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Is The EFSA Safety Opinion on Zeaxanthin Being Misinterpreted?

Kalamazoo, MI, July 14, 2008 – On April 24, 2008, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published an opinion on the safety of zeaxanthin. The opinion, based on “existing data,” concluded that “the safety of zeaxanthin as an ingredient in food supplements has not been established.”

“The EFSA safety opinion on zeaxanthin is being misinterpreted,” according to Gary Hainrihar, Executive Vice President, Business Development at Kalsec®, a food and beverage ingredient manufacturer headquartered in Kalamazoo, Mich.”

While the opinion was very detailed and specific in stating that the judgment was in reference to “a proposed level of 20 mg/person/day” and for “synthetic zeaxanthin,” some members of the functional food and nutritional supplement industry are interpreting the judgment as an expression of concern over the safety of zeaxanthin in general.

Those who are familiar with the link between good nutrition and eye health are aware of numerous scientific studies indicating that dietary zeaxanthin is critical to eye health and function.

These studies also suggest that zeaxanthin and other related carotenoids may play a role in delaying the onset of age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and cataracts.

The same studies conclude that insufficient dietary intake of zeaxanthin and other carotenoids contribute to several risk factors for AMD. These risk factors are low blood plasma content of zeaxanthin and low macular pigment density.

Kalsec® is a proud member of CRN (the Council for Responsible Nutrition) and the maker and marketer of ZeaGold® Natural Zeaxanthin derived from a natural whole food source, paprika.

Kalsec® Inc. is a privately held producer and marketer of natural extracts for use in food, beverage, nutraceutical and pharmaceutical applications. Selling and marketing in more than 70 countries worldwide, Kalsec® is dedicated to delivering the best products on time, and backed with unparalleled technical expertise. Founded in 1958, the company is headquartered in Kalamazoo, Michigan, with facilities in Kalamazoo, Michigan; Denver City, Texas; and Mildenhall, England. For more information, contact Kalsec® at (800)323-9320.

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