



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH AND CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Deputy Director-General for the Food Chain

INCOMING N° 36136

04 MAG. 2011

EFSA

04.05.2011

Brussels,
SANCO.E3/SB/km (2011), *Ar.s 483328*

Subject: Request for EFSA to perform a full re-evaluation of aspartame (E 951)

Dear Ms Geslain-Lanéelle,

Regulation (EU) No 257/2010 setting a programme of re-evaluation on food additives foresees in its Article 3 (c) that the re-evaluation of all approved sweeteners listed in Directive 94/35/EC shall be completed by 31 December 2020.

As you are aware, the sweetener aspartame (E 951) has fuelled numerous questions over the recent years from some scientists, members of the European Parliament and consumer organisations. On this matter, I appreciate the important work already undertaken by EFSA and its ANS panel to scrutinise new scientific developments in order to keep up to date the original opinion on aspartame delivered by the Scientific Committee on Food (SCF).

However, due to the high controversy over the potential safety concern of this food additive which is highly consumed nowadays, I would like EFSA to perform a full re-evaluation of the safety on aspartame by the end of July 2012, therefore anticipating the deadline of 2020 foreseen by the Regulation EU No 257/2020.

As you are aware, my service provided EFSA with the general Terms of Reference (ToR) which are applicable for all re-evaluations of food additives under the framework of Regulation (EU) No 257/2010 (see annex). Therefore, this ToR also covers the re-evaluation of aspartame.

Having listened to the criticisms over the last week, I consider it very important that this re-evaluation also takes into account the original raw data.

Ms Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle
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My services remain at your disposal for further information. On this matter, you can contact Mr Stephane Brion, who is responsible for this dossier with regard to legislation and Ms Josiane Houins-Roulet, who is the relevant contact point in the unit in charge of relations with EFSA. Their respective phone and e-mail addresses are indicated below.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ladislav Miko', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Ladislav Miko

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ANNEX

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Commission asks the European Food Safety Authority to re-evaluate the safety of food additives already permitted in the Union before 2009 and to issue scientific opinions on these additives, taking especially into account the priorities, procedures and deadlines that are enshrined in Regulation (EU) No 257/2010 of 25 March 2010 setting up a programme for the re-evaluation of approved food additives in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on food additives.

