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## Rice Food Safety & Other Facts



Newsletter  
 Nr. 24  
 January  
 2010

### FOOD SAFETY

#### Rapid Alert System Notifications for Food

date	Notification type	notified by	subject
21/12/10	information	FRANCE	unauthorised genetically modified (KeFeng6) rice vermicelli from China, via Hong Kong
21/12/10	information	FRANCE	unauthorised genetically modified (presumably KeFeng6) rice sticks from China, via Hong Kong
21/12/10	information	FRANCE	unauthorised genetically modified (Bt63) rice vermicelli from China, via Hong Kong
21/12/10	alert	FRANCE	unauthorised genetically modified (KeFeng6) vermicelli rice from China, via Spain
21/12/10	information	FRANCE	unauthorised genetically modified (KeFeng6) food preparation with rice vermicelli from China, via Hong Kong
22/12/10	information	SWEDEN	unauthorised genetically modified (presumably keFeng6) rice vermicelli from China
24/12/10	border rejection	GREECE	unauthorised genetically modified (CaMV 35S promotor) rice crackers from China
24/12/10	border rejection	GREECE	unauthorised genetically modified (Bt 63) rice crackers from China
04/01/11	information	FRANCE	unauthorised genetically modified (Bt 63) rice noodles from China

Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/rapidalert/rasff\\_portal\\_database\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/rapidalert/rasff_portal_database_en.htm)

### GMO & BIOTECH

In order to help inform debate on genetically modified organisms, last December the EU Commission published a compendium entitled "**A decade of EU-funded GMO research**". The book summarizes the results of 50 research projects addressing primarily the safety of GMOs for the environment and for animal and human health. Launched between 2001 and 2010, these projects received funding of €200 million from the EU and form part of a 25-year long research effort on GMOs. The aim of the book is to contribute to a fully transparent debate on GMOs, based on balanced, science-based information.

Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/biosociety/library/brochures\\_reports\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/biosociety/library/brochures_reports_en.htm)

#### China's National People's Congress is proposing legislation on the management of GMOs.

It is said that the legislation will cover the import and export of GM food as well as the development and production of GM grain. China is the largest producer of GM cotton, but it has been much more cautious about accepting GM food crops. In November 2009 the Ministry of Agriculture's biosafety committee gave the first safety approval for GM varieties of rice and corn, "paving the way" for a large scale commercial production of those GM varieties within 2 to 3 years. Following the ministry's decision, local media reports were especially concerned about what were said to be the unknown health effects of GM crops. To respond to a growing perception that the Chinese public is uneasy about GM crops, a roundtable dialogue on GM crops was held last October between Chinese scientists and members of the general public. The roundtable took place on the sidelines of the "Communication and Dialogue of Agribiotech Symposium" at Huazhong Agricultural University.

Source: *Crop Biotech Update*; <http://sites.merid.org/fs-agbiotech>



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### SCIENCE & RESEARCH

Production of rice will be thwarted as temperatures increase in rice-growing areas with continued climate change, according to a new study by an international team of scientists, published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science (USA). The research team found evidence that the net impact of projected **temperature increases will be to slow the growth of rice production in Asia**. Rising temperatures during the past 25 years have already cut the yield growth rate by 10–20% in several locations. The report analyzed 6 years of data from 227 irrigated rice farms in 6 major rice-growing countries in Asia, which produces more than 90% of the world's rice. As the daily minimum temperature increases, or as nights get hotter, rice yields drop. Up to a point, higher day-time temperatures can increase rice yield, but future yield losses caused by higher night-time temperatures will likely outweigh any such gains because temperatures are rising faster at night and if day-time temperatures get too high, they too start to restrict rice yields, causing an additional loss in production. If rice production methods will not change or new rice strains will develop that can withstand higher temperatures, there will be a loss in rice production over the next few decades as days and nights get hotter. The study is unique because it uses data collected in farmers' fields, under real-world conditions, so it is an important addition to what it was already known from controlled experiments.

Source: <http://beta.irri.org>

### LAWS, STANDARDS & AGREEMENTS

In the OJ L006/2011 the **Commission Regulation (EU) No 16/2011** was published laying down implementing measures for the Rapid alert system for food and feed. The RASFF is a tool enabling quick and effective exchange of information between Member States and the Commission when risks to human health are detected in the food and feed chain. All Members of the RASFF (EU-27, Commission, EFSA, ESA, Norway, Liechtenstein, Iceland and Switzerland) have a round-the-clock service to ensure that urgent notifications are sent, received and responded to in the shortest time possible. By this new Regulation the Commission has implemented measures for the RASFF to operate efficiently and has formulated requirements for the procedure for transmission of the different types of notifications.

Source: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/it/index.htm>

### OTHER NEWS

To contribute to rice food security endeavors, Bayer CropScience and BASF have come into a research agreement to improve rice productivity through plant biotechnology. Both companies aim to develop and commercialize **hybrid rice seeds** with 10% more yield over conventional seeds. In the agreement, BASF Plant Science covers research and development activities for traits responsible for high yield and for obtaining the regulatory approvals needed for commercialization. Bayer CropScience will then integrate these high-yielding traits into leading Arize® rice hybrids.

Source: *Crop Biotech Update*

### EVENTS & MEETINGS

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) will hold an International Conference on **"New Directions for Smallholder Agriculture"** January 24-25, 2011 in Rome, Italy. The conference website notes that in much of Africa and South Asia, small farms still account for the largest share of agricultural output. Most of the smallholders and their dependents - some two billion of them - live in poverty, are more fragmented than before, and have limited capacity to link up to market opportunities. The conference is an opportunity to examine various options facing the world's smallholders; what support can be extended to them and by whom; and how far can they really become the engine for sustainable development in developing countries.

Source: [www.ifad.org](http://www.ifad.org)