

Summary of the application: Roasted and popped seed kernels of *Euryale ferox* Salisb (Makhana)

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This is a notification for the authorisation to place on the EU market the following traditional food from a third country: Makhana, which are the roasted and popped seed kernels of *Euryale ferox* Salisb..

This notification has been compiled in line with the administrative and scientific requirements of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/2468 for notifications concerning traditional foods from third countries in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 of the European Parliament and of the Council. It is also in line with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) guidance on the preparation and presentation of the notification and application for authorisation of traditional foods from third countries in the context of Regulation (EU) 2015/2283. The ingredient falls under category (iv): “food consisting of, isolated from or produced from plants or their parts”.

In India and China, the use of the dried seeds of *Euryale ferox* as a food is very old and well-established for over 3000 years. It is used in different forms (dry, cooked and roasted) in multiple local dishes. The roasted and popped seed kernels, known as ‘Makhana’ have been consumed traditionally as a snack. The last few decennia, the sales of this ready-to-eat snack significantly increased in India and the US and spread around the globe, since 2012 even in several Member States.

The dried seeds are pre-heated in a pan and left to cool after which they are roasted. During the roasting the seed kernel expands, the hard-shell cracks and is removed. Afterwards the popped seeds are roasted in oil and seasoned with salt or other spices. The applicant buys popped seeds on local markets, roast them and add seasoning. They are then packed in retail packs ready for local sale and export.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), the National Makhana Research Centre of the Indian Council for Agricultural Research - Research Complex for Eastern Region (ICAR-RCER) and the Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI) are involved in the improvement of the technology of Makhana production and standardization of the processing technology and the promotion of food safety standards (e.g. HACCP and regulations of the Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)).

The analyses executed in accredited laboratories in 2019 and 2021 show that Makhana is free of pesticides, mycotoxins, and most other contaminants and that a shelf life of 6-12 months can be assured. Makhana contains mainly carbohydrates and protein; is naturally low in fat, salt, and sugar; and does not contain gluten or trans fats. It can be eaten as a healthy snack by all population groups. The authorities of Australia and New Zealand already evaluated and officially authorized the use of makhana on June 18, 2020.

Analysis of the composition of Makhana, reference to numerous published studies, the long-standing traditional uses and evidence of ongoing regular human consumption, support the claim that Makhana is a traditional food with a very long history of safe food use in India and does not pose a safety risk to human health. Makhana is not intended to replace another food but provides an alternative, snack high in carbohydrates and protein, that is very similar to popcorn.

ZENKO SUPERFOODS hereby notifies the European Commission of this traditional food, with the intention of making it available to consumers in the European market.