anses
French agency for food, environmental and occupational health & safety

Press file

Launching of a national nutritional vigilance scheme

9 December 2010

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Contents:

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Press release

A new health & safety scheme for nutritional vigilance

The French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES) today launched a nutritional vigilance scheme for novel foods, fortified foods, food supplements and foodstuffs intended for specific diets. The scheme will enable authorities to identify possible adverse effects related to their consumption and to undertake targeted expert appraisals. The review of the pilot phase launched in 2009 on food supplements confirmed that the vigilance scheme did indeed improve consumer protection.

Over the last few decades, significant progress has been made in food health and safety, particularly in the field of microbiology, through the introduction of widespread hygiene measures and the efforts of all those involved in the food production and distribution chain.

However, the foods available to consumers are evolving rapidly with products which are referred to as "novel" due to the technology used to make them or to their ingredients, i.e. fortified foods and beverages, imported products or those purchased *via* the Internet. These new products might expose consumers to new hazards which authorities must be able to identify promptly.

This is the purpose of the French nutritional vigilance scheme, the only one of its kind in Europe, whose implementation has been entrusted to ANSES by the French Act on Regional Health Governance (*Loi Hôpital, Patients, Santé et Territoires - 2009*), as part of the Agency's overall health and safety mission[1].

The new scheme covers food supplements, beverages and foods to which substances have been added for nutritional or physiological purposes, also known as fortified foods, as well as products intended for particular diets and novel foods.
The scheme will be coordinated by health professionals since they will be examining their patients and then declaring any possible adverse effects related to consumption of these new types of foods and beverages.

The declarations will be analysed by a technical committee and discussed with the manufacturers concerned as well as the supervising ministries in order to identify risk

[1] According to the HPST Act : "The implementation of the vigilance scheme concerns novel foods, food supplements, foods to which substances have been added for nutritional or physiological purposes as well as products intended for particular diets".

situations which may then be subjected to collective expert assessment and lead to the publication of formal opinions.
This innovative system will involve many stakeholders.
Networking will be used to exchange knowledge with Canada and the United States which have fairly similar systems.

A pilot phase, limited to food supplements, was undertaken in 2009 and a recent review confirmed the effectiveness of the system.
Following 10 declarations of adverse effects, some of which were quite severe, involving a range of products containing alcoholic extracts of yams, ANSES recommended that the extracts' chemical make-up, composition and toxicity be examined as quickly as possible by the manufacturers who market them.
Eight cases of confusion between a drug named *previscan®*, and a food supplement called *preservision®* have led to recommendations being published on the Agency's site, while 10 other declarations have also led to the issuing of Opinions.

This first pilot phase demonstrated the usefulness of such a scheme in making public authorities, manufacturers and consumers aware of adverse effects, some serious as well as unforeseen, although the number of cases was proportionately low in comparison to the overall consumption of food supplements in France. Extension of the scheme will make it possible to reinforce consumer protection.

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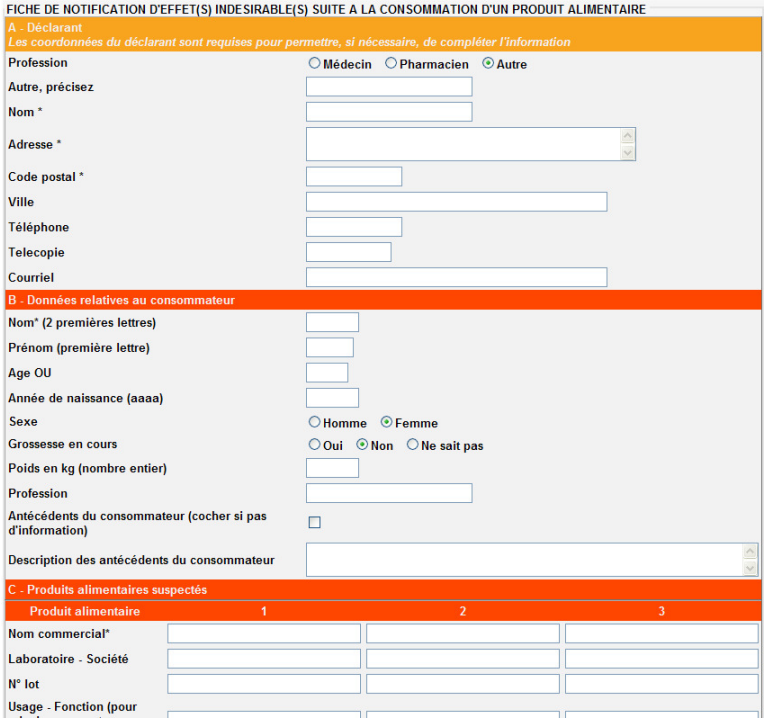
1 - The French nutritional vigilance scheme, the first of its kind in Europe

Implementation of the national nutritional vigilance scheme was entrusted to the Agency in July 2009 by the French Act on Regional Health Governance.
The purpose of this system is to improve consumer safety by rapidly identifying any possible adverse effects[2] related to consumption:

- of food supplements;
- of foods or beverages fortified with substances for nutritional or physiological purposes (vitamins, minerals, amino acids, plant extracts, etc);
- novel foods and novel ingredients;
- products intended as food for specific categories of the population (infants, athletes, patients suffering from food intolerances, etc.)

The national nutritional vigilance scheme is a new addition to the French public health system. It is being implemented due to the emergence on the market of novel foods and ingredients not traditionally found in Europe, related to the globalisation of exchanges and new patterns of consumption. In particular we should note the significant increase in consumption of diet or food supplements and fortified beverages.

A pilot vigilance phase targeting food supplements, which has been undertaken since September 2009, has confirmed the usefulness of the monitoring scheme.


FICHE DE NOTIFICATION D'EFFET(S) INDESIRABLE(S) SUITE A LA CONSOMMATION D'UN PRODUIT ALIMENTAIRE

A - Déclarant

Les coordonnées du déclarant sont requises pour permettre, si nécessaire, de compléter l'information

Profession ○ Médecin ○ Pharmacien ◉ Autre

Autre, précisez

Nom *

Adresse *

Code postal *

Ville

Téléphone

Telecopie

Courriel

B - Données relatives au consommateur

Nom* (2 premières lettres)

Prénom (première lettre)

Age OU

Année de naissance (aaaa)

Sexe ○ Homme ◉ Femme

Grossesse en cours ○ Oui ◉ Non ○ Ne sait pas

Poids en kg (nombre entier)

Profession

Antécédents du consommateur (cocher si pas d'information) ☐

Description des antécédents du consommateur

C - Produits alimentaires suspectés

Produit alimentaire	1	2	3
Nom commercial*			
Laboratoire - Société			
N° lot			
Usage - Fonction (pour			

How the scheme works

- **Who makes the declarations?**
  Health professionals (doctors, pharmacists, dietitians, etc.) who can identify the adverse effects on their patients.
  Individuals who wish to make a declaration on their own behalf are invited to contact a health professional who can file for them.

- **Where should the declaration be made?**
  On the **ANSES Internet site** by filling out the **on-line form**. Online declaration is a **quick and reliable** way of informing the authorities of a nutritional vigilance problem.
  It is also possible to download a declaration form and to send the completed form to ANSES by e-mail, fax or post.

[2] An adverse effect is a harmful reaction occurring under normal conditions of use or resulting from misuse.

The nutritional vigilance organisation

The system is managed by a nutritional vigilance unit at ANSES which coordinates:

- **a steering committee** (decision no. 2010-08-050) responsible for defining missions, policy orientations and major principles for organising vigilance.
  It consists of:
  - the Directorate General for Health (DGS),
  - the Directorate General for Competition, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF),
  - the Directorate General for Food (DGAL),
  - ANSES.

- **a technical committee** (decision no. 2010/03/133) which contributes to the vigilance system by analysing declarations of adverse effects. It consists of:
  - ANSES,
  - the French Anti-Doping Agency (AFLD),
  - the French Health Products Safety Agency (AFSSAPS),
  - the Toxicant and Poison Control Centres (CAP-TV)
  - the French Institute for Public Health Surveillance (InVS).

The technical committee can request help from one or more experts and from the DGS, DGAL and DGCCRF as needed.
In accordance with the Consumer Code, products which are marketed "must offer the level of safety which consumers are legitimately entitled to expect and must not affect the health of people under normal conditions of use or under other conditions which health professionals might reasonably foresee". If "producers or distributors are aware that products which they have put on the market do not meet these conditions, then they must inform the competent authorities". In this way manufacturers and distributors take part in the nutritional vigilance scheme and may themselves declare hazards.

How are declarations processed?

All declarations registered by ANSES fully ensure consumer anonymity. Declarations are then analysed by the nutritional vigilance unit (to determine the seriousness of the incident, the product's composition, concordance with previous declarations, etc.) and are then submitted to a technical committee for more thorough analysis in order to determine whether the product is responsible for the occurrence of the adverse effect.

Based on the work done by the technical committee, ANSES may decide to appoint experts to investigate the subject more thoroughly, including whether the hazard is related to the composition of the product in question. Working closely with the DGCCRF, ANSES may ask the manufacturer for complementary information on the composition of the product and on the way in which the raw materials were procured and processed.

The conclusions of this expert appraisal are then discussed by the technical committee before being submitted to the Ministriess concerned to enable them to implement suitable measures.

Determining a causal relationship

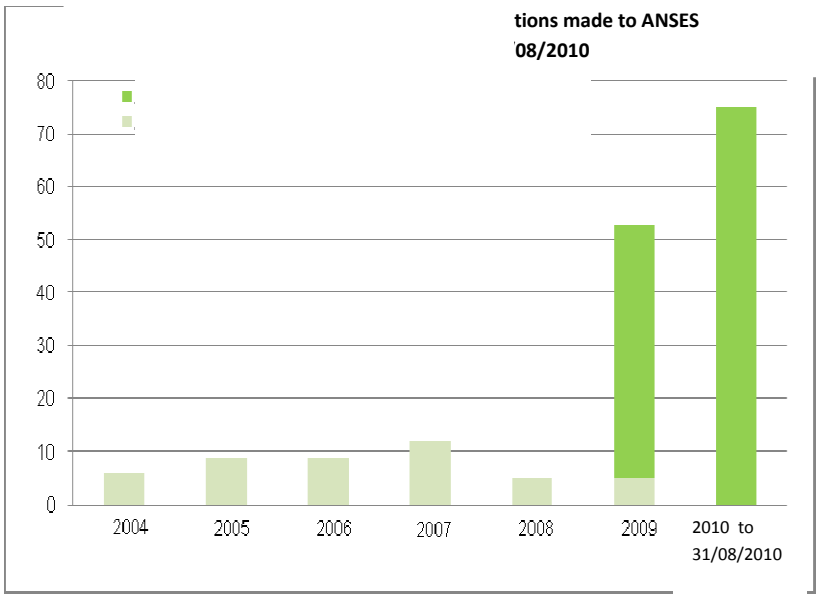
This involves assessing as objectively as possible and in a reproducible way whether the consumption of a product is responsible for the occurrence of an adverse effect. Just as for pharmacovigilance and cosmetics vigilance, ANSES is developing a procedure for determining the specific cause of a nutritional vigilance incident. An expert committee will soon finalise this procedure, derived from the method used for pharmacovigilance.

2 - Review of the pilot phase for food supplements

In July 2009, the French Act on Regional Health Governance entrusted AFSSA with "the implementation of the vigilance system for novel foods, food supplements, foods to which substances have been added for nutritional or physiological purposes and products intended for particular nutritional uses". The Agency began this mission in September 2009 with a pilot phase on food supplements.

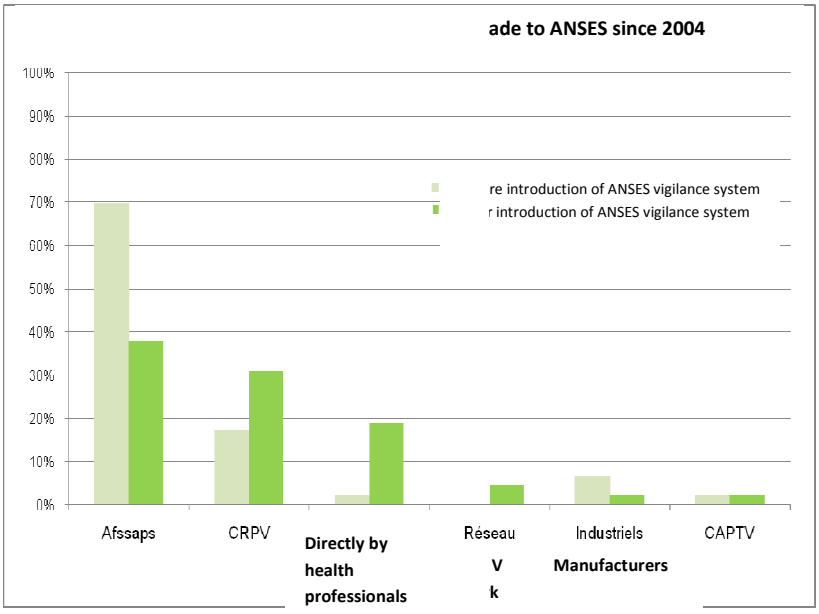
An increasing number of declarations

By 31 August 2010, 169 declarations of adverse effects had been recorded in the nutritional vigilance data base. This set includes 49 declarations made before the system was set up and 123 declarations received since the beginning of the pilot phase, 75 of which have been made since January 2010. Thus, since the system was introduced, the number of declarations made to the Agency has continued to increase. These are declarations made at the time the adverse effect was observed by the health professional but also declarations made previously by other vigilance systems; their retroactive transmission to ANSES will facilitate a global analysis by the nutritional vigilance system.



Satisfactory identification by health professionals

The declarations received by the Agency may come from data transferred by AFSSAPS, but also from various networks of health professionals or general practitioners, or pharmacists, among others.



Since the introduction of the system, the proportion of declarations sent by the French Health Products Safety Agency (AFSSAPS) has been dropping in relation to direct declarations (25 in all) made by pharmacovigilance or toxicant vigilance centres run by health professionals (independent general practitioners, pharmacists), the allergy vigilance network and manufacturers. The vigilance system for food supplements has thus

clearly been acknowledged by health professionals as making a complementary contribution to the French vigilance system.

After a year of existence, two situations have led to work by the Agency

Out of the 170 declarations recorded by ANSES one year after the system began operating, two situations, accounting for about 20 declarations, justified action by the Agency.

- **Confusion between the name of a drug and a food supplement**

Since 2004, seven cases of erroneous supply of the drug, Préviscan®[3] instead of the food supplement, Préservision®[4], have been recorded by AFSSAPS. As a result of these supply errors, clinical symptoms (haemorrhages) resulted in hospitalisation or an extension of hospitalisation periods in five cases.

In July 2010, following an eighth case of confusion between these two products. ANSES, aware of the measures taken by AFSSAPS and the Ministry of Health, warned health professionals that they should take the greatest care possible during all stages of treatment, from prescription of products to their supply. AFSSAPS made a similar announcement.

- **Products containing yam extracts**

Eleven declarations of adverse effects were recorded by the vigilance system, including six cases of liver damage observed in patients who had consumed two types of food supplements from the same range of products,.

A review of these files by the nutritional vigilance technical committee and then by ANSES experts concluded that it was not possible to exclude a link between the adverse effects and consumption of the food supplements in 10 of the cases[5], six of which had led to hospitalisation. An analysis of the composition of the products revealed that there was a common ingredient in these food supplements, namely an alcoholic extract of yams. A collective expert appraisal of risks related to the substance was undertaken and led to an Opinion indicating that research was indispensable in order to define the chemical make-up of the yam roots, the composition of the extracts used and their toxicity. There are in fact many subspecies of yams and there is a need to ensure that the ingredients used do not contain subspecies which, in the form of an alcoholic extract, might turn out to be toxic. Thus, given the lack of such data, it is not possible to guarantee that these products are totally safe and ANSES recommends that the data be gathered as quickly as possible by manufacturers of products made of yam extract.

[3] Préviscan® is an anticoagulant drug prescribed for the preventative and curative treatment of thrombo-embolism incidents, and can only be prescribed by a medial practitioner.

[4] Préservision® is a food supplement for the eyes, and contains vitamins and mineral salts.

[5] 6 cases of liver damage, one case of acute pancreatitis, one case revealing a decrease in the frequency and volume of urination.

3 - Nutritional vigilance, a new component of the public health and safety system

Health and safety are based on a series of interlinked and complementary systems:

- **Regulations**

European legislation defines the hygiene and safety conditions to be followed at all stages of the food chain (Hygiene Packet) and the maximum levels for chemical pollutants (heavy metals, pesticide residues, PCBs, dioxin, etc.) or biological contaminants (bacteria, viruses, etc.) in foodstuffs in order to ensure the safety of consumers. Only foods which comply with the regulations can be marketed. With respect to food supplements, the regulations stipulate the drawing up of a list of substances which may be used for manufacturing them and the maximum concentrations which may be used. Some foods such as "novel foods" (with respect to European regulations) must undergo a prior authorisation procedure, on a case-by-case basis, which includes an assessment of risks, before they can be marketed.

- **Inspections**

In order to ensure the quality of foodstuffs offered to consumers and their compliance with regulations, French and European manufacturers and distributors implement hygiene measures from primary production up to the supply of food products to consumers (the "farm to fork" approach), for the purpose of reducing contamination as much as possible, whether it be micro-biological, chemical or physical. Various participants perform inspections at all stages of the food chain to ensure the effectiveness of these hygiene measures. The manufacturers and distributors also undertake their own inspections at all stages of the production chain. Government authorities undertake official inspections and surveillance plans organised on national or European levels and in France these are coordinated by the relevant authorities, the Directorate General for Food (DGAL) and the Directorate General for Competition, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF).

- **The vigilance and surveillance systems**

On the national level, the law has provided for vigilance systems to monitor the potentially adverse effects of various products on humans: drugs (Pharmacovigilance) are monitored by the French Health Products Safety Agency (AFSSAPS) for human medicinal products and by ANSES *via* the French Agency for Veterinary Medicinal Products (ANMV), toxic substances and mixtures are monitored *via* the Toxicant and Poison Control Centres (CAP-TV) coordinated by the French Institute for Public Health Surveillance (InVS), while food supplements, novel foods, fortified foods and foods intended for specific diets are monitored by ANSES through the nutritional vigilance system.

At the same time the government monitors the health of the population through its own surveillance networks (such as the one for notifiable diseases including food poisoning outbreaks), managed by the InVS, the network for nosocomial diseases and also imminent threats to human health and emergency public health situations.

On the European level, warnings, information and blocking of imports at frontiers, sent by the Directorate General for Health and Consumer Affairs (DG Sanco) and coming from Member States,

are sent out on the early warning network for food and feed, the RASFF (*réseau d'alerte rapide pour l'alimentation humaine et animale*).

The risk appraisal results serve as input for these various systems. They are used to define standards for regulating the use of certain substances in foodstuffs and by authorities to improve their policy orientations when drawing up inspection and surveillance plans. They are also used during evaluation of manufacturing applications for marketing authorisation. Finally in the framework of the nutritional vigilance scheme they are used to ascertain whether a product is likely to cause an adverse effect as well as its potential toxicity for consumers.

In turn, surveillance, vigilance and health and safety monitoring provide feedback in the form of field data for improving risk assessment in order to ascertain the actual exposure of the population to certain components or contaminants in food.

These different systems are already operational and have proved their usefulness:

- thus, for the category of "health foods, food supplements and fortified foods", the RASFF declarations increased until 2006 when they stabilised at about 100 per year with the proportion of food supplements varying from 40 to 60%. Not including the presence of pharmacologically active substances (which account for 10 to 50% of the declarations), two types of hazard exist: either they are a "characteristic" of the foods (levels higher than the regulatory threshold for vitamins or minerals, or containing toxic plant substances) or "typical" hazards (bacterial contamination, presence of allergens or novel foods, irradiated foods). **A small proportion of these declarations concerns foods distributed in France.**

- Concerning microbiological contamination, the identification and investigation of food poisoning outbreaks (TIAC – *toxi-infections collectives*) by the InVS in France and by EFSA in Europe since 2007 show that:

    - the number of TIACs in France remained stable from 1997 to 2005, then increased in 2006 and 2007 before stabilising again in 2008. This transient increase was due to much more thorough collection of declarations by means of new software.

    - In Europe, the number of TIACs varies greatly from one country to another, but since the investigation and declaration systems are not all standardised, it is difficult to compare the data. However if we look at countries which have similar systems, the number of TIACs per 100,000 inhabitants in 2007 and 2008 is of the same order in France (1.6 and 1.7 respectively), in the Netherlands (2.1 and 2.0 respectively) and in Germany (1.7 and 1.3 respectively).

4 - Foods covered by the nutritional vigilance system

Food supplements

Food supplements are defined [6] as "foodstuffs the purpose of which is to supplement the normal diet and which are concentrated sources of nutrients or other substances with a nutritional or physiological effect, alone or in combination".

Food supplements, which fall under the Consumer Code, have to be declared to the Directorate General for Competition, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF) in order to specify their composition. The DGCCRF also conducts inspections on food supplements, as it does for other categories of foodstuffs. The regulation stipulates the ongoing creation of a list of possible ingredients, currently focusing on vitamins and minerals at the European level and extended at the national level to include maximum recommended daily intakes and various substances such as plant extracts.

However, unlike medicinal products, the marketing of food supplements does not require prior individual authorisation for marketing following the evaluation by an expert assessment committee of an industrial application. Manufacturers are responsible for ensuring that their products comply with current standards in force to ensure consumer safety and prevent fraudulent claims, before marketing them.

Fortified foods

These are foods or beverages which have been fortified with substances for nutritional or physiological purposes (vitamins, minerals, amino acids, plant extracts, etc). All types of foods may fall under this category.

Novel foods

Novel foods are foods or ingredients which were not consumed in the Member Sstates of the European Union before 15 May 1997 and which have one or more of the following characteristics:

- a new primary molecular structure or one that has been deliberately modified;
- be made up of microorganisms, fungi or algae or have been isolated from them;
- be made up of plants or have been isolated from plants or animals (with the exception of traditional multiplication or reproduction practices which are known to be safe);
- involve a production process which is not currently used (when such a process leads to significant changes in nutritional value, metabolism or content of undesirable substances).

The novel foods are defined in the European regulation EC no. 258/97 which is currently being revised. This regulation does not apply to food supplements, flavourings or extraction solvents.
Among the wide range of ingredients and foods covered by this regulation we find magnolia bark extract, gamma-cyclodextrin, guar gum, noni juice and also dried fruit pulp from baobab trees.

[6] According to directive 2002/46/CE of the European Parliament, transposed by the decree of 20 March 2006

Before they can be marketed, novel foods are subject to risk evaluation by the health authorities of the Member States and possible arbitration at the community level, following issuance of an opinion by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) which may then lead to a marketing authorisation being granted.

Foods intended for specific diets

Such foodstuffs are intended for population groups with specific needs (infants, individuals allergic to gluten, the elderly, etc) and must meet specific composition criteria.

5 - Key statistics

Consumption of food supplements[7]

Who takes food supplements?

- Almost **20%** of adults and just over **11%** of children took food supplements or vitamins and minerals in the form of a medicinal product during the year
- **Twice as many women** as men take food supplements
- **Almost two thirds** of food supplements are consumed as a therapeutic treatment course
- For **70%** of children and **53%** of adults, treatment courses of food supplements are taken in winter
- The average duration per year for consumption of a food supplement is **four and a half** months for adults and **two and a half** months for children
- **23%** of adults and **12%** of children who consume food supplements take them throughout the year or almost

Under what conditions do people take food supplements?

- On a doctor's prescription (**32%** of adults and **39%** of children)
- On **advice from a health professional (23%** of adults and **31%** of children)
- On advice from a friend (**14%** of adults)
- After learning about the product in a store or on the Internet (**15%** of adults)

Where are food supplements purchased?

- **In pharmacies (54%** of adults and **78%** of children)
- **In supermarkets (14%** of adults)
- **In health food stores (9%** of adults)

[7] According to the INCA 2 survey undertaken by the Agency in 2006/2007. In this study, the chosen definition included food supplements as defined in the regulations but could also include medicinal products which provide nutrients.

Nutritional vigilance scheme

- **169** declarations [8] were recorded by ANSES in one year of scheme operation
- more than **30 000** different food supplements are currently being marketed in France
- **237** novel foods were authorised for marketing in Europe in 2007 under the "novel food" regulation

Food health and safety:

- Since 1988, **690** declarations have been made under the "health foods, food supplements and fortified foods" category in the framework of the RASFF[9]
  - Each year more than **59 000** samples are analysed by government authorities through the inspection and surveillance plans.

[8] These statistics cover both the spontaneous exchanges with AFSSAPS, especially since 2004 (46 declarations) and 123 declarations received in the framework of the pilot phase launched in 2009.

[9] The European early warning network for humans and animals (food and feed) disseminates warnings, information and import border blocks issued by the DG Sanco and originating in the Member States. (A "warning" is defined as a serious market risk which requires prompt action. "Information" concerns a risk which does not require prompt action or a product which has not yet been marketed or which is no longer marketed in Europe)

6 - ANSES and food

Food is one of the most carefully monitored market sectors. At all stages of the food chain, producers, distributors and government inspection authorities ensure the quality of products available to consumers. Never before have there been so many studies, so much research and so many inspections of all the ingredients which may be found in the food production and distribution chain. However given the globalisation of trade, the emergence of new lifestyles and consumption patterns, the diversity of the food offer and sedentary lifestyles, new risks are emerging and must be evaluated, without however neglecting "conventional" risks (microbiological risks, for example). Furthermore, certain food risks linked to environmental pollutants are also emerging . Significant research is being conducted into the issue of the combined effects on health of combined low levels of pollutants over the long term.

ANSES intervenes at all stages of the food chain, "from farm to fork", from primary production to the consumer's plate. The Agency evaluates the health risks related to food, monitors the exposure of populations to contaminants and to nutrients, and analyses all possible adverse effects. ANSES, an independent scientific body, systematically publishes the results of its work and when necessary issues formal Opinions containing recommendations for risk management.

Concerning nutrition, ANSES:

- evaluates the nutritional characteristics of ingredients and foodstuffs used for human food as well as their intrinsic health risks and advantages;
- develops nutritional reference guidelines for the general population and population subgroups;
- provides scientific input for developing national and European regulations (food fortification with vitamins and minerals and other substances, food supplements, etc);
- helps set objectives and recommendations for public health policy with respect to nutrition (guidelines for food consumption, benefit/risk evaluations for the consumption of certain foods or certain categories of foods, etc).

Tools used for health and safety measures

ANSES is fully involved in analysing the health consequences of the nutritional quality of food and the consumption of food supplements. The Agency has developed a number of tools for evaluating the actual exposure of consumers to nutrients:

- The **Ciqual base**, which lists the nutritional composition of foods. ANSES manages the French reference database for the nutritional composition of foods. The Ciqual base lists the contents of 42 substances found in more than 1300 food products. This online database is an indispensable tool for food control. It is used by agrifood companies for nutritional labelling, by health professionals (nutritionists, dietitians) when drawing up menus and making personalised recommendations for their patients and is an essential tool for the designers of nutritional software and research teams working on nutritional

epidemiology.

- **Oqali**[10], for monitoring the quality of the food offer. Implemented jointly by ANSES and INRA, Oqali makes it possible to monitor the quality of foods on the market by measuring and making public the efforts of manufacturers and distributors. In 2009 it listed almost 15,000 products.

- **The INCA surveys**, for collecting details of food consumption. The INCA surveys are national studies of individual food consumption, undertaken every six years. They consist in gathering food consumption for a sample population in continental France for a period of seven days. In 1999, the first INCA survey studied 3003 individuals of three years old and older. In 2006/2007, the consumption patterns of more than 4000 participants were monitored. The data collected has given ANSES a detailed 'snapshot' of the food consumption patterns of French people which enables it to monitor the evolution of their habits. By combining consumption data with that of nutritional composition and contamination of food, ANSES is able to determine the nutritional intakes of French people and their exposure to contaminants.

- **The EAT studies,** so-called "total diet" studies to determine the content of contaminant residues in foods. Following the first study undertaken in 2005, which covered about 30 contaminants, ANSES is undertaking an EAT2 study of more than 20,000 food products and 300 potential contaminants which will result in more than 170,000 assay results. This study, whose results will be published in June 2011, will enable ANSES to update the actual level of exposure of consumers by combining this data base with the INCA survey.

[10] Food quality observatory

7 - ANSES, a new public health authority

The French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety was created on 1 July 2010 following the merger of two French health agencies, AFSSA, the French Food Safety Agency and AFSSET, the French Agency for Environmental and Occupational Health Safety. In taking over their respective missions, ANSES offers a broad, cross-cutting, global perspective on health issues and is thus able to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the exposures to which human beings may be subjected through their lifestyles, consumption patterns and the characteristics of their environment including the occupational environment.

Preserving human, animal and plant health

For human health, ANSES intervenes in three areas, food, the environment and work. It is also mandated to evaluate risks to animal and plant health. Based on its scientific reports, it issues formal Opinions and recommendations to public authorities.

Guaranteeing food safety and quality

The Agency evaluates health and nutritional risks for all of the agrifood sectors. It evaluates the nutritional properties of substances used in human food and animal feed, as well as the related advantages. It monitors food consumption patterns and their evolutions and identifies the most exposed populations. Finally it evaluates the safety and quality of water intended for human consumption.

Evaluating health risks related to the environment

Health and the environment are closely related. ANSES evaluates the impact of the environment on human health in order to better identify the health and safety risks related to pollution of the life supporting environments (air, water, soil). It intervenes in several specific fields: cancer and the environment, exposure to biological, chemical and physical agents and regulations governing the use of hazardous chemical substances.

Evaluating occupational health risks

Nowadays people are increasingly preoccupied with exposure to occupational diseases and the delayed risks related to working with chemical substances such as those found in nano-materials or asbestos. ANSES does research on exposure mechanisms in the workplace and the specific health risks affecting different professions.