



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



World Health
Organization

JOINT FAO/WHO EXPERT COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES (JECFA)

Call for Experts by the FAO/WHO Joint Secretariat

Exposure Assessment: Estimating Dietary Intake of Chemicals in Food

Introduction

The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) is an international expert scientific committee that is administered jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). It has been meeting since 1956, initially to evaluate the safety of food additives. Its work now also includes the evaluation of contaminants, naturally occurring toxicants and residues of veterinary drugs in food.

To date, JECFA has evaluated more than 2600 food additives, approximately 50 contaminants and naturally occurring toxicants, and residues of approximately 100 veterinary drugs. The Committee has also developed principles for the safety assessment of chemicals in food that are consistent with current thinking on risk assessment and take account of recent developments in toxicology and other relevant scientific areas such as microbiology, biotechnology, exposure assessment, food chemistry including analytical chemistry, and assessment of maximum residue limits for veterinary drugs.

According to the procedure, the FAO/WHO Joint Secretariat establishes one joint list of experts for exposure assessment (appointments are for a period of five years). Experts are selected from the list, referred to as the *roster* of experts, for each meeting of JECFA to serve as members of the Committee or to assist the Secretariat with preparatory work.

Expertise required

For food additives, veterinary drugs, contaminants and naturally occurring toxins, we require experts who can

- (i.) perform food consumption studies of human populations (including specific sub-populations like children and the elderly) using validated protocols;
- (ii.) develop and apply sampling protocols and study the influence of the sampling protocols on the analytical results;
- (iii.) evaluate the comparability and reliability of analytical data received;
- (iv.) analyse the concentration of chemicals occurring in food items and statistically evaluate data obtained;
- (v.) establish and maintain databases relevant to the intake assessment of chemicals in food;
- (vi.) model/extrapolate the dietary intake of chemicals in food by humans using food consumption data; and
- (vii.) assess the intake of food chemicals by humans using a variety of techniques, including stochastic modelling.

(viii.) assess the exposure of population subgroups to a contaminant or group of contaminants

Basic and essential qualifications of experts

FAO and WHO place great value on the technical qualification and independence of the participating experts as well as to the transparency of its selection process. Therefore, both organisations have developed well-defined procedures for selecting experts that promote the excellence and independence of opinions provided.

Candidates should fulfil the following basic and essential qualifications:

- a. advanced university degree(s) in chemistry, biology, food science and technology, pharmacology, biochemistry, microbiology, epidemiology, or statistics;
 - b. scientific publications in peer reviewed journals, in particular, relevant publications within the last ten years, or proven experience in delivering scientific opinions on food safety/risk assessments (including exposure assessments) at national, regional or international level;
 - c. at least 5 years of professional experience in food safety risk assessment and in particular the dietary exposure assessment of chemicals;
 - d. ability to prepare documents and spreadsheets in electronic format;
 - e. good knowledge of existing data and methodologies used for dietary exposure assessment;
- and
- f. past participation in national or international scientific bodies, committees, etc., pertinent to the above disciplines and described tasks.

Applicants must also have a good working knowledge of English as meetings and correspondence will be in English and translation services are not provided.

Criteria and process for selection of experts

The criteria for the selection of experts are the basic and essential qualifications together with the proven competence and expertise in various tasks related to exposure assessment as described above. The *curriculum vitae* of applicants will be reviewed on the basis of the criteria listed above by a selection panel consisting of three or more individuals including at least one independent, internationally recognised expert appointed by FAO or WHO. The purpose of the panel review is to determine whether an applicant meets all the essential requirements. The highly qualified individuals selected from the applicants will be placed on the roster that will be used by FAO and WHO to invite experts to JECFA meetings and/or expert consultations.

In selecting experts FAO and WHO will consider, in addition to scientific and technical excellence, diversity and complementarities of scientific backgrounds, and balanced representation from geographic regions including developing and developed countries as well as gender.

Appointment of Experts

The experts will be invited to participate only in their individual scientific capacity. No expert shall represent the position of the government of which he or she is a citizen, or of the institution with which he or she is associated. The experts designated to participate in such meetings will not receive any remuneration, however, travel costs, subsistence allowance and other related expenses will be the exclusive responsibility of FAO and WHO.

Application

Interested applicants should submit their *curriculum vitae* including a description of their education, work experience including reference to two persons with knowledge of the professional qualifications and a list of peer reviewed publications relevant to the factors indicated above. Do not include reprints in your submission unless specifically requested at a later date.

Before participating in meetings, candidates will be required to declare any potential interests associated with the substances that will be evaluated through completion of a standard form adopted by FAO or WHO. They will be asked to indicate in writing any potential conflict of interest on their part or their spouse that may affect their scientific independence as experts including one or more of the following conditions: employment (past or present) by any commercial enterprise or private or civil sector association; a recipient of research or other study grants from such enterprises or associations; or shareholdings in commercial enterprises active in fields related to food safety. In addition, a confidentiality undertaking is also to be signed to ensure proper handling of dossiers and proprietary information. These declarations will be retained by the Joint Secretariat.

Names of selected individuals will be posted on the FAO and WHO web sites, including their affiliation.

Deadline

The call for experts is open without deadline. Evaluation of candidates is carried out annually and in order to be added to the roster in a given year, applications should be sent electronically or post-marked by **15 November of the previous year** to one of the addresses mentioned below. Review and selection of candidates will take place annually between 15 and 31 December and applicants will be notified in January of the outcome of the evaluation. Applications received after that date will be evaluated following the same procedure as described above and if they meet the criteria will be added to the roster the following year. Selected candidates will remain on the roster for a period of 4 years, after which time they will be removed from the roster and will have to reapply if they wish to be considered further.

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