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The FDA wants to prohibit artificial trans fats

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On Thursday, November 7, 2013, the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced measures to definitively eliminate all the artificial trans fats from processed products in the United States.

The purpose of the proposal, which is released for public comments for a 60-day period, is to remove trans fats from the “generally recognized as safe” (“GRAS”) category, which would allow these products to be commonly used in food products.

If the proposal was accepted, businesses which would want to use artificial trans fats in their formulas would be required to scientifically prove that such product can be consumed without problems, which would be likely hard to achieve since most scientific studies conclude otherwise.

This decision of the FDA occurs after several decades of debates concerning the health hazard posed by adding artificial trans fats to food products, particularly in fried foods, bakery products and common items which are found in our cupboards, such as margarine.

The proposal would not apply to trans fats which occur naturally in the food chain.

Although many major food processors already removed artificial trans fats from their product formulas or are currently in the process of doing so, these ingredients are still used. Food processors would be well-advised to closely monitor the developments respecting this issue to avoid them having an impact on their exports to the United States.

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