



Association des Amidonniers et Féculiers

SAFE USE OF PROCESSING AIDS

AAF members are aware of the recent publication in the “Environmental Health” Journal of a study that indicates that traces of mercury were detected in samples of high-fructose corn syrups (HFCS) – isoglucose - in the US, and invites to further research on exposure.

The existing monitoring practices within the European starch industry show that its syrups, including isoglucose, are well below the limits set by EU law.

Mercury may be present at low levels in caustic soda and hydrochloric acid, commonly used as processing aids, depending on the production process. EU legislation sets regulatory specifications for mercury in caustic soda and hydrochloric acid used as food additives (Directive 2008/84/EC laying down specific purity criteria on food additives other than colours and sweeteners).

The industry gives much importance to the quality of the raw materials and of the processing aids used.

Whereas US legislation sets a limit (for methylmercury) in fish, EU legislation provides for permitted levels of mercury, which can range from 0.1 to 1.0 mg/kg depending on the food category (Regulation 1881/2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs).

Please note that the methodology of this publication has been criticised for not meeting normal scientific standards, see:

<http://www.chemrisk.com/ChemRisk%20Press%20Release%201-30-2009.pdf>

The European starch producers operate to the highest safety and quality standards.

The EU starch industry applies strict Quality Management Systems in line with ISO, GMP and other certification requirements and meeting the applicable requirements of the EU laws in order to provide a consistently high quality, purity and safety of its products. The EU starch producers reassure that they will continue to supply safe and high quality products to their customers.

March 2009
