

April 26, 2024

Reference # 291

TO: FGIS POLICY BULLETIN BOARD

FROM: Jacob Thein
Policies, Procedures, and Market Analysis Branch

SUBJECT: Optional Approved Certificate Statements for Aflatoxin and Fumonisin Test Results

ORIGINATING OFFICE: Policies, Procedures, and Market Analysis Branch

1. PURPOSE

The Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) is providing further guidance to Official Service Providers (OSPs) regarding optional certificate statements for aflatoxin and fumonisin testing results. This policy bulletin is only applicable to mycotoxin test results obtained using FGIS-approved rapid mycotoxin test kits and will remain in effect until current certification instructions are updated to include the following information.

2. BACKGROUND

Recently, FGIS has received questions from OSPs regarding applicant requests for certificate statements referencing specific types of aflatoxin or fumonisin. This policy bulletin will provide guidance to OSPs and standardize certification requirements for using optional approved certificate statements for aflatoxin and fumonisin testing results.

In accordance with Mycotoxin Handbook, Section 5.4 Optional Statements, all optional certificate statements, including the aflatoxin and fumonisin optional approved statements provided below, are reported in the “Remarks” section of the certificate, in addition to reporting the standard results in the “Results” section.

“5.4 OPTIONAL STATEMENTS Certification statements may be modified to report true and factual events. Before modifying a certification remark, consult with the Policies, Procedures, and Market Analysis Branch. Report all optional statements in the “Remarks” section of the official certificate, and on the same certificate with the applicable standard certification.”

3. POLICY

PPMAB has reviewed and approved several options for reporting total aflatoxins and total fumonisins type statements in the “Remarks” section of the certificate, in addition to reporting the standard results in the “Results” section. These qualitative statements are available at the request of the applicant for service. If an applicant requests to use a statement that is not identical to those provided, the statement must be reviewed and approved by the FGIS Policies, Procedures, and Market Analysis Branch (PPMAB) prior to its use.

Aflatoxin Type Statements:

Aflatoxins are part of a larger group of toxins called mycotoxins, which are toxic metabolites that are produced by certain types of fungi and can infect agricultural commodities and make food inedible. There are four major types of aflatoxins: B1, B2, G, and G2, which are named according to the mechanisms of detection (e.g., blue or green fluorescence under UV light).

Referencing aflatoxin types B1, B2, G1, and G2 to define total aflatoxins, is acceptable when reporting rapid test kit mycotoxin results on an official certificate or letterhead document. Statements and results representing individual aflatoxin type results other than total aflatoxins are prohibited when using approved rapid test kit methods.

The following aflatoxin type statements are approved:

“Total aflatoxins (sum of B1, B2, G1, and G2) is equal to or less than (result) ppb.”

“Total aflatoxins (sum of B1, B2, G1, and G2) is negative for the specified threshold of (specific threshold) ppb.” Note: May only be used when test results are less than the specified threshold (e.g., 20 ppb for aflatoxin).

“Aflatoxin (sum of B1, B2, G1, and G2) does not exceed (result) ppb.”

Fumonisin Type Statements:

Fumonisins are environmental toxins produced by certain types of molds that grow on agricultural commodities in the field or during storage. These mycotoxins have been found as contaminants worldwide, mainly in corn. There are three major types of fumonisins produced in nature: B1, B2, and B3.

Referencing fumonisin types B1, B2, and B3 to define total fumonisins, is acceptable when reporting rapid test kit mycotoxin results on an official certificate or letterhead document. Statements and results representing individual fumonisin or fumonisin type results other than total fumonisins are prohibited when using approved rapid test kit methods.

The following fumonisin type statements are approved:

“Total fumonisins (sum of B1, B2, and B3) is equal to or less than (result) ppm.”

“Total fumonisins (sum of B1, B2, and B3) is negative for the specified threshold of (specific threshold) ppm.” Note: May only be used when test results are less than the specified threshold (e.g., 2 ppm for fumonisin).

“Fumonisin (sum of B1, B2, and B3) does not exceed (result) ppm.”

As a reminder, if an applicant requests to use any certificate statement that is not approved, the statement must be reviewed and approved by PPMAB prior to its use.

4. FILING INSTRUCTIONS

File a copy of this policy bulletin with the Mycotoxin Handbook and Grain Inspection Handbook IV, Chapter 3 until the instructions are updated to include the change. Field Office Managers must ensure that a copy of this policy bulletin is available to official service providers operating within their circuit.

5. QUESTIONS

Direct any questions regarding this policy bulletin or questions regarding use of a statement requested by an applicant, to PPMAB by email at FGISPoliciesProceduresMarketAnalysisBranch@usda.gov.