

# **Foods and food ingredients treated with ionising radiation. Framework Directive**

1988/0169A(COD) - 08/10/2019 - Follow-up document

In accordance with Directive 1999/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, the Commission presented a report on foods and food ingredients treated with ionizing radiation for the period 2016-2017.

Food irradiation is the treatment of foodstuffs by a certain type of radiant energy known as ionising radiation.

Directive 1999/2/EC (Framework Directive) on the approximation of the laws of the Member States concerning foods and food ingredients treated with ionising radiation lays down specific provisions for the manufacturing, marketing and importation of treated foods and food ingredients.

The report is based on information provided to the European Commission by 28 Member States in 2016 and 27 Member States in 2017. Malta has not provided any data for the year 2017.

The information and data contained in the report cover the following points:

## ***Approved irradiation facilities in the Member States***

Any food irradiated or containing irradiated ingredients must have been treated (irradiated) only at approved facilities. The list of approved irradiation facilities in Member States is published by the Commission in the Official Journal of the European Union. Any irradiated food or any irradiated food ingredient of a compound food must be labelled with the words ‘irradiated’ or ‘treated with ionising radiation’.

There are now 24 irradiation facilities in the EU. Two previously approved irradiation facilities have been closed in 2015.

The facilities are located in 14 Member States: five in France, four in Germany, two in Bulgaria, the Netherlands, and Spain, one in Belgium, Czech Republic, Croatia, Estonia, Italy, Hungary, Poland, Romania and United Kingdom.

Of those 14 Member States equipped with irradiation facilities, Bulgaria, Italy, Romania and the United Kingdom did not irradiate any foodstuffs over the period covered by this report

To enforce correct labelling or to detect non-authorised products, several analytical methods have been standardised by the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN), following a mandate given by the European Commission.

## ***Checks carried out in radiation facilities***

A total quantity of 10 211 tonnes of products were treated with ionising irradiation in EU Member States during the years 2016 and 2017. The treatment took place mainly in two Member States: Belgium, which treated two thirds of the irradiated food of the EU (68%), and the Netherlands (13%).

The two main commodities irradiated in the EU are frog legs (ca 57%) and dried aromatic herbs, spices and vegetables seasoning (ca 21%).

### *Checks carried out at the marketing stage*

For the period 2016-2017, 11 162 samples were analysed by 24 Member States, i.e. overall 7.02% less in average than in 2015.

From the total of 11 162 samples, 87 were not compliant (0.8%) and 113 samples (1%) gave inconclusive results. The non-compliance observed were mainly incorrect labelling and forbidden irradiation.

The percentage of non-compliance was lower than in the previous report.

At marketing stage, the majority of the products analysed were 'herbs and spices' (42%) and the 'cereals, seed, vegetables, fruit and their products' (22%). Under category 'Other' (foods supplements and soup and sauces) the percentage was 17%.