

Food additives other than colours and sweeteners

1995/0114(COD) - 22/02/1996

A draft report for a first reading (under the co-decision procedure) of a Commission proposal for a European Parliament and Council Directive amending Directive 95/2/EC of the European Parliament and the Council on food additives other than colours and sweeteners (PE 215.507- Mrs Karin RIIS-JØRGENSEN - ELDR, Dk). Carrageenan (E 407) is the official name for a highly refined seaweed extract of this kind. Another less purified product with a similar use is Processed Eucheumaa Seaweed (PES). The committee thought this would mislead the consumer and amended the proposal to retain the name Processed Eucheumaa Seaweed and give it a new number of its own, E 408. It also decided that PES would not be permitted in foodstuffs for children under the age of 18 months. The process used to refine carrageenan (E 407) results in a virtually pure end product. The process used to produce PES, however, leaves the end product with a residue of 10 to 15 per cent insoluble acid matter. PES may also contain heavy metals and/or microbial substances. In her explanatory statement, the rapporteur, Mrs Karin RIIS-JØRGENSEN - ELDR, Dk), thinks that consumer confidence in the Community's labelling system would be severely dented if, with this Directive, the Commission set a precedent for the marketing of different products under virtually the same name and E number. The proposal is expected to the House for approval at the part-session in March. If adopted, it will then return to the Commission and Council for further consideration under the co-decision procedure.