

# codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

JOINT OFFICE: Via delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 Rome Tel.: 39.06.57051 Telex: 625825-625853 FAO I E-mail Codex@fao.org Facsimile:39.06.5705.4593

**Agenda Item 15 A**

**CX/FAC 02/18**

## **JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**

### **CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES AND CONTAMINANTS**

#### **Thirty-fourth Session**

**Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 11-15 March 2002**

### **DRAFT MAXIMUM LEVEL FOR OCHRATOXIN A IN WHEAT, BARLEY AND RYE AND DERIVED PRODUCTS**

The following comments have been received from Argentina.

#### **ARGENTINA**

Argentina considers the proposed maximum level of Ochratoxin A for cereals of 5 µg/kg unacceptable.

From the point of view of its comparison with Aflatoxin B1, Ochratoxin A has been classified by the IARC as a “possible human carcinogen” group 2B, while Aflatoxin which is a proven human carcinogen belongs to Group 1 A.

Risk analysis studies should be carried out by the JECFA in order that decisions can be made in respect of Ochratoxin A.

Until the JECFA has carried out an evaluation in 2004 and in view of the fact that the difference in health hazard between the two limits of 5 or 20 µg/kg is not of significant importance, and taking as antecedent what has been agreed for Aflatoxins, the Codex should adopt the same criterion for Ochratoxin A and accept 20 µg/kg as the maximum level.

Just as for the rest of the mycotoxins, it is better to establish guidelines with recommendations to prevent contamination than to fix tolerance levels and carry out checks which could be very costly, in particular for developing countries.