

# Hygienic supervision of food safety

## Supervisory authorities

The supervision of foodstuffs and meals has the character of an inspection activity carried out by state administration authorities according to the competences assigned to them in § 14 of Act No. 110/1997 Coll. about food. They are:

- **public health protection authorities** (sanitary stations): supervise the provision of catering services (previously used term public catering) and investigate the causes of health damage from food,
- **veterinary administration authorities**: exercise supervision over foodstuffs of animal origin,
- **State Agricultural and Food Inspection**: supervises food that does not belong to the veterinary administration authorities, i.e. foods of plant origin, alcoholic beverages, additives, food supplements, etc.

The inspection is started by presenting the inspector's service card in the presence of the business operator, a cooperating family member or another employee. During the inspection, the actual condition is determined. The inspector has the right to enter the company, take pictures, inspect documents and other documents, take measurements, take samples for laboratory examination, etc. At the end of the inspection, he draws up a protocol, a copy of which is handed over to the inspected entity.

*Sanctions* may be imposed on the inspected person for breach of obligations arising from *applicable legal regulations*. Sanctions can take the form of ordered removal of the defect within a set deadline, imposition of a fine, suspension or prohibition of activity, ordered liquidation of the food product, etc.

## RASFF

Finding the presence of a food or dish that is harmful to health is the reason for including such information in the central database of the **RASFF** system. The acronym is created from the first letters of the words Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed). The RASFF system functions uniformly within the European Union and is intended for the rapid exchange of information between cooperating countries. Timely information should then ensure the implementation of relevant preventive measures (e.g. withdrawal of a defective batch of products from circulation). A part of the RASFF system is also a report on the defectiveness of feed for so-called food animals (i.e. intended for the production of food of animal origin). Especially in the case of contamination of feed with chemical substances with the ability of persistence and bioaccumulation, there is a risk of chemical substances entering the human food chain. In the past, for example, the importance of cooperation between agriculture, veterinary and human medicine was confirmed when solving the dioxin scandal with Irish pork in 2008.

For the Czech Republic, around 200 reports of the occurrence of objectionable food are entered into the RASFF system every year. Of the chemical risks, the most numerous occurrence is the occurrence of pesticide residues, the undeclared use of some food additives (mainly sulphites, which can cause intolerance in susceptible people) and substances with a dioxin effect in food of animal origin. Contamination of food with mycotoxins is also significant. Of the biological factors, the most attention is paid to bacteria of the genus *Salmonella* as the causative agents of salmonella enteritis and *Listeria monocytogenes*.

## Cooperation of human and veterinary medicine

The cooperation of human and veterinary medicine is best manifested in the surveillance of food-borne anthroponozoonoses. In the past, for example, it was found that the significant increase in salmonellosis from eggs after 1990 was due to the introduction of salmonella into poultry farms through contaminated feed. Subsequently, poultry farming and contamination of animal products occurred. In 2008, the "National Program for Suppression of Salmonella in Farms" was launched. The program is based on care for feed, care for veterinary hygiene of laying hens. At the same time, it is necessary to admit that the number of human salmonellosis is very high for the assumed contamination of fresh eggs with salmonella (a figure of around 4% is given for the Czech Republic). The spread of salmonellosis is therefore apparently contributed to by improper handling of eggs when eating, when as a result of cross-contamination, a larger number of products can be contaminated by the contamination of one egg. That is why it is important to supervise the observance of certain rules in catering services and to educate and train people. These competencies fall precisely within the human hygiene service sector.

## Corporate responsibility

The surveillance (control) activity provided by the state supervisory authorities never represents an exhaustive investigation and therefore cannot by itself completely guarantee the health-safeness (safety) of food. The primary responsibility for the health safety of food always belongs to the person who produces, packages, transports, sells or performs any similar activity. Operators of food businesses are obliged to comply with certain rules to ensure maximum protection of people's health from health hazards that can spread through food and dishes. In addition to complying with the basic rules resulting from the current legislation, some manufacturers approach the certification of their businesses according to international standards to demonstrate the above-standard care for food hygiene.

# Links

## Citations

1. 16 of the Act No. 110/1997 Coll. on foodstuffs, as amended.
2. e.g. § 88 of the Act No. 258/2000 Coll. on the protection of public health, as amended.
3. Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic. *Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)* [online]. [feeling. 14/12/2012]. < [http://www.bezpecnostpotravin.cz/stranka/system-rychleho-varovani-pro-potravinu-a-krmiva-\(rasff\).aspx](http://www.bezpecnostpotravin.cz/stranka/system-rychleho-varovani-pro-potravinu-a-krmiva-(rasff).aspx) >.
4. e.g. Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic. *Consequences of Irish pork dioxin contamination* [online]. Last revised 1/19/2009, [cit. 14/12/2012]. < <http://www.bezpecnostpotravin.cz/dusledky-kontaminace-irskeho-veprovehu-dioxiny.aspx> >.
5. TARAS, Ladislav. A little different about salmonella in poultry... *Our breeding*. 7/2009, year 69, pp. 64 - 66, ISSN 0027-8068.
6. ROSICKÝ, Bohumír and Wolf SIXL. *Salmonellosis : Current information for doctors, veterinarians and food practice*. 1st edition. Prague: Scientia medica, 1994. p. 68. ISBN 80-85526-23-9 .
7. cf. Article 1 EC Regulation No. 853/2004 on food hygiene

## External resources

- [wikipedia:en:Paratyphoid salmonella of poultry](#)

category:Hygiene