



Amfep Statement on the EC Regulation 1332/2008 on Food Enzymes

On 16 December 2008 the European Parliament and the Council adopted Regulation 1332/2008 EC on food enzymes (OJ EU L 354/7, 31.12.2008).

The Association of Manufacturers and Formulators of Enzyme Products (Amfep) welcomes this EU legislation which is the first attempt ever to harmonise authorisation and safety assessment procedures of enzymes used in food processing in the EU. The Regulation is set to improve the functioning of the internal market by removing disparities among member states and bringing more legal certainty to the market.

Only authorised food enzymes will be allowed to be commercialised and/or used in foods sold in the EU – irrespective whether they are used as processing aids or ingredients. This also applies to imported foods. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) will play a pivotal role in the authorisation process of food enzymes. On the basis of EFSA's scientific advice, the EU Commission will grant authorisations after consulting member states and the EU Parliament.

The publication of the Regulation in the Official Journal of the European Union only marks the beginning of an extensive implementation process. In fact, several years will be needed for the new rules to become fully applicable across the EU. Until then, all national provisions on the use of food enzymes in individual EU Member States remain valid and applicable.

The European Commission, supported by EFSA, has until 2011 to specify what information is required to be submitted for a risk assessment of food enzymes. After that, the industry will have another two years (until 2013) to submit dossiers for evaluation and authorization of food enzymes presently used in food on the EU market. Only after the EU Commission and EFSA have completed the evaluation of all these dossiers will the first EU (positive) list of approved food enzymes be established. The Regulation 1332/2008 EC does not set a deadline by which this evaluation is to be completed.

Apart from the authorization requirements, Regulation 1332/2008 also lays down specific provisions on labelling of food enzymes, food enzyme preparations and food prepared with enzymes. The provisions on labelling of food enzymes and food enzyme preparations will enter into force on 20 January 2010, whereas the provisions on labelling of food prepared with enzymes enter into force on 20 January 2009. The latter do not increase the scope of the previous food labelling provisions, although some changes are introduced to the way the small number of food enzymes that are not used as processing aids are declared.

Amfep is working closely with relevant European Stakeholders to ensure a seamless implementation of the new EU legislation for the benefit of food enzyme manufacturers, their clients, and consumers.

NB: The proposal for a regulation on food enzymes is a part of a so-called Food Improvement Agents package (FIAP). While harmonising EU legislation for food enzymes, FIAP is also aiming at upgrading existing EU legislation on food additives (EC Regulation 1333/2008) and food flavourings (EC Regulation 1334/2008) and establishing a transversal authorisation procedure (EC Regulation 1331/2008) The EU Regulation on food additives will include a positive list of additives and carriers that will be allowed in food enzymes and food enzyme preparations. This list will come into force on 1 January 2011.

Food Enzymes Regulation: Timeline

