

## SUBSTANTIAL EQUIVALENCE OPINION

### Chia Seed (*Salvia hispanica*)

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) received an application in July of 2014 from Go Superfoods Ltd. T/A Rainforest Foods in the UK for an opinion on the substantial equivalence of its Chia seed (*Salvia hispanica*) sourced from Central and South America to Chia seed authorised as a novel food on the EU market. The comparator Chia seed on the EU market was authorised to the Chia Company in Australia by Commission Implementing Decision 2013/50/EU.

The novel Chia seed will be grown in Central and South America and will generally conform to the compositional parameters set out in Annex I of Commission Implementing Decision 2013/50/EU. The intended uses and labelling of the novel Chia seed will be the same as for the authorised comparator as set out in Commission Implementing Decision 2013/50/EU.

### Composition

The applicant states that Chia seed grown in different geographical locations is susceptible to relatively minor variations in composition depending on soil type, agricultural practices and prevailing climate among other aspects. The applicant demonstrates with three batch test results (from different growing regions) that any differences in the levels of macro and micro elements are relatively minor and reflect natural variation. The applicant provides data demonstrating compositional similarity of their Chia seed with the comparator in terms of dry matter, protein, fat (saturated and unsaturated), carbohydrate, dietary fibre and ash, as well as a number of vitamins and minerals. The applicant undertakes to continuously monitor their Chia seed to ensure compositional specifications are maintained.

### Nutritional Value and Metabolism

The novel Chia seed and the authorised comparator contain similar amounts of the major and minor nutritional constituents and therefore the nutritional value and metabolism of both products would not be expected to differ. Chia seed contain

naturally occurring antioxidants that along with physical attributes of the seed help to maintain stability.

### **Intended Uses**

The novel Chia seed is to be used in the EU at similar levels and in the same food categories set out in Annex II of Commission Implementing Decision 2013/50/EU which includes baked products, breakfast cereals, fruit/nut/seed mixes and pre-packaged seed.

### **Level of Undesirable Substances**

Herbicides or other chemicals are not used in the growing, harvesting or processing of the novel Chia seed and therefore detailed chemical residue analysis is not carried out.

Data relating to microbial contaminants (mycotoxins, yeasts/moulds, *Bacilli*, *Salmonella*, *E. Coli* and *Staphylococci*) as well as heavy metals (arsenic, cadmium, lead and mercury) are provided. The applicant undertakes to ensure that their Chia seed will be routinely monitored for these undesirable substances as part of their quality control system.

### **Conclusions**

The FSAI is satisfied from the information provided by the applicant that Chia seed marketed by Go Superfoods Ltd. T/A Rainforest Foods is substantially equivalent to Chia seed already on the EU market and authorised to the Chia Company in Australia by Commission Implementing Decision 2013/50/EU. The designation of this novel ingredient in foodstuffs will be “Chia (*Salvia hispanica*) seeds” in accordance with *Article 2* of Commission Implementing Decision 2013/50/EU. When sold in pre-packaged form, the consumer will be informed through the label that the daily intake of Chia seed should not exceed 15 g.