

9 January 2014

UNESDA statement on aspartame

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) recently re-affirmed the safety of aspartame in its Opinion of December 2013*.

As the chair of the EFSA food additives panel, Alicja Mortensen, stated: *“This opinion represents one of the most comprehensive risk assessments of aspartame ever undertaken. It’s a step forward in strengthening consumer confidence in the scientific underpinning of the EU food safety system and the regulation of food additives.”*

Aspartame is one of the most thoroughly researched food ingredients ever, with over 200 studies confirming its safety. It has been widely used as a low calorie sweetener for over 30 years.

In addition to EFSA, national and international food safety authorities have carried out extensive scientific research and regulatory reviews on aspartame and found it to be safe for use. These include the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) of the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization as well as regulatory agencies in over 100 countries.

Notes to editors

- The 2013 Opinion followed the first full evaluation of aspartame requested of EFSA . It was carried out by the Authority’s Scientific Panel on Food Additive and Nutrient Sources Added to Food (ANS Panel).
- In this evaluation, EFSA’s scientific experts drew upon all available information on aspartame and its breakdown products and, following a detailed and methodical analysis, they concluded that they pose no toxicity concern for consumers at current levels of exposure.
- The current Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) for aspartame of 40 mg/kg bw/day is considered to be safe for the general population and consumer exposure is below this ADI.
- This was the third time since 2006 that EFSA had expressed its confidence in the safety of aspartame. In doing so, EFSA has also reconfirmed the results of reviews conducted by its predecessor, the European Commission’s Scientific Committee on Food (SCF), in 2002, 1988 and 1984.

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