

PFAS: The Risks, Regulations, and Impacts for Food Safety

PFAS: Should we worry?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a widely discussed group of man-made chemicals posing a significant risk to global food chain safety. The persistence and potential toxicology of PFAS make tracking and testing their presence in food, feed, beverage, and ingredients critical.

Globally, regulators are moving to control and assess human exposure by mandating testing and certification of priority compounds. This impacts local and export supply in many ways, but how?



PFAS


Since PFAS persist in the environment and can migrate into food, manufacturers face potent and urgent regulatory and reputational risks.

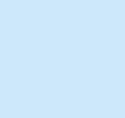
Globally, governments are responding robustly to the threat.

- **Stricter controls**
- **Targeted phase-outs**
- **Stronger penalties**

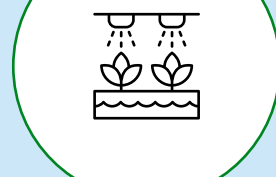
While the global food supply is interconnected, the regulatory landscape is still fragmented and complex in many ways, but how?

So, what are the directives you need to know?





The ubiquity of PFAS across our food chain is well-documented, with chemicals detected in:



Water/irrigation



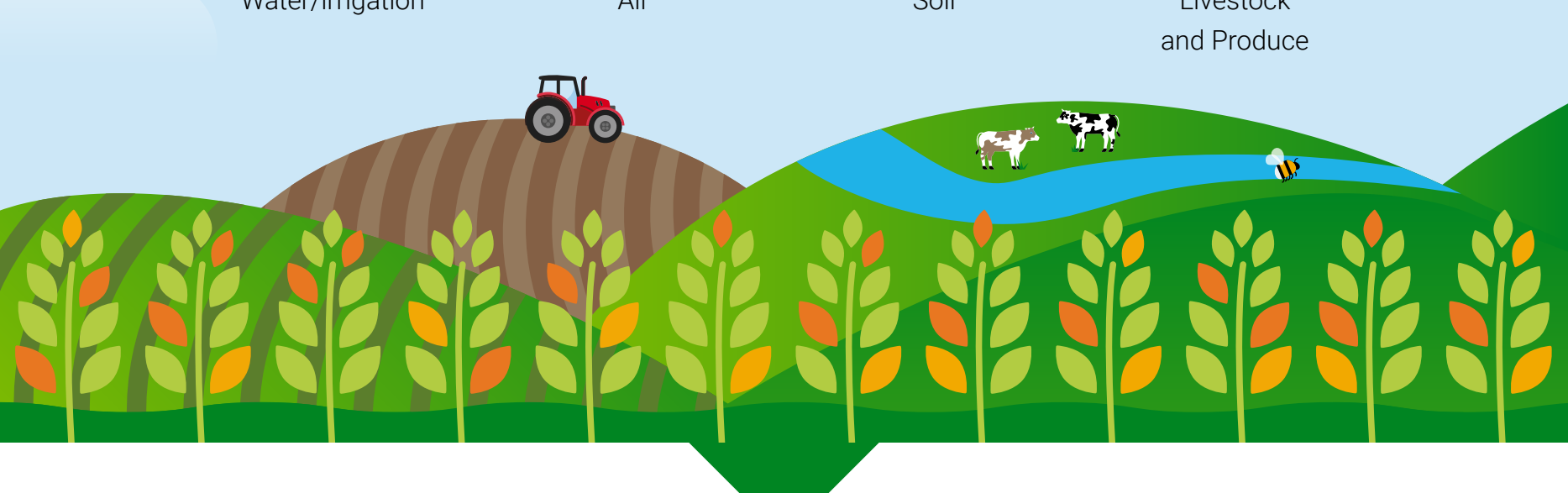
Air



Soil



Livestock and Produce



European Union (EU)

Five EU member states have submitted a restriction proposal to the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) to ban thousands of PFAS compounds. The goal is to phase out PFAS use where possible and tighten testing requirements across products and packaging.

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Food safety

EU Regulation 2023/915

Established maximum levels for compounds in eggs, seafood, meat, and offal.

Business responsibility

- Maintain regular PFAS testing of food, packaging, and water sources
- Stay up to date on evolving guidance from ECHA and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
- Prepare for expanded PFAS restrictions as legislation evolves



United States of America (USA)

Federal and state authorities share responsibility, creating a complex but increasingly coordinated framework designed to protect public health and the food supply.

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The federal landscape

- The FDA oversees PFAS in food, monitoring contamination and enforcing recalls when safety thresholds are exceeded

State-level controls

- Lack of unified national limitations has led to several states introducing distinct PFAS standards for food and water, beyond federal requirements
 - For example, Maine has set maximum permissible levels for PFAS in milk, beef, and fish.
 - [Watch our industry documentary to learn more](#)

Business responsibility

- Implement regular PFAS testing across raw materials and finished products
- Verify supplier compliance, particularly for imported goods
- Stay alert to federal and state updates as PFAS rules evolve


China

China has a rapidly evolving regulatory framework for PFAS, which combines national safety standards, production restrictions, and advanced analytical testing.

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Business responsibility


- Use accredited laboratories equipped with validated LC/MS/MS systems
- Monitor developments in the GB 5009.253 revision
- Maintain documentation and traceability throughout the supply chain



The cost of inaction is high...


Health and dietary safety

Excessive PFAS exposure has been linked to various health concerns - highlighting your duty to protect consumers and customers from contaminated foods and ingredients. Protect the supply chain and your brand credibility with adequate testing.




Brand and consumer risk

PFAS contamination erodes consumer trust and damages brand reputation. Transparency, testing, and swift response are essential to retain confidence.



Product recall and withdrawal

Contamination and inadequate testing can lead to regulatory action or production disruption. This can impact supply and brand reputation.



To manage and maintain safe food, you should implement:

- **Robust PFAS testing and monitoring programs**
- **Transparent communication with consumers and regulators**
- **Swift, accountable action if contamination occurs**

Read our eBook for comprehensive detail on the governing frameworks and requirements for food legislation.


[PFAS regulation overview](#)



Be proactive on PFAS, with Agilent

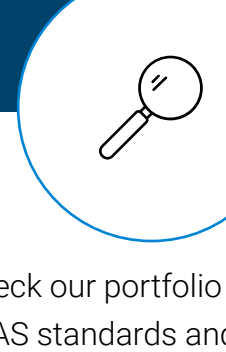
- Simplified, scalable workflow** ✓
- Accurate in every stage of testing** ✓
- Compatible with a wide range of food matrices** ✓
- Verified methodologies aligned to global standards** ✓
- Optimized and verified for PFAS testing** ✓
- Built for everyday, critical food testing** ✓

Accurate and efficient sample prep



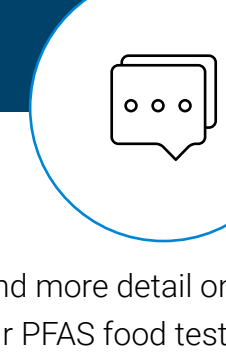
Get right-first-time reliability, eliminate repeat analysis, and optimization with our advanced portfolio. This ensures consistency in data quality.

[PFAS food testing kits](#)



Check our portfolio of PFAS standards and calibrate your workflow based on EPA guidelines.

[View portfolio](#)



Find more detail on our PFAS food testing solutions or ask questions on our dedicated page.

[Take a look](#)