

EN
E-000663/2025
Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(3.6.2025)

The purpose of Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 on novel foods¹ is to ensure a high level of protection of human health and consumers' interests and the effective functioning of the internal market. Any novel food must be authorised prior to its placing on the market. Companies wishing to obtain an authorisation for a novel food must submit an application which is subject to a comprehensive safety evaluation by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). The Regulation does not foresee other factors such as the necessity for a particular novel food to be available on the market. It is for companies to decide whether they wish to apply for authorisation and for consumers to decide whether they wish to buy authorised novel foods.

In 2015, EFSA adopted a scientific opinion on the risk profile related to the production and consumption of insects as food and feed². According to this opinion, while insect farming systems generally do not use hormones, antibiotics or chemicals, with the exception of biocides used to disinfect the production environment in between batches, in intensive production systems, antibiotics may be used to treat or prevent diseases, such as in apiculture. In this context, the provisions on the use of antimicrobials included in Regulation (EU) 2019/6 on veterinary medicinal products³ for food producing animals are also applicable to insects intended for human consumption.

In all its scientific opinions on insects as novel foods, EFSA has not reported the use of antibiotic or antifungal substances in the rearing of the authorised insects, nor the presence of any residues. Therefore, there was no need to consider risk management measures such as specific labelling in this regard.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32015R2283>.

² <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/4257>.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02019R0006-20220128>.