

# Application for consultation to determine the status of a novel food pursuant to Article 4(2) of the Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on novel foods.

## Recipient Member State

Finnish Food Authority

## Name and description of the food in question

Chaga (*Inonotus obliquus*)

Chaga is a conk produced jointly by a host tree and the fungus *Inonotus obliquus* on the side of a living tree. Chaga is most commonly found in birches. In addition to the naturally occurring chaga, chaga is cultivated by grafting the mycelium with selected trees. The chaga is removed from the tree and cleaned after which it is chopped and then frozen or dried. The dried chaga is ground or used in preparation of an extract, which can also be freeze-dried into a powder.

The history of the consumption of chaga in food supplements has been confirmed earlier and was not part of this consultation request.

## Status

Novel food.

## Food category

3 (2)(a)(ii) food consisting of, isolated from, or produced from microorganisms, fungi, or algae

## Reasons statement

Based on the evidence provided in the consultation request, the conk of *Inonotus obliquus* mushroom has been used in the preparation of tea and coffee substitutes in the 19th century and during wartime. However, according to the European Commission's Information and Guidance Document "*Human Consumption to a Significant Degree*", if a food has been used long time ago, but the use has not continued until recent years, the history of consumption cannot be considered as significant. In addition, products that have been available during times of emergency, but not regularly and commercially, should also be considered as novel foods.

The competent authorities of the EU Member States and the European Commission were also consulted, but no information about significant use of chaga was available. Thus, there is no evidence of the significant use of chaga in other foods than in food supplements.

## Conclusion

Chaga (*Inonotus obliquus*) is novel food.