

Commissioning of Acrylamide and Furans UK Retail Survey

Summary of stakeholder responses

2 September 2020

Introduction

This consultation was issued on 10 February 2020 and closed on 13 March 2020.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has previously funded the continuous monitoring of levels of acrylamide and furans in UK retail foods, and the results from the last survey period of 2014 to 2018 have been published on the FSA website.

A new survey has been commissioned to monitor levels of acrylamide and furans in UK retail foods to gather occurrence data to provide a snapshot of UK compliance rates with the benchmark levels for acrylamide established in the legislation and to gather data on other products to inform any future regulatory measures.

The survey design for 2020 – 2021 is similar to the previous survey conducted between 2014 – 2018 but is intended to be more targeted. Sampling is being reduced or stopped for some categories previously sampled such as French Fries, while a wider variety of broad categories such as fine bakery wares and snacks intended for infants and young children will be sampled.

The FSA is grateful to those stakeholders who responded and sets out in the table below responses in order of the issues considered.

The key proposals on which the consultation sought views were:

- Survey design
- How occurrence data might be used to identify effective mitigation measures and steps to reduce further reduce levels of acrylamide and furans

The Food Standards Agency's considered responses to stakeholders' comments are given in the last column of the table. A summary of changes to the original proposal(s) resulting from stakeholder comments is set out below the table.

Summary of substantive comments

Respondent: Potato Processors Association (PPA)

Comment	Response
<p>The FSA programme should continue to sample in March and October (including for root veg. crisp as these may have some similarities in terms of fresh/storage to potatoes). We have newer information about “best” and “worst” months for AA levels in potato crisps.</p> <p>The other element of interest is that different root vegetable components have differing AA forming potential. Components are typically fried separately and then combined to a specific recipe (e.g. 35% carrot, 20% parsnip, 15% beetroot, etc). Whilst you can and should test for final product as sold to consumer, it may be difficult to produce a homogenous sample which is truly reflective of the batch without understanding the values for individual components i.e. the sample used for testing may contain a higher amount of beetroot than the recipe and (assuming beetroot has a higher AA forming potential) the sample might therefore have a higher AA level than the batch as a whole.</p>	<p>Due to the impact of COVID-19 on sampling it has not been possible to commence sampling in March for 2020. Potato crisps are not being sampled for acrylamide in the upcoming survey period, however root vegetable crisps will be. This seasonal variance in acrylamide levels due to storage periods will be considered when interpreting the results of the survey and a March/October sampling period considered for 2021.</p> <p>The suggestion to separate out the different root vegetable components of mixed vegetable crisps has been included in the analysis method for acrylamide.</p>

Actions to be implemented

- Seasonal variance of acrylamide in potatoes will be considered
- Components of mixed vegetable crisps will be separated and analysed separately