

# COMMITTEE ON TOXICITY OF CHEMICALS IN FOOD, CONSUMER PRODUCTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT



## STATEMENT ON SURVEILLANCE FOR THE MYCOTOXIN MONILIFORMIN

1. We have been informed of the results of a surveillance exercise conducted by the Joint Food Safety and Standards Group of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Department of Health in which food samples collected between May 1997 and March 1998 were analysed for the presence of the mycotoxin, moniliformin.[1]
2. We last considered this subject in 1992.[2] On the basis of available toxicological information and the surveillance data presented to us,[1] we are unable to reach a definite conclusion as to the extent of the risk that this mycotoxin poses to the health of the UK population. However, we *welcome* the new data and are reassured by the low exposure indicated by the surveillance data. We *reiterate* our previous opinion that as few of the UK population are likely to consume unprocessed maize products other than on an occasional basis, the low levels of exposure found do not give particular cause for concern.
3. As there is a continuing possibility of sporadic instances of significant mycotoxin contamination occurring in foodstuffs, we *recommend* continued monitoring of the concentrations of moniliformin in foodstuffs in order to determine any trends in these concentrations.
4. Surveillance should continue for mycotoxins whose presence in the diet is likely to result in widespread exposure of the UK population and for those mycotoxins where toxicological data indicate a specific hazard. We *consider* that the available toxicological information on moniliformin does not allow us to make a full assessment of the possible risks to humans. We therefore *recommend* that studies of the long-term toxicity of moniliformin in two mammalian species should be undertaken to enable us to complete our risk assessment.

July 1998

## **References**

1. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1998). Food Surveillance Information Sheet No.164.
2. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1992). Mycotoxins. Food Surveillance Paper No. 36. London: HMSO.