



Customer information about "benzene in soft drinks"

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, BfR, has been informed at the end of last year that small quantities of benzene might occur in foodstuffs and beverages as a reaction between benzoic acid and ascorbic acid during storage. Benzene is used normally as an additive in petrol and as an intermediate product during the manufacturing of plastic. For humans benzene is considered to be toxic.

Benzoic acid and ascorbic acid are permitted food additives since many years. Benzoic acid (E 210) is a preservative which also occurs naturally for example in cranberries. It can be added to non-alcoholic flavoured drinks (except dairy-based drinks) up to a maximum level of 150 mg/l. For ascorbic acid (E 300) no maximum level is specified. However, according to Good Manufacturing Practice it may only be used in such amounts that are necessary to achieve the intended purpose ("quantum satis"). Besides its technological function as an antioxidant ascorbic acid is also used as vitamin C. Ascorbic acid is often found as a natural component of many berries and fruits.

In order to verify the information about benzene in foodstuffs and beverages and to evaluate a potential risk for the consumer, the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment has asked food inspection authorities in Germany to report all relevant data about benzene in beverages to them.

WILD takes this matter very serious and offers its customers as a precautionary measure to avoid using benzoic acid in beverage compounds. WILD's state of the art technology allows the production of unpreserved beverage compounds and assures a high level of microbiological safety.

Furthermore, WILD offers competent advice to its customers about alternatives for the use of preservatives in their production facilities. If you are interested in such advice please do not hesitate to approach your contact at WILD.

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