



New EU rules on maximum levels for mineral oil aromatic hydrocarbons (MOAH)

22 and 25 June 2026

TODAY'S WEBINAR



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Food QSafety First

- ❑ Brief introduction to AGRINFO programme
- ❑ Part I: The new maximum levels for MOAH and recommendations on MOSH and MOAH
 - Why EU action on MOH?
 - Setting maximum levels for MOAH
 - Monitoring recommendations for MOAH/MOSH
 - Next steps & timeframe
 - Questions & Answers
- ❑ Part II: Preparing for MOH maximum levels
 - Potential risk to trade
 - Sources of contamination
 - Practical mitigation strategies
 - Analytical challenges
 - Questions & Answers

Further questions? e-mail: agrinfo@colead.link

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2022 	142 PARTNER COUNTRIES	6 YEARS →	€7 MILLION 	AGRI & FISH 
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AGRINFO'S OBJECTIVES

Monitor

Many rule changes:
identify what's
relevant

Consolidate



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Clear, accessible
explanations of
what rules are
changing, why &
the implications

“Get information to the people who need it, when they need it, in a form that is understandable”

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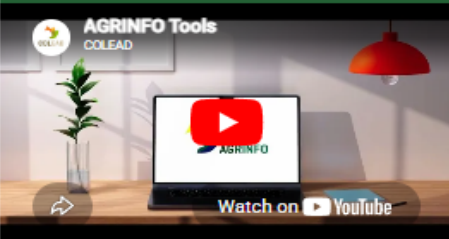
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01.

CONTEXT OF EU REGULATION ON MINERAL OIL HYDROCARBONS

Why EU action on mineral oil hydrocarbons?

Substances derived from crude oil or produced synthetically from coal, natural gas and biomass

Mineral Oil Hydrocarbons

Mineral Oil Aromatic
Hydrocarbons
(**MOAH**)

EFSA
MOAH in food can
damage DNA in cells
and may cause cancer

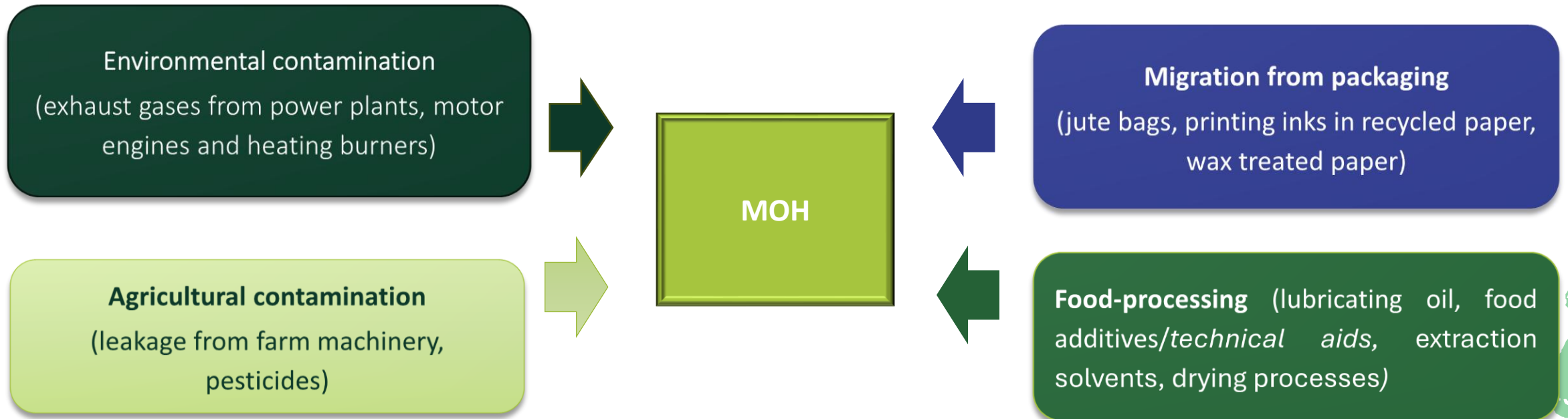
Maximum levels &
monitoring recommendations

Mineral Oil Saturated
Hydrocarbons (**MOSH**)

EFSA
MOSH accumulate in
organs - no immediate
health concerns, but
potential exposure risks

No maximum levels, but
monitoring and steps to reduce
presence

Sources of mineral oil hydrocarbons



MOAH maximum levels will apply regardless of the source of the contamination

The rules today

- No maximum levels
- **But** all food on the EU market must be safe*
- In light of the EFSA evaluation, Commission/ Member States agree common approach to managing MOAH in food**
- EU Member States to take action e.g. withdraw, and if necessary, recall products where they detected levels of MOAH in food > Limit of Quantification (LOQ)



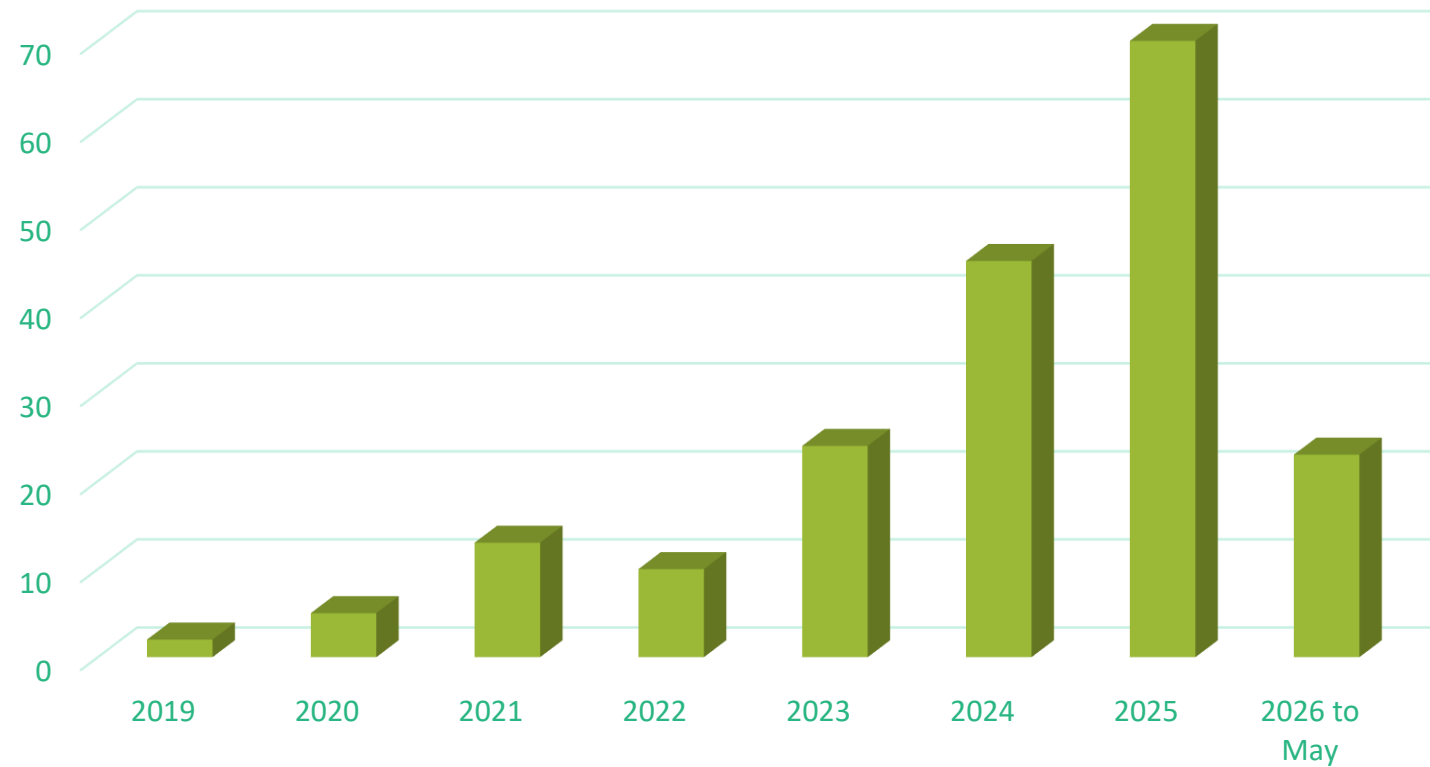
- **0.5 mg/kg** for dry foods with a low fat/oil content ($\leq 4\%$ fat/oil)
- **1 mg/kg** for foods with a higher fat/oil content ($> 4\%$ fat/oil, $\leq 50\%$ fat/oil)
- **2 mg/kg** for fats/oils or foods with $> 50\%$ fat/oil

*Article 14 of General Food Law (Regulation [178/2002](#))

* * Statements of the Standing Committee Plants, Animals, Food and Feed ([June 2020](#), [April 2022](#), [October 2022](#))

Controls of products for mineral oil contamination

Number of RASFF notifications (all foods) on MOH
(2020 - 2026)

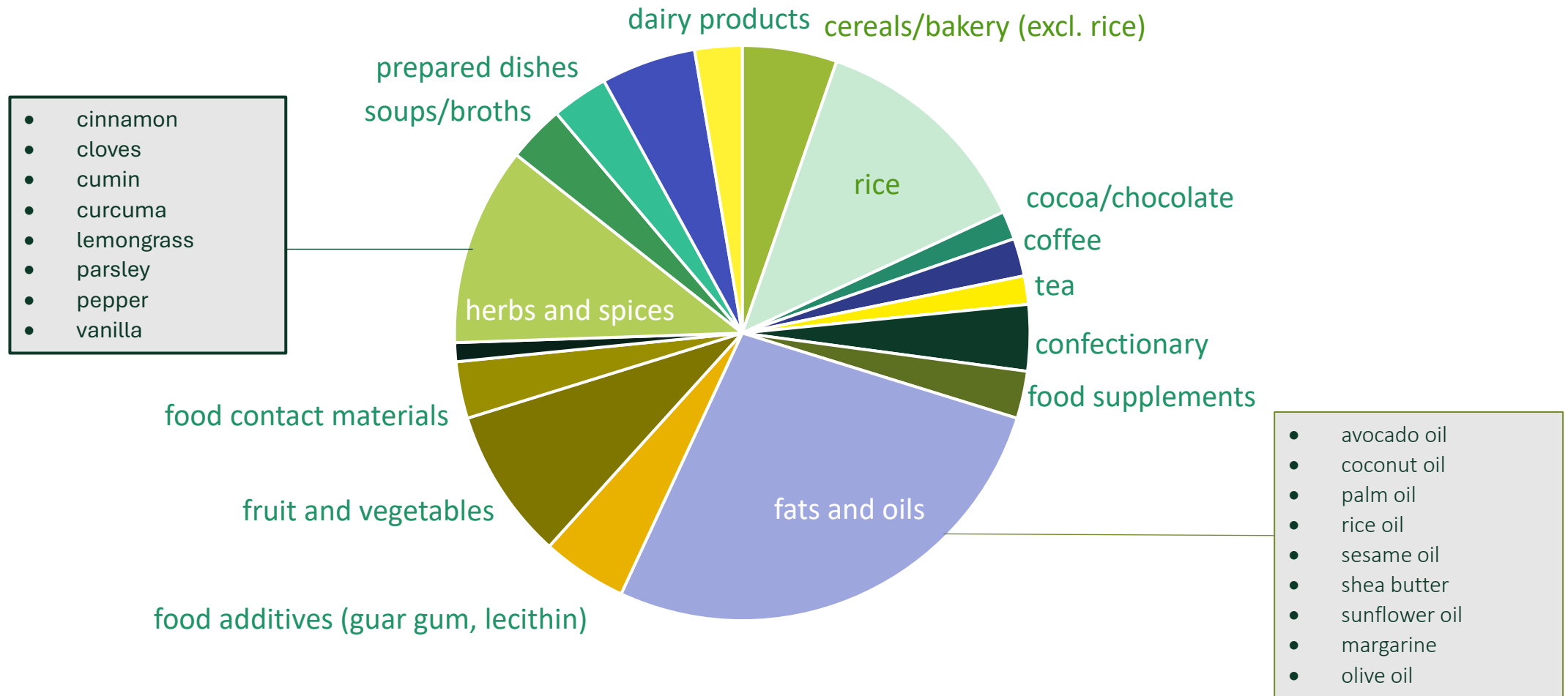


Increase in
controls and
findings of
MOH

Source: Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed

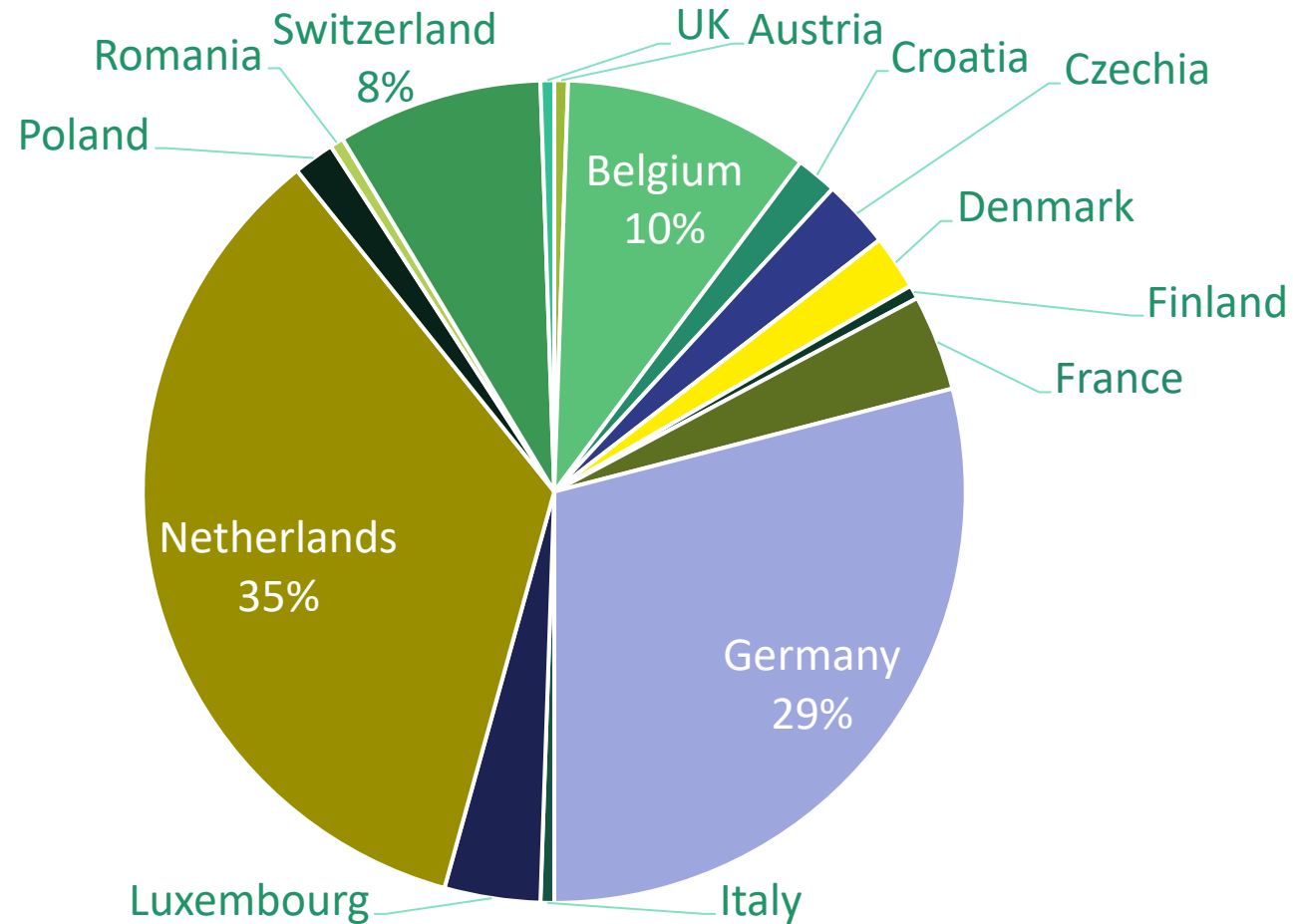
In which products have MOH been found?

Products that have been subject to RASFF notifications 2019-2026



Which countries have reported MOH findings?

Countries reporting
RASFF notifications
on MOH
2020-2026



02.

SETTING MOAH MAXIMUM LEVELS

Approach to setting maximum levels (MLs)

Basic principle:

- MLs set 'As Low As Reasonably Achievable' (ALARA)
- **MLs for MOAH:** when following good practices MOAH in food can be avoided → MLs at limit of quantification (LOQ)

Taking into consideration:

- Concentrations below the LOQ not currently possible for all foods
- LOQs may be higher for certain products than others due to specific analytical complexities

LOQ MLs from January 2027

- oilseeds and oil fruits
- certain fats and oils
- tree nuts and pulses
- cereal grains and derived products
- milk and dairy products
- cocoa mass/cocoa powder
- foods for infants/young children

Food additives: MLs apply taking into account a processing factor

MLs higher than LOQ from January 2027 & ML reduction timelines

- certain vegetable fats and oils
- spices, dried herbs, dry tea/herbal infusions used as ingredients in food, dry instant tea/herbal infusions
- food supplements

Certain MLs only apply from a later date

- cocoa beans (1 January 2030)
- oils destined for further refining and labelled as such (1 January 2030)
- olive pomace oil and refined olive pomace oil (1 March 2028), other olive oils (1 March 2027)

LOQ MLs from January 2027: Milk and dairy products

Category	Product		ML (mg/kg)
5.5.6	Milk		0.50
5.5.2.1	Dairy butter and fat		2.0
5.5.7	Other dairy products	< 4% fat/oil content	0.50
		≥ 4% and ≤ 50% fat/oil content	1.0
		> 50% fat/oil content	2.0

Cocoa butter
not dairy
product; ML for
'other oils and
fats' applies

MLs at the LOQ from January 2027: Cereals

Cereal grains including rice (raw materials)

0.50 mg/kg from 01/01/2027

- ❑ “Derived products” = products containing > 80% cereals (not including oils derived from cereals). The MLs are, for those containing fat/oil content:
 - < 4% : 0.50 mg/kg from 01/01/2027
 - $\geq 4\%$ and $\leq 50\%$: 1.0 mg/kg from 01/01/2027
- ❑ MLs not applicable to cereals used for beer production, if residue not sold as food. If residue is sold as food, the cereal grain ML of 0.50 mg/kg applies, taking into account processing factors



MLs at the LOQ from January 2027: Foods for infants/young children

Category	Product		ML (mg/kg)
5.5.7	• Infant formulae • Follow-on formulae • Young-child formulae • Food for special medical purposes intended for infants and young children • Baby food • Processed cereal-based food for infants and young children(• Drinks for infants and young children	< 4% fat/oil content	0.50
		$\geq 4\%$ and $\leq 50\%$ fat/oil content	1.0
		> 50% fat/oil content	2.0





MLs from January 2027: Food additives

- ❑ Producers of food additives must ensure that, if they are using raw materials for which MOAH MLs are set, the raw material is compliant with those MLs. When food additives produced from:
 - **oil or fats**, raw material must comply with MLs for that specific oil as sold to the final consumer or used as a food ingredient
 - other foods with MLs, the raw material must comply with the relevant ML
- ❑ The ML for the food additive can be calculated, taking into account a processing factor.

MLs at the LOQ from January 2027: Others

Category	Product		ML (mg/kg)
5.5.1	Oilseeds and oil fruits		2.0
5.5.3	Tree nuts		2.0
5.5.4	Pulses		0.50
5.5.8	Cocoa products (not beans)	Cocoa mass	2.0
		Cocoa powder (including fat reduced)	1.0



MLs >LOQ in January 2027 & ML reduction timelines

Vegetable fats and oils

General approach

- ❑ Capacity for industry to comply with LOQ by January 2027 can vary depending on the type of oil
 - ❑ For certain oils, MLs are set at a level higher than the LOQ in January 2027 with a gradual reduction over time and MLs at the LOQ applying in 2030
 - ❑ These MLs apply to oils sold to the consumer and “used as an ingredient in food”, for example, used by the food industry without further refining of the oil. Oils for refining and labelled as such are exempted until 31 December 2029
 - ❑ MOAH presence can be reduced to a certain extent during refining, however the most toxic MOAH fractions are not removed
 - ❑ Applying MLs to crude oils in 2027 might compromise supply of certain oils to the EU. Therefore MLs, set at the LOQ, will only apply to crude oils from 2030
 - ❑ This allows time for the industry to adapt
- 

MLs for vegetable and animal fats and oils

Category	Type of oil	ML (mg/kg) from January 1 (or March 1)		
		2027	2028 (2029)	2030
5.5.2.1.1	Maize, rapeseed, sunflower, soybean and linseed	2.0		
5.5.2.2.1	Groundnut, sesame, coconut, cereal germ and cereal bran	6.0	4.0	2.0
5.5.2.3.1	Grape seed, cotton seed, blackcurrant seed and argan	10.0	5.0	2.0
5.5.2.4	Olive pomace oil ⁽⁷⁾ and refined olive pomace oil ⁽⁷⁾		10.0 (01/03/2028) 5.0 (01/03/ 2029)	2.0 (01/01/2030)
5.5.2.6	Other olive oils*	4.0 (01/03/2027)	2.0 (01/01/2028)	
5.5.2.5	Fish and other marine organisms and algae	10.0		5.0
5.5.2.7	Other fats/oils**	4.0	2.0	

* other than lampante and crude olive pomace oil ** other than essential oils, lampante and crude olive pomace oil



MLs >LOQ in Jan. 2027 & reduction timelines

Spices, Herbs, Teas, Herbal infusions and Food Supplements

Spices, Herbs, Teas and Herbal Infusions

- ❑ Spices, dried herbs, dry tea and dry herbal infusions that are used as an ingredient in food, dry instant tea and dry instant herbal infusions
 - 10.0 mg/kg from 01/01/27
 - 5.0 mg/kg from 01/01/30

- ❑ No ML for tea for use in aqueous brews, as MOAH do not transfer to the brew

Food supplements

- 10.0 mg/kg from 01/01/2027
- 5.0 mg/kg from 01/01/2030

MLs from a later date: Oils destined for further refining

Category	Type of oil	ML (mg/kg)
5.5.2.1.1	Maize, rapeseed, sunflower, soybean linseed	2.0 from 1 January 2030
5.5.2.2.1	Groundnut, sesame, coconut, cereal germ and cereal bran	
5.5.2.3.1	Grape seed, cotton seed, blackcurrant seed and argan	
5.5.2.4	Olive pomace oil and refined olive pomace oil	
5.5.2.6	Other olive oils other than lampante and crude olive pomace oil	
5.5.2.7	Other oils	
5.5.2.5	Fish and other marine organisms and algae	5.0 from 1 January 2030

Only from 1 January 2030
MLs apply for oils:

- ☐ destined for further refining and
- ☐ labelled as destined for further refining



MLs from a later date: olive oils and cocoa beans

Olive oils:

- ☐ 1 March 2028 for olive pomace oil and refined olive pomace oil
- ☐ 1 March 2027 for other olive oils
- ☐ No MLs are set for crude olive pomace oil and lampante

Cocoa beans

- ☐ ML of 2.0 mg/kg to apply from 1 January, 2030, to give third countries more time to implement mitigation measures, such as the use of vegetable oil treated jute bags instead of mineral oil treated ones.
 - ☐ As the MLs for cocoa mass and cocoa powder apply from 1 January 2027, these MLs will also apply to chocolate and confectionary, taking into account a processing factor.
- 

Processed & compound foods – products derived from certain fats and oils

From 1 January
2028

- ❑ ML of 2.0 mg/kg to apply from 1 January, 2028, for products containing > 50% fat/oil content and only containing the following oils/fats

5.5.2.1	Maize, rapeseed, sunflower, soybean, linseed and dairy butter
5.5.2.6	“Other” olive oils (not olive pomace oil and refined olive pomace oil)
5.5.2.7	Other: for example palm oil, walnut oil hemp seed oil, ... (NOT groundnut, sesame, coconut, cereal germ and cereal bran, grape seed, cotton seed, blackcurrant seed and argan, fish and other marine organisms and algae)

Processed & compound foods - all

From 1 January
2030

- ❑ ML depends on the fat/oil content of the **total** product
- ❑ Where a food product contains ingredients for which MOAH MLs are set, the ML for the **whole** food depends on the fat/oil content:
 - < 4% fat/oil content: 0.50 mg/kg
 - $\geq 4\%$ and $\leq 50\%$ fat/oil content: 1.0 mg/kg
 - > 50% fat/oil content: 2.0 mg/kg
- ❑ During controls, the labelled fat/oil content will be the reference point for competent authorities, or if not labelled, the fat content will be determined by competent authorities

Processed & compound foods

From 1 January
2027 -31 December
2029

- ❑ Where no specific ML is set, the applicable ML must take into account*:
 - changes in the MOAH concentration resulting from drying, diluting or other processing
 - the proportion of the ingredients in product
 - the LOQ (ML cannot be below the LOQ)

Compound foods: example

If a food contains multiple ingredients, some with and some without MLs, the compound food's ML depends on the quantities of ingredients e.g. grilled paprika

Product	Maximum level (mg/kg)	Maximum level x proportion of the ingredient (mg/kg)
Sunflower oil (20%)	2.0	0.40
Paprikas (80%)	No maximum level set	0

As the LOQ for a product with 20% fat content is 1.0 mg/kg, and $0.40 < 1$ the ML for grilled paprikas would be **1.0 mg/kg**

Further examples are provided in the Annex to the Commission's [FAQ on MOH](#)

03.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MONITORING MOAH & MOSH



Monitoring recommendations for MOAH and MOSH

- ❑ For some foods, insufficient data available to set MOAH maximum levels.
- ❑ For MOSH, while no health concerns today, the margin for safe exposure is limited. Further measures required to prevent an increase in MOSH
- ❑ Need to collect further data on MOSH and MOAH through monitoring.
- ❑ This requires collaboration between competent authorities and food business operators during the period 2026 – 2029
- ❑ Monitoring includes processed and compound foods: typically higher levels of contamination than raw materials; need to be included in monitoring



The MOAH/MOSH monitoring process

- ❑ For MOSH and MOAH for foods without maximum levels, indicative levels (ILs) are recommended. When indicative levels are exceeded:
 - source of contamination should be investigated
 - **but** food may still be placed on the market
 - Member States retain the right to not allow products on the market if the levels of MOSH and MOAH are very high, following a national risk assessment*

*on the basis of Article 14 of General Food Law (Regulation [178/2002](#))

Which foods should be monitored for MOAH?

Food	Indicative level (mg/kg)
• coffee beans, instant coffee (dried products) • cereal grains used for the production of beer or distillates	1
• processed fruits and vegetables, processed meat and offal • processed fish and other seafood, processed eggs • animal and vegetable based fats and oils destined for further refining	2
• tea and herbal infusions (other than instant or ingredients for use in food)	5
• essential oils	10

Which foods should be monitored for MOSH? (1)

Food	Indicative level (mg/kg)
• Oils: olive pomace oil, grapeseed, blackcurrant seed, cottonseed, cereal germ, safflower, essential/fish/marine organisms/algae • Products derived from these fats and oils	50
• Oils: Linseed, maize, rapeseed, sunflower, soybean • Products derived from these fats and oils • Cocoa butter • Spices • Dried herbs, tea (dried products), herbal infusions (dried products) • Food supplements	15
• Other animal and vegetable fats/oils • Products derived from these fats/oils	30

Which foods should be monitored for MOSH? (2)

Food	Indicative level (mg/kg)
• Cocoa beans, cocoa and chocolate products other than cocoa butter, confectionary other than cocoa and chocolate products • Processed meat and offal • Processed fish and other seafood, processed eggs:	10
• Oilseeds, oil fruits • Tree nuts • Pulses • Cereal grains, cereal based foods • Milk, dairy, eggs • Coffee beans • Dry food for infants and young children and bayfood • Processed fruit and vegetables,	5
• Liquid formulae and drinks for infants and young children	1

Should ILs be calculated for processed/compound foods?

ILs **should** be calculated for:

- MOAH in processed and compound foods that **only** contain ingredients without MOAH MLs (e.g. processed fruit/vegetables, processed meat/offal, processed fish/seafood, processed eggs).
- MOSH in processed and compound foods for which no specific IL is set.

ILs **should** not be calculated for:

- MOAH in compound foods that contain ingredients with MOAH MLs: MLs should be calculated not ILs

04.

NEXT STEPS

EU MOAH maximum levels: next steps

Target timeframe





QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



Thank you

Follow-up questions can be sent to agrinfo@colead.link

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