

WTO notification German Mineral Oil Regulation

As indicated in the e-mails to the general membership (9/04), the German Mineral Oil Regulation has now been notified towards the WTO (SPS notification G / SPS / N / DEU / 012 - amendment of the consumer goods ordinance).

<https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NDEU12.DOCX>

This is a formal step which - in the opinion of the German Food Industry Association (BLL) - indicates that the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) sees possible technical barriers to trade and that a signal should be sent to pursue the adoption and coordination of the regulation.

The National Associations and ECMA members were encouraged to contact once more the national authorities to introduce objections.

In view of the positions in the EU TRIS context, especially the Netherlands, Spain and - according to well-informed sources - also Italy, were identified as countries which may be prepared to reinforce the criticism of trade inhibiting effects.

According to the very latest obtained background certainly some of those countries consider the discussion however as closed after the obtained formal reply from the German authorities, which means major objections are probably just to be expected from non-EU countries.

Comments can be introduced until the 21/05.

The ECMA position and the TRIS replies from the authorities are available from the Members Only Section of the ECMA website (Food Contact network updates 30/09/2020 and 05/02/2021).

Annexed you can find the latest BLL position on the WTO notification.

Zero Waste Europe publishes toolkit.

As part of the global UNWRAPPED Project (<https://unwrappedproject.org>) the non-governmental organization Zero Waste Europe published a toolkit to throw a spotlight on their assessment of the human health risks posed by plastics and other food packaging materials.

<https://zerowasteurope.eu/library/the-unwrapped-projects-toolkit-exposing-the-health-risk-of-food-packaging-chemicals/>

The toolkit contains 9 factsheets presenting facts and figures about how disposable food packaging can be harmful to human health and call for corporate and decision-makers to put an end to single use packaging and take a precautionary approach to use harmful chemicals that are known to migrate out of packaging and cause human health impacts.

Many expressed concerns are well known such as the potential use of unassessed Food Contact Chemicals, contaminants which may be present in recycled materials, micro plastics and the typical priority chemicals of concern (Bisphenols, phthalates, ... PFAS).

In several factsheets reference is made to Food Contact Chemicals database published by the Food Packaging Forum. (See FC Update 22 12 2020)

Clearly questionable are a number of negative messages about the non-inert "single use" materials (plastic, paper and cardboard). Inert materials are presented as safer and more sustainable.

1. Hazardous chemicals in food packaging - A threat to human health.
2. Food Packaging Chemicals - Policy recommendations to protect human health.
3. Reusable packaging protects public health and the environment.
4. The human health threats of microplastics.
5. Recycled content in food packaging and toxic chemical exposure.
6. COVID 19 and packaging.
7. Common plastic used in packaging.
8. Glossary of terms - Food Packaging Terminology.
9. Summary of priority chemicals of concern.



The COVID factsheet is just stating the reusables are not less safe than single-use. Important to know is how the information about the UNWRAPPED Project has been circulated by the Food Packaging Forum and also by Food Drink Europe.

ECMA GMP

Since the launch of the GMP Version 2.0 mid-March, ECMA obtained several positive comments related to the practical content of the publication, well-fitting in the current market context and the expectations from customers.

Also, direct questions came in, about what to do and how to declare compliance.

To clarify once more, all direct members and all carton makers which are member of ECMA via an affiliated National Association, can - without costs - declare compliance with the ECMA GMP.



In doing so, the company will be added directly to the FC Update network, is allowed to use the ECMA GMP Food Seal and is listed on the ECMA website.

<https://www.ecma.org/industry-topics/food-safety/-/gmp/self-declared-gmp-compliant-ecma-members.html>
Annexed you will find the latest version of the self-declaration form, which is also available from the following link :

<https://www.ecma.org/uploads/Bestanden/Members%20Only/GMP/ECMA%20%20self%20declared%20compliance%20-%20%20commitments%20%202021.pdf>

Direct Food Contact (DFC) Inks and varnishes

In 2007 the European Ink Manufacturers Association (EuPIA) published an information leaflet on Printing Inks and Varnishes intended to come into direct contact with foodstuffs. This note which was revised in 2011 covered the legal basis, the selection of raw materials and certain exclusions from use.

In reply to recently raised questions, EuPIA stated how the information leaflet has been archived without further updates. All details and recommendations on inks for DFC applications are meanwhile incorporated in the different EuPIA documents:

- The EuPIA Guideline on Printing Inks applied to Food Contact Materials. (April 2020)

<https://www.eupia.org/key-topics/food-contact-materials/summary-text-general-overview-of-fcm>

- The EuPIA GMP

<https://www.eupia.org/key-topics/food-contact-materials/good-manufacturing-practice-gmp>

In different paragraphs, DFC inks and varnishes are specifically covered, e.g. product recommendation (7.2.3) and new product design (7.3.2).

- The EuPIA Guidance on Migration Test Methods for the evaluation of substances in printing inks and varnishes for food contact materials.

<https://www.eupia.org/key-topics/food-contact-materials/migration-testing>

Annex D provides typical examples of DFC applications.

From the legal perspective, DFC inks are not covered by the Swiss Ordinance on Printing Inks.

Of course, this type of sensitive ink applications requires an accurate communication with the ink supplier on the use restrictions and on how compliance with the Food Contact Framework Regulation 1935/2004 is guaranteed.

