

The Egg Scare Across Europe and Asia

A scandal involving eggs contaminated with insecticide spread to 15 EU countries and Asia as the European Commission called for a special meeting on the growing crisis. Here is all you need to know

WHAT IS FIPRONIL?

Fipronil is an insecticide used to rid household pets like dogs and cats of fleas

Also effective at treating poultry for the parasite red lice

It is banned by the EU from being used to treat animals destined for human consumption

The WHO says fipronil is "moderately hazardous" in large quantities, with dangerous effects on people's kidneys, liver and thyroid glands

DOES THE SCANDAL THREATEN HEALTH?

Authorities in the affected countries say there is no risk to public health

EU rules say eggs with a level of fipronil above **0.005 mg/kg** must be withdrawn from sale

Fipronil levels above **0.72 mg/kg** are a possible "acute" health risk when consumed

PROGRESS IN INVESTIGATION

Belgium and Netherlands raided several premises on Thursday

Dutch investigators arrested two managers at Chickfriend

The head of Belgium's Poultry-Vision was held for questioning in July, then released

Germany has said there was "criminal intent"



WHEN DID IT START?

The problem stemmed from a substance used by Dutch company Chickfriend, which farmers in the Netherlands and Belgium hired to treat their chickens

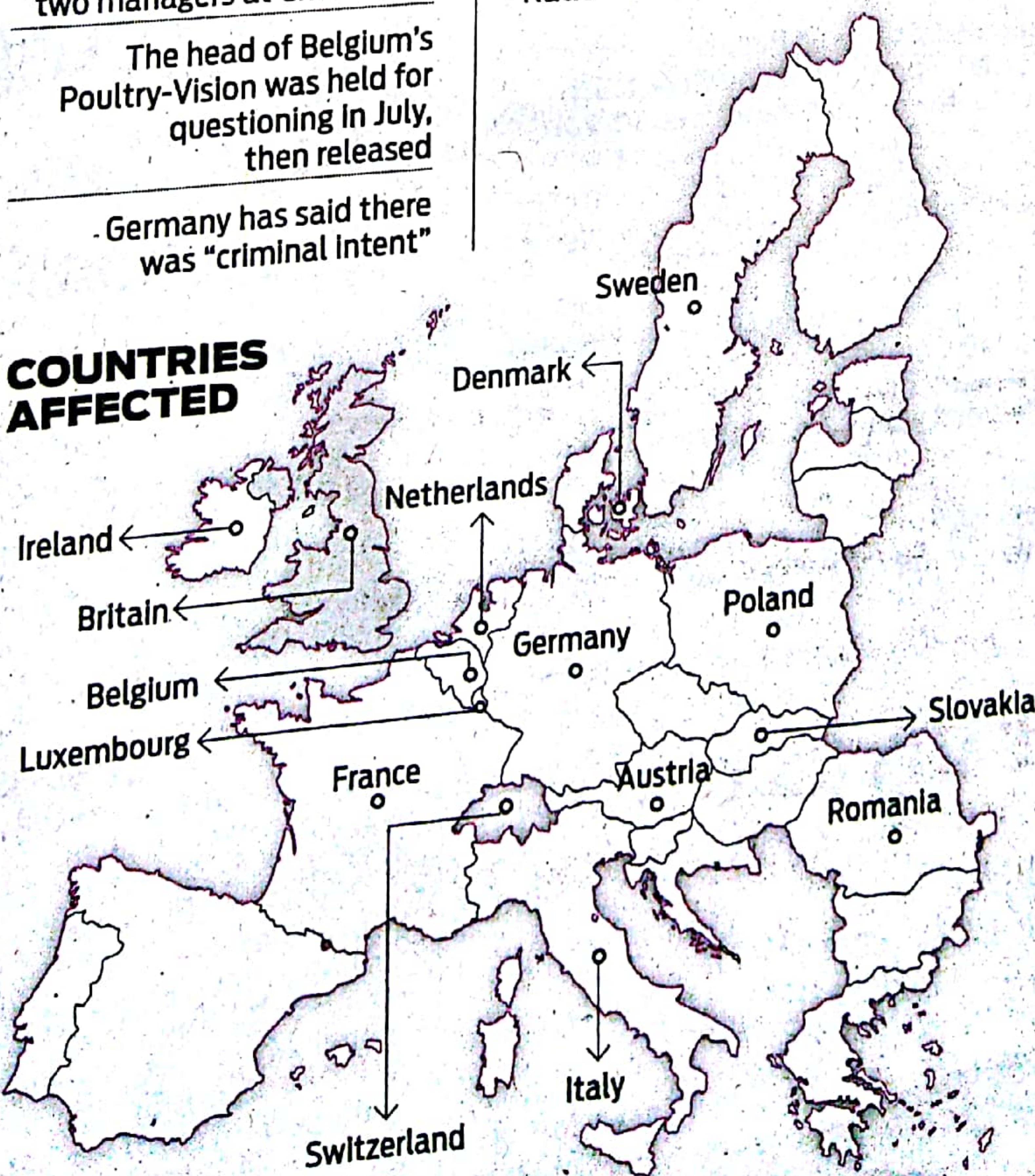
Belgium has accused the Netherlands of having detected contaminated eggs in Nov 2016, but keeping it quiet

But Belgium has admitted that it knew about fipronil in eggs in early June but kept it secret because of a fraud investigation

Belgium officially notified the EU's food safety alert system on July 20, followed by the Netherlands on July 26 and Germany on July 31

National authorities made it public on August 1

COUNTRIES AFFECTED



Any countries found not to have notified Brussels immediately about the detection of fipronil could face legal action

The European Commission

• Hong Kong
First Asian country to be affected