

Inspection of food: monitoring of substances and residues in live animals and meat

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This Commission staff working paper concerns the implementation of national residue monitoring plans in the Member States in 2001. In accordance with Directive 96/23/EC, the Commission shall report to Member States within the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health on the outcome of the checks carried out in particular on the implementation of the national plans and on the developments in the situation in the various regions of the Community. The aim of this report is to summarise the results of national residue monitoring plans during the year 2001 in the Member States. Member States are also requested to provide information on actions taken at regional and national level in response to the report. Moreover, in accordance with Article 8 of Directive 96/23/EC, the Member States were requested as a follow-up to provide information on actions taken at regional and national level. The objective is to provide an overview of actions taken as a consequence of positive results for residues of non authorised substances or when maximum residue limits (MRLs) established in EU legislation are exceeded. In order to collect information on action taken as a consequence of positive results, the Commission sent a questionnaire to the Member States. The responses of the Member States are summarised under the three headings below: - Subsequent sampling as suspects. In summary, this means that the terms "suspect sample" apply to a sample taken as a consequence of : positive results and/or suspicion of an illegal treatment at any stage of the food chain and/or suspicion of non compliance with the withdrawal period for an authorised veterinary medicinal product; - Modifications of the national plan for 2002 and 2003. The national residue monitoring plan aims at detecting illegal treatment of food producing animals, controlling compliance with the maximum residue limits for veterinary medicinal products, the maximum residue levels for pesticides and the maximum levels for environmental contaminants. Positive results for a specific substance/group of substances or a specific food commodity should result in intensified controls for this substance/group or food commodity in the plan for the following year. The document summarises the changes introduced by some Member States for the 2002 plan; - Other actions are foreseen in Directive 96/23/EC such as blocking of farms, intensification of checks, fines, etc. The responses of the Member States in relation to this type of actions are as follows : investigations in the farm of origin: verification of records, additional sampling; animals held in the farm as a consequence of positive findings; animals slaughtered in case of confirmation of illegal treatment; farms subject to intensified checks after positive results; carcasses impounded at the slaughterhouse; carcasses and products declared unfit for human consumption; administrative measures; criminal penalties; denial of the opportunity of receiving or applying for Community aid for a period of 12 months.