

# HOT SOURCE

Global food integrity issues  
and emerging risks

October - December 2019

Q4



Original thinking... applied

[www.fera.co.uk/horizonscan](http://www.fera.co.uk/horizonscan)



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## Dear Reader

### 'Meat v Plant' - The New Debate for A New Decade

Approaching 7 years on from the horse meat food scandal, meat and lack of it are still very much featured into today's headlines. Recent figures from a Mintel survey of more than 1,000 adults in Great Britain suggested a total of 49% of those are interested in cutting down on their meat consumption said they would do so for health reasons, with weight management, animal welfare and environmental concerns also being big motivators.

The flipside to this is the meat industry has seen a significant increase on food fraud issues over the last quarter, up by 70% on Q3 and compared to the same period in 2018, a 42% increase has been seen. These have been fuelled by some real big headlines hitting the industry like in China's Guangdong Province, more than 70 tonnes of smuggled frozen meat from the United States, Brazil, Argentina and other countries were seized in several cases. Maywood, IL-based Morris Meat Packing recalled 515,000 pounds of various raw, intact pork products that were produced without the benefit of federal inspection. Beef and pork from Austria was suspected to be unfit to eat which had been distributed to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and the UK which resulted in 17 pigs and 1 cow slaughtered in Styria in late October as they were found not to have the required health marks. Ending the year was the

notification that The Bureau of Customs-Port of Manila (BOC-POM) seized two containers of mis-declared pork and other meat products from China estimated to be worth P3.5m, according to the initial report, the consignee declared the shipment as containing tomato paste and vermicelli.

All these incidents were highlighted in real-time via Fera's HorizonScan system. It plays a vital part in the sharing of intelligence and data on emerging and increasing food safety issues. HorizonScan houses data since 1999 to date, a web-based food safety alerting tool of raw material and global commodity issues (an API is also available for hooking into your ERP system) across all food integrity areas. The system will help keep you posted on hazard and risk assessments across all food sectors from around the world and specific issues that may concern you like fraud, microbial contaminants, residues of veterinary drugs, pesticide residues, mycotoxins, allergens, heavy metals, dioxins, PCBs and many more.

To find out more visit [www.fera.co.uk/horizonscan](http://www.fera.co.uk/horizonscan) or to request a demonstration of the system by the team, email: [knowledgesolutions@fera.co.uk](mailto:knowledgesolutions@fera.co.uk)

### The Fera Team

# Food fraud issues:

- A New York seafood company sold more than \$1 million worth of fraudulent octopus. Octopus and squid are distinct species of fish with great variance in their taxonomy, habitat, and physical characteristics. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration requires food companies selling squid to market it by its name or as calamari, while octopus is the only acceptable name when selling octopus. In general, octopus has a greater retail price than squid.
- In China's Guangdong Province, more than 70 tonnes of smuggled frozen meat from the United States, Brazil, Argentina and other countries was seized in several cases.
- Delhi Police carried out a raid in a factory manufacturing fake cumin seeds in the Bawana area of Delhi. The adulteration ingredients included stone dust, semolina and grass paste.
- Maywood, IL-based Morris Meat Packing is recalling 515,000 pounds of various raw, intact pork products that were produced without the benefit of federal inspection. These items were shipped to distributors and retail locations in Illinois.
- EUROPOL reveals that 5,789 kilograms of smuggled glass eels have been seized in Europe and 154 people arrested during the most recent fishing season (2018-2019) as a result of Operation Lake and Operation Fame. With an estimated value of €2,000 per kilogram, those smuggled eels were worth over €11.5 million. The operations brought together 10 European countries.
- Beef and pork from Austria that is suspected to be unfit to eat has been distributed to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Seventeen pigs and one cow that were slaughtered in Styria in late October were found not to have the required health marks.
- A study analysed the authenticity of almost 6,000 herbal products sold across 37 countries using DNA testing. It concluded that 27% of the samples did not contain what was claimed on the label.
- The Bureau of Customs-Port of Manila (BOC-POM) seized two containers of mis-declared pork and other meat products from China estimated to be worth P3.5m. Based on the initial report, the consignee declared the shipment as containing tomato paste and vermicelli.
- A Canadian seafood company has pleaded guilty to importing previously rejected fish into the United States.
- Police in Bangalore, India, have arrested two people on suspicion of making and selling counterfeits of two Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) tea powder products.
- Quality control officer of a meat supplier admits fabricating E. Coli test results. During an interview with a USDA's FSIS investigator, he admitted that the documents were fraudulent, and that his business did not collect and submit the samples to the certified laboratory.



## Emerging issues:

- Following the release of a RASFF report, an emerging issue has been picked up in HorizonScan concerning the presence of unauthorised genetically modified whole wheat in biscuits from China.
- An emerging issue has been picked up by HorizonScan regarding strawberry powder from China being exposed to radiation.
- Undesignated additive (cyclamid acid) has been reported on Radler Natur alcoholic beverage from Germany for the first time.
- Migration of cadmium (3.0, 2.9 mg/dm<sup>2</sup>) from mugs from Ukraine has been considered an emerging issue by HorizonScan.
- United States is reporting an emerging issue about Lead being detected in candies from Mexico.
- The recall of rice oil from Poland due to excessive levels of glycidyl esters and 3-monochloropropanediol has been considered an emerging issue for HorizonScan.
- Mineral oil (3.5 mg/kg - ppm) in infant formula manufactured in the United Kingdom, dispatched from Belgium, has been reported for the first time.
- An emerging issue has been picked up by HorizonScan regarding organic ground flax seeds from Slovenia with excessive hydrocyanic acid.

## Increasing issues:

- Greece has seen an increasing number of reports for Salmonella contamination in sesame seeds from Sudan.
- Salmonella in black pepper from Brazil is becoming an increasing risk in Europe. Germany, Spain, The Netherlands, France, Austria and the United Kingdom have been reporting incidences during the last three months.
- An increasing issue has been picked up in HorizonScan concerning the presence of aflatoxins in peanuts from United States.
- Number of reports alerting about unauthorised food additives in food and dietary supplements from United Kingdom has been increasing in the last quarter of the year.
- Italy is seeing an increase in the number of reports regarding parasitic infestation (Anisakis) in fish from France.



# Q4 results 2019

		Quarter change from Q3 2019	Annual change from Q4 2018
	Poultry & poultry products	↑ 37.3%	↑ 28.7%
	Seafood	→ 0.0%	↑ 10.3%
	Milk & dairy products	↑ 7.8%	↑ 11.6%
	Meat & meat products (excluding poultry)	↑ 70.0%	↑ 41.7%
	Herbs & spices	↓ 3.8%	↑ 58.7%
	Fruit & vegetables	↑ 22.9%	↑ 26.0%
	Nuts, nut products & seeds	↑ 15.0%	↓ 23.3%

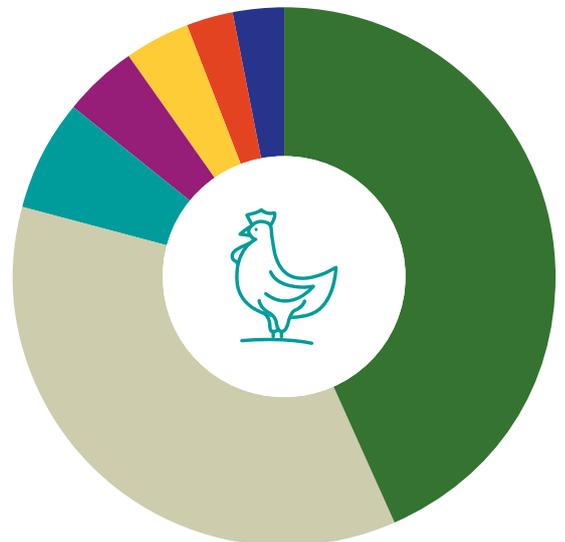


# Poultry meat and poultry products

Main issues reported during Q4 2019

## Total of 184 issues

Key	Commodity	%	Main issues
	Meat - chicken	41.8	<i>Salmonella</i>
	Meat products (pate, burgers etc)	34.2	<i>Salmonella</i>
	Eggs	6.5	<i>Salmonella</i>
	Meat - turkey	4.3	<i>Salmonella</i>
	Minced meat - (chicken)	3.8	<i>Salmonella</i>
	Meat - duck	2.7	<i>Listeria</i> or <i>Salmonella</i>
	Meat products (sausages)	2.7	Mislabelling



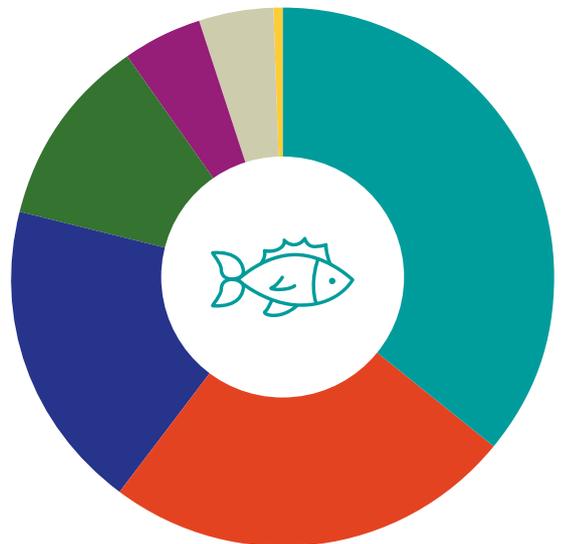


# Seafood

Main issues reported during Q4 2019

## Total of 290 issues

Key	Commodity	%	Main issues
<span style="color: teal;">●</span>	Fish - fresh/frozen	35.9	Histamine, altered organolepsis, nematodes or mercury
<span style="color: red;">●</span>	Crustaceans (crab, shrimps etc.)	24.5	Undeclared sulphites
<span style="color: blue;">●</span>	Fish - smoked/cured/dried	18.6	<i>Listeria</i> , histamine or processing issues
<span style="color: green;">●</span>	Bivalve molluscs (mussels etc.)	11.4	<i>E. coli</i> , <i>Salmonella</i> , norovirus or DSP
<span style="color: purple;">●</span>	Cephalopods (octopus, squid etc.)	4.8	Altered organolepsis or cadmium
<span style="color: grey;">●</span>	Other sea food	4.5	Aerobic colony count or unauthorised additive
<span style="color: yellow;">●</span>	Seaweed, algae, carrageenan	0.3	Iodine



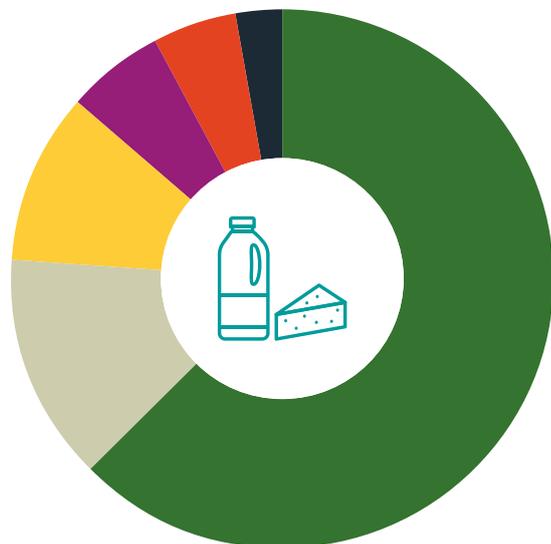


# Milk & dairy products

Main issues reported during Q4 2019

## Total of 125 issues

Key	Commodity	%	Main issues
●	Milk products - cheese	59.2	<i>Listeria</i> , <i>E. coli</i> or fungal moulds and yeasts
●	Milk - bovine (cow)	12.8	<i>B. cereus</i> or altered organolepsis
●	Milk products - ice-cream etc.	9.6	Undeclared allergens
●	Milk products - yoghurt	5.6	Foreign bodies
●	Milk products - others (e.g. caseins)	4.8	Fungal moulds and yeasts
●	Milk products - butter and ghee	2.4	Adulteration



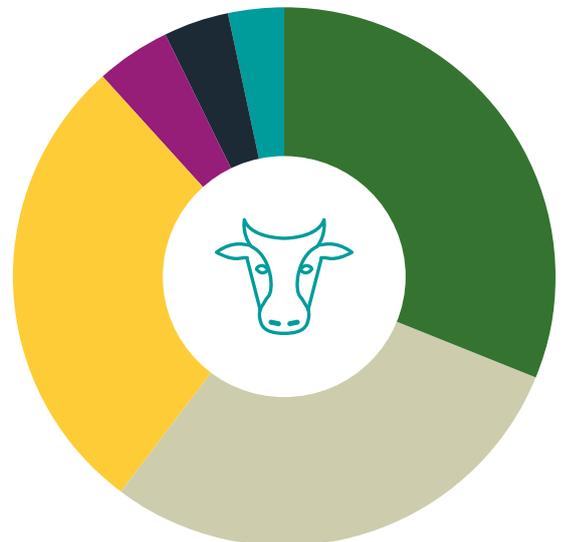


# Meat and meat products (other than poultry)

Main issues reported during Q4 2019

## Total of 323 issues

Key	Commodity	%	Main issues
	Meat - bovine (beef, veal, cow)	28.5	<i>E. coli</i>
	Meat products - preparations	26.9	<i>Listeria</i>
	Meat products - sausages	25.7	<i>Listeria</i>
	Minced meat - (beef, veal, cow)	4	Foreign bodies
	Meat products - pork hams	3.7	<i>Listeria</i> or altered organolepsis
	Meat - porcine (pork,pig)	2.8	Altered organolepsis





# Herbs & spices

Main issues reported during Q4 2019

## Total of 100 issues

Key	Commodity	%	Main issues
●	Pepper, black, pink and white	28	<i>Salmonella</i>
●	Spice mixtures & curry powder	26	Undeclared mustard or <i>Salmonella</i>
●	Paprika and chilli powder	10	Pesticides or aflatoxins
●	Cinnamon	5	<i>Bacillus cereus</i>
●	Paan leaves (Betel)	5	<i>E. coli</i>
●	Nutmeg whole and ground	5	Aflatoxins
●	Coriander leaves (cilantro)	4	Pesticides
●	Cumin seed and ground (jeera)	3	Undeclared gluten





## Fruit & vegetables

### Main issues reported during Q4 2019

#### Total of 359 issues

Key	Commodity	%	Main issues
<span style="color: green;">●</span>	Figs - dried	13.6	Aflatoxins or ochratoxin A
<span style="color: red;">●</span>	Peppers (sweet or bell)	8.1	Pesticides
<span style="color: blue;">●</span>	Prepared fresh vegetables	5.6	<i>Listeria</i>
<span style="color: yellow;">●</span>	Other dried or candied/mixed fruits	3.9	Undeclared sulphite
<span style="color: purple;">●</span>	Vine fruits - raisins	3.3	Ochratoxin A
<span style="color: black;">●</span>	Okra (bhindi, gumbo, ladies fingers)	3.1	Pesticides
<span style="color: grey;">●</span>	Chilli peppers - fresh or dried	3.1	Pesticides
<span style="color: teal;">●</span>	Dates - dried	2.2	Pesticides, moulds or undeclared sulphites
<span style="color: olive;">●</span>	Apricots - dried	2.2	Undeclared sulphites
<span style="color: lightgrey;">●</span>	Beans (dry)	2.2	Pesticides





# Nuts, nut products and seeds

Main issues reported during Q4 2019

## Total of 92 issues

Key	Commodity	%	Main issues
●	Almonds including ground almonds	29.3	Aflatoxins
●	Pistachios	17.4	Aflatoxins
●	Coconut - other products (yoghurt)	9.8	Undeclared gluten or milk
●	Hazelnuts	7.6	Aflatoxins
●	Other tree nuts & mixed nuts	6.5	Aflatoxins
●	Nut spreads and butters	5.4	Undeclared multiple allergens
●	Other sprouted seeds	4.3	<i>E. coli</i>
●	Chia seeds	3.3	Foreign bodies, aflatoxins or infestation
●	Apricot kernels	3.3	Aflatoxins





## KEY

'%' relates to the number of issues concerning that commodity in its group, for example 28.4% of all issues concerning nuts, nut products and seeds involved pistachios.

'Main issues' reflects the majority of issues reported for that commodity, but does not include every minor issue, for example, most reported issues concerning chicken meat were either the presence of *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter* or *Listeria*.

'Issues' relates to food recalls, border rejections and other such notifications at a global level collated from over 90 official government and other additional reliable sources around the world.

For further information or a demonstration from the team on HorizonScan, contact the Team on;

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