

## Analysis requests to the BfR's National Reference Laboratories (NRL)

BfR FAQ of September 7, 2021

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) hosts several National Reference Laboratories (NRL). They develop and validate methods and perform proficiency tests (inter-laboratory tests) with official laboratories at national level for quality assurance. This means that the BfR is part of an EU-wide network to improve food monitoring.

We have put together some questions and answers so that you can judge whether the BfR is the right partner to carry out analysis of your food and feed samples.

Further information on the BfR's national reference laboratories can be found at [https://www.bfr.bund.de/en/reference\\_laboratories-10485.html](https://www.bfr.bund.de/en/reference_laboratories-10485.html)

### **Does the BfR Monitor Food and Feed Sold in Germany?**

The BfR is not responsible for monitoring food and feed. The enforcement of the provisions set out in the Food and Feed Code (LFGB) is the mandate of the authorities of the federal states. Regional monitoring is usually performed by the local regulatory authorities, which also control companies and take samples.

If you have any questions about the food or feed monitoring, please contact these authorities. Our directory of the acting authorities in the various federal states will help you to find the right contacts ([https://www.bfr.bund.de/de/lebensmittelueberwachung\\_verzeichnis\\_der\\_obersten\\_fuer\\_die\\_lebensmittelueberwachung\\_zustaendigen\\_behoerden\\_der\\_bundeslaender-1095.html](https://www.bfr.bund.de/de/lebensmittelueberwachung_verzeichnis_der_obersten_fuer_die_lebensmittelueberwachung_zustaendigen_behoerden_der_bundeslaender-1095.html)).

### **Does the BfR Test Food or Feed on Behalf of Companies or Private Individuals?**

Sample measurements performed by the BfR are undertaken exclusively within the scope of tasks of the national reference laboratories, to support other authorities or for the purposes of our own scientific research (e.g. method validation). Companies or individuals can contact contract test laboratories to commission analyses of food or feed.

### **Does the BfR Recommend Any Testing Institutes?**

The BfR is often asked for contact details of testing facilities, for example for checking the legal conformity of food or feed or in relation to approval for feed additives. In compliance with competition laws, the BfR does not recommend any laboratories.

Companies or individuals can contact professional associations that represent the interests of companies in the relevant food or feed industries. The chambers of industry and commerce can also provide information on testing laboratories. In addition, the German Chemical Society (Gesellschaft Deutscher Chemiker - GDCh) section of Freelance Chemists and Owners of Free Independent Laboratories maintains a list of laboratories on its homepage. There is also the German Association of Independent Testing Laboratories (Deutscher Verband Unabhängiger Prüflaboratorien e.V.). This information in no way constitutes an assessment as to the quality of the facilities mentioned above on the part of the BfR.

## Where Can I Find Analytical Methods to Ensure the Legal Compliance of Food or Feed?

Analysis methods which, for example, allow the legal compliance of food or feed to be checked, can be found in the scientific literature and in the following collections of methods:

- Official collection of investigative procedures according to § 64 LFGB, please see: <http://www.methodensammlung-bvl.de/>
- VDLUFA Method Handbook: <https://www.vdlufa.de/Methodenbuch/>

Details of the methods of other standardisation organisations:

- <https://www.beuth.de/de> (German Institute for Standardization, DIN)
- <https://standards.cen.eu/dyn/www/f?p=CENWEB:105::RESET:::> (European Committee for Standardization, CEN)
- <http://www.oiv.int/de/normen-und-technische-dokumente> (International Organisation of Vine and Wine, OIV)
- <http://www.eoma.aoac.org/> (AOAC International, formerly Association of Official Analytical Chemists)

## About the BfR

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is a scientifically independent institution within the portfolio of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) in Germany. The BfR advises the Federal Government and the States ('Laender') on questions of food, chemical and product safety. The BfR conducts its own research on topics that are closely linked to its assessment tasks.