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Rice Food Safety & Other Facts



Newsletter
 Nr. 36
 April
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FOOD SAFETY

Rapid Alert System Notifications for Food

date	notification type	notified by	subject
21/02/2014	border rejection	CYPRUS	acephate (0.05 mg/kg - ppm) in basmati rice from India
24/02/2014	alert	GERMANY	glass fragments in rice from the Netherlands
03/03/2014	border rejection	ITALY	carbendazim (0.04 mg/kg - ppm) in basmati rice from India
17/03/2014	border rejection	BULGARIA	absence of health certificate(s) for rice from China
25/03/2014	border rejection	ITALY	acephate (0.05 mg/kg - ppm) in basmati rice from India
27/03/2014	border rejection	UNITED KINGDOM	absence of health certificate(s) for rice crackers from China
27/03/2014	border rejection	UNITED KINGDOM	absence of health certificate(s) for GM rice from China
27/03/2014	border rejection	UNITED KINGDOM	absence of health certificate(s) for canned rice porridge from China
07/04/2014	border rejection	UNITED KINGDOM	absence of health certificate(s) for senbei rice crackers from Hong Kong
07/04/2014	border rejection	UNITED KINGDOM	absence of health certificate(s) for seaweed rice crackers from Hong Kong

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/rapidalert/rasff_portal_database_en.htm

- The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has released a new guidance on submission of applications for authorization of genetically modified (GM) plants under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003. The EFSA submission guidance is now updated to account for requirements outlined in Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 503/2013. This Regulation only covers GM plant applications for food and feed uses, and excludes GM plant applications for cultivation in the EU. Therefore, the update of the EFSA submission guidance focuses on the relevant parts related to molecular characterisation and food and feed safety assessment as outlined in Appendix A (the completeness checklist). Parts pertaining to the Environmental Risk Assessment were not changed, except for Appendix E which was updated.

Source: www.efsa.europa.eu

ORGANIC FOOD

- The EU Commission has published new proposals for a new Regulation on organic production and the labelling of organic products. Consumer and producer concerns are at the heart of this new proposal, which seeks to address shortcomings of the current system. The EU organic market has quadrupled in size over the last 10 years and rules need to be updated and adjusted so that the sector can further develop and respond to future challenges. The proposal builds on the findings of a broad consultation process that started in 2012 and which included a series of hearings with EU and international experts on organic production. A public consultation carried out in 2013 met a strong interest from the public (with 45,000 replies, mostly from "consumers" rather than "producers"). It highlighted the public's concerns with environmental and quality issues. The proposal focuses on three main objectives: maintaining consumer confidence, maintaining producer confidence and making it easier for farmers to switch to organics.

Source: [//europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-312_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-312_en.htm)



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SCIENCE & RESEARCH

- An international team of crop scientists from Japan's National Institute of Agrobiological Sciences (NIAS) and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) have identified a gene in rice called *Deeper Rooting 1 (DRO1)* that gives plants deeper roots, resulting in triple yields during droughts. Rice is highly susceptible to drought because of its shallow roots, but the new study shows that by pointing roots down instead of sideways, the *DRO1* gene results in roots that are nearly twice as deep as those of standard rice varieties. The resulting plants have roots that are able to reach more than twice as deep as those of standard varieties, so that the former suffered only a 10% yield loss in conditions of moderate drought, while the last suffered a 60% yield loss. Under extreme drought, standard varieties completely failed, but the new rice plants continued to produce grain – about 30% of the yield of unstressed rice plants growing in normal conditions.

Source: Crop Biotech Update

GMO & BIOTECH

- Last February the US Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service published the report *Genetically Engineered Crops in the United States*. The report examines issues related to three major stakeholders in agricultural biotechnology in the US: genetically engineered seed suppliers and technology providers (biotech firms), farmers, and consumers. Genetically engineered (GE) varieties with pest management traits became commercially available for major crops in 1996. More than 15 years later, adoption of these varieties by U.S. farmers is widespread and U.S. consumers eat many products derived from GE crops—including corn-meal, oils, and sugars—largely unaware that these products were derived from GE crops. Despite the rapid increase in the adoption of corn, soybean, and cotton GE varieties by U.S. farmers, questions persist regarding their economic and environmental impacts, the evolution of weed resistance, and consumer acceptance. Three crops (corn, cotton, and soybeans) make up the bulk of the acres planted to GE crops. U.S. farmers planted about 169 million acres of these GE crops in 2013, or about half of total land used to grow crops.

Source: www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err-economic-research-report/err162.aspx#.UwxZD-PuKSo

EVENTS & MEETINGS

- 13th International Symposium on the Biosafety of Genetically Modified Organisms (ISBGMO13), November 9-13, 2014, Cape Town, South Africa. The ISBGMO is a biennial, international meeting that brings together academics, technology developers, regulatory authorities, non-government organisations and other credible stakeholders involved in all aspects of biosafety and offers a unique opportunity to share information and experiences and engage in open and meaningful dialogue on biosafety research, risk analysis, policy and regulatory matters. The goal of the symposium is to advance the standing of biosafety research around the world and shape the ways in which GM technology is applied and regulated. It will be attended by approximately 450 delegates from at least 50 countries.

Source: [//isbr.info/ISBGMO13](http://isbr.info/ISBGMO13)
