

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

G/SPS/N/TPKM/14
18 December 2002

(02-6976)

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English

NOTIFICATION

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| 1. Member to Agreement notifying: <u>THE SEPARATE CUSTOMS TERRITORY OF TAIWAN, PENGHU, KINMEN AND MATSU</u> If applicable, name of local government involved: |
| 2. Agency responsible: Department of Health |
| 3. Products covered (provide tariff item number(s) as specified in national schedules deposited with the WTO; ICS numbers should be provided in addition, where applicable): Sodium dehydroacetate |
| 4. Regions or countries likely to be affected, to the extent relevant or practicable: Imported (as well as domestically produced) foods sold in the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu |
| 5. Title, language and number of pages of the notified document: Proposed ban on the use of sodium dehydroacetate as a food additive (1page) |
| 6. Description of content: <ul style="list-style-type: none">(1) Sodium dehydroacetate ($C_8H_7O_4Na$) is the sodium salt of dehydroacetic acid, and has been used in food as a preservative.(2) In the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu, sodium dehydroacetate has been permitted to be used in cheeses, butter, cream, margarine with the amount not more than 0.5 g/kg (calculated as dehydroacetic acid) under the regulations of "Scope and Application Standards of Food Additives" since 1987.(3) Very limited research data can be found for the toxicity evaluation on this chemical. No adequate scientific data was found to ensure that the chemical is safe to be used as a food additive. Oppositely, some data mentioned that sodium dehydroacetate may induce an experimental teratogen.(4) In the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu, sodium dehydroacetate is added illegally very often in food such as cakes, cookies and breads, according to the inspection records of the health authorities.(5) The domestic manufacturers of cheeses, butter, cream, and margarine have denoted that sodium dehydroacetate is not a necessary food additive for their products. There are some other legal alternative food additives may be used. Prohibiting the use of sodium dehydroacetate will not disturb the manufacturing.(6) Considering the use of sodium dehydroacetate may present a potential risk to the public health and sodium dehydroacetate is not a necessity on technical aspect, the authority has proposed to ban the use of sodium dehydroacetate as a food additive. |

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| 7. | Objective and rationale: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> food safety, <input type="checkbox"/> animal health, <input type="checkbox"/> plant protection, <input type="checkbox"/> protect humans from animal/plant pest or disease, <input type="checkbox"/> protect territory from other damage from pests |
| 8. | International standard, guideline or recommendation: <input type="checkbox"/> Codex Alimentarius Commission, <input type="checkbox"/> Office International des Epizooties, <input type="checkbox"/> International Plant Protection Convention, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None If an international standard, guideline or recommendation exists, give the appropriate reference and briefly identify deviations: |
| 9. | Relevant documents and language(s) in which these are available: "Proposed ban on the use of sodium dehydroacetate as a food additive" (27 November 2002, Food No.0910074529, available in English from the Department of Health). The order will be published in the Official Government Gazette when adopted. |
| 10. | Proposed date of adoption: 1 July 2003 |
| 11. | Proposed date of entry into force: 1 July 2003 |
| 12. | Final date for comments: 10 February 2003 Agency or authority designated to handle comments: <input type="checkbox"/> National notification authority, <input type="checkbox"/> National enquiry point, or address, fax number and E-mail address (if available) of other body: Bureau of Food Sanitation Department of Health 12F, 100 Ai-Kuo E. Rd., Taipei, Taiwan, Postal Code 100 Tel: 886-2-23210151 ext 353 Fax: 886-2-23929723 E-mail: fswang@doh.gov.tw |
| 13. | Texts available from: <input type="checkbox"/> National notification authority, <input type="checkbox"/> National enquiry point, or address, fax number and E-mail address (if available) of other body: Bureau of Food Sanitation Department of Health 12F, 100 Ai-Kuo E. Rd., Taipei, Taiwan, Postal Code 100 Tel: 886-2-23210151 ext 353 Fax: 886-2-23929723 E-mail: fswang@doh.gov.tw |