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Silicone bakeware can add unwanted substances to cookies and cakes, consumer groups find

A [new test](#) by nine consumer organisations shows how silicone baking moulds can contaminate cakes, cookies, and other baked goods with unwanted chemicals. BEUC therefore urges the EU to rethink its food packaging laws to better protect consumers.

Silicone baking moulds are handy, as the material can withstand high temperatures and does not stick. But silicone can also add chemical contaminants to baked goods as revealed by a new test.

Out of 44 silicone baking moulds, 23% (10 products) either released contaminants in high amounts – or the amount increased between tests, indicating that the products are not suitable for repeated use.

In addition, in 36 products (82%), the test detected substances of concern in low levels including some the EU has identified as 'Substances of Very High Concern' under its flagship chemicals legislation, REACH. Unlike plastic materials, no dedicated EU rules exist to ensure that silicone products meant for food contact are safe for consumers.

While none of the tested products in isolation may endanger human health, the results illustrate that there is ample room for manufacturers to improve: 7 samples (16%) released only minor amounts of contaminants and no substances of concern.

Monique Goyens, Director General at the European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), commented:

"As the festive season approaches, many Europeans delight in sampling traditional, home-baked cakes and breads. Silicone baking moulds are a popular, easy-to-use alternative to metal forms. The results of this test however show they may also add unwanted ingredients to our cakes and cookies.

"These results illustrate that EU legislation meant to protect consumers is half baked as it essentially only regulates plastic materials. It is high time the EU cooks up strict safeguards for silicone and other materials to protect consumers against unwanted food contaminants."

Recommendations to policymakers

A 2021 [test by four consumer organisations](#) found chemicals of concern in single-use tableware made of popular non-plastic alternatives, such as disposable plant fibre bowls, paper straws, or palm leaf plates. This new evidence now again drives home that the EU needs to rethink its

regulatory approach. BEUC therefore calls on the EU to [regulate all food contact materials](#) without delay.

About the tests

Read the report: [Half baked: EU food packaging laws need a rethink to keep consumers safe](#).

- The test focused on silicone bakeware since their repeated use at high temperatures, often in contact with fatty and oily foodstuff, is expected to result in higher releases of chemical contaminants.
- The test sampled 44 different silicone baking moulds, purchased in physical shops, including discount stores, in web shops, and on marketplaces such as AliExpress, Amazon, and Wish. All samples were sent to a laboratory for analysis.
- The test found that 10 samples (23%) released either high amounts of chemical contaminants into food simulant – or that this amount increased between tests. Two samples released contaminants above the legal limit established in the [EU Plastics Regulation](#).
- In 36 products (82%), the test detected substances of concern, including some the EU has identified as Substances of Very High Concern or that are suspected endocrine disruptors. These chemicals were however detected at low levels, suggesting the absence of an immediate concern for consumer health.

Who was involved in the test

The test was led by International Consumer Research and Testing (ICRT) on behalf of consumer organisations Altroconsumo (Italy), Deco (Portugal), [Forbrugerrådet Tænk](#) (Denmark), [OCU](#) (Spain), [Sveriges Konsumenter](#) (Sweden), [Testachats](#) / [Testaankoop](#) (Belgium), [UFC-Que Choisir](#) (France), [Verein für Konsumenteninformation](#) (Austria), and Zveza Potrošnikov Slovenije – ZPS (Slovenia).

This press release has been amended in February 2023 to clarify that nine, instead of ten as mentioned originally, national consumer organisations took part in the research.

