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Notice of Modification to the *List of Permitted Colouring Agents* to Enable the Use of Caramel in Flavoured Cheddar Cheese

Notice of Modification – Lists of Permitted Food Additives

Reference Number: NOM/ADM-0158

January 22, 2021



Canada

Summary

Food additives are regulated in Canada under [Marketing Authorizations](#) (MAs) issued by the Minister of Health and the *Food and Drug Regulations* (Regulations). Approved food additives and their permitted conditions of use are set out in the [Lists of Permitted Food Additives](#) that are incorporated by reference in the MAs and published on the Canada.ca website. A petitioner can request that Health Canada approve a new additive or a new condition of use for an already approved food additive by filing a food additive submission with the Department's Food Directorate. Health Canada uses this premarket approval process to determine whether the scientific data support the safety of food additives when used under specified conditions in foods sold in Canada.

Health Canada's Food Directorate received a food additive submission seeking approval for the use of caramel as a colouring agent in a flavouring preparation used in the manufacture of flavoured cheddar cheese. The caramel is added to the flavouring preparation to enhance the visibility of swirls of the flavouring preparation used in the finished cheese. The caramel is not intended to impart colour to the entire cheese. Taking into consideration that the caramel is only present in the preparation used to flavor the finished cheese, the requested maximum level of use of caramel is equivalent to 50 parts per million (ppm) on the basis of the entire finished cheese, as consumed.

The compositional standard for cheddar cheese prescribed by section [B.08.034](#) of the Regulations provides for the use of flavouring preparations¹, other than cheese flavouring, in cheddar cheese. Caramel is already permitted for use in Canada as a colouring agent in various standardized and unstandardized foods at different maximum levels, depending on the food.

The results of the Food Directorate's evaluation of available scientific data support the safety of caramel for its requested use. Therefore, Health Canada has modified the [List of Permitted Colouring Agents](#) to extend the use of caramel by adding the entry shown below to the List.

Modification to the *List of Permitted Colouring Agents*

Item No.	Column 1 Additive	Column 2 Permitted in or Upon	Column 3 Maximum Level of Use and Other Conditions
2.	Caramel	(7) Cheddar cheese containing one or more flavouring preparations in accordance with B.08.034(1)(b)(ii)	(7) Good Manufacturing Practice in the flavouring preparation (Residues of caramel in cheddar cheese prepared with such flavourings not to exceed 50 p.p.m.)

Rationale

Health Canada's Food Directorate completed a premarket safety assessment of caramel for use as a colouring agent to enhance the visibility of swirls of a flavouring preparation used in the production of flavoured

¹ As per subparagraph B.08.034(1)(b)(ii) of the Regulations.

cheddar cheese. The assessment concluded that information related to allergenicity, chemistry, nutrition, and toxicology supports the safety of caramel for its requested use. Therefore, the Department has enabled the requested use of caramel by adding to the [List of Permitted Colouring Agents](#) the new entry shown in the above table.

Other Relevant Information

The *Food and Drug Regulations* require that food additives such as caramel that do not have food-grade specifications set out in Part B of the Regulations meet the food-grade specifications set out in the most recent edition of the *Food Chemicals Codex* or the *Combined Compendium of Food Additive Specifications*. The *Food Chemicals Codex* is a compendium of standards for purity and identity for food ingredients, including food additives, published by the United States Pharmacopeial Convention. The *Combined Compendium of Food Additive Specifications*, which contains specifications prepared by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA), is published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Implementation and Enforcement

The above modification came into force **January 22, 2021**, the day it was published in the [List of Permitted Colouring Agents](#).

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is responsible for the enforcement of the *Food and Drugs Act* and its associated regulations with respect to foods.

Contact Information

Health Canada's Food Directorate is committed to reviewing new scientific information on the safety in use of any permitted food additive, including caramel. Anyone wishing to submit new scientific information on the use of this additive or to submit inquiries may do so in writing, by regular mail or electronically. If you wish to contact the Food Directorate electronically, please use the words "**Caramel (NOM-0158)**" in the subject line of your e-mail.

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