



42nd Focal Point Meeting, 07 May 2020

Crisis Preparedness

September 2020

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Scientific Committee & Emerging Risks Unit
Instinctif Partners

Trusted science for safe food



Emergency response

- What is an emergency?
- Why is EFSA involved?

Emergency?

DutchNews.nl

Chlormequat risk in green

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Fipronil found in thousands of eggs exported to Germany

Business | Health |     June 12, 2018

 today published the presence of

USNEWS CIVIC » Best Countries Best States Healthiest Communities

China's

By Jess Hall
11-May-2009



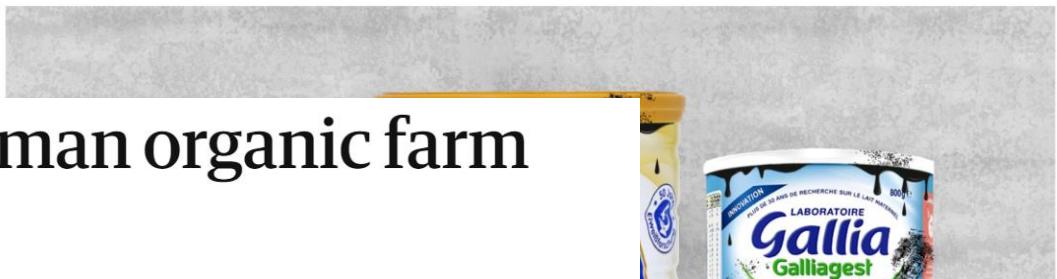
RELATED TAG

The European occurrence investigation by EFSA, and implementing on-going monitoring.

NEWS | 24.10.2019

foodwatch Laboratory Tests: Suspected Carcinogenic Mineral Oil Residues in Baby Milk

MINERAL OIL IN FOODS



E. coli outbreak: German organic farm officially identified

Eat cucumbers, tomatoes and lettuce again, say German health authorities, but avoid bean sprouts



I won't trust formula



What makes an event urgent?

- Public health risk
- Scale of the incident (products, countries, people affected)
- Vulnerable groups of the population
- Knowledge about source of the problem
- Act of terrorism
- Media interest or public concern (including perceived risks)
- Institutional reputation risk
- Impact on the functioning of the internal market
- Disagreement between MS on actions



Why is EFSA involved?



- Assess the public health risk
- Advise on sampling and testing methods and strategies
- Identify the critical sampling sites along the food/feed chain

Emergency preparedness

- Procedures
- Emergency Preparedness Exercises

Updated version Oct 2019



Purpose:

- Ensure effective response
- Guidance on practical arrangements
- Accountability, lessons learnt

- Alignment with CID 2019/300 for “General Plan”
added explanation of situations requiring:
 - i. enhanced coordination at Union level,
 - ii. setting up of crisis unit



Survey Results

Key findings from survey

1. 48 responses received
2. Almost 70% have experience of handling a 'live' food/feed crisis
3. Almost 60% have undertaken some form of crisis training previously (including BTSF, EFSA crisis training, JIFEE, national courses, EU/EC exercises etc.)
4. Email is still dominant communication channel during 'business as usual' and crisis response (with Microsoft Teams taking on a larger role)
5. Two thirds are prepared to share case studies during an event

Q8: which areas of training would be most valuable to fill gaps in current knowledge?

Roles, responsibilities & protocols

- Coordination within and between countries (inside and outside of the EU)
- Interactions at EU level
- EU-level frameworks
- Crisis-handling role of FPs and institutions
- Operational procedures and methodologies
- Use of EFSA's 'Procedures for responding to urgent advice needs'
- Implementation of transparency principles—e.g. under Regulation (EU) 2019/1381
- EU-level support for MSs

Data collection/information sharing

- EU-level information flow
- Avoiding duplication of data at EU level
- Exchange of reliable data
- Characterising vulnerable populations
- Basic epidemiology and biostatistics

Primary areas

Communication

- Crisis media communications (speed, channels, messages, strategy etc.)
- Liaison with stakeholders
- Communication strategy
- Interface between risk communications and crisis communications

Crisis management

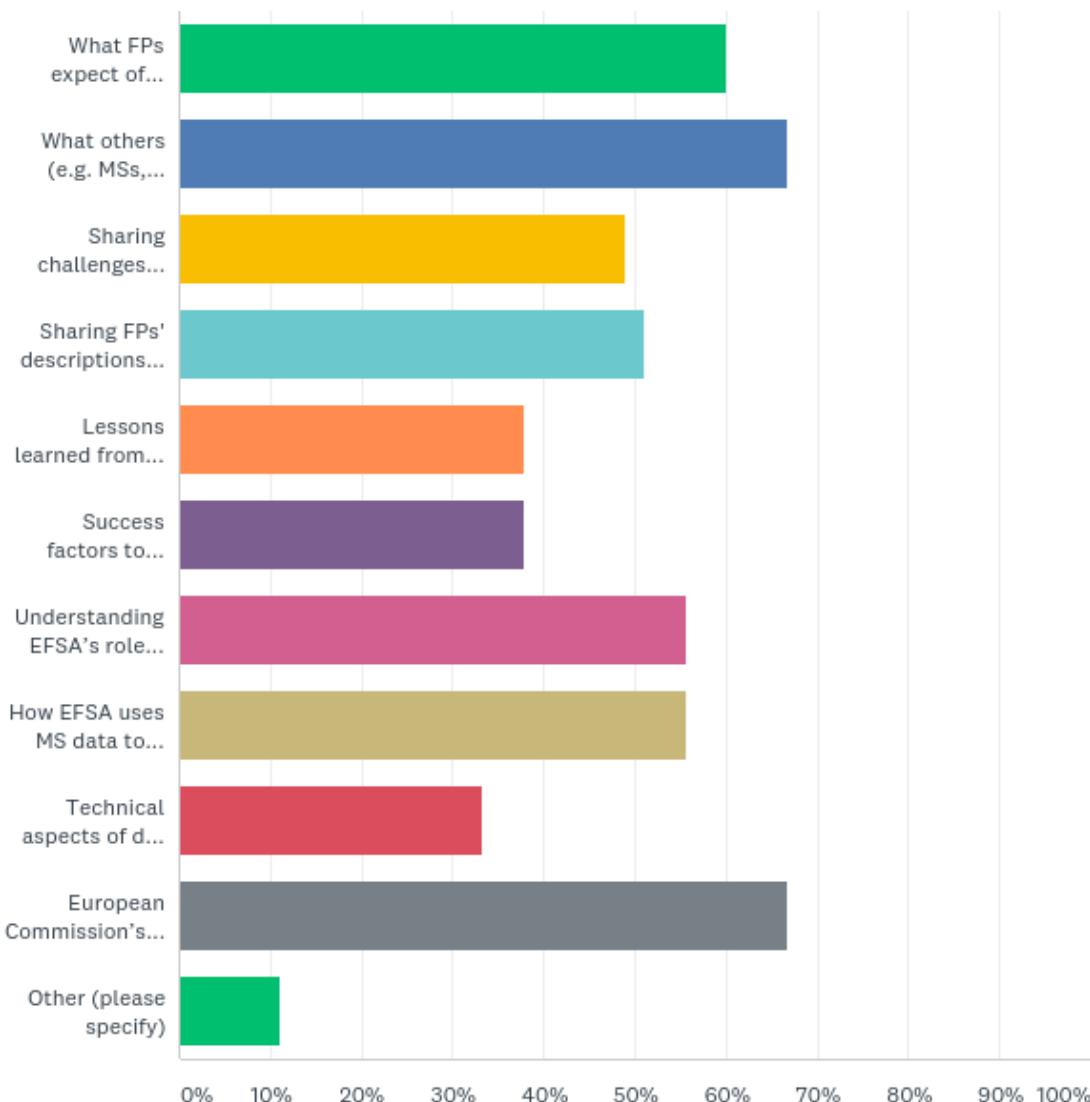
- Practical examples of best practice in preparedness and response
- Record keeping
- Staff resource management
- Harmonising crisis response definitions, team structures and escalation thresholds (e.g. between 'evidence support' and crisis management)

Tools and systems

- EFSA tools for food/feed crisis management
- Early warning systems
- Behavioural analysis
- Use of 'big data' to inform communications and impact on consumers
- Horizon scanning
- Statistical modelling
- Dealing with novel/sparsely documented hazards

Secondary areas

Q15: which topics would you find most useful?



- =1 European Commission's approach to food/feed safety crisis management (e.g. including recently implemented general plan for crisis management)
- =1 What others (e.g. MSs, EFSA, EC) expect of FPs during a food/feed safety crisis
- 2 What FPs expect of others (e.g. MSs, EFSA, EC) during a food/feed safety crisis
- =3 How EFSA uses MS data to manage a feed/food safety crisis
- =3 Understanding EFSA's role during a food/feed safety crisis
- 4 Sharing FPs' descriptions of experience in handling 'real' multi-country food/feed safety crises across EU borders (e.g. fipronil)
- 5 Sharing challenges faced by FPs during food/feed safety crises
- =6 Lessons learned from previous interaction between EU Members States and Pre-Accession Countries during food/feed safety crises across EU borders
- =6 Success factors to improve future interaction between EU Member States and Pre-Accession Countries during food/feed safety crises across EU borders
- 7 Technical aspects of data and information sharing (e.g. data entry templates, data collection frameworks, xml file creation etc.)
- 8 Other

EFSA External Crisis Preparedness Exercise 2020

Proposal for a 'virtual' FP crisis training event

Proposed timing

- Training: **22 September** (3 hours in morning; 1-2 hours in afternoon)
- Follow-up: **23 or 24 September** (1 hour)
- Make best use of 'online' time by sharing some presentation materials in advance

Facilitation logistics

- Participation via **Microsoft Teams**
- Online **facilitated activities**, e.g.
 - presentations
 - plenary/small group discussions
 - practical exercises

Areas to cover

- *Based on most useful/valuable areas indicated in survey responses*

Overarching theme: "what if COVID-19 had been a foodborne outbreak"?

- **Setting context for food/feed safety crisis response at European level**
 - EC's role—e.g. as documented in general plan for crisis management, Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/300
 - EFSA's role
- **Expectations of FPs at European level during a food/feed safety crisis**
 - How EFSA uses MS data to manage a feed/food safety crisis—and FPs' role in this
 - Sharing data and avoiding duplication of effort (between MS, EFSA, EC etc.)
- **Sharing FPs' real-life experiences**
 - Descriptions/case studies of experience in handling 'real' multi-country food/feed safety crises across EU borders (e.g. fipronil)
 - Challenges faced by FPs during food/feed safety crises (e.g. common terminology)



Any comments
or questions?