

## *Advisory Commission for Plant Preparations*

### **Advice of 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 emitted by the Advisory Commission for Plant Preparations concerning the use of the seeds of *Papaver somniferum* L. (poppy seeds) in bakery products and in cheese.**

The Advisory Commission for Plant Preparations was asked by the Directorate-General Animals, Plants and Food of the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment to issue an advice about the safe use of the seeds of *Papaver somniferum* L. (poppy seeds) in bakery products and in cheese.

Regarding the Royal Decree of 31 August 2021 concerning the manufacture of and trade in foodstuffs composed of or containing plants or plant preparations, and in particular Article 3, §2.

Considering that *Papaver somniferum* L. is mentioned on List 1 of the Royal Decree of 31 August 2021 (Dangerous plants that should not be used as or in food) with the following condition for derogation: "The seed of this plant can be used as 'poppy seed' on bakery products".

Considering that this condition is specific for the use **on** bakery products, it does not apply for poppy seeds used **in** bakery products, neither for poppy seeds placed on the market for the final consumer.

Considering that *P. somniferum* contains opium alkaloids such as morphine and codeine; the seeds do normally not contain these alkaloids, but can be contaminated e.g. during the harvesting. During food processing, like heating of the food, the alkaloid content in the poppy seeds can be reduced.

Considering the scientific opinion of EFSA (2018)<sup>1</sup> and the Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/915 of 25 April 2023 on maximum levels for certain contaminants in food and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006<sup>2</sup> laying down amongst others the maximum level for opium alkaloids (expressed as the sum of morphine + 0,2 codeine):

- for bakery products containing poppy seeds and/or derived products thereof: max. 1,50 mg/kg bakery products
- for whole, ground or milled poppy seeds placed on the market for the final consumer: max. 20 mg/kg poppy seeds

The Advisory Commission on Plant Preparations concludes that bakery products and cheese, containing the seeds of *Papaver somniferum* L. (poppy seeds), can be placed on the market if the sum of the content of morphine + (0,2 x the content of codeine) is maximum 1,50 mg/kg bakery product or cheese. Whole, ground or milled poppy seeds can be placed on the market for the final consumer if the sum of the content of morphine + (0,2 x the content of codeine) is maximum 20 mg/kg poppy seeds.

The Advisory Commission on Plant Preparations reserves the right to re-examine this advice in the light of new considerations.

### **References**

1. EFSA CONTAM Panel (EFSA Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain), “Update of the Scientific Opinion on opium alkaloids in poppy seeds”. EFSA Journal 2018;16(5):5243,119 pp.  
<https://doi.org/10.2903/j.efsa.2018.5243>
2. Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/915 of 25 April 2023 on maximum levels for certain contaminants in food and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32023R0915>