

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000377/26
to the Commission
Catherine Griset (P/E)
(29 January 2026)**

Subject: Contamination of infant milk: failure of health vigilance and strategic dependence

Since December 2025 there have been widescale recalls of contaminated infant milk in more than 60 countries, with the blame falling on large European manufacturers dependent on the same ingredient supplier located outside the EU. The recalls came late, despite the precautionary principle enshrined in EU law.

1. Can the Commission explain why the European health alert and traceability mechanisms did not provide a quicker and more transparent response given that infants were repeatedly exposed to this contamination?
2. Will it learn the lessons from this critical industrial dependence on non-EU inputs by strengthening the application of existing rules on control, the responsibility of industry and securing of supply chains, so that the protection of infants takes precedence over cost concerns and uncontrolled globalisation?

Submitted: 29.1.2026

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(31 March 2026)**

The Commission treats this incident with utmost seriousness and is committed to ensuring the highest standards of food safety.

1. On 10 December 2025, the Commission was alerted to cereulide contamination in products from a Nestlé company in the Netherlands, which recalled the same day 25 batches across 16 European countries. As soon as the Commission was made aware of this incident, the different existing tools, in particular the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), were activated to ensure an efficient cross-border coordination between the competent food safety authorities of the Member States.
2. Since RASFF investigations found that arachidonic acid oil imported from China and subsequently used in infant formula was the very likely contamination source, the Commission has swiftly adopted measures ⁽¹⁾ requiring mandatory laboratory analysis, certification, and stricter border controls for this product. Pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ⁽²⁾, food business operators at all stages of production, processing and distribution have the primary responsibility to ensure that their products comply with food law requirements relevant to their activities and to verify that these requirements are met.

⁽¹⁾ http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2026/459/oj.
⁽²⁾ <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2002/178/oj>.