



Rapid aflatoxin testing services

Bureau Veritas and Schutter Group, agri-commodities testing and inspection, have introduced a rapid aflatoxin pre-shipment inspection and quality control process designed to protect producers, shippers, global buyers and feed processors by mitigating the risk of toxin exposure through on-site quick detection tests.

Aflatoxin is a naturally occurring mycotoxin produced by two types of mold: *aspergillus flavus* and *aspergillus parasiticus*. *Aspergillus flavus* is common and widespread in nature and is most often found when certain grains are grown under stressful conditions such as drought or excessive precipitation levels. Exposure to aflatoxins can cause liver damage and cancer if not immediately identified and addressed. Animals fed contaminated food can pass aflatoxin transformation products into eggs,

milk products, and meat.

For example, in 2016 Brazilian corn crops were heavily impacted by aflatoxin problems, mainly due to the drought in Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul and Minas Gerais. Brazil is about to experience one of the largest corn harvests in recent years. Therefore, close monitoring and testing of the country's 2017 corn crop is required to alleviate product contamination, food safety concerns and even global cargo rejection resulting in economic losses.

Schutter Group, a Bureau Veritas company, offers aflatoxin control services during the vessel pre-loading process through the implementation of a rapid and minimally disruptive testing process. Grains and by-products are taken as samples during discharge of inbound delivery trucks or even directly on a shipping vessel's

load conveyor belt. Product testing is then performed using quantitative strip tests that quantify total aflatoxin content within only 7-10 minutes.

Alan Shirley, Vice-President Marketing & Sales, Bureau Veritas Agri-Commodities explained, "Bureau Veritas and Schutter Group are well equipped to perform aflatoxin quality control and detection for the upcoming agriculture export season. We have invested in equipment and test kits to address on-site aflatoxin testing needs in high-demand ports and have five laboratories approved by both FOSFA and GAFTA to perform in-house analysis."

He summarised, "The service is an essential element of our grain quality control process and fundamental to our inspection service adding value for customers in the global agricultural industry."