



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Directorate H. Sustainability and quality of agriculture and rural development
H.3. Organic farming

Brussels,
AGRI H.3/MF/jm/D(2008)

Subject: Classification of Leonardite under Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91)

Dear

Thank you for your request on whether the product "Perlhumus" can be used as a fertiliser or soil conditioner in organic farming. We thoroughly examined your request and came to the following conclusion:

According to your explanation the product "Perlhumus" consists mainly of the substance "Leonardite (highly oxidised lignite)".

The use of soil conditioners and other substances in organic farming is governed by Council Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91, which will be replaced as of 1 January 2009 by Regulations (EC) No 834/2007 and 889/2008.

Those Regulations contain in the Annexes a restrictive list of substances, which can be used as fertilizers or soil conditioners in organic production only, if the nutritional needs of the plants cannot be met by the organic cultivation practices.

The substance "Leonardite (highly oxidised lignite)" is not yet included in the organic farming legislation, and therefore it is not allowed in organic farming.

As set out in Article 16 of Regulation 834/2007, upon motivated request of a Member State, the Commission may propose to include a substance in the restrictive list of fertilisers and soil conditioners. The criteria for the inclusions of substances are set out in the same Article.

I recommend you to contact a Member State, which may put forward such request if they see a demand in the organic sector.

Yours sincerely

signed
Jean-Francois HULOT
Head of Unit