

## **A regulatory perspective on nanomaterials or engineering nanomaterials in food in the European Union**

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### **Abstract**

The European Union regulatory framework does not provide a legal definition of “nanomaterial” or “engineered nanomaterial” applicable to food additives as such. The definition of nanomaterial given in Commission Recommendation 2011/696/EC is not binding because “a recommendation allows institutions to make their view known and to suggest a line of action without imposing any legal obligation on those to whom it is addressed”. Regulation (EU) 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumer establishes the general principles, requirements and responsibilities governing food information, and in particular food labelling. The safety of substances to be authorised as food additives as well as the re-evaluation of all food additives permitted in the EU before 20 January 2009 is carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Within the programme of re-evaluation of permitted food additives EFSA had to deal with some food additives, e.g. titanium dioxide (E171), for which a fraction of material in the nano range is present. These assessments have been finalised and a follow-up procedure by risk managers is in place in order to clarify the uncertainties pointed out during their re-evaluation.