

Summary of the application: Grain from perennial intermediate wheatgrass (*Thinopyrum intermedium*)

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The novel food application concerns the authorisation of domesticated perennial intermediate wheatgrass (*Thinopyrum intermedium*), referred to as Kernza[®]. Intermediate wheatgrass is a perennial cool season grass and is currently grown as a source of forage for livestock and wildlife and is originally from Eurasia but has long been cultivated in North America in the western regions of the US and Canada. Kernza is grain harvested from domesticated forms of perennial IWG and is cultivated via standard breeding methodologies consistent with those employed for wheat. The Kernza sourced by the applicant is cultivated according to the USDA National Organic Programme (NOP) guidelines.

Kernza is intended for use in foods that will be consumed by the general population in the EU for use as a cereal grain in whole grain or milled whole grain forms (e.g., flour) in select foods in a manner similar to wheat, barley, oats or other grains. The intended uses of Kernza as a whole grain cereal grain include use as a replacement for the grain component in baked goods and baking mixes, breakfast cereals, grain products and pasta, and snack foods. Kernza is also proposed for use as a grain in the production of beer and distilled beverages. An exposure assessment based on the proposed uses of Kernza for the EU population was conducted using food consumption data from the most recent release of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Comprehensive Food Consumption Database.

Overall, Kernza is nutritionally similar to other common edible grains including conventional wheat, rye, and barley. The safety of Kernza has already been established through the consumption of conventional wheat and closely related edible grains including as barley and rye. Anti-nutrients potentially present in Kernza are limited to those already present in conventional wheat and other grains, and searches of the scientific literature did not reveal novel anti-nutrients in Kernza. Like common wheat, Kernza contains wheat proteins that may cause an allergic reaction. Any product therefore containing Kernza would require labelling to indicate the risks to allergic and coeliac disease subpopulations.

In conclusion, Kernza is a safe and suitable food for consumption by the EU population. This conclusion is based on its history in plant breeding and integration into common edible species, its nutritional and genetic similarity with conventional wheat and other edible grains, and a lack of high-level of anti-nutrients.