



THE NATURAL FOOD COLOURS ASSOCIATION

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CONNECTIONS WITH REGULATORY GROUPS

NATCOL attends various regulatory meetings of individual European Governments, EU (DG Sanco), European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), Codex Alimentarius Committee for Food Additives (CCFA) and FAO/WHO Joint Expert Committee for Food Additives (JECFA).



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NATCOL is a member of the Federation of European Speciality Food Ingredients Industries (ELC) comprising various associations and manufacturers of food additives. ELC represents a rich source of scientific expertise on the safety and use of food additives and is therefore regularly consulted by the European Commission and other EU decision-makers.



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ELC works in tandem with the Confederation of the Food and Drink Industries of the EU (CIAA) on matters of mutual interest, and liaises with other industry organisations. ELC also has observer status at Codex Alimentarius, thus supporting NATCOL at this influential decision-making forum.



Confédération des industries agro-alimentaires de l'UE
Confederation of the food and drink industries of the EU



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Through these and other international linkages, NATCOL is strongly positioned to influence the legislative processes both at EU level and globally.



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WORKING GROUPS

Members get together in expert working groups to examine specific issues in detail.

The following working groups are those which presently are active:



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NATCOL Working Group Legislation (WGL)

The NATCOL Working Group Legislation keeps the NATCOL membership informed on future legislation of particular interest to the natural food colours manufacturers. WGL co-ordinates common positions among NATCOL members on regulatory issues related to food colours. WGL responds to the needs of the food colour manufacturers by participating in the legislative processes of the EU and international organisations such as Codex Alimentarius.



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Annatto Interest Group (AIG)

The AIG, formed in 1995 from NATCOL membership with Annatto interests, co-ordinates the re-testing of commercial Annatto preparations in the wake of the EU Colours Directive (94/36/EC) and the JECFA call for additional information on Annatto Extracts. Annatto was evaluated at the 61st JECFA 2003; however the meeting proposed temporary ADI values and tentative specifications which were different from those previously used. These were difficult to enforce and impossible to provide Intake Data for. Consequently, Annatto was re-evaluated at the 67th JECFA 2006 and following on from the submission of information on the safety and composition of Annatto Extracts, as requested by JECFA in its call for data for the 67th meeting, two permanent ADIs were established; one for Bixin and a Group ADI for Norbixin.

In response to the request from EFSA for a dossier on Annatto Extracts (Bixin & Norbixin), NATCOL AIG submitted a dossier for the evaluation by DG Sanco / EFSA in April 2008, to provide a scientific opinion on the safety of Annatto Extracts (Bixin & Norbixin) when used as food colour in the food categories specified (in the dossier submitted). In November 2010, EFSA requested Genotoxicity Studies on Annatto Extract preparations and Industry is currently addressing this request.



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NATCOL Working Group on Colouring Foodstuffs (WGCF)

The NATCOL Working Group on Colouring Foodstuffs reconvened in 2004 coordinates the NATCOL position with regard to colouring foodstuffs and their use in the colouring of foods. It represents the needs of the NATCOL members with interests in colouring foodstuffs. A position paper, clarifying NATCOL's position on 'colouring foodstuffs' and making clear how such products are defined / manufactured / used and labelled within the food industry has been prepared and can be accessed from the NATCOL web site.



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Curcumin Interest Group (CIG)

The CIG formed in 1999 from the NATCOL membership with Curcumin interests co-ordinated the European and Japanese industry (J-CIG) initiative in support of the multigeneration study on Curcumin requested by JECFA. Curcumin was on the re-evaluation list for the 61st JECFA meeting, June 2003, where it was granted a permanent ADI status of 3mg/kg bw/day. CIG in conjunction with IACM supported the All India Spices Exporters Forum (AISEF) in this project. This sub-group is now disbanded¹



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Paprika Support Group

The PSG was formed in 2006 incorporating the three (3) major production capabilities for Paprika Oleoresin; Europe (co-ordinated by AFEXPO), India (co-ordinated by Spices Board of India), North / South Americas (co-ordinated by KALSEC) in response to the JECFA call for data for Paprika Oleoresin as a food colour. The dossier (funded by the 3 production areas) was submitted via NATCOL by 15 December 2007 for evaluation at the 69th JECFA June 2008.

The Committee did not allocate an ADI but did allocate the name Paprika Extract for use as a food colour to differentiate it from Paprika Oleoresin for use as a spice. New tentative specifications were prepared pending receipt of additional information on Paprika Extract as a food colour; including concentrations of capsaicin and additional information about the composition of commercial batches produced by a variety of manufacturers.



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COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS

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Maintaining regular contact with the ELC, via The Secretariat. NATCOL regularly sends joint communications with ELC, CIAA and CEFIC to the Commission and EFSA on issues relating to Food Colours.

NATCOL and IACM have quite a number of common members, so we have reciprocal presentations with IACM at the respective AGMs.



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NATCOL SECRETARIAT

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NATCOL convenes one Annual General Meeting (AGM) per year, to which a guest speaker is invited.



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MEMBERSHIP OF NATCOL

Membership is open to any manufacturer on Natural Colours and any producer of raw materials for the manufacturer of Natural Colours. Associate membership is open to food manufacturers, users and R&D Institutes not being manufacturers of Natural Colours.

There are currently 22 members; 12 European based, 3 North American based, 2 Japanese based, 2 Indian based, 1 Israeli, 1 Chinese and 1 Peruvian. More information on NATCOL membership can be obtained from the Secretariat.



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