France Bans Titanium Dioxide Food Additive Beginning in 2020

Friday, April 19, 2019

On April 17, 2019, the Ministry of Ecological and Solidarity Transition issued a press release announcing that France will prohibit foods containing food additive E171 (titanium dioxide) from being placed on the market beginning January 1, 2020. The press release cites the April 15, 2019, opinion from the Agence nationale de sécurité sanitaire de l'alimentation, de l'environnement et du travail (ANSES). The expert group established by ANSES conducted a literature review on the oral toxicity of E171, identifying 25 studies published since 2017. ANSES concluded that it has no new information to remove the uncertainties regarding the safety of the E171 additive. Pending a better toxicological characterization of E171 and work currently underway at the European level, ANSES reiterates its previous general recommendations on nanomaterials aimed at limiting the exposure of workers, consumers, and the environment by promoting products that are safe and equivalent products in terms of function and efficiency, without nanomaterials. According to the Ministry's press release, an order regarding the ban has been signed and will be published as soon as possible. As E171 is authorized at the European Union (EU) level, France will notify the order to the European Commission and other EU Member States, which will then meet within ten days.

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