



AIBI POSITION

ACRYLAMIDE - BREAD REMAINS THE HEALTHY BASIS OF NUTRITION

Brussels 28 February 2012

Bread is the healthy basis of every day meals all over Europe. Official nutrition recommendations state that starchy carbohydrates, such as bread, should provide around two third of a healthy and balanced diet. Recent statements on Acrylamide by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) support this recommendation.

What is Acrylamide?

Acrylamide is a chemical substance which may occur in starchy foods cooked at high temperatures. These include coffee, crisps, chips, bread and crisp breads. Acrylamide has been a research target for many years due to fears that the substance may have carcinogenic properties. Though this has never been proven, AIBI – the international Association of plant bakers – has supported this research from the beginning and assists the appropriate authorities in gaining a better understanding of Acrylamide formation.

EFSA findings and what do they mean?

EFSA points to cereal based products and fried potatoes as the main sources of acrylamide <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/2133.pdf> . The reason for this is not that the levels of Acrylamide are particularly high. It has to do with the high bread consumption. The contents found are far below the level which could represent a health risk for consumers.

What AIBI has done?

The European bakers have joined the efforts to reduce Acrylamide levels from the beginning. Together with FoodDrinkEurope, AIBI has developed and revised the Acrylamide toolbox and bread brochures with best practices to minimise the formation of Acrylamide. These documents are available in 22 languages on the GD SANCO, FoodDrinkEurope and AIBI websites.
(http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/chemicalsafety/contaminants/acrylamide_en.htm)

Bread remains the healthy basis of nutrition:

Therefore bread and cereals can be continued to be consumed in a safe way at present consumption levels, the diet pattern should not be changed. This is recommended by

AIBI as well as by all nutrition agencies in Europe. <http://www.eufic.org/article/en/expid/food-based-dietary-guidelines-in-europe/>.

People should not change their diets or cooking methods, but should follow cooking instructions mentioned on the label. In fact avoiding eating bread may lead to nutrition problems itself as starchy carbohydrates, such as bread, should provide around a third to a half of a healthy and balanced diet <http://www.eufic.org/article/en/expid/food-based-dietary-guidelines-in-europe/>.

However, AIBI – the international Association of plant bakers – has recognised the EFSA and consumer concerns about Acrylamide in food and is assisting the appropriate authorities – in gaining a better understanding of its formation and how consumer exposure to it might be minimised.

It is recommended by all nutrition agencies in Europe that the diet pattern should not be changed and bread and cereals can be continued to be consumed in a safe way at present consumption levels. The bread industry is aware of the issue and is doing the utmost to minimise and control the risk of Acrylamide formation.

About AIBI AISBL

AIBI aisbl (Association Internationale de la Boulangerie Industrielle) is the major International association of plant bakeries. AIBI is formed of 16 national plant bakeries associations including Turkey and Russia and representing more than 1200 plant bakeries. It represents the interests of its member vis-à-vis the European institutions in Brussels.

For further information, please contact:
AIBI Secretary General Susanne Döring:
Tel.: 0032-2-361 1900 sd@aibi.eu
www.aibi.eu

FAQ – Frequent Answers and Questions:

Should I stop eating bread?

No. The levels of acrylamide in bread are very low and the general nutrition advice to consumers is that they should not change their diets. Starchy carbohydrates including bread should provide around a third to a half of a healthy, balanced diet. The disadvantages to remove this food group from the diet are higher than the advantages to continue eating bread.

What happens when bread is toasted?

Normal toasting raises the levels of Acrylamide in Bread slightly. The optimum level for tasting is for the bread to turn a light to medium golden colour.

Is Acrylamide an immediate risk?

Acrylamide appears to be formed in food by common cooking practices and so people are likely to have been exposed to AA through this route since mankind started cooking – more than 9000 years ago.

How much Acrylamide is found in food?

Food Group Acrylamide Concentration ($\mu\text{g}/\text{kg}$) (Source FSA 2009/2010)

White Bread	12
All Bread	20
French Fries (ready to eat)	240
Pre-Cooked Potato Products	182
Potato Crisps	1066
Breakfast Cereals	161
Crispbreads	201
Biscuits / Crackers	329
Instant Coffee	736
Cocoa Powder	527

The FSA Survey of Process Contaminants in Retail Foods 2009 is available at:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/fsis0310.pdf>

What has the bread industry done about Acrylamide?

The bread industry found out in many studies that changes to the baking process did not have any significant effect upon Acrylamide formation. AIBI is in close contact with EFSA to monitor Acrylamide levels and to develop strategies regarding advice for a safe consumption of bread.