Human consumption: new sweeteners additives, sucralose and salt of aspartame (amend. Directive 94/35/EC)

2002/0152(COD) - 10/04/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted the resolution by Mrs Anne FERREIRA (PES, F) calling on the Commission to tighten up the new restrictions it is proposing on cyclamates in soft drinks in line with its consistent drive to make sure that foodstuffs and drinks consumed in the EU are safe. It is concerned at claims that cyclamates, used as low-calorie sweeteners in drinks consumed in large quantities by children and teenagers in particular, pose health hazards and may cause reduced testosterone levels in rats and are carcinogenic. It believes that the Commission's plan to reduce the maximum levels of cyclamates from the current level of 400 mg/l to 350 mg/l. does not go far enough. The House passed an amendment which reduces the limit to 100 mg/l (and brings it down further from the limit of 250 mg/l previously demanded by the Environment Committee). It also voted to extend the new limit to milk-based drinks in addition to water-based drinks. The resolution, which was adopted by 440 votes to 20, with 13 abstentions, accepts the Commission's proposal, in the same draft directive, to authorise two new sweeteners, sucralose and aspartame-acesulfame salt. However, it calls for a review of their use within three years. It also wants the use of two other sweeteners, aspartame and Stevia, to be re-examined and calls for proposals to improve the labelling of products containing aspartame. Parliament also wants the new directive to be implemented in the Member States within a year of its entry into force.