Quality and Food safety: EU regulatory requirements in a sustainable cocoa supply chain

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ECA - European Cocoa Association
regroups the major companies involved in the cocoa bean trade and processing, in warehousing and related logistical activities
ECA Members represent:
- over two-thirds of Europe’s cocoa beans grinding
- 50% of Europe's industrial chocolate production
- 40% of the world production of cocoa liquor, butter and powder

CAOBISCO
Chocolate, Biscuits and Confectionery Industries of Europe
CAOBISCO industries use:
- 50% of the world production of cocoa beans
- 30% of the European production of sugar

Joint EU activity on Food Safety & Quality
European link to cocoa origins

• Imports of cocoa & cocoa products into Europe:
  • from Africa: > 89 %
  • from Latin America: circa 5 %
  • from Far East: about 5 %

• Linking cocoa farmers, especially from West-Africa, to European consumers and the EU regulatory landscape
EU Food Safety Principles

**EU principles:**

- Precautionary approach
- Compliance with EU food safety requirements is a prerequisite to enter the EU market
  
  (e.g. Article 19 of EC Regulation N° 396/2005: “The processing and/or mixing for dilution purposes with the same or other products, ..... shall be prohibited”)

- Farm to fork approach
- Respect of international standards
EU decision-making process as applied to food safety

Based on scientific assessment: EFSA

Legislation proposed by the EU Commission

Proposals discussed in WG (EC & MS experts)

SCFCAH
Decisions & adoption of proposals

Consultations with stakeholders: ECA/ CAOBISCO ICCO/COPAL

Decision made by EU Member States

EFSA = European Food Safety Authority

SCFCAH = Standing Committee Food Chain & Animal Health

Lengthy Process!
Current food safety risks at EU level

**Pesticides**
EC Regulation 396/2005 on MRLs of pesticides

**PAH**
EC Regulation 835/2011 setting max. limits

**Mycotoxins/OTA**
EC Regulation 105/2010
No levels set (yet) for cocoa

**Heavy Metals**
EC legislation under discussion
EU food safety control tools
Civil society and media attention

- **External Context:**
  - Health food scares 90s
  - Consumer & media attention
  - High on the political agenda (EP)
  - Shift from hazard to risk

➢ Pressure from stakeholders can lead to regulatory developments!
EU recommendations for the Cocoa sector

• Increasing number of EU legislative acts addressing preventive measures & re-evaluation clauses

• **Industry is requested to identify and/or implement preventive measures**

• Strong focus on Good Agricultural Practices (**GAP**) & Integrated Pest Management (**IPM**)  

• Application of the **ALARA** principle (As Low As Reasonably Achievable)
What is the industry doing?

- **Identification** of potential threats
- **Analysis** of beans to ensure that limits proposed are reasonable for cocoa producing countries & data collection to substantiate positioning vis a vis the EU
- **Informing & consulting** cocoa producing countries & ICCO
- **Conducting research** projects to identify preventive measures
- **Substantial positioning** to EU authorities & stakeholder outreach – notably to convey situation on the ground and time needed to adapt!
- **Monitoring development** at international level (e.g. Codex Alimentarius)
- **Supporting** GAP for cocoa contaminants & IPM implementation
For the cocoa industry: quality goes beyond food safety

• In addition to EU Regulations... Industry needs to meet quality requirements within its supply chain
  • to respond to manufacturers’ needs
  • to respond to consumers’ expectations

• How can we work better together to address regulatory challenges and other quality issues in a win-win scenario?
Food safety & quality : a win-win

- Measures taken to prevent, mitigate and address **contaminants**, tackled by regulations, will inevitably help to address quality issues!

- **Improved production & post-harvest practices** positively impact quality & quite often, productivity

- More cocoa - of a superior quality – definitely leads to **increased profitability** for farmers!
Working together sustainably

- **Continuing challenge** of reaching out to smallholders:
  - Need to increase **in-country analysis** capacity
  - Important role for **research institutes**
  - Need for increased regional and international **cooperation** (on challenges and alternatives)

⇒ Some examples of successful cooperation:
  - Industry input to SPS project
  - Industry support to ICCO pesticides manual
    
Conclusion: Food Safety & Quality

- **Food safety & quality** requirements are key to ensure **profitability**
  - No compromise on food safety and quality for products entering the EU market
  - Sound **science-based evidence** crucial
  - **GAP** essential to prevent contamination, focusing on:
    - Cocoa farm maintenance and crop husbandry
    - Cocoa crop protection
    - Cocoa harvest, post harvest, on-farm processing and storage
    - Health, safety of cocoa producers
- Meeting food safety requirements (in the EU and other regions) will ultimately help **meet the rising demand for good quality cocoa**
- **Bearing in mind the growing consumer interest in cocoa sustainability we must all work towards the goal of producing** more sustainable cocoa which is safe, of good quality and productive – for the benefit of the farmer, the consumer and the manufacturer”
Thank you for your attention!

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