



Food and Veterinary Office - Annual Report 2004

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The Food and Veterinary Office (FVO)

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 evaluations, to :

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

and to inform stakeholders of the outcome of evaluations.

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 2004

Objectives

Inspection Objectives

Food Safety:	61%
Food of animal origin	19%
TSE/Animal by-products	14%
Import controls (food of animal origin)	6%
Food Hygiene HACCP	5%
Veterinary medicines and residues	4%
Pesticides	4%
Import controls (food of plant origin)	2%
Other	7%
Animal Health:	26%
Identification/certification	14%
Disease eradication/control plans	10%
Disease outbreaks	1%
Disease contingency plans	1%
Plant Health:	7%
Plant pest outbreaks	2%
Internal market – Plant passport	2%
Other	3%
Animal Welfare:	6%
Transport	2%
Other	4%

In 2004, the FVO carried out 232 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, three out of every five inspection objectives in 2004 concerned food safety, while animal health objectives accounted for 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 2004.

Countries

Inspections by Member State

Italy	15
United Kingdom	12
Spain	11
Greece	10
The Netherlands	10
Germany	9
Portugal	9
Denmark	7
Belgium	6
France	6
Luxembourg	4
Sweden	4
Ireland	3
Austria	2
Finland	2
Total	110

The 232 FVO inspections in 2004 covered 54 countries. Apart from the 15 pre-enlargement Member States and the 13 Candidate Countries (ten of which became New Member States following their accession to the European Union on 1st May 2004), a further 26 countries worldwide (referred to as Third Countries) were visited.

There were 110 inspections in the 15 Member States during 2004. In the New Member States, 34 inspections were performed after the date of accession and 37 took place before accession, when these countries were referred to as Candidate Countries. For the other Candidate Countries, ten inspections were held in 2004, while 41 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 2004 is included in Annex 2 of this report.

Inspections by New Member State

Slovak Republic	6
Poland	5
Hungary	4
Lithuania	4
Slovenia	4
Cyprus	3
Estonia	3
Czech Republic	2
Latvia	2
Malta	1
Total	34



Food and Feed 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.

Member States



Activities

In two Member States, inspections were performed to evaluate the follow-up action taken by the competent authorities after previous inspections. These earlier inspections formed part of a series on the traceability of beef and beef products from farm to retail outlet.

Nineteen 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).

The majority of these inspections took place in Member States. However, three were held in Accession Countries and two involved Candidate Countries. Most of the inspections followed up the findings of a previous inspection series.

A series of eight inspections covered fishery products and live bivalve molluscs produced in Member States. The aim was to evaluate the improvements made since the previous inspection series in 2001/2002, especially for the main risks presented by such food, and to examine the implementation and control of the HACCP systems in place for the handling, preparation and processing of fishery products.

There were several inspections to assess control systems for the prevention, control and eradication of TSEs (Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies). The inspections concentrated on the implementation of EU rules on:

- BSE surveillance;
- the removal of specified risk materials (SRM) and the control of the feed ban;
- the follow-up of previous inspections in this area.

For BSE, two inspections were undertaken in Member States, five in New Member States and one, as an observer, in a European Free Trade Association (EFTA) country. Inspections on the feed ban took place in four Member States.

Findings

For the two Member States, improvements were noted in the control of the systems in place. However, some shortcomings that were identified in the previous inspections were found again.

The evaluation of the general food hygiene control systems was mainly positive, with improvements in the systems since the previous inspection series. However, a number of deficiencies in the implementation of Community legislation were noted in several Member States. 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 and the lack of categorisation of food businesses according to the risk associated with them. The implementation of HACCP was very poor in some sectors, notably in the service sector (retail, catering, and restaurants). 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 fishery products inspection series, very little progress has been noted, with the exception of one Member State for live bivalve molluscs, and a second Member State in the areas of competent authority establishment control and evaluation / verification of the HACCP systems in place. For the other Member States, control of these sectors is still unsatisfactory.

Eight of the biggest Member States, in terms of production of fishery products and live bivalve molluscs, were visited in 2004 and the series will be completed in 2005.

For TSEs, although most control measures were applied as required and improvements were noted, some shortcomings remained, which tended to hinder the effective implementation of some of the measures.

Food and Feed Safety

Member States



Activities

The control systems for animal nutrition / feedstuffs were evaluated in a series of inspections focusing on the implementation of EU requirements for:

- the safe production of animal feedstuffs, in particular on the official controls by the competent authorities on the production and use of feed;
- the requirements for feed producers and traders.

The inspections also followed-up previous inspections in this area. There were three inspections in Member States and five in New Member States (combined with the BSE inspections mentioned above).

A series of animal by-products (ABP) inspections covered the implementation of EU rules on ABP, in particular:

- 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.

In 2004, 13 inspections were performed in Member States in the context of a series of inspections in all Member States during 2004/2005.

There was also a separate ABP inspection in a Member State.

There was a series of visits to study the audit systems of the competent authorities in the Member States. The competent authorities had previously provided information to the FVO in response to a questionnaire that was sent to them in the context of a current FVO study on national audit systems. The aim of the visits was to expand on the information provided by the competent authorities and, where necessary, to obtain additional information.

Findings

In most Member States visited, the systems in place for official inspection in the field of animal nutrition, and the requirements for feed producers and traders, were largely satisfactory. However, some common weaknesses were observed in the practical application of the rules. These inhibited a consistent supervision over the feed sector. In three Member States, the overall effectiveness of the official controls is still influenced by the limited application of the control programmes and/or delays in the approval and registration procedures for establishments.

As regards ABP, all Member States visited had adequate arrangements and sufficient infrastructures are in place to handle most of the ABP in accordance with the ABP Regulation. There are adequate systems and official controls in place to ensure the proper disposal of the risk materials, but more is needed to guarantee the flow of other ABP within the allowed chains until their permitted use or safe disposal in all Member States. In particular, Member States should improve the effectiveness and/or uniformity of official control of the ABP chain by ensuring:

- 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.

As required by Article 35 of the ABP Regulation, the Commission will submit during 2005 a report to the European Parliament and the Council describing the necessary administrative and control measures taken by the Member States to ensure compliance with the ABP Regulation.

The information gathered in the course of the competent authority visits will assist in the drafting of guidelines for the conduct of national audits of competent authority control systems as required by Article 43.1(i) of 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, adopted on 29 April 2004¹.

¹ Official Journal L 165, of 30.4.2004 page 1 and corrigendum Official Journal L 191, of 28.5.2004, page 1



Food and Feed Safety

Accession and Candidate Countries



Activities

As a result of an inspection series carried out in 2003, a new series of inspections was launched in 2004 in the Accession Countries, prior to the enlargement of the EU. The purpose was to monitor the progress made by these countries since the previous inspections and to follow up key issues raised by the earlier inspection series.

All New Member States were revisited after enlargement.

Two Candidate Countries were also visited, one of which was inspected twice.

Findings

Significant improvements were made by all ten Accession Countries in upgrading their standards. Some countries, however, were too optimistic in their submitted timetable and could not meet the standards within the time proposed. This resulted in a number of temporary derogations being granted to some New Member States in different fields.

Re-visits to all ten New Member States ensured that improvements were on-going.

The upgrading of standards in the two Candidate Countries visited is still in progress.

Third Countries



Activities

The authorities in a Third Country requested two inspections, one in relation to exports of milk and meat products and another on the production and export of reindeer meat to the European Union.

In other Third Countries, three inspections were performed to follow-up certain guarantees provided during previous inspections and to evaluate animal health, in particular foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), public health control systems and certification procedures.

An inspection was undertaken in a Third Country to evaluate the operation of control systems for fresh meat, meat products, minced meat, meat preparations, farmed and wild game meat, milk and milk products. The inspection was held under the terms of a veterinary agreement, between the EU and the country concerned, on sanitary measures applicable to trade in live animals and animal products.

Findings

The inspections on milk, meat products and reindeer meat found that the control systems in place differ from the requirements of the EU legislation on several points. Layout, structure and equipment of all establishments visited need improvement before meeting EU standards. As a consequence, imports from this country have not yet been authorised.

In the three countries visited for animal health and procedures, efforts have been made to implement the guarantees provided in response to the recommendations of previous inspections. In one country, however, the input was mainly focussed on public health aspects, in particular to correct the deficiencies detected in establishments during the previous inspection. Although efforts have been made to combat a recent outbreak of FMD, some significant problems were observed regarding animal health. All three countries have started to change the systems in place for animal identification and movement, to allow better traceability of EU eligible beef. Implementation of the new systems is still at an early stage and they cannot yet provide full guarantees. In view of this, imports remain restricted to meat from certain controlled areas, under strict health conditions.

The Third Country veterinary agreement inspection was the first inspection in that country since the agreement entered into force. The control systems in the meat and meat products sector were considered to be operating in a satisfactory and reliable way, providing adequate guarantees that products exported to the EU fulfil the required and agreed standards. In the milk and milk products sector however, some deficiencies were identified that could undermine the reliability of the control systems in place. An action plan to address these deficiencies has been provided by the country concerned.

Food and Feed Safety

Third Countries



Activities

A series of 12 inspections covered fishery products and live bivalve molluscs imported from Third Countries for which import conditions are fully harmonised (Third Countries listed in part one of the list annexed to Commission Decision 97/296/EC).

Findings

During the 12 fishery products inspections in Third Countries, the situation in the majority of the countries visited ranged from unsatisfactory to very serious with risks for consumer health.

It should be noted that most of these Third Countries are developing countries that face difficulties in reaching EU standards, due to poverty, climate and limited competent authority resources. However, some of the fishery products exported present a low risk and did not require drastic safeguard measures.

Actions taken as a result of the fishery products inspections included:

- the suspension, by the competent authority, of certain exports;
- requests, from the Commission to the competent authority, for systematic controls of consignments for the main hazards;
- a review of the list of establishments and vessels approved for export to the EU;
- information from the Commission to the Member States for increased controls and analyses on fishery products imported from certain Third Countries;
- the suspension, in some cases, of the automatic pre-listing of vessels and establishments, pending satisfactory guarantees and actions from the competent authority;
- encouraging these countries to consider this sector as a priority for development actions, using Community or Member State funds to improve both production conditions and competent authority control activities.

A number of inspections took place in Third Countries requesting authorisation for export to the EU. These inspections covered commodities such as live clams, and ratite meat from a South American country.

The outcomes of the Third Country export authorisation inspections were satisfactory.

An inspection was carried out in the USA, to evaluate the state of readiness of the poultry meat export sector to comply with the agreed provisions for the use of anti-microbial treatments (AMT) in the context of an EU scientific opinion.

The results of the USA inspection were encouraging, despite the fact that some points remained under discussion. There was improvement in the official control of the farms and flocks supplying live poultry to slaughterhouses wishing to resume export of poultry meat to the EU.

The FVO took part, as an observer, in an ESA (EFTA Surveillance Authority) inspection on the traceability of beef in a European Free Trade Association (EFTA) country. This occurred in the framework of the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement.

As an observer, the FVO did not produce a report on this inspection. The inspection reports of the ESA are available at <http://www.eftasurv.int/information/reportsdocuments/>

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
An inspection was carried out in a Member State, to complete a series of inspections in the 15 pre-enlargement Member States on contingency plans for dealing with outbreaks of epizootic diseases.	The series of inspections on contingency plans in the 15 Member States showed that competent authorities have made a major effort to prepare for the possibility of large scale outbreaks of OIE "List A" diseases. However, the effectiveness of the control of such outbreaks could be compromised by deficiencies in the official veterinary control systems for holdings and establishments. It could also be affected by shortcomings relating to holding registration, animal identification and movement control.
One Member State was visited as part of a new series of inspections in Member States regarding animal health controls for intra-community trade in semen and embryos of domestic animals of the bovine species.	Essential provisions of EU legislation on semen and embryos had not been transposed or implemented in the Member State visited. Control systems in place, and their supervision, were insufficient along parts of the chain, and it could not be guaranteed that the production of semen meets the required EU standards. An action plan to remedy the shortcomings identified has been received from the Member State.
Thirteen inspections, as detailed below, took place in Member States, to evaluate disease eradication programmes in place:	Progress in the eradication of most diseases has been made in the majority of the Member States inspected. However, the implementation of key elements of the programmes in place was not always sufficient. Shortcomings identified need special attention as they could undermine further progress.
• Classical swine fever (CSF) in feral pigs (three inspections);	• The implementation of the eradication programmes in the three Member States visited was generally found to be satisfactory.
• African swine fever (ASF) (one inspection);	• The implementation of the eradication programme and the control of the measures to be applied were insufficient to prevent further spread of the disease in the region of the Member State visited.
• Five inspections for brucellosis, specifically <i>Brucella melitensis</i> (one of which also included <i>Brucella abortus</i> in buffaloes);	• Despite shortcomings in the control and implementation of eradication programmes for <i>Brucella melitensis</i> in sheep and goats, progress has been made in four of the five Member States visited. However, several key points have to be addressed before further progress can be made. Particular steps need to be taken to implement efficiently the eradication programme for <i>Brucella abortus</i> in buffaloes in the inspected Member State.
• Bovine tuberculosis (TB) (one inspection);	• The measures contained in this Member State's TB eradication programme have, in general terms, been implemented properly. However, some shortcomings were noted and the number of reactor animals is still high. The Member State concerned addressed all recommendations except one: milk from TB reactor animals is still allowed to be delivered to milk establishments.



Animal Health



Activities	Findings
Rabies (three inspections).	In two of the Member States visited, eradication of rabies appears to be in progress. In the third Member State, however, major problems remain in one area. Eradication is mainly based on the vaccination of foxes and dogs. This vaccination programme is monitored but shortcomings have been identified in the implementation of the programme. An action plan to remedy the shortcomings identified has been received from the Member State.
A series of inspections started in Third Countries, on animal health controls for live equidae and equine semen destined for export to the EU, including certification procedures.	The equine health inspection series showed that the inspected Third Countries have well organised structures in place to manage these issues on their territory. However, weaknesses were identified in the requirements for the registration of holdings, identification of equidae, controls on their movement and certification procedures. All have systems in place to detect equine diseases; however, the surveillance system in place is insufficient to give a reliable overall picture of the actual epidemiological situation for equine diseases.
There was a series of inspections to eight Third Countries on live bivalve mollusc diseases. The aim was to examine the respect of animal health conditions for the export of live bivalve molluscs to the EU. These provisions were recently harmonised and newly entered into force.	The Third Country inspections in the live bivalve mollusc series showed that the new legislation was disproportionate to the risk of the introduction of the live bivalve mollusc diseases into the production area waters of the Member States. This led to an amendment of the legislation, which is now more in line with SPS principles.
An inspection took place in China on the Avian Influenza situation and on poultry and rabbit meat production. This inspection mainly aimed at evaluating the situation with regard to the Avian Influenza epizootic, with a view to a possible lifting of the ban on poultry meat exports to the EU.	The Chinese competent authority appears to have controlled Avian Influenza by large-scale slaughtering, serological surveys and epidemiological enquiries, animal movement controls and preventive vaccination. Despite this, the risks of a possible circulation of HPAI strains, particularly in farmed ducks, and of the recurrence of outbreaks in poultry, are still high.



Animal Welfare

Inspections dealt with EU animal welfare legislation applicable on farms, during transport and at slaughter. A series of inspections was undertaken to assess the implementation of welfare requirements for laying hens, which should have entered into force in all Member States in 2002. The other major focus of inspections was on the state of implementation of requirements applicable in all areas of the keeping and handling of livestock in the New Member States.



Activities	Findings
There were six inspections in Member States, which formed a series on the welfare of laying hens.	The series on the welfare of laying hens in Member States concluded that implementation has been most rapid where producer associations have worked closely with the competent authority to find practical solutions to implement EU requirements. The link between welfare requirements and marketing regulations meant that there was a strong basis for the system of controls. Checks of EU welfare standards of unenriched cages, which continue to be the dominant system for keeping laying hens, have been in place since 1988. Changes introduced by Directive 1999/74/EC were applied to a greater or lesser extent in all Member States visited. Weaknesses were found where this Directive had not been properly transposed into national legislation or where competent authority inspectors had not been given sufficient training or guidance on the new requirements. Regarding alternative systems, monitoring and enforcement were in place but not yet fully effective. Either competence for these checks had not been fully agreed between the egg marketing inspectorate and the veterinary service or, where the veterinary service had taken responsibility for animal welfare checks, the service was relatively inexperienced in dealing with this sector. Further FVO inspections in this area are envisaged in 2005.
In one Member State, there was a follow-up inspection concerning welfare during transport and at slaughter.	The Member State inspection on welfare during transport and at slaughter found that progress in implementing the commitments given in response to previous recommendations has been slow and not fully adequate. The Commission services have been following up these issues directly with the competent authority concerned.
Four inspections assessed animal welfare on farms, during transport and at slaughter in certain New Member States.	In the New Member States, substantial efforts had been made to adopt EU legal requirements in time for accession to the EU. Progress in implementation varied as legislation was often only recently in force or, in some cases, still pending. This resulted in an overall situation that was not yet fully satisfactory. In a follow-up inspection in one of these Member States, it was found that the authorities have delivered on commitments given in response to the pre-Accession inspection in 2004, by amending legislation and developing their system of inspections. Further FVO inspections are planned to the other three New Member States, when an assessment will be made of the implementation of the action plans provided following the inspections in 2004.



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
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. Nine 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.	A complete analysis of the overall results of the inspection series in Member States on the plant passport system is in preparation, in the form of an interim overview report. The provisional results show that in several Member States the 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 mere routine rubber stamping of the commercial invoices. Many Member States also face resource shortages, not having enough inspectors to supervise the system adequately. However, in many cases, action plans have been submitted by the Member States to address these issues.
Regarding disease outbreaks, three Member States were inspected on their control of <i>Diabrotica virgifera virgifera</i> (western corn rootworm) outbreaks, for which new EU legislation had been put in place. The insect is a serious pest in maize. A follow-up inspection was also carried out on the eradication programme for <i>Bursaphelenchus xylophilus</i> (pine wood nematode), a serious pine forest pest, of which there is an outbreak in one Member State.	The inspections on disease outbreak control in Member States showed, in general, good compliance with the requirements of EU legislation and thus good control of the pest in question.
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 2004, these overviews included reports on <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) and Pepino mosaic virus.	The Member State survey reports on the implementation of EU plant health legislation show that there is substantial variation across the EU with regards to survey activity.
In 2004, a new, improved version of "EUROPHYT" was launched. This is an electronic, web-based system 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 other Member States then use this information for the formulation of plant health policy and the targeting of controls.	In the course of the year, the FVO trained EUROPHYT users from all 25 Member States. By the end of the year, 17 additional Member States had adopted the use of the system, leaving only four Member States still to do so. The data available in the system show that there is substantial variation across the EU with regard to the number and nature of interceptions made.



Plant Health

Activities	Findings
In the context of enlargement, monitoring inspections were performed, early in the year, in three Accession Countries, which are now New Member States. A similar inspection took place in Bulgaria.	The enlargement monitoring 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 and the Commission did not need to introduce any emergency measures in the plant health area, after accession, in any of the New Member States.
Inspections in the area of Third Country exports were held in Argentina and Brazil, on their citrus fruit exports to the EU, and in Bulgaria, for the possible export of potatoes before EU accession.	Some non-compliance with the current requirements for citrus fruits introduced to the EU from Argentina and Brazil was recorded and improvements were recommended for both countries. The inspection in Bulgaria concluded that there was not yet adequate evidence that the country is free from potato ring rot. Follow-up inspections in all three countries are planned for 2005.

Special Topic

Enlargement of the European Union



On 1st May 2004, the EU completed the largest enlargement in its history with the accession of ten New Member States, adding 76 million inhabitants to the EU's population.

Enlargement Inspections

Accession Countries

Poland	8
Lithuania	5
Estonia	4
Slovenia	4
Czech Republic	3
Hungary	3
Latvia	3
Malta	3
Cyprus	2
Slovak Republic	2
Total	37

Other Candidate Countries

Bulgaria	5
Romania	4
Turkey	1
Total	10

New Member States

Slovak Republic	6
Poland	5
Hungary	4
Lithuania	4
Slovenia	4
Cyprus	3
Estonia	3
Czech Republic	2
Latvia	2
Malta	1
Total	34

Activities

In the first four months of the year, the FVO conducted an intensive programme of 37 inspections in the ten Accession Countries, as part of the Commission's overall monitoring of their progress in the final preparations for EU membership. It also continued its on-going programme of inspections in the other three Candidate Countries, focussing especially on Bulgaria and Romania.

After 1st May, the FVO continued its focus on the ten New Member States and carried out a further 34 inspections, mainly to verify delivery of commitments, made by them in the final months before accession, to improve certain aspects of their control systems

Findings

The overall performance of the ten New Member States, both before and after accession, in responding to recommendations made by the FVO in its inspection reports, was generally very positive. Over 97% of a total of about 650 recommendations made by the FVO in 2004 to the competent authorities in the ten countries received a favourable response. This was either in the form of action already taken following the completion of inspections or in the form of commitments to take action within a specified deadline. Cyprus, the Czech Republic and Lithuania were notable in giving 100% satisfactory responses to recommendations. Subsequent verification by the FVO at the end of 2004 confirmed that over 76% of commitments for action by all ten New Member States had actually been delivered, while progress was being made on most of the others.

At the end of the year the main areas that still required close monitoring were:

- the upgrading of hygiene conditions in slaughterhouses and meat processing plants;
- animal registration and identification systems;
- animal waste disposal;
- animal welfare;
- control of veterinary medicines;
- import controls from non-EU countries.

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.

In 2004, 16 countries were inspected. Of these, eight were Member States, six were Accession Countries, prior to enlargement, and two were Third Countries.

Inspections

Member States

Belgium
Denmark
Finland
Italy
Luxembourg
Spain
Sweden
The Netherlands

Accession Countries

Estonia
Latvia
Lithuania
Poland
Slovakia
Slovenia

Third Countries

Argentina
Uruguay

Activities

The Member State inspections continued a series of follow-up inspections of the 15 pre-enlargement Member States, which started in late 2003.

The inspections in the Accession Countries examined the implementation of relevant EU legislation in the run up to accession and followed up progress made since they were inspected in the first half of 2003.

The Third Country evaluations focused on the ability of those countries to satisfy Community requirements for food exported to the EU.

In addition, one of the four Community Reference Laboratories (CRLs) for residues was inspected. The CRL in Rome (part of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità) was assessed on how it fulfils the requirements and performs the mandatory functions for CRLs in the field of residues. Particular attention was paid to the general analytical performance of the laboratory.

Findings

In the Member States, the overall implementation of residue control plans was generally satisfactory, although certain deficiencies in laboratory capability, accreditation status and analytical performance were observed. Controls on the use and distribution of veterinary medicines were generally acceptable and enforcement actions were effective. However, a common deficiency in many Member States was the authorisation and use of medicated premixes for top-dressing animal feeding stuffs. Potentially, this practice can result in over- or under-dosing of treated animals with implications for therapeutic efficacy and residue status of food derived from such animals.

In the Accession Countries, many improvements were observed, compared to the inspections carried out in 2003, in laboratory performance, implementation of residue controls, and removal from the market of EU-prohibited veterinary medicines.

In both Third Countries visited, systems were generally effective. Again, laboratory performance and lack of accreditation were issues requiring attention. Improvements could be made in the scope of testing, such as the number of substances monitored. However, the controls on growth promoters and veterinary medicines banned from use in the EU functioned properly. This provides assurances to the European consumer concerning the safety of food of animal origin exported from these Third Countries to the EU.

Although there were improvements in the performance of the Rome CRL during 2004, the laboratory could not be considered to be a state-of-the-art facility, nor a leading laboratory, in all of the areas for which it is meant to be the competent CRL. Also, the performance of mandatory CRL functions was considered to have been less effective than would be expected from a properly functioning CRL.

Special Topic

Pesticide residues in food of plant origin



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

In the context of enlargement, there were inspections in Accession and Candidate Countries to evaluate progress in the implementation of official control systems for pesticide residues in, and on, food of plant origin.

Inspections

Member States

Denmark
Germany
Greece
Spain
Italy
Netherlands

New Member States

Estonia
Cyprus

Accession Countries

Czech Republic
Hungary
Poland

Candidate Countries

Bulgaria
Romania

Third Countries

India
Turkey

Activities

The Member State inspections were part of a series to all Member States. Inspections took place in Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands.

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 Internet². The report covered the Member States' national programmes and the EU co-ordinated programme for the year 2002.

After EU accession, the New Member States Estonia and Cyprus were also inspected. Inspections in other New Member States will continue in 2005.

Inspections took place in the Accession Countries Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, in the context of EU enlargement.

There were also enlargement inspections in the Candidate Countries Bulgaria and Romania

In response to alerts concerning the detection of pesticide residues in grapes from India and peppers from Turkey, inspections were also undertaken in these countries, to examine the pesticide residue controls on produce for export to the EU.

Findings

In the Member States, the control system for pesticide residues was, in general, better developed than the control system for the placing on the market and the use of plant protection products. Only very few of the Member States carry out adequate controls on the users of plant protection products.

Although good monitoring systems for pesticide residues were generally in place, inadequate risk assessment and follow-up of infringements were found in some Member States. There was an inconsistent application of criteria for notification of non-compliant samples in the RASFF. In the large Member States with a federal organisation, co-ordination of control activities was problematic.

In the pesticide residue laboratories inspected, the analytical methods and equipment were mostly satisfactory. However, there was a great variation in the number of pesticides analysed for. 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.

In the two New Member States visited, considerable progress was noted in the development of control systems during the EU accession process, and their control systems compare favourably with existing Member States.

The relevant EU legislation had been drafted in the Accession Countries, for transposition and implementation of controls following accession to the EU.

In the case of the Candidate Countries, areas were identified where progress is required as part of the accession process and where follow up will be needed.

In India, a comprehensive official control programme has been introduced for grapes intended for export to the EU. In Turkey, the official control measures for pesticide residues were not sufficient to confirm compliance with EU standards.

² http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fvo/specialreports/pesticides_index_en.htm

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.



Activities	Findings
The inspections in Third Countries include a verification that adequate controls are in place to prevent the presence of aflatoxins and Sudan I-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 Commission Decisions. During 2004, two inspections on contaminants were performed, in India and Brazil. The inspection in India was conducted following a number of notifications to the RASFF regarding the presence of the non-authorised colorant Sudan I-IV in chilli, chilli products, mixtures of spices, sauces and snacks and the presence of aflatoxin in spices originating in that country. The inspection in Brazil was a follow-up to an inspection undertaken in 2003. A Commission Decision (2003/493/EC) was put in place in July 2003, to address shortcomings that had been found. These were identified when an increased number of rejected consignments of Brazil nuts contaminated with aflatoxins were notified in 2001 and 2002.	In the two Third Countries inspected, the current implementation of controls did not ensure that consignments of spices and nuts intended for export to the EU met the requirements of Commission Decisions. Deficiencies with regard to sampling, sample homogenisation and analytical capabilities were detected. All consignments of chilli and related products being imported into Europe are now required to be accompanied by an analytical certificate to show that they are free from Sudan dyes. The actions taken by the Indian authorities are also to be followed up in a subsequent inspection to be carried out in 2005. In relation to Brazil nuts, the volume of trade to the European Union from Brazil has decreased significantly in 2004. As a result, the number of consignments rejected at import was reduced to two in 2004. The Commission will continually monitor this situation.
In the New Member States, three countries were visited before accession for contaminants and again, after accession, for import controls.	The findings of these import control inspections are included in the Special Topic on page 17 concerning import controls on products of plant origin.
Two Member States were inspected for additives, specifically Sudan dyes. The objectives were: - to assess the control measures in place for imported products of plant origin containing chilli and chilli products, intended for free circulation within the European Union; - to verify the measures in place to control the presence of Sudan I-IV in imported foodstuffs.	The overall situation regarding import control of consignments containing chilli and chilli products intended for free circulation within the European Union, and the measures in place to control the presence of Sudan I-IV in foodstuffs in the two Member States visited, was positive. Exceptions, however, were the analytical capability for Sudan II, III and IV and the effectiveness in ensuring that all contaminated product is destroyed. In both countries, problems regarding analytical capability were solved shortly after the inspection.
In the context of enlargement, two inspections were undertaken in Candidate Countries to evaluate progress in the implementation of official control systems for contaminants in food of plant origin.	In the case of the Candidate Countries, areas were identified where progress is needed as part of the accession process. These areas will require further follow up.

Special Topic

Additives, flavourings, food contact materials

Two desk studies were carried out by the FVO in 2004, concerning the evaluation of official controls in Member States relating to food additives, flavourings and food contact materials.

**Activities**

A questionnaire was sent to the 15 pre-enlargement Member States, covering different topics such as legislation, competent authorities, inspection and controls, laboratories and the industry situation.

Findings

The main conclusions of these desk studies were that:

- all relevant directives regarding food additives and food contact materials have been transposed, with the exception of two Member States;
- the level of inspection and sampling was reported to be low.

These studies have now been extended to the New Member States and are currently in preparation. It is planned to complete them during 2005.

Special Topic

Products of Plant Origin**Import Controls**

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). In these cases, controls are imposed by Commission Decisions. The inspection series in 2004 specifically examined compliance with these Decisions. Other areas inspected included import controls on mycotoxins, the process contaminant 3-MCPD, irradiated foodstuffs and pesticide residues, as well as general procedures for imports of products of plant origin.

**Activities**

In 2004, there were eight inspections to assess imports controls in Member States. Three of these were a follow-up of previous recommendations from the last inspection series, which started in 2002. The other five inspections took place in New Member States after accession.

The inspections comprised a week-long evaluation in each country. These involved visits to two main points of entry to the Community (usually ports, but also land borders), visits to the central, regional and local authorities, to a large premises dealing with the imported products concerned, and to relevant laboratories.

Findings

The follow-up inspections found that improvements had been made to address the recommendations made in previous inspections. In most of the New Member States, satisfactory actions were demonstrated for almost all of the issues considered outstanding.

For controls on mycotoxins, it was noted that some of the inspected countries inadequately applied the controls at import required by Commission Decisions. In particular, they were not sampling according to the legislation or not preparing analytical samples correctly. The inspection series also identified little control at import for irradiated foodstuffs, and variable controls for pesticides and 3-MCPD.

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. In 2004, as a result of the inspections and the action plans, the approvals of a number of BIPs have been modified accordingly. In addition, newly proposed BIPs are subject to an inspection by the FVO prior to their approval by the Commission.

The same applies for BIPs in EFTA, as these are also points of entry for the EU. In such cases, the FVO joins EFTA Surveillance Authority (ESA) inspections as an observer.

Prior to EU enlargement, the state of readiness of the Accession Countries to apply EU import controls at accession, and the compliance of proposed BIPs with EU legislation, were also verified.



Activities

Findings

There were inspections in four Member States during which 11 approved BIPs and two newly proposed BIPs were inspected to verify compliance with EU requirements.

In the Member States visited, the overall implementation of import controls was, in general, satisfactory. Common minor non-compliances were found in the areas of staff training, identification and selection of consignments, working procedures, supervision of BIPs and transit trade, facilities, equipment and hygiene, registration and documentation.

Although the overall organisation of import control systems was largely satisfactory, a small number of the non-compliances that were found were considered to be significant. These were mainly related to facilities in BIPs, and to a lesser extent to working procedures and supervision. They are being raised with the relevant authorities in the Member States concerned.

A new series of inspections concerning illegal imports was started, with inspections in three Member States to evaluate 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, gaps exist in the measures taken to minimise the likelihood of illegal introduction of relevant consignments.

Eight assessment inspections were undertaken in Accession Countries, during which 24 proposed BIPs were visited.

The competent authorities in Accession Countries made substantial efforts to implement the import control system according to EU legislation before accession. As the construction of several of the proposed BIPs was not completely finalised at the time of inspection, further follow-up, including inspections, was considered necessary to verify compliance with EU provisions.

After accession, five inspections in New Member States were conducted to verify the compliance of the import control systems in place and the compliance with EU requirements of five approved and 13 newly proposed BIPs.

In the New Member States visited, the situation was similar to that found before accession. Shortcomings concerning supervision and working procedures could be related to insufficient training or expertise of the individuals. Also, in a few new BIPs, there were significant non-compliances for facilities although satisfactory action plans were received in response to the previous inspection. The FVO is monitoring the situation closely.

The FVO joined, as an observer, two ESA inspections, to Norway and Iceland.

As an observer, the FVO did not produce reports on these inspections. The inspection reports of the ESA are available at <http://www.eftasurv.int/information/reportsdocuments/>

Special Topic

National Audit Systems

In 2004, the FVO started a series of inspections 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. To assist in this, the FVO carried out a study of the extent to which Member State controls already involve audits of those systems. Such audits could be conducted either internally by the competent authorities or by suitable and technically qualified external bodies. The study consisted of a questionnaire sent to all Member States. This was followed by a series of fact-finding visits to a sample of Member States. The purpose of these was to become familiar with the audit systems in place in each country. Six Member States (DK, IE, IT, NL, PL and UK) were visited during 2004 and the series will be completed by visits to a further three Member States in 2005.

Findings

When the series is completed, an overview report will be prepared, based on the information obtained from the questionnaires and gathered in the course of the fact-finding visits. This overview report will then be presented to the Member States.

Special Topic

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 food and feed law, animal health and animal welfare rules. The Regulation sets out a new framework for control activities conducted by national authorities and the Commission.

Under this important Regulation, Member States will be required to draw up and, from 2007, implement a single multi-annual national plan for official control activities on food and feed law, animal health, and animal welfare rules. The Commission will then carry out audits in the Member States to verify that controls take place in accordance with the multi-annual national control plans.

As part of its preparations for the implementation of the new requirements, the FVO began preliminary work in 2004 to establish country profiles of control systems in the Member States, based mainly on information compiled from previous inspections and on the responses of competent authorities to FVO inspection recommendations.

Each country profile will have five main components, containing information on:

- the overall structure, organisation and responsibilities of competent authorities;
- the control processes operated by these authorities;
- production and trade data to give a context to the controls;
- input and output indicators used in assessing the overall effectiveness of control systems;
- the responses of the competent authorities to previous FVO reports.

In 2004, as part of its work on the development of the country profiles, the FVO completed a review of all outstanding issues arising from its previous inspections in the Member States. On the basis of this review, the FVO sought a written report from each competent authority on progress with these issues.

The FVO also announced its intention to begin in 2005 a new type of general review mission to each Member State. The aim is to enable the FVO and each competent authority jointly to review, update and complete as far as possible the draft country profiles. The information contained in these profiles will serve as an additional basis for future FVO audits and inspections.

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).
Accession Countries	The ten countries joining the EU on 1 May 2004: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. From 1 January to 30 April 2004, these were referred to as the Accession Countries; from 1 May 2004, these became the New Member States.
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.
AMT (anti-microbial treatment)	A treatment to reduce the level of pathogens in poultry meat production. The use of chlorinated water washes for this purpose has been a common practice in the USA, but is not permitted by EU rules. The USA has proposed other compounds for EU approval as alternative AMTs.
Animal by-products (ABP)	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.
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")
Border inspection post (BIP)	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	See "TSE"
Candidate Countries	From 1 January to 30 April 2004: the ten Accession Countries (see above) plus Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. From 1 May 2004: Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. From 18 June 2004: Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey.
Community Reference Laboratories (CRLs)	"Community Reference Laboratories" (CRLs) with scientific and technical expertise within the areas of animal health, public health and zootechnics have been designated in different Community Decisions, Directives and Regulations for fulfilling tasks and functions specified in legislation.
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.
Epizootic diseases	Diseases affecting a large number of animals at the same time within a particular region or geographic area (e.g. Avian Influenza, Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Newcastle Disease). Analogous to epidemic diseases among humans.
EUROPHYT	An electronic rapid alert system between the Member States and the Commission ³ . 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).

³ 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 ».

Food irradiation	A controlled intervention process, exposing food to ionizing energy that destroys food borne pathogens.
Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD)	A highly contagious viral disease characterised by blister-like lesions of the mouth (inner tissue of mouth and lips, snout, and tongue) and feet (especially around the coronary band). The blisters rupture and leave an ulcerated depressed area that is susceptible to bacterial infection. Cloven-hoofed animals (cattle, sheep, swine, goats, and wild ruminants) are susceptible to the disease.
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.
HPAI	See “Avian influenza”
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.
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	See “Accession Countries”.
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”)
Organic farming	Farming methods which use only organic fertilisers and avoid use of inorganic agricultural chemicals and herbicides.
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 Food and Feed (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.
Ratites	Flightless birds, such as ostrich or emu.
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.
Specified Risk Material (SRM)	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”)
SPS (Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures)	The Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) from the World Trade Organization (WTO) establishes and enforces rules regarding the application of food safety. The EU is a member of the WTO and, under the SPS Agreement, it informs WTO members of draft legislation that may have a significant impact on trade.
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.
Veterinary agreement	Bilateral agreement between member states of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), where the parties recognise that each other's sanitary measures achieve the same level of protection. (See “SPS”)
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 2004

Member States:		Report No:
Austria	Food Hygiene	7062/2004
	Animal by-products	7275/2004
Belgium	Feedban	7040/2004
	Food Hygiene	7060/2004
	Internal market - Plant passport	7082/2004
	Animal by-products	7280/2004
	Residues	7290/2004
Denmark	Plant pest outbreak - Arable crops	7322/2004
	Food Hygiene	7063/2004
	Pesticides - Residues	7071/2004
	Internal market - Plant passport	7084/2004
	Animal Welfare - Poultry	7208/2004
	Residues	7266/2004
	Animal by-products	7269/2004
	National Audit Systems	7357/2004
	Control of residues in live animals and animal products	7262/2004
	Animal by-products	7270/2004
France	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7023/2004
	Disease eradication/control programmes - CSF	7127/2004
	Animal Health - AI/embryo/semen collection centres	7136/2004
	Animal Welfare - Poultry	7231/2004
	Disease eradication/control programmes - Brucella melitensis	7247/2004
	Animal by-products	7279/2004
	Traceability	7001/2004
	Animal Welfare - Poultry	7018/2004
Germany	Food Hygiene	7066/2004
	Import controls - food of non-animal origin	7068/2004
	Pesticides - Residues	7070/2004
	Internal market - Plant passport	7085/2004
	Animal by-products	7117/2004
	Disease eradication/control programmes - CSF	7129/2004
	Disease eradication/control programmes - Rabies	7216/2004
	Animal by-products	7015/2004
	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7022/2004
	Import controls - food of non-animal origin	7069/2004
Greece	Internal market - Plant passport	7081/2004
	Evaluation of Competent Authority in Member State - potatoes	7087/2004
	Disease eradication control programmes	7131/2004
	Feedban	7252/2004
	Animal welfare	7273/2004
	Animal nutrition	7295/2004
	Pesticides - Residues	7333/2004
	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7027/2004
	Animal by-products	7119/2004
	National Audit Systems	7365/2004
Italy	Animal Welfare - Poultry	7010/2004
	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7026/2004
	Feedban	7042/2004
	Food Hygiene	7059/2004
	Internal market - Plant passport	7083/2004
	Animal by-products	7120/2004
	Disease eradication control programmes	7130/2004
	Plant pest outbreak - Fruits, fruit plants, vegetables	7229/2004
	Additives	7254/2004
	Control of residues in live animals and animal products	7263/2004
	Animal nutrition	7288/2004
	Pesticides - Residues	7318/2004
	Community Reference Laboratory	7366/2004
	National Audit Systems	7367/2004

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	Disease eradication/control programmes - ASF	7369/2004
Luxembourg	Food Hygiene	7061/2004
	Disease eradication/control programmes - CSF	7223/2004
	Animal by-products	7272/2004
	Residues	7299/2004
Portugal	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7029/2004
	Border inspection posts; Import controls	7046/2004
	Food Hygiene	7058/2004
	TSE surveillance, rendering, feedban	7214/2004
	Disease eradication/control programmes - Brucella melitensis	7246/2004
	Animal nutrition	7305/2004
	Plant pest outbreak - Forest plants/products	7361/2004
	Internal market - Plant passport	7362/2004
	Import controls - illegal imports	7374/2004
Spain	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7024/2004
	Feedban	7041/2004
	Evaluation of Competent Authority in Member State - potatoes	7088/2004
	Disease eradication control programmes	7128/2004
	Traceability	7228/2004
	Animal Welfare - Poultry	7230/2004
	Animal by-products	7248/2004
	Control of residues in live animals and animal products	7264/2004
	Import controls - food of non-animal origin	7308/2004
	Pesticides - Residues	7319/2004
	Border inspection posts	7352/2004
Sweden	Food Hygiene	7064/2004
	Internal market - Plant passport	7080/2004
	Animal by-products	7271/2004
	Control of residues in live animals and animal products	7304/2004
The Netherlands	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7030/2004
	Food Hygiene	7067/2004
	Pesticides - Residues	7072/2004
	Animal by-products	7276/2004
	Border inspection posts; Import controls	7282/2004
	Residues	7293/2004
	Plant pest outbreak - Arable crops	7321/2004
	Internal market - Plant passport	7334/2004
	National Audit Systems	7364/2004
	Import controls - illegal imports	7373/2004
United Kingdom	Animal welfare - On-farm	7019/2004
	Fishery products and bivalve molluscs	7025/2004
	BSE, rendering, feedban	7044/2004
	Import controls and illegal imports - animals/animal products	7045/2004
	Food Hygiene	7065/2004
	Animal by-products	7126/2004
	Disease eradication control programmes - Tuberculosis	7251/2004
	Additives	7255/2004
	Disease contingency plans	7267/2004
	Internal market - Plant passport	7309/2004
	Plant pest outbreak - Arable crops	7310/2004
	Evaluation of Competent Authority in Member State	7356/2004
New Member States:		Report No:
Cyprus	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7183/2004
	Food Hygiene	7316/2004
	Pesticides - Residues	7330/2004
Czech Republic	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7179/2004
	Import controls - food of non-animal origin	7314/2004
Estonia	Border inspection posts; import controls	7238/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7250/2004
	Pesticides - Residues	7313/2004
Hungary	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7178/2004
	Animal welfare	7237/2004

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	Border inspection posts; import controls	7239/2004
	Import controls - food of non-animal origin	7327/2004
Latvia	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7174/2004
	Border inspection posts; import controls	7344/2004
Lithuania	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7175/2004
	Animal welfare	7306/2004
	Food Hygiene	7317/2004
	Import controls - food of non-animal origin	7335/2004
Malta	Food production; Animal health and welfare	7182/2004
Poland	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7177/2004
	Evaluation of Competent Authority in Member State - potatoes	7320/2004
	Animal Health - AI/embryo/semen collection centres	7325/2004
	Import controls - food of non-animal origin	7336/2004
	Evaluation of Competent Authority in Member State	7363/2004
Slovak Republic	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7180/2004
	Animal welfare	7233/2004
	Border inspection posts; import controls	7240/2004
	Import controls - food of non-animal origin	7315/2004
	Food Hygiene	7324/2004
	Evaluation of Competent Authority in Member State - potatoes	7338/2004
Slovenia	Food production; Animal health	7181/2004
	Disease eradication/control programmes - Rabies	7256/2004
	Food Hygiene	7328/2004
	Border inspection posts; import controls	7353/2004
Accession Countries:		Report No:
Cyprus	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7168/2004
	Enlargement – TSEs, BSE surveillance, feedban, animal nutrition	7206/2004
Czech Republic	Enlargement - Import Controls including BIPs	7092/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7164/2004
	Enlargement - General food hygiene controls	7212/2004
Estonia	Enlargement - Residues	7017/2004
	Enlargement - Plant Health	7073/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7173/2004
	Enlargement - food processing, transport and intermediate storage	7220/2004
Hungary	Enlargement - TSEs, BSE surveillance, feedban, animal nutrition	7004/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7163/2004
	Enlargement - General food hygiene controls	7213/2004
Latvia	Enlargement - Residues	7008/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7161/2004
	Enlargement - Import Controls including BIPs	7265/2004
Lithuania	Enlargement - TSEs, BSE surveillance, feedban, animal nutrition	7006/2004
	Enlargement - Import Controls including BIPs	7016/2004
	Enlargement - Residues	7051/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7160/2004
	Enlargement - Plant Health	7261/2004
Malta	Enlargement - TSEs, BSE surveillance, feedban, animal nutrition	7012/2004
	Enlargement - Import Controls including BIPs	7020/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7167/2004
Poland	Enlargement - Residues	7002/2004
	Enlargement - TSEs, BSE surveillance, feedban, animal nutrition	7005/2004
	Enlargement - Import Controls including BIPs	7011/2004
	Enlargement - Plant Health	7089/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7162/2004
	Enlargement - Animal Welfare	7209/2004
	Enlargement - General food hygiene controls	7211/2004
	Disease eradication/control programmes - Rabies	7215/2004
Slovak Republic	Enlargement - Residues	7050/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7165/2004
Slovenia	Enlargement - Residues	7013/2004
	Enlargement - food processing, transport and intermediate storage	7101/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7166/2004
	Enlargement - Import Controls including BIPs	7241/2004

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Candidate Countries:		Report No:
Bulgaria	Enlargement - Plant Health	7091/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7170/2004
	Evaluation of Competent Authority in Third Country - Potatoes	7302/2004
	Enlargement - General food hygiene controls	7331/2004
	Enlargement - Import Controls including BIPs	7348/2004
Romania	Food Production; Disease eradication control programmes	7169/2004
	Pesticides - Residues; Contaminants	7332/2004
	Identification/certification - live animals; Import controls	7341/2004
	Enlargement - Import Controls including BIPs	7343/2004
Turkey	Pesticides - Residues	7077/2004
Third Countries:		Report No:
Albania	Food production - table eggs/products	7149/2004
Algeria	Identification/certification - live animals	7203/2004
Argentina	Food Production; Disease eradication/control programmes - FMD	7184/2004
	Residues	7283/2004
	Plant pest outbreak - Arable crops	7312/2004
Australia	Disease outbreak - Newcastle disease; Ratites	7210/2004
Brazil	Contaminants	7074/2004
	Food production - poultry meat/products/preparations	7138/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication/control programmes - FMD	7185/2004
	Plant pest outbreak - Arable crops	7311/2004
Canada	Disease outbreak - Avian influenza	7323/2004
China	Disease outbreak - Avian influenza; Food production	7360/2004
Gabon	Food production - fish/fishery products	7257/2004
Iceland	Border inspection posts; import controls	7347/2004
India	Contaminants	7075/2004
	Pesticides - Residues	7076/2004
	Organic farming controls	7329/2004
Indonesia	Fishery products	7148/2004
Mauritania	Food production - fish/fishery products	7258/2004
Mexico	Food production - fish/fishery products	7301/2004
	Food production - fish/fishery products	7371/2004
Morocco	Identification/certification - live animals	7200/2004
New Zealand	Food production - Food of animal origin	7197/2004
	Animal Health - Live Bivalve Molluscs	7225/2004
Norway	TSEs	7054/2004
	Border inspection posts; import controls	7345/2004
Panama	Food production - fish/fishery products	7268/2004
Philippines	Fishery products	7355/2004
Russian Federation	Food production - Food of animal origin	7188/2004
	Food production - farmed game meat/products/preparations	7372/2004
Senegal	Food production - fish/fishery products	7152/2004
Seychelles	Food production - fish/fishery products	7259/2004
Singapore	Food production - fish/fishery products	7340/2004
Tunisia	Identification/certification - Live mammals	7201/2004
	Animal Health - Live Bivalve Molluscs	7224/2004
United States of America	Food production - poultry meat/products/preparations	7303/2004
Uruguay	Control of residues in live animals and animal products	7055/2004
	Ratites & ratite meat products	7132/2004
	Food Production; Disease eradication/control programmes - FMD	7187/2004
	Bivalve molluscs	7342/2004
Yemen	Food production - fish/fishery products	7260/2004



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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://europa.eu.int>

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://europa.eu.int/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://europa.eu.int/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://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fvo/index_en.htm

This gives a brief description of the work and role of the FVO, and contains separate sections on food and feed 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://europa.eu.int/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 2004, 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.