

Advice 24-2008 of the Scientific Committee of the FASFC on formaldehyde in cultivated mushrooms

Following the detection of formaldehyde at a concentration between 0.08 and 0.65 mg/kg in cultivated mushrooms (*Agaricus*, *Pleurotus*, *Shiitake*), the Scientific Committee is asked whether this poses a risk to public health and whether it is relevant to search for formaldehyde in cultivated mushrooms within the framework of the control programme of the Agency.

The available data show, amongst others, that the reported levels of formaldehyde in mushrooms are mostly lower than the levels that occur naturally in vegetables, fruit, meat, fish and dairy products. Moreover, the exposure to formaldehyde through the consumption of mushrooms is three orders of magnitude smaller than the toxicological substantiated safety limits for chronic exposure presented in literature, and appears to be small compared to the total exposure to formaldehyde through the diet. Given furthermore that there are no indications that the intake of formaldehyde is carcinogenic (inhalation is), it can be alleged that the presence of formaldehyde in mushrooms is not an immediate threat to public health. The Scientific Committee is of the opinion that the monitoring of formaldehyde in cultivated mushrooms should not be a priority within the control programme of the FASFC.

The full text is available on this website in dutch and in french, respectively under the section "Wetenschappelijk Comité/Adviezen" and "Comité scientifique/Avis".