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Position statement – use of products containing Zein

Following correspondence from two of our suppliers regarding products containing Zein (Maize Protein) and its suitability for use as an additive or food ingredient, we have decided to provide the following update for our customers.

As a result of in depth discussions with both Trading Standards and the Food Standards Agency our suppliers have been advised that 'Zein maize protein' falls under the definition of a food additive, but is not currently authorised in the UK. Therefore, in order for our suppliers to resume supplying confectionery products using Zein maize protein, there would need to be an application submitted to establish a new food additive directly with the FSA, requiring assessment and approval.

The Food Standards Agency accept that the use of Zein is not a "food safety issue but a technical non compliance issue". They state that a "risk based approach" is necessary and that a full withdrawal from the market & recall is not required.

Following discussions and advice from our suppliers, Food Safety Consultants and Trading Standards, we have made the decision to continue to sell existing stocks of products containing Zein. We will not be purchasing any further stock of products containing Zein, but expect that clarification from the FSA regarding the future of Zein will be available shortly.

Please note, this affects only a very small number of our products and the affected products have been highlighted on the website.

Zein was introduced as an alternative to Shellac, after the Vegetarian Society declared Shellac was no longer considered vegetarian. Our suppliers are already looking into an alternative to Zein, to ensure the interruption to the supply of products is kept to a minimum.

We will provide an update as soon as we have further information.

Should you have any questions relating to this, please contact the Compliance Team – compliance@truly.uk.net.

Carys Field
Compliance & Technical Manager