



FDA Green Lights Another Natural Food Color

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This week, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) granted another color additive petition, approving the use of Gardenia (Genipin) in various food and beverage products. This marks the fourth naturally-derived color additive authorized for use in foods since FDA's [April announcement](#) to phase out all petroleum-based synthetic dyes in food and transition to natural alternatives (read more [here](#)). Gardenia blue, derived from the fruit of the gardenia, a flowering evergreen, is now approved for use in sport drinks, flavored or enhanced non-carbonated water, fruit drinks and ades, ready-to-drink teas, hard candy and soft candy.

In addition to the approval, FDA announced that it had issued a letter to manufacturers “encouraging” them to accelerate the phase-out of FD&C Red No.3 in foods, including dietary supplements, sooner than the January 15, 2027 deadline. FDA's latest [announcement](#) on Gardenia also noted voluntary industry commitments to remove certified colors from products served in schools nationwide by the start of the 2026–2027 school year. This comes on the heels of various food manufacturers also having announced commitments to eliminate certain food dyes from their food product lines ahead of the regulatory deadline.

Companies should anticipate a sustained focus on the use of natural colors by FDA with the goal of accelerating the elimination of synthetic dyes from food products as part of the Trump administration's broader initiative to Make America Healthy Again.

Categories

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