



Statens tilsyn for planter, fisk, dyr og næringsmidler

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# The Norwegian Food Safety Authority (NFSA)

[https://www.mattilsynet.no/language/english/about\\_us/](https://www.mattilsynet.no/language/english/about_us/)

## Answers to three ministries:

- **Ministry of Agriculture and Food**
- **Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries**
- **Ministry of Health and Care Services**

**The most important mission of the NFSA , relevant to seaweed:**

**To ensure food safety – and within the framework of this goal, also to contribute to value creation in the food sector**

# Seaweed - under NFSA responsibility

- **Food, including food supplements**
  - **Feed**
  - **Fertilisers**
  - **Products for use as plant protection**
  - **Cosmetic products**
  - **Primary production of products (cultivation and wild harvesting) is also under our responsibility, but we no longer have any input on management of applications for aquaculture permits**
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- **Import**
  - **Export**

(All business operators shall be registered by NFSA)

# NFSA participate in international forums and systems that may be relevant for seaweed

- EU committees and working groups
- RASFF, Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (European)
- EREN, Emerging Risks Exchange Network (EFSA)
- Codex Alimentarius, «Food Code» (FAO/WHO)
- IPPC, The International Plant Protection Convention (FAO) (plant health)
- The Nordic Council of Ministers

# Important with a good dialogue between public administration and business/R&D

**NFSA shall contribute to facilitation for harvesting and breeding of new species**

**For this to be successful:**

- The business has knowledge of the food regulations and takes responsibility for the food safety**
- NFSA has updated knowledge of the business**

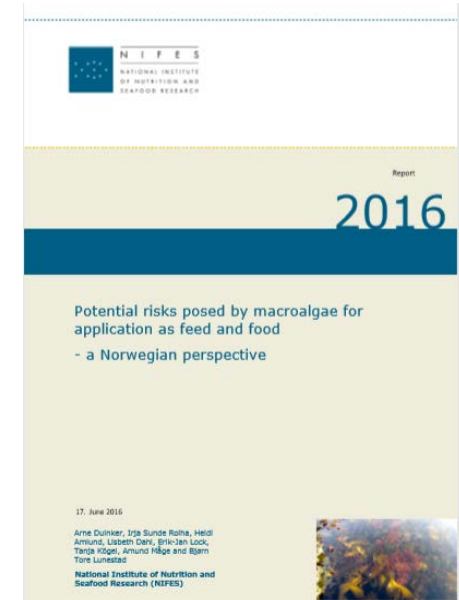
**NFSA needs a good dialogue to ensure both safe products for the consumers and to facilitate business development**

**NFSA participates in international forums and can influence the development of legislations  
These processes takes time and our arguments must be knowledge-based**

**We must hurry slowly  
Food safety and business development must go hand in hand**

# 2016: report on potential risks

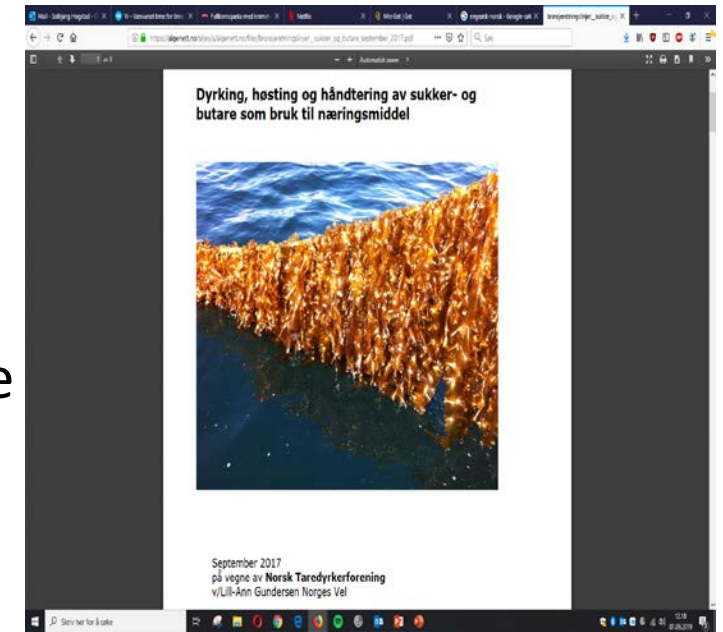
- NFSA asked The Institute of Marine Research Institute of marine research (IMR, previous name NIFES) for an assessment on potential negative effects on the health of humans and animals posed by consumption of macroalgae harvested in Norwegian waters
- The most important risk substances in Norwegian seaweed seem to be cadmium, inorganic arsenic and iodine <https://nifes.hi.no/dette-vet-vi-om-mattrygghet-tang-og-tare/>
- Based on the IMR report, NFSA publish recommendations to consumers not to eat too much seaweed until we have more knowledge



# 2017: private business guidelines

The network “Norwegian seaweed farms” develops private guidelines on *Saccharina latissima* and *Alaria esculenta* with input from NFSA

NFSA develop the control system further – partly based on the knowledge gained by the dialogue with the business



## EU 2017 -2018

Many seaweed species included in the EU Novel food catalogue as not novel  
[http://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/novel\\_food/catalogue/search/public/index.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/novel_food/catalogue/search/public/index.cfm)

Commission recommendation (EU) 2018/464 on monitoring metals and iodine in seaweed for use as food and feed  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0464&from=EN>



# Several alerts (RASFF) from some EU countries on seaweed as food and feed

RASFF alerts on «seaweed» from 2003 til sept 2018:  
148 alerts - in particularily on high iodine in food

Some countries choose to **ban** the marketing of certain products and require **withdrawal** from the market. They issue **warnings** to the population - products with iodine content as low as 20 mg / kg dry matter (Norwegian products from brown algae may have values above 5000 mg)

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/rasff-window/portal/>

# NFSA main focus on iodine

Too high iodine may be the most challenging factor in many of the Norwegian brown algae for the use as food and feed

European alerts (RASFF) from other countries on high iodine in seaweed (far under the level of some of the Norwegian products)

The population may have iodine deficiency and some of the business promote seaweed as a solution, while a sudden high intake may be bad for the health of people with deficiency

We must find solutions to both secure safe products for the consumers and facilitate for the business development – the sooner the better

Important to communicate with other countries and influence the EU in the development of a harmonized risk management

## 2019: voluntary labelling on high iodine

- It has been announced that some Norwegian producers will start marketing their products in regular grocery stores. The products will then be available to a much larger part of the population than before
- **Norwegian producers of seaweed food products starts with voluntary labelling of products with high iodine content after request from NFSA**

# NFSA further work on risk management in seaweed

- **Further develop our control system**
- **Analysis according to the EU recommendation (arsenic, cadmium, iodine, lead and mercury)**
- **Ask the Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food and Environment for a risk assessment of high iodine intake associated with the consumption of seaweed**
- **Inclusion of some Norwegian seaweed species into the Norwegian Food Composition Table (content of nutrients and energy)**
- **Search for possible networking with competent authorities in other countries in the EU/EEA**
- **Continue with the constructive dialogue with business/R&D!**

# Our websites (only in Norwegian)

For producers:

[https://www.mattilsynet.no/fisk og akvakultur/nye marine arter/tang og tare](https://www.mattilsynet.no/fisk_og_akvakultur/nye_marine_arter/tang_og_tare)

For consumers:

[https://www.matportalen.no/uonskedestoffer i mat/tema/miljogifter/er det tr ygt aa spise tang og tare](https://www.matportalen.no/uonskedestoffer_i_mat/tema/miljogifter/er_det_tr_ygt_aa_spise_tang_og_tare)

# Contributions and questions are welcome!

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