

**From:** [Secretariat](#)  
**Cc:** [Secretariat](#)  
**Bcc:**

s 22

**Subject:** Advisory Committee on Novel Foods - Recommendation [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Date:** Tuesday, 3 February 2015 2:02:19 PM

---

Dear ISFR members,

The Advisory Committee on Novel Foods (ACNF) has finalised another recommendation. The details of this recommendation are provided below.

### **Diatomaceous Earth**

Diatomaceous Earth is a powdered product resulting from ground soft rock (diatomite) that contains accumulated microscopic fossil algae shells (diatoms). Diatomaceous Earth has a long history of use as a processing aid (filtering aid), particularly in beverage production, and is a permitted processing aid in accordance with Standard 1.3.3 – Processing Aids of the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* (the Code). The ACNF considered an enquiry to use Diatomaceous Earth as an ingredient in foods and beverages, rather than as a processing aid. Diatomaceous Earth is not normally present in a final food or beverage product when it is used as a processing aid. The enquirer's intended use of Diatomaceous Earth is as a powder to be added to water to make a beverage (at up to one heaped teaspoon per day) and as an ingredient in a spelt bread product (at up to 2 heaped teaspoons per 620g loaf). The ACNF noted there was little information available to suggest a history of consumption of Diatomaceous Earth as a food in Australia and New Zealand. Therefore, the ACNF considered that Diatomaceous Earth does meet the definition of 'non-traditional food' in in Standard 1.5.1 – Novel Foods of the Code.

The ACNF did not identify safety concerns associated with the consumption of Diatomaceous Earth at the proposed levels of use. The ACNF noted the similarity of Diatomaceous Earth to silica and that silica consumption has been well tolerated in human and animal studies and assessed by JECFA (WHO Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives). The ACNF noted there may be some variety in the source of Diatomaceous Earth and that if Diatomaceous Earth was to be used as a food ingredient it should meet the specifications for Diatomaceous Earth in accordance with the requirements of Standard 1.3.3 (for example, JECFA and Food Chemicals Codex specifications). Therefore, the recommendation of the ACNF (below) is provided in the context of Diatomaceous Earth that meets appropriate specifications (referred to above); and this will be highlighted in the FSANZ response to the enquirer and in the 'Novel Food - record of views' document that is published on the FSANZ website.

The ACNF did not consider that additional assessment of public health and safety considerations was required. Therefore, the recommendation of the ACNF is that Diatomaceous Earth does not meet the definition of 'novel food' in Standard 1.5.1 of the Code.

This recommendation will be made to the FSANZ General Manager, Food Standards on Wednesday 11 February 2015. If you have any comments regarding this recommendation, or if

you would like copies of the papers provided to the Committee, please contact [redacted] s 22

[redacted] s 22 by Tuesday 10 February 2015.

Regards [redacted] s 22

[redacted] s 22

Food Standards Australia New Zealand

[redacted] s 22