

French suspension of titanium dioxide in foodstuff (E171) does not impact Food Contact Materials

On 25th April 2019 the French Government [decreed](#) the suspension of placing foodstuff containing E171 on the French market from 1 January 2020 for a period of one year as a precautionary measure. TDMA [calls](#) on the European Commission and the Member States to oppose this measure which contradicts multiple assessments by EU Authorities confirming E171's safety. The suspension does not apply to the use of titanium dioxide (TiO₂) in food contact materials (FCM) in the EU or in France. The use of TiO₂ in food packaging materials is fully separate from its use as a food additive, and the French measure does not mention the use of TiO₂ in FCM.

The use of the TiO₂ in FCM has widespread regulatory approval and the substance is listed both in the EU and in several Member State FCM regulations. TiO₂ is an essential component in many FCM due to its brightness and reflectiveness, protecting food products from premature spoilage due to light exposure, thereby reducing food waste.

We fully stand behind the safety of TiO₂ in food and in FCM and we regularly review new scientific evidence to inform our views.

We will continue to monitor any regulatory developments in France and in the EU that could impact the use of TiO₂ in FCM. We will provide updates to users and customers accordingly on the TDMA website

For any queries please contact Brett Pinker, bpi@cefic.be – further information on www.tdma.info

Background to France's Suspension of E171

On 25 April 2019 the French Government [decreed](#) the suspension of placing E171 in foodstuff on the French market from 1 January 2020. The suspension was adopted in October 2018 by the French National Assembly under the food-agri (EGALIM) [law](#). The food-agri law specifies that the placing the additive E171 (titanium dioxide-TiO₂) and foodstuffs containing E171 on the market should be suspended. The use of TiO₂ in food contact materials is not mentioned in French law.

The suspension of E171 in foodstuff in France contradicts multiple assessments by EU Authorities of its safety. EFSA [confirmed](#) in 2016 that data on E171 in food showed no health concerns for consumers. EFSA [reaffirmed](#) its conclusion in June 2018.

On 12 April 2019 ANSES published its [report](#) on E171 to obtain the necessary legal conditions to implement the suspension under the EU's General Food Law as a unilateral emergency safeguard measure. On 13 May 2019, EFSA presented their [review](#), concluding that the ANSES opinion does not provide new evidence to overrule their previous conclusions that E171 is safe.

The Member States and the European Commission are currently considering whether to accept the French ban as an emergency safeguard measure under the EU's General Food Law. TDMA calls on them to stand behind the scientific authority of EFSA and to ensure the integrity of the EU's internal market.

About titanium dioxide

Titanium dioxide is by far the world's highest volume and most versatile white pigment and is used in the manufacture of a wide range of products including paints, coatings, plastics, paper and as a food colorant. In non-pigmentary form

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A sector group of Cefic 

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TiO₂ is used as a UV-filter in sunscreens and in many depollution technologies. Across the EU, the industry directly supports close to 23,000 jobs and hundreds of billions of Euros in added value. Titanium dioxide has been repeatedly examined and found safe by authorities around the world.

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 has acted 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 our members' websites.