

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 16 D

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES AND CONTAMINANTS

Thirty-fifth Session

Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, 17 - 21 March 2003

DISCUSSION PAPER ON TIN

COMMENTS

The following comments have been received from Poland, South Africa, The European Community:

POLAND:

Maximum limits for tin in Polish regulations are as follows:

- 10 mg/kg for foods packed in tinsplate cans intended for infants and young children (under 3 years) and 100 mg/kg for other foods
- 10 mg/kg for processed fruit, processed vegetables and all products containing processed fruit and vegetables intended for infants and young children (under 3 years) and 20 mg/kg for other foods.

SOUTH AFRICA:

Generally, the paper on tin is well presented and covers almost every aspect of food contamination by tin and its compounds.

Paragraph 17: The value of 700 ppm does not correspond exactly to 18mg/kg bw/day, based on a consumption of 1.5 kg of food, it should be 720 ppm, but perhaps the figure has been rounded off.

Paragraph 56: It would be wise to indicate the inter-dependence between tin and iron in this paragraph or at least to refer to par 45.

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY:

The European Community submitted comments on this item for the 34th CCFAC, although they were not taken into account. The same comments were submitted in response to Codex Circular Letter CL 2002/10-

FAC and they are reiterated at this time. More specific comments on limit values are likely to follow in advance of the 35th CCFAC meeting.

The European Community has examined the proposed maximum levels for tin in foodstuffs and agrees that maximum levels should be set. JECFA (June 2000) concluded that tin can cause gastric irritation in some individuals when present in beverages at 150 mg/kg and when present in other canned foods at 250 mg/kg. The EU Scientific Committee on Food (December 2001) concurred with this view.

The European Community wishes to assess all available information on levels of tin in foods before concluding on the most appropriate maximum levels. However, at this time it has been possible to conclude on the following points to ensure the safety of consumers:

- 1) The proposed maximum level of 250 mg/kg in solid canned foods is too high; a separate maximum level of 200 mg/kg in canned liquid foods/ beverages would be too high.
- 2) If separate maximum levels are set for liquid and solid foods, the categories should be 'canned beverages' and 'canned foods other than beverages'. The proposal to list 'liquid canned foods' is too vague. Confusion could arise, for example for relevant foods such as fruits canned in juice.
- 3) Maximum levels should be set in line with the scientific advice, to protect the safety of consumers and in particular those individuals who may be sensitive to tin.
- 4) A separate maximum level might be necessary for tin in canned foods for infants.