

Food safety, human health protection: common authorisation procedure for food additives, food enzymes and food flavourings

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The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted a report drafted by Asa **WESTLUND** (PES, SE) recommending some amendments to the Council's common position for adopting a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a common authorisation procedure for food additives, food enzymes and food flavourings. It reinserted some amendments from 1st reading that had not been taken up by the Council in its common position, with particular reference to increasing transparency in the authorisation procedure, and thereby increasing consumer protection. The main amendments are as follows:

- transparency in the production and handling of food is absolutely crucial to achieving consumer credibility;
- the Committee stressed that the common procedure should contribute to improved consumer protection and public health as well as the free movement of these substances within the Community;
- substances included on the Community list may be used by all food business operators subject to the conditions applicable to them, provided their use is not restricted under certain provisions in the legislation on confidential information;
- the Authority shall give its opinion within nine months (instead of six months) of receipt of a valid application;
- the opinion shall also be made public, subject to the provisions of on confidentiality (Article 12);
- on updating the list, the Commission must justify its draft regulation and explain the considerations on which it is based ;
- scientific data and other information provided by applicants may not be used for the benefit of a subsequent applicant for a period of five years from the date of authorisation, unless the subsequent applicant has agreed with the prior applicant that such data and information may be used and costs are shared accordingly, and under certain circumstances that are prescribed in a new amendment.