Smoke flavourings: no reauthorisation of 10 primary products

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EU bans the use of smoke flavouring primary products

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/2067 of 31 July 2024 amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1321/2013 as regards the deletion of entries SF-001 to SF-010 from the Union list of authorised smoke flavouring primary products

Update

Due to safety concerns, the European Commission has not renewed the authorisation of 10 smoke flavouring primary products that expired on 1 January 2024. Some of these smoke flavourings may continue to be used until 1 July 2026, or 1 July 2029 in the case of foods that are traditionally smoked (including cheese, meat, processed fish, and fish roe).

What is changing?

Regulation 1321/2013 (Annex) lists smoke flavouring primary products that are authorised to be used in foods in the European Union.

In 2014, the European Commission authorised 10 smoke flavouring primary products for use in the EU until 1 January 2024. The Commission will not reauthorise smoke flavourings SF-001 to SF-006, SF008, and SF-009 (see Table 1). No application was made for the renewal of products SF-007 and SF-010.

All 10 products (SF-001 to SF-010) will therefore be deleted from the EU list.

During a transition period of 2–5 years, certain smoke flavourings may continue to be used to allow producers time to adjust their production processes or recipes (see Timeline).

Why?

Following a series of scientific opinions by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA 2023a–h), which identified potential safety concerns for genotoxicity, the Commission will not renew its authorisation of the eight smoke flavouring primary products (SF-001 to SF-006, SF008, and SF-009) for which renewal had been requested.

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Timeline

Foods containing smoke flavouring primary products SF-001 to SF-006, SF-008, or SF-009 may continue to be put on the EU market in accordance with current rules until:

- 1 July 2029 for cheese and cheese products (food category 1.7), meat (8), processed fish and fishery products (9.2), fish roe (9.3) (foods for which smoke flavourings replace traditional smoking processes)
- 1 July 2026 for all other food categories.

For further information on these food categories, see Regulation 1333/2008, Annex II.

Mixtures of these smoke flavouring primary products with other food ingredients may also be placed on the market for use in the food categories listed above (with the same timelines).

SF-007 and SF-010 can no longer be used.

What are the major implications for exporting countries?

Smoke flavourings are used extensively in a wide range of food products. For exporters of foods that make use of smoke flavouring primary products, adjusting production processes may take time and require significant investment. The EU therefore foresees a transition period during which these smoke flavouring primary products can still be used (see Timeline).

Recommended Actions

Exporters of foods currently containing smoke flavouring primary products must urgently review their use of these products; immediately stop using smoke flavouring SF-007 and SF-010; and aim to find alternatives to smoke flavourings SF-001 to SF-006, SF-008, or SF-009 within the transition period foreseen by the EU.

Background

Smoke flavourings are used as an alternative to the flavouring effects of traditional smoking, giving foods a particular taste rather than preserving them (which is the traditional aim of smoking). They are complex mixtures of chemical substances which are specifically regulated in the EU under Regulation 2065/2003.

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In addition to offering an alternative to the traditional smoking process for foods such as meat, fish, and cheese, smoke flavourings are added to other food such as soups, sauces, drinks, crisps, edible ices, and confectionery (EFSA 2023i).

Only approved primary products authorised under Regulation 1321/2013 may be used to produce smoke flavourings. The genotoxic substances in smoke flavourings that have been identified by EFSA are also expected to be produced during traditional smoking (BfR 2024).

Resources

BfR (2024) Smoke flavourings in food: Updated FAQ on smoke flavourings and their health risks. German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment.

EFSA (2023a) Scientific opinion on the renewal of the authorisation of proFagus Smoke R714 (SF-001) as a smoke flavouring Primary Product. EFSA Journal, 21(11): 8363.

EFSA (2023b) Scientific opinion on the renewal of the authorisation of Zesti Smoke Code 10 (SF■002) as a smoke flavouring Primary Product. EFSA Journal, 21(11): 8364.

EFSA (2023c) Scientific opinion on the renewal of the authorisation of Smoke Concentrate 809045 (SF-003) as a smoke flavouring Primary Product. EFSA Journal, 21(11): 8365.

EFSA (2023d) Scientific opinion on the renewal of the authorisation of Scansmoke SEF7525 (SF-004) as a smoke flavouring Primary Product. EFSA Journal, 21(11): 8366.

EFSA (2023e) Scientific opinion on the renewal of the autorisation of SmokEz C■10 (SF■005) as a smoke flavouring Primary Product. EFSA Journal, 21(11): 8367.

EFSA (2023f) Scientific opinion on the renewal of the autorisation of SmokEz Enviro■23 (SF■006) as a smoke flavouring Primary Product. EFSA Journal, 21(11): 8368.

EFSA (2023g) Scientific opinion on the renewal of the authorisation of proFagus Smoke R709 (SF■008) as a smoke flavouring Primary Product. EFSA Journal, 21(11): 8369.

EFSA (2023h) Scientific opinion on the renewal of the authorisation of Fumokomp (SF■009) as a smoke flavouring Primary Product. EFSA Journal, 21(11): 8370.

EFSA (2023i) Smoke flavourings: Q&A with Wim Mennes, EFSA's working group chair on flavourings. Newsroom, 16 November.

Regulation 1321/2013 establishing the Union list of authorised smoke flavouring primary products for use as such in or on foods and/or for the production of derived smoke flavourings

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Regulation 872/2012 adopting the list of flavouring substances provided for by Regulation (EC) No 2232/96

Regulation 1334/2008 on flavourings and certain food ingredients with flavouring properties for use in and on foods

Sources

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/2067 as regards the deletion of entries SF-001 to SF-010 from the Union list of authorised smoke flavouring primary products

Commission Implementing Decisions (refusing requests for the renewal of authorisations of individual smoke flavourings): Decision 2024/2066; 2024/2069; 2024/2071; 2024/2072; 2024/2073; 2024/2077; 2024/2078; 2024/2079

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Tables & Figures

Table 1
Smoke flavouring primary products withdrawals

Implementing Decision	Smoke flavouring[1]	Concern	Applicant
2024/2066	Zesti Smoke Code 10 (SF-002)	Furan-2(5H)-one and benzene–1,2-diol genotoxicity	Kerry Ingredients (UK) Ltd
2024/2069	ProFagus-Smoke R709 (SF-008)	Furan-2(5H)-one genotoxicity	ProFagus GmbH
2024/2071	Scansmoke PB 1110 (SF-001)		
2024/2072	Scansmoke SEF 7525 (SF-004)	Styrene and benzofuran genotoxicity	Azelis Denmark A/S
2024/2073	Smoke Concentrate 809045 (SF-003)	Furan-2(5H)-one and benzene–1,2-diol genotoxicity	Symrise AG
2024/2077	Fumokomp (SF-009)	Furan-2(5H)-one genotoxicity	Kompozíció Kft
2024/2078	SmokEz Enviro-23 (SF-006)	Furan-2(5H)-one and benzene–1,2-diol genotoxicity	Kerry Inc. (USA)
2024/2079	SmokEz C-10 (SF-005)		

1. These smoke flavouring primary products may continue to be placed on the market until 1 July 2029.

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Source: based on Commission Implementing Decisions 2024/2066; 2024/2069; 2024/2071; 2024/2072; 2024/2073; 2024/2077; 2024/2078; 2024/2079

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