Consumption of sheep or beef liver can contribute considerably to the total intake of PFAS

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Head of polled, domesticated sheep in the long grass. Credit: Michael Palmer/Wikipedia

The Lower Saxony Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection has written a report on Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) concentrations in sheep and beef liver based on samples from the 2019 National Residue Control Plan. The BfR has compared these data with PFAS concentrations in sheep and beef liver samples sourced from the food control programs of various German federal states, which were taken in the period 2007 to 2020.

The BfR concludes that the concentrations of PFAS in sheep and beef liver detected in Lower Saxony do not differ signifi-cantly from the concentrations known from the investigations undertaken by the other federal states. In order to assess the health risks posed by the PFAS concentrations in sheep and beef liver, the BfR used the more comprehensive data from the federal states.

Overall, the BfR concludes that sheep or beef liver with the identified concentrations can contribute considerably to the total intake of PFAS in individuals who consume these foods. PFAS are also ingested through many other kinds of foods. At least in the case of high intakes of sheep or bovine liver, this source of exposure can lead to a comparatively high exhaustion (up to the limit) of the tolerable weekly intake (TWI) for a single food, especially for perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS). The exhaustion of the TWI for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA, EFSA 2018) by consumption of sheep or bovine liver is considerably lower compared to the exhaustion of the TWI for PFOS.

More information:
www.bfr.bund.de/cm/349/the-con … -substances-pfas.pdf DOI: 10.17590/20200910-153505

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