

## Current Status of Bleach Refined Shellac as a Food Additive in the EU

In the EU, as in the USA, food additives are routinely reviewed by authorities for their compliance with current laws and regulation. After its last review **European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)** determined that the available data for shellac were not sufficient for supporting its status as a food additive and called in for submission of more data to fulfill the current regulatory requirements.

In a letter to the industry, EFSA has clearly outlined the demands and deadlines for submission of the missing data. The first response to EFSA's letter is due on June 1, 2012, when EFSA will receive and review all current available data provided by the industry. Upon evaluation of data package EFSA will decide if additional data are required. In that case EFSA will outline the path for the new studies and set new deadlines for their submission date.

To address EFSA's needs, Shellac and Forest Products Production Council of India (SHEFEXIL) has already formed a Task Force (TF) for defending Shellac as a food additive and has even proposed its own path for execution of studies to EFSA, and is awaiting their response. Decco Anning Fine Chemical Company, Decco's own bleached shellac manufacturing company and other bleached shellac producers are currently negotiating to become a member of this TF as well.

For decade shellac has been safely used as a food additive in form of a protective coating in pharmaceutical, confectionery and fresh produce packing industry, hence the shellac TF is confident that they can and will produce all the data to fulfill the requirements of EFSA, and keep shellac on the **EU positive list of food additives** for the future.

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