

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR NOVEL FOODS AND PROCESSES****YOGURT WITH CHIA SEEDS (EXTENSION OF USE OF CHIA SEEDS) - DOSSIER 203****ISSUE**

1. The Croatian Competent Authority (CA) has prepared comments on an application to extend the use Chia Seeds to yogurt under the Novel Foods Regulation (EC) No 258/97.
2. The Committee is asked whether it agrees with the initial opinion and whether it would like to make any further comments on this application. The Committee's advice will form the basis for the UK's formal response to the Commission.

**Background**

3. On 17 January the European Commission forwarded the Croatian Institute for Public Health's favourable initial opinion on an application made by Meggle Hrvatska d.o.o under Article 4 of the Regulation for yogurt with Chia Seeds.
4. The Commission has requested the views of Member States on the Croatian CA's initial opinion. Member States have until 17 March to submit any comments and/or reasoned objections to the Croatian assessment.
5. A summary to the application dossier is attached as **Annex A**, (the application dossier is not available) the Croatian Initial Assessment Report is attached as **Annex B**. Further annexes providing the referenced papers are available on request. Annex A and B contain protected information.

**This application**

6. Commission Decision 2009/827/EC approved chia seed as a novel food in the EU from 2009. Chia Seed is currently approved for use in baked products, breakfast cereals, fruit, nut and seed mixes, as 100% packaged seed,<sup>1</sup> and in fruit juice and fruit juice blends<sup>2</sup>. The applicant has applied to extend the use of chia seeds to be added whole mashed or ground to yogurt (fermented milk product).

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<sup>1</sup> Commission implementing decision 2013/15/EU

<sup>2</sup> Irish decision for Chia Wow dated 18<sup>th</sup> September 2015

[https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/novel-food\\_authorisation\\_2015\\_auth-letter\\_chia-seeds-2\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/novel-food_authorisation_2015_auth-letter_chia-seeds-2_en.pdf)

7. The seeds which Argrana will use in yogurt are grown under contract to R Craig and Sons Ltd and have been authorised as being substantially equivalent to chia seeds which are already on the market in the European Union.
8. The initial opinion notes that Argrana conducted research into potential reports of allergic reactions to chia in countries where chia is widely available as an ingredient in products and as a whole food. They found no reported incidents of an allergic reaction to Chia seed.
9. Agrana also conducted a survey of food allergy associations and food safety regulatory authorities and found that no reports of allergic reaction to chia seed has been reported and recorded.
10. In the initial opinion no microbiological concerns were expressed based on the seeds being an existing authorised source applying appropriate controls to minimise the growth of moulds.
11. The applicant estimates that the average intake of chia seeds will be less than 1g from the consumption of yogurt products. The Croatian Competent Authority (CA) considers it highly unlikely that a consumer would consume a product from each authorised use category for chia seeds. It is suggested that the additional use would be an alternative source of Chia.

#### **COMMITTEE ACTION REQUIRED**

12. Members are asked whether they agree with the initial opinion from the Croatian CA and whether they wish to make any comments on the application.
13. The Committee's advice will form the basis for the UK's formal response to the opinion of the Croatian CA.

**Secretariat  
January 2017**

#### **Annexes attached:**

- Annex A**     Application summary for the approval of chia seeds in yogurt
- Annex B**     Initial Opinion of the Croatian Authorities