

Athens, 8th April 2013

PRESS RELEASE

Completion of the 1st Round of Controls regarding horse meat detection in food products containing bovine meat

EFET would like to inform consumers that, in the context of the No. 2013/99/EU Recommendation of the European Commission and following controls triggered by its own initiatives, in collaboration with the General Veterinary Directorate of the Ministry of Rural Development and Food and the competent food control authorities of the Prefectural Directorates within the country, the 1st Round of Controls for the detection of horse meat in food products containing bovine meat has been completed.

The results of the relevant controls are depicted, as following:

CONTROLS					
	FACILITY TYPE				
	<i>Meat processing facilities</i>	<i>CATERING</i>	<i>Importers</i>	<i>Retail trade</i>	<i>Food Service</i>
Number	176	26	63	70	14
Total Facilities inspected: 349					

In total, 288 samples have been sampled regarding various food categories according to the following table:

LABORATORY ANALYSES				
SAMPLE TYPE	ANALYSIS FOR HORSE DNA			
	<i>Number of Analyses</i>	<i>Negative results</i>	<i>Positive results</i>	<i>Analyses in progress</i>
<i>Raw material of bovine meat (e.g. meat, minced meat)</i>	62	60	2	0
<i>Final meat products (e.g. meat balls, soutzoukakia, burgers, kebab)</i>	226	191	34	1
Total:	288	251	36	1

With regard to the positive in horse DNA samples, which are further subject to analysis for the determination of the veterinary medicine phenylbutazone -although not foreseen by the Recommendation of the European Commission- but based on EFET own initiative, twenty four (24) results have been issued from the General Chemical State Laboratory, which were all negative in total. The following table is given:

LABORATORY ANALYSES				
SAMPLE TYPE	ANALYSES FOR PHENYLBUTAZONE			
	Number of Analyses	Negative results	Positive results	Analyses in progress
<i>Raw material of bovine meat (e.g.meat, minced meat)</i>	2	2	-	-
<i>Final meat products (e.g. meat balls, soutzoukakia, burgers, kebab)</i>	34	22	-	12
Total:	36	24	-	12

It is noted that a few number of samples, subject to controls resulting from consumers complaints, are still on going. Samples, falling under this category, include the two positive samples of the company "P. G. NIKAS AVEE" (in greek: "Π. Γ. Νίκας ΑΒΕΕ") referring to the "NIKAS Bovine" product type (in greek: "Νίκας Μοσχάρι"), which had already been recalled from the aforementioned company on a precautionary basis, following the issuance of relevant EFET's Press Release.

Additionally, EFET, through Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) and the mutual assistance between Member States has informed the implicated companies in order that relevant controls to be launched in European level. Relevant procedure regarding information to the European Commission of the totally results is in progress.

Conclusively, as an outcome of the whole inspector activity, it was found out that the countries of origin of the bovine raw material, responsible for the presence of horse DNA, were basically Romania and secondly Poland and Italy, while final products, which had been imported into our country had been produced in Latvia, France, Romania and the Netherlands.

For all batches of food products, which have been found positive in horse DNA and for the involved enterprises, relevant procedures are already followed with respect to what the European and National Legislation foresees, **both relating to administrative as well as to criminal consequences, for each referring food incident, one by one.**

We inform consumers' body that further detailed information with regard to the presence of horse meat in food products containing bovine meat, can be found in EFET's website (http://portal.efet.gr/portal/page/portal/efetnew/horse_meat_alert).