



## MOFA urged to adopt Aflasafe to control aflatoxin in food

Professor Richard Tuyee Awuah, Chairman, National Steering Committee for Aflatoxin Control, has appealed to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) to adopt Aflasafe, a biological control product, for the control of aflatoxin in food and feed.

Science Aflatoxin ProposalHe said studies had shown that some farmers who used Aflasafe in the cultivation of sorghum in the Northern Region produced aflatoxin-free sorghum.

Prof Awuah made the appeal at the launch of the National Policy for Aflatoxin Control in Food and Feed in Accra on Wednesday, October 12, 2022.

“This is probably the most important way we can minimise aflatoxin contamination of our feed and food in Ghana. We have tried drying, early planting, early harvesting, and proper storage. These are good but they don’t amount to much. It is the Aflasafe, which is going to do the trick,” Prof. Amoah said.

He added: “If the Government should help in supplying Aflasafe to farmers, it will help a lot in mitigation of aflatoxin contamination of our feeds.”

Aflatoxin is a class of toxic compounds produced by certain moulds found in food and could cause liver damage and cancer when consumed by humans or animals.

Factors such as high temperature, high humidity and bad hygienic practices often predispose food products to mould infection and subsequent aflatoxin production.

According to researchers, the toxin was discovered in Ghana in 1964 and was found in groundnuts. It is estimated that the country loses about 18 per cent of its maize annually to aflatoxin contamination.

The National Policy for Aflatoxin Control seeks to reduce foodborne diseases, increase the income of farmers and actors in the agriculture value chain, and promote food security in keeping with Goal 2 of the Sustainable Development Goals – “Achieve zero hunger by 2030”.

Dr Kwaku Afriyie, Minister for Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, lauded the development of the policy, saying aflatoxin contamination in food had serious implications on food safety and security, health, trade and livelihoods.

He said although there was no data linking aflatoxin to liver cancer in Ghana, the cases had been increasing, with 3,453 people suffering from liver cancer in 2020, representing 21 per cent of all cancers.

He said aflatoxins also posed a barrier to trade and market development due to the rejection of contaminated products by buyers, including the food industry and importing countries.

“In the early 2000s, EU was the main destination for Ghana’s groundnuts and maize products but currently, the quantities have declined such that in 2019 for example, only 10 per cent of the exported peanut butter went to the EU markets,” Dr Afriyie said.