

Bake-at-home dough merger raises competition concerns

Press release

The CMA has found that Cérélia's purchase of the Jus-Rol business could lead to higher prices and lower quality products for shoppers in the UK.



Cérélia is the largest manufacturer of bake-at-home dough products in the UK, producing private label (own brand) products on behalf of some of the largest grocery retailers in the UK. Jus-Rol is the best-selling brand in the bake-at-home dough category and faces few branded rivals.

Some of Jus-Rol's popular products include puff and shortcrust pastry dough, pizza dough and pain au chocolat dough.

Together, the businesses are the 2 leading suppliers of bake-at-home products to supermarkets and other grocery retailers and account for over two-thirds of sales of such products to shoppers in the UK. The Competition and Market Authority's (CMA) investigation has found that, prior to the merger, Jus-Rol's branded products competed against private label products supplied by Cérélia for space on supermarket shelves.

Following the deal, Cérélia would produce and sell both the Jus-Rol products and private label products, leaving retailers with fewer alternatives. The CMA is therefore concerned that the loss of the Jus-Rol business as an independent player could lead to increased prices to grocery retailers – and ultimately consumers – and lower quality products.

Sorcha O'Carroll, Senior Director of Mergers said:

Millions of people across the UK regularly use bake-at-home dough products, whether to rustle up a mid-week pizza for dinner or to make breakfast pastries for their families on the weekend.

Consumers should know they're getting value for money and not overpaying for their grocery products, especially as the current

cost-of-living crisis stretches people's budget even further. That's why we won't hesitate to refer this investigation further if our concerns aren't addressed.

Cérélia now has 5 working days to submit proposals to address the CMA's concerns. If suitable proposals are not submitted, the CMA will progress to an in-depth Phase 2 investigation.

For more information, visit the [Cérélia / Jus-Rol merger inquiry](#) page.

1. All media enquiries should be directed to the CMA press office by email on press@cma.gov.uk, or by phone on 020 3738 6460.
2. Cérélia refers to Cérélia Group Holding SAS (either directly or through entities under its common ownership or common control or over which it exerts material influence within the meaning of section 26 of the Enterprise Act 2002 (the Act)).
3. The CMA believes that the merger gives rise to a realistic prospect of a substantial lessening of competition as a result of horizontal unilateral effects in the wholesale supply of bake-at-home dough products to grocery retailers in the UK.
4. Under the Act the CMA has a duty to make a reference to Phase 2 if the CMA believes that it is or may be the case that a relevant merger situation has been created, or arrangements are in progress or contemplation which, if carried into effect, will result in the creation of a relevant merger situation; and the creation of that situation has resulted, or may be expected to result, in a substantial lessening of competition within any market or markets in the United Kingdom for goods or services.

Published 30 May 2022