

SUBSTANTIAL EQUIVALENCE OPINION

Fruit Juice and Fruit Juice Blends with Added Chia Seed

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) received an application in February of 2017 from Andean Grain Products Ltd. in the UK for an opinion on the substantial equivalence of fruit juice and fruit juice blends with added chia seed. The applicant compares their products to similar products that were authorised to Wow Food and Drinks Ltd. in September of 2015. The applicant's chia seed has previously been authorised by the UK Competent Authority and therefore this opinion will focus on the addition of that chia seed to fruit juice and fruit juice blends.

Composition

The chia seed to be used in fruit juice and fruit juice blends has already been authorised for the EU market and therefore its composition has been previously addressed. Fruit juice and fruit juice blends are not within the scope of the novel food Regulation and the addition of chia seed will not otherwise alter the composition of those products. The amount of chia seed to be added to the fruit juice and fruit juice blends will be the same as that for the authorised comparator.

Nutritional Value and Metabolism

There are no effects on nutritional value or metabolism anticipated due to the addition of authorised chia seed to fruit juice and fruit juice blends.

Intended Uses

The applicant's chia seed is currently authorised for use in bread and baked products, breakfast cereals, fruit, nut and seed mixes and pre-packaged seed. It is the applicant's intention to extend the use so that whole, ground or mashed chia seed can be added to fruit juice and fruit juice blends in accordance with the conditions set out in the FSAI authorisation letter of 2015 to Wow Food and Drinks Ltd.

Level of Undesirable Substances

A flow diagram explaining the production process has been provided by the applicant. This includes preparing whole, mashed or ground chia seed which is pre-hydrated in water before addition to fruit juice or fruit juice blends. The fruit juice or fruit juice blends with added chia

seed are pasteurised before packaging in transparent containers. Quality control is ensured throughout the production process by analysis of the starting chia seed and the final product.

Conclusions

The FSAI is satisfied from the information provided by Andean Grain Products Ltd. that the proposed fruit juice and fruit juice blends with added chia seed are substantially equivalent to those authorised to Wow Food and Drinks Ltd. in 2015. Only chia seed that has previously been authorised to Andean Grain Products Ltd. for marketing in the EU will be used and so the composition, nutritional value and metabolism of the chia seed are not specifically addressed in this opinion. The applicant has demonstrated that the pasteurisation process is adequate to ensure a safe end product. The potential for any allergic reactions to chia seed will be monitored by Andean Grain Products and the contact details of a local food allergy organisation provided on containers. The chia seed added to fruit juices and fruit juice blends shall be designated as “Chia (*Salvia hispanica*) seeds” on the labelling of products containing them.