

January 2025

Monthly Summary of Articles on Food Fraud and Adulteration

Retrieved mainly from the JRC tool Medisys (<http://medisys.newsbrief.eu>)



Disclaimer: The presentation of articles reflects their media coverage. In any case, it does not reflect the frequency of food fraud in a particular country and/or concerning a specific food product. The European Commission does not take any responsibility for the validity of the information extracted from the media channels scanned. The views expressed shall not be regarded as stating an official position of the European Commission.

Food Fraud Cases

The Australian Border Force has seized 12 illegal fishing boats in a single month, highlighting the ongoing issue of unauthorised fishing in Australian waters (ref: not available). The affected territory was Australia, specifically its maritime borders.

09/12/2024 - 09/01/2025 [maritime-executive](#)

-  Australia
-  Fish and fish products
-  Grey market



The authorities have seized 400 quintals of contraband maize in a crackdown on smuggling and food fraud. The seized maize is believed to have been imported illegally, avoiding customs controls and taxes.

04/01/2025 [elpais](#)

-  Bolivia
-  Cereals and bakery products
-  Grey market




The Carabinieri have seized 100 kg of chocolate products in the Caserta area, which were being sold without labels or proper certification. The seizure was part of a crackdown on counterfeit and abusive products being sold during the Befana celebrations.

04/01/2025 [fanpage](#) [casertanews](#) [casertace](#)

-  Italy
-  Cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea
-  Misdescription/ Mislabelling/ Misbranding

An investigation has uncovered a case of food fraud involving the sale of fake organic ricotta cheese in large retail stores. The counterfeit product was found to be mislabelled and did not meet the required standards for organic certification.

04/01/2025 [ilsole24ore](#)

-  Italy
-  Milk and milk products
-  Counterfeit Misdescription/ Mislabelling/ Misbranding

The customs authorities in Burkina Faso have intercepted more than 23 trucks carrying illicit goods, including food products. The seizure is part of an effort to combat smuggling and ensure the safety of consumer goods.

07/01/2025 [abidjantv](#)

-  Burkina Faso
-  Cereals and bakery products
-  Grey market

A significant quantity of high-quality fish was seized in Manfredonia, Italy, as it did not meet food safety and traceability standards.

07/01/2025 [lagazzettadelmezzogiorno](#) [antennasud](#)



Italy



Cephalopods and products thereof
Crustaceans and products thereof



Document forgery
Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

The Carabinieri NAS have carried out a series of food safety controls in the province of Brindisi, resulting in seizures and closures of food establishments.

07/01/2025 [brindisireport](#) [buonasera24](#) [antennasud](#)



Italy



Confectionery
Fish and fish products



Document forgery
Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

A significant anti-fraud operation has been conducted in the Puglia region of Italy, targeting the production and sale of counterfeit and adulterated olive oil. The operation, which was carried out by law enforcement agencies, aimed to protect consumers and legitimate producers from food fraud and to ensure the authenticity and quality of olive oil products.

07/01/2025 [olivoeolio](#)



Italy



Fats and oils



Adulteration/ Product tampering
Counterfeit

The gendarmes of Val-de-Briey have seized 6 284 bottles of alcohol, valued at approximately EUR 54 000.

10/01/2025 [republicain-lorrain](#)



France



Alcoholic beverages



Grey market

The Italian Coast Guard has conducted an operation to combat illegal fishing and food fraud in the regions of Palermo, Agrigento, and Mazara del Vallo. The operation resulted in the seizure of over 133 tonnes of fish products, including 100 tonnes in the Palermo area, and the issuance of 77 administrative sanctions worth EUR 117 533.

10/01/2025 [palermotoday](#)



Italy



Crustaceans and products thereof



Fish and fish products
Grey market

The Italian Coast Guard has carried out an operation to protect Italian fish products and marine resources. The operation resulted in the seizure of 20 tonnes of anchovies in Sciacca, as well as denunciations and seizures in other locations. The Coast Guard also intercepted a Tunisian fishing vessel in Italian waters and seized 100 kg of fish products and 2 000 meters of fishing nets.

10/01/2025 [agrigentonotizie](#)



Italy



Fish and fish products



Document forgery
Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

The Peruvian National Police have raided a house in the Ceres urbanization, Ate district, Lima, which was being used as a factory to produce counterfeit liquor. The volume or weight involved is approximately 3 000 bottles of adulterated liquor.

10/01/2025 [rpp](#)



Peru



Alcoholic beverages



Adulteration/ Product tampering
Grey market

The Ivorian authorities have seized 2.5 tonnes of coffee during an operation as part of the "Épervier 10" initiative, dealing a significant blow to a network of coffee traffickers.

11/01/2025 [abidjanty](#)



Côte d'Ivoire



Cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea

The Italian Financial Police have seized 8.5 tonnes of fish, worth over EUR 100 000, due to lack of traceability and poor preservation. The affected territory is Italy, specifically the province of Palermo.

11/01/2025 [grandangoloagrigeno](#)

The local police of Reggio Calabria have seized approximately 150 kg of food products and imposed fines totaling EUR 17 000 on four unauthorized vendors operating in the area of Piazza del Popolo.

11/01/2025 [reggiotoday](#)

The Guardia Civil's Seprona unit in Tenerife has seized 350 kg of Hass avocados due to the lack of traceability labels and uncertain sanitary conditions.

11/01/2025 [eldia](#)

The civil police of Maranhão, Brazil, have seized a shipment of 178 bundles of counterfeit hybrid maize seeds, weighing approximately 170 bundles, in the city of Caxias.

13/01/2025 [g1.globo](#) [imirante](#)

The Guardia Civil's Seprona unit has dismantled a bluefin tuna-poaching scheme in Marbella, Spain, involving three National Police officers and five other individuals, resulting in the seizure of approximately 16 bluefin tuna, weighing between 70 kg and over 200 kg each.

13/01/2025 [surinenglish](#)

The South African Police Service (SAPS) has intercepted a major smuggling operation near the Limpopo River, including alcoholic beverages, energy drinks, baked goods, and other consumer goods.

13/01/2025 [thesouthafrican](#)

The Turkish authorities have detained 46 suspects and seized over 50 000 litres of counterfeit and ethyl alcohol, as well as 4 000 counterfeit tax stamps, in a nationwide operation targeting counterfeit alcohol producers.

13/01/2025 [famaagusta-gazette](#)

A raid by the Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force (STF) in Madiyaon uncovered a large-scale food fraud operation, resulting in the seizure of over 11 000 kg of adulterated tea leaves mixed with harmful chemicals.

14/01/2025 [hindustantimes](#)

Paraguayan authorities have seized 15 tonnes of smuggled chicken from Brazil due to lack of proper documentation and sanitary registration. The seizure occurred at a control post in the Caaguazú department, and the driver and accompanying individual have been detained.

14/01/2025 [swissinfo](#)



Grey market



Italy



Fish and fish products



Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding



Italy



Other food products/
mixed



Document forgery
Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding



Spain



Fruits and vegetables



Grey market



Brazil



Nuts, nut products and
seeds
Counterfeit



Spain



Fish and fish products



Grey market



South Africa



Other food products/
mixed



Grey market



Türkiye



Alcoholic beverages



Counterfeit



India



Herbs and spices



Adulteration/ Product
tampering



Paraguay



Poultry meat and poultry
meat products



Grey market

A series of tragic incidents have occurred in Istanbul, Turkey, where at least 11 people have died after consuming adulterated alcohol. The tainted liquor is believed to have contained methanol, a toxic substance that can cause serious health problems, including death. The death toll has risen to 19, according to some reports.

14/01/2025 - 15/01/2025 [noticiasaminuto](#) [leparisien](#) [sapo](#) [diariosigloxxi](#) [noticiasde](#)
[menafn](#) [quotidiano](#) [cbsnews](#)



Türkiye



Alcoholic beverages



Adulteration/ Product tampering

Swedish authorities have blocked the sale of a "fai da te" (homemade) grappa that improperly carried a geographical indication of an Italian region. The control operation has revealed that the product did not meet quality and authenticity standards for grappa.

15/01/2025 [winenews](#)



Italy
Sweden



Alcoholic beverages



Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

The Malaysian customs authority has seized a significant quantity of alcoholic beverages at Port Klang. The seizure consisted of 52 790 cans of beer, equivalent to 26 395 litres, which had been imported from an East Asian country and classified as prohibited goods.

15/01/2025 [thestar](#)



Malaysia



Alcoholic beverages



Grey market

The Ghanaian Police have arrested three suspects in connection with the alleged smuggling of cocoa beans to neighbouring countries, specifically Togo or Burkina Faso. The suspects included a driver and two driver's mates of three heavy-duty trucks that were carrying 1 473 maxi bags of cocoa beans covered with lumber.

16/01/2025 [myjoyonline](#)



Ghana



Cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea



Grey market

The Paraguayan authorities have seized 15 000 kg of smuggled chicken in the Caaguazú region. The chicken was not refrigerated and lacked proper documentation, posing a significant risk to consumers.

16/01/2025 [caritas](#)



Paraguay



Poultry meat and poultry meat products



Grey market

A joint operation between the National Directorate of Tax Revenue (DNIT), the National Service for Plant and Seed Quality and Health (Senave), and the National Police, has resulted in the seizure of approximately 20 240 kg of tomatoes that were smuggled into the country.

17/01/2025 [lanacion](#)



Paraguay



Fruits and vegetables



Document forgery
Grey market

Ivorian authorities have seized over 25 tonnes of cocoa that were being transported illegally. The control operation has revealed that the cocoa did not meet quality and food safety standards.

19/01/2025 [abidjantv](#)



Côte d'Ivoire



Cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea



Grey market

French authorities have seized a large quantity of adulterated honey, known as "erectile honey", which contained sildenafil and tadalafil, substances used to treat erectile dysfunction. The honey, believed to have been imported from outside the European Union, was discovered in an attempt to introduce it into the French market. Authorities have issued a warning to consumers and alerted them to the health risks associated with consuming this product.

20/01/2025 [douane](#) [ilgiornale](#) [fortuneita](#) [article](#) [executivedigest](#) [cnnspanol](#)
[lepoint](#) [rifday](#) [vice](#) [euronews](#)



France



Honey and royal jelly



Adulteration/ Product tampering

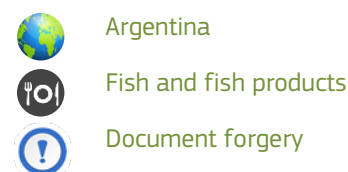
The Philippine Department of Agriculture has filed a complaint against an importer, Betron Consumer Goods Trading, for allegedly smuggling P20.8 million worth of carrots and white onions into the country through the Port of Subic. The smuggled goods were found to contain traces of E. coli and unregistered pesticide residues, posing a risk to public health.

20/01/2025 [philstar](#)



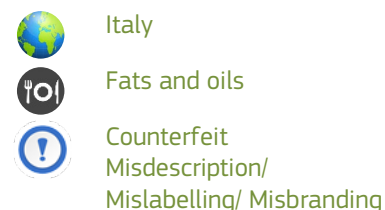
Argentine authorities have seized 3000 sabalos, a type of fish, in an environmental control operation in the city of Rosario. The seizure took place at the Girsu complex, in the Arroyo Seco neighbourhood, and it is suspected that the fish were illegal and did not meet the standards of quality and food safety.

22/01/2025 [ellitoral](#)



Italian authorities have seized a significant quantity of adulterated olive oil in the Lecce region, southern Italy. The oil, which was sold as "extra virgin", was actually a blend of refined oils and did not meet the quality standards to be considered "extra virgin". The seized quantity amounts to 2 200 litres.

22/01/2025 [lecceprima](#) [teatronaturale](#)



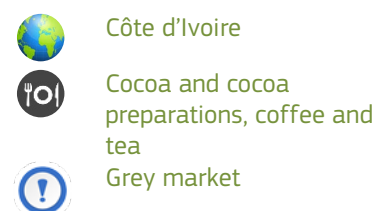
Italian authorities have seized a significant quantity of adulterated wine from a winery in the Caserta region. The wine, which was sold with an PGI label, was produced in unsanitary conditions and sold at a high price. The winery has been seized and investigations have been launched to determine the extent of the fraud.

22/01/2025 [edizionecaserta](#) [ottopagine](#) [fanpage](#)



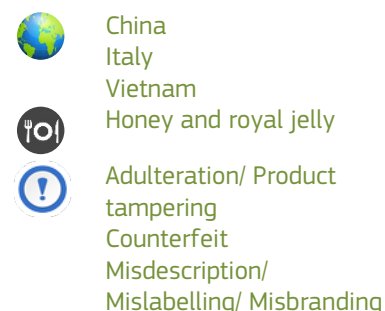
Ivorian authorities have seized over 29 tonnes of cocoa that were being transported illegally. The control operation has revealed that the cocoa did not meet quality and food safety standards.

23/01/2025 [ivoirematin](#)



Italian authorities have seized 22 tonnes of untraceable honey and 35 tonnes of questionable sugar substance in the Vicenza region. The honey, which originated from China and Vietnam, did not meet quality and food safety standards, and it is suspected that a non-biological sugar substance was used to feed the bees. The joint control operation has revealed criminal and administrative irregularities in the agri-food chain.

24/01/2025 [agenparl](#) [ildolomiti](#) [ecovicentino](#) [garantitaly](#)



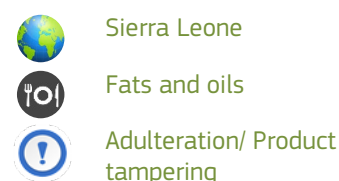
Italian authorities have shut down four livestock companies in the Sassari region, Sardinia, after discovering that they had untraceable livestock. The companies have been fined a total of EUR 100 000 for failing to comply with traceability and food safety regulations.

24/01/2025 [lanuovasardegna](#)



The Sierra Leone police have seized 240 containers of palm oil, salt and chemicals that were being stored illegally. The control operation has revealed that the products did not meet quality and food safety standards.

31/01/2025 [sierraloaded](#)



Other interesting articles

Report on EU agri-food fraud suspicions

"Monthly reports on Agri-Food Fraud Monthly suspicions" displaying the necessary information concerning fraud suspicions retrieved from the Alert and Cooperation Network.

[FFN monthly - European Commission](#)



EU



Food

The Food Fraud Monthly Report is drafted by the JRC Geel Unit F.4 "Food Integrity" with the support of the JRC Ispra Unit T.5 "Text and Data Mining".

It serves the same interests as the JRC report but is based on EUMS notifications. More at: [FFN monthly - European Commission](#) (europa.eu)

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