

Press Release

HFMA comment on 'Probiotic' labelling authorisation in France

As the Voice of UK Natural Health, the Health Food Manufacturers' Association (HFMA) has been advocating for use of the term 'Probiotic' on packaging for some time, working purposefully with stakeholders, advisers, and other industry bodies to push for UK regulatory authorities to make this positive change.

We therefore welcome the significant news from France that our 'sister' EHPM trade federation, Syndicat national des compléments alimentaires (SYNADIET), has been informed by the French regulatory authority, General Directorate for Competition, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Prevention (DGCCRF), that the term 'probiotic' is now authorised for use on food supplements in France, albeit with some conditions.

The DGCCRF recognised that many EU Member States have chosen to no longer follow the position of the Commission (which views the term 'Probiotic' as a health claim), including the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Italy, Czech Republic, Denmark, and Greece. In the UK the regulatory authority continues to follow the Commission line.

The DGCCRF has recognised that the market in Europe is anti-competitive and has acted to correct the situation in France. They have defined probiotics as *"live microorganisms which, when consumed in adequate quantities, have a beneficial effect on the health of the host by contributing to the balance of the intestinal flora"*. Companies in France are now authorised to use the term 'Probiotics' on the labelling of food supplements as a category name, and to associate it with a statement on the balance of the intestinal flora.

Graham Keen, HFMA Executive Director said; *"We warmly acknowledge the hard work and determination of our friends at SYNADIET in achieving this positive outcome. This adds weight to our long-held belief that the term 'Probiotic' should be similarly authorised for use here in the UK, and we will continue to advocate strongly on behalf of our members in this respect"*.

A significant part of our argument for an alternative approach in the UK market has focused on the same arguments used in France and we will actively be asking the UK regulatory authority why it should not be taking similar steps here in the UK.

---ENDS---

Press enquiries:

 comms@hfma.co.uk

PR Consultant: Theresa Cutts 07790 895279

Director of Communications: Esther Mills-Roberts

PRESS NOTES:

About the HFMA

The HFMA, the voice of the UK's natural health industry since 1965, represents around 150 manufacturers and suppliers of natural health products. As the authoritative voice of the natural products industry, the HFMA supports the interests of its members with legislators and regulators; promotes industry best practice for product quality and safety; and provides responsible information for consumers.

For further information about the HFMA, visit www.hfma.co.uk