

**DIOXIN CONTAMINATION OF CERTAIN ANIMAL PRODUCTS INTENDED
FOR HUMAN OR ANIMAL CONSUMPTION**

Information from the European Communities

1. On 27 May 1999 the Belgian authorities informed the European Commission of a case of contamination of compound feedingstuffs with dioxin. The source of the contamination is still under investigation, but it is thought to originate from adulterated fat used in the production of compound feedingstuffs.
2. Following discussions in the Standing Committee on Feedingstuffs and the Standing Veterinary Committee, the European Commission adopted urgent safeguard measures to protect consumer health (Commission Decision 1999/363/EC, published in Official Journal of the European Communities L 141 of 4 June 1999, and Commission Decision 1999/368/EC, Official Journal L 142 of 5 June 1999).
3. The measures oblige member States' authorities to ensure that all potentially dioxin contaminated product, whether food or feedingstuff, be traced, removed from the market and destroyed. The measures also require the Belgian authorities to trace all products covered by the Decisions, and to notify other member States and third countries that have imported such products. Other member States that have received contaminated feedingstuffs are subject to the same obligations, i.e. to trace the feedingstuffs and food products and destroy them, and to prepare a monitoring plan on the levels of dioxins in products of animal origin. Restrictions are in place preventing movement from all the farms in Belgium, France and the Netherlands which received potentially contaminated feedingstuffs.
4. The measures prohibit the placing on the market, or the export to third countries, of products intended for human or animal consumption derived from domestic fowl, pigs and bovine animals which were reared in Belgium from 15 January 1999. This does not apply to products derived from animals reared in holdings which were not put under restriction by the Belgian authorities, or where the analytical results demonstrate that the products are not contaminated with dioxin, and for which the Belgian authorities provide appropriate certification.
5. In addition to fresh poultry meat, pigmeat and beef, the list of affected products includes: mechanically recovered meat; minced meat and meat preparations; meat products; milk and milk products, fats for human consumption; raw material for animal feedingstuffs; processed animal proteins, if these contain poultry, pig or bovine products; and egg products and other products for human consumption which contains more than 2 per cent egg.
6. The European Communities will continue to monitor the situation and will take any necessary measures to protect both consumer and animal health.

7. The European Commission held an information meeting in Brussels on 4 June 1999 at which representatives of 58 third countries were present. A further information meeting will take place on 8 June 1999.

8. Copies of Commission Decisions 1999/363/EC and 1999/369/EC (available in all EC languages) can be obtained from the EC SPS Enquiry Point, or on the EUR-Lex site (<http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex>).
