



Cranberry Health Application Fails in Europe



Cranberries (*Vaccinium melanocarpum* L.)

Cranberries are the only berry with an approved health claim anywhere in the world -- in this specific case, the health regulation body of France has allowed a health claim for cranberry juice to inhibit **bacterial infections of the urinary tract** in women.

However, in the interest of providing a balanced view of how berries and berry products are being evaluated by scientists and governments, here is February 2009 news from the European Food Safety Authority on the application by cranberry juice manufacturer, **Ocean Spray** of Massachusetts, USA.

Europe cans cranberry health claim, *click!*

In the application, Ocean Spray highlighted the possible role of **proanthocyanidins (PAC)** in fighting urinary tract infections (UTIs) and pointed to the peer-reviewed, clinical trials that

have been “well received, and published in respected, peer-reviewed journals including JAMA.”

“For the future we need to ensure our clinical studies are carried out to meet the exact requirements of the EFSA Panel,” said the managing director of Ocean Spray Europe, Middle East and Africa. “We are committed to further research to ensure we reach these levels.”

The EFSA expert panel of scientists found that six of the 12 studies submitted by Ocean Spray were irrelevant because they were not conducted on a normal population of over-16-year-old women. One was ruled out because it used doses six times stronger than those proposed for the claim.

The other five were discounted for lacking statistical power, insufficient trial length and inadequate randomization.

The Panel concluded that the evidence provided is not sufficient to establish a cause and effect relationship between the consumption of Ocean Spray cranberry products® and the reduction of the risk of UTI in women by inhibiting the adhesion of certain bacteria in the urinary tract.



The claimed effect by Ocean Spray is “helps reduce the risk of urinary tract infection in women by inhibiting the adhesion of certain bacteria in the urinary tract”.

One wonders if the French allowed claim may be withdrawn by this recent review.

To read the entire EFSA document, click on the red link below -- entitled

Ocean Spray Cranberry Products® and urinary tract infection in women

Scientific substantiation of a health claim related to Ocean Spray Cranberry Products® and urinary tract infection in women pursuant to Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 1924/20061

Scientific Opinion of the Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies
(Question No EFSA-Q-2008-117)

Adopted on 22 January 2009

Recent research on cranberries

Cranberries in Research on Coronary Artery Disease *(click for the project summary)*

- A pilot study is being done in Boston to determine whether double-strength cranberry juice has an effect on vascular function.
- The assumption is that cranberry polyphenols may improve blood flow to the hearts of people with **coronary artery disease**.
- The study will provide information about the chronic vascular effects of cranberry juice in patients with vascular disease (atherosclerosis). If successful, this study will lead to a larger project involving more patients.

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