

NEWSFLASH!

JULY 4

Codex Commission Adopts Supplement Guideline

Rome July 4 2005: The Codex Alimentarius Commission, consisting of 85 of 171 country members (one short of a quorum) assembled in Rome today adopted without objection the restrictive Vitamins and Minerals Guidelines recommended by its Nutrition and Food for Special Dietary Foods Committee. While expected the action disappointed American dietary supplement consumer group representatives and observers resent. Attorney Scott Tips of the National Health Federation made a last minute plea to return, for technical and substantive reasons, the guideline to its authoring committee. His plea fell on deaf ears. No country objected to adoption of the guideline.

Mr. Tips was followed by a representative for the International Alliance of Dietary/Food Supplement Associations (IADSA) refuting concerns about the guidelines and seeking approval from the Commission for "ten years of concerted effort" to bring the guideline to fruition.

Industry representatives from the Council for Responsible Nutrition and other trade groups appeared elated and on their way to partying.

Consumer representatives in attendance at the Rome Codex session announced that they will meet to prepare strategies for continuing the battle to maintain worldwide access to all currently available dietary supplements products and to remove the barriers to innovation they see created by the adopted guideline. More action will follow.

Jim Turner

JULY 3

Codex Commission Executive Committee Endorses

Restrictive Vitamin-Mineral Guidelines

by James S. Turner, Esq., Board Chair, Citizens for Health

Rome, July 3, 2005. Dr. Ed Scarbrough, US Codex Office administrator and administrative leader of the US Delegation to the 28th session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, today told the delegation at its pre-meeting session that the Codex Commission Executive Committee had endorsed the vitamin and mineral guidelines recommended to it for adoption by its Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU). The endorsed guidelines call for upper intake limits based on toxic chemical risk assessment, prohibit health claims for foods, and urge consumers to restrict their intake of nutrients to the foods they eat. The endorsement of the guidelines by the Executive Committee virtually ensures their adoption by the full Commission at its July 4 meeting.

Dr. Scarbrough commented on Chinese and other Asian country desires to have greater flexibility, based on unique dietary habits, to add other categories than vitamins and minerals to the guidelines, and Australia's perennial desire to restrict the guidelines to countries that treat vitamins and minerals only as foods. These arguments, he reported, did not move the Codex Executive Committee away from endorsing the guidelines. Nor did Canada's lack of support for the guidelines. Canada argued that given the differences in diets, food supplies, attitudes, and consumption patterns around the world, such guidelines were best left to national governments. This argument failed to move the Executive Committee to recommend delay or rejection of the guidelines. In the opinion of the Canadian government, the guidelines will not apply to Canada because it regulates vitamin and mineral supplements

as □natural health products, not as foods.□

Dr. Scarbrough also reported Executive Committee recommendations that, going forward, the Codex nutrition committee (CCNFSDU) consider how it can contribute to the World Health Organization Global Strategy for Diet Exercise and Health, and that more study be undertaken on the role of nutrition in Codex and the relationship of Codex to other international bodies. Dr. Scarbrough also reported a serious Executive Committee discussion about a consultant's report on the future of Codex. Several countries, Mexico and Brazil among them, desire clearer rules on the consensus process used by Codex to make decision. Some observers believe that the current consensus rules favor Europe and the US and marginalize the interests of developing countries. There is a movement to switch away from consensus to voting. The opponents of this move say it would create combative factions and politicize the Codex process.

The delegation meeting, attended by forty delegation members and observers, took place at the trendy Hotel 47 (www.fortysevenhotel.com) at 47 Via Petroselli, Rome, just one block away from Circus Maximus, the site of Rome's contribution to Live 8 Roma (<http://www.live8live.com/theconcerts/index.shtml>), singer Bob Geldof's effort to use global music performances to focus world attention on hunger and poverty in Africa. Several of the dietary supplement consumer group representatives attending the delegation meeting felt strongly that Codex could contribute most effectively to ending world hunger and poverty by adopting less restrictive vitamin and mineral guidelines. This issue will have to be debated after the Commission meeting. The meeting agenda and consensus process allows time only to adopt or delay the guidelines or send them back to committee with no serious discussion. The Executive Committee endorsement makes adoption of the vitamin and mineral guidelines all but inevitable.

James S. Turner, partner in Swankin and Turner, a 32 year old Washington DC law firm is a Private Sector Advisor to the US Codex Delegation on behalf of Citizens for Health and Citizens for Health supporter NOW Foods.

GUYS - CHECK THIS OUT TOO.

<http://www.citizens.org/priorities/codex/index.cfm>