

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

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CX 4/35.2

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TO: Codex Contact Points
Interested International Organizations

FROM: Secretariat, Codex Alimentarius Commission
Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy
E-mail: codex@fao.org

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR COMMENTS AT STEP 6 ON THE:

- (1) Draft maximum level for deoxynivalenol (DON) in cereal-based foods for infants and young children;
- (2) Draft maximum levels for DON in raw cereal grains (wheat, maize and barley) and associated sampling plan and in
- (3) Draft maximum levels for DON in flour, semolina, meal and flakes from wheat, maize or barley ¹

DEADLINE: 15 December 2013

COMMENTS: To:
Secretariat,
Codex Alimentarius Commission,
Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme,
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Rome, Italy
E-mail: codex@fao.org

BACKGROUND

1. The 7th Session of the Committee on Contaminants in Food (April 2013) agreed to the ML of 2 mg/kg for raw cereals (wheat, maize and barley) prior to sorting and removal of damaged kernels with the associated sampling plan with sample size of 5 kg for maize and 1 kg for wheat and barley. For flour, semolina, meal and flakes derived from wheat, maize or barley, the Committee agreed to establish a ML of 1 mg/kg. For cereal-based foods for infants and young children, the Committee agreed to establish the ML of 0.2 mg/kg and that this ML would apply to cereal-based foods as consumed.
2. The Committee further agreed to forward the proposed draft MLs for raw cereal grains including associated sampling plan, and for flour, semolina, meal and flakes from wheat, maize or barley to Step 5 and the proposed draft ML for cereal-based foods for infants and young children to Step 5/8 for adoption by the 36th Session of the Commission. A number of reservations were entered on the proposed MLs and sampling plan. The full details of the discussion including the MLs and sampling plans can be found in the report of the session.²
3. The 68th session of the Executive Committee (June 2013) recommended that the Commission adopt the MLs at Step 5 and that the CCCF give further consideration to pending issues with respect to MLs for DON in raw grains at its next session. The full details of the discussion can be found in the report of the session.³
4. The 36th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (July 2013) noted that the ML for DON in cereal-based foods for infants and young children was presented to the Commission as applying to cereal-based foods “as consumed”. The Commission noted that clarification was needed on whether the ML should apply to cereal-based foods for infants and young children “as consumed” or to the “dry matter” and therefore agreed to adopt the proposed draft ML at Step 5 for further consideration in the CCCF.⁴

¹ Reports of Codex meetings are available on the Codex website: <http://www.codexalimentarius.org/> by clicking on “Meetings and Reports”, 2013.

² REP13/CF, paras. 55-70, Appendix III.

³ REP13/CCEXEC, paras. 31-32.

⁴ REP13/CAC, para. 80.

5. As regards the other MLs and sampling plans, the Commission noted that while there was support for the adoption of the MLs, there were also concerns expressed either to all the MLs in general or to the MLs for raw cereal grains in particular. The Commission adopted the MLs at Step 5 and recommended that the CCCF give further consideration to the pending issues. The Commission noted the reservation on the ML for raw cereal grains, on the sampling plan for raw cereal grains, and on the MLs for raw cereal grains and for flour, semolina, meal and flakes derived from wheat, maize or barley. The full details of the discussion can be found in the report of the session.⁵

Request for comments

6. Codex members and observers wishing to submit comments on the draft MLs for DON in cereal-based foods for infants and young children; flour, semolina, meal and flakes from wheat, maize or barley; and raw cereals grains (wheat, maize and barley) including associated sampling plan should do so in writing as directed above.

7. In making comments, members and observers are invited to pay special attention to those issues that have risen concerns and reservations when discussing the MLs and sampling plans at the CCCF, CCXEC and the CAC for instance whether the MLs are sufficiently health protective for the different regions and population groups based on the JECFA evaluation and other relevant risk assessment available in member countries; whether MLs for raw cereals and processed cereals (flour, semolina, flakes) should be established or whether one would exclude the need for the other or whether one is more relevant for international trade or whether one is more achievable by Codex members while still being worldwide health protective (e.g. raw cereals versus climate change and flour / semolina / flakes versus processing techniques to reduce contamination); whether the proposed sampling plan is appropriate or different sample sizes should apply, etc.

8. The appropriate scientific and technical justification should be presented in support of the current proposals or in submitting revised proposals in order to assist the CCCF in the resolution of these matters at its next session.

⁵ REP13/CAC, paras. 96-100.