

MYCOTOXINS—DEOXYNIVALENOL (DON)

Mycotoxins are small toxic substances that are produced by fungi. Deoxynivalenol (DON) is one of several mycotoxins produced by certain *Fusarium* species that frequently infect corn, wheat, oats, barley, rice, and other grains in the field or during storage. A recent publication on *fusarium* toxins indicates that the levels of *fusarium*, the fungus that leads to the formation of DON in wheat crops are likely to increase given changes in weather conditions (warming temperatures and increasing rain).

Commodities	Description	Maximum Levels
Raw cereal grains (wheat, maize and barley)	Raw wheat, maize and barley prior to sorting and removal of damaged kernels	2 mg/kg
Flour, semolina, meal, flakes (and possibly grits and starch)	Derived from wheat, maize or barley	1 mg/kg
Cereal-based foods for infants and young children	All cereal-based foods intended for infants (up to 12 months) and young children (12 to 36 months)	0.2 mg/kg

In the April 2013 meeting of Codex Alimentarius, maximum levels for DON were proposed, and are summarized in the table below. Canadian academics and industry partners are working together to determine levels of DON at various stages of the supply chain to provide data on the actual levels. Supply chain members do not feel these current proposed levels are feasible, especially for raw cereal and infant foods. However, cleaning and sorting the raw grain will achieve levels below the 2ppm identified. The next meeting of CODEX on this issue is scheduled for the spring of 2014.