

Mr John Ritz  
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10<sup>th</sup> June 2004

Reference: NFU 501

### **Saskatoon Berries**

Dear Mr Ritz

On the 5<sup>th</sup> May you requested an opinion from the Food Standards Agency, as the competent UK assessment body under the novel foods regulation (EC) No 258/97, on the substantial equivalence of Saskatoon berries to blueberries, according to Article 3(4) of that regulation. I am writing to inform you that we do not accept that substantial equivalence has been established between these two berries.

In reaching this conclusion, we have taken advice from the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP), which discussed your application dossier at its meeting on 27 May. The Committee acknowledged that Saskatoon berries have a history of consumption in Canada and do not appear to present any safety concerns. However, they could not be considered substantially equivalent to blueberries as the two species are unrelated and their phytochemical compositions are very different. The Committee accepted that the nutritional profiles of the two berries are similar, but advised that any possible concerns over the safety of the berries would be centred on other components which clearly differ between the two types of berry.

The ACNFP advised that Saskatoon berries should not therefore be considered for authorisation under the simplified procedure for novel foods, which applies to

products that are substantially equivalent to an existing food. Instead, any authorisation would have to be granted under the standard procedure described in Article 4 of the regulation.

Please let us know if you intend to convert your application for a dossier for assessment under the "full" Article 4 procedure.

Yours sincerely

Dr Sandy Lawrie  
ACNFP Secretary

cc

Dr Joe Mazza  
Rick Cooper

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
Canadian High Commission