

Ensuring Safe Food for Infants: The Importance of an Integrated Approach to Monitor and Reduce the Risks of Biological, Chemical and Physical Hazards



The SAFFI project (Horizon 2020) to provide the right solutions

Despite a decrease in biological, chemical, and physical hazards in infant food owing to national and international control programs, the risks of hazards in infant food remain a global concern. Raising consumer awareness on the consequences of unhealthy food consumption, and a growth of consciousness by the food industry of the importance of ensuring protection against contaminants in commercially available products, have limited the risk of food contaminants. However, interventions applied across the food supply chain to inspect the presence of food contaminants and help to ensure a sustainable supply of nutritious safe food, are insufficient to provide an extensive and comprehensive protection. Infant food safety in the economically advanced Western world is currently monitored by increasingly strict legal regulations. However, some countries still use banned substances in industrial food production owing to their poor economy and insufficient regulation. The export and import exchange of commercial, often low-cost, infant food products, may raise serious risks for children's health despite the presence of standard control procedures and techniques, which may be insufficient or inadequate to detect a large variety of contaminants in food products.

It is of paramount importance to increase awareness of the necessity to further decrease the risks of hazards of different nature in infants and children's food and to emphasize the importance of developing and constantly update integrated and effective systems for monitoring the presence of contaminants in infant food.

The SAFFI EU-funded project aims to improve risk-based food safety management of hazards. To achieve these goals, the consortium is developing procedures to enhance top-down and bottom-up hazard control by combining management options within the frame of the EU Horizon 2020 research and innovation program. In view of the food safety challenges in the monitoring and detecting of contamination in food supplies, whether by accident or fraud, the consortium is developing decision support systems to enhance safety controls along the food chain. Focusing on the potential risks raised by the major international channels of infant food trade, the program is also establishing educational and knowledge transfer activities to foster harmonization of good practices.

The Global collaboration in the area of food safety and control is of great strategic importance, and the EU program includes cooperation with public health authorities of governments around the world.



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SAFFI: THE SINO-EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM PARTNER CENTERS



- Coordination: French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE),
- Five international infant food companies (Friesland Campina, HiPP, YIOTIS, Beingmate, YFFC)
 - Two food safety authority institutions (ZAIQ and ANSES)
 - Three European technological SMEs (CremeGlobal, Computomics, BDS)
 - The Union of 49 National European Societies of Pediatric (EPA-UNEPSA)
 - Seven leading European and Chinese academic institutions (WU, UNITO, IRTA, IVV; ZJU, ZAAS, JAAS)



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