



28 November 2013

FDA ADVISORY
No. **2013-058**

SUBJECT: SAFETY OF MONOSODIUM GLUTAMATE (MSG) AND
ASPARTAME AS FOOD ADDITIVES

Monosodium glutamate (MSG) and Aspartame are safe food additives. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (FAO/WHO JECFA) - an international expert scientific committee administered jointly by the FAO and WHO have approved the inclusion of MSG and Aspartame in the Codex General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA) STAN 1992-1995 and these additives are being used globally. The major task of JECFA since 1956 is to evaluate the safe use of food additives. Codex is an international scientific body, the Philippines being a member country, that develops food standards and part of its dossier is the GSFA.

The MSG as flavor enhancer is subject to the provisions of the GSFA standard and shall always be used under conditions of good manufacturing practice (GMP), which includes the following: a) the quantity added to food shall be limited to the lowest possible level necessary to accomplish its desired effect b) the quantity that becomes a component of food as a result of its use in the manufacturing, processing or packaging of a food and which is not intended to accomplish any physical, or other technical effect in the food itself, is reduced to the extent reasonably possible and, c) it is prepared and handled in the same way as a food ingredient. Aspartame as sweetener has GSFA provisions for maximum limit in specific food categories ranging from 100 to 10,000 mg/kg.

Generally, there are people who may be sensitive to some food substances. If you are sensitive to MSG, read the food labels prior to buying them as all ingredients are required to be listed on the product label. The declaration of every ingredient in descending order of proportion on the product label is mandatory.

Both MSG and Aspartame are included in the Philippines List of Permissible Food Additives under Bureau Circular 2006-016 posted in FDA website: www.fda.gov.ph. For more information and inquiries, email us at info@fda.gov.ph.


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