

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

In the “Operation Garden”, the Guardia Civil dismantled a criminal group selling since 2013 fake saffron, which was in reality modified gardenia extracts imported from China. The criminals invented an innovative technique aiming at almost eliminating the only molecule distinguishing saffron from gardenia. Harvest price for gardenia is ten times lower than for saffron; anyhow, gardenia is not considered a food in the European Union. Labels and customs documentation were falsified as well. The authorities seized 2 tons of fake saffron (total value of more than 750 000 Euros).

[Euro Weekly News](#) [RTVE](#) (min 31) [Antena3](#) [Bullfrag](#)
[Securing Industry](#) [Food Safety News](#) [Green Me](#)

-  Spain/ China
-  Herbs and spices
-  Adulteration/ Product tampering
Document forgery




The authorities have redistributed to the residents 53 000 litres of contraband alcohol confiscated from smugglers.

[News in Cyprus](#)

-  Cyprus
-  Alcoholic beverages
-  Grey market

In 2021, the customs at the Vienna airport seized in total almost 4 tons of contraband animal products: milk and milk products (2 tons), meat and meat products (1.8 tons), fish, honey and other animal-based food, as well as 3 400 litres of illegally imported alcohol.

[Noen](#) [Bvz](#) [Orf](#)

-  Austria
-  Alcoholic beverages
Fish and fish products
Honey and royal jelly
Meat and meat products (other than poultry)
Milk and milk products
Poultry meat and poultry meat products
-  Grey market

The Financial Guard seized 4 500 bottles of contraband alcoholic beverages (e.g. whisky, tequila, rum, vodka and beer) imported from Brazil, Argentina, Cuba, Mexico and Colombia.

[Msn](#) [Ciao Como](#) [Espansione TV](#) [el Nacional](#) [Union Radio](#)
[El Universo](#) [Infobae](#)

 Italy
 Alcoholic beverages
 Grey market

The authorities seized in total 39.4 tons of rice intended for the public distribution system.

[The Hindu](#) [The Hindu](#) [The Hindu](#) [Times of India](#) [The Hindu](#)
[The Hindu](#)

 India
 Cereals and bakery products
 Grey market

In another operation, 10 tons of rice illegally kept were seized as well.

[The Hindu](#)



The National Gendarmerie seized 69 tons of contraband corn and 30 tons of contraband soybean.

[Perfil](#)

 Argentina
 Cereals and bakery products
Fruits and vegetables
 Grey market

The Spanish Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition (Aesan) has launched an alert regarding the clandestine production of fake olive oil and extra-virgin olive oil actually containing a mix of other vegetable oils. Additionally, those products are not considered safe for human consumption as they lack proper traceability.

[AESAN](#) [Alimente](#) [Bullfrag](#) [Granada Hoy](#) [Europa Sur](#)
[el Dia de Cordoba](#) [Diario de Jerez](#) [Deia](#) [Diario de Sevilla](#)
[Telemadrid](#) [el Diario](#) [Diario de Almeria](#) [Rtve](#)
[La Opinion de Murcia](#) [El Mundo](#) [Agrodiario](#) [Diario de Sevilla](#)
[Granada Hoy](#) [el Dia de Cordoba](#) [Europasur](#) [Diario de Jerez](#)
[Diario de Almeria](#) [Huffingtonpost](#) [el Espanol](#) [La Voz de Cadiz](#)
[ABCdesevilla](#) [ABC](#) [Bolsamania](#) [Diariovasco](#) [La](#)
[Razon](#) [Agropopular](#) [Agrodigital](#) [Revista alimentaria](#) [El](#)
[Mundo](#) [ABC Sevilla](#) [Tellerreport](#) [Murcia Economia](#)
[Nius Diario](#) [Salamanca rtv al dia](#) [Sevilla Actualidad](#)
[65ymas](#) [Diario de Navarra](#) [20 minutos](#) [La gaceta de](#)
[Salamanca](#) [el Progreso](#) [Food Safety News](#) [el Comercio](#) [La Informacion](#)
[Business Insider](#) [La Voz del Sur](#)

 Spain
 Fats and oils
 Adulteration/ Product tampering
Grey market

The authorities seized 1 ton of fish juveniles and 1.8 tons of fishes without traceability documentation.

[Corriere di Taranto](#) [Il secolo xix](#)

 Italy
 Fish and fish products
 Grey market

In another operation, more than 1 ton of contraband fish was seized.

[Ansa](#) [Qui Cosenza](#) [Zoom24](#) [Calabria 7](#) [Nuova Cosenza](#)

900 kg of fish illegally caught or without traceability documentation have been seized as well.

[Grandangolo Agrigento](#) [La Sicilia](#) [Agrigento Oggi](#) [Il fatto nisseno](#)

Oceana Mexico reported that dogfish and cod products are often replaced with other species. Substitution rate was on average 31% (43% for fishmongers and 17% for supermarkets).

[Quadratin](#) [La Silla rota](#)

 Mexico
 Fish and fish products
 Adulteration/ Product tampering

The authorities destroyed 2 tons of meat products unsuitable for human consumption and of unknown origin.

[Teller Report](#)



Egypt



Meat and meat products
(other than poultry)

Poultry meat and poultry



Grey market

The Punjab Health Department seized 1.4 tons of spurious and adulterated cheese.

[Latestly](#)

[The Statesman](#)

[Aninews](#)

[Outlook India](#)



India



Milk and milk products



Adulteration/ Product
tampering

Six people have died after consuming alcoholic beverages adulterated with methanol and re-packaged into empty bottles from well-known brands.

[elCaribe](#)



Dominican Republic



Alcoholic beverages



Adulteration/ Product
tampering

The Nigeria Customs Service seized 3.9 tons of contraband rice.

[Punchng](#)



Nigeria



Cereals and bakery
products



Grey market

The Hisbah Board seized 1 426 bottles of contraband alcoholic drinks. Alcohol consumption is prohibited in the country.

[Pulse](#)

[Punchng](#)

[Sahara Reporters](#)



Nigeria



Alcoholic beverages



Grey market

The Directorate-General for Competition, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF) has investigated the authenticity of foie gras. Numerous non-conformities were noted by the DGCCRF investigators in 46% of the establishments checked. The non-compliance rate was 28% for foie gras blocks and 75% for foie gras products.

Recurrent non-compliances included *inter alia*:

- Mislabelling of the country of origin
- Presence of unauthorised additives
- Presence of excessive moisture, added water and/or fat content
- Incomplete labels
- Lack of traceability documentation
- Misuse of Geographical Indications

[DGCCRF](#)

[Food Navigator](#)



France



Poultry meat and poultry
meat products



Adulteration/ Product
tampering

Counterfeit

Misdescription/

Mislabelling/ Misbranding

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety Authority seized 1 000 litres of counterfeit beverages produced with water and unsafe chemicals.

[Urdu Point](#)



Pakistan



Alcoholic beverages

Non-alcoholic beverages



Adulteration/ Product
tampering

The Financial Guard seized 3 307 170 litres of wine (total value of 5 160 000 Euros), without



Italy

any traceability documentation, adulterated with water and sugar and with fake Geographical Indications. It is estimated that the criminals sold 4 million litres of wine between 2020 and 2021.

[Guardia di Finanza](#) [Ansa](#) [La Sicilia](#) [Grandangolo](#) [Notizie Tiscali](#)
[L'Adige](#) [News Sicilia](#) [Blog Sicilia](#) [Espansione TV](#)
[Diretta Sicilia](#) [Seguo News](#) [La Repubblica](#) [Voce di Popolo](#)
[Monreale Live](#) [Msn](#) [QdS](#) [Gazzetta di Parma](#)
[Quotidiano Nazionale](#) [Gazzetta del Sud](#) [Sicilia News24](#) [Il](#)
[Sicilia](#) [Quotidiano di Ragusa](#) [La Sicilia Web](#) [L'opinione della](#)
[Sicilia](#) [Italia a tavola](#) [Palermo Today](#) [Filo diretto](#) [Monreale](#)
[Euronews](#) [Agen Press](#) [Today](#) [Sicilia 24h](#) [AskaneWS](#)
[La Sicilia](#) [Stretto Web](#) [Eco di Sicilia](#) [Stella d'Italia News](#) [Blog](#)
[Sicilia](#) [Il Tirreno](#) [Garantitaly](#)



Wine



Adulteration/ Product tampering
Counterfeit
Document forgery

The authorities dismantled another criminal organisation that sold more than 3 million litres of wine with fake Geographical Indications and without traceability documentation. Other 3 300 000 litres of must and wine were seized as well (total value of 2 500 000 Euros).

[Guardia di Finanza](#) [Foggia Today](#) [Noi Notizie](#) [Stato Quotidiano](#)
[Puglia press](#) [Wine News](#) [La gazzetta del Mezzogiorno](#) [Agricoltura](#)

The authorities seized 6 000 bottles of contraband wine.

[Gauchazh](#)



Brazil



Wine



Grey market

The authorities seized 465 kg of spices (garam masala) adulterated with clay, dirt and husk. Products were considered harmful to human health.

[Times of India](#)



India



Herbs and spices



Adulteration/ Product tampering

The authorities seized 36 tons of contraband corn, 2 tons of contraband sugar and 3 tons of contraband soy flour.

[La Repubblica](#)



Peru



Cereals and bakery products
Fruits and vegetables
Other food products/ mixed



Grey market

In 2021, German authorities discovered that in 23 out of 230 (10%) seafood samples analysed the species was incorrectly labelled. Samples were taken at all stages of the food chain (manufacturer, wholesale, retail, catering).

[UA-BW](#) [Il Salvagente](#)



Germany



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



Adulteration/ Product tampering

The authorities seized 400 tons of cheese for counterfeiting a Geographical Indication from



Italy

Sardinia. Eight companies have been accused of using pasteurized milk rather than raw milk.

[Ansa](#) [Unione Sarda](#) [Sardegna Live](#) [Sarda News](#) [Caqliaripad](#)
[Informazione](#)



Milk and milk products



Counterfeit

The authorities seized 1 ton of buffalo hock tendon, 3 tons of buffalo tail, 6 tons of buffalo heart and 17 tons of buffalo lungs. The buffalo products, imported from India, were presenting fake or inaccurate information.

[The Star](#) [Bernama](#)



Malaysia



Meat and meat products
(other than poultry)



Document forgery

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety Authority seized 2 tons of spices adulterated with bran mixture.

[Urdu Point](#)



Pakistan



Herbs and spices



Adulteration/ Product
tampering

In another operation, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety Authority seized additional 3 tons of adulterated spices.

[Urdu Point](#)

The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) destroyed in total 13 334 litres of milk adulterated with various compounds, as e.g. unsafe powder, detergents, polluted water, formalin, and urea.

[Urdu Point](#) [Urdu Point](#) [The News](#) [The Nation](#) [Urdu Point](#) [Urdu](#)
[Point](#) [Urdu Point](#) [The Nation](#) [Urdu Point](#)



Pakistan



Milk and milk products



Adulteration/ Product
tampering

The authorities rescued 150 sheep ready to be illegally slaughtered.

[Il giornale nuovo](#)



Italy



Meat and meat products
(other than poultry)



Grey market

The National Customs and Senasag seized more than 16 tons of contraband seafood from Argentina (total value of 33 500 Euros).

[Erbol](#) [Los Tiempos](#) [Pagina Siete](#) [El deber](#) [Eju](#) [el](#)
[Diario](#) [Pagina Siete](#) [FM Bolivia](#)



Bolivia



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



The Economic and Food Safety Authority (ASAE) seized 1 338 120 eggs (total value of 105 935 Euros) lacking some mandatory information on the label, as batch number, dates and origin.

[24 sapo](#) [Noticias o minuto](#) [JN](#) [Diario de noticias](#) [Observador](#)
[Sic Noticias](#) [Correio da manha](#) [Sapo](#) [Online sapo](#)
[Tvi noticias](#) [Sol](#) [Reconquista](#) [Agricultura](#) [&](#) [Mar](#)
[Agroportal](#)



Portugal



Eggs and egg products



Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

The authorities seized almost 3 tons of contraband rice (total value of 3 390 Euros).

[The Sun daily](#) [Malay mail](#) [Bernama](#) [The Malaysian Insight](#)



Malaysia



Cereals and bakery
products



Document forgery

The authorities seized 1 200 bottles of contraband liquor.



India

[Northern Ireland News Star](#)

[Ani news](#)

[Cambodian Times](#)

[Long Beach](#)

The authorities seized 900 litres bottles of illicit liquor.
[Latestly](#)



Alcoholic beverages

Grey market

The authorities seized in total 2 737 tons of contraband wheat.

[Urdu Point News](#)

[Brecorder Latestly](#)

[The News Urdu Point](#)

[The Nation Tribune](#)

[Dawn Urdu Point](#)

[Ani](#)



Pakistan



Cereals and bakery products



Grey market

The authorities seized 25 tons of contraband tuna, for a total value of around 115 500 Euros.
[Kapitalis](#) [African Manager](#)



Tunisia



Fish and fish products



Grey market

The authorities seized 5.1 tons of offal and heads of cattle without traceability documentation and unfit for human consumption. Additional 1.3 tons of meat either unfit for human consumption or slaughtered clandestinely were seized as well.

[Le quotidien](#)



Algeria



Meat and meat products (other than poultry)



Grey market

As part of the “Operation Matsya”, the authorities seized 3.6 tons of stale and chemically contaminated fish. Contaminants included ammonia and formalin.

[Morning Express Hindu](#)

[The Hindu](#)

[Onmanorama](#)

[Uniindia](#)

[The](#)



India



Fish and fish products



Adulteration/ Product tampering

The authorities seized 48 tons of contraband frozen meat, for a total value of 1.1 million Euros.
[Scmp](#)



Hong Kong



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



Grey market

Within the “Operation Crepuscolo”, the authorities seized 9 tons of food (meats, salami, sweets, cheese), 2 018 litres of vinegar, and 300 litres of wine (total value of 127 000 Euros).
Frauds included:

- Falsification of expiry dates
- Misuse of logos from Geographical Indications
- Mislabelling and/or lack of information
- Lack of traceability documentation

[Ansa](#)

[Stretto web](#)

[Giornale L’Ora](#)

[Piacenza Sera](#)

[Il Giornale di Salerno](#)

[Strill](#)

[Libertà](#)

[Reggio Today](#)

[Quotidiano Nazionale](#)

[Italia a Tavola](#)

[Il metropolitano](#)

[Gazzetta del Sud](#)

[Il Piacenza](#)

[Alto Adige](#)

[GreenMe](#)

[La](#)

[città di Salerno](#)

[95047](#)



Italy



Confectionery
Meat and meat products (other than poultry)
Milk and milk products
Poultry meat and poultry meat products
Soups, broths, sauces and condiments
Wine



Counterfeit
Grey market
Misdescription/
Mislabelling/ Misbranding

The authorities seized 14 720 bottles of contraband liquor.

[Arab Times online](#)

[Kuwait Times](#)



Kuwait



Alcoholic beverages



Grey market

The authorities seized 6 tons of contraband seafood illegally smuggled from Venezuela (total value of 25 400 Euros).

[El Heraldo](#)



Colombia



Fish and fish products
Crustaceans and products thereof



Grey market

Other interesting articles

The biggest cases of food fraud ever

An online journal describes some of the most infamous food frauds all over the world.

[Mashed](#)



World



Food

FAO publication on food fraud

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) published the report "*International and national regulatory strategies to counter food fraud*".

[FAO](#)



World



Food

Food fraud vulnerability assessment in the Chinese oil sector

A scientific article assessed the perceived fraud vulnerability of Chinese enterprises using the SSAFE FFVA tool.

[Food Control](#)



China



Fats and oils

Review on honey analytical techniques

An online journal published a review covering honey authentication and adulterant detection techniques.

[Food Control](#)



World



Honey and royal jelly

Greenwashing

An online article covers the risk of fraudulent claims about the environmental impact of food products.

[New Food Magazine](#)



World



Food

Horizon scanning from EFSA

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published the document "*Horizon scanning exercise on preparedness for future risk assessment requirements and possible challenges in regulatory science*". Within Thematic area 5 (*Sustainable food systems and food safety*) food fraud is mentioned as an element of relevance to be monitored.

[EFSA](#)



EU



Food

Annual Report on food safety inspection

The Romanian Veterinary and Food Safety Agency (ANSVSA) published its annual report covering food safety inspection. More than 1.6 tons of substandard products have been seized.

[Food mate](#)



Romania



Food

Analytical technique to spot fake eggs

Researchers from South Korea and USA have developed an analytical technique based on



South Korea/ US



Eggs and egg products

chemometrics and Fourier transform infrared (FT-IR) spectroscopy (99% accuracy) in order to detect fake eggs. Fake egg white and yolk can be artificially created with sodium alginate, gelatin, and colourings, whereas fake shells can be built with calcium chloride.

[Infrared Physics & Technology](#) [Securing industry](#)

Food frauds in Italy

A scientific article analyses the food frauds in Italy from 1997 to 2020, following the entry into force of the “Hygiene Package”.

[Foods](#)



Italy



Food

Food fraud concerns over sunflower oil

Following the conflict in Ukraine, food fraud experts believe that sunflower oil may be an easy target for fraudsters, given the rising prices and the disruption in the supply chain.

[Food Navigator](#)



World



Fats and oils

The Food Fraud Monthly Report is drafted by the JRC Geel Unit F.4 “*Fraud Detection and Prevention*” with the support of the JRC Ispra Unit I.3 “*Text and Data Mining*”.

The European Commission’s science and knowledge service

Joint Research Centre



@EU_ScienceHub



EU Science Hub - Joint Research Centre



EU Science Hub



Joint Research Centre

Copyrights pictures:

©PixieMe – stock.adobe.com

©Alex White – stock.adobe.com

©UBE – stock.adobe.com

©Africa Studio – stock.adobe.com

If you wish to receive a notification whenever any new Food Fraud Monthly Report is published on our [Knowledge Centre for Food Fraud and Quality \(KC-FFQ\)](#) website, please register here: [K4P Newsroom](#).

For any comments, questions or feedback feel free to contact us via the [K4P feedback form](#).

