



Excellence through measurement

Dioxin and PCB contamination of Irish meat products

Dioxin and polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) residues discovered in slaughtered pigs has led to the recalling of all pork products originating from the Republic of Ireland since 1 September 2008. The source has been traced to contaminated feed, and tests have shown some pork products contained up to 200 times more dioxins than the recognised maximum residue limits specified by Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1881/2006 (Sum of dioxin and dioxin like PCBs 1.5 pg/g fat).

Dioxins are formed during combustion processes, such as waste incineration, and long term exposure can cause cancer.

The recall advised by the Food Standards Agencies also affects Irish exports of pork to Europe. Manufacturers, retailers and caterers can only continue to sell their products if they prove it has not been affected by the contamination, or complies with the safety limits.

Laboratories testing products for the presence of dioxins and other contaminants require reference standards and materials to ensure the accuracy of their results, and the validity of their testing methods.

LGC Standards has a range of products to assist testing laboratories in the analysis of dioxins, PCBs and related environmental contaminants e.g. polybrominated flame retardants:

- Individual standards for dioxins, PCBs and other environmental contaminants e.g. polybrominated flame retardants, in isotope-labelled and unlabelled forms.
- Dioxin/furan and PCB method standards, standard mixtures and reference materials
- Custom solutions for environmental contaminants in isotope-labelled and unlabelled forms.
- Processed meat matrix reference materials, including pork and related products

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