27th May 2011

Dear Sir or Madam,

Food Contact Materials, Contaminants and Irradiation – Update Bulletin May 2011

This latest issue of our periodic update bulletin will provide you with information on key developments in the above areas.

The attached summary of news items details the areas covered in this bulletin. Clicking on the associated links will take you directly to the relevant material.

I hope you find this helpful.

Yours faithfully,

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SUMMARY OF NEWS ITEMS

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Food Contact Materials (Science & Policy)

Science (Research)

Develop a post-market test for recycled food contact materials (FS241007)

In March this year an Agency-funded project began to gain knowledge of typical substances that would always be present in PET (polyethylene terephthalate) plastic and paper & board materials before they are recycled as a result of their first use, but which should be removed by the recycling process. Once this suite of chemical substances is identified and multi-methods for their analysis developed, then materials and articles, or the packed food, could be tested.

This test could verify that the recycling process has been properly implemented and in effect would be a post-market 'challenge test'. This will provide a means of ensuring quality production of recycled food contact materials and enforce the appropriate legislation. The results are due to be published in the Spring of 2013.

Policy

Commission Directive 2011/8/EU (Bisphenol A)

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:026:0011:0014:EN:PDF

Commission Directive 2011/8/EU amended the Plastics Directive 2002/72/EC to introduced phased EU-wide restrictions on polycarbonate feeding bottles manufactured using Bisphenol A (BPA) intended for infants up to 12 months of age. This Directive was implemented by The Plastic Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI 231/2011) which:

(a) Prohibited, from 1st March, the use of BPA in the manufacture of polycarbonate feeding bottles (intended for infants up to 12 months of age) in the UK, and

(b) Prohibits, from 1st June 2011, the placing of such products on the market in, and their import into, the UK.

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/231/made/data.pdf

Regulation (EU) No. 10/2011 (Plastic Food Contact Materials)

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:012:0001:0089:EN:PDF

The requirements of the Plastics Directive 2002/72/EC (as amended) were updated and consolidated into this single, directly applicable, EU Regulation which replaced the Directive and came into effect on 1st May 2011. The new EU Regulation was amended by Regulation (EU) No. 321/2011 in order to carry forward the prohibitions on BPA that had been enacted by Directive (EU) 2011/8 (see above). This amendment also came into effect on 1st May 2011.

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:087:0001:0002:EN:PDF

Kitchenware from China – Commission Regulation (EU) No. 284/2011

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:077:0025:0029:EN:PDF

This was published in the Official Journal on 23rd March (OJ L77/25) concerning requirements on the importation of melamine and polyamide ('nylon') kitchenware from China and Hong Kong.

As from 1st July 2011 each such consignment should be accompanied by an attestation, containing similar information as in the Declaration of Compliance (DoC) required under Regulation (EU) No 10/2011. EU Member States must check 100% of the documentation.

For polyamide kitchen utensils it will be compulsory to have test data on primary aromatic amine (PAA) migration, and for melamine-ware on formaldehyde migration. EU Member States will be required to sample and analyse 10% of such consignments to check that the test data is correct.

Testing will be done at the first port of introduction into the EU, for this the port will need to be notified of such a consignment at least two working days beforehand. Customs have been mandated to hold the consignment and release them for free circulation when deemed satisfactory. The costs of this are expected to be covered by the importers.

The Agency is conducting a public consultation on national Regulations to provide for the execution and enforcement of the EU Regulation and an associated draft Impact Assessment.

http://www.food.gov.uk/consultations/consulteng/2011/plastickitchenwareregs2011eng

Environmental Contaminants (Inorganic)

European Food Safety Authority Scientific Opinion on Lead

Recent opinions by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the Joint WHO/FAO Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) agree that it is not possible to set a tolerable lead intake and therefore minimisation of exposure to lead from all sources is desirable (particularly in respect to developmental neurotoxicity in young children, cardiovascular and nephrotoxicity effects in adults). Limits in the EU are currently aligned with those of CODEX (where set) and it appears that for many foods the typical levels found are well below the current limits, however, discussions have commenced at the Expert Working Group to review current EU limits and the Commission has produced a draft discussion document. This is at an early stage and robust data will be required to justify any future reductions or new limits.

If you have data on lead occurrence that you consider would aid discussions and prove valuable in ensuring any revisions to limits are proportionate and achievable, please do let us have these as soon as possible.

Cereal products, vegetables and tap water contribute most to dietary exposure to lead for most Europeans, while dust and soil can be important non-dietary sources in children.
At the recent Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF), 21-25 March 2011, as a result of the in-session working group on the follow up by CCCF on recent JECFA evaluations it was agreed that the USA should establish an electronic working group to

reconsider the existing maximum limits for lead in children and infant foods as well as in canned fruits and vegetables.

Lead Ammunition Group (LAG)

With regard to the issue of lead in game and whether or not this poses a risk to human health, the Lead Ammunition Group (LAG) set up in the UK to advise the Agency on the use of lead ammunition. The Agency will reserve it views until it has an opportunity to consider this advice, which is now anticipated later in the year. The Agency (FSA Scotland) has commissioned work to collect data on high level game consumption which will also report this year and inform our position.

Arsenic

At the October expert working group meeting there was a presentation from the EU Reference Laboratory (EURL) on arsenic proficiency testing. In summary there were large variations when testing shark (dogfish) liver for inorganic arsenic but was not such an issue for rice where consistency was much better and considered satisfactory. Rice (and rice based products) is one of the major contributors to dietary exposure to inorganic arsenic.
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Sea fish inorganic arsenic is not considered an issue as levels are accepted as being generally low, although it is not known if this is also the case for fresh water fish and bivalves.

The EURL is to look at inorganic arsenic methods for wheat, some vegetables and some seaweeds in future projects. The European Committee for Standardization (CEN) is also due to produce a standardised method for inorganic arsenic by 2013.

Stakeholders' views are sought including information on current industry measures to control levels of arsenic in rice and rice products. If you are able to provide useful data for arsenic in any products (particularly all cereal products, seaweed and vegetables) that may help inform future discussions on limits please do so as soon as possible.

A research requirement for 'Arsenic speciation in fruit and vegetables grown in the UK' was previously published by the Agency and details can be found at:

http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/procurement/resreq/

This now commissioned research and surveillance work regarding arsenic speciation in UK grown fruit and vegetables is due to be completed December 2011.

At the recent Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food meeting China presented the discussion document on arsenic in rice. After some discussion it was decided that they would seek to convene a new electronic working group to look at this again and consider whether it was appropriate to propose a limit for total arsenic or inorganic arsenic only, among other issues.

Cadmium

At the February expert working group meeting EFSA presented a clarifying statement on differences in their recent opinion on cadmium from the 2010 JECFA opinion. The same studies were used by EFSA and JECFA. The main differences were in the identification of

the reference point, the statistical approach to variability and uncertainty and the methodology for relating dietary intake to urine concentrations. EFSA reaffirmed their Tolerable Weekly Intake for Cadmium of 2.5µg/kg BW.

There was further discussion on the review of cadmium limits in light of the EFSA opinion and it is anticipated that the Commission will consult stakeholders on any proposals. To ensure that any revisions to the limits are proportionate it is essential that as wide a body of data as possible is used. Therefore if you have any cadmium occurrence data that you wish to be considered it will be welcomed. In particular data relating to regional and varietal variation in potatoes and also data on cereals and oilseeds will be useful.

Cadmium in brown crab meat

Levels of cadmium in brown crab meat vary but can often be higher than those in the white meat as the brown meat includes the crab's internal organs which can accumulate contaminants. The EU Commission has produced an information note in regard to cadmium in brown crab meat. The expectation is that individual member states will produce bespoke consumption advice relevant to their consumers.

As such, the Agency is consulting with stakeholders and has held initial discussions with the Shellfish Association of Great Britain to produce UK consumer information on the consumption of brown crab meat. The intention is to provide realistic and proportionate advice based on solid evidence. There are no plans to try to set a limit for cadmium in brown crab meat or to ban brown crab meat.

The Agency is requesting the following data from industry:

- How much brown crab meat is sold annually in UK?
- How is it sold (e.g. 'as is', in what type of products, etc)?
- What is the percentage brown meat in the various products (ranges for products, rather than specific recipes)?
- What are the ranges of cadmium found in the brown meat (the more data we have on this, the better able we are to provide advice on a more realistic basis. In other words, at the moment with the relatively little data we have, we may have to take a more conservative and precautionary approach as we cannot be sure that the higher values are 'outliers'.)?
- Any information on portion sizes for the various types of product would also be helpful.

At EU Standing Committee in November an amendment was agreed to Commission Regulation 1881/2006 clarifying that the limits as set for cadmium in crab meat only apply to meat from the claws and appendages ('white meat'), not from the cephalothorax ('brown meat'). Some Member States had been variously applying the limit to non 'white meat' from the cephalothorax and rejecting UK crabs on this basis. This has now been published in the Official Journal of the EU as European Commission Regulation (EU) No. 420/2011.

Metals in baby foods/weaning foods

At the Standing Committee on General Food Law on the 21st February, the Swedish National Food Administration tabled a paper relating to metals in baby foods, based on a small study (18 samples) recently published by the Institute of Environmental Medicine. The study reported concerns with the levels of metals, particularly arsenic, cadmium and

manganese found in infant formula and infant porridges. It is likely therefore that this may be a topic for discussion at a future Expert Working Group meeting.

The UK has conducted extensive surveys of contaminants including metals in weaning foods and infant formula in 2003, 2006 and a follow up study on methyl mercury and arsenic in 2007. These are available on the Food Standards Agency website at http://www.food.gov.uk/science/surveillance/ . The conclusions of which were that these did not give concern for the health of infants.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or comments regarding any of the above, or any information or data that you would like to submit, please contact Gavin Shears (E-mail: gavin.shears@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk/ Tel 020 7276 8713).

Process Contaminants

Acrylamide

The Agency in accordance with European Commission Recommendation (EU) No. 2010/307 is continuing to survey retail products for acrylamide and is carrying out a further survey of Acrylamide in UK Retails Products from November 2010 until April 2011. As well as providing extra data, this additional monitoring should provide the Commission and stakeholders with further evidence of the impact of the CIAA toolbox and help to inform future mitigation strategies.

The Recommendation on investigations into the levels of acrylamide in food (C(2010) 9681 final), has been agreed and is available from the EU Commission. It has not and will not be published in the Official Journal of the EU. It contains 'indicative values' that are intended to stimulate investigations into food business operator understanding and action in regard to acrylamide reduction and therefore better understand the issue. They are not maximum levels.

As such and with a lot of UK input a 'Checklist' to be used by enforcement personnel when undertaking these investigations has now been finalised. The Agency has also, with the support of a stakeholders drafting group, produced guidance on use of the checklist for use in the UK. It has also been shared via the Commission with other Member States for information. The Agency's intention is to ensure a harmonised approach, gathering consistent and useful data and minimise the burden on FBOs and enforcement officers.

In September 2010 the Agency published the most recent Food Survey Information Sheet (FSIS) for the Process Contaminants Survey, which measured acrylamide, 3-MCPD, furan and ethyl carbamate from 2007 – 2009 which is available at: http://www.food.gov.uk/science/surveillance/fsisbranch2010/fsis0310

EFSA have also now published their report on the first three years of surveillance which is available at: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/datex110420.htm

The Agency welcomes any data on acrylamide or any other process contaminants which may be used to inform UK policy and aid discussions.

Furan

At the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food, 21-25 March 2011**,** the paper on development of a code of practice for furan (the UK had been on the electronic working group) was discussed. There was a consensus to revise and update the discussion paper when more data on mitigation techniques become available. Currently the mitigation advice chiefly relates to consumer food preparation, so it is considered inappropriate to draft a code of practice for industry at this time.

Ethyl Carbamate

At the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food, 21-25 March 2011, the paper on a proposed draft code of practice for the reduction of ethyl carbamate in stone fruit distillates was agreed and is now ready to be forwarded for adoption by CODEX.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or comments regarding any of the above, or any information or data that you would like to submit, please contact Gavin Shears (E-mail: gavin.shears@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk/ Tel 020 7276 8713).

Environmental Contaminants (Organic)

Discussions from the Expert Committee on Persistent Organic Pollutants, 07 February 2010.

Dioxins and PCBs

The Commission announced its intention to combine the introduction of limits for non dioxin-like PCBs with the revised limits for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs and the replacement of 1998 TEFs with 2005 TEFs and put the whole proposal to a forthcoming Standing Committee. However, there was very little discussion on the actual content of the proposal, which remains much as it was, and nothing was tabled for the March or April Standing Committees. Barring any further changes, the new limits will appear as follows:

Foodstuffs		**MAXIMUM LEVELS**		
		Dioxins (WHO-PCDD/F-TEQ)	**Sum of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs (WHO-PCDD/F-PCB-TEQ)**	**Sum of PCBs 28, 52, 101, 138, 153 and 180 (ICES–6)**
5.1	Meat and meat products (excluding edible offal) of the following animals: - bovine animals and sheep - poultry - pigs	 2.5 pg/g fat 1.75 pg/g fat 1.0 pg/g fat	 4.0 pg/g fat 3.0 pg/g fat 1.25 pg/g fat	 40 ng/g fat 40 ng/g fat 40ng/g fat
5.2	Liver of terrestrial animals referred to in 5.1. with the exception of sheep, and derived products thereof.	4.5 pg/g fat	10.0 pg/g fat	40ng/g fat
5.3	Muscle meat of fish and fishery products and products thereof, with the exemption of - wild caught eel - wild caught fresh water fish, with the exception of diadromous fish	3.5 pg/g wet weight	6.5 pg/g wet weight	75 ng/g wet weight

	species caught in fresh water - wild caught char originating in the Baltic region - wild caught river lamprey originating in the Baltic region - wild caught trout originating in the Baltic region - fish liver and derived products - marine oils The maximum level for crustaceans applies to muscle meat from appendages and abdomen. In case of crabs and crab-like crustaceans (*Brachyura and Anomura*) it applies to muscle meat from appendages.			
5.4	Muscle meat of wild caught fresh water fish, with the exception of diadromous fish species caught in fresh water, and products thereof.	3.5 pg/g wet weight	6.5 pg/g wet weight	125 ng/g wet weight
5.5	Muscle meat of wild caught eel (*Anguilla anguilla)* and products thereof.	3.5 pg/g wet weight	10.0 pg/g wet weight	300 ng/g wet weight
5.6	Fish liver and derived products thereof with the exception of marine oils referred to in point 5.7	--	20.0 pg/g wet weight	200 ng/g wet weight
5.7	Marine oils (fish body oil, fish liver oil and oils of other marine organisms intended for human consumption).	1.75 pg/g fat	6.0 pg/g fat	200 ng/g fat
5.8	Raw milk and dairy products, including butter fat.	2.5 pg/g fat	5.5 pg/g fat	40 ng/g fat
5.9	Hen eggs and egg products.	2.5 pg/g fat	5.0 pg/g fat	40 ng/g fat
5.10	Fat of the following animals: - bovine animals and sheep - poultry - pigs	 2.5 pg/g fat 1.75 pg/g fat 1.0 pg/g fat	 4.0 pg/g fat 3.0 pg/g fat 1.25 pg/g fat	 40 ng/g fat 40 ng/g fat 40 ng/g fat
5.11	Mixed animal fats	1.5 pg/g fat	2.50 pg/g fat	40 ng/g fat
5.12	Vegetable oils and fats	0.75 pg/g fat	1.25 pg/g fat	40 ng/g fat
5.13	Foods for infants and young children.	0.1 pg/g wet weight	0.2 pg/g wet weight	1.0 ng/g wet weight

Most of the apparent reductions to the existing limits are a consequence of the move to the 2005 TEFs, although the values in the proposals are based on an analysis of recalculated data rather than a simple *pro rata* lowering. The Action levels currently set out in Commission Recommendation 2006/88 will, in some instances, also be lowered. However, it is not anticipated that this will lead to a significant increase in the need for investigations.

Comments on the above proposal will be welcomed.

- **Dioxins in sheep liver**

This issue has yet to be resolved, pending an opinion from EFSA.

- **Brominated flame retardants (BFRs)**

These were not discussed on 7 February. However, the Commission indicated that they will be on the agenda for the next meeting, by which time it is hoped that the first of a series of EFSA opinions on BFRs will have been published.

Discussions from the Expert Committee on Environmental & Industrial Contaminants 14 February 2010.

- **Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons**

The finalised draft amendment for new and revised limits received a favourable opinion at Standing Committee on 8 April 2011. There were only minor changes to the limits in the most recent previous proposals (November 2010) and longer transition times will be allowed (see table below). Unless stated otherwise, the changes will apply from 01/09/2012.

6.1		Maximum levels (µg/kg wet weight)	
		Benzo(a)pyrene	Sum of benzo(a)pyrene, benzo(a)anthracene, chrysene and benzo(b)fluoranthene
6.1.1	Oils and fats (excluding cocoa butter and coconut oil)	2.0	10.0
6.1.2	Cocoa beans and derived products	5.0, fat basis, from 01/04/2013	35.0, fat basis, from 01/04/2013 until 31/03/2015 30.0 from 01/04/2015
6.1.3	Coconut oil	2.0	20.0
6.1.4	Smoked meat and smoked meat products;	5.0 until 31/08/2014 2.0 from 01/09/2014	30.0 until 31/08/2014 12.0 from 01/09/2014
6.1.5	Muscle meat of smoked fish and smoked fishery products, excluding those in 6.1.6 and 6.1.7. The maximum level for smoked crustaceans applies to muscle meat from appendages and abdomen. In the case of smoked crabs and crab-like crustaceans (*Brachyura* and *Anomura*) it applies to muscle meat from appendages.	5.0 until 31/08/2014 2.0 from 01/09/2014	30.0 until 31/08/2014 12.0 from 01/09/2014
6.1.6	Smoked sprats and canned smoked sprats (*Sprattus sprattus)*; bivalve molluscs (fresh, chilled or frozen); heat treated meat and heat treated meat products sold to the final consumer.	5.0	30.0
6.1.7	Bivalve molluscs (smoked)	6.0	35.0
6.1.8	Processed cereal-based foods and baby foods for infants and young children	1.0	1.0
6.1.9	Infant formulae and follow-on formulae, including infant milk and follow-on milk	1.0	1.0
6.1.10	Dietary foods for special medical purposes intended specifically for infants	1.0	1.0

For 6.1.2, the regulation is extended from cocoa butter to cocoa beans and derived products so that other intermediate products containing cocoa butter can also be controlled.

The wording of 6.1.6. includes heat treated meats because high PAH levels were reported in burgers cooked using a particular processing method and the food business concerned avoided enforcement action on the grounds that the product was not smoked. It is not

intended that this change will lead to widespread testing of cooked meat products but it will provide a basis for enforcement action in specific cases and may possibly lead to some risk-based, targeted testing.

A recent survey for PAHs in smoked foods uncovered a small number of problems with products of direct, hot smoking. However, the bulk of samples complied with even the lower limits that will not come into force until 2014, indicating that compliance should be readily achievable. Food businesses therefore have over three years to make any necessary process improvements.

Data for PAHs in cereals and vegetables tested in the same survey did not identify any high-risk products and found generally very low levels of contamination. Limits for these are consequently no longer included in the proposal. Nevertheless, there will be a recital to the effect that these categories will be kept under review as further data becomes available.

There are no immediate calls for data. However, the effectiveness of the regulation will be kept under continuous review and certain food categories, notably cereals and cereal products, vegetables and vegetable products and supplements, especially plant-derived, are likely to receive the greatest attention.

Summary of calls for data

- PAHs in cereals and cereal products, vegetables and vegetable products and marine and plant-based supplements.
- Dioxins and PCBs in all currently-regulated food groups, particularly ovine and bovine liver and pig meat.
- Non-dioxin like PCBs, particularly in freshwater fish and farm milk
- Brominated flame retardants, notably polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) in any foods
- PFOS and related compounds in any foods (both outstanding from previous bulletins)

For further information or to submit comments or data relating to dioxins, PCBs, PAHs, BFRs and PFOS please contact David Mortimer (020 72768731 david.mortimer@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)

Mycotoxins

EC Meetings

- **Pre-export checks approval for OTA in Canadian wheat**

Canada has submitted an application for pre-export checks with regards to OTA in wheat (common and durum) and certain derived products (flour). The pre-export agreement will be similar to the relevant controls for aflatoxins in peanuts from USA as described in Commission Decision 2008/47/EC. The expert working group meeting agreed to take this forward.

- **Review of Regulation (EC) 1152/2009**

At 17 January 2011 the agricultural contaminants expert working group discussed the possibility of amending the frequency of checks for some of the commodities covered by Regulation (EC) 1152/2009.

Additionally, the possibility of moving the legal basis of the regulation to article 48 of Regulation (EC) 882/2004 was also discussed. This is to reflect the permanent rather than emergency nature of the controls under Regulation (EC) 1152/2009.

No proposal has been drafted yet and the Agency will keep you informed on any developments.

JECFA/CODEX

5th session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food (CCCF), The Hague March 2011

- **Proposed Draft Maximum Levels for Deoxynivalenol (DON) and its Acetylated Derivates in Cereals and Cereal-based Products**

The discussion on setting maximum levels for DON in cereals and cereal products re-commenced last year after the 1st session of CCCF had decided to discontinue the work until further information on DON acetylated derivatives and occurrence data became available. The paper presented in the 5th session of the Committee indicated that there is still a need for more data on the acetylated derivatives of DON and therefore MLs for DON only could be discussed. The limits proposed were:

a) raw wheat, maize and barley, to be subjected to sorting or physical treatment before human consumption or use in as an ingredient in foodstuffs: 2mg/kg
b) all foods derived from wheat, barley and/or corn, including those intended for direct human consumption, except cereal-based foods for infants and young children: 1mg/kg
c) cereal-based foods for infants (up to 12 months) and young children (12 to 36 months): 0.5mg/kg.

The 5th session of the committee could not conclude on actual levels as yet. It was agreed to follow a phased approach by continuing the work on setting maximum levels (MLs) for DON only in raw wheat, maize and barley and in products relevant to international trade. An electronic working group, led by Canada, will continue this work. A proposal to request that JECFA undertake risk assessments at different hypothetical maximum levels will be considered. Subsequently, the extension of the MLs to acetylated derivatives of DON will also be considered at the 8th session of the committee. In addition, it was agreed to request CCMAS to identify methods for acetylated derivatives of DON in order to allow for its monitoring.

The revision of the *Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Mycotoxin Contamination in Cereals* (CAC/RCP 51-2003) with the scope to update it as regards DON and associated sampling plans will also be considered.

Governments and industry are encouraged to continue monitoring occurrence of DON and its derivatives.

- **Proposed Draft Maximum Levels for Total Aflatoxins in Dried Figs (At Step 4) (N11-2010)**

Following the decision of the 4th CCCF session to establish an electronic working group, led by Turkey, to discuss maximum levels for total aflatoxins in dried figs, the results of the groups work were presented to the committee this year. A maximum level of 10µg/kg for total aflatoxins in ready-to-eat dried figs was proposed. Although there was no formal opposition to the limit itself, the work did not progress as sampling plans were requested before any agreement on the proposed maximum levels could be made. Therefore, this issue will be discussed again at the next session of the committee in 2012.

- **Discussion paper on mycotoxins in sorghum**

Sorghum is used as a staple food in several countries in the world, particularly in Africa, Asia and South America. The committee had agreed at previous meetings to discuss the feasibility of developing a code of practice for the prevention and reduction of mycotoxins in sorghum and the results of the work that has been done so far were discussed during the 5th session. It was agreed that the work on this issue will continue within the remits of a re-established electronic working group, with the scope to collate more information on prevention strategies and the feasibility of developing a code of practice.

- **Discussion paper on ochratoxin A in cocoa**

This piece of work re-commenced at the 4th session of the Committee with the scope to collect information that would form the basis for the development of a code of practice for the prevention and reduction of OTA in cocoa. Although, the 5th CCCF session acknowledged the importance of developing a code of practice, it was considered premature to develop one at this stage. An electronic working group with the task to collect more monitoring data, information on dietary intakes and farming practices that have been implemented, especially by small farmers, was established. The development of a code of practice will be re-considered at the next session of the committee in 2012.

The cocoa industry is encouraged to provide more monitoring data.

The final report of the meeting is available at:

http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/archives.jsp?lang=en

EFSA Developments

The European Commission has requested EFSA to collect all available data on certain contaminants in food and feed on a continuous basis. The current call for data includes mycotoxins, process contaminants, organic and inorganic contaminants. The call can be found at:

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/data/call/datex101217.htm

FSA Publication of New Research Requirement

The Food Standards Agency has published a new research requirement which aims to identify the different factors affecting the presence of ergot and their associated alkaloids in sclerotia. The results of the project will help to inform the necessity and type of targeted

strategies required to reduce the levels of ergot alkaloids in cereals in the interests of consumer safety. The deadline for submitting proposals is Monday 6 June 2011.

Further information on the above requirement can be found at:
http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/how_we_work/procurement/resreq/rrd32progc03