

Grain Industry Food Safety Database Project

Grain Industry Food Safety Database Project

PURPOSE OF THE DATABASE

The purpose of the Database is to capture analytical results of various contaminants regarded as food safety issues (mycotoxins, heavy metals, contaminants other than weeds/chemical residues) on all Australian grain.

WHO IS FUNDING THE DEVELOPMENT?

Grain Trade Australia (GTA) was successful in receiving funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture under the Package Assisting Small Exporters.

An industry Working Group has been formed to assist GTA develop the database. A number of issues have been raised by that Working Group and will be addressed during the lifetime of the project.

WHO COLLECTS FOOD SAFETY DATA ON GRAINS?

While the National Residue Survey analyses grain samples for heavy metals and mycotoxins, the individual results are not available to industry. NRS provide:

- A summary of results to industry.
- The individual results are provided to the storage agent and marketer only.

Industry samples and tests grain for various food safety parameters as part of their contractual obligations and internal company QA procedures. These are kept in-house and not available to industry.

WHAT WILL DATA BE USED FOR?

Currently, no national database exists to support Australia's clean image in relation to food safety quality parameters. The data

generated under the project will be used for two main purposes:

- a) Development of a database to capture this information will give industry a starting point to evaluate the background levels of various contaminants and assist in developing targeted sampling/testing programs for these contaminants. This information will assist industry to select stock based on market requirements.
- b) The Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF) requires national data to support development of international standards. Individual countries (Governments) programs generally supply data to enable these standards to be developed. In relative terms, limited monitoring data (of domestic grain or exported grain) is provided by Australia. For grain some data is generated under the Australian total diet survey and partly under limited NRS monitoring programs.



WHAT FOOD SAFETY PARAMETERS WILL BE COVERED?

All relevant food safety parameters will be covered. Initially these will include:

- Heavy metals
- Mycotoxins
- Ergot
- Pyrrolizidine alkaloids
- Radiation

Over time the database will be added to by industry with other food safety parameters as required by industry.

WHAT DATA WILL BE GENERATED?

Data on the results of analyses will be collected from all available sources. This may include:

- Domestic grain samples
- Export grain

The sampling/testing may be targeted (due to regional issues) or general (e.g., covering a wide agronomic area).

It will not include imported grain, only data on grain produced in Australia and Australian grain products will be used.

WHAT GRAIN TYPES WILL BE COVERED?

It is intended that all grain commodities grown in Australia will be included in the database. These include:

- Whole grains – i.e., cereals, pulses, oilseeds
- Downstream and processed products – as applicable, provided by industry

The initial focus will be on whole grain commodities as this is currently the main focus of the grain industry marketing effort and development of international standards.

WHO CAN PROVIDE DATA?

While GTA is undertaking this project for its members, it is intended that all grain industry participants can access the database provided they agree to the terms and conditions of entry of data and use of the data contained in the database. These terms and conditions are currently being developed as part of the project and will be made available to industry on completion of the project.

WHAT OTHER INFORMATION WILL BE REQUIRED FROM INDUSTRY?

For each sample the fields to be entered in the database are currently being developed. In order to access and use the information to assist the Australian government develop a position at international forums, particular fields may be required to be entered (i.e., level of quantification and level of reporting by test). This is being discussed during the project development. It is intended that the database will be as user friendly as possible and consideration is being given to completion of these unique fields automatically.

WHO CAN ACCESS THE DATABASE AND DATA?

It is expected that the database will be hosted on the GTA website.

For entry of data:

- Industry will need to contact GTA to gain access
- Industry participants will be given a unique password to enable entry of data

For viewing results:

- Industry who provide and input data will have access to not only their own data, but also data on that commodity entered by other industry participants.
- Commercial in-confidence material will only be seen/accessible by the industry participants entering that data.

The rules regarding who has access to data and the final nature of the data able to be seen are being determined and will be made available on completion of the project.

WHAT IS THE TIMEFRAME FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT?

The project has commenced and is due for completion by January 2017.

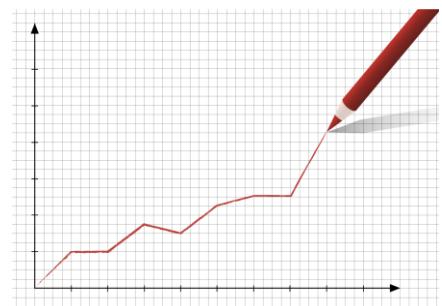
HOW IS THE DATABASE TO BE UPDATED?

Industry will be responsible for updating the database by entry of data as it becomes available. While industry will be encouraged to provide data of recently tested samples, industry will be encouraged to enter results of previously collected/analysed samples in order to generate as much data as possible.

HOW CAN DATA BE VIEWED?

Over time it is expected that a significant number of test records will be generated for viewing by industry. While details are yet to be fully determined, it is intended that industry will be able to access results by:

- On-line viewing
- Printing of reports in a format able to be downloaded to a file (CSV etc.).



HOW IS CONFIDENTIALITY ADDRESSED?

Some of the data to be entered may be considered commercial in confidence and thus not publicly available. This will not be made transparent to industry, except to the industry participant entering the data.

All database users will be required to agree to terms and conditions of use of the database. As the use of the data may impact on the reputation of Australian grain, consideration is being given on how industry may refer to the data.

These terms are currently being developed and will be made available to industry on completion of the project.

CAN I GET INVOLVED IN THE DATABASE DEVELOPMENT?

Yes. Please contact GTA at admin@graintrade.org.au if you wish to have input into its development or comment on any aspect of the project.