



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Directorate B. Quality, Research & Innovation, Outreach  
The Director

Brussels  
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[Redacted]

Thank you for your e-mail<sup>1</sup> of 14 February 2020 complemented by the e-mail<sup>2</sup> of 4 May from your colleague [Redacted] about yeast extracts used as flavourings in processed food and their status under Regulation (EU) 2018/848<sup>3</sup>.

The description in your letter and the presentation indicate a high diversity of products that can be obtained from yeast. The terms “yeast extract” cover many different products and cannot be strictly classified in one category of ingredient. Regarding products corresponding to a flavouring, several provisions of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 are relevant, in particular:

- point (i) of Article 30(5)(a) of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 confirms that processed food may not be labelled with a terms referring to organic production when they are not complying with Part IV of Annex II; and
- point 2.2.2 (b) of Part IV of Annex II to Regulation (EU) 2018/848 restricts the use of flavouring to the “*substances and products defined in points (c) and (d)(i) of Article 3(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008 that have been labelled as natural flavouring substances or natural flavouring preparations in accordance with Article 16(2), (3) and (4) of that Regulation*”.

Some yeasts, and in particular most of the strains of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, are categorised as a food in accordance with Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002<sup>4</sup>. A yeast extract from such yeast with flavouring properties could be classified as a ‘flavouring preparation’ as defined in point (d)(i) of Article 3(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008<sup>5</sup>. Such flavouring preparation described as a ‘natural yeast flavouring’ in

<sup>1</sup> Ares(2020)1038544

<sup>2</sup> Ares(2020)2357138

<sup>3</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Council Regulation \(EC\) No 834/2007 \( OJ L 150, 14.6.2018 p.1 \)](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Regulation \(EC\) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety \(OJ L 031 1.2.2002, p. 1\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Regulation \(EC\) No 1334/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on flavourings and certain food ingredients with flavouring properties for use in and on foods and amending Council](#)

[Redacted]

accordance with Article 16(4), where the flavouring component has been obtained by at least 95 % by w/w from yeast, is authorised in production of organic food.

However, a yeast extract used as a flavouring “to impart a meat flavour” and consequently described as “natural flavouring” in accordance with Article 16(6) of Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008, is not authorised in production of organic food.

The present opinion is provided on the basis of the facts as set out in your e-mail of 14 February 2020 complemented by the e-mail of 4 May and expresses the view of the Commission services and does not commit the European Commission. In the event of a dispute involving Union law it is, under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, ultimately for the European Court of Justice to provide a definitive interpretation of the applicable Union law.

Yours sincerely,



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[Regulation \(EEC\) No 1601/91, Regulations \(EC\) No 2232/96 and \(EC\) No 110/2008 and Directive 2000/13/EC \(OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, p. 34\)](#)