



Food Law

Insects as food in Italy: clarifications from Italian Health Ministry

Claudio Perrella and Susanna Visser

On January 8th the Italian Health Ministry issued an information note to present clarifications about the use of insects as food in Italy.

This note was necessary due to numerous requests for clarifications received by the Italian Health Ministry, and also due to misleading information spread by media about the possibility of using insects as food following the application of the new Regulation (EU) 2283/2015 on *novel foods* from January 1st, 2018.

European legislation defines *novel foods* as products falling into categories defined by the aforementioned Regulation and those which are not used for human consumption to a significant degree before May 15th, 1997. Insects belong to this category, and therefore now require specific authorization issued by the European Commission, according to EFSA guidelines, prior to their commercialization. The Commission will verify their safety in respect of the proposed intake quantity, and eventually release the authorization, which will include details and conditions applying to future commercialization.

The Italian Health Ministry clarifies that currently no kind of insect or their derivatives are authorized for commercialization as a food in Italy. Introduction in the Italian market will be allowed only after release of the authorization from the European Commission.

The Italian Ministry also specifies that – according to the Transitional measures included in art. 35 of Regulation (EU) 2283/2015 – some EU countries have temporarily authorised commercialization of some kind of insects in their market; the standard EU authorization procedure will, nevertheless, also be required from their side.



Claudio Perrella
c.perrella@lslex.com



Susanna Visser
s.visser@lslex.com