



1101 17th Street, NW • Suite 700 • Washington, DC 20036
T: 202-293-5800 E: info@iacmcolor.org
www.iacmcolor.org

March 25, 2015

IACM Statement in response to recent articles regarding removal of food grade TiO₂ from food formulations

Following the recent reports in the media about the removal of titanium dioxide (TiO₂) from some products, it has become clear that the distinction between food grade form of TiO₂ and engineered nanoscale TiO₂ is not well understood, with the terms often used interchangeably. It is unfortunate that this results in widespread confusion among consumers about the safety of the food grade form when there is no scientific justification for such concern. The International Association of Color Manufacturers (IACM) would like to take this opportunity to clarify the differences between these two types of TiO₂ and correct the resulting misconceptions regarding the safety of the food grade form.

Contrary to statements made by some advocacy groups and reported through media outlets, food grade TiO₂ is opaque and white in color and is NOT the same as TiO₂ manufactured as a nanomaterial. Nanoscale grade TiO₂ is a clear material and has very different, non-color properties. Manufacturing of TiO₂ particles in the nanoscale range requires specific technological engineering and results in a material that performs other functions, such as antimicrobial coating, UV filter and other non-color applications. Engineered nanoscale TiO₂ explicitly cannot be used as a pigment.

Food grade TiO₂ is a safe substance, derived from naturally occurring minerals. Its safety as a food ingredient has been demonstrated in scientific studies that have been reviewed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization/World Health Organization Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Both JECFA and EFSA have evaluated TiO₂ and continue to approve its use as a food color. The FDA approved TiO₂ as a food color additive in 1966, and this approval as an “exempt from certification” (a.k.a. natural) color continues to this day. These international regulatory bodies consider the material to be safe for intended use as a food color.

Regrettably, the differences of the two forms of TiO₂ have frequently been overlooked, misinterpreted or ignored in statements of various groups and in the way these are reported by the media. While IACM cannot comment on the rationale behind manufacturer decisions to reformulate their products, we do want to assure the public that food grade TiO₂ is safe for use as a color in foods and its replacement is not justified on grounds of safety or a designation of food grade TiO₂ as a nanomaterial. We hope this information helps clarify the differences between food grade and nanoscale TiO₂.

###

The International Association of Color Manufacturers (IACM) is a trade association that represents the manufacturers and end-users of coloring substances that are used in foods, drugs and cosmetics. Our association includes members that produce and use both certified and exempt from certification colors. For more information on our services and products, please visit www.iacmcolor.org.