

APPENDIX VIII**PROPOSAL FOR A NEW WORK ON THE REVISION OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE PREVENTION AND REDUCTION OF AFLATOXIN CONTAMINATION IN PEANUTS (CXC 55-2004)****PROJECT DOCUMENT****(For approval)****1) Purpose and scope of the project**

The purpose and scope of the proposed new work is to revise the *Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Aflatoxin Contamination in Peanuts* (CXC 55-2004) to reflect new information available to prevent and reduce aflatoxin contamination in peanuts.

2) Relevance and timeliness

The 16th Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF16, 2023) identified this code of practice (CoP) for revision as part of an overall work on the review of Codex standards for contaminants. There is already a maximum level (ML) of 15 µg/kg for peanuts for further processing adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and a proposed ML for ready-to-eat (RTE) peanuts under consideration by CCCF. Aflatoxins were last evaluated by the 83rd Meeting of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA83, 2017). JECFA83 reaffirmed the conclusions of JECFA49 (1997) that aflatoxins are genotoxic human liver carcinogens. Given the health concerns associated with aflatoxin, the new work aims to continue to reduce exposures by updating the existing CoP.

3) Main aspects to be covered

The work will address risk management measures to prevent or reduce aflatoxin contamination in peanuts, supported by scientific data, that have become available since adoption of the code of practice (CoP) which are proven to be effective and are widely applied across regions. It will also address information to contextualize aflatoxin formation in peanuts such as the identification of aflatoxigenic species and the stages of peanut reproductive growth.

4) Assessment against the criteria for establishment of work priorities**(a) Consumer protection from the point of view of health and fraudulent practices.**

A revised CoP that includes measures proven to prevent and reduce aflatoxin production would result in a reduction in aflatoxins exposure from peanuts.

(b) Diversification of national legislations and apparent resultant or potential impediments to international trade.

A revised CoP is needed to ensure that the most updated information on recommended practices to prevent and reduce aflatoxin exposure from peanuts is available to all member countries. It will also provide the means to enable exporters to reduce aflatoxins levels and to assist in compliance with the current ML of 15 µg/kg for peanuts for further processing and a proposed ML for RTE peanuts under consideration by CCCF.

(c) Scope of work and establishment of priorities between the various sections of the work.

The revision of the CoP should prioritize the inclusion of relevant and efficient practices to prevent and reduce aflatoxin contamination in peanuts that are effectively and worldwide applicable.

(d) Work already undertaken by other international organizations in this field.

JECFA assessments.

5) Relevance to Codex Strategic Goals**(a) Goal 1 Address current, emerging and critical issues in a timely manner.**

The proposed new work will support competent authorities and food business operators to implement practical interventions that can be used to reduce risk of aflatoxins in peanuts.

(b) Goal 2 Develop standards based on science and Codex risk-analysis principles.

Additional guidance by Codex might assist countries in reviewing their legislation to reduce the risk of aflatoxins and support fair practice in international peanuts trade.

(c) Goal 3 Increase impact through the recognition and use of Codex standards.

A revised CoP containing updated risk management practices to prevent and reduce aflatoxin contamination in ~~to eat~~ ready to eat peanuts will facilitate compliance with Codex MLs for aflatoxins in peanuts.

(d) Goal 4 Facilitate the participation of all Codex Members throughout the standard setting process.

Peanuts are an important commodity in international trade and there are new measures that have been identified that contribute to the reduction and prevention of aflatoxins in peanuts.

(e) Goal 5 Enhance work management systems and practices that support the efficient and effective achievement of all strategic plan goals.

This work will help developing and maintaining efficient and effective work management practices and systems to prevent or reduce aflatoxin contamination in peanuts to achieve the Codex goals of ensuring public health protection and trade facilitation.

6) Information on the relationship between the proposal and other existing Codex documents

The CoP is important to support the implementation ~~or development~~ of MLs for aflatoxins contamination in peanuts (see points 1 and 4b).

7) Identification of any requirement for any availability of expert scientific advice

JECFA83 has already provided needed expert scientific advice.

8) Identification of any need for technical input to the standard from external bodies

Currently, there is no identified need for additional technical input from external bodies, as there is information available published by ICMSF (International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods) (2018) as well as other publicly available literature that can support the inclusion/revision of the CoP to include new management measures that were proven to be effective in reducing or preventing aflatoxin contamination in peanuts.

9) Timeline for completion of the new work

Work will start following approval by CAC in 2024. Completion of work is expected by 2027 or earlier.