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Item 9 of the provisional agenda

Sulphur dioxide content in dried apricots

**Comment by the National Technical Group of the Republic
of Tajikistan (accountable to the Central Asian Working
Group to Promote Exports of Agricultural Produce)
regarding sulphur dioxide content in dried apricots**

**Submitted by the National Technical Group of the Republic of
Tajikistan (accountable to the Central Asian Working Group to
Promote Exports of Agricultural Produce)**

Summary

The National Technical Group of the Republic of Tajikistan (accountable to the Central Asian Working Group to Promote Exports of Agricultural Produce) submitted the following comment related to a recommendation by the European Food Safety Authority to lower maximum limits for sulphur dioxide–sulphites in European Union specifications.



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From 12|06|2023

Comment by the National Technical Group of the Republic of Tajikistan (accountable to CAWG) regarding sulphur dioxide content in dried apricots

Submitted by the National Technical Group of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Sulphur dioxide (SO₂) is currently ongoing a reclassification process under Classification Labelling and Packaging Regulation (1272/2008) in the European Union. European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) published its opinion in December 2022 and stated that the available toxicity data was insufficient to derive an Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) level and established the Margins of Exposure (MOE). EFSA recommended that the maximum limits be lowered and the current sulphur dioxide–sulphite usage levels may be of concern.

The National Technical Group of the Republic of Tajikistan is concerned about the issue of reducing the level of sulfur dioxide in dried apricots initiated by the European Commission as it will lead to undesirable consequences for Tajik, Uzbek, and Kyrgyz producers. As we know, sulfur is a preservative, and reducing its content in the finished product negatively affects the color and shelf life. Also, note that the safe daily intake of E220 (sulfur) standards in the EU is 7 mg per 1 kg of body weight. In order not to exceed the norm of consumption a person with a body weight of 70kg per day can consume at least 200 grams of dried apricots, in the case of not consuming other products containing sulfur. We as producers and exporters of dried apricots are also against this initiative, referring to the fact that there is no scientific evidence proving that the current level (2000 ppm) is harmful to the health of consumers.

The secretary of NTG of Tajikistan

Mirzoravshan Qobilov

