

Food safety criteria for *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat food

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Regulation

[Draft](#) Commission Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 as regards *Listeria monocytogenes* [download]

What is changing and why?

In recent years, there have been an increasing number of deaths due to listeriosis among consumers in the European Union. The EU now proposes to apply strict food safety requirements for *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat foods. These requirements will apply not only at the production stage, but throughout the shelf-life of food products, from production to distribution and sale to the consumer. If an operator cannot demonstrate that the concentration of *L. monocytogenes* in a food will never be higher than 100 cfu/g, they must be able to show that the pathogen is completely absent in a 25 g portion of that food during its whole shelf-life.

This 100 cfu/g limit **does not apply to foods for infants and consumers with weakened immune defences**, who must not be exposed to any concentration of this pathogen.

Actions

Producers of ready-to-eat foods for export to the EU should assess their current practices for *L. monocytogenes* control, and any potential challenges posed by the proposed Regulation, particularly for foods that are not cooked or reheated before serving such as salads, sprouts, cheese, cooked meats, smoked fish, or desserts.

There is an opportunity to provide feedback on the European Commission's proposal via the EU's "[Have Your Say](#)" webpage until **8 May 2024**.

Timeline

Feedback on the draft can be submitted until **8 May 2024**.

Expected date of application: 1 January 2026.

For more information see the [full record](#) on the AGRINFO website – where you can also view the latest [AGRINFO Update](#) newsletters and [search](#) the database.

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