

Food additives: conditions of use for E 425 konjac

2002/0201(COD) - 05/08/2002 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to amend the current authorisation to withdraw the authorisation to use E 425 konjac in jelly mini-cups in order to protect human health. **CONTENT:** on 27 March 2002, the Commission adopted a Decision (2002/247/EC) to suspend the placing on the market and import of jelly confectionery containing the food additive E 425 konjac. Also the use of E 425 konjac in jelly confectionery was suspended. The measure was adopted under Article 53 of Regulation 178/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety. The Commission took this measure after being informed by the several Member States and third countries of the risk involved in consuming jelly confectionery (so called jelly minicups) containing E 425 konjac. Several children and elderly persons had died in third countries through choking. In addition to the shape and size of this confectionery, the chemical and physical properties of the food additive konjac are such that it causes jelly mini-cups to constitute a life-threatening risk to humans. Some manufacturers of jelly mini-cups recognise the risk by affixing a warning on the food package, highlighting the risk for children and the elderly. In the present case, warning through labelling is not sufficient to protect human health, especially with regard to children. The use of the food additive E 425 konjac is authorised in foodstuffs in the European Community under certain conditions by Directive 95/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 February 1995 on food additives other than colours and sweeteners. It is necessary to amend the current authorisation to withdraw the authorisation to use E 425 konjac in jelly mini-cups in order to protect human health. In addition, the use of konjac in any other jelly confectionery should also be withdrawn, as it may present the same risk as jelly mini-cups.