

WHO Expert Meeting to review toxicological aspects of melamine and cyanuric acid

Call for experts **Deadline 1 November 2008**

WHO is seeking scientific experts to participate in an emergency expert meeting on toxicological aspects of melamine and cyanuric acid to be held in 1-4 December 2008. The meeting will be convened in collaboration with FAO.

Background

An increased incidence of kidney ‘stones’ and renal failure in infants has recently been reported in China, believed to be associated with the ingestion of infant formula contaminated with melamine. Melamine has been detected in a variety of milk and milk products at varying levels, from low ppb to high ppm ranges. Preliminary risk assessments based on limited information have been prepared by WHO as well as by several national/regional authorities to form the basis for interim measures for public health protection.

These preliminary assessments have provided many Member States with valuable information for action. However, there is now an urgent need to update and evaluate the current international knowledge base and refine the preliminary assessments. An independent international scientific expert meeting has therefore been planned as part of WHO's emergency measures in this area.

The objectives and expected outcome of the expert meeting

To review current knowledge on:

- Chemistry of melamine alone and in combination with its analogues (e.g. cyanuric acid)
- Analytical methods relative to detection of these chemical substances in various foods
- Occurrence of melamine in foods as a result of normal food production and processing (e.g. from migration of food contact material, pesticide or fertilizer use) as opposed to adulteration
- Toxicity of melamine alone and in combination with its analogues (e.g. cyanuric acid)
- Human health risk assessment, including species sensitivities and sensitive sub-populations
- Knowledge gaps

The outcome of the expert meeting is expected to provide a description and analysis of at least the following areas:

- Current state of knowledge on toxicology, exposure and analytical methodology
- Risk assessment, including attendant uncertainties
- Knowledge gaps
- Conclusions and Recommendations

Expertise required

WHO is seeking persons with expertise in the chemistry and toxicology of melamine structural analogues, such as cyanuric acid, as well as occurrence of these substances in food. In addition expertise regarding human health risk assessment and analytical methodology is sought.

Applicants require a working knowledge of English as it is not possible to provide translation / interpretation facilities for such expert meetings.

Application

Applicants should submit curriculum vitae including a description of education, work experience and a list of publications / presentations or other types of technical documents developed. A declaration of interest form has to be submitted as well.

In order to be considered for this consultation applications must be submitted on or before **1 November 2008**. Please send your CV and Declaration of Interest form to: foodsafety@who.int
When sending in your application please note in the subject line: Melamine Consultation

Timing of meeting:

The meeting will take place **1-4 December, 2008**. The location will be communicated in due course.

Contact Information

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Process for Selection of Experts

All applications will be reviewed by a panel with external participation (internationally recognized expert) to determine whether the applicants meet the following criteria:

- Technical expertise and professional recognition in the specified areas as listed above.
- Publications, presentations in the specified areas.
- Ability to participate in group discussions.
- Ability to draft clear and concise reports.

All applicants meeting these criteria will be considered in the selection of experts for the consultation.

In doing so WHO will consider the following:

- Diversity of experience and scientific backgrounds.



- Conflicts of interest (each participant will be asked to complete a “Declaration of Interest” form).
- Representation from different geographic and economic regions and gender balance.

Important Notes:

Experts shall be selected to participate in the Consultation in their personal capacity and not as representatives of their country or of the institution for which they may be employed. Selected experts will be asked to complete a “Declarations of Interest” form in order to determine if any potential conflicts of interest exist. WHO seek to have representation from all geographic regions including developing and developed countries and a balanced representation of women and men. Selected experts will be required to assist in the preparation of background papers for the Consultation, participate in a four day meeting and provide feedback after the Consultation to facilitate finalization of the meeting report.