

## **Advice 36-2009 of the Scientific Committee of the FASFC on the estimation of dietary intake of lead by the Belgian population**

Lead (Pb) is an environmental contaminant, which mainly comes from anthropogenic emission. Food is the main source of lead exposure. The FAO/WHO (1999) has established a Provisional Tolerable Weekly Intake (PTWI) of 25 µg/kg body weight (bw)/week for lead.

The Scientific Committee of the Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC) was requested to estimate the exposure of the Belgian population to lead and to determine the contribution of different food categories to the exposure.

Based on consumption data from the Belgian food survey (2004) and results from the Pb analyses control in the framework of the control program from the FASFC for 2006, 2007 and 2008, the median and the 95th percentile dietary exposure to lead of the Belgian adult population was estimated at 0,9 µg/kg bw/week and 2,5 µg/kg bw/week, respectively. The median and the 95th percentile dietary exposure of children was estimated at 2,9 µg/kg bw/week and 7,5 µg/kg bw/week. The Pb dietary exposure for consumers which follow the food recommendations for the consumption of vegetables and fish was estimated at 0,98 µg/kg bw/week and 1,02 µg/kg bw/week, respectively.

The food groups that are the main contributors to the lead exposure are beverages (juice), cereals (bread, pasta, ...), vegetables and potatoes.

Milk products, like the above mentioned products, also contribute importantly to the dietary exposure of children and this because of their high consumption.

The Scientific Committee recommends to analyze lead in a certain number of products like in bovine offal (liver, kidney) and in liver pâté.

The full text is available on this website in dutch and in french, respectively under the section "Wetenschappelijk Comité/Adviezen" and "Comité scientifique/Avis".