



MINISTÈRE
DE L'AGRICULTURE
ET DE L'ALIMENTATION

*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*

HEALTH MONITORING OF ANIMAL AND PLANT PRODUCTS



2019 Overview
Monitoring
and control plans

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MONITORING AND CONTROL PLANS: WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES?

WHAT ARE THEIR ROLES IN THE FOOD SAFETY SYSTEM?

The General Directorate for Food (DGAL) applies two types of verification to ensure food safety for the public throughout the food supply chain:

1 controls of production facilities and food distributors, in order to ensure that their operations comply with regulations (good hygiene practice, product self-monitoring, etc);

2 controls of products (French and imported), based on product sampling programmes called “monitoring plans” and “control plans”.

Monitoring plans and control plans relate to two different, mutually complementary strategies. Using samples representative of production or consumption, monitoring plans provide an evaluation of consumers’ overall exposure to a given risk and thereby an identification of the measures needed to control that risk.

Where control plans are concerned, these relate to food products targeted as subject to an increased risk of contamination, thus providing an evaluation of the efficacy of the management measures applied.

The DGAL leads the PSpC programme and coordinates its implementation with the other competent government ministries⁽¹⁾.

IT ENSURES MONITORING FOR:

Contamination in primary animal production and food products of animal origin, both French and imported, at every stage in the food supply chain



Contamination in primary plant production (on farms)



Contamination of animal feed



WHAT ARE THE CONTAMINANTS?

Chemical contaminants, veterinary medicines such as antibiotics, banned substances such as chloramphenicol and metallic trace elements such as lead, organic pollutants as dioxins.

Biological contaminants, bacteria such as Salmonella, viruses such as hepatitis and toxins such as mycotoxins, parasites – echinococcus species for example.

Physical contaminants, radionuclides.

Such contaminants have confirmed or suspected damaging impacts on consumers’ health, leading to **short-term** (e.g.: foodborne outbreak with Salmonella) or **long-term** consequences (chronic toxicity resulting in cancer or endocrine disorders).

⁽¹⁾ General Directorate for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (Ministry of the Economy): fair and honest commercialisation of plant products when placed on the market. General Directorate for Health (French Ministry of Health): bottled water for human consumption.

MAIN RESULTS 2019

→ 17 monitoring and control plans were implemented in 2019 by the DGAL

Typical plans: detection of residues of veterinary medicines in farmed fish, Shiga Toxin-producing E. coli (STEC) in minced meat, histamine in fisheries products, plant protection product residues in plants and dioxins in livestock feed.

The majority of the **70,000 samples** in 2019 was related to primary production, and more particularly the **meat livestock sector**, which accounted for 69% of all samples (of which 62% were in the beef sector) and the **poultry sector**, which accounted for 13% of all samples.

Next came **fisheries products** – 6% of all samples.

THERE ARE THREE OBJECTIVES

- 1 Avoid the placing on markets of non-compliant products.
- 2 Identify poor practice in the application of plant protection products.
- 3 Improve knowledge of levels of contamination in plant production at harvest.

→ Targeted contaminants



In **animal production**, targeted contaminants are mainly **banned substances and growth promoters** (32% of all samples taken), such as animal constituents in feedingstuffs, chloramphenicol and steroids, plus **residues of veterinary medicines** (26%), e.g. antibiotics and anti-inflammatory drugs.

The targeting of **other chemical contaminants** (trace elements and persistent organic pollutants) and **biological contaminants** accounted respectively for 12% and 4% of all samples taken.

In 2019, antimicrobial resistance continued to be a major public health issue (15% of samples).



For **plant production**, monitoring and control plans related largely to efforts to detect **residues of plant protection products**. All in all, 1,122 samples were taken in 2019 in order to detect active substances not authorised at the stage of harvesting and to check plant compliance with the maximum residue levels permitted by regulations.

→ High compliance levels

In 2019, the vast majority of the **70,000 samples carried out were compliant** with the contamination limits laid down in EU regulations..



Where **animal production was concerned**, the compliance levels found in the plans were **high, between 98% and 100%**, with the exception of the plan for control of metallic trace elements residues in game products, for which non-compliant results were estimated at 8%,



In **plant production**, compliance level stood at **88% for the monitoring plan and at 93% for the control plan for plant protection product residues**. Non-compliance involved constitute exceeding of authorised maximum limits or the presence of substances not authorised for a given type of crop.

The data collected are used as input for **national and European risk assessment studies** in order to improve knowledge of consumer exposure to foodborne hazards. Where necessary, the data also allow changes to regulations, involving for example the implementation of specific regulations or consumer recommendations.

WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF APPLICATION?

Applied within the DGAL's official field of competence, the monitoring and control plans cover the whole of the food supply chain – following the “from farm to fork” principle – from initial produc-

tion to placing on the market. Sampling is also carried out at entry to the EU at border posts in order to check imported products' compliance with European requirements.

70 000
samples



13 M€
budget



1 600
officers deployed
across the country
and at its borders



WHAT STEPS ARE TAKEN FOR NON-COMPLIANCE?

Where results are non-compliant, officials take appropriate and proportionate steps such as:

- official reminder of the regulatory requirements (e.g. hygiene indicator microorganisms);
- withdrawal and/or recall of production batches (e.g. presence of *Listeria*);
- isolation of herds and herd production (e.g. for contamination with dioxins or metallic trace elements), slaughter (banned substances), crop destruction (plant protection product residues in plants);
- investigations to determine the reasons for non-compliance, with stringent offi-

cial compliance orders and the involvement of the French National Veterinary and Phytosanitary Investigation Unit (BNEVP) (for banned substances for example);

- implementation of specific regulations (setting maximum permitted residue levels, prefectural orders) and consumer recommendations (e.g. ANSES recommendation on the risk of mercury contamination in fish);
- intensified controls and application of safeguard measures in the event of detection of noncompliance in imported roductsproduits importés.

HOW ARE THE RESULTS USED?

Monitoring and control plans are key tools for protecting the public health and promoting French farm and agrifood exports.

The results are transmitted to :

- the European Commission, as evidence of the application of EU regulations in France concerning the sanitary monitoring of foodstuffs;
- the French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety (ANSES) and the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA), which use them to assess the level of risk exposure of the consumer at EU level. This is in turn used to establish and revise food safety control measures.