

# COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(81) 712 final.  
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
Brussels, 10 November 1981

Proposal for a  
Council directive

amending for the seventeenth time Directive 64/54/EEC  
on the approximation of the laws of the Member States  
concerning the preservatives authorized for use in  
foodstuffs intended for human consumption

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(submitted to the Council by the Commission)

COM(81) 712 final.

### EXPLANATORY NOTE

The proposed modification is intended to amend the basic Directive on preservatives (1) in respect of three substances :

#### 1. Potassium bisulphite

Various sulphite salts are already included in the Directive (E220-E224, and E226). These salts are chemically very similar to potassium bisulphite. Each has technological advantages in particular circumstances.

Potassium bisulphite has been included in Council Regulation 79/337/EEC for use in certain oenological practices together with sulphites already permitted by the Directive. It seems appropriate therefore to list the substance in the Directive under number E225.

Purity criteria will be developed in due course (Note : its inclusion in Directive 64/54/EEC will lead to consequential amendments to Community Directives on Antioxidants).

#### 2. Thiabendazole (E233)

The use of thiabendazole is authorized by the Directive on Preservatives on citrus fruit and bananas.

Because the Community is developing general rules governing the surface treatment of fruit and given the uncertainty about the classification of thiabendazole as "Pesticide" or "preservative", a deadline of 1 July 1982 for its use was included in the 14th modification to the Directive (2). However, this has for effect a continuing uncertainty about its acceptability for use. Therefore, the Commission proposes that this uncertainty should be removed by deleting the deadline for use.

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(1) : OJ N° 12, 27.1.1964 - p. 161/64

(2) : OJ N° L13, 19.1.1979 , p. 50.

### 3. Natamycin

Natamycin is effective as an antifungal agent on certain cheese rinds and sausage casings. The present proposal provides for this use at Community level.

The Scientific Committee for Food advised the Commission that the use of natamycin for the surface treatment of this rind of whole pressed cheese (semi hard) ripened under aerobic conditions, and on the casings of sausages requiring maturation before marketing is acceptable(3) provided that :

- a. the substance was applied only to the final product;
- b. the residues of natamycin in food at the time of sale should not be present at a depth greater than 5 mm and that they should not exceed  $1 \text{ mg/dm}^2$  expressed in relation to the surface of the rind or casing .

The Commission has been informed that many cheeses on which natamycin is to be used have a composition which falls on the borderline between 'hard' and 'semi-hard' and the proposal takes this into account.

In addition, it has to be noted that on a commercial scale, although the average residue on the cheese or sausage is approximately  $1 \text{ mg/dm}^2$  the process by which the natamycin is applied may lead to uneven distribution over the product.

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(3) : Reports of the Scientific Committee for Food, 9th Series, 1979.

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THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,  
and in particular Article 100 thereof

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission (1)

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament (2)

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee (3)

Whereas Council Directive 64/54/EEC (4), as last amended by Directive  
81/214/EEC (5), lays down a list of preservatives authorized for the  
protection of foodstuffs intended for human consumption against deteri-  
oration caused by microorganisms;

Whereas potassium bisulphite has application in wine production as an  
alternative to other sulphites already permitted by the Directive, and  
therefore should be added to the list under E 225;

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(1)

(2)

(3)

(4) : O J N° 12, 27.01.1964, p. 161/64

(5) : O J N° L 101, 11.04.1981, p. 10

Whereas, without prejudice to future general Community rules on the surface treatment of fruit, in order to remove any uncertainty about the acceptability of thiabendazole (E233), the deadline for its permitted use should be removed;

whereas natamycin has proved to have technological advantages in the protection of certain cheeses and sausages against fungi and to assist in the prevention of any potential development of mycotoxins;

whereas the data on the safety of natamycin permit these restricted food uses and whereas therefore the substance should be added to the list under E 235,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DIRECTIVE :

Article 1

The Annex to Directive 64/54/EEC is hereby amended as follows:

1. The following is inserted between the entries relating to E 224 and E 226

EEC N°	Name	Conditions of use
E 225	Potassium bisulphite	

2. under E 233 in the column "Conditions of use", paragraph (c) is deleted.

3. The following is inserted between the entries relating to E 233 and E 236

EEC N°	Name	Conditions of use
E 235	Natamycin	For the surface treatment of the rind of whole, semi-hard or hard, pressed cheese and for the casings of sausages requiring maturation before marketing provided that the natamycin will not be present in the cheese or sausage at the time of sale at a depth greater than 5 mm and that the residues expressed in relation to the surface area of the rind or casing do not exceed 1 mg/dm <sup>2</sup>

#### Article 2

Member States shall bring into force not later than 31 December 1982 the laws regulations or administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Directive and shall forthwith inform the Commission thereof.

#### Article 3

This Directive is addressed to the Member States.

Done,

For the Council

The President

