

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2014-2015, 2/3 June 2014

Ref No: SQ14-000571

OUTCOME: 1 – Population Health

Topic: Nano Titanium Dioxide in Food

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Siewert, Rachel

Question:

Is FSANZ aware of the 2012 US study by Weir et al which tested a range of products and found nano titanium dioxide in a significant number, including lollies, chewing gum, doughnuts, salad dressings, yoghurt, biscuits, pasta and cream cheese?

Is FSANZ aware that many of these products are available here?

Answer:

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is aware of the study by Weir et al. The study found a proportion of the titanium dioxide particles in a food additive sample from one supplier had one dimension of less than 100 nm. The study also found elemental titanium in analysed food samples.

There is permission for the use of titanium dioxide (INS No. 171) in processed foods in accordance with Good Manufacturing Practice in Schedule 1 of Standard 1.3.1 in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code). FSANZ is aware that titanium dioxide is used in a range of food products and has been used safely for many years.

FSANZ is further reviewing the scientific literature for certain insoluble materials with existing permissions in the Code, to determine whether there is any justification to establish specifications based on particle size, based on the best scientific evidence.