

SUMMARIES

Food Contact Materials: Working Together for Safety and Innovation in Europe





THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG
Ministry of Health

Conference

“Food contact materials: working together for safety and innovation in Europe”

30th September 2015

Luxembourg, Chambre de Commerce, Kirchberg

National EFSA focal point event

Opening Session

Welcoming speech by Ms Lydia Mutsch, Minister of Health

Introductory view from the European Commission by Dr Michael Flüh, European Commission

Scene setter on existing legislation: harmonised and non-harmonised by Dr Michael Flüh, European Commission

The role of the Council of Europe/EDQM in setting standards for FCM in Europe by Dr François Xavier Lery, Council of Europe

Developing guidance and standards in the areas of consumer health issues including Food Contact Materials (FCM) is part of the missions of the EDQM. The action of the Council of Europe in this area started in 1989 with its first resolution on colorants use in plastic materials. More resolutions followed on materials such as paper and board and rubber products. Today, 37 Member States and the European Commission, the JRC and EFSA participate in the Council of



Europe/EDQM works in this area. The presentation gives some input on the technical work carried out by EDQM experts coming from authorities, with a focus on the last published guidance on metals and alloys. The Council of Europe/EDQM guidelines are complementary with the guidelines from JRC on issues such as test conditions. Finally, the presentation will shortly describe the governance of the Food Contact Materials activities of the Council of Europe /EDQM, with the involvement of experts from national authorities.

Scientific Cooperation presented by Mr Jeffrey Moon, Advisory Forum, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

EFSA was established to assess and communicate on risks associated with the food chain, thereby contributing to ensure food safety for Europe's 500 million consumers. Cooperation with partners in Member States (MS) and internationally has been important since EFSA's inception, and EFSA's Management Board identified the further enhancement of EU risk assessment capacity as one of EFSA's priority areas.

This is seen as a key element in the development of scientific cooperation with the MS with a budget of €10 506 000 (2014) to €11 150 000 (2016) allocated to support the tools and initiatives needed. These include outsourcing through framework partnership agreements and thematic grants and support for 'joint projects' between EFSA and MS as mentioned in Article 36 of EFSA's Founding Regulation. New activities such as a fellowship programme and twinning projects to exchange knowledge and expertise and strengthen Europe's capacity in food safety risk assessment are also being developed.

EFSA's scientific networks play an important role in scientific cooperation and the sharing of information between EFSA and MS in specific domains, including the area of Food Ingredients and Packaging which has a dedicated network since 2014.



Session 1: EU market and innovation in FCM

Mr Jori Ringman, Sustainability Director of the Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI)

Innovations in packaging and production technology, in compliance testing and in policy as well as in social innovations all impact how food contact material markets function and evolve in Europe. The presentation will suggest a balance between the responsible self-regulation by industry and binding rules in EU-regulation; an innovative regulatory approach in food contact could serve as a pilot for better regulation in the area.

Industry needs internal market functioning for growth and jobs, but equally industry wants to see a world-class standard for consumer safety applied uniformly across the EU; the Refit project should not stop the regulatory work where it is still needed in the EU but rather guide the quality of such regulation. The talk will focus on fibre-based packaging but many of the conclusions can be generalised to other food contact materials.

Dr Leonor Garcia, Director Public Affairs of PlasticsEurope

Plastics in Packaging have these unique characteristics which allow them to make a strong contribution to a more environmentally sustainable and resource efficient Europe. Plastics are the most regulated among Food Contact Materials and although the EU food contact legislation for plastics is unique selling point for consumer safety, it also brings critical challenges for the European plastics industry to continue developing innovations while remaining competitive.



Session 2: Food contact material and food safety

Prof. Dr Dr Andreas Hensel, President of German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR)

Potential risks arising from food contact materials (FCM) are a constant source of recurring public debate. Be it PET bottles, cardboard packaging, aluminium foils, or other cases, the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has a well-established expertise in providing consumers as well as manufacturers with special recommendations about the ingredients of FCM and possible health risks that might occur if these substances are released into and absorbed by the food product.

The BfR runs the national reference lab for FCM and has published various position papers and reports on related topics, like amongst others phenol in FCM, aluminium in fruit juices, mineral oil residues in printing ink, or plasticisers in lids. In addition, the BfR offers an open-access database on the internet that is constantly updated to include novel substances and also suitable test methods. The talk will focus on issues like the contribution of FCM legislation to consumer safety and health, the prioritisation of risks resulting from different materials, questions of exposure, the required expertise and responsibilities.



Session 3: Consumer expectations on food contact materials

Ms Beate Kettlitz, Director Food Policy, Science and R&D, FoodDrinkEurope

As long as civilisation has existed, packaging and storage of food has been integral to survival. Glass, wood and earthenware pots have been used for thousands of years and over the last two hundred years, steel and tin coated steel have been used not only for containing food but also to preserve it. Only over the last century with the advent of mineral oil fractionation plastics have become available for use in the food industry.

Packaging is carefully designed to undertake a number of tasks to present food in an attractive, safe and convenient way to consumers.

For food producers the principal targets of food packaging are to reduce food loss and increase shelf-life of food products. It is important for food packaging to contain food in a cost-effective way that satisfies industry requirements and consumer desires, maintains food safety and minimises environmental impact.

Regulatory issues around packaging are very complex and it is necessary to consider them in detail with respect to each food product's unique needs and the properties of its potential package.



Workshop 1: Risk analysis

The evaluation of food contact materials by Dr Georges Kass, Deputy Head of the Food Ingredients and Packaging Unit, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

EFSA's work in the area of food contact materials (FCM) is carried out by the Panel on Food Contact Materials, Enzymes, Flavourings and Processing Aids (CEF) that deals with questions on the safety of use of materials in contact with food, enzymes, flavourings and processing aids, and also with questions related to the safety of processes. The CEF Panel performs risk assessments on FCMs in the EU-harmonised area of plastics based on the data submitted to EFSA in accordance with the 2001 Guidelines of the Scientific Committee on Food. Recently, the CEF Panel endorsed a draft scientific opinion that explains recent developments in the safety assessment of chemicals in food and their potential impact on the EFSA evaluation of FCM

In particular, this discussion document revisits the previous approach to consumer exposure and how the amount of toxicity data needed for a risk assessment should be related to the expected human exposure. Other areas addressed in the document include oligomers and non-intentionally added substances (NIAS). This document is currently under public consultation.

Technical challenges in food safety and innovation for food contact materials and the role the European Commission Joint Research Centre as scientific support to EU policies by Dr Catherine Simoneau, Head of European Union Reference Laboratory for Food Contact Materials, European Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC)

The importance of food contact materials is recognised as key in achieving long lasting quality and shelf life. These materials include food processing, packaging as well as kitchen appliances, cutlery. These materials in contact with food also need to be safe in order to guarantee consumer protection and safety of the European Citizens while fostering industrial innovation. While a robust legislation is necessary to regulate the use of substances used in the manufacturing of FCMs,



the issue also requires a strong underpinning science for its technical implementation.

The presentation will look at the scientific challenges of food safety and of migration issues. It will also highlight the work of the European Reference Laboratory as well as National Reference Laboratories to bridge the gap between legislative aspects and the implementation of adequate technical specifications for compliance and official controls purposes.

Ink Makers - Current and future approaches to the control and risk management of printed food contact materials by Dr Paul Hunt, Expert for European Printing Ink Association (EuPIA), Director of Liquid Ink Technologies, Sun Chemical Ltd

Ink makers have for many years worked to an established selection scheme for raw materials used in food packaging inks and coatings. More recently they have worked with National Authorities on the creation of broad and logical Positive Substance Lists for application in creating safe printed food packaging. However, in the longer term there is a need for harmonized legislation across Europe and the creation of an integrated, exhaustive set of European authorized, evaluated ink ingredients plus detailed methodologies defined in support of risk assessment across all food packaging types.

Introduction to the PlasticsEurope Guidance document on risk assessment by Dr Françoise Godts, Expert for PlasticsEurope, Food Contact Manager EMEA, DuPont de Nemours

With this guidance document, PlasticsEurope intends to explain how the plastics (plastic intermediate material) producers interpret and respond to their risk assessment obligations for non-listed and non-intentionally added substances under the article 3 of the Framework Regulation (Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004) and article 19 of the Regulation on plastic materials and articles intended to come into contact with food (Regulation (EU) No 10/2011), based on internationally recognized tools and scientific knowledge available to them at the time of writing.



Workshop 2: Official controls

Analytical work and effective measures: current challenges in FCM enforcement by Dr Gregor McCombie, Head of Department, Food Safety Authority Zurich, Switzerland

FCM are an underestimated risk in food safety. Currently, there is a large gap between the legal requirements and reality. FCM cover an extraordinarily broad spectrum of the chemical universe making laboratory work excitingly challenging. There are tens of thousands of possible migrants and very little knowledge of their identity, let alone toxicity. It is impossible for a single laboratory to measure the migration of every possible substance. These challenges and promising approaches towards a solution, such as multidimensional separation techniques, are highlighted. When issues in the area of FCM are discovered, they usually affect a whole industry and are of serious concern. It is challenging for enforcement to address these concerns due to the scale of the issues. Authorities struggle to find effective measures, in order to achieve an improvement. New ideas and approaches for all stakeholders seem inevitable.

FCM policy and organisation of the official FCM control in Denmark by Ms Mette Holm, Scientific Advisor, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Danish Veterinary and Food Administration and Ms Carina Mørkhøj, Official Veterinarian, Danish Veterinary and Food Administration

Food contact materials have been one of the focus areas in the official control of chemicals in food for several years in Denmark. The basis of the control is the register of all FCM establishments to identify and prioritize the control. The control is focused on documentation in the supply chain. Recently, the food authorities in the Nordic Countries have developed a common check list as control tool and as a guideline to the FCM operators. The new check list covers the whole chain, from raw materials to final products of all types of materials.



Workshop 3: innovation

Trends in packaging innovation and their relation to food safety, Prof. Dr Horst-Christian Langowski, Chair of Food Packaging Technology, TU Munich and Director of Fraunhofer Institute for Process Engineering and Packaging

In food packaging, a complex optimisation between functional, economic, environmental and food safety issues always needs to be achieved. This is especially true for the development of new materials or the application of materials that have not been used so far for food packaging. The presentation will elucidate these aspects with help of recent developments in the following areas: Nanomaterials, active and intelligent packaging and the application of biopolymers. Special focus will be given to the predominant role of packaging functionality and the stringent requirements from the side of food safety. As an effect, new developments have to undergo a very critical examination until they may be applied in large scale in the food packaging sector.

The increasing use of Recycled PET leading to innovation by Mr Regis Heyberger, Corporate Quality Manager International, Plastipak Holding Inc.

The usage of recycled material in the manufacturing of food contact packaging is the best sustainable solution providing lower Greenhouse gas footprint and a cradle to cradle solution. Even if the usage of Recycled PET already exists in some markets in Europe, there is still a lot of room for improvement all over Europe. Plastipak is a leading actor in the PET recycling in Europe and is constantly innovating to better ensure the quality and safety of its products. Some examples of innovation will be presented during this presentation.



Database of substances known by member states of the Council of Europe and used in FCM: Practical applications by Dr Fabien Bolle, Head of Unit for the consumer safety, Belgium Scientific Institute of Public Health (ISP)

This database contains all the known substances used in food contact materials (FCM) in the Member States of the Council of Europe. The database is a compilation of lists of known substances, which can be used in FCM. It is based on national legislation, regulations and guidelines of the Commission or the resolutions of the Council of Europe. Consequently, this database contains about 10 000 substances, with their CAS (Chemical Abstract Service) number (if available) and their presence in different lists. For these substances, one can find the results from several existing toxicological prediction softwares (e.g .Toxtree and OECD toolbox). In order to provide useful support to industry and Member States, the database was furthermore a valuable tool in the research projects conducted by ISP (Institut Scientifique de Santé Publique).

Rubber: Its Challenges and Innovation opportunities by Mr Lorenzo Zullo, Coordinator, Chemicals & Environment Legislation and Advocacy European Tyre & Rubber Manufacturers Association (ETRMA)

Rubber products are used in very important applications in contact with food, especially during food processing activities (hoses, transmission belts, gaskets, seals, etc.). Hundreds of substances are used to guarantee rubber products the performances required in their big variety of applications. The lack of a European legislative framework, as well as the absence of a standardised and mutually recognised approval scheme on substances, is threatening the capacity of the industry to innovate and grow.



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The conference is organised in collaboration with:

- Ministère de la santé
- Organisme pour la sécurité et la qualité de la chaîne alimentaire (OSQCA)
- Service de la sécurité alimentaire (SECUALIM)
- Représentation permanente du Luxembourg

Websites:

<http://www.sante.public.lu/fr/index.html>

<http://www.securite-alimentaire.public.lu/index.html>

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