



The BfR in brief:  
**FACTS & FIGURES**

## LOCATIONS

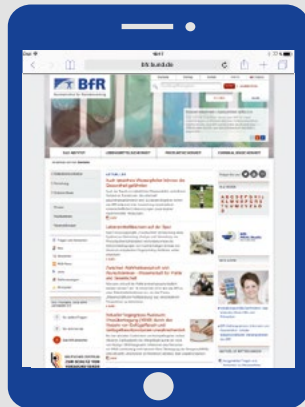


## 9 DEPARTMENTS

- ▶ Administration
- ▶ Risk Communication
- ▶ Exposure
- ▶ Biological Safety
- ▶ Food Safety
- ▶ Pesticides Safety
- ▶ Chemical and Product Safety
- ▶ Safety in the Food Chain
- ▶ Experimental Toxicology and ZEBET



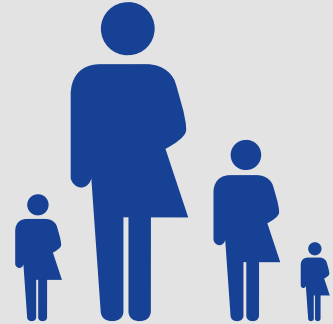
**MOST CLICKED:**  
*FAQ: Can the new type of coronavirus be transmitted via food and objects?*



**6,756,994**  
VISITS TO THE BfR WEBSITE

## EMPLOYEES

**1,153**



## BUDGET

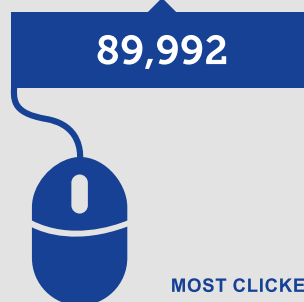


**approximately**  
**113 million euros**

## OPINIONS



**89,992**



**MOST CLICKED:**  
*Bacillus cereus bacteria in foodstuffs may cause gastrointestinal diseases (No. 048/2020)*

## THIRD-PARTY FUNDED PROJECTS



**122**

## PRESS RELEASES



**45**

## EVENTS



**71**



The BfR in brief:  
**FACTS & FIGURES**

*“The protection of human health  
is at the centre of our work.”*

# About the BfR

Dear Readers



An extraordinary year lies behind us. The coronavirus pandemic has posed new challenges for the whole world and also for the BfR. Protecting the health of consumers and BfR employees was our main task.

The pandemic is also reflected in our key figures: more people than before used the BfR's website and social media channels to find out about current consumer health protection issues – for example, whether coronaviruses can be transmitted via food, surfaces and consumer products.

A quick overview of further facts and figures in the reporting year 2020 is provided by the format "BfR in brief". If you are curious and want to learn more about the projects and publications behind the figures, more detailed information is available on the BfR website. And anyone with an interest in the BfR's core research areas and content can read all about them in the BfR2GO science magazine.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Andreas Hensel".

Professor Dr. Dr. Andreas Hensel,  
President

How can food, chemicals, cosmetics, toys, and many other everyday products be made as safe as possible? The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment – BfR for short – provides the answers.

## Science in the service of humanity

The BfR was founded in 2002 to strengthen consumer health protection in Germany. As a federal authority with legal capacity within the portfolio of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, it advises the federal government and German federal states ("Laender") on food and feed safety issues and on the safety of chemicals and products.

The BfR's main tasks include assessing existing health risks and identifying new ones, preparing recommendations on risk mitigation and communicating this process transparently.

All working areas of the BfR – science, assessment, communication, and administration – have been certified in accordance with quality standard DIN EN ISO 9001 since 2010.

At the BfR, there are also National Reference Laboratories under Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004 and (EU) 2017/625 in the domains of food and feed safety and food hygiene. This means that the BfR is part of an EU-wide network for improved food monitoring.

## Networks and cooperations

The BfR is supported in its risk assessment and risk communication by an independent scientific expert network made up of 15 commissions and is advised in its strategic focus by the Scientific Advisory Board.

## Food and feed safety

Whether ingredients or additives, residues, contaminants or germs and parasites – on the basis of international recognised criteria, the BfR assesses food and feed with regard to toxicological, microbiological and nutritional aspects.

## Product safety

The BfR investigates ingredients and their release from products such as cosmetics, toys, clothing or food packaging and containers, and assesses whether the contained substances could be a hazard to human health.

## Chemical safety

The BfR also assesses health risks of chemicals, plant protection products, biocide products and hazardous materials to quickly identify undesirable effects.

## Risk communication

The BfR examines the risk perception and risk behaviour of the population. To inform the public about health risks, BfR talks to various stakeholders in society.

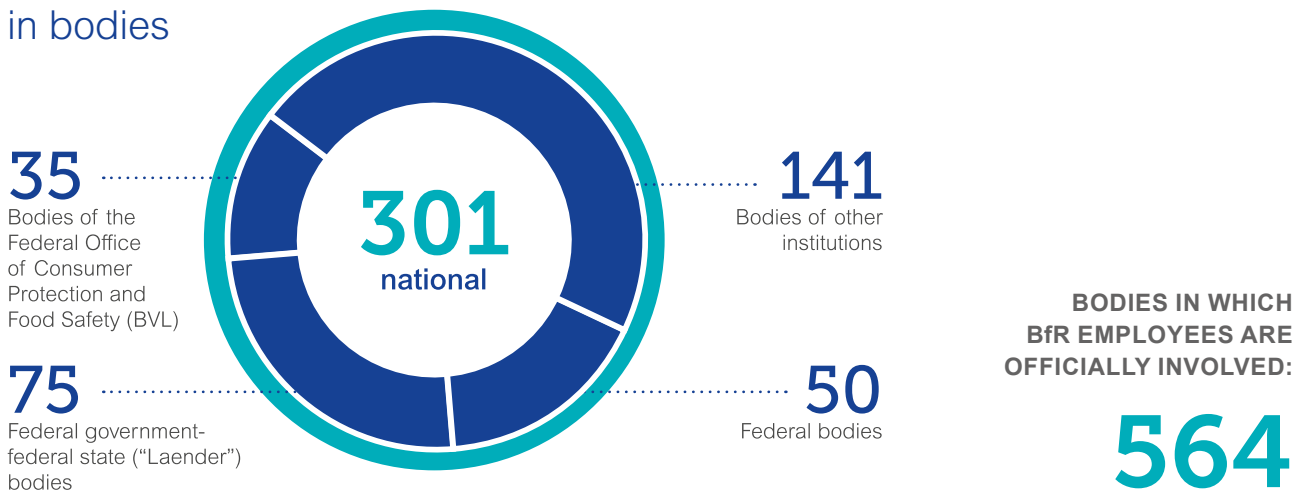
## Alternatives to animal experiments

The BfR performs the tasks of the “German Centre for the Protection of Laboratory Animals (Bf3R)” and coordinates all activities countrywide with the goal of restricting animal experiments and ensuring the best possible care for laboratory animals.

# Networks

Partnerships exist in the form of institutional cooperation or joint research projects. Scientists at the BfR actively contribute to the work of a variety of bodies. Institutional exchange between experts is also becoming more important.

## Participation in bodies



## 163

European level ...

Bodies of the European Commission	52
Bodies of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)	33
Bodies of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)	32
Bodies of other European organisations	46

## 100

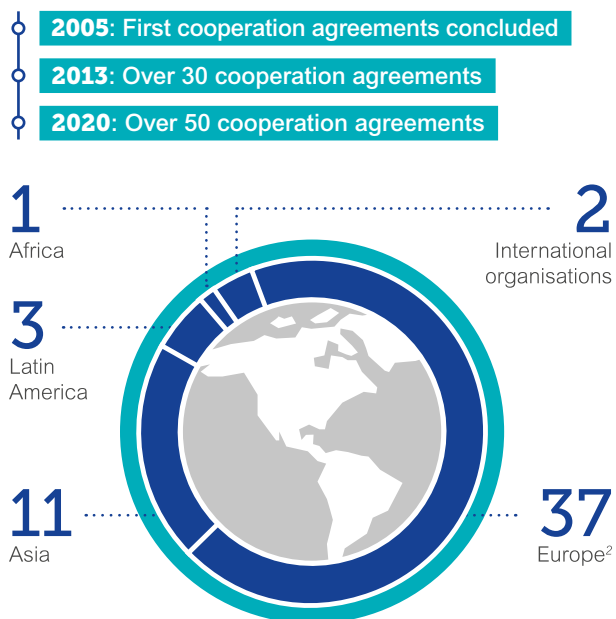
Worldwide ...

WHO/FAO: Bodies of Codex Alimentarius	22
WHO/FAO: Other bodies	1
Bodies of other United Nations specialised agencies	13
OECD bodies	45
Other bodies involved in global standardisation activities	19

[www.bfr.bund.de/en](http://www.bfr.bund.de/en) > The Institute > Cooperations

The BfR works in close partnership with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). In addition, the BfR cooperates with more than 50 national, international, governmental and nongovernmental institutions on all continents and advises on the establishment of official risk assessment structures.

## International cooperations



The BfR had a total of **54** cooperations in 2020.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> No change compared to previous year 2019 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>2</sup> EU 27, EU Candidate Countries, EFTA Member States, Russia

## EFSA Focal Point

As the national EFSA Focal Point in Germany, the BfR acts as an interface between EFSA and the various national authorities for food and feed safety. The main task of the Focal Point is the scientific coordination and the exchange of information with the aim of including more German expertise into EFSA's work.

### Tasks

#### Information exchange

Capacity building Outreach & Scientific Visibility

**EFSA Scientific Networks**

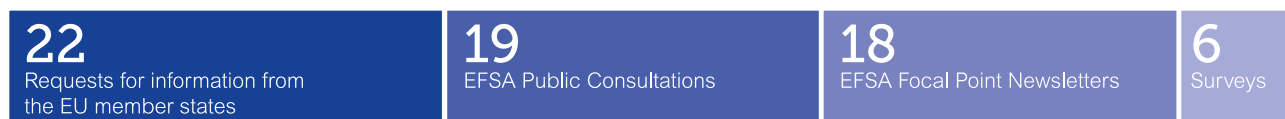
**EFSA Focal Point Network**

Data related issues

**EU Food Safety Almanac of the BfR**

**EFSA Advisory Forum** **Art.36-Network**

## Scientific Information Exchange of EFSA Focal Point in 2020

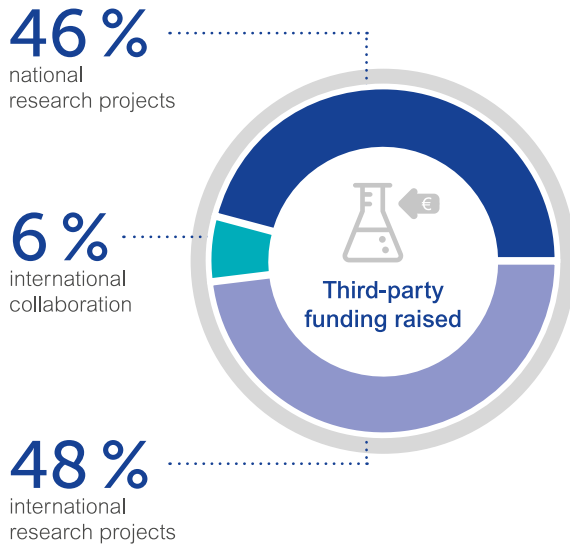


[www.bfr.bund.de/en](http://www.bfr.bund.de/en) > The Institute > Cooperation > International cooperation

# Research

One of the BfR's key competences is independent, application-orientated, and cause-related research. The topics are closely related to its assessment tasks. One aim is to close knowledge gaps. Another is to constantly expand the Institute's scientific expertise in risk assessment and risk communication independent of economic, political and social interests. The BfR is actively involved in numerous national and international research projects.

## Third-party funded projects



Third-party funding raised	Funding (in thousands of euros)	Number of projects
<b>national research projects</b>	<b>1,393</b>	<b>53</b>
Federal government	998	
DFG	369	
Other	26	
<b>international research projects</b>	<b>1,460</b>	<b>59</b>
EU	1,135	
EFSA	265	
Other	60	
<b>international collaboration (EU, EFSA, BMZ etc.)</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,029</b>	<b>122</b>

THIRD-PARTY FUNDING IN 2020 AMOUNTED TO

**3 million euros.**



### JUNIOR RESEARCH GROUPS

Junior research groups provide young scientists with research and scientific qualification opportunities shortly after completing their PhD. In doing so, the BfR specifically boosts core research areas and junior scientists.



### STUDY CENTRES

The study centres provide long-term prioritisation in strategically important areas of the BfR and bundle technical expertise on interdepartmental topics.

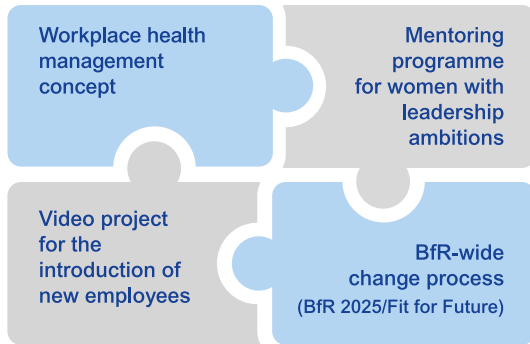
**i** *Third-party funded projects*  
[www.bfr.bund.de/en](http://www.bfr.bund.de/en) > **Research**  
> **Third-party projects**

*Main areas of research*  
[www.bfr.bund.de/en](http://www.bfr.bund.de/en) > **Research**  
> **Main research**



# Personnel and training

## Focus on staff development



**175**  
NEW APPOINTMENTS  
PER YEAR, OF WHICH  
4 ARE TRAINEES

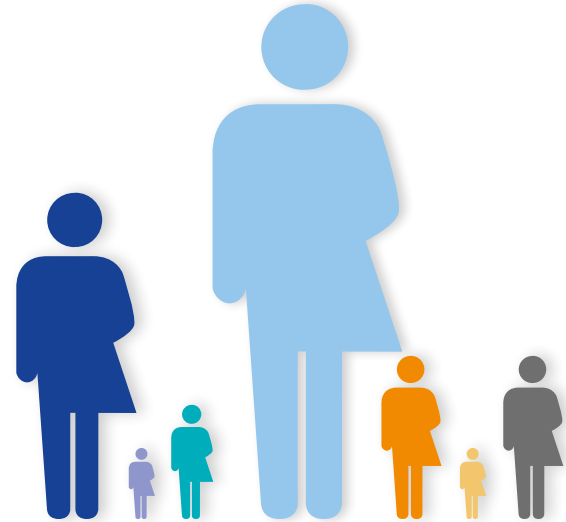
**i** [www.bfr.bund.de/en](http://www.bfr.bund.de/en) > Job advertisements  
[www.bfr.bund.de/en](http://www.bfr.bund.de/en) > The Institute > Working at the BfR

## Trade fair appearances

**Leipzig** CAREER CORNER,  
VETERINARY CONGRESS

**digital**  
JOBWUNDER, TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN

**digital** GERMAN ACADEMIC  
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK (GAIN)



Scientists	523
Administrative staff	256
Technical assistants	128
PhD candidates	71
Apprentices/trainees	25
Animals carers	22
Other (e.g. librarians, laboratory assistants, etc.)	128

A TOTAL OF  
**1,153 employees**

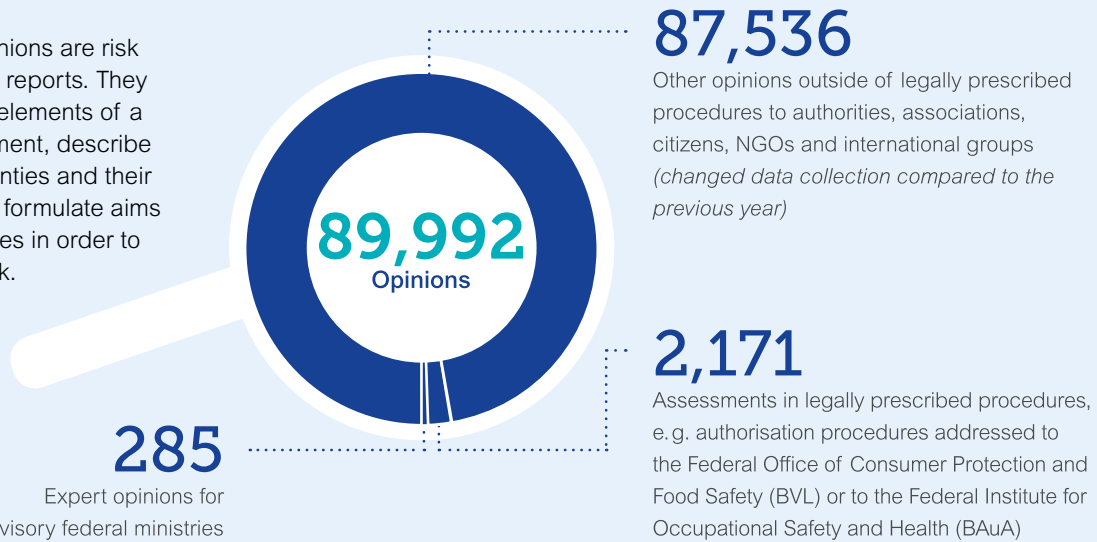
## Training professions

- ▶ Laboratory chemist
- ▶ Office management clerk
- ▶ Animal carer
- ▶ Plant mechanic
- ▶ Electronic technician
- ▶ Laboratory biologist
- ▶ IT specialist

# Publications

## Expert opinions

The BfR opinions are risk assessment reports. They include the elements of a risk assessment, describe the uncertainties and their origins, and formulate aims and strategies in order to minimise risk.



### KEY OPINIONS PUBLISHED IN 2020

***Bacillus cereus* bacteria in foodstuffs may cause gastrointestinal diseases (No. 048/2020)**

**Vitamin D: consumption of high-dose food supplements is unnecessary (No. 035/2020)**

**New studies on antiperspirants containing aluminium: impairments to health unlikely as a result of aluminium uptake via the skin (No. 030/2020)**

## Publications

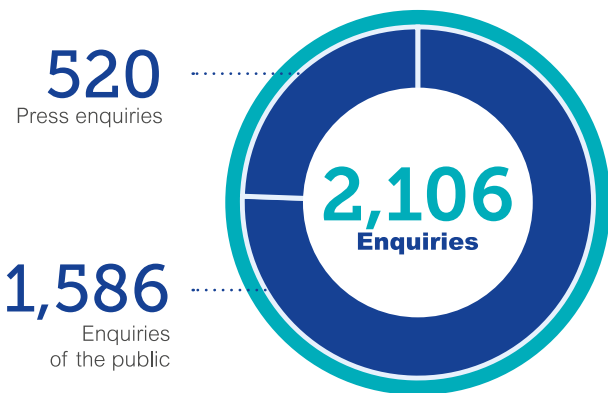
	Number
Book publications	1
Contributions to compilations	38
<b>Journal publications</b>	<b>268</b>
Contributions to conference proceedings	88
Poster contributions	106
Presentations (including conference speakers)	446
Dissertations/postdoctoral papers/master theses/ diploma theses/bachelor theses	36
Reports/EFSA	14

### KEY PUBLICATIONS IN 2020:

- ▶ Stolz, A. et al. 2020. **Biomedical Research Meets Toxicology: How *In Vitro* Chromosome Instability Methods Can Contribute to Carcinogenicity Prediction.** *Journal of Hazardous Materials* (393): e122480.
- ▶ Friedemann, A. E. R. et al. 2020. **Phosphine fumigation – Time dependent changes in the volatile profile of table grapes.** *Cancer Research* (80)8: 1626–1629.
- ▶ Trefflich, I. et al. 2020. **Is a vegan or a vegetarian diet associated with the microbiota composition in the gut? Results of a new cross-sectional study and systematic review.** *Critical Reviews in Food Science and Nutrition* (60)17: 2990–3004.

**i** Overview of all publications  
[www.bfr.bund.de/en](http://www.bfr.bund.de/en) > publications  
[www.bfr.bund.de/en](http://www.bfr.bund.de/en) > Science News  
[www.openagrar.de](http://www.openagrar.de)

# Public relations

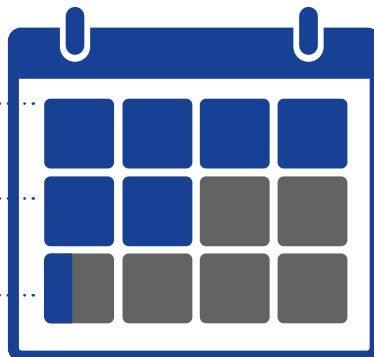


The BfR received **520 enquiries** from TV, print/online media, news agencies as well as from radio, including on ...

Coronavirus <sup>1</sup>	115
Aluminium	30
Tattoos	29
Glyphosate/Plant Protection Products	17
Food Supplements	12

<sup>1</sup> Concerning foods, consumer products/surfaces, disinfectants

- 47  
Scientific dialogue
- 21  
Information events
- 3  
Training courses

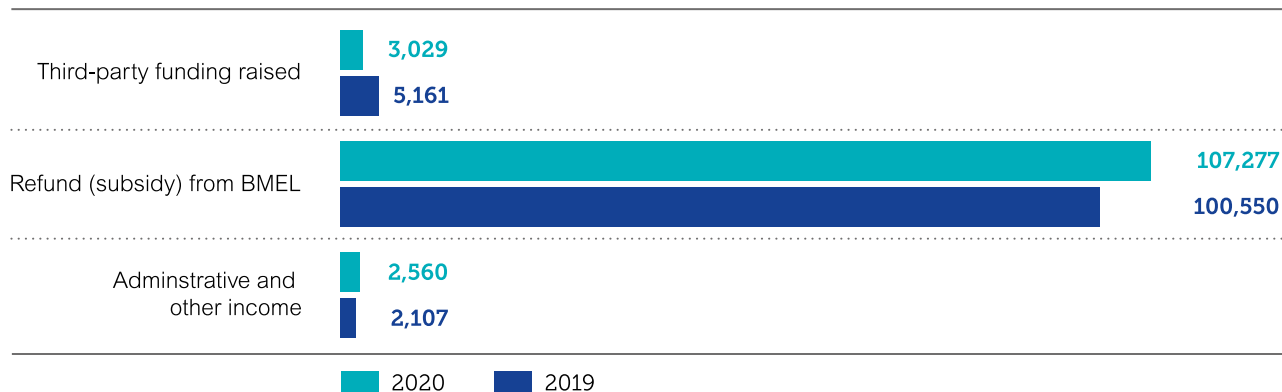


**71**  
events were organised  
by the BfR.

**i** Overview of all BfR events  
[www.bfr-akademie.de/english](http://www.bfr-akademie.de/english)

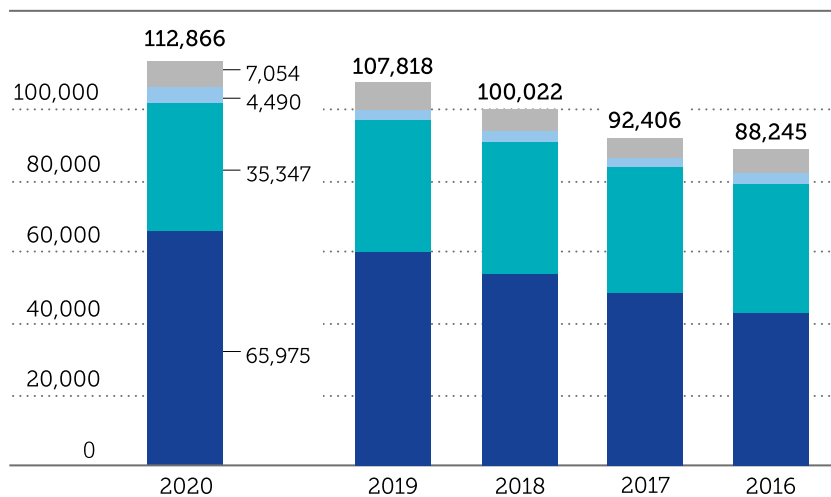
# Budget

## Income (in thousands of euros)



IN 2020, THE BfR SPENT APPROXIMATELY **113 million euros.**

## Expenditure (in thousands of euros)



### Selected expenditure

Scientific collections and libraries	431,831 €
Initial and further training	464,554 €
Public relations work, publishing and documentation	1,193,700 €
Conferences, trade fairs, exhibitions	168,012 €

# More about the BfR

## Consumer protection to go

Twice a year, the compact and knowledge-packed BfR2GO scientific magazine provides current and well-founded information on the research on and assessment of possible health risks of food and feed, chemicals and consumer products. Order, subscribe to or download the magazine free of charge at: [www.bfr.bund.de/en](http://www.bfr.bund.de/en)



## **Imprint**

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**Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung**