

## SUBSTANTIAL EQUIVALENCE OPINION

### AcanChia<sup>®</sup> Chia Oil

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) received an application in June 2016 from ACANCHIA UG & CO.KG in Germany for an opinion on the substantial equivalence of its chia oil (AcanChia<sup>®</sup> chia oil) to chia oil produced by Functional Products Trading S.A. and authorised for the EU market by Commission Implementing Decision 2014/890/EU.

Chia oil is derived from chia seed (*Salvia hispanica*) and is a rich source of polyunsaturated fatty acids, particularly omega-3 alpha-linolenic acid and, to a lesser extent omega-6 linoleic acid. Chia oil is a novel ingredient and is categorised under *Article 1.2(e)* of the novel food Regulation EC No. 258/97: “*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 or breeding practices and having a history of safe food use*”.

The chia seed from which the novel oil is derived is cultivated in seed plantations in the north of Argentina, Bolivia and Peru. The oil is produced through a cold pressing process followed by a three stage filtering process (in plates, meshes and fabric) resulting a high level of purity. The oil is then stored in drums conditioned as oil containers, with natural tocopherols added to enhance stability.

#### **Composition**

Batch analyses demonstrates that the composition of the novel oil is very similar to the comparator in terms of acidity expressed as oleic acid, peroxide value, insoluble impurities, alpha linoleic acid and linoleic acid. The applicant also assessed the levels of other constituents including fatty acids, protein, sugars, dietary fibre, tocopherols and sterols. Any minor differences detected are considered to be in line with natural variation.

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

As the novel chia oil is compositionally very similar to the comparator chia oil already on the EU market, it is reasonable to conclude that it will also be similar in terms of nutritional value and metabolism.

### **Intended Uses**

The novel chia oil will have the same uses and use levels as the existing chia oil which are specified in Annex II of Commission Implementing Decision 2014/890/EU (fats and oils  $\leq 10\%$ , food supplements  $\leq 2\text{g}$  per day).

### **Level of Undesirable Substances**

Analyses of three batches of the novel chia oil demonstrates that levels of heavy metals (arsenic, cadmium, lead and mercury), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, PCB's/dioxins and mycotoxins as well as microbiological contaminants such as yeasts, moulds, *Enterobacteriaceae*, Coliforms, *Salmonella* and *Escherichia coli* are within regulatory or guideline limits. Pesticide residues were also not detected.

### **Conclusions**

The FSAI is satisfied from the information provided by the applicant that AcanChia<sup>®</sup> chia oil is substantially equivalent to chia oil already on the EU market in terms of composition, nutritional value, metabolism, intended use and level of undesirable substances. The novel chia oil will be subject to the same general and specific EU food legislation that currently governs the marketing and use of seed oils on the EU market and shall be designated as "Chia oil (*Salvia hispanica*)" on the labelling of foodstuffs containing it.