

## **Organic certification body bans man-made nanomaterials**

*Soil Association says there is 'insufficient evidence' on impact on environment of nanotechnology*

by *Sustainable Food News*

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The U.K.'s largest organic certification body, the Soil Association, said Tuesday it was banning the use of man-made nanomaterials from its certified organic products, claiming the new technology poses a serious threat to human health.

Food, clothing and cosmetics made with superfine particles called nanoparticles will be banned from carrying the pro-organic group's logo, the group said.

Nanotechnology involves manipulating material at the molecular level. At scales of a billionth of a meter, substances can behave in unpredictable ways and take on new properties. The technique is expected to lead to major breakthroughs in medicine and electronics.

But the Soil Association says there is insufficient evidence about the impact of nanotechnology on the environment and human health.

It said in a statement: "Of the \$9 billion per year being invested globally in nanotechnology, much is going to the development of cosmetics and health products."

Many well-known companies such as L'Oréal, Unilever, Boots and Lancôme are already developing and introducing these superfine particles into their products and none of these products are required to have labeling to warn consumers.

Three years ago, scientists advised the government that the release of nanoparticles should be "avoided as far as possible."

Though the government acknowledged the risks, no action has been taken to impose controls.

"Following the precautionary approach, in line with organic principles, the Soil Association has banned manufactured nanoparticles as ingredients under our organic standards," Soil Association said in a statement. "We are the first organization in the world to take regulatory action against the use of nanoparticles to safeguard the public."