Safety Data Sheet

Date of revision: January 2020 Supersedes: December 2015



Section 1 Identification of the chemical and of the supplier

1.1	Product Identifier	Optibor HP	
1.2	Other means of identification	Boric Acid	
1.3	Recommended use of the chemical and restrictions on use	Industrial manufacturing	
1.4	Supplier's details (including name, address, phone number, email)	Rio Tinto Minerals Asia Pte Ltd 12 Marina Boulevard #20-01 Marina Bay Financial Centre Tower 3 Singapore 018982	Borax Europe Limited 6 St. James's Square London, SW1Y 4AD United Kingdom
		+65 6679 9316	+44 (0)20 7781 2000
		rtb.sds@riotinto.com	
	Manufacturer	Borax Français S.A.S. Usine/Siège Social Route de Bourbourg CS 70059 59411 Coudekerque-Branche Cedex, France	
		+ (33) 3 28 29 28 30	
1.5	Emergency phone number	APAC +65 3158 1074 (24-Hr Non EIMEA +44 (0) 1235 239 670 (Rio Tin	toll-free number) (Rio Tinto Borates) to Borates)

Section 2 Hazards identification

2.1 Classification of the substance or mixture

Classification (CLP Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008): Classified as toxic for reproduction (Repr. 1B; H360FD). The products listed above are produced in Europe and classification complies with the EU CLP. U.S. Borax *Optibor* products produced in the USA have been GHS self-classified as Cat 2 in the Americas and Asia-Pacific regions.

Reproductive Toxicity Category 1B Acute Toxicity (Oral) Category 5

2.2 GHS label elements, including pictogram or symbol, signal word, hazard and precautionary statements Hazard pictograms



Hazard statements: H360: May damage fertility or the unborn child. H303: May be harmful if swallowed.

Precautionary statements:

P202: Do not handle until all safety precautions have been read and understood.

P281: Use personal protective equipment as required.

P308+P313: IF exposed or concerned: Get medical advice/attention.

P501: Dispose of contents/container in accordance with local regulation.

Other hazards which do not result in classification (e.g. dust explosion hazard): None

Section 3 Composition/information on ingredients

3.1 Substances

Chemical name	Common names and synonyms	CAS No.	% content
Boric acid	Orthoboric acid, Boracic acid	10043-35-3	>99.9

Section 4 First aid measures

4.1 Description of first aid measures

Protection of first-aiders: No special protective clothing is required.

Inhalation: If symptoms such as nose or throat irritation are observed, remove to fresh air.

Eye contact: Use eye wash fountain or fresh water to cleanse eye. If irritation persists for more than 30 minutes, seek medical attention.

Skin contact: No treatment necessary.

Ingestion: Swallowing small quantities (one teaspoon) will cause no harm to healthy adults. If larger amounts are swallowed, give two glasses of water to drink and seek medical attention.

- 4.2 Most important symptoms and effects both acute and delayed: Symptoms of accidental over-exposure to high doses of inorganic borate salts have been associated with ingestion or absorption through large areas of severely damaged skin. These may include nausea, vomiting, and diarrhoea, with delayed effects of skin redness and peeling (see Section 11).
- **4.3** Indication of any immediate medical attention and special treatment needed: Note to physicians: Supportive care only is required for adult ingestion of less than a few grams of the product. For ingestion of larger amounts, maintain fluid and electrolyte balance and maintain adequate kidney function. Gastric lavage is only recommended for heavily exposed, symptomatic patients in whom emesis has not emptied the stomach. Hemodialysis should be reserved for patients with massive acute absorption, especially for patients with compromised renal function. Boron analyses of urine or blood are only useful for verifying exposure and are not useful for evaluating severity of poisoning or as a guide in treatment¹.

Section 5 Fire-fighting measures

5.1 Suitable (and unsuitable) extinguishing media Suitable extinguishing media: Use extinguishing media that are appropriate to local circumstances and the surrounding environment.

Unsuitable extinguishing media: None

- **5.2** Special hazards arising from the chemical None. The product is not flammable, combustible or explosive.
- 5.3 **Special protective equipment and precautions for fire-fighters:** Not applicable. The product is itself a flame retardant.

Section 6 Accidental release measures

6.1 Personal precautions, protective equipment and emergency procedures

For non-emergency personnel:

Eye goggles and gloves are not required for normal industrial exposures, but eye protection according to ANSI Z.87.1 or other national standard. Respirators should be considered if environment is excessively dusty.

For emergency responders:

Eye goggles and gloves are not required for normal industrial exposures, but eye protection according to ANSI Z.87.1 or other national standard. Respirators should be considered if environment is excessively dusty.

6.2 Environmental precautions: The product is a water-soluble white powder that may cause damage to trees or vegetation by root absorption. Avoid contamination of water bodies during clean up and disposal. Advise local water authority that none of the affected water should be used for irrigation or for the abstraction of potable water until natural dilution returns the boron value to its normal environmental background level or meets local water quality standards.

6.3 Methods and material for containment and cleaning up

Appropriate containment: Avoid spillage into water and cover drains.

Land spill: Vacuum, shovel or sweep up and place in containers for disposal in accordance with applicable local regulations.

Spillage into water: Where possible, remove any intact containers from the water.

6.4 Reference to other sections

Refer to sections 8, 12 and 13.

Section 7 Handling and storage

7.1 Precautions for safe handling

Good housekeeping procedures should be followed to minimise dust generation and accumulation. Avoid spills. Do not eat, drink and smoke in work areas. Wash hands after use. Remove contaminated clothing and protective equipment before entering eating areas.

7.2 Conditions for safe storage, including any incompatibilities

No special handling precautions are required, but dry, indoor storage is recommended. To maintain package integrity and to minimise caking of the product, bags should be handled on a first-in first-out basis.

Storage temperature:	Ambient
Storage pressure:	Atmospheric
Special sensitivity:	Moisture (Caking)

Section 8 Exposure controls/personal protection

8.1 Control parameters

Occupational exposure limit values: In the absence of a national OEL, Rio Tinto Borates recommends and applies internally an Occupational Exposure Limit (OEL) of 1 mg B/m³. To convert product into equivalent boron (B) content, multiply by 0.175.

8.2 Appropriate engineering controls: Use local exhaust ventilation to keep airborne concentrations of dust below permissible exposure limits.

8.3 Personal protection equipment:

Eye and face protection: Eye protection according to ANSI Z.87.1 or other national standards may be warranted if environment is excessively dusty.

Skin protection: Standard work gloves (cotton, canvas or leather) may be warranted if environment is excessively dusty. Respiratory protection: Where airborne concentrations are expected to exceed exposure limits, respirators should be used (EN149).

Section 9 Physical and chemical properties

9.1 Information on basic physical and chemical properties

Appearance:	White, crystalline solid
Odour	Odourless
Odour threshold:	Not applicable: odourless
pH @ 20°C:	6.1 (0.1% solution); 5.1 (1.0% solution); 3.7 (4.7% solution)
Melting point/ Freezing point:	>1000°C
Initial boiling point and boiling range:	Not applicable: melting point >300°C
Flash point:	Not applicable: inorganic substance
Evaporation rate:	Not applicable: non-volatile
Flammability (solid/gas):	Non-flammable (used as a flame retardant)
Upper/lower flammability or explosive limits:	Not applicable: non-flammable
Vapour pressure:	Not applicable: melting point >300°C
Vapour density:	Not applicable: melting point >300°C

	Relative density: Solubility(ies): Partition coefficient; n-octanol/water: Auto-ignition temperature: Decomposition temperature:	1.49 @ 23°C Water: 49.2 g/L @ 20°C Log P _{ow} = -1.09 @ 22°C Not applicable: not self-heating If heated above 100°C water is lost and boric acid converts initially to metaboric acid (HBO ₂) and on further heating forms boric oxide
	Viscosity: Explosive properties: Oxidising properties:	(B ₂ O ₃) Not applicable: solid substance Not explosive: does not contain chemical groups associated with explosive properties
		Not oxidising: does not contain chemical groups associated with oxidising properties
9.2	Other information Molecular weight: Formula:	61.8 H ₃ BO ₃

Section 10 Stability and reactivity

- **10.1 Reactivity:** None known.
- **10.2** Chemical stability: Under normal ambient temperatures (-40 °C to +40°C), the product is stable product. When heated it loses water, first forming metaboric acid (HBO2), and on further heating it is converted into boric oxide (B₂O₃).
- **10.3 Possibility of hazardous reactions:** Boric acid is a weak acid that may cause corrosion of base metals. Reaction with strong reducing agents such as metal hydrides or alkali metals will generate hydrogen gas which could create an explosive hazard.
- **10.4** Conditions to avoid: Avoid contact with strong reducing agents by storing according to good industrial practice.
- **10.5** Incompatible materials: Strong reducing agents.
- 10.6 Hazardous decomposition products: None.

Section 11 Toxicological Information

11.1 Information on the likely routes of exposure (inhalation, ingestion, skin and eye contact) Inhalation is the most significant route of exposure in occupational and other settings. Dermal exposure is not usually a concern because product is poorly absorbed through intact skin. Product is *not* intended for ingestion.

(a) Acute toxicity

Method: Acute Oral Toxicity Study – OECD Guideline 401 Species: Rat Dose: 2000 – 5000 mg/kg body weight Routes of Exposure: Oral Results: Low acute oral toxicity. The oral LD₅₀ value in male rats is 3,450 mg/kg bw, and in female rats is 4080 mg/kg bw. Classification: Acute Toxicity (Oral) Category 5 (Hazard statement: H303: May be harmful if swallowed)

Method: Acute Dermal Toxicity Study – U.S. EPA FIFRA Guidelines Species: Rabbit Dose: 2,000 mg/kg bw Routes of Exposure: Dermal Results: Low acute dermal toxicity; LD₅₀ in rabbits is > 2,000 mg/kg of body weight. Poorly absorbed through intact skin. Based on the available data, the classification criteria are not met.

Method: Acute Inhalation Toxicity Study – OECD Guideline 403 Species: Rat Dose: 2.12 mg/L Routes of Exposure: Inhalation Results: Low acute inhalation toxicity; LC_{50} in rats is > 2.0 mg/l (or g/m³). Based on the available data, the classification criteria are not met.

(b) Skin corrosion / irritation:

Method: Primary Dermal Irritation Study – U.S. EPA FIFRA Guidelines Species: New Zealand White Rabbit Dose: 0.5 g moistened with saline Routes of Exposure: Dermal Results: No skin irritation. Mean Primary Irritation Score: 0.1. Based on the available data, the classification criteria are not met.

(c) Serious eye damage / irritation:

Method: Eye Irritation Study – similar to OECD Guideline 405 Species: New Zealand White Rabbit Dose: 0.1 g Routes of Exposure: Eye Results: Not irritating, corneal involvement or irritation clearing in 7 days. Classification: Based on mean scores < 1, and the effects were fully reve

Classification: Based on mean scores < 1, and the effects were fully reversible within 7 days, the classification criteria are not met. Many years of occupational exposure indicate no adverse effects on human eye.

(d) Respiratory or skin sensitization:

Method: Buehler Test – OECD Guideline 406 Species: Guinea Pig Dose: 0.4 g 95 % w/w/boric acid Routes of Exposure: Dermal Results: Not a skin sensitiser. No respiratory sensitisation studies have been conducted. There are no data to suggest that boric acid is a respiratory sensitiser. Based on the available data, the classification criteria are not met.

(e) Germ cell mutagenicity:

Method: Several in vitro mutagenicity studies have been carried out on boric acid including gene mutation in mammalian cells, unscheduled DNA synthesis, chromosomal aberration and sister chromatid exchange in mammalian cells. Species: L5178Y mouse lymphoma, V79 Chinese hamster cells, C3H/10T1/2 cells, hepatocytes, Chinese hamster ovary (CHO cells). Dose: 1.0 - 10.0 mg/ml (1000 -10000 ppm) boric acid Routes of Exposure: *in vitro* Results: Not mutagenic (based on boric acid). Based on the available data, the classification criteria are not met.

(f) Carcinogenicity:

Method: OECD 451 equivalent. Species: B6C3F1 mice Dose: 446 ; 1150 mg boric acid/kg bw/day Routes of Exposure: Oral feeding study Results: No evidence of carcinogenicity. Based on the available data, the classification criteria are not met.

(g) Reproductive toxicity:

Method: Three-generation feeding study, similar to OECD 416 Two-Generation Study Species: Rat Dose: 0; 34 (5.9); 100 (17.5) and 336 (58.5) mg boric acid (mg B)/kg bw/day Routes of Exposure: Oral feeding study Results: NOAEL in rats for effects on fertility in males is 100 mg boric acid/kg bw equivalent to 17.5 mg B/kg bw.

Method: Prenatal Developmental Toxicity Study of Boric Acid – OECD Guideline 414 Species: Rat

Dose: 0; 19 (3.3); 36 (6.3); 55 (9.6); 76 (13.3) and 143 (25) mg boric acid (mg B)/kg bw.

Routes of Exposure: Oral feeding study

Results: NOAEL in rats for developmental effects on the foetus including foetal weight loss and minor skeletal variations is 55 mg boric acid/kg bw or 9.6 mg B/kg.

Classification: Reproductive Toxicity Category1B (Hazard statement: H360: May damage fertility or the unborn child.)

Method: Occupational studies of evaluating sensitive sperm parameters in highly exposed borate workers. Epidemiological studies evaluating high environmental exposures to boron and developmental effects in humans have been conducted.

Species: Human

Dose: A subset of workers was exposed to 125 mg B/day.

Routes of Exposure: Combined oral ingestion and inhalation

Results: No adverse fertility effects in male workers. Epidemiological studies of human developmental effects have shown an absence of effects in exposed borate workers and populations living in areas with high environmental levels of boron.

(h) STOT-single exposure:

Method: Standard Test Method for Estimating Sensory Irritancy of Airborne Chemicals – ASTM E981-04 (2004) Species: Mouse

Dose: 221 - 1096 mg boric acid/m³

Routes of Exposure: Inhalation

Results: The highest concentration of boric acid that was achievable with acceptable control of the aerosol concentration was 1096 mg/m3 with a %RD of 19%. The lowest exposure tested of 221 mg/m³ boric acid resulted in a reduced respiration rate of 9%, graded as no irritation. Based on the available data, the classification criteria are not met.

Method: Sensory irritation in human volunteers Species: Human Dose: 2.5, 5, 10 mg boric acid/m³ Routes of Exposure: Inhalation Results: No irritation from boric acid was observed at exposures up to 10 mg/m3 among male and female human volunteers under controlled laboratory conditions.

(i) STOT-repeated exposure:

Method: Chronic toxicity study of boric acid, similar to OECD 452 Species: Rat

Dose: 0; 33 (5.9); 100 (17.5); 334 (58.5) mg boric acid (B)/kg bw per day (nominal in diet) Routes of Exposure: oral: feed

Results: A NOAEL of 17.5 mg B/kg bw/day equivalent to 100 mg boric acid/kg bw/day was determined in a chronic feeding study (2 years) in rats and is based on testes effects. Other effects (kidney, haemopoietic system) are regarded only at even higher dose levels. Based on the available data, the classification criteria are not met.

(j) Aspiration hazard: Physical form of solid powder indicates no aspiration hazard potential.

Toxicokinetics

In the blood boric acid is the main species present and is not further metabolised. Boric acid is distributed rapidly and evenly through the body, with concentrations in bone 2 - 3 higher than in other tissues. Boric acid is excreted rapidly, with elimination half-lives of 1 h in the mouse, 3 h in the rat and < 27.8 h in humans, and has low potential for accumulation. Boric acid is mainly excreted in the urine. Absorption of borates via the oral route is nearly 100 %. For the inhalation route also 100 % absorption is assumed as worst case scenario. Dermal absorption through intact skin is very low with a percent dose absorbed < 0.5%.

11.2 Symptoms related to the physical, and chemical and toxicological characteristics:

Products are *not* intended for ingestion. Small amounts (e.g. a teaspoonful) swallowed accidentally are not likely to cause effects. Symptoms of accidental over-exposure to high doses of inorganic borate salts have been associated with ingestion or absorption through large areas of severely damaged skin. These may include nausea, vomiting, and diarrhoea, with delayed effects of skin redness and peeling.

11.3 Delayed and immediate effects as well as chronic effects from short and long-term exposure:

Human epidemiological studies show no increase in pulmonary disease in occupational populations with chronic exposures to boric acid and sodium borate dust. Human epidemiological studies indicate no effect on fertility in occupational populations with chronic exposures to borate dust and indicate no effect to a general population with high exposures to borates in the environment.

11.4 Numerical measures of toxicity (such as acute toxicity) None. This product is a substance.

Section 12 Ecological information

12.1 Ecotoxicity (aquatic and terrestrial, where available)

Note that the data values are expressed as boron equivalents. To convert to this product divide the boron equivalent by 0.175. Studies judged to be unreliable or with insufficient information to evaluate are not included. All toxicity values are reported as added concentrations, i.e. with subtraction of the background concentration of Boron in the test media.

Freshwater

Chronic studies

Taxonomic Group	Number of Taxa Tested	Range of Endpoint Values (geometric NOEC/EC10)	References
Algal	1	17.5 mg B/L (Pseudokirchneriella subcapitata)	2
Higher plants	1	6.0 mg B/L (Spirodella polyrhiza)	3
Invertebrate	5	6.3 mg B/L (<i>Hyalella azteca</i>) to 30.0 mg B/L (<i>Lampsilis silliquoidea</i>)	4, 5
Fish	6	6.3 mg B/L (<i>Brachydanio rerio</i>) to 36.8 mg B/L (<i>Micropterus salmoides</i>)	6, 7
Amphibian	4	9.4 mg B/L (Xenopus laevis) to 69.9 mg B/L (Bufo fowleri)	8, 9

Results²: Based on the complete data set of 17 species, the HC₅₋₅₀ value of the species sensitivity distribution is 5.7 mg B/L.

Acute studies

Taxonomic Group	Number of Taxa Tested	Range of Endpoint Values (geometric EC/LC50)	References
Algal	1	52.4 mg B/L (Pseudokirchneriella subcapitata)	2
Invertebrate	7	112.9 mg B/L (<i>Ceriodaphnia dubia</i>) to >544 mg B/L (<i>Megalonaias nervosa</i>)	4
Fish	1	79.7 mg B/L (Pimephales promelas)	4

Classification: Based on the acute data for freshwater species, this substance is not classified as hazardous to the environment.

Marine and Estuarine Data

Chronic studies

Taxonomic Group	Number of Taxa Tested	Range of Endpoint Values (geometric NOEC/EC10)	References
Algal	1	27.9 mg B/L (<i>Phaeodactylum tricornutum</i>)	10
Invertebrate	1	16.6 mg B/L (Americamysis bahia)	11

Results: No data are available for vertebrate species. The results from the freshwater data set are recommended as applicable to marine and estuarine species.

Acute studies

Taxonomic Group	Number of Taxa Tested	Range of Endpoint Values (geometric EC/LC50)	References
Alga	1	66.0 mg B/L (Phaeodactylum tricornutum)	10
Invertebrate	1	130 mg B/L (<i>Litopenaeus vannamei</i>)	12
Fish	1	74 mg B/L (<i>Limanda limanda</i>) (total)	13

Sediment

Taxonomic Group	Number of Taxa Tested	Range of Endpoint Values (geometric EC/LC50)	References
Invertebrate	1	37.7 mg B/kg sediment dw (Chironomus riparius)	14

Results: The weight of evidence provided by the lack of partitioning of boron to the sediment and the results of the water only/whole sediment toxicity tests indicate that it is unlikely that boron will exert toxic effects via the sediment compartment and that the derivation of a sediment HC_{5-50} value is not warranted for this product.

Sewage Treatment Plants (STP)

Taxonomic Group	Number of Taxa Tested	Range of Endpoint Values (geometric NOEC/EC10)	References
Activated sludge	NA	17.5 mg B/L to 10,000 mg B/L	15, 16
Microbes	3	10 mg B/L (<i>Opercularia bimarginata</i>) to 20 mg B/L (<i>Paramecium caudatum</i>)	17

Results: The lowest NOEC for sewage treatment plant is 10 mg B/L.

Terrestrial Data

Chronic studies

Taxonomic Group	Number of Taxa Tested	Range of Endpoint Values (geometric NOEC/EC10)	References
Plant	28	7.2 mg B/kg dw (Zea mays) to 56 mg B/kg dw (Allium cepa)	18, 19
Invertebrates	9	15.4 mg B/kg dw (<i>Folsomia candida</i>) to 86.7 mg B/kg dw (<i>Caenorhabditis elegans</i>)	20, 21
Soil micro	3	41.3 mg B/kg dw (substrate induced nitrification) to 48.1 mg B/kg dw (soil nitrogen transformation test)	22, 23, 24

Results²: Based on the complete data set, the HC₅₋₅₀ value of the species sensitivity distribution is 11.3 mg B/kg dw.

Phytotoxicity: Boron is an essential micronutrient for healthy growth of plants. It can be harmful to boron sensitive plants in higher quantities. Care should be taken to minimise the amount of borate product released to the environment.

12.2 Persistence and Degradability

Biodegradation is not an applicable endpoint since the product is an inorganic substance.

12.3 Bioaccummulative potential

This product will undergo hydrolysis in water to form undissociated boric acid. Boric acid will not biomagnify through the foodchain. Octanol/Water partition coefficient: Log $P_{ow} = -0.7570 @ 25^{\circ}C$ (based on boric acid).

12.4 Mobility in soil

The product is soluble in water and is leachable through normal soil. Adsorption to soils or sediments is insignificant.

Section 13 **Disposal considerations**

13.1 **Disposal methods**

Product packaging should be recycled where possible. Local authorities should be consulted about any specific local requirements

Such product should, if possible, be used for an appropriate application.

Section 14 **Transport information**

Transport Classification for Road (ADR) / Rail (RID); Inland waterways (ADN); Sea (IMDG); Air (ICAO/IATA) Not Regulated

- 14.1 **UN Number:**
- 14.2 **UN Proper Shipping Name:**
- Transport hazard class(es): 14.3
- 14.4 Packing Group:
- 14.5 Environmental Hazards (e.g. marine pollutant)
- 14.6 Special precautions for user:

Not Regulated Not Regulated Not Regulated Not Regulated Not Regulated

Not Regulated

Transport in bulk according to Annex II of MARPOL 73/78 and the IBC code: 14.7

Section 15

Regulatory information

15.1 Safety, health and environmental regulations/legislation specific for the substance or mixture

International regulations

Chemical Weapon Convention List Schedule I, II & III Chemicals: Not listed.

Clean Air Act (Montreal Protocol) - Substances that deplete the ozone layer: Not manufactured with and does not contain any Class I or Class II ozone depleting substances.

Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants: Not listed

Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent (PIC): Not listed

UNECE Aarhus Protocol on POPs and Heavy Metals: Not listed

Regulation (EC) No 689/2008 - Export and Import of Dangerous Chemicals: Not listed.

National Regulations: Ensure all national/local regulations are observed.

Chemical inventory listing: The listing is sometimes under the Inventory number of the anhydrous form of this inorganic salt.

United States (TSCA) Active:	10043-35-3
Canada (DSL):	10043-35-3
European Union (EINECS):	233-139-2
Australia (AICS):	10043-35-3
China (IECSC):	10043-35-3
Japan (METI & ISHL):	(1)-63
New Zealand (NZIoC):	10043-35-3
Philippines (PICCS):	10043-35-3
South Korea (KECI):	KE-03499
Taiwan (NECI):	Listed
Thailand (TECI):	10043-35-3
Vietnam:	Listed

- **16.1 Date of previous issue:** December 2015
- 16.2 Date of latest revision date: January 2020

Revision Details:

Section 1: Updated manufacturer and suppliers' contact number. Section 11, 15 and 16: Additional information. Minor typographical corrections

16.3 References:

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For general information on the toxicology of borates see ECETOC Technical Report No. 63 (1995); Patty's Toxicology, 6th Edition Vol. I, (2012) Chap. 23, 'Boron'.

16.4 Abbreviations and acronyms:

bw: Body weight

dw: Dry weight EC: Effect concentration GHS: Global Harmonised System for classification and labelling of chemicals HC: Hazard Concentration IATA: International Air Transport Association IBC: International Maritime Dangerous Goods LC: Lethal Concentration LD: Lethal Dose MARPOL: International Convention for the Prevention of Pollutant From Shops, 1973 STOT: Specific Target Organ Toxicity

LOEC: Lowest Observed Effect Concentration

NA: Not applicable.

NOAEL: No observed adverse effect level NOEC: No Observed Effect Concentration

STP: Sewage Treatment Plant

Precautionary Phrases:

Do not ingest. Keep out of reach of children. Refer to safety data sheet. Not for use in food, drugs or pesticides.

Disclaimer:

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