

## Bulletin 314 - 07/03 - Contamination of Coffee by Wood Preservatives - West Indies

We have been advised of an incident where the treatment of container flooring resulted in a consignment of coffee being contaminated.

Prior to loading the coffee into the containers, wood preservative products containing dichlorophenol were used for the treatment of the container's boarded wooden floors. Dichlorophenol is a chemical used to produce the herbicide 2,4D, is toxic and causes severe tainting in most foodstuffs through its pervasive and long-lasting odour. Articles detailing the effects of dichlorophenol are available to Members on the [Encyclopaedia](http://www.epandi.com) on www.epandi.com.

On delivery, the coffee was found to give off a bad odour. Further analysis of the coffee showed that small amounts of dichlorophenol were present. Due to this contamination all the coffee carried in these containers was condemned for human consumption, and with no other alternative, the coffee was destroyed.



Considering the consequences of carrying foodstuffs in containers previously treated with products containing dichlorophenol, we advise all Members to ensure that they try to obtain data on the history of containers prior to their use. If practicable, separate pools of containers designated for loading chemicals or foodstuffs could be kept, so as to avoid claims such as this in the future.

Source of information: Philippe De Rycker (Sparks & Company)  
Through the Carefully to Carry Committee