

# Operation OPSON IX: Dangerous Food and Drinks Taken Off the Market



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European Law Forum: Prevention • Investigation • Prosecution

## News

**Thomas Wahl**

On 22 July 2020, [OLAF reported](#) on its support for the operation OPSON IX, which was carried out on an international scale from December 2019 to June 2020. The operation was run by Europol and Interpol, and it targeted counterfeit and substandard food and beverages, food fraud, and economically motivated adulteration. OLAF coordinated actions in 17 EU and two non-EU countries, which lead to the seizure of 1.2 million litres of counterfeit wine and alcoholic beverages.

In total, the entire operation involved law enforcement authorities in 83 countries worldwide. [Europol reported](#) the successful dismantling of 19 organised crime groups involved in food fraud and also arresting over 400 suspects. This year's operation OPSON focused on dairy products, resulting in the seizure of 320 tonnes of smuggled or substandard goods, e.g., rotten milk and cheese. Besides alcohol and wine, actions also targeted the sale of olive oil and illegal horse meat. Europol concluded that the operational activities of OPSON IX revealed a disturbing new trend: the infiltration of low-quality products into the supply chain, a development possibly [linked to the COVID-19 pandemic](#). See the separate news item under "Counterfeiting" for the Europol report of 17 April 2020 on how counterfeiters are benefiting from the COVID-19 pandemic. For the eighth edition of the operation Opson, see [euclid 2/2019, p. 90](#). For the recent successful strike against trade in fake spirits in Spain, an operation also supported by OLAF, see [euclid 1/2020, p. 12](#).

### AUTHOR

**Thomas Wahl**

Senior Researcher  
Max Planck Institute for the  
Study of Crime, Security and  
Law

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