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## **European Union**

### **Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and**

### **Standards**

### **Food Additives: Additional Uses and Harmonization**

### **2002**

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#### **Report Highlights:**

**The European Commission has proposed amendments to the current authorizations for food additives on the EU market. These amendments concern mainly new uses for additives that are already authorized in the EU and the harmonization of the use of food additives in flavorings. Other changes concern the approval of one new additive and the withdrawal of a number of additives.**

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Includes PSD changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Brussels USEU [BE2], E2



The European Commission has proposed amendments to the current authorizations for food additives on the EU market. These amendments concern mainly new uses for additives that are already authorized in the EU and the harmonization of the use of food additives in flavorings. Other changes concern the approval of one new additive and the withdrawal of a number of additives.

Directive 95/2/EC covers the EU authorizations of food additives other than colors and sweeteners. The directive is based on the principle of a positive list. A list of authorized food additives is set out in the Annex to the directive with a list of the foodstuffs in which they may be used and the conditions for use. All food additives not included in this list are prohibited except for those substances that received a temporary authorization limited to a period of two years.

The positive list has been amended a number of times since it was adopted in 1995. In the light of recent technical and scientific developments the list needs to be reviewed again.

Food additives are also used in flavorings, for example to preserve flavor. Until now, the use of additives in flavors has not been harmonized throughout the EU. The lack of harmonization at the EU level has been an trade barrier between EU Member States. The present proposal aims to overcome this problem by harmonizing EU legislation on additives necessary for the storage and use of flavors.

The full proposal can be downloaded from:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/sfp/addit\\_flavor/additives/proposal\\_2002\\_0662\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/sfp/addit_flavor/additives/proposal_2002_0662_en.pdf)

The proposed changes concern:

- 1/ The authorization of the new additive hydrogenated poly-1-decene.
- 2/ The withdrawal of the authorization for calcium hydrogen carbonate and phosphates in cider and perry as these additives are not used. Biphenyl (E 230), orthophenyl phenol (E231) and sodium orthophenyl phenol (E232) were temporarily authorized under the miscellaneous additives directive for the treatment of citrus. As these substances are to be considered as plant protection products covered by legislation in this area, the Commission proposes to pull these plant protection products out of the additives legislation.
- 3/ The approval of new uses for additives already authorized. These include amongst others, the approval of a non-GM based emulsifier (citric acid esters of mono- and diglycerides of fatty acids - E 471c) for use in chocolate. Citric acid can be derived from non-GM raw material such as sunflower oil and thus provides for an alternative to lecithin. Other new uses concern malic acid in peeled potatoes, pectin and calcium chloride in fruit compotes, powdered cellulose in grated mozzarella, sodium citrate in UHT goat milk, thickening agents in chestnuts, starch sodium octenyl in baby foods, sorbic acid in dairy and fat based spreads, potassium aluminium silicate as a food color carrier, sorbic acid and sodium aluminium phosphate in bakery wares.
- 4/ Harmonization of the use of food additives in flavorings. The proposal is to authorize only those

additives which are strictly necessary for the storage and use of flavors. This will reduce significantly the number of additives currently on the market for this purpose in EU member States. Generally, maximum levels are set for the additives in the flavoring substance. In a few cases- where the additive transferred from the flavoring may have a technological function in the flavored food - the maximum levels for the additive is set in the flavored food.

Next steps. Now the proposal will go to the Council and to the European Parliament for adoption under the co-decision procedure. Given the length of the authorization procedure and time needed to transpose the directive into Member State legislation, these amendments are not expected to apply throughout the EU before 2006.