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Titanium Dioxide Manufacturers Association: Statement on the INRA study

This study by the French National Agronomic Institute (INRA) proposes to look further into the possibility of a link between the titanium dioxide additive “E171” and the development of inflammatory changes and colorectal cancer in rats. However, the tests found no consistent pattern and were conducted using a protocol which cannot be extrapolated to conclude that it could cause cancer in humans. In fact, INRA clearly states that its findings cannot be extended to draw conclusions for human health, and that they do not comply with Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) guidelines for the testing of chemicals. Other studies carried out in conformity with OECD guidelines have not shown any adverse effect at doses considerably higher than those used in the INRA study.

We take the health of workers and consumers seriously. When it comes to long-term exposure, extensive epidemiological studies on more than 24,000 titanium dioxide workers exposed over several decades have shown no indication whatsoever of any forms of cancer arising from exposure to titanium dioxide.

As for its ingestion as E171 in food, this was reviewed in-depth last year by European Food Safety Agency (EFSA), and raised no concern over any adverse effects such as inflammatory changes or carcinogenicity. This evaluation added to the already considerable literature relating to the safe use of E171 in foodstuffs.

We will continue to study the INRA paper in detail to thoroughly comprehend the relevance of the reported findings. E171 has been repeatedly examined for its safety by authorities around the world and we are confident that the weight of scientific evidence supports its continued safe use in food.

About TDMA

The Titanium Dioxide Manufacturers Association - TDMA is a sector group of Cefic (the European Chemical Industry Council) and it represents the major producers of titanium dioxide (TiO₂) and acts as their responsible voice in Europe since 1974. TDMA promotes and defends the merits of titanium dioxide in all suitable applications by bringing forward evidence of its safety and efficacy. TDMA is a non-profit organisation and it has no commercial role. For all commercial enquiries, please refer to the websites of our members.

www.tdma.info