

**European Union comments for the
CODEX COMMITTEE ON CONTAMINANTS IN FOOD
10th Session**

Rotterdam, the Netherlands, 4 – 8 April 2016

Agenda Item 11

**Proposed draft Code of practice for the Prevention and Reduction of
Mycotoxin contamination in spices**

(CX/CF 16/10/12)

*Mixed Competence
Member States Vote*

The European Union and its Member States (EUMS) welcome and appreciate the work done by the Electronic Working Group chaired by Spain and co-chaired by India and The Netherlands on the draft Code of practice for the prevention and reduction of mycotoxin contamination in spices.

The EUMS agree in general with the recommendations made by the EWG as outlined in §6 of CX/CF 16/10/12. Nevertheless, the EUMS would like to propose as regards the recommendation in point a) of §6, in order to avoid confusion with such a wide term as “spices”, that the definitions should be deleted in this Code of Practice (paragraphs 7 to 9 of Appendix I). A reference to the definitions of the Code of Hygienic Practice for Spices and Dried Aromatic Herbs (CAC/RCP 42-1995) should be made instead (cross-reference).

In line with the comments made for the Code of Practice for the prevention and reduction of mycotoxin contamination in cereals, the EUMS are of the opinion that it is most appropriate to use the term "mycotoxigenic fungi" or "mycotoxigenic moulds" throughout the document;

In paragraph 29 it is important to mention that when the trucks and containers are opened in order to increase aeration and minimise the condensation effects **that this is done under conditions protected from rain.**

In paragraph 32, for the sake of clarification and in order to avoid confusion with the subsequent drying process, the EUMS propose the following wording: “... *through adequate desiccation (drying) to less than 10% moisture*”.

The EUMS are of the opinion that in paragraph 34 too much focus is made on the effectiveness of the use of chemical compounds to prevent fungal growth and mycotoxin production. The EUMS are of the opinion that it would be appropriate to soften the wording and to refer to the possible use of such chemical treatments to prevent fungal growth and mycotoxin production on the condition that their effectiveness has been demonstrated.

Furthermore, reference is made to "stored grains". The EUMS question if this should not be "stored spices" or does it only refer to grains which could also be used as spices such as e.g; sesame seed.

In paragraph 39, reference is made to a water activity below 0.60. Elsewhere in the code reference is made to the moisture content. The EUMS are of the opinion that it would be appropriate to provide a table with values of moisture content of spices in relation to water activities at a certain temperature for some spices.

In paragraph 40, it is appropriate to add (in bold): "(...) and should be constructed of a material **that can easily be cleaned** and that will not contaminate the stored spices."

In paragraph 44, point 3 a) it is important to mention that this type of controlled drying **must be** (stronger than "is") carried out in drying houses.

In Appendix II, Part I of the document, the EUMS propose to delete "poppy seeds" from the list of spices as in the Codex Classification of Food and Animal Feeds (CAC/MISC 4), the poppy seeds belong to the group of "023 Oilseed" and although it is also mentioned in the group "028 Spices" (with reference to the group 023 Oilseed), it is mainly considered as an oilseed in many countries.

In Appendix II, Part II, in point 2.4, when reference is made to the fumigation with magnesium and aluminium phosphide, it is important to refer that this has to be done with the appropriate safety measures for personnel and food safety measures and according to the instructions and legislation.

Finally, the EUMS propose to change the title of Table 2 in Appendix II, Part I, by the following: "Main species of mycotoxigenic fungi".