

SUBSTANTIAL EQUIVALENCE OPINION

Chia Seed

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) received an application in July of 2017 from Healy Group Ltd. of Ireland for an opinion on the substantial equivalence of their chia seed (*Salvia hispanica* L.) to chia seed already authorised on the EU market under the novel food Regulation (EC) No 258/97. The novel ingredient is compared with chia seed already authorised by Commission Decision 2009/827/EC and Commission Implementing Decision 2013/50/EU. The novel chia seed is grown in Uganda without the use of chemical pesticides and processed in a factory with a HACCP system in place. The bagged chia seeds will be loaded and sealed into food grade containers in Uganda before export to Ireland.

Composition

Batch test results demonstrate that the composition of the novel chia seed is substantially equivalent to the authorised comparator in terms of dry matter, protein, fat, carbohydrates, dietary fibre and ash. Any deviations in these parameters are minor and are likely due to natural variation.

Constituent (%)	Novel Chia seed (average)	Authorised Chia Seed Decision 2013/50/EU
Dry Matter (%)	92	91-96
Protein (%)	22	20-22
Fat (%)	28	30-35
Carbohydrates (%)	39	25-41
Dietary Fibre (%)	32	18-30
Ash (%)	4	4-6

Nutritional Value and Metabolism

As the composition of the novel chia seed is largely similar to the authorised comparator, it is not expected that the nutritional value or metabolism will differ.

Intended uses

The novel chia seed will be placed on the EU market as set out in *Article 1* of Commission Decision 2009/827/EC and Annex II of Commission Implementing Decision 2013/50/EC in food categories that include bread products, baked products, breakfast cereals, fruit nut and seed mixes as well as pre-packaged chia seeds as such.

Level of Undesirable Substances

Batch analyses demonstrate that heavy metals including arsenic, cadmium, lead and mercury are within limits set out in Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006. Analytical results for microbiological contaminants such as *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, *Listeria spp.*, yeasts and moulds do not identify any concerns while results for mycotoxins, pesticides residues and other environmental contaminants do not identify any cause for concern.

Conclusion

The FSAI is satisfied from the information provided by Healy Group Ltd. that their chia seed is substantially equivalent to the chia seed authorised for the EU market by Commission Decision 2009/827/EC and Commission Implementing Decision 2013/50/EU. The novel ingredient will be used in the same food categories and at the same levels as the authorised chia seed. The designation of the novel ingredient in foods containing it will be “Chia (*Salvia hispanica*) seeds”, while pre-packaged chia seed will be required to inform consumers that the daily intake is to be no more than 15g.