

IACM



International Association
of Color Manufacturers

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Cochineal Extract and Carmine Label Declaration

- OMB/OIRA currently reviewing proposed rule from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to require a label declaration on products with the color additives carmine and cochineal
- Although carmine is widely consumed in foods and beverages, it has been rarely implicated in adverse reactions experienced by consumers
- In many of the reported cases, the cause of sensitization to carmine was topical exposure from the use of carmine-containing cosmetics or occupational exposure to carmine and not from ingestion of carmine-containing foods and beverages
- Following sensitization, affected individuals would be sensitive to carmine and the amounts present in foods and beverages could elicit allergic reactions
- It is not known whether all individuals with carmine sensitivity induced through topical use are sensitive to the ingestion of carmine in foods
- Reactions to carmine solely because of ingestion are likely to be exceedingly rare due to the low use levels of carmine in foods and beverages
- The ingestion of natural color additives presents a very low risk of provoking adverse reactions
- The International Association of Color Manufacturers does not oppose labeling products with the color additives carmine and cochineal
- The IACM does, however, take exception to the use of the term "insect" by the Food and Drug Administration when labeling the use of carmine and cochineal is required
- Natural color additives such as carmine and cochineal are readily identified on products by those terms, not through the use of any reference to "insect"
- IACM therefore encourages the Office of Management and Budget to omit any reference to "insect" when the labeling rule is ultimately proposed and promulgated by the Food and Drug Administration