

# COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
COM(81) 709 final  
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Brussels, 24 November 1981

Proposal for a  
Council Directive

amending Directive 78/664/EEC laying down specific criteria of purity for  
antioxidants which may be used in foodstuffs intended for human consumption

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(submitted to the Council by the Commission)

COM(81) 709 final.

### EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Council Directive laying down specific purity criteria\* for Antioxidants (78/664/EEC) allows Member States to retain existing national arrangements in respect of (a) DL-tartric acid, (b) hydrolysed lecithin, and (c) the aldehyde content of propylene glycol "for economic and technological reasons". The Council also engages itself to decide before 1 January 1982 on the criteria of purity referred to in (a) and (b).

DL-tartaric acid is not now used as an ingredient in foods and there are also outstanding questions relating to its safety-in-use as an ingredient that the Scientific Committee for Food has not yet examined. DL-tartaric acid may be employed in wine technology as a processing aid (i.e. a substance that in principle will not be present as such or transformed in the wine as consumed) and the proposal does not affect this use.

The Scientific Committee for Food has advised the Commission that it sees no objection to the use of hydrolysed lecithin. There is a market for this product which shows technicological advantages in some cases over non-hydrolysed lecithin.

There is no requirement in the Directive to examine the aldehyde content of propylene glycol, but it appears that this provision is no longer necessary.

The present proposal has for effect:

- a) the prohibition, as "substance capable of increasing the antioxidant effect of other substances" of DL-tartaric acid and its salts;
- b) the inclusion of hydrolysed lecithin within the scope of "E 322 lecithins";
- c) the introduction throughout the whole Community of the same provisions in respect of specific purity criteria for propylene glycol.

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\*compositional parameters which define the purity of the substance

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THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission<sup>1</sup>,

Whereas the Council Directive 78/664/EEC<sup>2</sup> makes provision, for economic and technical reasons, for Member States to retain their existing national arrangements concerning specific criteria of purity concerning DL-tartaric acid and salts thereof, hydrolysed lecithins and the aldehyde content of propylene glycol,

Whereas DL-tartaric acid is not used as an ingredient in foods, although it may be employed in wine technology as a processing aid (i.e. a substance that in principle will not be present as such or transformed in the wine as consumed);

Whereas hydrolysed lecithins show technological advantages in some cases over non-hydrolysed lecithins, and scientific research on safety in use show that the use is acceptable from the point of view of public health;

Whereas the provision relating to the aldehyde content of propylene glycol is no longer necessary;

HAS ADOPTED THIS DIRECTIVE:

Article 1

Directive 78/664/EEC is hereby amended as follows:

1. Article 2 is deleted.
2. In the Annex under E 322

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<sup>2</sup>OJ No L 223 of 14.8.1978, p. 30

a) the entry relating to Description is replaced by:

"Lecithins are mixtures or fractions of phosphatides obtained by physical procedures or by enzyme hydrolysis from animal or vegetable foodstuffs. The lecithins may be slightly bleached in aqueous medium by means of hydrogen peroxide. This oxidation must not chemically modify the lecithin phosphatides".

b) the entry relating to Acid number is replaced by:

"Not more than 45 mg of potassium hydroxide per gram (1)".

Article 2

Member States shall bring into force the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Directive not later than 30 June 1983. They shall forthwith inform the Commission thereof.

Article 3

This Directive is addressed to the Member States.

Done at

For the Council

The President