

Press release

2nd June 2023

Novel Food Catalogue updated to include leaves for herbal infusions as traditional food.

Brussels – EU Member States have reached an agreement on the proposal put forth by EIHA, affirming that hemp leaves are not considered novel for herbal infusion. After several months of discussion, Member States have finally agreed to modify the Novel Food Catalogue. This decision aligns with EIHA's long-standing position that hemp leaves should be explicitly exempt from the Novel Food Catalogue, allowing them to be authorized for marketing as traditional food for herbal infusion. Moreover, the new "*Cannabis sativa* L." entry gives a more detailed list of other hemp products that are excluded from the scope of the novel food regulation. The amendment of the catalogue was made on June 2, 2023, and takes immediate effect. Unless decided otherwise at national level, leaves for aqueous infusions will be allowed on the market.

"I am delighted that the initiative we started in 2022 as EIHA has resulted in such a positive outcome", comments Mr. Daniel Kruse, EIHA President. "This is a significant achievement for our sector, clearly demonstrating that a collective industry effort is essential for normalizing the hemp plant and its products". "For many years, EIHA has been engaged in discussions with the EU Institutions and Member States on the Novel Food legislation. We are pleased that scientific evidence and historical facts have prevailed over prejudice" adds Kruse.

To support its request, EIHA submitted evidence from several Member States demonstrating that hemp leaves have been traditionally consumed as food, particularly as aqueous infusions, prior to 1997. This change of status is also in line with the 1961 Single Convention, which explicitly exempts hemp leaves.

"This is indeed very welcome news, and we are thrilled to have contributed to its realisation. These changes will bring much-needed legal certainty, eliminating any doubts surrounding the open marketing of hemp seed-derived food and leaves for water infusion throughout Europe. This will generate revenue for farmers and business operators. We sincerely hope that this positive and constructive engagement will prevent operators in many EU countries from suffering from misleading interpretation, seizures, and unnecessary administrative requirements" says Lorenza Romanese, EIHA Managing Director.



On 7th - 9th of June, the EIHA Conference, Europe's most important event on industrial hemp, will take place in Brussels. International speakers and experts will present the latest developments and future perspectives of the entire sector.

About EIHA:

The European Industrial Hemp Association represents the common interests of hemp farmers, producers and traders working with hemp fibres, shives, seeds, oil, leaves and cannabinoids. Our main task is to represent, serve and protect the hemp sector in the EU and international policymaking. EIHA covers different areas for the application of hemp, namely its use for textile, construction material, paper, cosmetics, feed, food and supplements.

Contact:

Monica Solano Leon, Tel: (0032) 472854308, E-Mail: monica.solano@eiha.org