



## CEEREAL Statement on Acrylamide in Breakfast Cereals

January 2017

CEEREAL takes the assurance of food safety and quality very seriously.

Acrylamide is a substance that naturally forms in starchy food products during every-day high-temperature cooking (at above 120°C and low-moisture), due to a reaction between sugars and amino acids naturally present in many foods. This is known as the Maillard Reaction that also 'browns' food and affects its taste. Acrylamide is not added to food, but naturally forms in a wide range of products, such as bread, biscuits, breakfast cereals, potato crisps, French fries and coffee, whether they are cooked at home, in restaurants or commercially. Even though scientists only discovered it in food in 2002, it has actually been present in the human diet for as long as people have been baking, grilling, roasting, toasting or frying foods. The amount of acrylamide in food depends on a wide range of factors, including crop variability, recipe design and process control<sup>1</sup>.

CEEREAL members have actively contributed to research<sup>2</sup> on Acrylamide in the past years, particularly regarding the control of asparagine in cereal grain to reduce the potential of Acrylamide formation during processing.

CEEREAL is also committed to help manufacturers, and especially Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) with limited research capabilities, to minimise Acrylamide formation in foods. To this end, CEEREAL was one of the major contributors to the FoodDrinkEurope<sup>3</sup> Acrylamide Toolbox<sup>4</sup>, aimed at assisting individual manufacturers in reducing Acrylamide formation in their specific manufacturing processes and products. In addition, a CEEREAL pamphlet was developed giving advice to mitigate Acrylamide formation for breakfast cereal manufacturers. The Acrylamide pamphlets<sup>5</sup> provide information on tools successfully tested on an industrial scale, as well as a step-by-step approach on how to implement them. Individual operators can use the tools outlined in the pamphlet to adapt their unique production systems. The pamphlets are also available in 23 languages on the FoodDrinkEurope website<sup>6</sup>.

CEEREAL members have assisted food business operators implementing the measures for minimisation of Acrylamide levels proposed in the "Toolbox" through *ad hoc* webinars or meetings<sup>7</sup>. Also, they have contributed extensively with data to the work carried out by EFSA.

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<sup>1</sup> More information on acrylamide can be found in the infographic developed by the European Food Safety Authority available at the link [https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/efsa\\_rep/blobserver\\_assets/acrylamide.pdf](https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/efsa_rep/blobserver_assets/acrylamide.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> The 'Link Project', Rothamsted Research (UK).

<sup>3</sup> FoodDrinkEurope is the European food and drink federation representing national food and drink federations, sector associations and individual company members. More information can be found at the link <http://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/>.

<sup>4</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/cs\\_contaminants\\_catalogue\\_acrylamide\\_toolbox\\_201401\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/cs_contaminants_catalogue_acrylamide_toolbox_201401_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/cs\\_contaminants\\_catalogue\\_acrylamide\\_cereals-final\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/cs_contaminants_catalogue_acrylamide_cereals-final_en.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.fooddrinkeurope.eu/publication/Download-FoodDrinkEurope-Acrylamide-Pamphlets-in-23-languages/>

<sup>7</sup> The Association of Cereal Food Manufacturers in the UK (ACFM) ran a webinar as part of a series of four webinars on Acrylamide<sup>7</sup> organized by the Food and Drink Federation. In France, Alliance 7 also organized a seminar to increase the understanding on Acrylamide.

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CEEREAL, as part of the activities led by FoodDrinkEurope, developed a Code of Practice to ensure that acrylamide levels are as low as possible, and support the application of Codes of Practice to increase the reduction of acrylamide levels and consumer exposure.

CEEREAL members are striving to reduce Acrylamide in their products to a level as low as reasonably practicable, will continue to monitor the research and work with the relevant stakeholders, including the European Commission, the European Food Safety Authority and FoodDrinkEurope, to increase knowledge and understanding.