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Rice Food
Safety & Other Facts

Newsletter
Nr. 42
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2015

FOOD SAFETY

Rapid Alert System Notifications for Food

date	notification type	notified by	subject
27/02/2015	border rejection	GERMANY	unauthorised genetically modified red yeast rice extract from China
04/03/2015	border rejection	SPAIN	fraudulent health certificate(s) for rice sticks from China
10/03/2015	border rejection	ITALY	unauthorised substance carbendazim (0.03 mg/kg - ppm) in rice from India
24/03/2015	border rejection	ITALY	unauthorised substance carbendazim (0.04 mg/kg - ppm) in rice from India
02/04/2015	alert	POLAND	undeclared gluten (39.74 mg/kg - ppm) in rice gluten free from Poland

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

- When our environment changes in the future, will it still be possible to produce safe food? Scientists from all over the world are doing research on this question, including in the Veg-i-Trade project funded by the EU. The main scientific findings about the impact of climate change on food safety were published following the completion of the project. **Climate change may jeopardize food safety** in several ways. When it gets warmer, there is a higher risk of contamination and growth of pathogens. Fungi are more likely to grow, so more pesticides may be used. In case of heavy rainfall, the irrigation water or cultivation itself may be contaminated with bacteria. Yet it is not all doom and gloom. Strong UV radiation from the sun and the many bacteria that are naturally present in the plant can also disable these unwanted germs quickly. Everything starts with the verification and possible adaptation of the current control systems that monitor the quality and safety of our food.

Source: www.ugent.be/en/news/bulletin

ORGANIC FOOD, PDO, PGI

In the year of EXPO, Data Bio has been officially activated: it is the first European **database for organic products** traceability, available to citizens and stakeholders. The database is made by the integration of the database of Accredia (Italian accreditation body), with that of FederBio (Interprofessional organization of Italian organic companies). The platform registers the product volumes and trade flows starting from agricultural land certified in Italy and in the countries from which Italian operators buy organic products, following them throughout the supply chain to ensure its consistency with the certified yields and the traceability of transactions. In this way the risk should be reduced of fraud and the possibility that false organic products enter the supply chain.

Source: www.databio.it

OTHER NEWS

The Italian Ministry of Agriculture has recently announced the end of the online **public consultation on the labeling of food products**. There were over 26,500 participants who expressed their point of view by answering 11 questions on the importance of product traceability, the indication of the origin and the transparency of information on the label. For 9 participants out of 10 it is important to know the origin of the food, in particular about some products as fresh meat and fresh milk (95%), dairy products as yogurt and cheese (90%), fruits and ready-for-use vegetables (88%), processed meats as salami and sausages, canned meat (87%) and **rice (81%)**. On the website of the Ministry detailed data are available concerning the responses received.

Source: www.politicheagricole.it

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SCIENCE & RESEARCH

Chalkiness is one of the key factors determining rice quality and price. Chinese researchers showed that plants with higher leaf ascorbic acid (Asc) content exhibit significantly reduced grain chalkiness. Asc is a major plant antioxidant that performs many functions in plants. The results of the study indicate that the enhanced level of Asc is likely responsible for changing redox homeostasis in key developmental stages associated with grain filling and alters grain chalkiness by maintaining photosynthetic function and affecting phytohormones associated with grain filling.

Source: www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S221451411500015X

LAWS, STANDARDS & AGREEMENTS

The Enlarged Board of Appeal of EPO (**European Plant Office**) has decided that the exclusion of essentially biological processes for the production of plants in Article 53(b) EPC (European Patent Convention) does not have a negative effect on the allowability of a product claim directed to plants or plant material such as a fruit or plant parts. This applies even if the only method available for generating the claimed plants or plant material is an essentially biological process for the production of plants, and also if the claimed product is defined in terms of such a process (product-by-process claim). In this context it is of no relevance that the protection conferred by the product claim encompasses the generation of the claimed product by means of an essentially biological process for the production of plants. Product claims or product-by-process claims directed to plants or plant material other than a plant variety thus are not excluded from patentability under Article 53(b) EPC and are allowable if they fulfil the formal and substantive requirements of the EPC. This possibility had been contested in view of the specific exclusion of plant varieties from patentability as well as the 'open source' approach of the breeders' exemption which are both enshrined in EU law.

Source: www.epo.org

EVENTS & MEETINGS

- 2nd International Conference on Global Food Security, 11-14 October 2015 - Ithaca, USA. Achieving global food security whilst reconciling demands on the environment is the greatest challenge faced by mankind. By 2050 at least 9 billion people will need food, and increasing incomes and urbanization will inevitably lead to dietary change. The food security challenge will increasingly encompass the triple burden of malnutrition – undernutrition, obesity and micronutrient deficiencies. The urgency of the issues has led to huge scientific strides forwards, making it difficult to keep up with the rapidly expanding volume of scientific research. The Conference therefore aims to deliver state-of-the-art analysis, inspiring visions and innovative methods arising from research in a wide range of disciplines.

Source: www.globalfoodsecurityconference.com

- Conference "**Arsenic in Food Chain**", 4-5 June 2015 – Roma, Italy. The national Institute of Health (ISS) organizes the first national conference dedicated to the impact of arsenic on food chains and human health. The diet is the primary way of exposure to arsenic for the general population. In light of the results of a study about the national total diet that has quantified the Italian population exposure to inorganic arsenic, and following the introduction of maximum limits for inorganic arsenic in food at European level, the conference offers an opportunity for discussion and exchanging views about risk analysis and prevention issues.

Source: www.arsenicfoodchain.it