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Study in UK examines presence of synthetic chemicals in food

Food producers to investigate supply chains to better understand where contaminants might be introduced

By **Manbeena Chawla** | September 28, 2022



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The first comprehensive assessment of common synthetic chemicals found in UK foods has been completed by researchers at the University of Birmingham.

In the study, nearly 400 food samples were tested for evidence of organophosphate esters (OPEs), chemicals used as flame retardants in furnishings and textiles, building, food packaging materials and decorating materials, as well in various other consumer products.

While the levels found in all the samples were below those currently deemed to be a risk to health, the researchers say this baseline survey should be a wake-up call to industrial users of OPEs to check their use of these chemicals and start exploring alternatives. Food producers should also investigate supply chains to better understand where contaminants might be introduced.

"Organophosphates are toxic to human health at high levels, or with long term exposure, and their use is increasing worldwide," said the researchers. "Although we found that current levels in food products are not dangerous, these chemicals build up in the body's fatty tissues over time and we need to have a clearer picture of the different sources of contaminants."

The chemicals triphenyl phosphate (TPHP) and 2-ethylhexyl diphenyl phosphate (EHDPP) were most common, being found in all food samples except egg and egg products.

"It's clear that food is a significant source of human exposure to OPEs in the UK and that more work is urgently needed to fully understand the risks of continuing to increase our use of OPEs", added the researchers.

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Read online: https://nuffoodsspectrum.in/news/17/19409/study-in-uk-examines-presence-of-synthetic-chemicals-in-food.html
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