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REACTIVE MEDIA STATEMENT – Coffee and Acrylamide

FOR REGULATORY AND EUROPEAN LEGAL FRAMEWORK JOURNALIST ENQUIRIES

The British Coffee Association and the UK coffee industry remain firmly committed to investigate and thoroughly test different approaches to reduce acrylamide in coffee. We welcome the European Commission's draft Regulation, which proposes to implement the 'as low as is reasonably achievable' (ALARA) principle, to introduce positive measures for consumer protection and will result in the further progressive reduction of acrylamide in the European food supply.

To continue to make progress, food industry partners in the UK and across Europe have developed detailed Codes of Practice setting out acrylamide mitigation measures that will meet the principles of the European Commission's draft regulation. In the meantime, an open and continuing dialogue with UK and European regulators is fundamental to maintaining high safety standards.

FOR HEALTH AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS JOURNALIST ENQUIRIES

The safety of coffee for consumers is the most important priority for the coffee industry. Overall coffee represents a comparatively low source of acrylamide in the diet compared with other foodstuffs such as potatoes and crisps, but the coffee industry is firmly committed to reducing levels of acrylamide in coffee further.

"The World Health Organization's International Agency on Cancer Research last year found no conclusive evidence for a carcinogenic effect of drinking coffee following an in-depth review of the science¹. This follows other strong evidence that coffee may be associated with a protective effect against some types of cancer²⁻⁶. Acrylamide does form in coffee during the roasting process, but levels significantly decrease before reaching the final degree of roast and the final product; overall there's little acrylamide left in brewed coffee as it is consumed. Compared with crisps, French fries, barbecued meat, and bread - coffee represents a relatively low source of acrylamide in the diet⁷." explained Chris Stemman, Executive Director of the British Coffee Association.

Coffee is one of the most heavily researched products in the world today, and the overwhelming weight of scientific evidence concludes that moderate coffee consumption of four to five cups per day (400mg caffeine), or two to three cups for pregnant women (200mg caffeine from all sources) can contribute to a healthy, balanced diet, and may even confer a range of health benefits.⁸⁻¹¹ Additionally there is strong independent scientific evidence that coffee even has a protective effect against several cancers, including endometrial, liver and bowel cancer¹⁻⁶.

The British Coffee Association supports the advice from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) for consumers not to stop eating any particular foods, but instead to prepare and store food according to instructions, and to follow a varied, healthy and balanced diet.

References

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