

CODEX COMMITTEE ON CONTAMINANTS IN FOOD
17th Session

Panama City, 15-19 April 2024

European Union comments on

Agenda Item 11:

Discussion paper on tropane alkaloids in foods

(CX/CF 24/17/11)

Mixed Competence
European Union Vote

The European Union welcomes and appreciates the work of China as chair and Saudi Arabia as co-chair of the Electronic Working Group to prepare the discussion paper CX/CF 24/17/11 on tropane alkaloids in foods.

The EU supports the elaboration of a Code of Practice to prevent and reduce the presence of tropane alkaloids in food. Although it is acknowledged that many good practices, in particular those related to weed control, to prevent and reduce the presence of pyrrolizidine alkaloids in food are also applicable to prevent and reduce the presence of tropane alkaloids in food, the EU is for several reasons not in favour of extension of the Code of Practice for weed control to prevent and reduce pyrrolizidine alkaloid contamination in food and feed (CXC 74-2004) to tropane alkaloid contamination.

These reasons are (not exhaustive):

- weeds containing pyrrolizidine alkaloids are different than weeds containing tropane alkaloids and might therefore require different measures to mitigate.
- the feed and food contaminated with pyrrolizidine alkaloids are mainly forages and roughages, herbs, tea, herbal infusions, spices and honey while the feed and food with tropane alkaloids are mainly cereals, pseudocereals, oilseeds and herbal infusions. The crops affected by pyrrolizidine alkaloid contamination are to a certain extent different from the crops affected by tropane alkaloid contamination and this might have an influence for the measures to prevent and reduce contamination.
- the contamination of feed and food with pyrrolizidine alkaloids is mainly a contamination with the whole plant while the contamination of food is mainly a contamination with the seeds of the tropane alkaloid containing plants. This is very relevant for prevention measures at the stage of harvest and post-harvest (cleaning, sorting etc).

The EU agrees to forward the project document to CCEXEC and the CAC for approval as new work after it has been clarified if the proposed work is to develop a new Code of Practice or extend the current Code of Practice for Weed Control to Prevent and Reduce Pyrrolizidine Alkaloid Contamination in Food and Feed (CXC 74-2014)

The EU agrees to issue a call for data on the presence of tropane alkaloids (atropine and/or scopolamine) in food with detailed information on the stage in the production and distribution chain where the sample was taken.

The EU supports the request to JECFA to carry out a risk assessment related to the presence of tropane alkaloids in food. The assessment should also include the presence of tropane alkaloids in food of animal origin following the transfer of tropane alkaloids in feed to food of animal origin.

In case the CCCF17 decides that the discussion paper needs further development, the EU suggests that in the discussion paper the presence of tropane alkaloids in feed and the transfer from feed to food of animal origin should be addressed. Recent research has found that tropane alkaloids transfer from feed to food of animal origin, in particular milk¹.

¹ Transfer of tropane alkaloids (atropine and scopolamine) into the milk of subclinically exposed dairy cows
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodcont.2021.108056>