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# Questions and answers on the contamination of eggs with fipronil

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<https://fimportal.de/xzufi-services/211548508/L100038>

Modul	Sachverhalt
Leistungsschlüssel	99003050000000, 99003050000000
Leistungsbezeichnung I	Questions and answers on the contamination of eggs with fipronil
Leistungsbezeichnung II	Questions and answers on the contamination of eggs with fipronil
Typisierung	6 - Allgemeine Hinweise, nicht spezifische für eine Leistung
Quellredaktion	Thüringen
Freigabestatus Katalog	unbestimmter Freigabestatus
Freigabestatus Bibliothek	unbestimmter Freigabestatus
Begriffe im Kontext	
Leistungstyp	Leistungsobjekt
Leistungsgruppierung	Gesundheit (003)
Verrichtungskennung	
SDG-Informationsbereich	
Lagen Portalverbund	

Modul	Sachverhalt
Einheitlicher Ansprechpartner	Nein
Fachlich freigegeben am	04.08.2017
Fachlich freigegeben durch	BMEL, UAL 31
Handlungsgrundlage	
Teaser	
Volltext	<p>What is Fipronil?</p> <p>Fipronil is a pesticide. It is used against fleas, lice, ticks, cockroaches and mites, among others. It must not be used on food-producing animals (livestock).</p> <p>Fipronil is also approved in the EU as an active ingredient for plant protection products. However, no plant protection products containing fipronil are approved in Germany.</p> <p>Why are eggs contaminated with fipronil?</p> <p>In Belgium and the Netherlands, egg production farms were treated for pest control with a product contaminated with the insecticide fipronil.</p> <p>According to current knowledge, contaminated eggs from the Netherlands reached North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony and were further distributed via packing stations there. It is now known that contaminated eggs were delivered to all German states.</p> <p>The same company that used the contaminated treatment agent on Dutch farms also treated farms in Germany.</p> <p>How did fipronil get into the treatment agent?</p> <p>This question is currently being investigated by law enforcement agencies in Belgium and the Netherlands. The probable trigger is the preparation Dega-16, which is used to control vermin in poultry. It is suspected that</p>

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fipronil may have been illegally added to this product as part of the application process. Investigations by the competent authorities in Belgium and the Netherlands are still ongoing.

Which eggs are contaminated with fipronil?

Currently, there is information that eggs from the Netherlands and Germany are affected.

Information on the affected batch numbers and warnings from the German states can be found on the portal [www.lebensmittelwarnung.de](http://www.lebensmittelwarnung.de).

How can consumers tell which eggs are contaminated?

The responsible monitoring authorities are recalling the affected egg batches and informing the public about the batch numbers. Consumers can check whether an egg comes from a contaminated batch by looking at the stamp imprint on each egg.

More information:

[www.lebensmittelwarnung.de](http://www.lebensmittelwarnung.de)

What does the code on the egg mean?

Should consumers take the precaution of not eating eggs as a precaution?

According to the assessment of the responsible Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR), an acute health risk to the consumer groups under consideration, including children, is unlikely based on current data (as of August 5, 2017).

According to BfR, eggs can still be consumed in accordance with the consumption recommendation of the German Nutrition Society (DGE). The DGE recommends up to three eggs weekly, including processed eggs. These are guideline values for adults.

What effects can fipronil generally have on human health?

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According to the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, fipronil is acutely toxic in animal studies when swallowed, inhaled or absorbed through the skin. The substance is not classified as a skin or eye irritant and does not cause allergic skin reactions.

In animal studies on rats, mice, dogs and rabbits, fipronil has a toxic effect on the nervous system, although these effects diminish in adult animals when there is no longer exposure to the substance. In rats, adverse effects on the nervous system are observed in the offspring in a dose-dependent manner when the dams have ingested the substance.

In addition, adverse effects on the liver are observed in rats and mice. Fipronil is not classified as mutagenic or carcinogenic according to current scientific knowledge.

How many eggs can be consumed without exceeding the health guidance value (acute reference dose)?

The health guidance value is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the amount of substance per kg of body weight that can be ingested through food in one meal or within one day without any apparent risk to the consumer.

In the case of fipronil, the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment has calculated the following example: At the highest level of 1.2 mg fipronil/kg egg measured to date in Belgium (not in Germany), a child with a body weight of 16.15 kg can eat 1.7 eggs (with an egg weight of 70 g) in one day (once or within 24 hours), purely mathematically speaking, without exceeding the health guideline value. An adult of 65 kg body weight can therefore eat seven eggs in one day (once or within 24 hours) without exceeding the health guideline value. As long as the estimated maximum intake remains below this value, a health hazard is unlikely. A child with a body weight of 10 kg, which corresponds to an age of about one year, can therefore eat one egg per day (once or within 24 hours) without exceeding the health guideline value.

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Is there a health risk for pregnant women and the unborn child?

According to the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, the health guideline value also includes sensitive population groups such as pregnant women.

What happens if I have already eaten contaminated eggs?

According to the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, exceeding the health guidance value does not necessarily mean a concrete health risk, but merely indicates the possibility of a health risk for consumers.

The safety factor between the highest dose in animal studies, where no significant adverse health findings were observed, and the health guidance value for humans is 100 for fipronil. This means that the dose that did not lead to any adverse health effects in animal studies was divided by 100 to obtain an appropriate safety margin for transfer to humans.

Have eggs been tested for fipronil in the past?

Since 2010, 280,893 test results on residues of fipronil have been submitted to the BVL by the competent state authorities. In 338 cases, fipronil was detected in plant foods. Fipronil is also an active ingredient in plant protection products. Among the test results from animal foods were 171 results from eggs and egg products. Fipronil residues were not detected in any of the animal foods. In 2015, there was monitoring for fipronil in 29 chicken eggs. Fipronil was not detected in any of the samples. Feedstuffs were also inconspicuous with regard to fipronil in the investigation period from 2011 to 2016.

Are processed foods also affected?

According to current knowledge, contaminated eggs have also been delivered to processing companies. The monitoring authorities in the German states are therefore also focusing their investigations on processed foods, and some products have since been

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recalled.

Does the fipronil content change when the contaminated eggs are processed?

According to current knowledge, fipronil is not degraded by cooking or frying (up to 120 °C for 20 minutes). Therefore, processed products are currently assumed to contain the same levels of fipronil as unprocessed eggs.

Eggs are used in the production of a wide variety of foods. The egg content in different foods varies. In this context, the concentration of fipronil can be assumed to be diluted in foods manufactured with the addition of eggs.

What are the authorities doing to protect consumers?

The responsible monitoring authorities in the federal states are recalling contaminated egg batches and informing the public on their own websites and on the portal [www.lebensmittelwarnung.de](http://www.lebensmittelwarnung.de).

A situation center has been set up at the Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety, where information from the federal states and the European Rapid Alert System RASFF is collated and evaluated.

Via the rapid alert system, the authorities of the member states exchange information on foodstuffs that pose a health risk and are not marketable.

For more information on the cooperation between federal and state authorities, see the brochure "Understanding Food Safety."

Should consumers report to authorities where and when they purchased eggs with a listed batch number?

No, this is not necessary.

What should consumers do if they have purchased contaminated eggs?

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Affected batches should either be returned to retailers or disposed of in household waste.

If a federal state has recalled an egg batch, does the recall automatically apply to Germany as a whole? as a whole?

If the product numbers (stamp imprint on the egg) match, the eggs should be returned or disposed of, regardless of the federal state in which they were purchased.

Will all laying hen farms in Germany now be tested for fipronil?

The monitoring authorities of the federal states are focusing their investigations on egg deliveries from those farms where the agent contaminated with fipronil may have been used. In addition, random samples of eggs from other farms are also tested.

Further information

- Information on egg contamination with fipronil
- Understanding food safety - facts and background (PDF, 4 MB, barrier-free)
- What does the code on the egg mean?

Information from the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment

- Health assessment of initial analytical results on fipronil levels in foodstuffs in Germany
- Health assessment of individual data on fipronil levels in food of animal origin detected in Belgium
- Questions and answers on fipronil levels in food of animal origin

## Erforderliche Unterlagen

## Voraussetzungen

## Kosten

## Verfahrensablauf

Modul	Sachverhalt
Bearbeitungsdauer	
Frist	
weiterführende Informationen	<a href="https://www.bmel.de/DE/Tier/Tiergesundheit/_texte/Fipronil-FAQ.html">https://www.bmel.de/DE/Tier/Tiergesundheit/_texte/Fipronil-FAQ.html</a> <a href="https://www.bmel.de/DE/Tier/Tiergesundheit/_texte/Fipronil.html;jses">https://www.bmel.de/DE/Tier/Tiergesundheit/_texte/Fipronil.html;jses</a> <a href="https://www.bmel.de/DE/Tier/Tiergesundheit/_texte/Fipronil-FAQ.html">https://www.bmel.de/DE/Tier/Tiergesundheit/_texte/Fipronil-FAQ.html</a> <a href="https://www.bmel.de/DE/Tier/Tiergesundheit/_texte/Fipronil.html;jses">https://www.bmel.de/DE/Tier/Tiergesundheit/_texte/Fipronil.html;jses</a>
Hinweise	
Rechtsbehelf	
Kurztext	<p>The biocide fipronil has been detected in eggs from Belgium and the Netherlands. At least ten million contaminated eggs from the Netherlands have been delivered to Germany, some of which have been sold. Meanwhile, fipronil has also been detected in eggs from Lower Saxony, with four farms affected so far. The responsible food monitoring authorities in the federal states have recalled the contaminated egg batches. In addition, there are first recalls of products in which contaminated eggs have been processed.</p>
Ansprechpunkt	
Zuständige Stelle	
Formulare	
Ursprungsportal	<p>Fragen und Antworten zur Verunreinigung von Eiern mit Fipronil, Questions and answers on the contamination of eggs with fipronil</p>