



ENSA and EUVepro statement on the rejection by the European Commission of the health claim on soy protein and reduction of blood cholesterol

Brussels, 16 June 2014 - The European Natural Soyfoods Manufacturers Association (ENSA) and the European Vegetable Protein Federation (EUVepro) regret that the European Commission has rejected the submitted health claim on soy protein and reduction in blood LDL-cholesterol – one of the dietary factors associated with a reduced risk of coronary heart disease, despite numerous studies and meta-analyses demonstrating such a cholesterol lowering effect.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has acknowledged that low saturated fat foods are beneficial in maintaining healthy blood cholesterol levels¹, which was the basis for the authorization of the health claim 'Reducing consumption of saturated fat contributes to the maintenance of normal blood cholesterol levels'². Thanks to their low saturated fat content, soyfoods can therefore play a very important dietary role in helping to maintain healthy blood cholesterol levels, and have long been recognised as part of a healthy balanced diet.

In May 2011, ENSA together with the European Vegetable Protein Federation (EUVepro) and the Soy Protein Association (SPA), submitted an application pursuant to article 14 of Regulation 1924/2006/EC on nutrition and health claims made on foods, for a claim that protein-rich soybean component contributes to the reduction of LDL-blood cholesterol levels. In January 2012, however, the EFSA's Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies (NDA) concluded that, based on the submitted evidence, it could not establish a cause and effect relationship between consumption of soy protein and reduction in blood cholesterol.

ENSA, EUVepro and SPA replied to the opinion by providing EFSA another analysis taking into account only the studies which were considered by EFSA as methodologically sound. This analysis also showed a similar LDL-cholesterol lowering effect as did the totality of the data. EFSA did not, however, take this data into consideration.

EFSA has rejected all the submitted meta-analyses, which demonstrate a significant cholesterol-lowering effect of soy protein, by dismissing them as irrelevant or inconclusive. We disagree with these conclusions.

Overall we consider that the assessment of the claim has failed to review the totality of the relevant data and that the application has been subject to an unusual level of scrutiny compared to other

¹ Scientific Opinion on Dietary Reference Values for fats, including saturated fatty acids, polyunsaturated fatty acids, monounsaturated fatty acids, trans-fatty acids, and cholesterol, December 2009.

² EU Register of nutrition and health claims made on foods <http://ec.europa.eu/nuhclaims/>



cholesterol lowering claims' applications. At a time when the EU and national governments call upon the food industry to innovate and find better formulations for healthier food products, this particular rejection denies European consumers the benefit of a claim that has been approved for use, on the basis of sound science, in many countries outside the EU.

For any questions, please contact:

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