

PUBLICATIONS FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ON PUBLIC HEALTH

Edited by
Anna Maria Rossi

EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY (EFSA)

Craig PS, Dujardin B, Hart A, *et al.* **Cumulative dietary risk characterisation of pesticides that have acute effects on the nervous system.** *EFSA Journal* 2020;18(4):e06087 A retrospective acute cumulative risk assessment of dietary exposure to pesticide residues, supported by an uncertainty analysis based on expert knowledge elicitation, was conducted for two effects on the nervous system: brain and/or erythrocyte acetylcholinesterase inhibition, and functional alterations of the motor division. The pesticides considered in this assessment were identified and characterised in the scientific report on the establishment of cumulative assessment groups of pesticides for their effects on the nervous system. Cumulative exposure assessments were conducted through probabilistic modelling by EFSA and the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) using two different software tools and reported separately. These exposure assessments used monitoring data collected by Member States under their official pesticide monitoring programmes in 2014, 2015 and 2016 and individual consumption data from 10 populations of consumers from different countries and different age groups. This report completes the characterisation of cumulative risk, taking account of the available data and the uncertainties involved. For each of the 10 populations, it is concluded with varying degrees of certainty that cumulative exposure to pesticides that have the acute effects on the nervous system mentioned above does not exceed the threshold for regulatory consideration established by risk managers.

EFSA Panel on Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ), Koutsoumanis K, Alvarez-Ordóñez A, Bolton D, *et al.* **The public health risk posed by *Listeria monocytogenes* in frozen fruit and vegetables including herbs, blanched during processing.** *EFSA Journal* 2020;18(4):e06092 doi: 10.2903/j.efsa.2020.6092 A multi-country outbreak of *Listeria monocytogenes* ST6 linked to blanched frozen vegetables (bfV) took place in the EU (2015-2018). Evidence of food-borne outbreaks shows that *L. monocytogenes* is the most relevant pathogen associated with bfV. The probability of illness per serving of uncooked bfV, for the elderly (65-74 years old) population, is up to 3600 times greater than cooked bfV and very likely lower than any of the evaluated ready-to-eat food categories. The

main factors affecting contamination and growth of *L. monocytogenes* in bfV during processing are the hygiene of the raw materials and process water; the hygienic conditions of the food processing environment (FPE); and the time/Temperature (t/T) combinations used for storage and processing (e.g. blanching, cooling). Relevant factors after processing are the intrinsic characteristics of the bfV, the t/T combinations used for thawing and storage and subsequent cooking conditions, unless eaten uncooked. Analysis of the possible control options suggests that application of a complete HACCP plan is either not possible or would not further enhance food safety. Instead, specific prerequisite programmes (PRP) and operational PRP activities should be applied such as cleaning and disinfection of the FPE, water control, t/T control and product information and consumer awareness.

EFSA Panel on Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ), Koutsoumanis K, Alvarez-Ordóñez A, Bolton D, *et al.* **The public health risk posed by *Listeria monocytogenes* in frozen fruit and vegetables including herbs, blanched during processing.** *EFSA Journal* 2020;18(4):e06092 doi: 10.2903/j.efsa.2020.6092 A multi-country outbreak of *Listeria monocytogenes* ST6 linked to blanched frozen vegetables (bfV) took place in the EU (2015-2018). Evidence of food-borne outbreaks shows that *L. monocytogenes* is the most relevant pathogen associated with bfV. The probability of illness per serving of uncooked bfV, for the elderly (65-74 years old) population, is up to 3600 times greater than cooked bfV and very likely lower than any of the evaluated ready-to-eat food categories. The main factors affecting contamination and growth of *L. monocytogenes* in bfV during processing are the hygiene of the raw materials and process water; the hygienic conditions of the food processing environment (FPE); and the time/Temperature (t/T) combinations used for storage and processing (e.g. blanching, cooling). Relevant factors after processing are the intrinsic characteristics of the bfV, the t/T combinations used for thawing and storage and subsequent cooking conditions, unless eaten uncooked. Analysis of the possible control options suggests that application of a complete HACCP plan is either not possible or would not further enhance food safety. Instead, specific prerequisite programmes (PRP) and operational PRP activities should be applied such as cleaning and disinfection of the FPE, water control, t/T control and product information and consumer awareness.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)

Ulrichs M, Costella C, Holmes R, *et al.* **Managing climate risks through social protection - Reducing rural poverty and building resilient agricultural livelihoods.** Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre (The Hague, Netherlands) 2019; 64 p. ISBN 978 92 513 1884 3 FAO recognizes that those living in rural areas whose livelihoods depend heavily on natural resources, are disproportionately affected by climate risks because of their great likelihood of living in high-risk geographical locations as well as their high vulnerability to, and limited capacity to cope with, climate hazards due to low incomes, lack of savings, weaker social networks, low asset bases and heavy reliance on agriculture and natural resources. Protecting poor and vulnerable small scale producers from the negative impacts of climate risks is an imperative in order to reach FAO's strategic objectives and achieve Sustainable development goal one and two. Managing climate risks through social protection sheds light on social protection as an effective investment to safeguard the livelihood of small scale producers and strengthen their essential role in ensuring food security across the globe.

Bracco S, Tani A, Çalıcıoğlu Ö, *et al.* **Indicators to monitor and evaluate the sustainability of bioeconomy. Overview and a proposed way.** Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations 2019; 127 p. (*Environment and Natural Resources Management – Working Paper*; 77) ISBN 978 92 513 1796 9 FAO has been working for many years on non-food biomass products (including sustainable bioenergy) and biotechnology, and it received a mandate to coordinate international work on “food first” sustainable bioeconomy by 62 Ministers present at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) 2015. Moreover, FAO has received support from the Government of Germany to develop guidelines on sustainable bioeconomy development (Phase 1: 2016; Phase 2: 2017-mid 2020). This involves work on the bioeconomy monitoring, including the selection and use of indicators. The ultimate aim of FAO's work on sustainability indicators is to provide technical assistance to countries and stakeholders in developing and monitoring sustainable bioeconomy, more particularly on identifying suitable indicators in line with the Sustainable Bioeconomy Aspirational Principles and related Criteria, agreed upon in 2016 by the International Sustainable Bioeconomy Working Group created in the context of FAO's project on Sustainable Bioeconomy Guidelines. These indicators shall help both policy makers and producers/manufacturers in monitoring and evaluating the sustainability of their bioeconomy strategies and interventions. In order to cover all the relevant aspects and issues for a sustainable bioeconomy, our approach identifies impact categories from the sustainable bioeconomy principles and criteria. The monitoring approach suggested is bal-

anced, since it considers the three sustainability dimensions (social, economic and environmental); at the same time, it proposes to use a limited set of core indicators, to keep the monitoring feasible and cost-effective. The suggested methodology starts with a review of existing monitoring approaches to identify already available indicators, from which the authors.

INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE COUNCIL (ISC)

Review of the Urban Health and Wellbeing Programme. Paris: International Science Council (ISC). 2020; 20 p. doi: 10.24948/2019.01 The report documents the independent mid-term formative review of the International Science Council (ISC) Urban Health and Wellbeing (UHWB) programme, established in 2014. The review was carried out by an independent panel of five experts. As the review is intended to inform the next phase of the ten-year programme, the review panel purposefully focused its work on identifying critical areas for growth and direction. The review panel's overall assessment is that the International Programme Office (IPO) has developed an ambitious “science plan” and an impressive steering committee, as well as local hosts. In the first three or so years, the IPO has experienced several challenges in meeting its goals and objectives as set out in the plan. These challenges, expected with any new IPO, range from issues related to language and staffing to clarity of expectations. The review panel is of the opinion that the core idea for the programme – to produce policy-relevant research – was ambitious, and that given limited resources, it requires careful re-thinking on how to go forward. The plan for the coordination of research projects has not been realized. In the considered opinion of the review panel, the programme is not on course to achieve the objectives as stated in the original science plan.

Frameworks for understanding transformations to sustainability – the “Multi-Level Perspective” in socio-technical transitions research. A Transformations to Sustainability knowledge brief. *Knowledge Brief* 2019;3 Addressing persistent and worsening global environmental problems, such as climate change, biodiversity loss and resource depletion, will require socio-technical systems such as energy, transport and housing to undergo fundamental change, and, in some cases, total transformation. This knowledge brief presents the “Multi-level perspective” (MLP), which is an analytical framework that provides a “big picture”, integrative approach to understanding how transitions come about as co-evolutionary processes. It is based on a peer-reviewed article which synthesizes recent literature on the MLP approach in socio-technical transitions research, including criticisms and recent elaborations. It is part of a series of knowledge briefs which synthesize findings from recent research papers on transformations into an accessible format, with the aim of opening up the latest transformations research to a wider audience. The MLP has shed light on transitions in energy, trans-

port and food systems, and has explained why some innovations were adopted quickly in some places, but not in others. MLP research suggests that policy makers can actively nurture the emergence of conditions that favour stronger policies for sustainability.

Handmer J, Stevance A, Rickards L, *et al.* **Achieving risk reduction across Sendai, Paris and the SDGs.** Paris: International Science Council (ISC). 2019; 8 p. The ISC's newly published policy brief provides a crucial set of key messages for policy-makers based on the synergies and coherence between the major global agreements of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda with specific reference to systemic and cascading risks. This focus is because of the extreme widespread and long-lasting potential impacts of such events, which could have long-lasting negative effects on the livelihoods and well-being of people, economies and countries, undermining development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This brief should be read as complementary to material dealing with frequent, smaller events and the day-to-day emergencies that affect hundreds of millions regularly.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)

Fancourt D, Finn S. **What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review.** Geneva: World Health Organization. 2019; p 142 (*Health Evidence Network Synthesis Report*; 67) Order no. 13400211 Sw.fr.25.00/ US \$ 25.00 ISBN 978 92 890 5455 3 Over the past two decades, there has been a major increase in research into the effects of the arts on health and well-being, alongside developments in practice and policy activities in different countries across the WHO European Region and further afield. This report synthesizes the global evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being, with a specific focus on the WHO European Region. Results from over 3000 studies identified a major role for the arts in the prevention of ill health, promotion of health, and management and treatment of illness across the lifespan. The reviewed evidence included study designs such as uncontrolled pilot studies, case studies, small-scale cross-sectional surveys, nationally representative longitudinal cohort studies, community-wide ethnog-

raphies and randomized controlled trials from diverse disciplines. The beneficial impact of the arts could be furthered through acknowledging and acting on the growing evidence base; promoting arts engagement at the individual, local and national levels; and supporting cross-sectoral collaboration.

The selection and use of essential medicines. Report of the WHO Expert Committee, 2019. Geneva: World Health Organization. 2020; p 677 (*WHO Technical Report Series*; 1021) Order no. 11001021 Sw.fr.90.00/ US \$ 90.00 ISBN 978 92 412 1030 0 This report presents the recommendations of the WHO Expert Committee responsible for updating the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines and WHO Model List of Essential Medicines for Children. It contains a summary of the evidence presented and the Committee's consideration, justifications and recommendations for additions, deletions and changes to medicines on the Model Lists. Annexes to the main report include the 2019 WHO Model List of Essential Medicines (21st edition) and the 2019 WHO Model List of Essential Medicines for Children (7th edition). In addition, all medicines on the Model Lists are presented according to their Anatomical Therapeutic Chemical (ATC) classification codes.

Wild CP, Weiderpass E, Stewart BW (Eds). **World Cancer Report. Cancer Research for Cancer Prevention.** Geneva: World Health Organization. 2020; p 612 (*IARC Non Serial Publications*) Order no. 17600041 Sw.fr.60.00/ US \$ 60.00 ISBN 978 92 832 0447 3 This is a multidisciplinary publication, with leading international scientists as authors and reviewers. More than 60 different chapters describe multiple aspects of cancer prevention and the research that underpins prevention, focusing on research activity during the past 5 years. Starting with the latest trends in cancer incidence and mortality worldwide, this publication provides wide-ranging insights into cancer prevention based on the known causes of cancer, factors that determine how cancer develops, and the behaviour of different tumour types, and presents a broad scope of interventions to reduce the cancer burden from a global perspective, including addressing inequalities that affect cancer prevention. The electronic version is available for free at: <http://publications.iarc.fr/Non-Series-Publications/World-Cancer-Reports/World-Cancer-Report-Cancer-Research-For-Cancer-Prevention-2020>.