

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND SCIENTIFIC MEETING

**SCIENTIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR HEALTH CLAIMS RELATED TO
GUT AND IMMUNE FUNCTION**

Public Consultation in October 2010

Scientific meeting 2 December 2010, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Background

Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006¹ harmonises the provisions that relate to nutrition and health claims and establishes rules governing the Community authorisation of health claims made on foods. According to the Regulation, health claims should be only authorised for use in the Community after a scientific assessment of the highest possible standard to be carried out by EFSA.

EFSA has been engaging in consultation with stakeholders and has published guidance on scientific substantiation of health claims since 2007². Most recently, a briefing document on scientific evaluation of health claims was published for consultation in April 2010, followed by a technical meeting with experts from the food industry, Member States and the European Commission in Parma, in June 2010³. In addition, information on the scientific requirements for the substantiation of specific types of health claims may be obtained from EFSA's scientific opinions on health claims.

To further assist applicants in preparing and submitting their applications for the authorisation of health claims, EFSA will organise a series of public consultations and scientific meetings on the scientific requirements for the substantiation of specific types of health claims during 2010-2012.

The overall aim of the consultations will be to provide additional guidance to applicants for the substantiation of health claims in selected areas.

This first consultation will focus on health claims related to gut and immune functions.

¹ European Parliament and Council (2006). Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods. Official Journal of the European Union OJ L 404, 30.12.2006. Corrigendum OJ L 12, 18.1.2007, p. 3–18.

² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/nda/ndaclaims.htm>

³ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/ndameetings/docs/nda100601-ax01.pdf>

Consultation and scientific meeting on health claims related to gut and immune functions

The main objective of the consultation is to discuss with scientific experts in the field the scientific requirements for the substantiation of health claims related to gut and immune functions. Specific issues addressed will include:

- which claimed effects are beneficial physiological effects?
- which studies/outcome measures are appropriate for the substantiation of function claims and disease risk reduction claims?

In October 2010, EFSA will publish on its website a draft guidance document on the scientific requirements for substantiation of health claims related to gut and immune functions for public consultation. Comments received during the public consultation, together with the draft guidance document will be presented by EFSA's experts for discussion at a scientific meeting to be held on 2 December 2010. The draft guidance document will be revised in light of the meeting's discussions and taking into account the comments received.

Who should attend the scientific meeting?

The scientific meeting is intended for scientific experts in the field of health claims related to gut and immune functions. In order to ensure thorough discussion, registration will be limited to around 100 participants selected on the basis of their experience in the field. Interested experts will be able to register for the scientific meeting via EFSA's website as from September 2010.

Further consultations planned

EFSA is planning further consultations (on-line, followed or not by a scientific meeting) in selected areas in the period 2011-12 according to the indicative timeframe indicated below:

- February 2011: Health claims related to post-prandial blood glucose responses/blood glucose control; health claims related to weight management/energy intake/satiety
- May 2011: Health claims related to protection against oxidative damage; health claims related to cardiovascular health
- September 2011: Health claims related to bone, joint and oral health; health claims related to cognitive function
- February 2012: Health claims related to physical performance

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