

Brussels, August 1964  
P-52/64INFORMATION MEMOColouring matters and antioxidants in foodstuffs

The Commission has laid before the Council two proposed directives on the approximation of the Member States' laws and regulations concerning foodstuffs.

The antioxidant directive gives a list of the substances which may be used to protect food against deterioration through oxidization. Harmonization measures will later be extended to cover the conditions under which these substances may be used.

The principles on which this list is based are the same as those followed by the experts when they drew up the lists of colouring matters (for the 1962 directive) and preserving agents (for the 1963 directive):

- (a) The protection of public health;
- (b) The protection of the consumer against fraud;
- (c) Economic and technological requirements.

Substances intended for other uses but which may also have a secondary antioxidant effect will also be subject to authorization. The directive lays down general and specific purity standards with which the substances listed must comply and states what information must be supplied on the labels or packages of food offered for sale.

A transitional provision has been included for propyl gallate and esters of ascorbic acid.

The directive applies to foodstuffs entering into trade within the Community, but not to foodstuffs intended for export to non-member countries.

The Member States will be required to amend their legislation to bring it in line with this directive within one year from the date on which they are notified of it. The amended legislation must be in force not more than two years after the date of notification.

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A panel of leading doctors and scientists has helped, together with the Member States' experts, in the drafting of this directive. Comments submitted by the Agricultural and Food Industries Committee of UNICE<sup>+</sup>) and by the Consumers' Contact Committee of the European Community have also been borne in mind.

The other directive amplifies and rectifies the directive of 23 October 1962 on the use of colouring matters in foodstuffs. New products have been added to the list of permitted colouring matters (commonly used varieties of caramel, and natural colouring matters added to the list of carotenoids and xanthophyls). The list of substances used as solvents or diluents for colouring matters has also been extended. A transitional clause has been included for sulphonated orcein, which the Member States can authorize on a temporary basis. The directive also gives detailed descriptions of certain products listed in the 1962 directive. The Commission proposes that the Member States' laws as amended to take account of the new directive should enter into force not later than 26 October 1964, the date on which the 1962 directive must be applied in full.

The Agricultural and Food Industries Committee of UNICE and the Consumers' Contact Committee of the European Community have also been consulted on this directive.

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+ ) Union of Industries of the European Community