

FDA bans food additive found in sports drinks, sodas

July 3 2024, by Robin Foster



A regulation allowing the use of brominated vegetable oil in food was revoked Tuesday by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration after the agency concluded the additive was unsafe for human consumption.

Brominated vegetable oil (BVO) contains bromine, which is found in fire retardants. Small quantities of BVO have been used legally in some citrus-flavored drinks in the United States to keep the flavor evenly

distributed, the FDA explained in a [news release](#) announcing the ban, which takes effect Aug. 2.

The agency first proposed the [ban](#) in November. But BVO was banned in the U.K. in 1970, followed by India in 1990, the E.U. in 2008 and Japan in 2010, according to the [Center for Science in the Public Interest](#).

In 1970, the FDA concluded that its use in food was not generally recognized as safe because of toxicity concerns. Following that decision, the agency began regulating BVO as a [food additive](#) while also conducting safety studies, Reuters reported. The results of that research prompted the ban.

Some experts said the ban was long overdue.

"The FDA's decision to ban brominated vegetable oil [BVO] in food is a victory for [public health](#). But it's disgraceful that it took decades of regulatory inaction to protect consumers from this dangerous chemical," Scott Faber, senior vice president of government affairs at the Environmental Working Group, said in a [statement](#).

"It's outrageous that for years Americans have been consuming a chemical banned in Europe and Japan. The FDA's belated action on BVO underscores the urgent need for more rigorous and timely oversight of food additives," Faber added.

Many beverage makers have already replaced BVO with an alternative ingredient, according to the FDA. "Few beverages in the U.S. contain BVO," it noted.

More information: The FDA has more on [brominated vegetable oil](#).

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