Sample distribution scheme for Commission Recommendation (EU) 2026/2335 on monitoring the presence of chlorinated paraffins in food

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EURL for halogenated POPs in Feed and Food
c/o State Institute for Chemical and Veterinary Analysis Freiburg
Bissierstraße 5
79114 Freiburg
D-Germany
contact@eurl-pops.eu
+49 761 8855 500
eurl-pops.eu

Editors

Theresa Zwickel (EURL POPs, Germany)

Katharina Rund (EURL POPs, Germany)

Alexander Schächtele (EURL POPs, Germany)

Scope

This document uses the harmonised terms and abbreviations for polychlorinated alkanes (PCAs) as the main ingredient of chlorinated paraffins (CPs).

It details the procedures to be followed for the distribution of samples **exceeding the thresholds** for PCAs **sum parameter ΣPCAs-C_{10-17}** as laid down in *Commission Recommendation (EU) 2026/2335 of 21 October 2026 on monitoring the presence of chlorinated paraffins in food* and the reporting of results.

The aim of this document is to provide a clear and transparent workflow for all involved parties. It covers instructions for laboratories performing PCA analysis, nominated expert laboratories as well as a description of the EURL POPs workflow.

Guidance on analytical methodologies including analytical parameters and example methods for a quantitative screening method for the determination of the sum parameter **ΣPCAs-C_{10-17}** (referred to as "monitoring method") in food are provided in the *Guidance Document on the Analysis of Polychlorinated Alkanes, version 2.0* (https://eurl-pops.eu/news/guidance-document-on-pca-analysis/guidance-document-pca-v2.0).

Threshold values of sum of PCAs-C_{10-17} with categories

(1) According to Commission Recommendation (EU) 2026/2335 the threshold values of sum of PCAs-C_{10-17} are as following:

for fish:	100 ng/g wet weight,
for milk and dairy products:	20 ng/g wet weight,
for oils and fats:	1000 ng/g fat,
for other products of animal origin:	300 ng/g fat,
(e.g. meat, eggs, …)	
for processed foods (whole meals):	50 ng/g wet weight and
for babyfood*:	20 ng/g wet weight.

* In the context of the *Commission Recommendation (EU) 2026/2335 on monitoring the presence of chlorinated paraffins in food* the threshold for the category "babyfood" is recommended to be applied to all kind of food intended for infants and young children including infant formula.

A. Workflow for laboratories performing PCA analysis

If a sample is analysed in the framework of Commission Recommendation (EU) 2026/2335 on monitoring the presence of PCAs in food and

- ⇨ **Exceeds the threshold(1)** for ΣPCAs-C_{10-17} laid down in Commission Recommendation (EU) 2026/2335 for the respective food category
- ⇨ **Shows very high levels*** of ΣPCAs-C_{10-17} but the sample does not fall under any of the categories (e.g. feeds, food of plant origin except oils, dietary supplements)

the following steps should be taken:

1.) **Inform** EURL POPs via mail to eurl-pops@cvuafr.bwl.de about the sample and you will receive an **EURL sample code** (for identification of the sample in all participating laboratories and the report). Provide the following information using the **EU survey link** (https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/PCA_monitoring_recommendation_labs):
   a. Laboratory name, country
   b. Type of sample with EURL sample code and sampling date
   c. ΣPCAs-C_{10-17} in the unit given in the monitoring recommendation if applicable or else in ng/g wet weight
   d. Fat content of the sample, if available
   e. Brief information on methodology

2.) **Store** at least an aliquot of 100 g of the analysed sample for shipment and analysis at a later stage maintaining the integrity of the sample, e.g. freezing, storage in dust free containers

3.) **Wait** for instructions from EURL POPs concerning the shipping of the sample to an expert laboratory. (Storage time could be several months depending on capacity of expert laboratories)

4.) **Ship** the sample(s) according to instructions received from EURL POPs to the designated expert laboratory. Notify EURL POPs of the shipping.

Report the data for ΣPCAs-C_{10-17} of all analysed samples irrespective if a threshold is exceeded or not to EFSA according to section 5 of Commission Recommendation (EU) 2026/2335.

* Values above 50 ng/g wet weight / product (12% moisture content) or 300 ng/g fat for e.g. supplements

B. Workflow for nominated expert laboratories for the characterisation analysis of PCA samples exceeding the ΣPCAs-C_{10-17} thresholds

EURL POPs will collect the information on all samples for which a characterisation analysis is needed. When a sufficient number of samples of a certain kind/type/matrix is collected EURL POPs will contact one of the expert laboratories.

The samples will be grouped into suitable batches according to the respective matrices and coded by EURL POPs to facilitate the sample preparation.

The following steps should be taken:

1.) **EURL POPs** contacts expert laboratory with:
   a. Information about number of samples, type of samples and respective EURL sample codes
   b. Information on shipment
2.) **The expert laboratory** confirms the sample receipt to EURL POPs
3.) **The expert laboratory** performs the characterisation analysis with a suitable method to
   a. Determine chain length specific contributions and concentrations of PCAs
   b. Determine, and if possible, quantify, whether PCAs-$C_{>17}$ are present in the sample or not

Note: Each batch of samples should include suitable QC samples, procedural blanks and, if possible, an aliquot of a defined PCA standard as "pattern QC material" provided by EURL, to facilitate the integration of the samples into the EURL PCA Pattern database.

4.) **The expert laboratory** should analyse the sample and report the results (in unit as given in the monitoring recommendation if applicable or else in ng/g wet weight) within 3 months to EURL POPs. Reporting is done via an **EU survey link** (https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/PCA_monitoring_recommendation_experts) to provide the following information:
   a. Type of sample with EURL sample code
   b. Sum parameters (ΣPCAs-C_{10-13}; ΣPCAs-C_{14-17}; ΣPCAs-C_{10-17})
   c. Chain length specific PCA concentrations
   d. Chain length specific PCA responses (relative homologue pattern)
   e. Occurrence/quantification of PCAs-$C_{>17}$ in the sample
   f. Fat content of the sample
   g. Method details if not already available at EURL POPs
   h. Any other information that is deemed noteworthy (e.g. strong deviations from screening result, unusual PCA patterns).

C. Workflow EURL POPs

EURL POPs coordinates distribution of information regarding shipment and distribution of the samples to the expert laboratories.

The following steps are taken:

1.) **Collecting** all reported information on samples exceeding the threshold from laboratories performing PCA analysis
2.) **Coding** of samples
3.) **Providing** of EU survey link for reporting information on samples and results
4.) Group available samples according to matrix or into fitting matrix groups for distribution to expert laboratories
    a. Request an expert laboratory for characterisation analysis, including information on sample types and quantities
    b. Upon positive reply of expert laboratory, coordinate sample shipment
    c. Provide assistance in case of shipment issues
5.) **Collecting** of reported information from expert laboratories
6.) **Short report** for laboratories providing samples above threshold on high resolution results from expert laboratories (sum parameters, chain-length specific results, relative homologue pattern)
7.) **Annual preliminary reports** to all expert laboratories and presentation at CWG meetings and EURL/NRL workshops
8.) **Transfer** response pattern into the PCA pattern database