EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

The Director-General

Brussels
SANTE/E2/HM/aa (2025) 3050764

Dear Ms Sumner,

Subject: Petition regarding aspartame

Thank you for your courtesy e-mail of 3 February 2025 and foodwatch's follow-up messages regarding the petition launched by foodwatch, Yuka and the French Cancer League asking the European Commission and Member States to ban the food additive aspartame.

First, let me assure you that the protection of human life and health is a key priority for the Commission.

The safety of aspartame (E 951) was re-evaluated by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in 2013, which concluded that aspartame and its breakdown products are safe for the general population (including infants, children and pregnant women). The acceptable daily intake (ADI) of 40 mg/kg bw per day established by EFSA is considered protective for the general population and consumer exposure to aspartame is estimated to be well below this ADI. The ADI is an estimate of the amount of a food additive that can be ingested daily over a lifetime without an appreciable risk to health.

EFSA is currently re-evaluating the safety of two related sweeteners, the salt of aspartame-acesulfame (E 962) and neotame (E 961). The salt of aspartame-acesulfame (E 962) is a mixture of the two sweeteners aspartame (E 951) and acesulfame K (E 950), while neotame (E 961) is a chemically related substance manufactured from aspartame.

As part of the re-evaluation of the salt of aspartame-acesulfame (E 962), EFSA will carefully consider all relevant new studies on aspartame that have become available since the last risk assessment for aspartame conducted in 2013.

This will also include Volume 134 of the UN's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) Monographs comprising aspartame, which was published in September 2024 as part of the IARC Monographs programme[1]. It will also include the Monographs

[1] https://www.iarc.who.int/infographics/the-iarc-monographs-programme-hazard-identification-versus-risk-assessment/

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from the 96th JECFA meeting re-evaluating the safety of aspartame as a food additive published in June 2024.

Based on the consideration of all relevant new studies on aspartame, EFSA will consider whether a revision of the ADI of aspartame (E 951) is required. The potential update of the dietary exposure assessment of aspartame (E 951) is part of this work.

EFSA is expected to complete the re-evaluation of neotame (E 961) and the salt of aspartame-acesulfame (E 962) by the end of 2025.

The Commission will take, if needed, appropriate risk management measures on aspartame (E 951) based on the updated EFSA safety re-evaluation once it is available, keeping health and safety as its main guiding principles.

In order to inform the citizens who signed the petition about EFSA's ongoing work on aspartame, I would like to request that you publish this letter on your website.

[e-signed]
Sandra GALLINA