

Fipronil and processed products containing eggs: procedure applied by the Food Agency in case of non-compliant products

The FASFC reiterates that only compliant products, i.e. products which meet all legal requirements, are allowed on the market. Non-compliant products must be withdrawn from the market in accordance with European regulations and directives. Products posing a risk to public health are duly recalled and the consumers receive a clear warning about the products concerned. The Food Agency conducts on-the-spot checks to verify whether businesses correctly apply the procedures for withdrawing products from the market. So far, no processed products containing eggs had to be recalled.

According to European regulations, businesses must withdraw non-compliant products, i.e. products which do not meet legal requirements, from the entire food chain (manufacturer, wholesalers, distribution centres, retail businesses). This obligation also applies to food products with fipronil levels exceeding the legal standard. The FASFC conducts on-the-spot checks to make sure that the necessary measures are taken in order to guarantee that only compliant products are placed on the market.

So far, the analyses carried out by Belgian manufacturers of processed products containing eggs show that public health is not at risk.

Should the analyses bring to light that processed products containing eggs pose a risk to public health (with fipronil levels exceeding the European safety threshold), the businesses concerned have to carry out a product recall in accordance with European regulations. This recall has to be carried out under the close supervision of the FASFC. In this case, the consumers must immediately be informed about the type of risk, the type of product and its precise identification (name, batch number, expiry date, weight, type of packaging, picture of the product). Furthermore, the consumers are instructed to certainly refrain from consuming the product any longer, which is not the case today. Indeed, **to date, no processed products containing eggs had to be recalled.**

These are standard operating procedures that comply with European regulations. The significant advantage of this way of working is that it sends a clear message to the consumers in case of a real problem for public health: recall of the products. The recalls are organised under the close supervision of the FASFC. The FASFC is fully transparent about product recalls. As a reminder, since 1 January 2017, the consumers and the Belgian press have already been informed about 37 recalls of products posing a possible risk to public health. Such a recall is currently not required for processed products containing eggs.

Putting it quite simply, when no products are recalled, no additional information has to be provided to the consumers because the public health is not at risk (no values exceeding the toxicity threshold agreed upon at the European level).

The product recalls can be found at the following link: <http://www.afsca.be/rappelsdeproduits/>

More information about product withdrawals and product recalls can be found in our FAQ at the following link <http://www.afsca.be/businesssectors/foodstuffs/incidents/fipronil/#faq>