

March 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

A crackdown on counterfeit alcohol, codenamed "Operation Çengel-17", has resulted in the arrest of 28 individuals and the seizure of 98 600 l of adulterated ethyl alcohol. The alcohol had been disguised with "Surface Cleaner" labels and distributed across four provinces in Turkey, centred around Bursa. The operation aimed to prevent the deaths of hundreds of people due to consumption of counterfeit alcohol.

01/03/2025 [haberler](#)



Türkiye



Alcoholic beverages



Adulteration/ Product tampering

Authorities in Côte d'Ivoire have seized 75 tonnes of cocoa intended for smuggling. The operation aims to combat tax evasion and protect the national economy.

05/03/2025 [afrique-sur](#)



Côte d'Ivoire



Cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea



Grey market

Sri Lankan authorities have seized a stock of contaminated wheat flour after detecting high levels of mould and other contaminants. The operation aims to protect public health and prevent the distribution of adulterated food products.

06/03/2025 [srilankamirror](#)



Sri Lanka



Cereals and bakery products



Misdescription/ Mislabelling/ Misbranding

Bolivian authorities have seized a large quantity of smuggled food and fuel, valued at nearly EUR 510 000. The operation was carried out in different parts of the country and confiscated products such as oil, rice, sugar, flour and fuel.

14/03/2025 [elpais](#)



Bolivia



Other food products/ mixed



Grey market

Pakistan's Food Authority has destroyed 315 000 l of adulterated milk.

14/03/2025 [urdupoint](#)



Pakistan



Milk and milk products



Adulteration/ Product tampering

Gauteng police in South Africa have seized a large quantity of counterfeit alcohol, valued at over EUR 45 000. Two people have been arrested in connection with the case. The operation was carried out in an effort to combat the production and distribution of illegal alcohol in the region.

14/03/2025 [citizen](#)



South Africa



Alcoholic beverages



Adulteration/ Product tampering

Swiss authorities have uncovered a case of meat smuggling, with a total of 208 t of meat of unknown origin. The investigation took place in 2024 and is looking into the origin and route of the smuggled meat.

14/03/2025 [ticinonews](#) [swissinfo](#) [schwaebische](#)



Switzerland



Meat and meat products (other than poultry)



Grey market

Turkey's Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has updated the list of honey products that do not meet quality standards. The list includes several famous honey brands that have been found to be adulterated and contaminated.

16/03/2025 [haberler](#)



Türkiye



Honey and royal jelly



Adulteration/ Product tampering
Counterfeit

Brazilian police have dismantled a factory producing counterfeit olive oil in the coastal region of São Paulo, Brazil. The operation was carried out after an investigation revealed the production and distribution of adulterated olive oil in the region.

17/03/2025 [g1.globo](#)



Brazil



Fats and oils



Adulteration/ Product tampering

Italian police have seized 700 kg of food products without traceability and not suitable for consumption from a street vendor in Calabria, Italy.

16/03/2025 [quicosenza](#)



Italy



Food



Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

Italian authorities have carried out checks in Catania and detected several cases of fish without traceability, as well as other suspicious food products. Fines have been imposed and products seized for a total value of EUR 11 000.

17/03/2025 [catania.gds](#) [lasiciliaweb](#) [ilsicilia](#) [cataniatoday](#)



Italy



Fish and fish products



Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

Malaysian police have arrested two individuals attempting to smuggle 40 t of white rice.

17/03/2025 [thestar](#)



Malaysia



Cereals and bakery products



Grey market

The egg shortage crisis in the United States has led to an increase in egg smuggling from Mexico. United States authorities have reported a surge in egg seizures at the border, even surpassing the amount of fentanyl seized. High egg prices in the United States have created a lucrative market for smugglers, who are taking advantage of the situation to illegally introduce eggs into the country.

17/03/2025 [ecosdanoticia](#) [nypost](#) [rpp](#) [tgcom24](#) [tf1info](#) [g1.globo](#) [istoe](#) [noticias](#) [fox5sandiego](#)



United States



Eggs and egg products



Grey market

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has recalled over 60 000 bags of a popular brand of potato chips that were distributed in three states. The recall was due to the presence of an undeclared ingredient in the product.

17/03/2025 [infobae](#)



United States



Prepared dishes and snacks



Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

Brazilian authorities have seized over 40 t of counterfeit olive oil, equivalent to approximately 10 800 l, in São Paulo, and four individuals have been arrested in connection with the case, highlighting concerns over food safety and authenticity.

18/03/2025 [noticias.uol](#) [exame](#)



Brazil



Fats and oils



Counterfeit
Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

The Colombian police have seized over 20 000 bottles of adulterated alcohol in an operation against food fraud. The alcohol is believed to have been produced illegally and did not meet quality and food safety standards.

18/03/2025 [eluniversal](#)



Colombia



Alcoholic beverages



Adulteration/ Product
tampering

The KwaZulu-Natal police in South Africa have seized a large quantity of counterfeit alcohol, valued at EUR 70 000, and dismantled an illegal alcohol factory. One suspect has been arrested in connection with the case.

18/03/2025 [citizen](#) [iol](#)



South Africa



Alcoholic beverages



Adulteration/ Product
tampering

A criminal complaint has been filed in relation to the production and distribution of bread that does not meet safety and public health standards in Argentina. The complaint focuses on crimes against public safety and health, and an investigation has been launched to determine the responsibility of those involved.

19/03/2025 [eldiariodelarepublica](#)



Argentina



Cereals and bakery
products



Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

Italian police have seized 11.5 t of Indo-Pacific octopuses at the port of Venice, Italy. The importer has been fined for the infraction, as the octopuses did not meet food safety standards and had not been declared correctly.

20/03/2025 [ilgazzettino](#)



Italy



Cephalopods and
products thereof



Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

Sri Lankan police have intercepted a truck carrying a load of low-quality tea, known as "refuse tea", which is believed to have been intended for sale in the market as high-quality tea. The load has been seized and the case is being investigated.

21/03/2025 [island](#)



Sri Lanka



Cocoa and cocoa
preparations, coffee and
tea



Adulteration/ Product
tampering

Cambodian authorities have seized over 25 000 chicken eggs that were illegally imported from Vietnam. The seizure was part of an operation to combat food smuggling in the country.

26/03/2025 [khmertimeskh](#)



Cambodia



Eggs and egg products



Grey market

The Nigerian Customs Service has seized 3 832 bags of contraband rice within a month. The seizures were made at various entry points across the country and the total value of the seized rice is estimated to be substantial.

27/03/2025 [premiumtimesng](#)



Nigeria



Cereals and bakery
products



Grey market

Brazilian police have detained a truck driver who was transporting 2 000 bottles of wine without a tax invoice and 750 l of an olive oil brand banned in Brazil. The cargo was found in a truck that was traveling through the Santos region in the state of São Paulo.

28/03/2025 [g1.globo](#)



Brazil



Fats and oils
Wine



Grey market

The United States FDA has recalled 4 000 bags of Traverse City Cherry Coffee due to a labeling error and the presence of an undeclared ingredient. The recall has been carried out in 15 states across the country.

29/03/2025 [mlive](#) [larepublica](#)



United States



Cocoa and cocoa preparations, coffee and tea



Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

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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