

## **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 Glanbia Nutritionals (Ireland) Ltd., 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 authorised to Wow Food and Drinks Ltd. in September of 2015. The chia seed (ChoiceChia™ White MP, ChoiceChia™ Black MP and Bevgrad® White Chia) in this application is already authorised for the EU market. Therefore, this opinion mainly deals with the addition of EU-authorised chia seed to fruit juice and fruit juice blends.

The applicant has outlined the production process which includes pre-hydration of chia seed in water for 15 minutes and pasteurisation after the addition of chia seed to the fruit juice and fruit juice blends.

#### **Composition**

The chia seed to be used by the applicant has already been authorised for the EU market and therefore its composition was satisfactorily addressed previously. Fruit juice and fruit juice blends are not within the scope of the novel food Regulation and the addition of chia seed should not affect their composition.

#### **Nutritional Value and Metabolism**

The composition of the chia seed has been addressed previously and fruit juice and fruit juice blends are outside the scope of the novel food Regulation. The nutritional value or metabolism of the chia seed or the fruit juice and fruit juice blends will not be affected by their co-consumption.

#### **Intended Uses**

The applicant wishes to extend the use of already authorised chia seed so that it can be added to fruit juice and fruit juice blends in accordance with the conditions set out in the authorisation letter of 2015 to Wow Food and Drinks Ltd. in the UK from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

## **Level of Undesirable Substances**

The fruit juice or fruit juice blends with added chia seed are pasteurised before packaging in transparent containers. The product is checked for mycotoxins, while microbiological analysis (*L. monocytogenes*, *Salmonella*, *S. aureus*, *B. cereus*, *C. perfringens*, yeast and mould) is carried out on the chia seeds and also on the final product to ensure quality control throughout the production process. Samples are tested every 3 months until the end of their shelf life (120 days).

## **Conclusions**

The FSAI is satisfied from the information provided by Glanbia Nutritionals (Ireland) 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 the UK. The chia seed to be used is already authorised for marketing in the EU and so the composition, nutritional value and metabolism are not specifically addressed in this opinion. The applicant has demonstrated that the pasteurisation process is adequate to ensure a safe and stable end product. The applicant will monitor the potential for allergic reactions to chia seed and, where possible, provide the contact details of local food allergy organisations. The chia seed added to fruit juices and fruit juice blends shall be designated as “Chia (*Salvia hispanica*)” on the labelling of products containing it.