

SUMMARY OF EC WORKING GROUP MEETING 27 June 2008

This was the third Commission working group meeting following on from the 17 December 2007 working group meeting at which tolerable upper safe levels and minimum/maximum levels of vitamins and minerals were discussed.

The next working group meeting is to be scheduled for September 2008.

1. Maximum amounts of vitamins and minerals

Two models for the setting of maximum and minimum levels of vitamins and minerals in food supplements were presented. The Commission stated that neither model presented by the European Responsible Nutrition Association (ERNA) or the Confederation of the Food & Drink Industries of the EU (CIAA) had been given preference over each other and reiterated that maximum levels must be set on scientific safety data. The Commission proposed that a subgroup of Member States should take forward technical discussions on the models including further data expected from the International Life Science Industries (ILSI). The subgroup will carry out simulations for nutrients for the whole population and for particular population groups such as for children and the elderly where specific risks exist. The subgroup would report back at future working group meetings.

2. Beta-carotene and the use of advisory statements for dossiers

The use of warning statements for particular groups of consumers was discussed in the context of the potential effect of beta-carotene intake on smokers. Warning/advisory statements in this regard are in use in some Member States, whilst others welcomed the recommendation for such statements. The Commission suggested that the requirement for a warning statement could be introduced under EU labelling legislation.

3. Tolerances levels for nutrient values declared on labels

The issue of tolerances in relation to declared labelling values and the practice of using overages when formulating products were raised in relation to setting maximum levels for nutrients added to foodstuffs. The Commission indicated that Guidance on tolerances for addition on nutrients to foods is being agreed under discussions for technical amendments for nutrition labelling, and that it is for this working group on food supplements and addition of vitamins and minerals to foodstuffs to set the maximum levels, and manufacturers need to consider the management of formulations to comply with the set levels.

4. Iodine consumption

Some Member States expressed concern about the over consumption of iodine through supplements and fortified foods. The Commission stated there was also concern surrounding the under consumption of iodine. Other

Member States also raised concern about the over consumption of vitamins A and K. The Commission indicated that concerns surrounding these nutrients would require close consideration when setting maximum levels.

5. AOB - Dossiers

Interpretation of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) statement on basic dossiers was raised. The Commission explained that EFSA had made successive attempts to acquire further information from applicants but no further data had been forthcoming and therefore an opinion could not be given. The Commission advised that Member States were not precluded from allowing continued derogation for the substances affected until expiry of the derogation period on 31 December 2009, or alternatively requiring the swift cessation of derogations for the affected substances.

EFSA intend to complete the evaluation of all remaining dossiers by May 2009. The Commission indicated that products containing substances not within the legislation or currently in the process of being added to lists should not be on the market after 31 December 2009.

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