

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 5a

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION AND FOODS FOR SPECIAL DIETARY USES

Forty-first Session

Dusseldorf, Germany
24 – 29 November 2019

PROPOSED DRAFT GUIDELINE FOR READY-TO-USE THERAPEUTIC FOODS

Comments by AO ECS

AO ECS

AO ECS, the Association Of European Coeliac Societies, proposes that RUFT should be gluten-free because of following reasons:

- The prevalence of coeliac disease in children in Africa is 5.6%. (1)
- ESPGHAN, the European Society for Paediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition, published in 2016: "Large quantities of gluten should be avoided during the first weeks after gluten introduction and during infancy". (2)
- In countries where large varieties of foods are available, the ESPGHAN recommendation can be observed. However, this is not the case in countries or districts where infants very urgently need RUTF because of war or environmental disasters and food is very limited or not at all available.
- Undiagnosed coeliac disease can easily been interpreted as SAM (severe acute malnutrition). It cannot be estimated that the knowledge about coeliac disease is known in all countries or districts and that diagnostic equipments are available. Gluten-free RUTF will prevent life threatening situations in such cases.

Therefore we kindly ask to insert in **5.1.4 Cereals** in the first line **gluten-free** that the text should read:

All milled gluten-free cereals.... And also in **5.2.1 Carbohydrates**, 3. Line "Only precooked and/or gelatinized **gluten-free** starches may be added."

References:

1. Why is coeliac disease endemic in the people of the Sahara? Catassi C, Rättsch IM, Gandolfi L, Pratesi R, Fabiani E, El Asmar R, Frijia M, Bearzi I, Vizzoni L. *Lancet*. 1999 Aug 21; 354(9179):647-8
2. Gluten Introduction and the Risk of Coeliac Disease: A Position Paper by the European Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition. Szajewska H1, Shamir R, Mearin L, Ribes-Koninckx C, Catassi C, Domellöf M, Fewtrell MS, Husby S, Papadopoulou A, Vandenplas Y, Castillejo G, Kolacek S, Koletzko S, Korponay-Szabó IR, Lionetti E, Polanco I, Troncone R., *J Pediatr Gastroenterol Nutr*. 2016 Mar;62(3):507-13