State of the art

Data from a recent Portuguese national project that studied the toxic effects of children exposure (under 3 years old) to multiple mycotoxins in infant foods (MYCOMIX) reported the co-occurrence of 21 mycotoxins and metabolites present in breakfast cereals primarily marketed for children. This study showed that 96% of the analyzed breakfast cereal samples were contaminated with mycotoxins\textsuperscript{1,2}. The output of this project also highlighted the knowledge gaps on the contra-balance beneficial health effect of these foods, and the need to determine the risk-benefit balance, since the evaluated food products, namely breakfast cereals, are simultaneously recognized vehicles of food components, like nutrients, vitamins and water soluble and insoluble fibers, which could be assumed as beneficial for children health.

RiskBenefit4EU project question

Can we ever have a quantitative tool that enable food and health authorities to estimate the balance between risks and benefits of foods usually contaminated by mycotoxins, as cereals-based products?

RiskBenefit4EU – Partnering to strengthen the risk-benefit assessment within EU

“RiskBenefit4EU – Partnering to strengthen the risk-benefit assessment within EU using a holistic approach” is a recent European project funded by EFSA (GP/EFSA/AFSCO/2017/01-GA02) in a joint initiative of 5 organizations from 3 EU member states: National Institute of Health Dr. Ricardo Jorge (INSA), Portugal, Economic and Food Safety Authority (ASAE), Portugal, Faculty of Food Sciences and Nutrition, University of Porto (UPORTO), Portugal, Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA), France and National Food Institute, Technical University of Denmark (DTU), Denmark. This project aims to strengthen the EU capacity to assess and integrate food risks and benefits in the areas of microbiology, nutrition and toxicology through the development of a harmonized framework that will be available to EU member states organizations.

Expected Results

The expected impact of RiskBenefit4EU stands to help further developing and establishing RBA as a tool to provide scientific evidence to inform risk management decisions in the area of food safety and nutrition at a national, regional and international level. RiskBenefit4EU will create a harmonized framework that different EU institutions could use and apply for their realities and food problems. Furthermore, the collaborations to be settled will provide a unique opportunity to establish critical mass thinking for this research area.