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**European Union comments for the
CODEX COMMITTEE ON CONTAMINANTS IN FOOD
11th Session**

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3 – 7 April 2017

Agenda Item 8

Proposed draft maximum level for total aflatoxins in ready-to-eat peanuts

(CL 2017/26-CF)

*European Union Competence
European Union Vote*

The European Union (EU) welcomes and appreciates the work done by India to prepare the document CL 2017/26 – CF related to the proposed draft maximum level for total aflatoxins in ready-to-eat peanuts.

The EU wishes to make the following comments as regards the proposed maximum level (ML) of 15 µg/kg for aflatoxin total in ready-to-eat peanuts:

- the establishment of MLs is not only to be based on exposure assessment by JECFA but has to take into account all the criteria for the establishment of maximum levels in food and feed mentioned in point 1.3.3 and more elaborated in detail in the Annex I of the General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed (CODEX STAN 193-1995);

- no justification is given as to why the previously proposed draft ML of 10 µg/kg, held at Step 4 pending the outcome of the JECFA exposure assessment for health impact, (REP15/CF § 100) could not be maintained and is changed to 15 µg/kg for aflatoxin total;

- no information nor justification is provided regarding the ML of 15 µg/kg being the level that is as low as reasonably achievable (one of the criteria for the establishment of MLs in food and feed referred to in CODEX STAN 193-1995). The information provided on the difference in rejection rate between a hypothetical ML of 4 µg/kg and 15 µg/kg is not a justification as to why the previously proposed ML of 10 µg/kg cannot be maintained;

- in the Codex STAN 193-1995, it is stated that additional processing/treatment has proven to reduce the presence of aflatoxins in consignments of peanuts. Processes that have proven to reduce levels of aflatoxins are shelling, blanching followed by colour sorting, and sorting by specific gravity and colour (damage). These processes are applicable to peanuts. Therefore, it is not justified to establish the same ML for ready-to-eat peanuts as the existing Codex ML for aflatoxins total in peanuts intended for further processing, as this is not in accordance with the criterion that MLs should be based on Good Manufacturing Processes (GMP) (CODEX STAN 193-1995).

For the reasons outlined above, the EU cannot accept the proposed ML of 15 µg/kg of aflatoxin total in ready-to-eat peanuts.

In addition the EU is of the opinion that the sampling plan for aflatoxins total in peanuts for further processing has to be reviewed to be applicable to ready-to-eat peanuts, not only for those traded in packs but also for ready-to-eat peanuts traded in bulk.