

# Monthly Summary of Articles on Food Fraud and Adulteration




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



## Food Fraud Cases

The Greek authorities recalled batches from several honey brands. The products were adulterated with exogenous sugars and additional pigments (e.g. caramel colours) not legally allowed in honey.



[Efet](#)  
[Decernis](#)

-  Greece
-  Honey and royal jelly
-  Replacement/ dilution/ addition/ removal  
Unapproved treatment and/or process

The Spanish authorities, supported by Europol, dismantled a criminal organisation selling adulterated saffron, arresting 17 people and investigating 13 additional suspects. The authorities seized also 500 kg of the adulterated spice.




Saffron imported mostly from Iran was: a) mixed with floral remains, styles and stamens (illegally increasing the volume); b) treated with unsafe colorants not authorised for human consumption; and c) mislabelled as a Spanish PDO (a Geographical Indication).

[Guardia Civil](#)      [Europol](#)      [Food Authenticity](#)      [Securing Industry](#)  
[OCCRP](#)      [The Guardian](#)      [Decernis](#)

-  Spain
-  Herbs and spices
-  IPR – Intellectual property rights  
Replacement/ dilution/ addition/ removal  
Unapproved treatment and/or process

A scientific article published that 43% of fish products in Lima was mislabelled and replaced with species of lesser economic value. Mislabelling was significantly higher in restaurants compared to supermarkets and fish markets. Mislabelling was higher for *cevicherias* compared to sushi-bars. The researchers even detected threatened species by using DNA barcode sequencing.

[Food Control](#)      [Sci Dev Net](#)

-  Peru
-  Fish and fish products
-  Mislabelling  
Replacement/ dilution/ addition/ removal

Some Member States' authorities, supported by Europol and Eurojust, arrested eight people belonging to a criminal organisation trading bivalves unfit for human consumption. The authorities investigated seven commercial companies and also seized 1.5 tons of mostly Japanese clams.




The criminals falsified the origin of the bivalves (mostly Japanese clams) contaminated by high level of toxins and pathogens. Taxes were evaded as well.

[Guardia Civil](#) [Food Safety News](#)

-  Spain, Portugal, Italy
-  Bivalve molluscs and products thereof
-  Documents  
Mislabelling

According to some analyses performed by an Italian journal, almost 50% (7 out of 15) of tested extra-virgin olive oil bottles contains in reality olive oil of lower quality.

[Il Salvagente](#) [Teatro Naturale](#) [Il Fatto Alimentare](#)

-  Italy
-  Fats and oils
-  Mislabelling




The Italian authorities seized 8.6 tons of meat products (total value of 200 000 euros) lacking any traceability documentation.

[Salute Gov](#) [Ansa](#)

-  Italy
-  Meat and meat products (other than poultry)  
Poultry meat and poultry meat products
-  Documents

The Spanish and Italian authorities, in collaboration with Europol, dismantled a criminal organisation counterfeiting medicines and selling them as food supplements. The authorities seized 10 000 tabs, for a total value of 65 000 euros, containing the active substance "Sildenafil" (the active pharmaceutical ingredient of Viagra®) and imported from China.

[Il Fatto Alimentare](#)

-  Spain/ Italy
-  Dietetic foods, food supplements, fortified foods
-  Counterfeit  
Unapproved treatment and/or process

The Cambodian authorities confirmed the death of eleven people, following a funeral ceremony, after drinking rice wine adulterated with methanol. A court has charged 13 people (two producers and eleven vendors).

[Khmer Times](#) [Sina English](#) [China.org.cn](#) [The Cambodian News](#)  
[Voa Cambodia](#) [AP News](#) [New Indian Express](#)

-  Cambodia
-  Alcoholic beverages
-  Unapproved treatment and/or process

In a second case, other twelve people have died as well because of methanol contamination.

[Khmer Times](#) [Wxow](#) [RFA](#) [Voa Cambodia](#)

A scientific article found that 98% of tested common snook fillets from supermarkets were replaced with other species, such as the Pacific bearded brotula, the Nile perch and the acoupa weakfish. The authors conclude that there is a high rate of fraudulent labelling in the marketing of common snook in the city of Santa Maria.

[Heliyon](#)

-  Colombia
-  Fish and fish products
-  Mislabelling  
Replacement/ dilution/ addition/ removal

Within the context of Operation SLICE, the Spanish authorities seized more than 63 000 containers with meat products (total value of 1.19 million euros). The food was mislabelled as regards the origin or the Geographical Indication (GI) claimed on the label.

[Food Safety News](#)

-  Spain
-  Meat and meat products (other than poultry)  
Poultry meat and poultry meat products
-  IPR – Intellectual property rights

## Other interesting articles

## Honey imports sued in USA

US beekeepers sued over imports of Asian honey. The adulteration in the honey sector is increasing globally, according to the journal, with consequences on the international honey market.

[The Guardian](#)

[Green Me](#)

[Agrifood today](#)

[Il Salvagente](#)



USA



Honey and royal jelly

## Seafood fraud under the spotlight

An online journal highlights the current frauds affecting the seafood sector.

[Visao](#)



World



Fish and fish products

## The impact of Covid-19 pandemic on food frauds

An online journal highlights how the current pandemic has negatively impacted the vulnerability of our food systems.

[Food Safety Tech](#)



World



Food

## Final Conference of the Oleum project

On the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2021, the OLEUM project successfully held its final conference. In total, over 400 people from different fields registered for the online meeting to discover the results of the project and discuss the future possibilities to assure olive oil quality and authenticity.

[Oleum Project](#)



EU



Fats and oils

## New Act against illegal fishing in USA

The *Illegal Fishing and Forced Labor Prevention Act* was filed in USA to end illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, to expand transparency and to stop fraud affecting the seafood sector.

[Market Screener](#)

[Stimson](#)

[Seafood source](#)



USA



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

## OPSON IX report from Europol

Europol has released the analysis report of the operation OPSON IX. In terms of quantity, animal food represent the most seized category of products. However, considering the value, alcoholic beverages represent the first category of seized goods.

[Europol](#)



EU



Food

## QR code for organic fruits and vegetables

Saudi Arabia has implemented a new traceability system where producers of organic commodities (fruits and vegetables) have to mark their products with a dynamic QR code sticker.

[Gulf News](#)



Saudi Arabia



Fruits and vegetables

*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*

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