

# CELLULOSE ETHERS SECTOR GROUP

## Cellulose ethers treated with Glyoxal (additives)

The European Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals Regulation, commonly referred to as REACH, places an obligation on European manufacturers and importers of substances to register the substances in order to continue production in or import into the European market.

Cellulose ethers are polymers derived by chemical modification of the natural polymer cellulose that is obtained from renewable botanical sources and are exempt from REACH registration (see our position paper available in different languages on [www.celluloseethers.eu](http://www.celluloseethers.eu)).

Cellulose ethers can be treated with reactive substances like glyoxal, which is used to improve solubilisation and dispersion of the polymer.

The glyoxal reaction provides specific physicochemical characteristic functions without modification of basic chemical structure.

This treatment falls under the definition of described in annex V of Regulation 1907/2007 :

*4. Substances which are not themselves manufactured, imported or placed on the market and which result from a chemical reaction that occurs when:*

*(a) a stabiliser, colorant, flavouring agent, antioxidant, filler, solvent, carrier, surfactant, plasticiser, corrosion inhibitor, antifoamer or defoamer, dispersant, precipitation inhibitor, desiccant, binder, emulsifier, de-emulsifier, dewatering agent, agglomerating agent, adhesion promoter, flow modifier, pH neutraliser, sequesterant, coagulant, flocculant, fire retardant, lubricant, chelating agent, or quality control reagent functions as intended; or*

*(b) a substance solely intended to provide a specific physicochemical characteristic functions as intended*

Thus, such modified cellulose ethers maintain the same chemical definition, the same CAS numbers and remain polymers (Article 3(5)) and hence are exempted from the REACH registration requirements (Article 2(9)).

Glyoxal is a chemical substance for which registration under REACH remains a duty of EU producers and if used at or more than 2% in the reaction process, of importers of the modified cellulose ether.

The cellulose ethers manufactured or imported by members of the European Cellulose Ethers Industry Association Sector group of Cefic (European Chemical Industry Council) all meet these criteria, and so are exempted from the REACH registration requirements. The same is true for cellulose ethers modified with chemical reactive substances.

The European Cellulose Ethers Industry Association Sector group therefore will not be submitting registration dossiers to the REACH Agency for their finished Cellulose Ethers but will address the REACH implications for the reactive additives that are imported in such modified polymers.

For and on behalf of the European Cellulose Ethers Manufacturers Association,  
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For more information please contact your cellulose ethers supplier. You may also find more information on the sector group and its members on our webpage: [www.celluloseethers.eu](http://www.celluloseethers.eu) .

