

MIDDAY EXPRESS

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Permanent withdrawal of use of “konjac” (E425) in jelly confectionery confirmed

Due to the risk of potentially fatal choking, the Council adopted on 19th May 2003 the European Commission proposal to revise Directive 95/2/EC, permanently withdrawing the authorisation for use of the additive E425 konjac in jelly confectionery, including so-called “jelly mini-cups”. This follows emergency measures by the Commission in March 2002 that suspended the placing on the market and import of jelly confectionery containing E425 konjac. The temporary ban remains in force until the permanent ban replaces it, 20 days after publication of the Directive in the Official Journal of the EU.

Konjac is used as a gelling agent and thickener in food products. The Commission proposal to withdraw authorisation for konjac in jelly confectionery was made to protect consumer health, particularly for children, following the death of children in the USA and Canada due to choking on jelly mini-cups containing konjac. The jelly mini-cups containing konjac are considered to constitute a risk because of their shape and form, as well as the chemical and physical properties of konjac.

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