

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0345/09
by Wolfgang Bulfon (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: The dangerous food additive Aspartame

Studies by experts^{1 2} have shown that consumption of the artificial sweetener Aspartame (E951) can seriously damage human health.

Aspartame is two hundred times sweeter than sugar and contains 4 cal/g., and is therefore particularly suited to the production of 'lite' products. It is contained in over 9 000 products worldwide, for instance in the popular diet drink, *Cola Lite*.

Despite its presumably adverse effect on human health, Aspartame has been released as a food additive and sugar substitute for the European market.

A daily intake of as little as 1.5 g. of Aspartame can cause poisoning with serious long-term effects. The symptoms include brain damage, multiple sclerosis-like symptoms, epilepsy, depressions and tumours. It has been found that even 1.5 g. per day causes migraine attacks, gastro-intestinal disorders, inflammations of the fatty tissue and convulsions.³

The EU limit value of 40 mg. per kilo of bodyweight per day is therefore far in excess of what would be safe. An adult with a body weight of 70 kg could consume up to 2.8 g. per day while remaining within the EU limit, but would suffer from severe poisoning.

Does the Commission envisage protecting consumers from possible health risks caused by the consumption of the dangerous artificial sweetener Aspartame? If so, what measures does it have in mind?

¹ Study by the Cesare Maltoni Cancer Research Center of the European Ramazzini Foundation 2005

² Study by Brina Frieder and Veronika Grimm, 1984

³ Dauderer: "Aspartam", in Klinische Toxikologie - 104, Erg.-Lfg. 3/96