a report from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's (FSAI) Scientific Committee, risk ranking was carried out using data from a survey of microbiological hazards in food. *Campylobacter* was confirmed as a leading cause of foodborne disease in Ireland.

The top seven hazards identified were: *Campylobacter*, norovirus, *Listeria monocytogenes*, Shiga toxin producing *E. coli* (STEC), *Salmonella*, hepatitis A virus (HAV), and hepatitis E virus (HEV).

Microbiological risk ranking assesses the public health impact of foodborne microbial hazards and helps authorities prioritise food safety risks. It provides an evidence-based approach to guide control measures, prevention strategies, surveillance activities, and risk management decisions.

FSAI consultation on the use of non-specific health claims

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) are seeking feedback from Food Business Operators (FBOs) on draft guidance intended to support FBOs in understanding and applying the requirements of Regulation (EC) No. 1924/2006, specifically in relation to the use of general, non-specific health claims.

An example of good and bad uses are given below

- ‘Contributes to weight loss’ ✓
- ‘Supports weight loss ✓
- ‘Fat Burner’ X
- ‘Lose weight fast’ X

The aim of the consultation is to help businesses understand how to use these claims in the correct manner giving clarification on their use and stopping businesses slipping into non-compliant territory.

GB/EU *Salmonella* outbreak instant noodles suggested

A multi-country outbreak across Europe has sickened 83 people, with an additional 24 potential cases under investigation. The outbreak is primarily affecting children and young adults and has been reported in nine countries, including the UK. The strain has been identified as *Salmonella* Stanley

Investigations have linked many cases to chicken flavoured instant noodles and possibly processed chicken products, although not all infections can be explained by these foods. Some consumers reported eating the noodles without following the preparation instructions.

A contaminated batch of Reeva Instant Noodle Dish Chicken Flavour (60g) has been recalled in Germany after testing positive for *Salmonella* Stanley. Authorities believe exposure may still be ongoing, but the overall risk to the public remains low if products are prepared according to the manufacturer's cooking instructions. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) are continuing investigations into the source of the outbreak.

ECDC and EFSA are also investigating a multi-country outbreak of *Salmonella* Bovismorbificans linked to the consumption of sprouted seeds. Between January and April 2026, 50 cases were reported in Ireland, Finland, and the UK. Investigations have identified alfalfa, clover, broccoli, and radish seeds from Italy as the suspected source. An outbreak assessment is expected to be published soon.

NFCU update

In its latest update, the National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) highlighted several concerns linked to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East:

- Supply chain vulnerabilities affecting herbs and spices, particularly saffron, which was the subject of an NFCU food crime alert in 2025.
- Risks relating to premium nuts (especially pistachios) and dates, which are commonly associated with festive periods.
- Spoiled and distressed loads caused by shipping delays.
- Laboratory document fraud.
- Fertiliser shortages that could impact future food production.

Fake lamb

A kebab meat supplier has been fined £500,000 for selling products which cannot legally be called meat, following a major investigation by Swansea Council into fraudulent food mislabelling. The kebab meat sold as 'lamb' consisted largely of skin, fat, mechanically reclaimed meat, and meat from other species including goat, mutton and turkey.

Wine seized by Portuguese authorities

Portuguese authorities have confiscated large amounts of wine and labels during a series of inspections. The labels misleadingly used terms linked to Protected Designation of Origin status, including references to grape varieties, which falsely suggested a higher quality and misled consumers.

⚠ TFA classed as highly hazardous

In June European Chemicals Agency's (ECHA) Committee for Risk Assessment (RAC) adopted an opinion recommending that trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) be classified as toxic to reproduction as well as persistent, mobile and toxic (PMT) and very persistent and very mobile (vPvM), following a proposal submitted by Germany in 2025.

Recent studies have highlighted increasing levels of trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) in drinking water, a wide range of foods and beverages particularly those derived from plants. TFA is one of the Ultrashort PFAS (ultrashort-chain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances). These are defined as PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) with one to three carbon atoms and are of growing concern due to their environmental persistence and widespread occurrence.

TFA is the simplest perfluorinated carboxylic acid and has been extensively studied and reviewed over the last few years. Its formation is partly linked to the atmospheric degradation of modern refrigerants and to a large extent the breakdown of pesticides containing trifluoromethyl groups (e.g. Fluazinam).

In a previous report from Pesticide Action Network Europe (PAN) TFA contamination was found in four fifths of all samples taken across 16 countries. Following this, food was identified as the dominant exposure route, with concentrations more than a thousand times higher than those typically found in tap water and children were identified as being particularly at risk from TFA exposure. PAN is now calling for all PFAS pesticides to be banned.

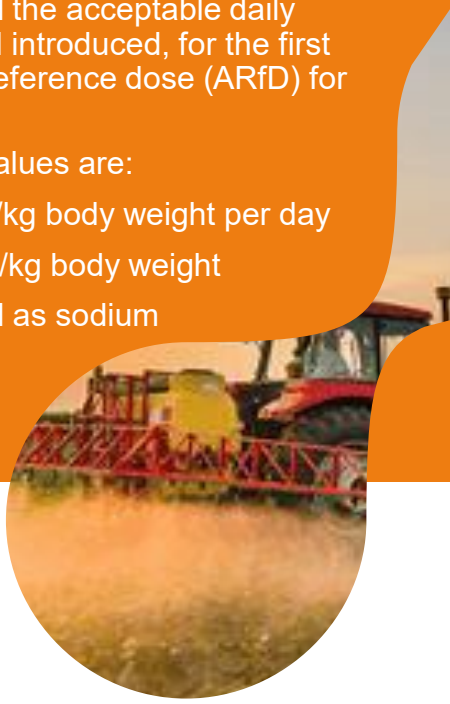
At the request of the European Commission, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Pesticide Peer Review Unit reevaluated the acceptable daily intake (ADI) and introduced, for the first time, an acute reference dose (ARfD) for TFA.

The proposed values are:

ADI: 0.03 mg/kg body weight per day

ARfD: 0.6 mg/kg body weight

(Both expressed as sodium trifluoroacetate)



⚠ UK Regulations

UK CCPs update

At the latest workshop for Cell-cultivated products (CCPs), several topics were explored including:

- How to handle different types of waste generated during production, and how these may fall under the classification of Animal By-Products
- Cleaning Regimes
- Traceability and protection against threats and vulnerabilities
- How the identity and authenticity of products can be ensured.

Regardless of the outcomes of the UK-EU SPS negotiations, the CCPs Sandbox Programme (a controlled environment where startups and enterprises can test innovative products or services under relaxed regulatory conditions) will continue as planned until February 2027. With the intention of continuing with the agreed workplan, the participant workshops, and the publication of positions on outstanding regulatory and scientific questions.

⚠ UK Regulations cont.

SPS agreement update

At the end of May, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) published a series of sector specific updates for businesses, to help them prepare for the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement.

The new Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement together with the Windsor Framework, is intended to make it easier, cheaper and more predictable for goods to move not just between the UK and the EU, but also within the UK itself, including smoother movements from Great Britain to Northern Ireland.

The assumption is that the UK will dynamically align with EU legislation and confirmed that it is working toward a mid-2027 start date for the new agreement. Alignment would mean businesses would no longer apply to the Food Standards Agency/Food Standards Scotland for authorisations and would have to apply under EU legislation instead, and EU authorisations would in future cover the whole of the UK.

The UK Government is advising that businesses should start to prepare now on this assumption and that businesses may wish to assess possible impacts and consider the regulatory strategy for their products.

The SPS Agreement will apply differently across sectors. The main groups likely to be in scope of these are:

- Farmers and primary producers – changes to animal health, plant health, feed, pesticides and their respective maximum residue levels, and veterinary medicine maximum residue limits.
- Food, feed and drink businesses – changes to hygiene rules, food law, additives, pesticide maximum residue levels, marketing standards, labelling and food contact materials.
- Hauliers and logistics providers – changes to movement requirements for animals, plants and SPS goods.
- Importers and exporters of SPS goods – changes to certification, checks, official controls and digital systems.
- Pesticide and biocide manufacturers and suppliers – changes to pesticide and biocide active substance approvals, plant protection product (PPP) and biocide authorisations, and PPP maximum residue levels.
- Retailers and wholesalers – changes to consumer information, compositional standards, traceability, labelling and sourcing requirements.
- Seed, plant and horticultural suppliers – changes to plant health, reproductive material and plant passporting.
- Veterinarians – changes to veterinary medicine Maximum Residue Limits and antimicrobial resistance

The EU has accepted there will need to be a number of areas where the UK retains its own rules such as Precision breeding.

UK consultation on bisphenol A

The summary of responses to this consultation has now been published. Based on the findings of the analysis, the Food Standards Agency recommendation to ministers will be to introduce a ban on the use of BPA and its analogues in Great Britain. The timing of this implementation will be communicated in due course.

⚠ EU Regulations

New MOAH limits adopted

New, legally binding maximum limits for Mineral Oil Aromatic Hydrocarbons (MOAH) in food have been approved by the EU with the final adoption expected in autumn 2026, and most maximum levels taking effect from 1 January 2027. There are phased implementation periods extending to 2030 for some specific food categories.

Levels are generally as previously discussed with the exception that confectionery has been dropped from the legislation.

SCoPAFF (EU Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed) is already encouraging EU official laboratories to apply the proposed limits in practice at this stage.

The legislative package for MOSH/MOAH regulation also includes a proposal for a monitoring recommendation for mineral oil saturated hydrocarbons (MOSH) and MOAH for the years 2026 to 2029. This aims to establish requirements for risk minimisation based on defined MOSH indicative levels. Numerous product groups are included. The MOAH monitoring is intended to cover products that are not included in the current proposal such as coffee, tea, processed fruit, processed vegetables, and flavourings.

GMO soy

In June, the EU granted authorisation for the genetically modified insect resistant soybean MON94637 for use in Food and Feed. The authorisation is valid for a period of 10 years.

Dioxins/PCBs

The EU has been looking at the World Health Organisation's updated Toxic Equivalency Factor (TEF) values for dioxins and dioxin like PCBs. TEFs have always been part of EU legislation and recognises that some dioxins/PCBs are more toxic than others. From the new WHO data Some TEFs went up while some went down.

Based on this the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has set a new lower Tolerable weekly intake (TWI) of 0.6 pg Toxic equivalents (TEQ) /kg body weight per week. This represents a weekly consumption limit over a lifetime.

Previously when new TEFs have been published they have been incorporated into EU legislation. This is also the expectation here but there is currently no information on when this will happen.

Breakfast foods regulations in force

From 14 June 2026, new EU rules introduced under Directive (EU) 2024/1438 came into effect, updating requirements for honey, fruit juices, jams and preserved milk products.

Key changes include clearer country of origin labelling and enhanced traceability measures for honey blends; new reduced sugar fruit juice options and clearer messaging that fruit juice contains only naturally occurring sugars; higher minimum fruit content requirements for jams and marmalades, along with greater flexibility in the use of citrus product names; and formal recognition of lactose free preserved milk products.

The reforms are designed to help consumers make more informed decisions.

Smoked flavours

The first EU transitional period for soups, snacks, sauces and similar products containing smoke flavourings, under Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/2067, ended on 1 July 2026, meaning these products can no longer be placed on the EU or Northern Ireland market if they contain the affected smoke flavourings.

FDA-iRISK tool for predictive modelling

FDA-iRISK is a free web-based system designed to analyse data concerning microbial and chemical hazards in food and return an estimate of the resulting health burden on a population level. The latest version (V5) is now available. It aims to build scenarios that simulate real-world issues predicting the risk they pose to consumers.

The information requires users who are knowledgeable about the hazards, foods and processes they are describing, but not necessarily familiar with risk assessment methodology.

Food and Drug Administration Human Foods Program (FDA/HFP), Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN), and Risk Sciences International (RSI). 2026. FDA-iRISK® version 5.0. FDA/HFP. College Park, Maryland. Available at **here**.

Man jailed for defrauding food supplier

A former employee of a leading UK food supplier has been jailed after defrauding the company of £700,000. Over a 20-year period, he generated losses through unnecessary stock orders, diverted materials, and associated haulage costs.

The offences included:

- False Ordering – Placing unauthorised orders for packaging materials.
- Stock Diversion – Redirecting stock between company sites and external packers.
- Illicit Recycling Sales – Selling surplus materials to recycling centres and keeping the proceeds.
- Cover-up – Altering invoices to avoid internal audits.

June in brief | Rising food safety risks and regulatory change

July's developments highlight growing microbiological risks, with UK and Irish surveillance data showing continued increases in foodborne pathogens including Salmonella and Campylobacter. Major multi-country Salmonella outbreaks linked to instant noodles and sprouted seeds further reinforce the importance of robust supply chain controls and effective risk management.

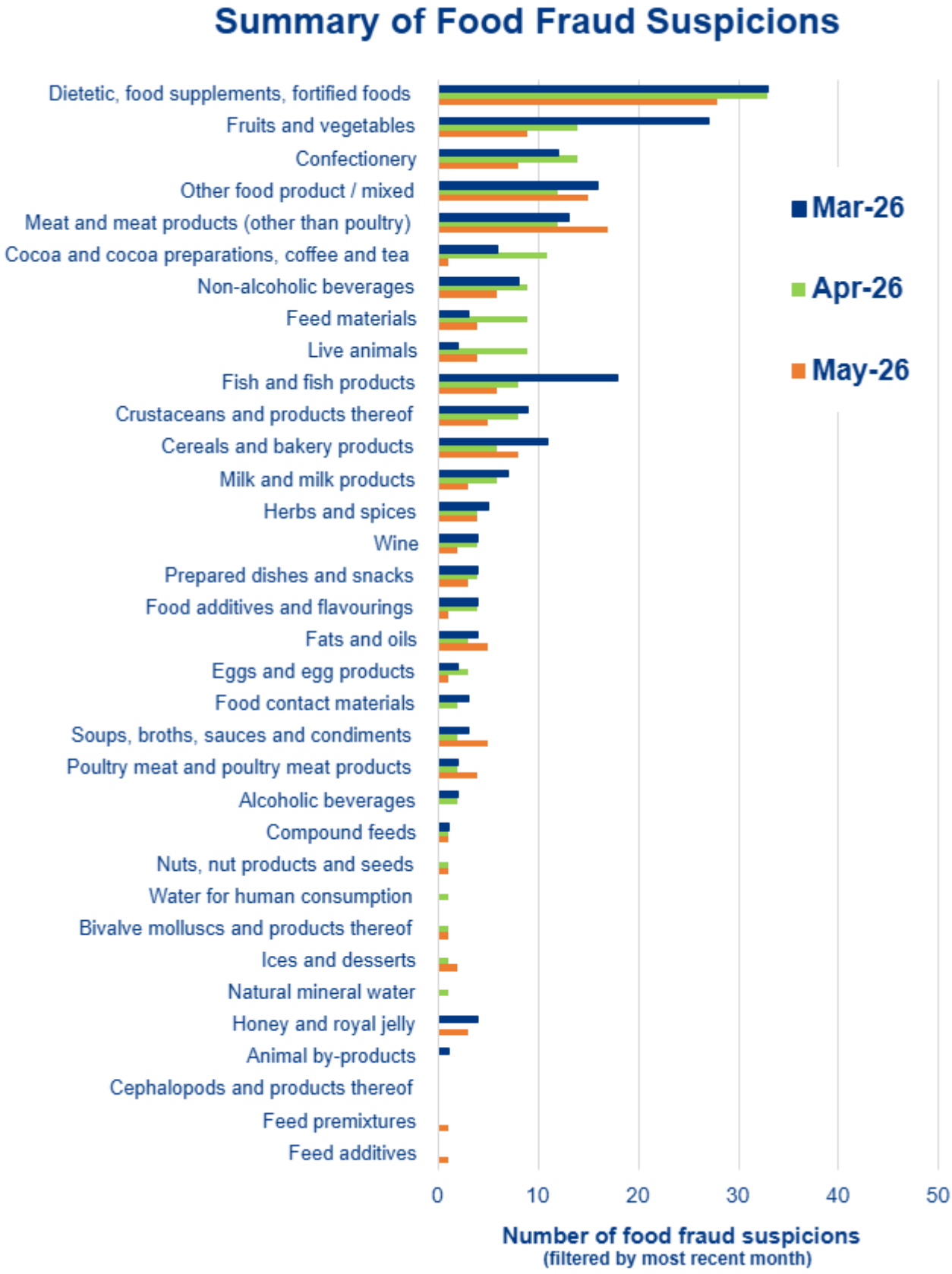
Regulatory activity remains high across both the UK and EU, with developments affecting UK-EU SPS alignment, cell-cultivated products, BPA restrictions and new contaminant limits. Businesses should continue to monitor the evolving regulatory landscape and assess the potential impact on compliance, labelling and market access.

Food fraud and authenticity risks also remain a key concern. Recent NFCU updates highlighted vulnerabilities affecting several supply chains, while enforcement actions relating to food mislabelling demonstrate continued regulatory scrutiny.

Emerging contaminant concerns, including increasing attention on TFA contamination, add further complexity to food safety risk management.

In an environment of increasing regulatory scrutiny and evolving food safety challenges, Eurofins Food Testing UK provides expert consultancy and testing services to help businesses strengthen compliance, manage risk and protect brand reputation

RASFF latest quarter's report



Source: https://food.ec.europa.eu/food-safety/acn/ffn-monthly_en

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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