

# Press release

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## **New Health Claim Opportunity for Sugar Beet Fibre!**

*Dec 8, the EFSA Panel published its positive Scientific Opinion for Sugar Beet Fibre for digestive health.*

New scientific evidence supported the application for the claim “increasing faecal bulk”. The EFSA (European Food and Safety Authority) Panel considers sugar beet fibre sufficiently characterized and the claim to be a beneficial physiological effect. The Panel concludes that a cause and effect relationship has been established between the consumption of sugar beet fibre and increasing faecal bulk.

Many large bowel disorders may be attributed to lack of faecal bulk (Kritchevsky, 2001). In the clinical studies that support the application and the new claim, various benefits are reported such as improved bowel function, regularity and prevention of constipation to mention some.

To our customers, the claim means a new marketing opportunity. Producers of bakery products, cereals, bars etc may consider using wordings on their packaging such as "improving digestive health" or "good for your stomach/bowels", says Lars-Erik Hansson, Business Manager at applicant company Nordic Sugar AS in Copenhagen. However, wordings must be expressed in a suitable way in each language and according to national guidelines. In order to bear the claim in the EU, a food product should be at least "high in fibre" which means at least 6 grams of fibre per 100. Fibrex (67% fibre content) could be used on its own or in combination with the other few fibres approved for the same claim.

*The final decision from the European Commission is expected during 2012.*

Abstract from EFSA Journal 2011;9(12):2468.

## **ABSTRACT**

Following an application from Nordic Sugar A/S, submitted pursuant to Article 13(5) of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 via the Competent Authority of Denmark, the Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies was asked to deliver an opinion on the scientific substantiation of a health claim based on newly developed scientific evidence related to sugar beet fibre and “increasing faecal bulk”. The food constituent that is the subject of the health claim is sugar beet fibre. The Panel considers that sugar beet fibre is sufficiently characterised in relation to the claimed effect. The claimed effect is “increasing faecal bulk”. Increasing faecal bulk may be a beneficial physiological effect. The applicant provided four human and three animal studies. The Panel considers that no conclusions can be drawn from two human studies for the scientific substantiation of the claim. The other two human studies showed an effect of the consumption of sugar beet fibre on increasing faecal bulk. The evidence obtained from three animal studies supports the evidence from human studies. The mechanism by which sugar beet fibre exerts the claimed effect is established. In weighing the evidence the Panel took into account that two human intervention studies showed that consumption of sugar beet fibre increases faecal bulk, that the evidence provided by three animal studies supports that effect, and that the mechanisms by which sugar beet fibre exerts the claimed effect are established. The Panel concludes that a cause and effect relationship has been established between the consumption of sugar beet fibre and increasing faecal bulk. The following wording reflects the scientific evidence: “Sugar beet fibre increases faecal bulk”. In order to bear the claim a food should be at least “high in fibre” as per the Annex to Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006. The target population is the general population.

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## **KEY WORDS**

Sugar beet fibre, faecal bulk, health claims

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2468.htm>

## **For further information:**

Please contact, [Lars-Erik.Hansson@nordicsugar.com](mailto:Lars-Erik.Hansson@nordicsugar.com)

## **Nordic Sugar at a glance**

Nordic Sugar has produced sugar for the Northern European market for more than 100 years. On the back of a high level of quality, innovative product development and efficient supply, we boast market leadership in the Nordic and Baltic countries. Our products are used in all almost food industry segments, and we develop many of our tailored solutions in close collaboration with our customers. Consumers benefit from our range of speciality products marketed under our Dansukker trademark.

Nordic Sugar produces sugar at plants in Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Lithuania. The production is based on natural raw materials, primarily sugar beet grown locally. In all we do, we are guided by our ambitions for environmental, social and financial sustainability: We want to be an attractive workplace, a strong business partner and an asset to the local community.

In Nordzucker, ranking as Europe’s second largest sugar producer, Nordic Sugar makes up Region Northern Europe.