

Statement of the Scientific Panel on Contaminants in the Food chain (CONTAM) on a request from the European Commission related to 3-MCPD esters

(Question No EFSA-Q-2008-258)

Adopted by written procedure on 28 March 2008

The Service within the European Commission responsible for legislation on food safety asked the members of the Scientific Panel on Contaminants in the Food chain (CONTAM) for a statement regarding the recent findings in Germany on high levels of 3-mono-chloropropane-1,2-diol (3-MCPD) esters in edible refined plant oils and fats, such as margarine, oil for frying, nougat spread and infant formula (fat component) in order to assist the European Commission in preparing its position on 3-MCPD in liquid condiments containing acid-hydrolysed vegetable protein for the meeting of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Food in April 2008. Maximum levels of 0.02 mg/kg 3-MCPD for hydrolysed vegetable protein and soy sauce have been laid down at a community level, however current discussions at the Codex Alimentarius propose higher maximum levels of 0.4 mg/kg for liquid condiments.

The CONTAM Panel was asked also to take into account the recently issued opinion from the German Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung (BfR) on 3-MCPD esters¹ and recently published scientific literature. The CONTAM Panel noted that since there are no toxicological data on 3-MCPD esters, the German BfR based its recent risk assessment on toxicological data on 3-MCPD, under the assumption that 100% of 3-MCPD is released from its esters.

The CONTAM Panel agreed with this assumption made by the BfR and concluded that there is no scientific evidence at present to dispute this figure and agreed with the estimate of 100 % release of 3-MCPD from its esters in humans. However, the CONTAM Panel would welcome kinetic studies with 3-MCPD esters to gain further

¹ Available at URL:

http://www.bfr.bund.de/cm/208/saeuglingsanfangs_und_folgenahrung_kann_gesundheitlich_bedenkliche_3_mcpd_fettsaeureester_enthalten.pdf

information on the time-course and site of the release of 3-MCPD from its esters *in vivo*.

SCIENTIFIC PANEL MEMBERS

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