



James McDonald

Ms Anne Peat
Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee
Scottish Government
By e-mail

13th June 2013

Dear Ms Peat,

Ref: PE1376

In preparation for the Committee's consideration of our petition on the 25th of June, I would like to update members on the progress of EFSA's latest review of the safety of aspartame, which we have all been waiting for.

On the 9th of January this year, EFSA produced a Draft Opinion stating that aspartame was safe and there was no need to alter the current ADI (40mg/kg) they said their final decision would be made in May.

EFSA held two public consultations; one on-line and the other a scientific meeting in Brussels on the 6th of April at which I was a speaker. On the 8th of May, EFSA announced the unprecedented news that they were rescheduling the date for their Final Opinion to November 2013. The reasons given were "New information" and "the safety of the metabolites of aspartame" Both of these reasons include the methanol we are concerned with. <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/130508a.htm>

EFSA are no longer certain aspartame is safe due to its methanol content and are currently reviewing their Opinion, this we believe vindicates our concern for the health of the Scottish people embedded in our petition. We respectfully request our petition is progressed as previously discussed.

Some Background Information:

California approves Proposition 65 methanol dose limits

19 April 2013 / United States

The California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (Oehha) adopted maximum acceptable dose levels (MADLs) for methanol of 47,000micrograms/day for inhalation and 23,000micrograms/day for ingestion ([CW 9 July 2012](#)). Methanol is regulated under Proposition 65 as a reproductive toxicant. The regulation will take effect on 1 July 2013.

As the methanol threat is being better understood, the State of California has just announced that as from the 1st of July 2013, the maximum dose of ingested unnatural methanol will be 23mg/day – Note: At the current US ADI of aspartame (50mg/kg) a 70kg adult would ingest 350mg of methanol.

Unless something changes, as from the 1st of July Aspartame will be illegal in California.

Yours Sincerely,

James McDonald

(UKAAC)