

A1221 Phospholipase A1 from GM *Aspergillus niger* as a processing aid

Comments from the Victorian Department of Health and the Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.

Due date of submission – 13 September 2022

The Victorian Departments of Health and Jobs, Precincts and Regions (the departments) welcome the opportunity to respond to this application/proposal to amend the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code).

Application A1221 - *Phospholipase A1 from GM Aspergillus niger as a processing aid* seeks to permit the use of the enzyme phospholipase A1 derived from a genetically modified (GM) strain of *A. niger*.

From the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) Assessment report it is understood that:

- Phospholipase A1 provides another option for industry to degum vegetable oils: that is, to remove phospholipid components and improve the stability of the oil.
- The phospholipase A1 is produced by a GM strain of *A. niger* containing the phospholipase A1 gene from *Evansstolkia leycettana*¹.
- The *A. niger* strain has a long history of use in enzyme production and is not considered pathogenic nor toxigenic.
- The gene insert from *E. leycettana* has been shown to be stably integrated into the genome of the production strain.
- There are no safety concerns with the use of this enzyme for this technological purpose at levels consistent with Good Manufacturing Process.

It is noted that the enzyme Phospholipase A1 was assessed against protein homology data and not shown to be congruent with the amino acid sequences of any known allergens. However, while potential for allergen contamination of the enzyme preparation, or in oils that had been processed with it, was provided by the applicant to FSANZ, this was deemed to be confidential commercial information (CCI). Thus, it was not detailed in the Call for Submissions documents. In considering the potential impact of changes to the Code on public health, as complete as possible information is necessary, and applicants should be encouraged to supply the relevant information in a form that can be reviewed by stakeholders.

Despite this, and on the basis of the information above and FSANZ's conclusion that there are no public health and safety issues associated the application, the departments support the progression of Application 1221.

¹ formerly named *Talaromyces leycettanus*.