

EUROPE-WIDE MONITORING OF CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN



CHEMICAL CONTAMINANTS ARE...

... substances unintentionally present in food or feed due to food production, processing, handling or transport, or as a result of environmental contamination of air, soil and water.

Main types



Natural toxins

Produced by fungi, algae or plants including some weeds and sea plankton



Environmental contaminants

Industrial and consumer chemicals present in air, soil and water



Process contaminants

Formed during food processing like high-temperature cooking



Metals & "inorganic" substances

Includes lead, mercury and substances like nitrates or fluorine

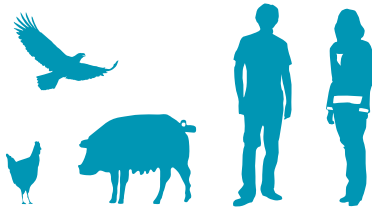


Others

Includes unauthorised veterinary medicines

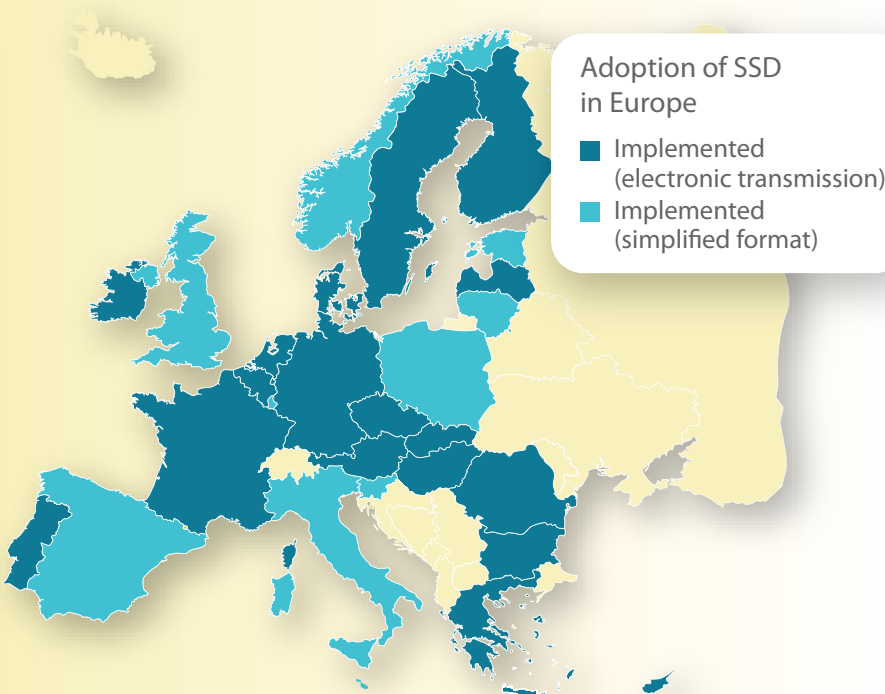
Consumer safety

Contaminant levels in food are **often very low** and **harmless** for consumers. However, some contaminants can cause **effects** such as food poisoning, or, their **accumulation over time** might harm animal and human health.



COMPARABLE DATA FROM ACROSS EUROPE

- European countries **monitor** levels of contaminants found in food and feed
- Data are used to assess **exposure of people and animals** to contaminants
- Since 2010, most countries submit data to EFSA using **Standard Sample Description (SSD)**
- SSD is a **standardised reporting format** for transmission of analytical data to EFSA

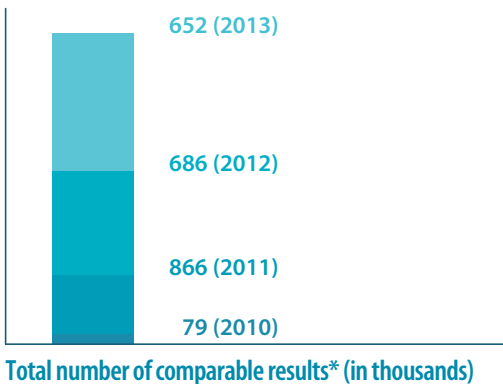
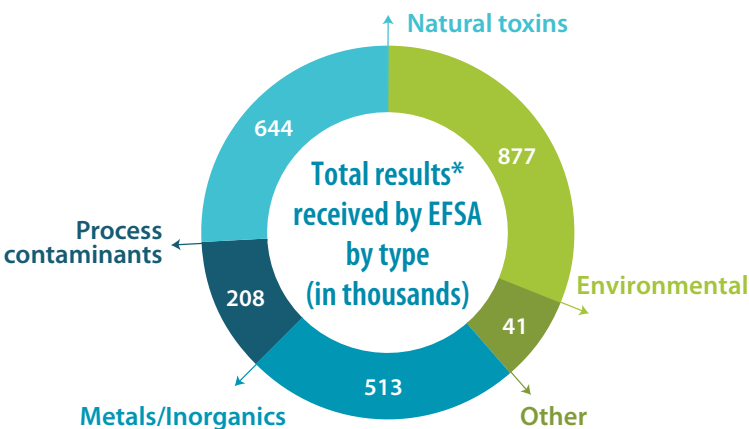


THIS SYSTEM IMPROVES THE QUALITY OF DATA USED TO:

- Understand how often foods are contaminated and by how much
- Estimate consumer exposure and identify the most exposed populations
- Protect public health by limiting contaminants in food
- Evaluate prevention, reduction, monitoring programmes

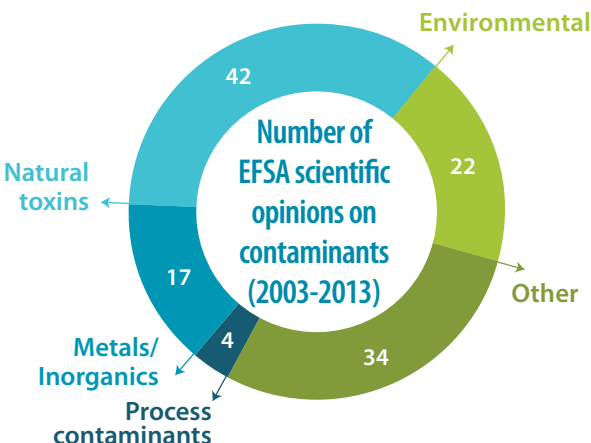
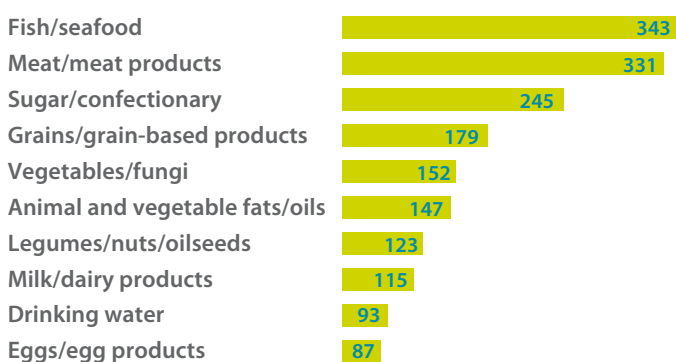


Food-related data received 2010-2013 (since introduction of SSD)



Total results* received in top 10 food categories 2010 - 2013 (in thousands)

There are over 20 main categories of food and drink



*"Results" are the number of reported analytical results. Unvalidated data omitted.