

Press Release

Enabling a new and sustainable bioeconomy calls not only for investments in R&D, but also in a clear regulatory framework to incentivize innovators

Lisbon, September 30th, 2021

MULTI-STR3AM, an EU-funded project designed to help close the gap between research and industrial scale on microalgae cultivation, published a technical report with a comprehensive compilation and systematization of the existing EU regulation on the application of microalgae in the sectors of food and feed ingredients, and home and personal care products. This report aims to support microalgae industry producers and end-users on the different regulatory needs for new formulations using microalgae derived products. However, it is stressed in the report that there is a need to improve the regulatory framework to facilitate the market of these new products.

Need for standardization regarding use of microalgae as alternative protein sources

Since 2016, the European Committee for Standardization Technical Body on Algae and algae products (CEN/TC 454) has been working on technical standards to enable the harmonization of the terminology, sampling methods, testing methods, and specifications for different sector applications of algae, algae-based products, and their intermediaries into the market. However, we need to accelerate this process to have as soon as possible the necessary framework of technical standards for the proper introduction of these products in the European market.

Standardization as proof of reliability

Standardization has an important role to promote the use of microalgae and microalgae products because it improves the reliability of the supply chain, thereby improving the confidence of industry and consumers in these products, promoting and supporting commercialization of the European algae industry.

Nick Major, Corporate Affairs Director ForFarmers about these developments: “The key requirements for the animal feed industry from the algae bio-refinery are a product with a high protein content which can be safely fed to animals. To be successful it has to be GMP+ (Good Manufacturing Practice Systems) approved, consistent and available in sufficiently large volumes to have an impact on imported soy bean meal into the EU. Currently, we are not there yet.”

Sustainable alternative

Today, the European consumers demand more sustainable alternatives of raw materials. However, these need to reach the market with a given quality and safety that can be measurable and comparable. Thus, the MULTI-STR3AM consortium is accompanying the work of the European Commission (EC) on the standardization activities, to support with technical information and to guarantee all product requirements, in order to accelerate this process. This is vital to offer sustainable innovation to the market.

The Bio-based Industries Joint Undertaking's project MULTI-STR3AM addresses the challenges of scale of microalgae-based products by integrating sustainable multi-strain, multi-method and multi-product microalgae biorefinery in industrial side streams. This EU-funded project is designed to help close the gap between research and industrial scale on microalgae cultivation.

The MULTI-STR3AM project is coordinated by A4F – Algae for Future (PT), and brings together the companies ForFarmers (NL), International Flavors & Fragrances (IFF, NL), Phycom (NL), UpField (NL), and the R&D institutions IMIC CAS - Centre Algotech (CZ), Instituto de Biologia Experimental e Tecnológica (iBET, PT), and Laboratório Nacional de Energia e Geologia (LNEG, PT).

More information: www.multi-str3am.com

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