



Food and Veterinary Office - Annual Report 2005

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The Food and Veterinary Office (FVO)



Food Safety

Mission

The Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) is a directorate of the Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General of the European Commission, and is responsible for monitoring compliance with EU legislation in the fields of food safety, animal health, animal welfare and plant health.

The FVO performs this function by verifying, mainly through inspections, the effectiveness of national control systems for enforcing Community legislation in these fields.

The mission of the FVO is, through its audits, inspections and related activities, to :

- check on compliance with the requirements of EU food safety and quality, animal health and welfare and plant health legislation within the European Union and on compliance with EU import requirements in Third Countries exporting to the EU;
- contribute to the development of European Community policy in the food safety, animal health and welfare and plant health sectors,
- contribute to the development and implementation of effective control systems in the food safety, animal health and welfare and plant health sectors;

and to inform stakeholders of the outcome of its audits and inspections.

Activities

Inspections are the principal means by which the FVO performs its role. FVO inspectors carry out these inspections in Member States, Accession Countries, Candidate Countries and other Third Countries.

The findings and conclusions of the inspections are presented in reports that are, in general, made public on the Directorate-General's website. These reports include recommendations to the competent authorities in the countries inspected.

Where an inspection identifies an immediate threat to consumer, animal or plant health, the Commission may take emergency, or safeguard, measures. These may include legal action to prevent trade in, or imports of, animals, plants or their products. In other cases, where serious, but less urgent, problems are found, or where a competent authority fails to take satisfactory corrective action, the Commission may use the inspection report as one element in deciding to start infringement proceedings against a Member State or, in the case of a Third Country, to refuse, withdraw or modify authorisations for exports to the EU.

In addition, the results of the FVO's inspections can contribute to the development of Community legislation by identifying areas where existing legislation may need to be amended or where new legislation is required.

Inspection objectives and the countries to be visited are presented in an Annual Programme of Inspections prepared before the start of each year. Towards the end of the first half of the year, this programme is updated for the second half of the year. When finalised, normally by the end of November, the programme is published on the Directorate-General's website. It is also distributed to each Member State, to the Council and to the European Parliament.

New inspections may need to be programmed, for example, in response to emerging risks such as disease outbreaks. These new inspections are reflected in modifications to the inspections programme.

The FVO actively follows up the findings of each inspection and usually requests the national authority to submit an action plan to remedy the shortcomings identified in the report. The FVO evaluates the action plan and monitors its implementation. Different means, such as follow-up inspections, requests for written reports and high-level meetings can be used by the FVO to ensure that improvements in the control systems are achieved. As a last resort, legal action under EU law may be taken by the Commission to ensure that Member States meet their obligations under Community law.

FVO Inspections 2005

Objectives

Inspection Objectives

Food Safety:	64%
Food of animal origin	22%
Import controls	10%
TSE/Animal by-products	9%
Veterinary medicines and residues	6%
General/horizontal issues	5%
Pesticides	4%
Food Hygiene HACCP	4%
Other	4%
Animal Health:	23%
Disease eradication/control plans	9%
Identification/certification	6%
Disease contingency plans	3%
Disease outbreaks	1%
Other	4%
Animal Welfare:	7%
Hen, pigs, calves	3%
Transport	2%
On-farm	1%
Slaughter killing	1%
Plant Health:	6%
Plant pest outbreaks	2%
Internal market – Plant passport	2%
Other	2%

In 2005, the FVO carried out 223 inspections.

An FVO inspection can cover a number of objectives. Each objective is categorised into one of four broad areas:

- food safety;
- animal health;
- animal welfare;
- plant health.

On this basis, almost a two-thirds of the inspection objectives in 2005 concerned food safety, while animal health objectives accounted for nearly a quarter of all inspection objectives.

However, some objectives could be considered under more than one area. For example, animal nutrition could be regarded as having an influence on both the health and the welfare of an animal. Equally, it could be considered as having an influence on the final animal product and could therefore be classed as a food safety issue.

The table opposite gives the breakdown of inspection objectives in 2005.

Countries

Inspections in Member States

United Kingdom	11
Greece	8
Italy	8
Spain	8
France	6
Germany	6
Ireland	5
Sweden	5
The Netherlands	5
Austria	4
Finland	4
Portugal	4
Belgium	3
Denmark	3
Luxembourg	3
Total	83

The 223 FVO inspections in 2005 covered 63 countries. Apart from the 15 pre-enlargement Member States, the ten New Member States and the 4 Candidate Countries, a further 34 countries worldwide (referred to as Third Countries) were visited.

There were 83 inspections in the 15 Member States during 2005. In the New Member States, 71 inspections were performed. For the Candidate Countries, 21 inspections were held in 2005, while 48 were carried out in Third Countries.

The tables opposite give separate breakdowns of the number of inspections per Member State and per New Member State.

A full list of all the countries visited in 2005 is included in Annex 2 of this report.

Inspections in New Member States

Poland	12
Czech Republic	9
Estonia	8
Hungary	7
Latvia	7
Slovenia	7
Lithuania	6
Malta	6
Slovak Republic	5
Cyprus	4
Total	71

Feed and Food Safety

The majority of the work undertaken by the FVO concerning the evaluation of official control systems, both in Member States and other countries, falls under this heading.

It encompasses the total food chain "from farm to fork", including primary production, through processing of animal and non-animal origin foodstuffs, to retail and catering.

Evaluation of official control systems is undertaken to verify that the feed and food safety requirements established in EU law are being applied by the competent authorities in the Member States and in the Third Countries that export feed and food to the EU. In the case of Candidate Countries, such evaluations are performed in the context of the process of accession.

Member States

Activities

Findings



Inspections with a wide scope were carried out in the ten New Member States.

The inspections included the evaluation of official controls related to food safety, animal health, contingency planning and animal welfare at slaughter.

The results of these inspections were, in the majority of countries, positive, particularly with regard to the compliance status of establishments processing food of animal origin (in particular red meat and milk). However, in three New Member States (Hungary, Malta and Poland) the situation was not yet fully satisfactory. Furthermore, in several New Member States, deficiencies were noted in the performance of *Trichinella* examinations, and in the implementation of certain own checks (in particular carcass sampling in slaughterhouses).

In six Member States, inspections were carried out to evaluate official control systems relating to general food hygiene legislation (not covered by specific veterinary legislation). In particular, the inspections looked at the production of non-animal origin foodstuffs, wholesale distribution and the retail area (including retail butcher shops). These inspections completed a series on general food hygiene that started in 2004.

The evaluation of the general food hygiene control systems was generally positive. However, a number of deficiencies in the implementation of Community legislation were noted. These involved, particularly:

- The level of enforcement of the requirement that all food businesses implement and assess food safety procedures based on HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) principles, which was very poor in some sectors, notably in the service sector;
- The lack of categorising food businesses according to the risk associated with them.

In addition, guides to good hygiene practice, which are used by food businesses as tools to implement Community legislation, varied considerably, both in number and quality, in those Member States evaluated.

In the field of fishery products and live bivalve molluscs, the FVO finalised a series of inspections which had started in 2004. In 2005, the remaining Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany and Sweden) were visited.

As in the other Member States visited in 2004, a number of horizontal problems were found in most of the inspections carried out in 2005. They concerned insufficient capacities of competent authorities, inadequate supervision of establishments and vessels, and deficiencies in both establishments and vessels.

More specifically, for live bivalve molluscs (with the exception of Finland, where there is no production), the main problems concerned the inadequate monitoring of the shellfish producing waters, due to insufficient frequency of sampling or the use of non approved testing methods, both for microbiological and for biotoxin monitoring. The Commission has reminded Member States of their obligations concerning the application of the relevant rules.

For poultry meat, the FVO visited the Netherlands and the United Kingdom to assess the use of water retention agents.

The two inspections showed problems in this field, in particular regarding correct labelling of the poultry meat preparations concerned.

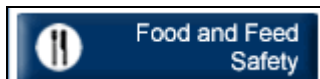
Feed and Food Safety

Member States	Activities	Findings
	<p>There were several inspections to assess controls systems for the prevention, control and eradication of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). Inspections concentrated on the implementation of EU rules on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epidemio-surveillance; • Removal of specified risk material (SRM); • Official controls on the total feed ban (prohibition of feeding products of animal origin to all livestock). <p>For BSE, seven inspections were undertaken, one in the United Kingdom and six in New Member States, the latter also covering feed safety.</p>	<p>In the United Kingdom, good progress was noted with respect to problems previously identified in the BSE control system.</p> <p>In the New Member States:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system of BSE epidemio-surveillance was largely in place apart from minor shortcomings. • There were minor shortcomings in SRM controls. • The total feed ban was in place but there were minor shortcomings in controls.
	<p>Control systems for feed safety were evaluated in a series of inspections in seven New Member States, focusing on the implementation of EU requirements for the safe production of animal feedstuffs, in particular on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the official controls by the competent authorities on the production and use of feed; • the requirements for feed producers and traders. <p>Six of the inspections were combined with the BSE inspections mentioned above and one was combined with an inspection on TSEs in small ruminants.</p>	<p>In the New Member States visited, the systems in place with respect to feed safety controls were largely satisfactory. However, in some cases there some minor problems regarding supervision of controls and collaboration between various competent authorities that are involved in feed safety systems.</p>
	<p>The series of animal by-products (ABP) inspections to all Member States that was started in 2004 was completed in 2005. The inspections checked the implementation of EU rules on ABP with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The arrangements and infrastructure in place for the handling of ABP from the point where they are produced until their safe disposal or permitted use; • ABP controls and traceability. <p>In 2005, 12 inspections were performed to complete the series.</p>	<p>As regards ABP, all Member States visited had adequate arrangements and sufficient infrastructure in place to handle most of the ABP in accordance with the ABP Regulation.</p> <p>On the whole, official controls on the most important types of ABP were satisfactory, but more is needed to guarantee the flow of other ABP within the allowed chains until their permitted use or safe disposal.</p> <p>In particular, Member States should improve the effectiveness and/or uniformity of official control of the ABP chain by ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of adequate staff resources; • A clear definition and distribution of responsibilities amongst the competent authorities involved; • More guidance and training for and co-operation between staff of the various competent authorities responsible for these official controls. <p>These inspections were undertaken, amongst others, to assist the Commission in drawing up a report under Article 35 of the ABP Regulation.</p>
	<p>A new series of inspections was started to assess the systems for control of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs) in sheep and goats. The inspections concentrated on TSE epidemio-surveillance, eradication and control measures, SRM, breeding programmes, and intra-community trade and imports of live ovine and caprine animals and their genetic material.</p> <p>In 2005, seven inspections were carried out in Member States.</p>	<p>In general the systems for control of TSEs in small ruminants were satisfactory. However, in some Member States, levels of epidemio-surveillance were not reaching the targets required by the TSE Regulation. In some Member States, shortcomings were seen in the removal of SRM.</p> <p>Some of the Member States visited did not have fully compliant programmes for breeding for resistance for Scrapie as required by Regulation (EC) No 999/2001.</p>



Feed and Food Safety

Candidate Countries	Activities	Findings
	<p>Inspections were carried out in Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania to assess controls over the production of food of mammalian origin.</p>	<p>In Romania and Bulgaria, progress had been made in the transposition of Community legislation in the field. However, in both countries, it was estimated by the competent authorities that 80%-90% of their mammalian food establishments would have to be upgraded to meet EC requirements, or be closed.</p> <p>In both countries, raw milk quality was far from complying with EC requirements.</p> <p>In Croatia, the transposition of Community legislation had not been started, and no strategy had been developed for upgrading establishments.</p>
	<p>Inspections on the upgrading of establishments took place in Bulgaria and Romania.</p>	<p>Certain problems remain for the upgrading process of establishments in both Romania and Bulgaria.</p>
	<p>There was an inspection to Croatia, concerning fishery products and live bivalve molluscs, related to export issues on the basis of the third country import rules. It was combined with an inspection regarding the respect of the animal health conditions governing exports of fishery products to the EU.</p>	<p>The inspection to Croatia showed some deficiencies regarding supervisory activities of the competent authorities, laboratory activities, training, as well as serious weaknesses in some establishments. On the other hand, significant progress was made with the supervision of the live bivalve mollusc production.</p>
	<p>Inspections were carried out in three Candidate Countries, covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSE and SRM controls; • feed safety controls. 	<p>In general, progress was noted in the implementation of BSE controls. However, the total feed ban had only been partially implemented in the Candidate Countries visited.</p> <p>Systems covering approval and registration of feed establishments are in place in the Candidate Countries visited but further work will be needed to ensure a level of feed safety comparable with EU standards.</p>



Feed and Food Safety

Third Countries	Activities	Findings
	<p>Inspections to evaluate the production of food of mammalian origin for export to the European Union were made to four countries in South America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay), four countries in Southern Africa (Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland), Australia, Switzerland and the USA.</p>	<p>Competent Authorities generally performed well, but weaknesses were identified in three countries and serious shortcomings were found in one other.</p> <p>In most of the countries visited, shortcomings were found in the control systems in place for the export of products to the European Union. In South Africa, the situation was found to be unacceptable but in this case there was a self-imposed ban on exports to the EU.</p> <p>There were significant shortcomings in certification procedures in four countries, and certification was found to be unreliable in two others: Swaziland, where there was a self-imposed ban on exports to the EU, and the USA, where assurances were given and accepted.</p>
	<p>Inspections regarding food safety aspects for exports of fishery products to the EU were carried out in 17 Third Countries included in part 1 of the list in the Annex to Commission Decision 97/296/EC.</p> <p>Another Third Country, Indonesia, was visited as a follow up to a previous inspection, carried out in 2004.</p> <p>Three other Third Countries, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia and Ukraine, were visited in view of a possible export listing.</p> <p>In several countries, the inspection also covered live bivalve molluscs or animal health issues, and information on these can be found in the Animal Health section of this report.</p>	<p>Although huge differences exist between the different countries, both in relation to the structure and capabilities of the competent authorities and in the level of compliance of establishments, it can be generally concluded that none of the countries inspected complied with all relevant conditions for exporting fishery products to the EU. In some countries, such as Madagascar or Indonesia, the deficiencies were so significant that the Commission implemented certain restrictions on the trade, such as a reduction in the list of approved establishments, or a level of 100% physical checks when imports take place (which is at the cost of the importer).</p> <p>As in previous years, many problems were noted regarding the laboratory testing capacities and reliability. This, combined with the absence of vital structures, such as properly equipped and hygienically operating fishing vessels and landing sites, along with a shortage of sufficiently trained and properly motivated officials to supervise the production chain, lead to some situations where a risk for the consumer could not be completely ruled out.</p> <p>In addition, in countries also approved for export of aquaculture fishery products, weaknesses existed generally in the field of residue monitoring for certain substances and supervision of the use of veterinary medicinal products.</p> <p>Among the measures taken in order to improve the situation, the outcome of this ongoing inspection series has been used by the Commission to target better its technical assistance programmes in the countries concerned.</p>
	<p>Live bivalve molluscs formed part of the subject of inspections in Chile, Japan, Morocco and Thailand. For Chile, this was in view of a first listing for export to the EU, while in the other three countries, the inspection was a follow up of the action taken in response to a previous inspection in this field.</p>	<p>In Chile, which requested listing in Commission decision 97/20/EC, the deficiencies found, in particular in the establishments concerned, were such that a listing is not yet considered.</p> <p>In the three countries where follow up was carried out, the inspections found that the guarantees provided for correction were generally in place and that the situation was satisfactory.</p>

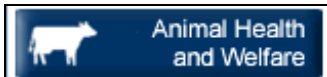
Animal Health

Animal health controls are important for two reasons:

- the protection of consumers from zoonotic diseases (i.e. transmissible from animals to humans) such as brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis (TB);
- the protection of animals from diseases with serious economic effects.



Activities	Findings
<p>The series of inspections regarding animal health controls for intra-Community trade in semen and embryos of cattle was continued, with inspections in four Member States in 2005.</p>	<p>In general the requirements were met. However, EU legislation on semen was not always fully transposed into national legislation. Control systems in place, and their supervision, were insufficient to ensure the correct application of health and hygiene requirements for the processing and storage of semen and embryos. The Commission is pursuing the matter with the Member State concerned.</p>
<p>One inspection regarding animal health controls for import of semen and embryos of cattle was carried out in a Third Country.</p>	<p>Generally, the requirements were met. However, in addition to shortcomings similar to those identified during inspections to Member States, specific deficiencies were noted in relation to the isolation of EU approved facilities in semen collection centres and the application of certain animal health tests. The country concerned gave assurances that would bring their approval criteria into line with EU requirements and are negotiating to have their test regimes recognised as equivalent.</p>
<p>Inspections were carried out on the control of rabies (in two Member States), African Swine Fever (one Member State) and bovine brucellosis (one Member State).</p>	<p>In respect of rabies, recommendations were made concerning the control of vaccination and import checks. African Swine Fever continues to be a problem in part of one Member State, where recommendations for improving control measures were made. Recommendations were also made concerning certain aspects of the bovine brucellosis control programme in another Member State.</p>
<p>Three inspections were carried out in two Member States to assess their applications for derogations from the Community rules for the identification of sheep and goats.</p>	<p>In one Member State, the alternative system proposed was considered to be acceptable. In the other, certain assurances in respect of improvements to the system were required.</p>
<p>Inspections with a wide scope were carried out in the ten New Member States.</p> <p>The inspections included the evaluation of official controls related to food safety, animal health, contingency planning and animal welfare at slaughter.</p>	<p>The results of these inspections were, in the majority of countries, positive. However, deficiencies were noted in the implementation of Community legislation in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration of small holdings; • Operation of the databases for bovine animals and pigs, including the controls and sanctions related to animal identification and movement controls; • Correct implementation of animal health control programmes, in particular for tuberculosis, brucellosis, CSF and rabies; • Deficiencies in the implementation of contingency plans for disease outbreak and the implementation of training requirements.
<p>Inspections were carried out in Three Candidate Countries to assess mammalian animal health controls</p>	<p>Some shortcomings were noted in control programmes for tuberculosis, brucellosis and enzootic bovine leucosis. Contingency plans for disease outbreaks were in some cases non-existent and in most cases inadequate.</p> <p>In Romania, the lack of effective control over CSF and rabies gave rise to particular concern.</p>



Animal Health

Activities	Findings
<p>Follow-up inspections to evaluate animal health aspects of the production of food of mammalian origin for export to the European Union were made to four countries in South America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay), and to four countries in Southern Africa (Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland).</p>	<p>Competent Authorities generally performed well, but weaknesses were identified in three countries and serious shortcomings were found in South Africa, where a self-imposed ban on exports to the EU was in place.</p> <p>In relation to holding registration, animal identification and movement controls, the situation was less favourable: some deficiencies were found in six countries and major deficiencies found in two others.</p> <p>Animal health controls were not being correctly applied in six countries.</p>
<p>An inspection to evaluate an application to export mammalian products to the European Union was made to Moldova.</p>	<p>The application could not be approved due to serious shortcomings in animal health controls, certification, holding registration and movement controls.</p>
<p>Contingency plan inspections were carried out in the ten New Member States and in Romania. They concentrated in particular on the avian influenza aspects, in view of the growing threat posed by this disease in 2005.</p>	<p>The outcome of the inspections was quite variable, but in general rather satisfactory. In particular, for avian influenza, the inspections showed that the Member States visited were reasonably prepared for a possible outbreak and had taken the necessary action to implement a series of Commission Decisions, starting from the summer of 2005, to prevent the disease from being introduced or to reduce the risk of it spreading if introduced.</p> <p>However, further improvements in the field of biosecurity provisions in poultry farms were generally necessary.</p>
<p>There were two inspections in Greece, in relation to poultry diseases: one concerning a number of outbreaks of Newcastle disease, and the other following a suspicion of avian influenza.</p>	<p>Both inspections showed that serious shortcomings existed regarding the biosecurity of farms, epidemiological inquiries, preparedness of authorities to cope with such outbreaks, the enforcement of animal health restrictions and diagnostic capacities. The Greek authorities have provided detailed responses to the Commission's recommendations.</p>
<p>As mentioned above, a fishery products inspection to Croatia also examined the respect of the animal health conditions governing exports of fishery products to the EU.</p>	<p>Serious weaknesses existed in the animal health supervision for aquaculture, which would preclude the signing of export certificates for live fish or aquaculture products. Urgent corrective action from the part of the Croatian authorities was requested. An action plan was received from them and is being followed up by the Commission.</p>
<p>In a number of inspections for fishery products in Third Countries, specifically Thailand, Chile, Malaysia, Japan and South Africa, the inspection teams looked also at animal health issues.</p>	<p>The supervisory activities regarding animal health in aquaculture varied strongly from one country to another, but deficiencies were found in all countries visited.</p>
<p>An inspection took place in Thailand, related to the guarantees provided on poultry meat products, in the framework of the avian influenza restrictions.</p>	<p>While the situation in the establishments provided the necessary guarantees that the products concerned would pose no threat to the poultry health status of the EU, the competent authorities were requested to improve their supervisory activity in the matter, which was deficient.</p>



Animal Welfare

Inspections dealt with EU animal welfare legislation applicable on farms, during transport and at slaughter.



Activities	Findings
<p>A series of inspections on checks of farms was carried out in six Member States. The main focus was the requirements in force from 1.1.2003 regarding the keeping of pigs. Laying hens, which were the principal focus of farm checks in 2004, were also included in the scope of these inspections. Calves were included in two countries which had a substantial level of veal (white meat) production.</p>	<p>In relation to the general requirements of Directive 98/58/EC, which were often overlooked at the time of the previous series of inspections in 2001, checks were more satisfactory for issues such as mortality and medicine records and care of sick and injured animals, although the latter is still commonly a concern in large production units.</p> <p>Group housing of sows is well established where national provisions pre-dated the EU requirements and is slowly making progress in the other Member States. There has been less progress in implementing the other principal changes made by the amendments to Directive 91/630/EEC. Structured training for stockpersons was available in half of the Member States visited and there has been very limited progress in achieving the provision of rooting materials for pigs, in particular in slatted floor systems.</p> <p>In relation to laying hens, cages remain the dominant sector, and when overstocking is detected, there is wide variation in the enforcement actions taken. Veterinary services are becoming more familiar with the requirements for alternative systems and more competent checks are being carried out in this area.</p> <p>The competent authorities had taken actions to ensure that traditional close confinement systems for veal production have been replaced by those which incorporate group housing from eight weeks of age.</p> <p>Positive steps have generally been taken so that the results of checks are provided in a coherent way through all levels of the competent authority in order to meet the requirements of Decision 2000/50/EC.</p>
<p>Inspections looking at aspects of controls of farms, transport and at slaughter were carried out in three New Member States.</p>	<p>Overall, the competent authorities have set up a satisfactory system of controls, with checks, reporting and sanctioning well developed. Although progress has been made to phase out old non-compliant systems, such as certain cage types for keeping hens and methods for stunning animals in slaughterhouses, action has not always been sufficient to ensure that this is achieved within the deadline set.</p>
<p>Inspections were carried out regarding aspects of farm checks and transport in two countries preparing for accession to the EU.</p>	<p>While most legislative requirements have been adopted, some gaps persist in the national provisions. This, together with the recent or still pending implementation of national control systems, means that enforcement of EU requirements is at an early stage.</p>



Plant Health

Plant health controls are important to prevent the introduction and/or the spread of organisms that are harmful to plants and that do not already exist commonly in the Community. Introduction of such organisms could result in:

- reductions in the yield or quality of agricultural or horticultural crops;
- increased use of plant protection products;
- damage to the environment, e.g. forested areas.



Activities	Findings
<p>In the area of internal market controls, the "Plant Passport" accompanies a limited and well defined range of products, in particular planting material. It provides a certain guarantee as to the phytosanitary status of these products as they circulate in the Community. Issuing of the passport is based on controls at the place of production. Six Member States were inspected on their implementation of the Plant Passport system. In addition, four Member States were visited for their controls in the potato sector and one Member State on its status as a protected zone for a specific harmful organism.</p>	<p>The overall results from 2004-2005 show that in several Member States the plant passport system is not fully implemented as intended. Growers and other operators are not always adequately aware of the phytosanitary status that the plant passport should guarantee or the administrative requirements of the system. In some cases the plant passport is reduced to a routine endorsement of the commercial invoices. Many Member States do not have enough inspectors to supervise the system adequately. That said, some of the 2005 inspections showed that with adequate resources and training of the involved parties, it is possible to implement the system well. Action plans have been submitted by Member States. The Commission is monitoring the implementation of these plans and considering further actions. The inspections on potato sector controls and protected zones revealed a good general degree of compliance with the requirements of Community legislation.</p>
<p>Regarding disease outbreaks, three Member States were inspected on their control of <i>Diabrotica virgifera virgifera</i> (western corn rootworm) outbreaks. The insect is a serious pest in maize.</p>	<p>Two of the Member States visited are located in areas of natural spread of the pest, which is established in parts of their territory. The inspections showed difficulties in complying with the requirements of EU legislation, which are aimed at eradication rather than suppression or containment. Non-availability of suitable registered insecticides for the obligatory control also contributed to the inadequacy of the measures taken.</p>
<p>Member State implementation of EU legislation in the plant health area is also monitored through various obligatory survey reports, submitted annually by the Member States to the Commission. These are analysed and overview reports are compiled. In 2005, these overviews included reports on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Clavibacter michiganensis</i> ssp. <i>sepedonicus</i> (potato ring rot) • <i>Ralstonia solanacearum</i> (potato brown rot) • <i>Bursaphelenchus xylophilus</i> (pine wood nematode) • <i>Phytophthora ramorum</i> (sudden oak death) • <i>Diabrotica virgifera virgifera</i> (western corn rootworm) • Pepino mosaic virus. 	<p>The survey reports verify that there is very substantial survey activity taking place in the EU. For example, 150,000 potato samples, each consisting of 200 tubers, were taken of the 2004 crop and subjected to laboratory analysis for <i>Clavibacter michiganensis</i> ssp. <i>sepedonicus</i>. However, the results also showed a substantial variation across the EU in the survey activity for the various organisms.</p>
<p>"EUROPHYT" is an electronic, web-based system, managed by the FVO, for Member States to notify non-compliant plants and plant products that they have intercepted in their imports or in the internal market trade. The Commission and the Member States then use this information for the formulation of plant health policy and the targeting of controls. 2005 saw an enhancement of the help-desk function and, under the guidance of a user group symposium, work on important new functions was initiated.</p>	<p>Almost all Member States are now using the system for submitting their notifications. The data are in any case kept up to date for all 25 Member States, and there is an increased use by Member States and the Commission of data extracts for various purposes.</p>



Plant Health

Activities	Findings
<p>In the context of enlargement, monitoring inspections were performed in Bulgaria and Romania. For Bulgaria, a request to be recognised as free from potato ring rot was also followed up.</p>	<p>The inspections showed good progress in the transposition and implementation of EU legislation. Where previous inspections had resulted in recommendations for improvements, these were taken up satisfactorily. Bulgaria was subsequently officially recognised by the EU as free from potato ring rot.</p>
<p>Inspections in the area of Third Country exports were carried out in Argentina and Brazil, on their citrus fruit exports to the EU. Controls in Israel for flower and vegetable exports were also evaluated.</p>	<p>The response to non-compliance with the EU requirements for citrus fruits from Argentina and Brazil, identified in 2004 inspections, were followed up with new inspections. Improvements were recorded, particularly in Argentina. The inspection in Israel showed inadequacies in the export controls envisaged by EU legislation. Recommendations were made to Israel and are being followed up by the Commission.</p>

Enlargement of the European Union

Up to 2004, the FVO's attention had mainly concentrated on the then ten Accession Countries, while also continuing its on-going programme of inspections in the other Candidate Countries. In 2005, the FVO intensified its programme of inspections in the two Accession Countries.

<i>Enlargement Inspections</i>		Activities	Findings
Accession Countries		In 2005, the FVO performed eight inspections in Romania and seven in Bulgaria. These inspections covered all areas of FVO activity, as part of the Commission's overall monitoring of the progress of these countries in their preparations for EU membership.	While the Romanian and Bulgarian responses to the 171 recommendations made by the FVO were positive, with a satisfactory response in 92% of cases, the delivery on commitments was low – only 11% of the recommendations could be closed following action taken.
Romania	8		
Bulgaria	7		
Total	15		
Other Candidate Countries		Regarding Candidate Countries, pre-accession monitoring began in 2005, with five inspections to Croatia.	These inspections highlighted that the national Competent Authorities, despite good intentions, were moving forward very slowly, mainly due to severe financial constraints, as well as political, legal and institutional complications. This applied in particular to import control systems, animal health controls, upgrading of agri-food establishments and general food hygiene controls.
Croatia	5		
Total	5		

Country Profiles



On 29 April 2004 the European Parliament and the Council adopted Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules. The Regulation sets out a new framework for control activities conducted by national authorities and the Commission.

As part of its preparations for the implementation of the new requirements, the FVO began in 2005 to establish country profiles of control systems in the Member States, based mainly on information compiled from previous inspections and on the responses of national authorities to FVO recommendations.

At present, each country profile includes the following:

- the overall structure, organisation and responsibilities of competent authorities;
- the control processes operated by these authorities;
- the response to previous FVO reports by competent authorities.

The FVO announced its intention to begin in 2005 a new type of general review mission to each Member State to enable it, jointly with each national authority, to review, update and complete as far as possible, the draft country profiles, as well as to assess action taken on recommendations made in previous FVO inspection reports. The information contained in these profiles will form a baseline for future audits of national control systems from 2007.

In 2005, eight Member States were visited. In the period from 1999, there were 2,524 recommendations arising from FVO inspections in these Member States, of which 73% had been closed before the general review missions took place. Following these missions, a further 25% were closed, or being closed, leaving only 2% still requiring action from the Member State concerned.

The intention is to carry out general review missions to a further ten Member States in 2006 and to complete the cycle by mid-2007.

The Country Profiles for the visited Member States will be published on the FVO website.

Special Topic

Chemical residues in food of animal origin

Within the EU, there is a legislative framework to monitor and control the presence of chemical residues in food derived from animals. Third Countries exporting food to the EU must have equivalent systems in place. Inspections carried out by the residues group in the FVO enable evaluation of control systems on-the-spot. Evaluations focus on the control systems for residues of veterinary medicines, pesticides and contaminants in animals and animal products, including controls on the distribution and use of veterinary medicines.

<i>Inspections</i>	Activities	Findings
Residues Inspections Member States Austria Cyprus France Germany Greece Malta United Kingdom	The series of residues inspections, which began in October 2003, examining residues and veterinary medicines controls in the fifteen 'old' Member States, was completed in June 2005. A general report on the outcome of this inspection series was prepared and subsequently published.	The overall implementation of residues control plans was generally satisfactory, although certain deficiencies in laboratory capability, accreditation status, analytical performance and implementation of follow-up sampling were observed. Controls on the use and distribution of veterinary medicines were generally acceptable and enforcement actions were effective.
Accession and Candidate Countries Bulgaria Romania Croatia	Residues inspections in three Candidate Countries were conducted in the framework of pre-accession monitoring. These inspections focussed on the implementation of relevant EU legislation in the run up to accession.	Both Romania and Bulgaria had been last inspected in 1999 and 2000 respectively. Relative to those inspections, improvements were seen in the operations of residues controls and alignment of national legislation on veterinary medicines with Community law. A similar picture was seen for Croatia which had never had a previous residues inspection. However, in all three countries, investment in laboratory infrastructure, analytical capability, training of staff and equipment remained priorities.
Third Countries Brazil Turkey Mexico	Third Country evaluations focused on the ability of those countries to satisfy Community requirements with regard to food exported to the EU.	<p>The inspection in Brazil was a follow-up to a residues inspection carried out in 2003. There had been slow progress in implementation of the corrective actions committed to by the Competent Authority. In particular, the absence of any official residue testing for honey led the Commission to propose, and subsequently implement, the suspension of exports of honey from Brazil.</p> <p>The first residues inspection in Mexico took place in 2005. There were deficiencies in the controls on the use of veterinary medicines, in particular anabolic hormones authorised for horses. This prompted the Commission to impose safeguard measures on horse meat imported from Mexico with every consignment being tested for residues of these substances at Border Inspection Posts in each of the Member States.</p> <p>Turkey was last inspected in 2001. Substantial improvements had been made since that inspection. However, laboratory analytical capability and performance were issues requiring attention.</p>
Dioxins Inspections Member States Estonia Finland Sweden	A new series of inspections focussing on control of dioxins in Baltic sea fish was undertaken. Three of the Member States fishing in the Baltic Sea were inspected in 2005 while plans were put in place to visit five further countries in the first half of 2006. The first two countries visited, (Sweden and Finland), both have been granted a derogation allowing the marketing (solely within their own national territories) of fatty fish from the Baltic region which contain residues of dioxins and furans exceeding Community maximum levels. None of the other countries have such a derogation.	The approaches taken to the implementation of the derogation were quite different in Sweden and Finland. Although the prerequisite conditions for the granting of the derogation were in place, neither control system was sufficient to ensure that 'violative' fish could not be traded with other Member States. Similarly in Estonia, which does not have a derogation, there was no control system in place to ensure and/or monitor compliance with Community legislation on dioxins in fish.

Special Topic

Pesticide residues in food of plant origin

The inspections in Member States examined the control systems put in place for pesticide residues in foodstuffs of plant origin. As pesticide residue monitoring is related to the placing on the market and use of plant protection products, the control systems for marketing and use were also evaluated. The inspections also focussed on the implementation of the Rapid Alert System for Feed and Food (RASFF) regarding pesticide residues.

<i>Inspections</i>	Activities	Findings
<p>Member States Czech Republic Hungary Latvia Lithuania Malta Poland Slovakia Slovenia United Kingdom</p>	<p>These inspections were part of a series to all Member States that commenced in 2003 and was scheduled to conclude in 2006.</p>	<p>There were inconsistent findings regarding the control systems for placing on the market and use of plant protection products in the Member States visited this year. In some of the New Member States, these controls are well developed, but in other Member States strengthening of the control systems is needed.</p> <p>Good monitoring systems for pesticide residues were generally in place, but frequently the numbers of pesticides analysed for was insufficient. There was an inconsistent application of criteria for notification of non-compliant samples in the Rapid Alert System for Feed and Food. In the pesticide residue laboratories visited, the analytical methods and equipment were mostly satisfactory. However, in some Member States, a long time-lapse between sampling and issuing of results was noted, making effective follow-up of non-compliant produce impossible.</p>
<p>Third Countries Brazil</p>	<p>In view of the significant imports of fruit and vegetables from Brazil into the EU, and in reaction to detections of pesticide residues in produce, in particular apples and papayas, from this country, an inspection was carried out in Brazil, in order to evaluate control systems for pesticide residues in foodstuffs of plant origin intended for export into the EU.</p>	<p>In Brazil, the limited official control systems overall provide little assurance that produce of plant origin being exported to the EU will comply with EU legislation systems. Voluntary systems are operated by the majority of exporters of plant produce to the EU in order to comply with conditions demanded by their European customers.</p>
<p>Other activities</p>	<p>An overall report on pesticide residue monitoring in plant products in the EU and certain EFTA countries was collated by the FVO and published on the Internet (link: http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fvo/specialreports/pesticides_index_en.htm). The report covered the Member States' national programmes and the EU co-ordinated programme for the year 2003.</p>	

Special Topic

Contaminants



Council Directive 89/397/EEC lays down a general obligation for Member States to undertake random analysis of foodstuffs. There are also specific conditions imposed in Commission Decisions on products from certain Third Countries where the risk of contamination is considered greater. These specific conditions relate to mycotoxin contamination and to Sudan dyes in certain food commodities originating in some Third Countries, and intended for export to the EU.

In 2005, inspections in Third Countries included a verification that adequate controls are in place to prevent the presence of aflatoxins and Sudan I, II, III and IV in foodstuffs and to ensure that facilities and official controls are adequate to guarantee that products exported to the EU do not contain these contaminants, in accordance with relevant Commission Decisions. Inspections were performed in four countries, in view of the increasing number of notifications through the RASFF system.

Activities	Findings
<p>India:</p> <p>From March 2004 to November 2005, there were 29 notifications relating to mycotoxins in groundnuts and groundnut products (peanut butter, peanut candy) from India. In addition, a follow up took place of the recommendations made in 2004 with regard to Sudan dyes adulteration and aflatoxins in spices.</p>	<p>An adequate framework of controls had been proposed by the Indian authorities, which, if implemented, should ensure that consignments are adequately labelled with intended use, and that they comply with EU legislation. However, some deficiencies were noted concerning the sampling procedure, the laboratory visited and the food premises visited. According to the competent authorities, these deficiencies had already been corrected. With regard to the follow up, recommendations made in the 2004 inspection report had been adequately addressed.</p>
<p>Islamic Republic of Iran:</p> <p>From January 2003 to November 2005, 1399 notifications were issued concerning aflatoxin levels in pistachios imported from Iran that exceeded the levels permitted under Community legislation.</p>	<p>There was a good control system in place for exporting pistachios to the EU. Examples of efficient application of certain GAP and GMP principles were demonstrated for the control of aflatoxin contamination in pistachios. However, only a small number of operators apply these principles. A positive response to the recommendations was received from the competent authority with a view to addressing the shortcomings detected.</p>
<p>Argentina:</p> <p>From January 2003 to May 2005, there were 67 notifications issued concerning aflatoxin levels in peanuts imported from this country that exceeded the levels permitted under Community legislation.</p>	<p>A satisfactory system was found to be operating for some time concerning the prevention of aflatoxin contamination in peanuts intended for export to the EU. However, minor shortcomings with regard to the labelling of exported peanuts and the export procedure, lack of research regarding the most appropriate transport conditions and significant failings in one of the authorised laboratories were noted. The competent authority provided satisfactory responses to all recommendations made in the inspection report and they will be followed up by the FVO.</p>
<p>Ghana:</p> <p>From July 2004 to May 2005, 83 notifications were issued relating to Sudan IV adulteration in palm oil from Ghana.</p>	<p>The official control systems in place did not allow for the identification of the source of Sudan dye adulteration in palm oil. In addition, the designated official laboratories with responsibility for testing consignments for export did not have the analytical capabilities to test for all Sudan dyes. It was therefore not possible for the competent authorities to certify consignments according to the requirements of Commission Decision 2005/402/EC. As a response to the FVO recommendations, the designated official control laboratory has begun to implement measures to address the shortcomings found. The competent authority response is generally satisfactory. The detailed controls in place for the food chain will be verified in a subsequent inspection.</p>

Special Topic

Additives, flavourings, food contact materials

In 2005, the two desk studies, which started in 2004, on the evaluation of official controls in Member States concerning:

- food additives and flavourings;
- food contact materials;

were extended to the 10 New Member States.

Activities

These desk studies covered different topics such as legislation, Competent Authorities, inspection and controls, laboratories and the industry situation in the Member States.

Findings

The main conclusions of these desk studies are that all relevant directives regarding food additives and food contact materials have been transposed but that the level of inspection and sampling is reported to be low. A number of future inspections are planned, to follow up on these points in some Member States.

Special Topic

GMO (Genetically modified organisms)

Regulations (EC) Nos 1829/2003 and 1830/2003 of the European Parliament and Council concerning controls on GMOs came into force on the 18 April 2004. These regulations extend the labelling and traceability requirements to food, to feed and to seed for cultivation. Thirteen Member States were selected for evaluation based on their size, geographical location and volume of imports. The objective of the inspections was to evaluate control measures including sample checks and testing (qualitative and quantitative) as appropriate were carried out to ensure compliance with the above Regulations.

*Inspections***Member States**

Italy
Netherlands
Portugal
Spain

Activities

In 2005, four Member States were inspected. The remaining inspections will take place in 2006.

Findings

All Member States had designated responsibility for the scope of the above Regulations. Controls are not harmonised in the Community concerning inspection and sampling, with the exception of Commission Decision 2005/317/EC and it was found that scope and frequency of controls vary between Member States. Alternative sampling methods to those referred to in the Commission Recommendation on technical guidance 787/2004/EC were used in those Member States visited to date.

Special Topic

Import Controls**Products of Plant Origin**

There has been an increasing number of rapid alert (RASFF) notifications circulated within the European Union related to products containing mycotoxins, in nuts and dried fruit, and for the unauthorised dye Sudan I-IV, in a wide range of products.

Controls at import on products of plant origin are not harmonised, with the exception of certain cases (such as: aflatoxins in nuts from certain Third Countries; Sudan I-IV in some spices and palm oil). In these cases, controls are imposed by Commission Decisions. The inspection specifically examined compliance with these Decisions. Other areas evaluated included import controls on mycotoxins, the process contaminant 3-MCPD, irradiated foodstuffs, pesticide residues and Sudan I-IV, as well as general procedures for imports of products of plant origin.

Activities

In 2005, one inspection was performed to assess imports controls in one Member State. This inspection was part of an inspection series to all Member States.

Findings

In the Member State visited, there were sufficient resources and procedures in place to provide an adequate system for import control. However, some deficiencies were noted, such as the lack of transposition of EU legislation concerning sampling for contaminants, the availability of sampling equipment in one port and inspection methodology. The competent authorities indicated that action had been taken in response to the recommendations contained in the relevant inspection report.

Special Topic

Import Controls

Live Animals and Products of Animal Origin

Import controls on live animals and products of animal origin are almost fully harmonised in the EU. These controls take place at specific EU-approved Border Inspection Posts (BIPs) at the external borders (land borders, ports, and international airports) of the EU.

Inspections of the BIPs take place at regular intervals, to verify that they meet Community requirements, together with an assessment of the systems put in place by the Member States to ensure that the controls are carried out as foreseen. Inspectors also check, where appropriate, if previously identified shortcomings have been corrected through the implementation of action plans.

The above is also the case in relation to BIPs in EFTA countries, as these are also points of entry for the EU. In such cases, the FVO joins EFTA Surveillance Authority (ESA) inspections as an observer. In 2005, however, no such inspections were carried out.



Activities	Findings
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There were inspections in thirteen Member States during which 54 approved BIPs and one newly proposed BIP were inspected to verify compliance with EU requirements.

In the Member States visited, the overall implementation of import controls was, in general, satisfactory. Certain progress was noted with supervision of BIPs and working procedures. Nevertheless, common shortcomings, in general of a minor nature, were found in the areas of staff training, identification and selection of consignments, supervision of transit trade, checks on non-commercial pet animals, BIP-facilities including equipment and hygiene. Some previously identified shortcomings continued to exist in a few Member States.

All non-compliances are being pursued with the relevant authorities in the Member States concerned.

As a consequence of the outcome of the inspections and of the action plans the approvals of a number of BIPs have been modified accordingly.

The new series of inspections concerning illegal imports, which had started in 2004, continued with inspections in thirteen Member States. The evaluation covered what measures have been put in place to detect illegal introductions, including those for personal consumption.

Each inspected Member State has a system in place to detect illegal imports. However, in all Member States further measures are possible to improve the system in place and to minimise the likelihood of illegal introduction of relevant consignments.

Four inspections in New Member States were conducted to verify the compliance of the import controls systems in place and the compliance with EU requirements in five approved BIPs and five newly proposed BIPs.

In the New Member States visited, the situation has improved since the time of accession. The overall organisation of import control systems was largely satisfactory. However, a number of significant non-compliances were found, mainly related to working procedures and supervision of BIPs and transit trade.

All non-compliances are being pursued with the relevant authorities in the New Member States concerned.

National Audit Systems

In 2004, the FVO started a series of fact-finding missions on national systems for the audit of competent authority controls.

The implementation of functioning national audit systems is primarily aimed at providing Member State competent authorities with an assurance that the control systems they have put in place are operated correctly and effectively or, where this is not the case, that timely corrective action can be taken. In addition, the effective operation of such audit systems should allow the FVO – once it has confirmed their effective operation – to review the deployment of its own resources. In this way, the FVO could place more emphasis on areas both inside and outside the EU where control systems are not in place or are less effective.

Activities

Under Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, the Commission is required to draw up guidelines for national systems for the audit of competent authority controls, and to agree these guidelines with the Member States. To assist in this, the FVO carried out a study of the extent to which Member State controls already involve audits of those systems. The study consisted of a questionnaire sent to all Member States and a series of fact-finding visits to a sample of Member States. The purpose of these visits was to become familiar with the audit systems in place in each country in order to facilitate the process of drafting the guideline. The mission-series was completed in 2005 with visits to three Member States, Estonia, Slovenia and Sweden.

Findings

This series of missions provided useful insight into a wide range of solutions to implementing an audit process, and the information collected has provided valuable input into the drafting of the Commission audit guidelines and the process of agreement of the guidelines with the Member States.

During the analysis of the questionnaires and mission findings, it became apparent that certain concepts and terms in the Regulation needed to be clarified. This need, in particular in relation to scope and extent of audits, would not have been as evident without the contribution of all the participating competent authorities.

In addition, having seen the variety of audit systems and approaches adopted, it became clear that the guidelines need to focus on key principles rather than being too prescriptive.

Glossary of terms used in the Report

3-MCPD	3-MCPD (3-monochloropropane-1,2-diol) is the most common of a group of chemical contaminants known as chloropropanols. It occurs at low levels in many foods and food ingredients as a result of processing. It is often found at high levels in soy sauces and the savoury food ingredient acid-hydrolysed vegetable protein (acid-HVP).
ABP (Animal by-products)	Animal by-products are the parts of a slaughtered animal that are not directly consumed by humans, including dead on farm animals and catering waste (i.e. waste food originating from restaurants, catering facilities and kitchens) that contains or has been in contact with meat products, whether cooked or uncooked.
Accession Countries	Countries in the process for accession to the European Union. Bulgaria and Romania signed Treaties of Accession on 25.04.2005, with a view to joining the EU in January 2007.
Aflatoxins	A group of toxins (poisonous chemical compounds) that are produced by two fungi called <i>Aspergillus flavus</i> and <i>Aspergillus parasiticus</i> . These toxins occur naturally and have been found in a wide range of commodities used for animal and human consumption. Depending on the levels, the toxins can severely affect the liver and they are a known cause of cancer in humans.
ASF (African swine fever)	African swine fever appears among pigs, warthogs, bush pigs, European wild boar and American wild pigs. It is an OIE List A disease. (See "OIE")
Audit	A systematic and independent examination to determine whether activities and related results comply with planned arrangements and whether these arrangements are implemented effectively and are suitable to achieve objectives.
Avian influenza	An infectious viral disease in poultry and birds, causing mortality and disturbances which can quickly take epizootic proportions liable to present a serious threat to animal and public health and to reduce sharply the profitability of poultry farming. Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) causes serious disease with high mortality (up to 100%) and is notifiable to the OIE. (See "OIE")
BIP (Border inspection post)	A facility approved for the carrying out of veterinary checks on live animals and products of animal origin arriving from Third Countries for import into the EU.
Bovine tuberculosis (TB)	Tuberculosis in cattle caused by infection with <i>Mycobacterium bovis</i> ; it is transmissible to humans and other animals. Characteristics include tubercles or nodular lesions in lymph nodes and various organs, such as the udder, kidneys, uterus, and meninges.
Brucellosis	Zoonotic disease commonly transmitted through abrasions of the skin from handling infected mammals or by ingesting contaminated milk and dairy products. Symptoms are non-specific and "flu-like".
BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy)	See "TSE"
Candidate Countries	From 1 January to 24 April 2005: Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey. From 25.04.2005 to 16.12.2005: Croatia and Turkey. From 17.12.2005, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey
Competent authority	A domestic government body made responsible under that country's national law for the control or regulation of a particular area of legislation.
Contaminant	Any substance not intentionally added to food, which is present in such food as a result of the production, manufacture, processing, preparation, treatment, packing, packaging, transport or holding of such food, or as a result of environmental contamination.
CSF (Classical swine fever)	Classical swine fever can be found among pigs and wild boar. It is an OIE List A disease. (See "OIE")
EEA / EFTA / ESA	The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is an intergovernmental organisation promoting free trade and strengthening economic relations. EFTA's Member States are Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. The European Economic Area (EEA) is an agreement between EFTA and the EU, designed to allow EFTA countries to participate in the European Single Market without having to join the EU. Switzerland is a member of EFTA but chose, by referendum, not to participate in the EEA. The EFTA Surveillance Authority (ESA) ensures that Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway respect their obligations under the EEA Agreement.
EUROPHYT	An electronic rapid alert system between the Member States and the Commission ¹ . Its aim is to transmit information concerning plant quarantine matters (notifications of interceptions of plants, plant health legislation, documents of the Standing Committee on Plant Health).
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) is a system for monitoring food processes to reduce the risk of food contamination. HACCP focuses on how food flows through the food processes – be it food production, distribution or retail – and identifies potential hazards at each step. By identifying "critical control points" (CCPs) where bacteria may grow or food may be contaminated, HACCP provides a framework for implementing control procedures for each hazard.
Illegal imports	The introduction onto the territory of the Community of products of animal origin or live animals that, either accidentally or intentionally, have not been subject to, and cleared following, the veterinary checks foreseen in Community legislation.

¹ Council Directive 2000/29/EC lays down in Article 21(6) first indent that « the Commission shall establish a network for the notification of new occurrences of harmful organisms ».

Infringement proceedings	Treaty infringement proceedings form a procedure for establishing whether a Member State has failed to fulfil an obligation imposed on it by Community law. The procedure starts with a pre-litigation phase, involving contacts between the Commission and the Member State, and may conclude with a legal action before the European Court of Justice.
Mycotoxins	A group of naturally occurring toxic metabolites produced by some species of fungi – especially strains of <i>Aspergillus flavus</i> . These fungi grow on many plant-based foodstuffs, such as grains, cereals, nuts and fruit, and mycotoxins may be produced by these fungi under certain conditions.
New Member States	The ten countries that joined the EU on 1 May 2004: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia.
Newcastle disease	Newcastle disease is a highly contagious zoonotic bird disease affecting many domestic and wild avian species. Its effects are most notable in domestic poultry due to their high susceptibility and the potential for severe impacts of an epidemic on the poultry industries.
OIE (Office International des Epizooties)	The OIE (Office International des Epizooties / World Organisation for Animal Health) is an intergovernmental organisation established in 1924. In May 2003 it had 164 member countries. The EU Member States are all members. The European Commission is actively involved in the OIE's work and co-ordinates the input of the EU Member States.
OIE List A diseases	OIE Classification List A diseases are defined as transmissible diseases that have the potential for very serious and rapid spread, irrespective of national borders, that are of serious socio-economic or public health consequence and that are of major importance in the international trade of animals and animal products. (See "OIE")
Phytosanitary	Pertaining to the health of plants.
Rabies	An acute, infectious, often fatal viral disease of most warm blooded animals especially foxes, wolves, cats and dogs. The virus attacks the central nervous system and is transmitted by the bite of an infected animal.
RASFF	The Rapid Alert System for Feed and Food (RASFF) is a network of national authorities, managed by the Commission, that exchanges information on the presence of potential health risks to consumers presented by a food product.
Residue	That portion of the administered dose of a veterinary medicine or other substance present in the tissues, body fluids, products or excreta of an animal arising from treatment of the animal. The total residue includes the parent compound plus any metabolites.
SRM (Specified Risk Material)	Tissues designated as specified risk material in connection with TSE are laid down in Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as amended, and comprise mainly: the skull including the brain and eyes, the vertebral column and the spinal cord of bovine animals aged over 12 months; the tonsils, the intestines from the duodenum to the rectum and the mesentery of bovine animals of all ages; the skull including the brain and eyes, the tonsils and the spinal cord of ovine and caprine animals aged over 12 months or which have a permanent incisor erupted through the gum; the spleen and ileum of ovine and caprine animals of all ages. (See "TSE")
Sudan dyes	Sudan I, II, III and IV are industrial dyes normally used for colouring plastics and other synthetic materials. Sudan dyes may have a carcinogenic effect. The presence of these dyes in food contravenes EU legislation.
TB	See "Bovine tuberculosis"
Traceability	The ability to trace and follow a food, feed, food-producing animal or substance intended to be, or expected to be incorporated into a food or feed, through all stages of production, processing and distribution.
TSE	Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE), of which Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) is one. BSE is a transmissible, neuro-degenerative, fatal brain disease of cattle. Also known as prion diseases, TSEs are a group of rare degenerative brain disorders characterised by tiny holes that give the brain a "spongy" appearance.
Zoonoses / Zoonotic diseases	Infectious animal diseases which usually affect other animals, but which can also afflict humans. They can be carried over through food (food borne zoonoses) or through direct contact with animals.

List of FVO inspections completed in 2005

Member States:		Report No:
Austria	Residues	7507/2005
	General Review Mission	7652/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7721/2005
	Border inspection posts	7722/2005
Belgium	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7561/2005
	Border inspection posts	7647/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7648/2005
Denmark	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7559/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7639/2005
	Border inspection posts	7640/2005
Finland	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7569/2005
	Border inspection posts	7646/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7649/2005
	Contaminants (dioxins)	7709/2005
France	Residues	7506/2005
	Border inspection posts	7522/2005
	Internal market - Plant passport	7545/2005
	Disease eradication/control programmes - Rabies	7607/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7634/2005
	Scrapie	7700/2005
Germany	Residues	7510/2005
	Animal Health - AI/embryo/semen collection centres	7528/2005
	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7583/2005
	Border inspection posts	7642/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7643/2005
	General Review Mission	7705/2005
Greece	Residues	7504/2005
	Animal by-products	7516/2005
	Scrapie	7699/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7723/2005
	Border inspection posts	7724/2005
	General Review Mission	7741/2005
	Disease outbreak - Newcastle disease	7747/2005
Disease outbreak - Avian influenza	7778/2005	
Ireland	Identification/certification - Live mammals	7542/2005
	Border inspection posts	7658/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7659/2005
	Scrapie	7704/2005
	Food Safety - Assessment of Audits of CA controls	7784/2005
Italy	Border inspection posts	7529/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7547/2005
	Animal Health - AI/embryo/semen collection centres	7622/2005
	Animal Welfare - Laying hens	7636/2005
	GMO food - Labelling	7653/2005
	TSEs	7701/2005
	Disease eradication/control programmes - ASF	7706/2005
	General Review Mission	7734/2005
Luxembourg	Border inspection posts	7662/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7663/2005
	Animal welfare - On-farm	7763/2005
Portugal	Animal by-products	7515/2005
	Animal welfare - On-farm	7544/2005
	General Review Mission	7644/2005
	GMO Feed and Food Controls	7669/2005
Spain	Animal Welfare - Laying hens	7548/2005

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Spain	Internal market - Plant passport	7571/2005
	GMO Feed and Food Controls	7632/2005
	Border inspection posts	7660/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7661/2005
	Scrapie	7702/2005
	Disease eradication control programmes	7707/2005
	General Review Mission	7733/2005
Sweden	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7560/2005
	National Audit Systems	7623/2005
	Border inspection posts	7626/2005
	Contaminants (dioxins)	7708/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7725/2005
The Netherlands	Animal Welfare - Laying hens	7512/2005
	Animal Health - AI/embryo/semen collection centres	7543/2005
	Food production - poultry meat/products/preparations	7568/2005
	GMO food - Labelling	7666/2005
	Evaluation of CA in MS - potatoes	7681/2005
United Kingdom	Residues	7503/2005
	Border inspection posts	7526/2005
	Identification/certification - Live mammals	7541/2005
	Pesticides - Residues	7562/2005
	Food production - poultry meat/products/preparations	7577/2005
	BSE	7614/2005
	Import controls - illegal imports	7657/2005
	Scrapie	7697/2005
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	Food Safety - Assessment of Audits of CA controls	7783/2005
	Food Safety - Assessment of Audits of CA controls	7785/2005
New Member States:		Report No:
Cyprus	Residues	7505/2005
	Waste Food Controls	7567/2005
	Food production - milk/products	7618/2005
	Animal nutrition	7696/2005
Czech Republic	Animal welfare - On-farm	7519/2005
	Waste Food Controls	7535/2005
	Food production - milk/products	7574/2005
	Identification certification	7613/2005
	Pesticides - Residues	7628/2005
	Food Hygiene	7655/2005
	Internal market - Plant passport	7679/2005
	Plant pest outbreak -Arable crops	7680/2005
	Border inspection posts	7727/2005
Estonia	National Audit Systems	7531/2005
	Waste Food Controls	7540/2005
	Food production - milk/products	7616/2005
	Food Hygiene	7629/2005
	BSE	7656/2005
	Animal welfare - On-farm	7714/2005
	Contaminants (dioxins)	7781/2005
Hungary	Animal by-products	7517/2005
	Food Hygiene	7546/2005
	Pesticides - Residues	7564/2005
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	General Review Mission	7641/2005
	Internal market - Plant passport	7684/2005
	BSE	7688/2005
Latvia	Waste Food Controls	7538/2005

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Latvia	Food production - milk/products	7617/2005
	Food Hygiene	7624/2005
	Import controls - food of non-animal origin	7625/2005
	Animal welfare - On-farm	7637/2005
	Pesticides - Residues	7654/2005
	BSE	7694/2005
Lithuania	Animal by-products	7572/2005
	Food production - milk/products	7621/2005
	Pesticides - Residues	7667/2005
	Evaluation of CA in MS - potatoes	7676/2005
	BSE	7692/2005
Malta	Residues	7509/2005
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	Border inspection posts	7520/2005
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	Food production - milk/products	7620/2005
	Pesticides - Residues	7671/2005
Poland	Animal by-products	7518/2005
	Food Hygiene	7521/2005
	Border inspection posts	7594/2005
	Evaluation of CA in MS - potatoes	7598/2005
	Food production - milk/products	7612/2005
	Animal Welfare - Laying hens	7638/2005
	General Review Mission	7651/2005
	Pesticides - Residues	7665/2005
	Internal market - Plant passport	7683/2005
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	Border inspection posts	7728/2005
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Slovak Republic	Animal by-products	7537/2005
	Food production - milk/products	7609/2005
	Pesticides - Residues	7631/2005
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Slovenia	Waste Food Controls	7539/2005
	National Audit Systems	7565/2005
	Food production - milk/products	7615/2005
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Accession and Candidate Countries:		Report No:
Bulgaria	Enlargement - Residues	7508/2005
	Disease eradication control programmes	7523/2005
	Enlargement - Plant Health	7597/2005
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	Evaluation of CA in TC - Potatoes	7650/2005
	Enlargement - General Food Hygiene Controls	7691/2005
	Enlargement - Animal Welfare	7717/2005
Croatia	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7586/2005
	Disease eradication control programmes	7595/2005
	Enlargement - General Food Hygiene Controls	7604/2005
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	Enlargement - Residues	7710/2005
Romania	Enlargement - Residues	7511/2005
	Disease eradication/control programmes - Rabies	7536/2005
	Enlargement - food processing, transport and intermediate storage	7581/2005

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Romania	Enlargement - Plant Health	7600/2005
	Enlargement - General Food Hygiene Controls	7674/2005
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	Enlargement - Animal Welfare	7746/2005
	Enlargement - Residues	7762/2005
Turkey	Residues	7502/2005
Third Countries:		Report No:
Argentina	Fishery products	7552/2005
	Food production red meat products preparations	7590/2005
	Plant pest outbreak -Fruits, fruit plants, vegetables	7601/2005
	Contaminants (aflatoxins)	7627/2005
Australia	Food production - milk/products	7534/2005
Bangladesh	Fishery products	7555/2005
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Fishery products	7720/2005
Botswana	Food production red meat products preparations	7603/2005
Brazil	Food production red meat products preparations	7589/2005
	Plant pest outbreak -Fruits, fruit plants, vegetables	7685/2005
	Pesticides - Residues	7703/2005
	Residues	7712/2005
Cambodia	Fishery products	7765/2005
Chile	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7551/2005
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Ecuador	Fishery products	7751/2005
Ghana	Fishery products	7575/2005
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Guatemala	Fishery products	7766/2005
India	Aquaculture	7533/2005
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Indonesia	Fishery products	7550/2005
Iran	Contaminants (aflatoxins)	7670/2005
Israel	Import controls TC - Plant Health	7599/2005
Japan	Fishery products	7739/2005
Korea, rep	Fishery products	7558/2005
Madagascar	Fishery products	7553/2005
Malaysia	Fishery products	7549/2005
Mexico	Residues	7713/2005
Moldova	Food production red meat products preparations	7525/2005
Morocco	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7585/2005
Namibia	Fishery products	7576/2005
	Food production red meat products preparations	7602/2005
Norway	Food production red meat products preparations	7776/2005
Pakistan	Fishery products	7557/2005
South Africa	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7579/2005
	Food production red meat products preparations	7605/2005
Swaziland	Food production red meat products preparations	7606/2005
Switzerland	Import controls - animals/animal products	7591/2005
Thailand	Food production - poultry meat/products/preparations	7554/2005
	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7738/2005
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The United States	Food production red meat products preparations	7524/2005
The United States	Identification certification	7608/2005
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Viet Nam	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7578/2005



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Further Information

Websites

Further information on the subject matter contained in this Annual Report can be found on the Internet, on the following websites:

EUROPA website

<http://ec.europa.eu>

The EUROPA website is the official website of the European Union. It provides a guide to what the EU does and how it works, with links to the activities and institutions of the EU, as well as many items of interest to EU citizens.

Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General website

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/dgs/health_consumer/index_en.htm

The website of the Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General of the European Commission provides information on the three main areas of activity within the Directorate-General – public health, consumer affairs and food safety, the area with which the FVO deals.

Food Safety website

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/food/index_en.htm

The Food Safety website provides information on the EU's approach to food safety and on the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), as well as all the latest news within the food safety sector. The website of the FVO can be found within the Food Safety website.

FVO website

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/food/fvo/index_en.htm

This gives a brief description of the work and role of the FVO, and contains separate sections on feed and food safety, animal health and welfare, and plant health. These sections provide a detailed overview of a range of topics within each area. There is also a section containing the inspection reports published by the FVO.

Inspection Reports

The FVO website includes a search tool that enables visitors to the site to look up published FVO inspection reports more easily:

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/food/fvo/ir_search_en.cfm

The tool provides a number of options, some of which can be combined:

- If you know the relevant inspection report number (which, for 2005, can be found in the list of inspections starting on page 22 of this Annual Report), you can simply type this number into the search engine to access the report directly.
- If you are interested in finding out about inspections in a particular country, you can click on the name of the country to access all the inspections that were carried out in that particular country.
- If you prefer to see the reports for a particular period, you can select the month and year for the start and end of the period that interests you.
- If you would like to see reports for a particular topic, you can enter words and search for reports that contain these words.
- If you want to know what reports were published during a particular month, you can select a single month.

Other Reports

There are also a number of special reports on the FVO website. Reports published under this heading give an overview of a specific theme based on a series of inspections carried out in Member States or Third Countries. Some of these overview reports have already been mentioned elsewhere in this Annual Report. The website also contains further reports dealing with other themes.