



Overview of information flow to and within international alert systems targeted at foodborne outbreaks or incidents

The schematic outline of the flow of information to and between international alert systems and stakeholders in an outbreak situation was created as a quick reference. The schematic outline is not intended to dictate the flow of information, but offers a suggestion of how information during an outbreak can be disseminated. Not all alert systems will necessarily be involved in each incident.

The schematic outline includes the major stakeholders that are likely to be involved in an European outbreak of food- or waterborne disease. However, individual countries may have different information sharing systems, including additional international, national and sub-national bodies that must be involved during an outbreak response. This schematic outline is therefore meant only as a guide.

HEALTH	
A	Clinicians, Laboratories, Public Health Officers: After detecting a food-related health event, the clinician, laboratory or public health officer notifies the relevant food safety or environmental health authority or equivalent. The healthcare professional detecting the event may also be responsible for notifying regional and/or national level institutions. Clinicians, laboratories and public health officers may also receive notification of a food hazard by the District Food Safety Authority.
B	Report from local level to national institutions: Using the country's appropriate reporting channel, the health event is reported by the relevant local level institution to the relevant national-level institutions.
C	National health authorities/institutes: The national level structure includes (but is not limited to) national representatives from the FWD-network, EWRS-MS and the IHR National Focal Point. National health authorities/institutes can also coordinate with the corresponding National Food Safety Authority in outbreaks linked to a distributed food product.
D	FWD-network EPIS (Food- and Waterborne -Disease network Epidemic Intelligence Information System): FWD expert microbiologists and epidemiologists are able to use this voluntary system to electronically communicate urgent inquiries relating to foodborne outbreaks in Europe. Persons involved in outbreak investigations in EU + EFTA/EEA member states are able to communicate signals and early confidential information within the network which can be used as an investigation tool.
E	EWRS-MS (Early Warning and Response System – Member State): EU + EFTA/EEA member states are required to communicate known disease threats that are likely to affect public health at the EU level via the web-based EWRS through nominated contact points at the national level.
	NFP IHR (National Focal Point for International Health Regulations): All WHO member states are required to establish an IHR NFP, which is responsible for all communications related to outbreaks of possible international public health significance, as mandated by the IHR 2005. Any outbreak meeting the IHR 2005 Annex 2 reporting criteria must be

F	reported to the WHO within 24 hours. IHR communications can be made through the EURO Regional office, directly to the WHO Headquarters or to other Regional offices.
G	ECDC-FWD – (European Centre for Disease Control – Food and Waterborne Disease) Communication of information relating to foodborne outbreaks in Europe from the EU +EFTA/EEA member states can be disseminated electronically to the ECDC-FWD. Other countries who had access to the precursor, Enter-Net, also have network access. The ECDC-FWD can also share information with WHO regional offices or headquarters of events of potential international public health significance.
H	EC-EWRS (European Community Early Warning and Response System): If a known disease threat meets the EWRS criteria, the EWRS-MS is required to communicate the event to the EC-EWRS, at the European level. EC-EWRS can then disseminate relevant information to all member states through a small number of nominated contact points.
I	WHO Regional office 1, Headquarters, Regional office 2: The National IHR Focal Point and ECDC-FWD can communicate with the WHO Regional offices and Headquarters on food- and waterborne events of international significance. Notifications and information sharing on events relevant the IHR 2005 to the WHO should be made through the designated IHR national NFP.
J	Exporting Country NFP IHR (National Focal Point International Health Regulations): The WHO can contact the IHR NFP of the non-EU exporting country, in the case of an outbreak due to a contaminated internationally distributed product.
FOOD	
K	Local food safety / environmental health authority: After detecting a food hazard, the local food safety authority (or equivalent) will notify the National Food Safety Authority (or equivalent) through the appropriate sub-national communication channels. The National Food Safety Authority may also notify the District Food Safety Authority of a potential hazard. Depending on the origin of the product, the District Food Safety Authority may communicate with the producer/importer.
L	Report from local level to national institutions: Using the appropriate sub-national reporting channel, the food hazard is reported by the District Food Safety Authority to the relevant national-level institutions.
M	National Food Safety Authority: The national food safety structure includes (but is not limited to) national representatives from the RASFF and INFOSAN. The National Food Safety Authority may also communicate with the corresponding national health authorities/institutes in order to coordinate the outbreak response linked to a distributed food product.
	National RASFF contact point (Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed): EU + EFTA/EEA member states are required to electronically communicate health risks associated with

<p>N</p> <p>O</p> <p>P</p> <p>Q</p> <p>R</p> <p>S</p>	<p>food or feed between member states through nominated contact points at the national level. This includes information about serious direct or indirect risks to human health deriving from food or feed, and any measures put in place.</p> <p>National Focal Point for Infosan (International Food Safety Authorities Network): Food safety authorities designated as focal points by the Infosan member countries (177 countries) are able to use this voluntary system to electronically share information on important food safety-related issues of global interest. Countries can elect to share information through Infosan simultaneously to reporting via RASFF.</p> <p>EC- RASFF (Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed): EU + EFTA/EEA member states are legally required to electronically communicate known health threats associated with food and feed on the market to RASFF at the European level. EC-RASFF can then communicate with National Food Safety Authorities as required (such as the exporting country of a contaminated food product).</p> <p>WHO/FAO-Infosan, Regional office1, Headquarters, Regional office 2 (WHO/Food and Agriculture Organization – International Food Safety Authorities Network): After Infosan National Focal Points communicate to Infosan network, information can be distributed through WHO Regional offices and Headquarters, as well as to the Infosan member countries.</p> <p>National Focal Point Infosan (International Food Safety Authorities Network) – From the WHO/FAO Infosan, Infosan National Focal Points can be contacted in the case of contaminated food product originating in a non-EU country.</p> <p>Exporting Country National Food Safety Authority: In the case of an outbreak related to an imported food product, the National Food Safety Authority of the exporting country may be informed by the EC-RASFF or by the WHO via the National Focal Point for Infosan. The National Food Safety Authority would then contact the non-EU exporting producer. If an EU exporting country is made aware of a food hazard in a product, they can also contact the EC-RASFF to disseminate this information.</p>
INDUSTRY	
<p>T</p> <p>U</p>	<p>Producer/Importer: After receiving information about a potentially contaminated product, the District Food Safety Authority or National Food Safety Authority can inform the domestic producer or the importer. The importer of a product may also communicate directly with the producer of the product from the exporting country.</p> <p>Producer: After receiving information about a potentially contaminated product, the National Food Safety Authority of the exporting country can notify the producer of the product.</p>