

SUBSTANTIAL EQUIVALENCE OPINION

Fruit pulp derived from the fruit of *Adansonia digitata* (Baobab tree)

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) received an application in July of 2013 from Aduna Ltd. in the UK for an opinion on the substantial equivalence of its Baobab (*Adansonia digitata*) fruit pulp to a similar ingredient already on the EU market as a novel food and which was authorised to PhytoTrade Africa (Commission Decision 2008/575/EC).

The novel Baobab fruit pulp, similar to the authorised counterpart, is produced primarily by standard mechanical procedures, with just one enzymatic step involving pectinase. The applicant considers Baobab fruit pulp to fall within the scope of the novel food Regulation (EC No 258/97, specifically under *Article 1.2(e)* “Foods and food ingredients consisting of or isolated from plants and food ingredients isolated from animals, except for foods and food ingredients obtained by traditional propagating and breeding practices and which have a history of safe food use”.

Composition

The applicant provided data on the typical composition of their Baobab fruit pulp which includes moisture, protein, fat, fibre, ash, carbohydrate and sodium. The applicant noted that compositional values available for the authorised product are presented as a range rather than a single value which takes into account the variability which can be associated with the geographical location of the Baobab source. The compositional values provided for the novel ingredient are broadly in line with those of the authorised product and any differences observed are likely to be a consequence of the variations that would be anticipated for any plant grown in different geographical regions. The primary bulk constituents of Baobab fruit pulp are carbohydrate and dietary fibre, with minor levels of protein, fat and ash.

Nutritional Value and Metabolism

The novel Baobab fruit pulp and its authorised comparator contain similar levels of the major nutritional components including carbohydrate, fibre, protein and fat, as

well as micronutrients such as vitamins and minerals. The metabolism of both products would not be expected to differ considering the close similarities in composition and nutritional content.

Intended Uses

Though there are no specific restrictions on the food uses for Baobab fruit pulp set out in Commission Decision 2008/575/EC, the applicant intends using Baobab fruit pulp in the same food groups as those in which the authorised ingredient is used.

Level of Undesirable Substances

The microbial specifications for both products are almost identical while the specifications for arsenic, mercury, lead and cadmium are very similar. The applicant provided satisfactory aflatoxin test results and undertakes to audit suppliers for a variety of parameters including microbial load, aflatoxins and foreign matter.

Conclusions

The FSAI is satisfied from the information provided by the applicant that Baobab fruit pulp marketed by Aduna Ltd. is substantially equivalent to Baobab fruit pulp already on the EU market and authorised to PhytoTrade Africa by Commission Decision 2008/575/EC. The designation of this novel ingredient will be “Baobab fruit pulp” in accordance with Commission Decision 2008/575/EC.