

Monthly Summary of Articles on Food Fraud and Adulteration

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Food Fraud Cases

A local Malaysian journal discovered a huge fraud case involving fake “halal” certifications. For more than 40 years, the criminal cartel have bribed customs officials to smuggle cheap and non-halal meat mislabelled as “halal”, thus increasing its value for the Muslim consumers. The agents seized 1 500 tons of frozen meat (including kangaroo and horse), together with fake labels and rubber stamps. The cartel also utilised the logo of a company famous for its highly-demanded products.

[New Straits Times](#) 21/12/2020

[New Straits Times](#) 22/12/2020

[Mashable](#) 23/12/2020

[The Straits Times - Malay Mail - New Straits Times](#) 29/12/2020

[Bloomberg](#) [SCMP](#) 30/12/2020

[The Straits Times](#) 02/01/2021

[Daily Muslin](#) 05/01/2021

[Malay Mail](#) 12/01/2021

[Malay Mail](#)

[Food Safety Tech](#) 19/01/2021

The Spanish Civil Guard seized 15 tons of grapes mislabelled as organic (total value of 24 000 euros). The products should be shipped to companies in Spain and France.

[The Olive Press](#) 11/01/2021

[Informacion](#) 11/01/2021

[Fresh Plaza](#) 12/01/2021

The Indian authorities seized almost 10 tons of lollipops and candies (for children) adulterated with talcum powder.

[India.com](#) 13/01/2021

[Business Today](#) 14/01/2021

According to the Bulgarian National Potato Growers Association, French and German potatoes are imported in their country and mislabelled as “Origin: Bulgarian”. The average price for imported potatoes (4-6 cents/kg) is usually half of the Bulgarian ones (11 cents/kg).

[Novinite](#) 15/01/2021

[Food Focus](#) 19/01/2021



Malaysia



Meat and meat products (other than poultry)
Poultry meat and poultry meat products



IPR – Intellectual property rights
Mislabelling
Replacement/ dilution/ addition/ removal



Spain



Fruits and vegetables



Mislabelling



India



Confectionery



Unapproved treatment and/or process



Bulgaria



Fruits and vegetables



Mislabelling

The Italian authorities seized almost 2 tons of cheese and more than 100 kg of dried tomatoes lacking the required documentation or label. Hygienic standards were also not respected.

[Casteddu Online](#) 19/01/2021

[Ansa](#) 19/01/2021

Two Italian companies have been caught selling low-quality apple juice mislabelled as “organic” and containing expired fruits (with high levels of mycotoxins) and unauthorised substances (e.g. sugar, plant protection products). Within the operation “Bad Juice” the authorities seized 1 411 tons of products, for a total value of 5 million euros.

[Il Dolomiti](#) 19/01/2021

The Spanish authorities denounced a dairy company producing mozzarella from buffalo’s and cow’s milk, but mislabelled as “100% buffalo mozzarella”, which is a GI product.

[EFA News - Zazoom - Anteprima24](#) 19/01/2021

The Jordan Food and Drug Administration (JFDA) seized 27 tons of powdered milk and cheese, with falsified nutrition labels, all over the country. The products were apparently not suitable for human consumption as well.

[Petra Gov](#) 21/01/2021

The Indian police uncovered an organisation producing fake turmeric and chilli powder starting from chemicals and waste materials (e.g. wood dust and rice powder). Products were misbranded with the logo of a popular company before entering the market.

[Times of India](#) 22/01/2021

The Spanish Civil Guard seized 122 tons of meat (poultry, beef, pork, rabbit) unfit for human consumption, and mislabelled in terms of freshness (e.g. expiry date), origin and organic labels. The authorities are currently investigating ten companies.

[Euro Weekly News](#) 24/01/2021

[The Olive Press](#) 25/01/2021

[Food Safety News](#) 27/01/2021

As part of the “Operation Hitsmo”, the Spanish authorities seized 225 000 bottles of counterfeit rum (total value of 3.5 million euros) together with the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). The criminals produced fake labels from three famous brands of rum in Spain.

[Food Safety News](#) 27/01/2021

[Securing Industry](#) 28/01/2021

-  Italy
-  Fruits and vegetables
-  Milk and milk products
-  Documents

-  Italy
-  Non-alcoholic beverages
-  Mislabelling
-  Unapproved treatment and/or process

-  Spain
-  Milk and milk products
-  IPR – Intellectual property rights

-  Jordan
-  Milk and milk products
-  Mislabelling

-  India
-  Herbs and spices
-  Counterfeit
-  IPR – Intellectual property rights

-  Spain
-  Meat and meat products (other than poultry)
-  Poultry meat and poultry meat products
-  Mislabelling

-  Spain
-  Alcoholic beverages
-  Counterfeit

According to a collective action, in Colombia many companies replace part of their milk with whey, a liquid by-product resulting from the production of cheese.

[Caracol](#) 27/1/2021

[Occidente](#) 28/01/2021



Colombia



Milk and milk products



Replacement/ dilution/ addition/ removal

The Italian authorities seized 2 tons of fish missing the required traceability documentation.

[Giornale di Sicilia](#) 28/01/2021



Italy



Fish and fish products



Documents

The Italian authorities seized 6.5 tons of processed meat products, which were sold by a supermarket without respecting the traceability legislation.

[Latina Today](#) 30/01/2021



Italy



Meat and meat products (other than poultry)



Documents

Other interesting articles

2/01/2021 – PFA report summarising the 2020 activities

In 2020 the Punjab Food Authority (PFA) discarded 3.5 million litres of adulterated milk and 120 tons of blended spices.

[The News](#)

[The News](#)



Pakistan



Herbs and spices

Milk and milk products

08/01/2021 – A summary of food fraud cases from 2020

An article from an online magazine summarizes the most relevant food fraud cases that occurred during 2020.

[Food Safety Tech](#)



World



Food

08/01/2021 – New insights on food fraud perception from the Eurobarometer

The EU Commission published the new Eurobarometer “*Making our food fit for the future – Citizens’ expectations*” carried out by Kantar with 27 000 interviews in 27 EU Member States. Concerning food fraud, the majority of consumers are worried of: 1) being misled about the true qualities of a food; 2) possible threats to their health (e.g. toxic substances).

[Eurobarometer \(PDF\)](#)

[Food Safety News](#)

[Le Blogaa](#)



EU



Food

20/01/2021 – An overview of frauds in the olive oil sector

JRC staff contributed to a recent scientific review discussing the food frauds affecting olive oil, as well as current and future ways to tackle the phenomenon.

[Food Control](#)



EU



Fats and oils

14/01/2021 – Food fraud in the honey sector

A popular online magazine highlights the challenges in the honey sector, with a special focus on adulteration practices from China affecting the global honey chain.

[Wired](#)

[Il Fatto Alimentare](#)



World



Honey and royal jelly

28/01/2021 – Food fraud on the rise in UK

According to a report from the Food Authenticity Network, during the Covid-19 pandemic food fraud cases related to adulteration (+30%) and counterfeit (+47%) increased. Most affected categories include spirits, wine and honey.

[The Grocer](#)



UK



Food

28/01/2021 – USA Consumers against seafood fraud, poll reports

According to Oceana, the vast majority of USA consumers and politicians would support policies against frauds in the seafood sector and in favour of similar standards between domestic and imported products.

[Market Screener](#)



USA



Bivalve molluscs and products thereof
Cephalopods and products thereof
Crustaceans and products thereof
Fish and fish products
Gastropods

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.

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