

**CODEX COMMITTEE ON CONTAMINANTS IN FOOD  
17<sup>th</sup> Session**

**Panama City, 15-19 April 2024**

**European Union comments on**

**Agenda Item 13:**

**Request for comments on the recommendation for the establishment of  
maximum levels for cadmium and lead in quinoa.**

**(CX/CF 24/17/13 and CL 2024/28-CF)**

***European Union Competence  
European Union Vote***

The European Union (EU) welcomes and appreciates the work on the maximum levels (MLs) for lead and cadmium in quinoa by the Joint FAO/WHO JECFA Secretariat.

The EU considers that enough evidence is available for establishing MLs for cadmium and lead in quinoa.

**For cadmium in quinoa**

The EU can support the extension of the ML of 0.1 mg/kg for cadmium in cereals to quinoa. In the EU the tolerable weekly intake (TWI) for cadmium is exceeded for many consumers. Therefore, MLs for cadmium in food should be set at levels, which are as low as reasonably achievable. Cereals are relevant contributors to the exposure of cadmium. By splitting up food categories into smaller sub-categories, such as specific cereals, the contribution of each specific cereal to the exposure will be lower. However, this doesn't change the fact the combined exposure to cadmium from all cereal species, results in a significant contribution to the exposure to cadmium, which should therefore be limited as much as possible.

**For lead in quinoa**

The EU prefers not to extend the ML of 0.2 mg/kg for cereals to quinoa, however on the basis if the available occurrence data the EU can support the proposed ML of 0.1 mg/kg. The EU considers that, because there is no safe threshold for lead exposure, MLs for lead in food should be set at levels, which are as low as reasonably achievable. Cereals, including quinoa, are relevant contributors to the exposure of lead. Therefore, an ML of 0.1 mg/kg for lead in quinoa should be set, with a view of lowering the combined exposure to lead from all cereal species.