

Food Safety

EFSA publishes opinion on ethoxyquin

EFSA has published their Opinion on Ethoxyquin
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/151118>

The Opinion remains inconclusive in terms of the risk associated with ethoxyquin to consumers, fed livestock, and the environment.

Some of the main points of the Opinion are:

- EFSA has identified a number of gaps in the data
- concerns are raised regarding the effect of impurities in the ethoxyquin product, specifically with regards to para-phenetidine
- the potential toxicity of one of the breakdown products of ethoxyquin, quinone imine. (Trials to determine the genotoxicity of quinone imine are still in progress.)

For more information from the IFFO here <http://www.iffonet.net/node/833>

Guidance Document related to import requirements and the new rules on food hygiene and official food controls

New guidance has been published by the Commission to assist all players in the food chain to better understand and to apply correctly and in a uniform way the Regulations. It covers The general food law regulation, hygiene regulations and the current official controls regulation.

http://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/international_affairs/trade/docs/interpretation_imports.pdf

Third Country Trade

EU-Philippines free trade agreement: Negotiations to start

The Council on 16 November 2015 gave the go-ahead for negotiations to start on a free trade agreement with the Philippines.

In April 2007, the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate a free trade agreement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which the Philippines are a member. In December 2009 however, following the suspension of region-to-region talks, it decided to pursue negotiations with individual ASEAN countries on a case-by-case basis. The strategic objective of a region-to-region agreement was nevertheless maintained. In October 2013, the Council extended the scope of its negotiating directives to include investment protection.

The EU is currently negotiating with two ASEAN countries -- Malaysia and Thailand -- whilst talks with two others -- Singapore and Vietnam -- have concluded. The Commission will continue its efforts to launch free trade negotiations with other ASEAN countries.

www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/11/16-eu-philippines-trade-agreement/

The suspended Free Trade Agreement with Thailand will “never be ratified” whilst the country is under a military dictatorship, a top aide to EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom admitted on Friday (20 November).

<http://www.euractiv.com/sections/global-europe/commission-unwilling-let-illegal-thai-fishing-hook-317775>

EU to consult authorities before deciding on Sri Lankan fish ban

Officials from the European Union will soon convene with Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe before making a final decision on whether to lift an EU-imposed ban on Sri Lankan fish handed down in January.

The EU delegates aim to fully assess the progress that Sri Lanka has made in preventing illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing practices; the EU recommended that the nation take steps to combat IUU fishing when the ban was first enacted. According to a senior official of the Fisheries Ministry, the decision will be taken once the review concludes.

After the evaluation concludes, the EU delegate team will pull together an extensive report on Sri Lanka's entire implementation process for the European Commission to consider when taking further action.

<http://www.seafoodsource.com/news/supply-trade/eu-to-consult-authorities-before-deciding-on-sri-lankan-fish-ban>

EU credits Sri Lanka on progress made on fisheries issue

The European Union has noted that it is satisfied with progress Sri Lanka had made in addressing concerns that led to an EU ban on Sri Lankan fisheries exports.

EU officials credited the Sri Lankan authorities for the progress that had been made to comply with the regulations of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission.

The two sides had also agreed to work together on the further measures necessary to address the remaining shortcomings under the EU legislation on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, with the aim of lifting the ban on fishery exports to the EU in the coming months.

<http://nation.lk/online/2015/11/19/eu-credits-sl-on-progress-made-on-fisheries-issue/>

Imports of tuna products from Thailand into the European Union

By a notice to importers published in the Official Journal C 220 of 1 August 2013, p. 7, the Commission advised EU operators presenting documentary evidence of origin (Form A — Generalised System of Preferences) in order to benefit from preferential treatment for canned tuna and frozen tuna loins of HS subheading 1604 14 imported from Thailand to take all necessary precautions, as there were reasonable doubts concerning the proper application of the preferential tariff treatment and the applicability of proofs of origin presented in the Union for those goods. The release of the goods in question for free circulation could thus give rise to a customs debt, lead to fraud and consequently, negatively affect the EU's financial interests.

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2015.392.01.0008.01.ENG

Nestlé admits to forced labour in its seafood supply chain in Thailand

Nestlé is not a major purchaser of seafood in Southeast Asia, but does some business in Thailand, primarily for its Purina brand Fancy Feast cat food.

Nestlé, among the biggest food companies in the world, launched the investigation in December 2014, after reports from news outlets and non-governmental organisations.

<http://www.euractiv.com/sections/global-europe/nestle-admits-forced-labour-its-seafood-supply-chain-thailand-319772>

Question for written answer on the decline in pilchard and anchovy stocks in connection with the tuna recovery plan

Reports from right across the fishing industry, recreational fishing associations and private individuals show that the recovery plan for tuna is working more effectively than expected, and that schools of small and medium-sized tuna are now a very common sight. This could have negative consequences for fisheries of the species that tuna feed on.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

Does the Commission intend to come forward with a package of remedial management measures, such as a recovery plan?

The full question and answer can be viewed here

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2015-012638&language=EN>

Funding Opportunities

New funds to promote our wild and farmed fish

Operators wishing to find new markets for their fish and widen their client base abroad can now apply for extra funding. A total of €110 million has been made available by the European

Commission and will go to promote the global consumption of made-in-the-EU fishery and aquaculture products. The figure is expected to keep increasing until it almost doubles in 2019.

In exchange for funds that will help them increase their market shares overseas, producers will inform foreign consumers of the high standards and broad diversity of EU products, and will underline the products' origin with a common label: "Enjoy, it's from Europe".

Find out more on the scheme's dedicated Commission page, in Regulation (EU) No 1144/2014 and in the Commission's work programme for 2016.

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/mare/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=27471&lang=en

Fisheries Policy

Working Party on Internal and External Fisheries Policy (November 26-27)

The Working Party on Internal and External Fisheries Policy will meet on November 26-27 2015.

Items on the agenda include:

1. Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION fixing for 2016 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union vessels, in certain non-Union waters;
2. Proposal for a Council Regulation fixing for 2016 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Black Sea;
3. Memorandum of Understanding of the Conservation of Migratory Sharks (Sharks (MOU) preparation of the Second Meeting of Signatories (MOS2);
4. Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a multiannual plan for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2187/2005 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1098/2007;
5. Preparation of the 2nd round of the EU/Norway bilateral consultations for 2016 (Bergen, 30 November - 4 December 2015);
6. Preparation of the Extraordinary Joint Committee EU/Seychelles SFP (Victoria, Seychelles, 8-10 December 2015).

<http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/CM-4697-2015-REV-1/en/pdf>

Sustainable Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in the Bioeconomy - A challenge for Europe - 4th SCAR Foresight Exercise - Information from the Commission

The fourth Foresight Exercise launched by the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR) in spring 2014 explored the interactions between the primary sector and the bioeconomy.

The foresight exercise provides an important contribution to the work on the further development of the European and national Bioeconomy strategies and can help guide the discussions on research and innovation investments in the Bioeconomy.

Details of the exercise, reports and presentations can be found here
<http://ec.europa.eu/research/scar/index.cfm?pg=foresight4th>