

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2014-2015, 2/3 June 2014

Ref No: SQ14-000579

OUTCOME: 1 – Population Health

Topic: Titanium dioxide studies

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Siewert, Rachel

Question:

Is FSANZ aware that recent studies have shown that nano titanium dioxide can damage DNA, disrupt the function of cells, interfere with the defence activities of immune cells and provoke inflammation in the gastro-intestinal tract?

Answer:

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is aware that there are a range of studies that demonstrate that titanium dioxide can cause adverse effects in cell systems at high exposure levels. However, at present, there is no significant evidence that titanium dioxide poses a significant risk to human health and safety in the form and levels used in foods.

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