

MAY 31 1991

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INTERNATIONAL GLUTAMATE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

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Please Reply To:
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March 22, 1991

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REPUBLIC OF CHINA - TAIPEI
Taiwan MSG Manufacturers
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United States

Sue Ann Anderson, R.D., Ph.D.
Senior Staff Scientist
Life Sciences Research Office
9650 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20814-3998

Dear Dr. Anderson:

As requested in your February 6, 1991 letter, a corrected copy of my testimony on Monday, February 4, 1991 in the meeting on the "Evaluation of the Safety of Amino Acids and Related Products", is attached.

IGTC had not registered or planned to testify in the FASEB Hearings because MSG, as a GRAS substance used as a flavor enhancer, is not used as a dietary supplement. In a real sense, presentations on MSG at the FASEB hearings were out of order and not relevant.

In your February 6th letter, you raised two questions, the first on the vehicle for administration of MSG in double blind studies.

This beverage mix designed to mask the taste of MSG has been used for a number of years. It is described on page 367 of the attached text, "Glutamic Acid Advances in Biochemistry and Physiology". Since the completion of the work described in Professor Kenney's chapter, the sample has been modified to replace the sucrose with the low calorie sweetener Aspartame in both the placebo and sample with MSG. Since completion of Professor Kenney's chapter, it has been shown that carbohydrate facilitates glutamate metabolism accelerating conversion to alanine, probably at the epithelial brush border of the intestine. To assure ingestion of glutamate in a low carbohydrate medium, sucrose has been replaced by aspartame.

Also attached for your files is a reprint of Professor Kenney's later work as reported in "Food Chemical Toxicology".

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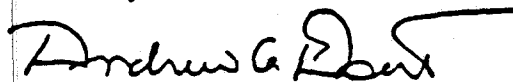
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Your second question asks IGTC to provide LSRO with a list of idiosyncratic reactions attributed to MSG and those for which the IGTC has documented evidence. Perhaps I did not make myself clear in my remarks. The list of complaints in the anecdotal literature against MSG is so voluminous as to make one doubt the veracity of the remarks; these are described on pages 147 and 148 of my testimony. As a toxicologist, I know of nothing in nature that has such a comprehensive series of effects. You will note that some of the claims are contradictory thus one could doubt the veracity of linking many of these claims with glutamate. The literature, starting with Schaumburg's work has claimed that there was a classic triad of responses in humans including a warmth or burning in the upper torso, headache in the form of pressure, i.e., not of the migraine type, and thirdly a tingling in the extremities of the arm.

For details, see the chapter in the attached text by Professor Kenney beginning on page 363. You'll note on page 373 that with the beverage described that Professor Kenney concludes that "it is now possible to say with confidence that with concentrations of MSG of the order of 0.75 percent, it is extremely unlikely that any of the symptoms will be experienced by even a demonstrably sensitive individual." MSG is not frequently used at concentrations above that.

If we can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,



Andrew G. Ebert, Ph.D.
Chairman

AGE:lbw

Enclosure