Question for written answer E-003187/2021 to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: Sodium nitrite

Sodium nitrite is a reagent, with antibacterial properties, which is particularly common in the food industry, owing to its qualities as a preserving agent.

According to substantial scientific evidence, products treated with this substance are potentially carcinogenic, to the extent that the Commission has stated that it has begun talks with Member States in order to review the maximum permitted levels of nitrites under Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008.

Moreover, if taken in significant quantities, sodium nitrite can have fatal effects in just a few hours. In particular, there have been several cases of suicides of young people who managed to find the product easily online.

In the light of the above, can the Commission clarify:

1. the latest developments in the talks with Member States with a view to revising the maximum permitted levels for nitrites under Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008, in order to reduce, as much as possible, exposure to nitrites from their use as food additives;

2. whether it intends to take any measures to address the risks associated with the online sale of sodium nitrite to non-professionals, and if so, what measures it will take?

Supporter

1 This question is supported by a Member other than the authors: Mara Bizzotto (ID)