

ASPARTAME APPROVED FOR GENERAL USE IN THE UNITED STATES

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The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the use of aspartame - as a "general purpose sweetener." This means that aspartame can now be used as a sweetener in all foods and beverages.

This approval, which underlines the confidence of the FDA in the safety and value of aspartame, can be expected to create expanded business opportunities in the United States since it enables the industry to explore new uses of aspartame.

This move marks the 26th time that the FDA has affirmed the safety of aspartame over a period of 23 years. Presumably, this will be the last FDA approval of aspartame, since it now can be incorporated into any category of food or beverage. The revised regulation resulting from this approval eliminates the itemisation of categories, as well as a weight restriction on aspartame's sale in bulk tabletop sweetener form. The only limitation that remains is a maximum 0,5% aspartame content in baked goods, which still allows aspartame to be used as the sole sweetener in any baking application.

Aspartame has been on the market since 1979. Today it can be found in more than 5,000 products and is enjoyed regularly by more than 200 million people around the world. It is commonly used as a sweetener and flavour enhancer in products such as soft drinks, tabletop sweeteners, yoghurt, ice cream, puddings, frostings, frozen desserts, chewing gum, breath mints, vitamins and pharmaceuticals.

In addition to the FDA, aspartame has been reviewed and found to be safe for the general population by the Council of Scientific Affairs of the American Medical Association, experts of the World Health Organisation and The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, The Scientific Committee on Foods of the European Union and regulatory agencies of more than 100 nations.