

The National Reference Laboratories ensure that work is performed throughout Europe in line with uniform standards, an aspect which is of particular importance where the monitoring and control of foods are concerned.

Reference laboratories

National reference laboratories work on standards for food monitoring in order to ensure the safety of food products throughout the entire EU. For this purpose, 19 reference laboratories in the areas of food and feed safety and food hygiene are located at the BfR. They are divided into two groups: national reference laboratories in accordance with Regulation (EC) 882/2004 and other BfR laboratories with reference function.

The reference laboratories located at the BfR pursuant to regulation (EC) 882/2004 are involved in both food chemistry analysis as well as molecular biological and microbiological testing. They are appointed by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL). Their work is based on various legal regulations such as the German Food and Feed Code as well as laws and regulations on consumer products.

The main job of reference laboratories is to develop and validate methods (including inter-laboratory comparisons) and to perform suitability tests among official laboratories for the purpose of quality assurance. The creation of national reference laboratories guarantees that work is carried out in line with uniform standards all over Europe. This is of particular importance for the monitoring and control of food products, which are fundamentally covered by the principle of the free movement of goods within the European Union. The national reference laboratories also act as a national link between the community reference laboratories of the EU and the food monitoring authorities of the EU member states.

Alongside these national reference laboratories based on EU law, there are also other laboratories at the BfR with reference function. These include the Reference Laboratory in the Network of Genetically Modified Organisms, the Senior Expert Office for the Import Control of Wine in accordance with the Wine Monitoring Ordinance, the Zoonoses Reporting unit and the Consiliary Laboratory for Leptospirae and Yersinia.

i List of the national reference laboratories active at the BfR, as well as the other laboratories with reference function: www.bfr.bund.de/en > **The Institute** > **Reference Laboratories**



The reference laboratories develop and validate new testing methods for the detection of substances and microorganisms that are relevant to health.