



Colors and the Codex GSFA

The current omission of some colors from the Codex GSFA is not due to safety concerns.

Background

The Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) considers colors for inclusion in the General Standard of Food Additives (GSFA).

The Codex process is very deliberate, and as such, not all additives, including colors, which are approved in countries such as the US and the EU, have made it through the Codex approval process for inclusion in the GSFA.

GSFA Not a Positive List

It was not the intent of the creators of the GSFA for it to be adopted as a positive list at this stage of development.

- Footnote 1 of the GSFA states,

Notwithstanding the provisions of this Section of the General Standard, the lack of reference to a particular additive or to a particular use of an additive in a food in the General Standard as currently drafted, does not imply that the additive is unsafe or unsuitable for use in food. The Commission shall review the necessity for maintaining this footnote on a regular basis, with a view to its deletion once the General Standard is substantially complete.

Since their current omission from the GSFA is not due to safety concerns, but instead due to the large number of additives waiting for completion of the step process, countries should consider color approvals in the US and the EU, as well as in the Codex GSFA, when developing color regulations.

Color Additives: Status at Codex

Color	INS #	# of GSFA Adopted Provisions	# of GSFA Draft Provisions	GSFA Table 3	EU Approved	US Approved
Curcumin	100(i)	6	80		E100	21CFR73.615
Riboflavins	101(i-iii)	71			E101(i-ii)	21CFR73.450
Tartrazine	102	8	66		E102	21CFR74.705
Quinoline Yellow	104	7	53		E104	
Sunset Yellow FCF	110	63			E110	21CFR74.706
Carmines	120	76			E120	21CFR73.100
Azorubine (Carmoisine)	122	7	55		E122	
Amaranth	123	5	36		E123	
Ponceau 4R	124	50	1		E124	
Erythrosine	127	6	1		E127	21CFR74.303
Allura Red AC	129	52			E129	21CFR74.340
Indigotine (Indigo Carmine)	132	51			E132	21CFR74.102
Brilliant Blue FCF	133	58			E133	21CFR74.101
Chlorophylls	140		23	*	E140(i)	
Chlorophylls & Chlorophyllins, copper complexes	141(i-ii)	57			E141(i-ii)	21CFR73.125
Fast Green FCF	143	36				21CFR74.203
Caramel I – Plain Caramel	150a	1	23	*	E150a	21CFR73.85
Caramel II – Sulfite Caramel	150b	5	52		E150b	21CFR73.85
Caramel III – Ammonia Caramel	150c	80			E150c	21CFR73.85
Caramel IV – Sulfite Ammonia Caramel	150d	71			E150d	21CFR73.85
Brilliant Black	151	4	54		E151	
Brown HT	155	1	58		E155	
Carotenoids	160a(i), 160a(iii), 160e, 160f	79			E160a(i), E160a(iii), E160e	21CFR73.90 21CFR73.95
Carotenes, Beta-, vegetable	160a(ii)	89			E160a(ii)	21CFR73.95
Annatto Extracts, Bixin-Based	160b(i)	6	87		E160b	21CFR73.30
Annatto Extracts, Norbixin-Based	160b(ii)	7	87		E160b	21CFR73.30
Paprika extract	160c	3	77		E160c	21CFR73.340 21CFR73.345
Lycopene, Synthetic	160d(i)		9	*	E160d(i)	
Lycopene, Tomato	160d(ii)		28	*	E160d(ii)	21CFR73.585
Lycopene, Blakeslea Trispora	160d(iii)		9	*	E160d(iii)	
Lutein from Tagetes Erecta	161b(i)	1	42	pending	E161b	
Lutein esters from Tagetes erecta	161b(iii)	1	41	*		
Canthaxanthin	161g	34			E161g	21CFR73.75
Zeaxanthin, Synthetic	161h(i)	1	33	pending		
Beet Red	162		24	*	E162	21CFR73.40
Anthocyanins	163(ii-vii)	67 (Grape Skin Extract)			E163	21CFR73.170 (Grape Skin Extract)
Calcium Carbonate	170(i)	19	1	*	E170	21CFR73.70
Titanium Dioxide	171		17	*	E171	21CFR73.575
Iron oxides	172(i-iii)	32			E172	21CFR73.200