

ADVICE 17-2019

Subject:

Request for exemption from the legal requirement to use potable water in a food additive manufacturing process

(SciCom 2019/08)

Scientific opinion approved by the Scientific Committee on 20 September 2019.

Key terms:

Potable water, exemption, production, food additive, fluorides, ammonium

Summary:

Question

The Scientific Committee has been asked to assess the food safety risks posed by the use of condensate waters which do not meet legal criteria for 'Fluorides' and 'Ammonium' parameters in a food additive manufacturing process.

Method

The advice is based on expert opinion on the technical file introduced by the operator.

Advice

The presence of fluorides in condensate waters is explained by its natural presence in different raw materials used to produce the food additive. All of the fluorine entering the manufacturing process is found in a co-product of the production of the food additive intended for animal feed. The concentration found is below (= more than ten times lower) the legal criterion (max. 150 mg/kg) for raw materials of feed.

The presence of ammonium in condensate waters is explained by the use of ammonia water to regenerate the ion exchangers used in the manufacturing process. The maximum concentration measured is less than 5 mg/l, the concentration assessed for drinking water by EFSA (2012) as being safe for consumer health, even for vulnerable groups.

Uncertainties

The uncertainties in this advice are those inherent to an expert opinion.

Conclusions

Taking into account the above-mentioned elements, the Scientific Committee is of the opinion that the uses of condensate waters, as foreseen in the technical file, do not compromise the safety of the food additive and of the different byproducts manufactured by the operator.

Recommendations

The Scientific Committee recommends that the operator continues to monitor, as part of its self-checking, the fluorides and ammonium concentration in the food additive and in one of the various co-products (intended for animal feed) to ensure that there is no accumulation of these substances. The Scientific Committee also recommends that results significantly higher than those provided in the technical file which is the topic of this opinion be reported to the FASFC.