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Rice Food Safety & Other Facts



Newsletter
Nr. 19

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FOOD SAFETY

Rapid Alert System

- Four notifications sent by Germany concerning unauthorised genetically modified (Bt) rice noodles from China, via the Netherlands.
- One notification sent by Germany concerning unauthorised genetically modified (LL Rice 601) parboiled long grain rice from Italy (3 feb).
- One notification sent by Spain concerning fraudulent health certificate(s) for rice noodles from China.
- One notification sent by Finland concerning unauthorised genetically modified (BT 63) rice vermicelli from China, via the Netherlands.

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

The EFSA Advisory Forum signed a declaration for supporting the proposal for the first **pan-European food consumption survey** to be carried out in the EU, called "What's on the Menu in Europe? (EU Menu)". Its planning will be coordinated by EFSA and its design and implementation will strongly involve the concerned national institutions. The added value of this data collection is the use of methodology providing comparable and detailed enough information suitable for risk assessment purposes representing all countries and regions in the EU. The collection of food consumption data is planned to be carried out as a rolling program from 2012 to 2017, with a preparatory phase in 2010-2011. Special attention will be paid to ensure a high participation rate in all countries to support the collection of representative data.

Source: www.efsa.europa.eu/en/eumenu/doc/declarationen.pdf

EFSA recently launched a project to predict the **effect of climate change on aflatoxin B1 in cereals**. Aflatoxin B1 is a mycotoxin produced by moulds which grow on certain cereals including maize, wheat and **rice**. It is particularly prevalent in hot and humid climates and is carcinogenic. Based on different climate change scenarios, the aim of the project is to gather and analyse data on aflatoxin B1 in order to build predictive models, define scenarios and create maps highlighting potential future contamination of cereal crops. The results will help to inform any future work in this area by EFSA and give an indication of potential emerging food contamination by mycotoxins in the EU due to climate change.

Source: www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA

GMO & BIOTECH

At the end of January the USA Rice Federation released **the results of voluntary testing** of the 2009 rice crop for the presence of the GM **Liberty Link (LL) trait**. **All of the results were negative**, indicating continued success of the US rice industry's Seed Plan to remove the LL601 trait from the commercial long-grain supply. Voluntary testing of each rice crop at harvest began in 2006 as part of the Seed Plan. This testing complements mandatory testing of seed before each planting season in rice states via an industry-wide effort to remove as much as possible the LL601 trait.

Source: www.usarice.com



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ORGANIC FOOD

The European Commission officially announced the winner of the **EU organic logo** competition. Some 130,000 people have voted online to choose the new organic symbol from three finalists, the winning design is by a student from Germany, who gained 63% of the overall vote for his "Euro-leaf" logo. From 1st July 2010, the organic logo of the EU will be obligatory on all pre-packaged organic products that have been produced in any of the EU Member States and meet the necessary standards. It will be optional for imported products. Other private, regional or national logos will be allowed to appear alongside the EU label. The organic farming regulation will be amended in the coming weeks to introduce the new logo into one of the annexes.



Source: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/files/news/i10_Logo_en.pdf

LAWS, STANDARDS & AGREEMENTS

From 25 January 2010 **Commission Regulation (EC) No 669/2009** (OJ L194/2009) applies implementing Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the increased level of official controls on imports of certain feed and food of non-animal origin and amending Decision 2006/504/EC. Among products to be checked with an increased level of official controls, Basmati rice from India and Pakistan is included, regarding aflatoxins content.

Source: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu>

EVENTS & MEETINGS

2nd International Symposium on Genomics of Plant Genetic Resources to be held in Bologna, Italy on April 24-27, 2010. The congress will be hosted at Pasta Trend 2010 – Expo and Conference dedicated to pasta and its world. In year 2010, declared as the International Year of Biodiversity by UN, the main theme of the symposium will be "Harnessing plant biodiversity for food security and nutritional quality". World food production is being challenged by global climate change and a fast-increasing demand for food, feed, fiber and biofuels. Never before has the importance of effectively harnessing the potential of plant biodiversity been more evident and urgent. From recent research experience, it is clear that genomics research on plant genetic resources and genomics-assisted breeding have great potential to revolutionize the world agriculture in various ways in both developed and developing countries.

Source: www.gpgr2.com

The Public Research and Regulation Initiative (PRRI) and the Science and Technology Options Assessment Panel (STOA) of the European Parliament are organizing a **seminar on "The Impact of EU GMO regulations on biotechnology research for the public good"** on February 25, 2010 at the European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium. Topics will include biotechnology in the context of global challenges in the production of food, feed, fiber and fuel; biotechnology research in the EU; experiences with GM crops; and public researchers' experiences with GMO regulations.

Source: *Crop Biotech Update*