

Animal feed additives

Requirements for the authorisation and marketing of feed additives, and a list of feed additives under withdrawal.

Feed additives are substances, micro-organisms or preparations (other than feed materials and premixtures) which are intentionally added to feed or water to perform, in particular, one or more specific functions as outlined below.

Feed additives are products authorised for specific purposes in animal feed, for example:

- in meeting the animals' nutritional requirements
- to improve the quality of feed, the quality of food from animal origin (e.g. meat, fish, milk, eggs)
- to improve the animals' performance and health

Feed additives are [regulated products](#) which means that they can be:

- placed on the market only if they have been authorised for use
- used only for the purpose stated within the authorisation

Retained EU [Regulation 1831/2003](#) sets out:

- rules on [feed additive authorisations](#)
- conditions of use for additives
- provisions on the labelling of feed additives and their premixtures which must be adhered to

Register of feed additives

The [register of feed additives](#) sets out a list of feed additives permitted for use in Great Britain and provides reference to the individual feed additive legislation. The register does not replace retained EU [Regulation 1831/2003](#) which is the legal basis for the placing on the market and use of individual feed additives.

Categories of feed additives

The regulation covers the following feed additive categories (with examples of their functional groups):

- technological additives (e.g. preservatives)
- sensory additives (e.g. flavourings and colourings)
- nutritional additives (e.g. vitamins and minerals)
- zootechnical additives (e.g. enzyme and micro-organisms used to favourably affect the performance of animals in good health)
- coccidiostats and histomonostats (to control gut parasites)

The use of antibiotics as feed additives were previously permitted, but their use – other than coccidiostats and histomonostats – have since been prohibited.

Authorisation of feed additives

Our [regulated products application guidance](#) provides information on authorisation process and application requirements for feed additives. This process includes an evaluation of the analytical method(s) and dossier submission for risk analysis.

Imports, exports and movement of feed additives

The marketing of feed additives, premixtures and those incorporated into feedstuffs must adhere to the authorisation criteria in Great Britain (GB) as set out in EU retained law.

The marketing of feed additives, premixtures and those incorporated into feedstuffs in Northern Ireland must adhere to the authorisation criteria under EU legislation.

Requirements for [‘third country’ representation for animal feed businesses](#) provides information on trading feed between GB, NI, the EU and other third countries (non-EU) after 31 December 2020.

Further requirements are set out for the [export of non-authorised feed additives or non-compliant feedstuffs from Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#).

Feed additives under withdrawal

Feed additives may be withdrawn from the market due to various reasons, such as no new application received, safety concerns raised or if they're superseded by new feed additives, for example. See [retained EU Regulation 2017/1145](#) on most recent market withdrawals of certain authorised feed additives.

Feed additive withdrawals of particular importance

Formaldehyde

This was commonly used for the treatment of microbial contamination in animal feed, but its authorisation and use was denied in 2018 under retained EU law [Regulation 2018/183](#). Risk assessment findings could not conclude on safe levels of use for formaldehyde in target animal species.

Ethoxyquin

This is another feed additive which has been used globally for many years as an antioxidant, where its use has now become suspended in animal feed under retained EU law [Regulation 2017/962](#). Ethoxyquin was last permitted on the market in June 2020.

Cassia gum

This has been on the market for many years as a gelling agent in animal feed. In 2019, the risk assessment identified a co-impurity (p-phenetidine) which may potentially be carcinogenic in the semi-purified feed-grade of cassia gum. As purified cassia gum is used in food with very low levels of this co-impurity; [retained EU Regulation 2019/1947](#) now substitutes the purified cassia gum for use in animal feed, with the withdrawal of the semi-purified feed-grade phased out from the market by 16 December 2020.

Non-compliant feed additives within the Register of Feed Materials

Feed materials provide a nutritional supply to animals, and are detailed in retained EU law [Regulation 2017/1017](#). There is also a Register of feed materials where new feed materials are notified and published, as required under retained EU law [Regulation 767/2009](#) (Article 24(6)).

The Register of feed materials may contain errors including entries which have been determined as being non-authorised feed additives and are rejected. It is the responsibility of the Feed Business Owner to monitor the Register of Feed Materials to ensure that products of interest remain in the Register of Feed Materials as valid entries.