

Summary of the application: Chia seeds in chocolate and chocolate products (extension of use)

Applicant: Naturkost Übelhör GmbH & Co. KG, Friesenhofen-Bahnhof 23-25 Leutkirch im Allgäu, 88299 Germany

This application concerns the extension of use of the novel food “chia seeds” (*Salvia hispanica*) to chocolate and related chocolate products to a maximum amount of 10%.

The application refers to the EU Novel Food Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 and the related legal acts. Chia seeds are considered as Novel Food within the European Union, with the first authorisation dating from 2009 (Commission Decision 2009/827/EC). Since then, several extensions of use were notified, ranging from chia seeds in breakfast cereals to pure pre-packed chia seeds, see Novel Food Union List (Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/2470).

Following the increased availability in a variety of products, chia seeds have become very popular within the EU and are part of the diet for many European consumers. Despite the increasing intake, adverse effects of chia seeds have not been reported yet.

Meeting consumers’ demand of foodstuff containing chia seeds, the product applied for combines whole or ground chia seeds with chocolate, including related products such as filled chocolates like pralines as well as chocolate bars. The maximum level shall be fixed to 10% chia seeds, considering the levels fixed for other foodstuffs as well as organoleptic properties of the final product. According to the intake data calculated with the help of the EU Food Consumption Database, the amount of chia seeds consumed with this new novel food is likely to be much below the maximum daily amount of 15 g which is considered safe (see Union List).

Consequently, this extension of use does not lead to a significant increase in possible safety concerns and does not carry additional risks for the consumers. This is valid for adults as well as for toddlers, representing the most sensitive consumer group. In order to inform the consumer, the product shall be clearly labelled with a hint to chia and the full designation “Chia seeds (*Salvia hispanica*)”.