

# Food additives: sweeteners and other than colours and sweeteners

2004/0237(COD) - 11/10/2004 - Legislative proposal

**PURPOSE :** Amendment of Directives on food additives other than colours and sweeteners and on sweeteners for use in foodstuffs.

**PROPOSED ACT :** Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council.

**CONTENT :** the European Commission is proposing amendments to Directive 95/2/EC on food additives other than colours and sweeteners and to Directive 94/35/EC on sweeteners for use in foodstuffs, in light of recent technical and scientific developments. The proposal's justification is the continued smooth functioning of the internal market, a high level of human health and consumer protection. The proposed revision affect the following substances:

- Nitrite and Nitrate : The Commission proposes amending the current provisions in such a way that the maximum levels permitted by the EFSA in non-heat-treated meat products, in cheese and in fish are set as added amounts. For certain traditionally manufactured meat products maximum residual levels should be set.

- Weaning foods : The Commission proposes that every reference made to "weaning foods" should be replaced by a reference to "processed cereal-based foods and baby foods".

- Food supplements and foods for special medical purposes. The Commission proposes that every reference made to "dietary food supplements" be replaced by a reference to "food supplements as defined in Directive 2002/46/EC" and every reference to "dietetic foods intended for special medical purposes" be replaced by a reference to "dietary foods for special medical purposes as defined in Directive 1999/21/EC."

- p-Hydroxybenzoates : The Commission proposes withdrawing E 216 propyl p- hydroxybenzoates and E 217 sodium propyl p- hydroxybenzoates from Directive 95/2/EC. Further, on the basis of updated information, the Commission proposes withdrawing the use of p- hydroxybenzoates in liquid dietary food supplements.

- Gelling agents in jelly mini-cups : The Commission proposes withdrawing the use of the following gel-forming food additives in jelly mini-cups: E 400 alginic acid, E 401 sodium alginate, E 402 potassium alginate, E 403 ammonium alginate, E 404 calcium alginate, E 406 agar, E 407 carrageenan, E 407a processed eucheuma seaweed, E 410 locust bean gum, E 412 guar gum, E 413 tragacanth, E 414 acacia gum, E 415 xanthan gum, E 417 tara gum and E 418 gellan gum.

- Erythritol : The Commission proposes allowing the use of erythritol in the same food applications as the other currently permitted polyols. Further, it is proposed to amend Directive 94/35/EC on sweeteners for use in foodstuffs, as erythritol can also be used for sweetening purposes like the other currently permitted polyols.

- 4- Hexylresorcinols : The Commission proposes that 4- hexylresorcinols can be used as an alternative to sulphites for preventing browning of crustaceans.

- Soybean hemicellulose : The Commission proposes to use soybean hemicellulose as an emulsifier in sauces, food supplements and flavouring, as a thickener in bakery ware and in jelly confectionery, as a stabiliser in frozen foods and dairy-based drinks and as an anti-caking agent in rice and noodles.
- Ethyl cellulose. The use of ethyl cellulose would be permitted in a similar way to other cellulose in the group ADI "not specified" for modified celluloses established by the Scientific Committee on Food. Further, it is proposed that the use of ethyl cellulose would be permitted in a similar way to other celluloses.
- Sodium hydrogen carbonate in sour milk cheese : The Commission proposes allowing the use of sodium hydrogen carbonate in sour milk cheese.
- Sorbates and benzoates in crustaceans: The Commission proposes allowing the use of a mixture of sorbates and benzoates in all cooked crustacean and molluscs, not only in cooked shrimps.
- Silicon dioxide as a carrier: The Commission proposes allowing the use of silicon dioxide as a carrier for food colours E 171 titanium dioxide and E 172 iron oxides and hydroxides at the level of maximum 90% relative to the pigment.
- Additives in traditional Hungarian products: Directive 95/2/EC limits the use of additives listed in Annex I in traditional French bread "Pain courant francais". The same limited use is proposed for similar traditional Hungarian bread "Búzakenyér, fehér és félbarna kenyerek." Further, the Commission proposes allowing the use in Hungarian liver patés (libamáj, libamáj egészben, libamáj tömbben) similar to foie gras, of ascorbic acid (E 300), sodium ascorbate (E 301) and calcium disodium EDTA (E 385). It is also proposed to allow the use of sorbates and benzoates for preservation of Hungarian quick-frozen chestnut puree "Gyorsfagyasztott gesztenyepüré".

Concerning the amendment of Directive 94/35/EC the Commission proposes the authorisation of a new food additive erythritol. It is proposed that erythritol may be used in tabletop sweeteners and in energy reduced foods and foods with no added sugars. Further, it is proposed to exempt erythritol from the labelling rule regarding labelling of laxative effect in tabletop sweeteners containing polyols.