

Assessment of the results of the national residue monitoring plan 2008 and the import residue monitoring plan 2008

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The national residue monitoring plan is a programme aimed at the analysis of foodstuffs of animal origin such as milk, meat, fish and honey that has been carried out since 1989 in the European Union (EU) according to standardised protocol. In addition, import products from third countries are controlled as part of the import residue monitoring plan. The aim is to uncover the use of prohibited substances as well as the improper use of restricted substances, to control the adherence to established maximum residue limits of veterinary medicinal products and to reveal the sources of residue. In Germany, the residue monitoring plans are coordinated by the Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL). The sampling is organised by the *Länder* (German federal states), while BVL analyses the results and forwards the data to the European Commission. The Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) analyses the results in respect to consumer health protection.

In 2008, 50153 animal or animal product samples were analysed in the national residue monitoring plan. In 198 cases, prohibited substances or concentrations of substances that exceeded the established maximum levels were detected. 1341 samples were taken for the import residue monitoring plan, and in 31 cases the residues and contaminants exceeded the established maximum levels or revealed the presence of substances that are not permitted. No product group displayed frequencies. Overall, the number of positive findings was low.

In its assessment of residue levels, BfR comes to the conclusion that even if maximum levels are exceeded, one-time or occasional intake did not constitute a consumers health risk. It was once again determined that the kidneys and livers of sheep are the foodstuffs most affected by heavy metals. BfR thus maintains its recommendation to principally abstain from the consumption of these.

The full version of this BfR Information is available in German on http://www.bfr.bund.de/cm/208/bewertung_der_ergebnisse_des_nationalen_rueckstandskontrollplans_2008_und_des_einfuhrrueckstandskontrollplans_2008.pdf

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