

Directorate-General for Health & Food Safety

Update on ergot, ergot alkaloids and opium alkaloids

Frans Verstraete

Ergot sclerotia –food - Under discussion

- Possible lowering of the maximum level for **ergot sclerotia** in unprocessed cereals, with the exception of corn and rice

Ergot sclerotia	
Unprocessed cereals (*) with the exception of <ul style="list-style-type: none">- maize, rye and rice- wheat intended to be processed by wet milling (**)	0.2 g/kg
Unprocessed rye (*)	0.5 g/kg until 30.6.2022 0.2 g/kg as from 1.7.2022 (***)

Ergot sclerotia –food - Under discussion

(*) The maximum level applies to unprocessed cereals placed on the market before first-stage processing i.e., if applied, after drying, cleaning, sorting (colour sorting where applicable) and scouring. In integrated production and processing systems the maximum level applies in the production chain at the stage before first-stage processing.

- Drying and cleaning, including sorting and scouring are not considered to be “first-stage processing” insofar as the whole grain remains intact.
- Scouring is cleaning cereals by brushing and/or scrubbing it vigorously, combined with dust removal (e.g. aspiration).
- In case scouring is applied in the presence of ergot sclerotia, the cereals need to undergo a first cleaning step before scouring.

Ergot sclerotia –food - Under discussion

(**) The exemption applies only for wheat for which it is evident e.g. through labelling, destination, that it is intended for use in a wet milling process only (starch production).

Ergot sclerotia –food - Under discussion

(***) Member States and interested parties shall communicate to the Commission the results of investigations undertaken and the progress with regard to the application of prevention measures to avoid contamination by ergot sclerotia/ergot alkaloids in rye and ergot alkaloids in milling products of barley, wheat, spelt and oats grains.

Member States and interested parties shall report on a regular basis to the EFSA database the occurrence data on ergot sclerotia and ergot alkaloids in rye and rye milling products and on ergot alkaloids in milling products of barley, wheat, spelt and oats grains.

The Commission shall make this information available to the Member States in view of an assessment, before the stricter level applies, of the achievability in the different producing regions in the EU of the stricter level for ergot sclerotia/ergot alkaloids in rye and rye milling products and in milling products of barley, wheat, spelt and oats grains by applying good practices.

Ergot alkaloids food - Under discussion

- Discussion on possible maximum levels for ergot alkaloids on the sum of the following 12 ergot alkaloids : ergometrine, ergosine, ergocornine, ergotamine, ergocristine, ergocryptine (*α - and β -form*) and their respective -inine forms.
- Lowerbound – LOQ for cereal milling products 4 $\mu\text{g/kg}$ for the individual epimers / for final cereal based consumer products, 2 $\mu\text{g/kg}$ for the individual epimers.

Ergot alkaloids – food - Under discussion provisions on ergot alkaloids

Ergot alkaloids	
Milling products of barley, wheat, spelt, oats grains (with an ash content lower than 900mg/100g)	100 µg/kg 50 µg/kg as from 1.7.2022 (***)
Milling products of barley, wheat, spelt, oats (with an ash content equal or higher than 900mg/100g) Barley, wheat, spelt and oats placed on the market for the final consumer	150 µg/kg
Rye milling products Rye placed on the market for the final consumer	500 µg/kg 250 µg/kg as from 1.7.2022 (***)
Processed cereal based food for infants and young children	20 µg/kg

Ergot sclerotia/ Ergot alkaloids food – sampling - Under discussion

- The sampling shall be performed in accordance with point B of Annex I to Commission Regulation (EC) 401/2006 for cereals and cereal products and in accordance with point J of Annex I to Commission Regulation (EC) 401/2006 for processed cereal based food for infants and young children (OJ L 70, 9.3.2006, p. 12).

Ergot alkaloids –outlook – analytical aspects

- Reliability and speed of screening methods for the presence of ergot alkaloids.
- Timing
- Other foodstuffs such as bread (including small bakery wares), pastries, biscuits, cereal snacks, breakfast cereals: no maximum levels **yet** discussed (analytical issues)
- Feed : ergot sclerotia – ergot alkaloids

Opium alkaloids – maximum levels under discussion

- Following the outcome of the EFSA opinion, maximum levels in poppy seeds for morphine equivalents (morphine + 0.2 codeine) are considered.
 - Poppy seeds placed on the market for the final consumer – 20mg/kg
 - Bakery products containing poppy seeds : 1,5 mg/kg
- Targeted stakeholder consultation – outcome
- follow-up



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**Thank you for
your
attention !**