

Report of the Webinar on Food Safety in the cocoa sector: Current and upcoming regulations in the EU and impacts on the cocoa supply chain

Executive Summary

Key discussions points

- The European Commission (DG SANTE) representatives outlined the changes in EU Food Safety policies in the context of a new EU policy framework, i.e. **the Farm to Fork strategy and the Green Deal**.
- Producing countries indicated that **they wished to be more closely involved in the EU consultation process** in relation to the **upcoming and more stringent EU regulations on food and agricultural products**:
 - reduction in Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) of Ochratoxin A (OTA) and pesticides;
 - revision of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive (SUD); and
 - proposal for a legislative Framework for Sustainable Food Systems (FSFS)
- The industry outlined the presence of **analytical issues** (methodologies, results, detection limits, determination of mineral oil hydrocarbons residues) and the **lack of mitigation strategies** (e.g., the case of Acrylamide (AA)). The need for more time (grace period) for the industry to adapt to new regulations was emphasised.
- Researchers presented **crop protection and genomic advances in cocoa** and **highlighted the challenges faced with regard to the availability, effectiveness, and costs of the proposed bio-pesticides** as substitutes to chemical pesticides.

Recommendations

- **Improve awareness raising on the state of play of EU food and agriculture regulations.**
- **Enhance consultations with cocoa stakeholders to discuss potential mitigation measures.**
- **Provide producers with viable alternatives to chemical pesticides.**