

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This application seeks to amend the Australia and New Zealand Food Standards Code for the inclusion of molecularly-imprinted adsorbent resins (molecularly-imprinted polymers or MIPs), as a processing aid for wine. It seeks to amend Standard 4.5.1 – Wine production requirements (Australia only), to remove a restriction in that Standard.

Molecularly-imprinted polymers are a type of cross-linked polyester resin. Polyester resins, cross-linked, as a broad category, are currently approved under Standard 1.3.3-5. They are listed in Schedule 18-3 as a processing aid permitted for use in food for certain purposes, such technological purposes being as decolourant, clarifying, filtration and/or adsorbent agents. They are therefore a permitted processing aid in food in both Australia and New Zealand (Clause 3 of Standard 1.3.3). They are also therefore a permitted processing aid for wine produced in New Zealand and wine produced in other countries and sold in Australia (subject to the production laws of such countries permitting same).

Standard 4.5.1 does not identify particular uses for permitted processing aids for the production of wine in Australia, but it is anticipated that molecularly-imprinted polymers would be used as an adsorbent agent. This would allow them to be used in the same manner, and for the same technological purposes in Australian wine, for which they are currently permitted by FSANZ as polyester resins, cross-linked, in the production of New Zealand wine, other imported wines, and in the production of food generally.

The applicant, amaea Limited, is a commercial producer of a cross-linked polyester resin product which is molecularly imprinted to provide precise and selective adsorption of specific molecules from fluids. The applicant currently markets this product to wine producers in the United States, Canada and New Zealand. Similarly to approval under Standard 1.3.3 of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, polyester resins, cross-linked, are also permitted for use in the United States (by way of section 21 CFR §177.2420 of the United States Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act) and molecularly-imprinted polymers are specifically approved for use in wine production in the United States by the TTB.

The applicant's product is a molecularly-imprinted polymer intended to be used for repeated use in the removal of target molecules such as off-flavours and aromas from beverages including wine. It is particularly beneficial in targeting molecules associated with smoke taint from exposure of grapes to bushfires.

The applicant's product may be washed of target molecules removed from wine and reused in a repeated and sustainable manner.

The processing aid is insoluble and macroscopic and losses of a molecularly imprinted polymer into wine are prevented using standard filtration techniques already commonly used for wine production in Australia. In the case of the applicant's product, molecularly-imprinted polymers are applied within a packed column, and wine is treated by passing it through the column. The molecularly-imprinted polymers remain packed within the column, and standard filters are used at column outlets to mitigate the risk of them ever remaining in the treated wine.

The applicant submits that there is no safety or dietary risk associated with the use of molecularly-imprinted polymers in the production of wine in Australia, which would not already be present in the permitted use under FSANZ of the broader category of polyester resins, cross-linked, including molecularly-imprinted polymers, as a processing aid for the production of wines in New Zealand and other countries.