



- Press Release -

## The International Platform of Insects for Food and Feed

Brussels, 4th May 2021

### IPIFF welcomes EU Member States' green light to the authorisation of the first insect food products at European level

The International Platform of Insects for Food and Feed (IPIFF) - the European umbrella organisation representing stakeholders active in the production of insects for food and feed - welcomes the recent decision of the European Union (EU) Member States' authorities to allow the commercialisation of dried yellow mealworm (and derived products<sup>[i]</sup>) on the European Union market.

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, EU Member States' delegates in the EU Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed<sup>[ii]</sup> have backed a draft Commission Implementing Regulation, aiming at authorising the placing on the EU market of dried *Tenebrio molitor* larvae, based on a novel food application submitted by the French insect producer SAS EAP Group Agronutris. This positive vote follows the recent publication by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)<sup>[iii]</sup> of a scientific opinion which concluded that such product is safe<sup>[iv]</sup>, in accordance with the conditions of use<sup>[v]</sup> and specifications<sup>[vi]</sup> proposed by the abovementioned applicant.

According to SAS EAP Group Agronutris co-founder and IPIFF Member, **Cedric Auriol**, *'the green light given by EU Member States represents a major milestone for our company, but also for the insect producing sector as a whole'*. In line with the voted draft Regulation, the applicant<sup>[vii]</sup> will have the possibility to commercialise the products containing dried *Tenebrio molitor* larvae across the EU for a five-year period, pursuant to the data protection mechanism foreseen in the EU novel food legislation<sup>[viii]</sup>. However, this authorisation will also benefit companies which intend to incorporate the ingredients produced/commercialised by Agronutris into insect-based products. Other producers of dried yellow mealworm also have the possibility to use the 'protected' scientific data included in the novel food application developed by Agronutris, if agreed by the latter company<sup>[ix]</sup>.

While this step rewards the efforts of Agronutris, which becomes the first European insect producer officially authorised to sell insects as human food within the EU, this first authorisation will also pave the way for other European producers of edible insects<sup>[x]</sup>. *'Agronutris being among the first insect producers that have heavily invested in the development of novel food applications, contributed to the development of scientific evidence demonstrating the safety of insect food products'*, added **C. Auriol**. These views were echoed by the IPIFF President, **Antoine Hubert**, who hailed this vote as an *'important milestone towards the wider EU commercialisation of edible insects'*.

According to applicable EU procedures, the European Commission is set to officially adopt the draft legal text prior to its publication in the EU Official Journal and its final entry into force. *'We are hoping that these final procedural steps will lead to the effective authorisation of these products before the summer'*, explained IPIFF Secretary-General, **Christophe Derrien**.

Pending the future confirmation by EFSA on the safety of other insect food products forming the basis of a novel food application<sup>[xi]</sup>, European insect producers who have lawfully commercialised their products at national level before 2018 may benefit from a so-called 'transitional measure'<sup>[xii]</sup>. This provision, provided under the EU novel food legislation, aims at allowing such producers to continue marketing their products

at national level, until the EU novel food authorisations – which apply all across the European Union territory - are being granted. However, this possibility has been used by several EU countries only <sup>[xiii]</sup>.

'Following the EU Member States positive vote on dried *Tenebrio molitor* products and a recent ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union <sup>[xiv]</sup>, we are urging EU Member States to make full use of the possibilities to implement this novel food transitional measure on their national territory, in full compliance with applicable novel food provisions <sup>[xv]</sup> and EU general food safety and traceability standards', concluded **Derrien**.

**Note:** As annex to this Press Release, IPIFF also launched an updated version of its '[Frequently Asked Questions' document](#), which covers the subject of novel food and the steps from the submission of a dossier to the final approval by the EU Member States.

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<sup>[i]</sup> E.g. dried powder from *Tenebrio molitor* incorporated into insect-derived products such as protein bars, biscuits or pasta;

<sup>[ii]</sup> SCoPAFF - section 'Novel Food and Toxicological Safety of the Food Chain';

<sup>[iii]</sup> [Safety of dried yellow mealworm \(\*Tenebrio molitor\* larva\) as a novel food pursuant to Regulation \(EU\) 2015/2283](#);

<sup>[iv]</sup> The product may be consumed as a whole or in the form of powder thereafter incorporated into insect-based products;

<sup>[v]</sup> E.g. food categories to which the products may be incorporated which include food for sports nutrition, biscuits, legume based dishes and pasta;

<sup>[vi]</sup> Setting of limits for contaminants and microbiological criteria;

<sup>[vii]</sup> SAS EAP Group Agronutris;

<sup>[viii]</sup> See article 26 of Regulation (EC) No 2015/2283;

<sup>[ix]</sup> For further information about this subject, see the [IPIFF FAQs document](#) (question 10);

<sup>[x]</sup> The [European Commission dedicated website portal](#) displays a non-exhaustive list of novel food applications which have been submitted since the entry into force of Regulation 2015/2283.

<sup>[xi]</sup> Are concerned foodstuffs derived from mealworm and other insect species such as house and banded cricket, lesser mealworm or migratory locust;

<sup>[xii]</sup> See the IPIFF [Contribution Paper on the transitional measure](#);

<sup>[xiii]</sup> See map provided in the [IPIFF FAQs](#);

<sup>[xiv]</sup> Further information about this ruling can be found on the [EU website through the following link](#);

<sup>[xv]</sup> The concerned products shall for the basis of a novel food application, which would have been submitted by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019.

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**The International Platform of Insects for Food and Feed (IPIFF)** is a non-profit organisation which represents the interests of the insect production sector towards EU policymakers, European stakeholders and citizens. Composed of 75 members, most of which are European insect producing companies, IPIFF promotes the use of insects and insect-derived products as top tier source of nutrients for human consumption and animal feed.