

Tightening of Trans-fat Norm

In 2025 year, the Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia (CSR DG) conducted monitoring on the issue of state control over the safety of margarines and spreads. The monitoring covered the existing mechanisms for controlling the safety of these products, the main difficulties and challenges. The report focused particularly on the control of industrial trans-fats.

Trans-fats are naturally contained in beef and dairy products. A much larger amount of trans-fats is formed during the conversion of vegetable fat from a liquid to a solid state, i.e. during the production of margarine, in cases where the technological process of hydrogenation has not been completed. Trans-fats in the fat of such a product make up 25-45%. When frying or baking other products using margarine containing trans-fats, these foods also contain trans-fats. Small amounts of trans-fats are also formed when vegetable oil is heated at high temperatures.

Trans-fats produced during food production and processing are called industrial trans-fats. Both naturally occurring and industrial trans-fats in food are equally harmful. They cause cardiovascular diseases, which are the leading cause of human mortality in the world. However, it is possible to avoid the formation of industrial trans-fats in food. That is why, according to the recommendation of the World Health Organization (WHO), a norm is in force in a number of countries around the world, including the European Union, according to which the content of industrial trans-fats in food should not exceed 2 g per 100 g of fat.

In Georgia, the content of industrial trans-fats in food intended for the nutrition of infants and preschool children was prohibited. However, the norm for certain foods for adult consumers was much more lenient than in the European Union and then the WHO recommendation provides. In particular, in Georgia, the content of industrial trans-fats should not have exceeded 2 grams per 100 grams of ready-made food. While 100% fat content is not even found in margarines, let alone other foods that contain only a small amount of fat.

Thus, the norm in force in Georgia did not correspond to the results of authoritative studies conducted in the world, including in Georgia, on the impact of industrial trans-fats on human health. Accordingly, the main recommendation of the report was addressed to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia and the government to tighten the industrial trans-fat norm in force in the country, in accordance with the recommendation of the World Health Organization and the current norm of the European Union.

On September 2, 2025, CSR DG received a response from the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, according to which the entity has taken into account the main recommendation of the report regarding tightening the trans-fat norm. Accordingly, amendments to normative acts were in preparation, which must have been approved by the government.

Indeed, on October 13, the previous Norm of Trans-fat in Food was canceled. At the same time, amendments were made to the technical regulation On the Addition of Vitamins, Minerals and Certain other Substances to Food, in particular, it was clarified that the requirements specified in the technical regulation apply to all categories of food; and in Annex 3 to the regulation, an already tightened norm of trans-fats was set out.

Thus, the trans-fat norm in force in Georgia has been tightened and brought into line with the best practices of the European Union and the world, which better ensures the protection of the health of Georgian consumers.