Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA)

Call for

Toxicological and Epidemiological Experts

issued 1 March 2020
Application Deadline: 1 October 2020

Background

The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) is an independent international scientific expert committee administered jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WHO. The Committee provides science advice on potential human health impact of food chemicals as basis for acceptable levels of chemicals in food to the Codex Alimentarius Commission and to Member States in their regulatory control programmes.

The Committee is convened on a regular basis since 1956, initially to conduct the safety evaluation of food additives (including flavours and processing aids). Its work now also includes the evaluation of contaminants, naturally occurring toxicants and residues of veterinary drugs in food. The conclusions and recommendations of the Committee are summarized in reports of the meetings that are published by WHO in the Technical Report Series (available on-line). Detailed monographs, describing all biological, toxicological and human data, as well as exposure data, are published in the WHO Food Additives Series (available on-line). Experts invited by FAO develop specifications for food additives and evaluate residue data for veterinary drugs, which are published in the FAO JECFA Monographs series (available on-line), and evaluate analytical methods and assess occurrence data on contaminants in food. In addition, FAO and WHO have a joint roster of experts in dietary exposure assessment.

WHO uses procedures for the selection of experts that assure the excellence, independence, and transparency of the recommendations of its scientific committees. This process was developed to ensure that the pool of available experts includes a diversity of expertise and viewpoints and includes scientists from all geographic regions of the world.

The objective of this call is to renew the current expert roster by identifying qualified scientists willing to serve as WHO experts on JECFA and to assist the Secretariat in the preparation of working papers.
**Expertise and resources required**

Experts will be responsible for reviewing epidemiological, toxicological, mechanistic and related data and for establishing, where possible, acceptable daily intakes (ADIs) or provide other safety advice for food additives, establish ADIs and acute reference doses for veterinary drugs, and tolerable intakes or other risk assessment advice for contaminants and naturally occurring toxicants. They prepare their contribution in advance of the meetings to be integrated in the overall monograph and report to be produced by the meeting.

The scientific food safety risk assessment is a multidisciplinary exercise that involves specialists in biology, chemistry, toxicology, medicine and applied statistics. Experts should be recognized within their scientific community by the way of peer-reviewed publications in national and international journals or otherwise have demonstrated expertise in one or more of the components of the risk assessment process (hazard identification, hazard characterization, exposure assessment, risk characterization) at national or regional level. The mutual respect and understanding between scientists from various disciplines is a key element of success in reaching a consensus based on the best available science. An understanding of the overall food safety risk analysis process would be of advantage.

Qualified experts will be selected from the roster for each meeting depending on the expertise required and are then requested to review the literature and prepare background papers in advance of the meeting. Meetings are conducted in English and participation in the meeting is required for the whole duration, usually 10-12 days. Cost of participation is covered by WHO, honoraria are not provided.

Successful candidates should meet most or all of the following qualifications:

- a. Hold an advanced university degree(s) in toxicology, pharmacology, biochemistry, pathology, epidemiology, molecular biology or statistics
- b. Scientific excellence evidenced by publications in peer-reviewed specialized journals
- c. Professional experience in food chemicals or a related field
- d. Practical experience in reviewing, analyzing, evaluating, and extrapolating experimental, animal, and other biological data on toxic chemicals to humans
- e. Experience in delivering scientific assessments at the national or international level
- f. Ability to converse in and write documents in English
- g. Ability to prepare documents and spreadsheets in electronic format
- h. Familiarity with the risk analysis processes, in particular as it relates to JECFA and Codex
- i. Ability to work with people from different cultural backgrounds as well as with scientists from various disciplines

**Application**

Interested scientists are invited to submit their curriculum vitae.

- The applicant should include a description of education, work experience, and a list of peer-reviewed publications in the application, including reference to two persons with knowledge of the professional qualifications.
- Scientists preparing background papers and draft evaluations should have hands-on experience in reviewing toxicological dossiers and in preparing evaluation reports
Scientists to be considered as Members (Reviewers) of the Committee should have long-standing and broad experience in the evaluation of chemicals in food.

Experts should also indicate whether time would be made available by his or her employer for the review of dossiers and preparation of working papers before the meeting and if he or she would have ready access to other experts, such as pathologists, pharmacologists, epidemiologists or statisticians to offer advice on various scientific issues as they arise during the review and preparation of the working papers.

The applicant should indicate whether his or her training and experience are best suited for the evaluation of food additives (including flavours and processing aids), residues of veterinary drugs, contaminants, or naturally occurring toxicants.

**Process for selection of experts**

WHO chooses scientists on the basis of their expertise in the areas under consideration. Procedures for the selection of experts are applied to assure the excellence, independence, and transparency of the recommendations of its scientific committees.

The curriculum vitae that are submitted will be reviewed by a selection panel, which will determine whether the applicant meets the essential requirements outlined in this call.

Complementarity of scientific backgrounds and representation from various geographic regions will be taken into account in the selection process, as well as gender balance.

The experts who are selected will be appointed to a roster from which experts for individual meetings are selected. Additional experts can be recruited if required to address specific questions at certain meetings.

**Appointments to the roster will be for a period of 5 years. The names and affiliations of those scientists placed on the roster will be public information.**

Before participating in meetings, candidates will be required to declare any potential interests associated with the substances according to the standard WHO process. Experts attend the Committee meeting as independent internationally recognized specialists who act in their personal capacities and not as representatives of their employers, governments, or other institutions.

**Applications should be submitted by October 1st 2020 to:**

**Food additives, contaminants and naturally occurring toxicants**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>WHO Joint Secretary to JECFA</th>
<th>Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses</th>
<th>World Health Organization</th>
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**Residues of veterinary drugs**

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