



Press Release

Rapid Route to Food Risks

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Spotting risks in the food chain is a growing challenge. A new database aims to provide vital information for growers, buyers and all those who need to comply with EU food contaminants and residue regulations. The database is unique for the ease with which it can be searched – joining up information from many sources, and data can be accessed from anywhere in the world, anytime. Those involved in the food-chain need to know about statutory limits and controls over the wide range of potential contaminants in produce. Searching through endless reports and other data sources is time consuming and frustrating – CSL believes it need not be that tricky.

Project co-ordinator Simon Baty is excited by the prospect: 'In a matter of seconds you can put in a product and find out what you're legally up against, and any problems with that commodity right across Europe. It's true this information is already freely available, but it's often hidden amongst large amounts of other data and alerts. The beauty of this database is it compiles all the information you need into one place, you can be sure it's bang up-to-date and accurate, and the easy searches make it incredibly simple to find just what you're after.'

Going live in the New Year, you can search by commodity and contaminant and also access relevant information from CSL's existing databases on pesticides, mycotoxins and vet drugs. In 2005 the RASFF Annual Report stated there were nearly 7000 alerts and related information - a 28% increase on the previous year. Updated continually as legislation changes, information is guaranteed to be up to the minute accurate. It promises to be an indispensable tool for risk-control in the food chain.

Ends

Notes for editors

The database contains information on limits and controls over the wide range of potential contaminants in produce, and augments the regulations with current and historical RASFF issues on a commodity basis. It is populated regularly, when changes are made they automatically update at midnight that night.

CSL is the UK's foremost public sector laboratory in the fields of agriculture, food and the environment. As an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, our main role is to carry out research in support of Government objectives. Our support for protection of the nation's food and rural environment includes responding to emergencies in the food supply chain through risk assessment, analysis and remedial actions.

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