2.1 Definitions

Flavourings are a major category of ingredients intentionally added to food and feeding stuff. Flavourings are concentrated preparations with the primary purpose to impart flavour except for substances that have an exclusively sweet, sour or salty taste. They are added in small amounts to food or feeding stuff but are not intended to be consumed as such.

Flavourings may contain flavouring substances, flavouring preparations, process flavourings, smoke flavourings and flavouring adjuvants.

*Flavouring substances* are chemically defined substances with flavouring properties. There are three different categories of flavouring substances defined in the definitions of the IOFI Code of Practice and EU Flavour Directive 88/388/EEC [1, 2]:

1. Natural flavouring substances
2. Nature-identical flavouring substances
3. Artificial flavouring substances

*Flavouring preparations* are natural complexes used because of their flavouring properties. They contain flavouring constituents and they are obtained by appropriate physical, microbiological or enzymatic processes from foodstuffs or other material of vegetable or animal origin, either in the raw state or after processing for human consumption by traditional food-preparation processes (including drying, torrefaction and fermentation).

*Process flavourings* means products which are obtained according to good manufacturing practices by heating a mixture of ingredients to a temperature not exceeding 180 °C for a period not exceeding 15 min, the ingredients themselves not necessarily having flavouring properties, and at least one of which contains nitrogen (amino) and another is a reducing sugar.

*Smoke flavourings* means smoke extracts used in traditional foodstuff smoking processes. The EU Regulation on smoke flavourings subdivides them into four categories:

1. ‘Primary smoke condensate’ shall refer to the purified water-based part of condensed smoke and shall fall within the definition of ‘smoke flavourings’.
2. ‘Primary tar fraction’ shall refer to the purified fraction of the water-insoluble high-density tar phase of condensed smoke and shall fall within the definition of ‘smoke flavourings’.

3. ‘Primary products’ shall refer to primary smoke condensates and primary tar fractions.

4. ‘Derived smoke flavourings’ shall refer to flavourings produced as a result of the further processing of primary products and which are used or intended to be used in or on foods in order to impart smoke flavour to those foods.

*Flavouring adjuvants* are foodstuffs, food additives, other food ingredients or processing aids which are necessary to ensure the safety and quality of flavourings and to facilitate the production, storage and intended use of flavourings.

Flavouring adjuvants may also include flavour modifiers.

### 2.2 Legal Positions

In the following, the regulations on flavourings of three major regions are presented. Several other countries have similar legal regulations or accept flavourings produced according to these regulations. One major difference is the general classification of flavourings. In some countries, flavourings are classified as food additives, like in the USA or Japan. In other regions, flavourings are considered to be a special type of foodstuff, like in the EU.

#### 2.2.1 Current Situation in the EU

In 1988 the “Council Directive of 22 June 1988 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to flavourings for use in foodstuffs and to source materials for their production” was published. Together with the amending Directive 91/71/EEC regulating the labelling of flavourings for end consumers, this Directive defined the categories of flavouring ingredients, purity criteria and maximum levels for certain “biological active principles” (BAPs). With this Directive the frame for following specific regulations was established [2, 3].

Two specific Regulations mentioned in the indent of EU Flavour Directive 88/388/EEC have been established.

1. **The EU Regulation on smoke flavourings** which was published in 2003 [4].

   The major subject of this Regulation is to establish:

   (a) A Community procedure for the evaluation and authorisation of primary smoke condensates and primary tar fractions for use as such in or on foods or in the production of derived smoke flavourings for use in or on foods.