Commission Regulation (EU) No 10/2011 of 14 January 2011 on plastic materials and articles intended to come into contact with food (Text with EEA relevance)

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food and repealing Directives 80/590/EEC and 89/109/EEC[(1)], and in particular Article 5(1)(a), (c), (d), (e), (f), (h), (i) and (j) thereof,

After consulting the European Food Safety Authority,

Whereas:

(1) Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 lays down the general principles for eliminating the differences between the laws of the Member States as regards food contact materials. Article 5(1) of that Regulation provides for the adoption of specific measures for groups of materials and articles and describes in detail the procedure for the authorisation of substances at EU level when a specific measure provides for a list of authorised substances.

(2) This Regulation is a specific measure within the meaning of Article 5(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004. This Regulation should establish the specific rules for plastic materials and articles to be applied for their safe use and repeal Commission Directive 2002/72/EC of 6 August 2002 on plastic materials and articles intended to come into contact with foodstuffs[(2)].

(3) Directive 2002/72/EC sets out basic rules for the manufacture of plastic materials and articles. The Directive has been substantially amended 6 times. For reasons of clarity the text should be consolidated and redundant and obsolete parts removed.

(4) In the past Directive 2002/72/EC and its amendments have been transposed into national legislation without any major adaptation. For transposition into national law usually a time period of 12 months is necessary. In case of amending the lists of monomers and additives in order to authorise new substances this transposition time leads to a retardation of the authorisation and thus slows down innovation. Therefore it seems appropriate to adopt rules on plastic materials and articles in form of a Regulation directly applicable in all Member States.

Changes to legislation: *There are outstanding changes not yet made to Commission Regulation (EU) No 10/2011. Any changes that have already been made to the legislation appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

(5) Directive 2002/72/EC applies to materials and articles purely made of plastics and to plastic gaskets in lids. In the past these were the main use of plastics on the market. However, in recent years, besides materials and articles purely made of plastics, plastics are also used in combination with other materials in so called multi-material multi-layers. Rules on the use of vinyl chloride monomer laid down in Council Directive 78/142/EEC of 30 January 1978 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to materials and articles which contain vinyl chloride monomer and are intended to come into contact with foodstuffs[3] already apply to all plastics. Therefore it seems appropriate to extend the scope of this Regulation to plastic layers in multi-material multi-layers.

(6) Plastic materials and articles may be composed of different layers of plastics held together by adhesives. Plastic materials and articles may also be printed or coated with an organic or inorganic coating. Printed or coated plastic materials and articles as well as those held together by adhesives should be within the scope of the Regulation. Adhesives, coatings and printing inks are not necessarily composed of the same substances as plastics. Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 foresees that for adhesives, coatings and printing inks specific measures can be adopted. Therefore plastic materials and articles that are printed, coated or held together by adhesives should be allowed to contain in the printing, coating or adhesive layer other substances than those authorised at EU level for plastics. Those layers may be subject to other EU or national rules.

(7) Plastics as well as ion exchange resins, rubbers and silicones are macromolecular substances obtained by polymerisation processes. Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 foresees that for ion exchange resins, rubbers and silicones specific measures can be adopted. As those materials are composed of different substances than plastics and have different physico-chemical properties specific rules for them need to apply and it should be made clear that they are not within the scope of this Regulation.

(8) Plastics are made of monomers and other starting substances which are chemically reacted to a macromolecular structure, the polymer, which forms the main structural component of the plastics. To the polymer additives are added to achieve defined technological effects. The polymer as such is an inert high molecular weight structure. As substances with a molecular weight above 1 000 Da usually cannot be absorbed in the body the potential health risk from the polymer itself is minimal. Potential health risk may occur from non- or incompletely reacted monomers or other starting substances or from low molecular weight additives which are transferred into food via migration from the plastic food contact material. Therefore monomers, other starting substances and additives should be risk assessed and authorised before their use in the manufacture of plastic materials and articles.

(9) The risk assessment of a substance to be performed by the European Food Safety Authority (hereinafter the Authority) should cover the substance itself, relevant impurities and foreseeable reaction and degradation products in the intended use. The risk assessment should cover the potential migration under worst foreseeable conditions of use and the toxicity. Based on the risk assessment the authorisation should if

necessary set out specifications for the substance and restrictions of use, quantitative restrictions or migration limits to ensure the safety of the final material or article.

(10) No rules have yet been set out at EU level for the risk assessment and use of colorants in plastics. Therefore their use should remain subject to national law. That situation should be reassessed at a later stage.

(11) Solvents used in the manufacture of plastics to create a suitable reaction environment are expected to be removed in the manufacturing process as they are usually volatile. No rules have yet been set out at EU level for the risk assessment and use of solvents in the manufacture of plastics. Therefore their use should remain subject to national law. That situation should be reassessed at a later stage.

(12) Plastics can also be made of synthetic or natural occurring macromolecular structures which are chemically reacted with other starting substances to create a modified macromolecule. Synthetic macromolecules used are often intermediate structures which are not fully polymerised. Potential health risk may occur from the migration of non- or incompletely reacted other starting substances used to modify the macromolecule or an incompletely reacted macromolecule. Therefore the other starting substances as well as the macromolecules used in the manufacture of modified macromolecules should be risk assessed and authorised before their use in the manufacture of plastic materials and articles.

(13) Plastics can also be made by micro-organisms that create macromolecular structures out of starting substances by fermentation processes. The macromolecule is then either released to a medium or extracted. Potential health risk may occur from the migration of non- or incompletely reacted starting substances, intermediates or by-products of the fermentation process. In this case the final product should be risk assessed and authorised before its use in the manufacture of plastic materials and articles.

(14) Directive 2002/72/EC contains different lists for monomers or other starting substances and for additives authorised for the manufacture of plastic materials and articles. For monomers, other starting substances and additives the Union list is now complete, this means that only substances authorised at EU level may be used. Therefore a separation of monomers or other starting substances and of additives in separate lists due to their authorisation status is no longer necessary. As certain substances can be used both as monomer or other starting substances and as additive for reasons of clarity they should be published in one list of authorised substances indicating the authorised function.

(15) Polymers can not only be used as main structural component of plastics but also as additives achieving defined technological effects in the plastic. If such a polymeric additive is identical to a polymer that can form the main structural component of a plastic material the risk from polymeric additive can be regarded as evaluated if the monomers have already been evaluated and authorised. In such a case it should not be necessary to authorise the polymeric additive but it could be used on the basis of the authorisation of its monomers and other starting substances. If such a polymeric additive is not identical to a polymer that can form the main structural component of a plastic material then the risk of the polymeric additive can not be regarded as evaluated by evaluation of the monomers. In such a case the polymeric additive should be risk

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assessed as regards its low molecular weight fraction below 1 000 Da and authorised before its use in the manufacture of plastic materials and articles.

(16) In the past no clear differentiation has been made between additives that have a function in the final polymer and polymer production aids (PPA) that only exhibit a function in the manufacturing process and are not intended to be present in the final article. Some substances acting as PPA had already been included in the incomplete list of additives in the past. These PPA should remain in the Union list of authorised substances. However, it should be made clear that the use of other PPA will remain possible, subject to national law. That situation should be reassessed at a later stage.

(17) The Union list contains substances authorised to be used in the manufacture of plastics. Substances such as acids, alcohols and phenols can also occur in form of salts. As the salts usually are transformed in the stomach to acid, alcohol or phenol the use of salts with cations that have undergone a safety evaluation should in principle be authorised together with the acid, alcohol or phenol. In certain cases, where the safety assessment indicates concerns on the use of the free acids, only the salts should be authorised by indicating in the list the name as '… acid(s), salts'.

(18) Substances used in the manufacture of plastic materials or articles may contain impurities originating from their manufacturing or extraction process. These impurities are non-intentionally added together with the substance in the manufacture of the plastic material (non-intentionally added substance – NIAS). As far as they are relevant for the risk assessment the main impurities of a substance should be considered and if necessary be included in the specifications of a substance. However it is not possible to list and consider all impurities in the authorisation. Therefore they may be present in the material or article but not included in the Union list.

(19) In the manufacture of polymers substances are used to initiate the polymerisation reaction such as catalysts and to control the polymerisation reaction such as chain transfer, chain extending or chain stop reagents. These aids to polymerisation are used in minute amounts and are not intended to remain in the final polymer. Therefore they should at this point of time not be subject to the authorisation procedure at EU level. Any potential health risk in the final material or article arising from their use should be assessed by the manufacturer in accordance with internationally recognised scientific principles on risk assessment.

(20) During the manufacture and use of plastic materials and articles reaction and degradation products can be formed. These reaction and degradation products are non-intentionally present in the plastic material (NIAS). As far as they are relevant for the risk assessment the main reaction and degradation products of the intended application of a substance should be considered and included in the restrictions of the substance. However it is not possible to list and consider all reaction and degradation products in the authorisation. Therefore they should not be listed as single entries in the Union list. Any potential health risk in the final material or article arising from reaction and degradation products should be assessed by the manufacturer in accordance with internationally recognised scientific principles on risk assessment.

(21) Prior to the establishment of the Union list of additives, other additives than those authorised at EU level could be used in the manufacture of plastics. For those additives which were permitted in the Member States, the time limit for the submission of data for their safety evaluation by the Authority with a view to their inclusion in the Union list expired on 31 December 2006. Additives for which a valid application was submitted within this time limit were listed in a provisional list. For certain additives on the provisional list a decision on their authorisation at EU level has not yet been taken. For those additives, it should be possible to continue to be used in accordance with national law until their evaluation is completed and a decision is taken on their inclusion in the Union list.

(22) When an additive included in the provisional list is inserted in the Union list or when it is decided not to include it in the Union list, that additive should be removed from the provisional list of additives.

(23) New technologies engineer substances in particle size that exhibit chemical and physical properties that significantly differ from those at a larger scale, for example, nanoparticles. These different properties may lead to different toxicological properties and therefore these substances should be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Authority as regards their risk until more information is known about such new technology. Therefore it should be made clear that authorisations which are based on the risk assessment of the conventional particle size of a substance do not cover engineered nanoparticles.

(24) Based on the risk assessment the authorisation should if necessary set out specific migration limits to ensure the safety of the final material or article. If an additive that is authorised for the manufacture of plastic materials and articles is at the same time authorised as food additive or flavouring substance it should be ensured that the release of the substance does not change the composition of the food in an unacceptable way. Therefore the release of such a dual use additive or flavouring should not exhibit a technological function on the food unless such a function is intended and the food contact material complies with the requirements on active food contact materials set out in Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 450/2009 of 29 May 2009 on active and intelligent materials and articles intended to come into contact with food[(4)]. The requirements of Regulations (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on food additives[(5)] or (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 Regulation (EEC) No 1601/91, Regulations (EC) No 2232/96 and (EC) No 110/2008 and Directive 2000/13/EC[(6)] should be respected where applicable.

(25) According to Article 3(1)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 the release of substances from food contact materials and articles should not bring about unacceptable changes in the composition of the food. According to good manufacturing practice it is feasible to manufacture plastic materials in such a way that they are not releasing more than 10 mg of substances per 1 dm^2 of surface area of the plastic material. If the risk