

Hamburg, 05 November 2010

To Sir / Madam

On 15th of October, the Bundesrat, the representative federal constitutional body of the 16 German regional states, has asked the federal Government to plead for a clear and explicit labelling of combined reformed meat products in the European Union. This concerns products in which through the application of special technologies, including Transglutaminase, several smaller meat pieces are combined to so-called (re)formed meat. We at Ajinomoto Foods Europe SAS, producer of ACTIVA® Transglutaminase preparations, would like to welcome this official support from the German Länder for an early and mandatory labelling requirement for combined meat parts at EU level.

The German Bundesrat demands better consumer protection

The Bundesrat at its 875th meeting on 15th October has requested the federal Government to develop proactive Governmental consumer protection, in particular with regard to “ combined meat products” . The Bundesrat recognizes and welcomes the decision by the European Parliament on 16th June 2010 to include a mandatory labelling requirement with “ Formfleisch – aus zusammengesetzten Fleischstücken” (“ Reformed meat – from combined meat parts”) in the new draft Regulation on Food Information to Consumers. It requests the Government to promote and lobby the EU to ensure and to support the corresponding rules in the currently discussed draft Regulation that will enter into force soon.

Ajinomoto initiates a transparent labelling system on final product – “ combined meat parts”

Indeed, we at Ajinomoto group have been committed to establishing a transparent labelling system for the consumers’ right to be informed. Ajinomoto has initiated with the EU Commission, the national authorities as well as the meat industry a process that intended to

inform the consumer about the fact of meat parts being connected in a simple and informative language and thus enabling consumer choice. Ajinomoto officially proposed the label “ combined meat parts” to the EU Commission in June 2009. The proposed label has been proven to be preferred by a majority of consumers according to an EU-wide consumer survey conducted in 2009, followed by a recent survey in Germany. After the proposal’ s acceptance through the EU Commission, the European Parliament integrated the labeling proposal as mandatory declaration of “ combined meat parts” in the new draft Regulation on Food Information to Consumers. The official support from the German federal states for an early and mandatory labelling requirement for combined meat parts at EU level is greatly appreciated as positive reinforcement of Ajinomoto’ s demand and corresponding ongoing engagement with all stakeholders.

Transglutaminase is a common enzyme to maintain plant and animal lives

Enzymes are proteins that catalyze biochemical reactions. Enzymes have been used throughout history to prepare traditional foods, such as cheese or beer. Like other enzymes, Transglutaminase can be found in nature. In fact, natural cross-links formed by naturally occurring Transglutaminase are widely contained in ordinary foods such as cooked ham, stewed beef, hamburger and Surimi (crab/fish sticks). This clearly indicates that, traditionally, people have always been in contact with this cross-link food technology. Ajinomoto succeeded in isolating this mechanism which occurs naturally in food materials, and has commercialized this under the brand name of ACTIVA® in 1993. Therefore, utilization of Transglutaminase can be described as reproducing and accelerating what actually is occurring in nature, in a commercial way.

History of safe use of ACTIVA® Transglutaminase in the world

Ajinomoto’ s Transglutaminase contained in ACTIVA® has been safely used in Japan for two decades and in the EU for more than 15 years as a food enzyme for various purposes. Also, ACTIVA® Transglutaminase has been used in the US (GRAS status), Canada, Brazil, Korea, China, Thailand and etc. In late 1990s, ACTIVA® Transglutaminase has obtained a prominent prize for The Most Innovative Food Ingredient Award in 1997 by Fi Europe, even though the technology of its use has historic roots.

Food application of ACTIVA® Transglutaminase – texture improvement, binding

Most of the ACTIVA® Transglutaminase applications are in the field of texture improvement, for example in promoting rheological stability of dairy products. Through such actions,

ACTIVA® Transglutaminase helps to create a “ bridge” between meat parts or fish parts to combine them. ACTIVA® Transglutaminase does not have a technological function in the final food. ACTIVA® Transglutaminase aids food processing.

Historical use of meat/fish combining technologies in the world

Many food ingredients help combining quality meat/fish parts. Salt, for example, is traditionally used to strengthen binding between whole meat muscles in meat processing such as cured or cooked ham. Other agents which function similarly are starch, gelatins, egg white, soy protein, citric acid and etc. ACTIVA® Transglutaminase preparations have joined the ranks of food combining technologies since 1993. It is neither our nor the meat industries’ intention to use such technologies to produce the products which mislead or confuse the consumers. Therefore, Ajinomoto fully supports the necessary legal requirements for a clear, well visible and comprehensible labelling of combined meat products produced through the application of any food binding technologies.

Consumers welcome to have an option of combined meat products

According to the German consumer opinion poll conducted by TNS Emnid on 6-7 May 2010, it was proven that a majority of consumers (> 70%) wants to have an option of buying combined meat products if they are appropriately labelled. Please visit www.transglutaminase.com for more detailed information.

Binding food parts is for consumers’ benefit, and even more

The immense carbon footprint of meat production and the state of the world’ s economy discourage wasteful behavior by both consumers and industries, and the considered use of natural enzymes to help avoid food wastage is positively considered by most, if not all. Transglutaminase is used in meat products, such as emulsified sausage and cooked ham, and improves texture and increases connectivity, thus decreasing loss during the manufacturing process. In meat and fish, Transglutaminase aids combining quality parts of meat/fish, decreasing loss, and consequently reducing pricing of the final products. This is an important contribution to a responsible and sustainable food chain. This also helps to reduce the negative environmental effects of farming by maximizing the use of the food that is produced. Transglutaminase also contributes to reducing salt in food products, allowing consumers to benefit from a lower salt intake.

Lastly, we would like to emphasize that the Ajinomoto group is fully committed to regulatory compliance. There is no doubt that Transglutaminase brings economical and environmental benefits to both food industries and consumers. It is now time for a balanced and well-informed dialogue between government, industry and consumers. Ajinomoto is fully prepared to take its responsibility in this dialogue.

If there is any concern, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are prepared to tackle this issue and keep on contributing to the European food industries and consumers.

05/11/2010

Tomokazu Teshima

President