

# Consumer Stakeholder Meeting Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2004

## Attendees

Morris McAllister – Chairman

Jenny Jackson – Diabetes UK NI

Trevor Williamson – FSA

Deirdre Ni Chleirigh – FSA

Andrea Farrell – FSA

Ruth Watson – Secretariat

## Apologies

Gillian Gibson – Footprints Women's  
Centre

Sinead Furey – General Consumer  
Council

## Introduction

1. The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming Jenny to the Food Standards Agency NI, and gave a short presentation that included:
  - The background to the Agency
  - Re-cap on why this initiative is happening
  - The appointment of the new NI Chairman
  - The resignation of Sir John Krebs
  - The agenda for the open Board meeting in October
  - The agenda for the Northern Ireland Advisory Committee (NIAC) meeting in October.

## Nutrition

2. Andrea Farrell opened the discussion on nutrition with a general overview of two key priority areas for the Agency.

## 3. Promotion of Foods to Children

Agency commissioned research on particular activity showed that there is a clear link between what children see on TV and their food preferences. In light of this, the Agency held a consultation at the start of 2004 with the subsequent Action Plan going to the Board in July. This identified a number of key actions including:

- Piloting healthy drinks vending machines in schools across the province

- Working with the Department of Education on compulsory nutritional standards
- Consulting on nutritional composition of children's foods

#### **4. Food Labelling**

The Agency is currently considering options for the signposts of labelling on foods and will be consulting with consumers across the UK in October. A consultation will take place in October on the nutritional composition of foods, the outcomes of which will help to shape new policies affecting food labelling. A comment was made about the distribution of goods throughout the UK. When pilot initiatives take place in the UK, we must be aware that it may take time for the initiative to come into action in Northern Ireland.

#### **5. Salt**

The Agency launched a public health campaign on 15<sup>th</sup> September. This is a large public health campaign aimed at:

- Raising consumers' awareness of the health issues associated with the excessive intake of salt
- Explaining how easy it is to consume too much salt because of its presence in so many foods.

To support this, the Agency will also be carrying out a 'shopping basket' survey, which aims to find out how much salt is in the average consumer's shopping basket. We will also be working with the food industry to find ways to reduce salt levels in products.

#### **Invitees Topics and General Issues**

**6.** There were no topics for discussion raised by the invitees. The Director thus thanked Jenny for attending and closed the meeting.

Ruth Watson

24/09/2004