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COFALEC statement on antibiotics use.

COFALEC wants to inform that the antibiotic known as monensin (monensin sodium)¹, detected last July 30th, 2008, in yeast products intended for feed which are by-products from the Brazil ethanol industry is not related to food and feed yeasts produced by its members.

Indeed, yeast products concerned by the July notifications are by-products of bioethanol production. According to the available information, the detected residue of monensin sodium is the consequence of an occasional introduction of this antibiotic in the bio-ethanol process.

COFALEC stresses that yeast used in bread, as well as in various food and feed products, is specifically and purposely produced from selected strains, and has nothing to do with the yeast by-products of the Brazilian ethanol industry which are questioned by the European Food Safety Authority.

Nevertheless, COFALEC participates to the exchange of information put in place by DG SANCO of the European Commission, in collaboration with FEFANA (EU Association of feed additives and premixtures operators) and FEFAC (European Feed Manufacturers federation), in order to co-operate in a transparent manner with public authorities and all relevant operators of the food and feed chain.

COFALEC members wish to confirm that the control of microbiological levels of micro-organisms during the production process is managed, in their factories, through conventional means (mechanical, thermal and/or chemical) without any introduction of antibiotics at any stage in the yeast production process.

COFALEC insists on the high level of quality achieved by its members within the EU and warns about the potential confusion between the genuine yeasts which they specifically produce and the yeast by-products of other industries.

COFALEC is the CONFEDERATION OF EU YEAST PRODUCERS and represents the whole yeast industry of the European Union. Yeast is generally offered as a living product for fermentation purposes (bread, wine, beer..) it can also be deactivated and used as flavour enhancer in food preparations.

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¹ Monensin has been banned by the European Union since 1 January 2006 for use as a fattening agent in cattle.