

## PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Enquiries to: [REDACTED]  
Assistant Director, Food Services  
Environmental Health Unit  
Telephone: [REDACTED]  
Facsimile: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]  
File Number: EH-NFAP-0235  
Our Ref.: GB021981

09 August 2002

### Project Manager – Proposal P235

Standards Liaison Officer  
Australia New Zealand Food Authority  
PO Box 7186  
Canberra Mail Centre ACT 2610

Dear Sir / Madam

### Submission – Proposal P235 – Review of Food-Type Dietary Supplements

Thank you for the opportunity to assess the Initial Assessment Report for Proposal P235.

The following comments are made by the Environmental Health Unit of Queensland Health.

Option 2b.i – New standards in existing Chapter 2 - is supported.

The term '*food-type dietary supplements*' would imply that the food has health giving properties when the reverse may be true. Using this terminology has the potential to increase a public perception that these food groups may be of benefit. Some can be grouped under novel foods, however most new products escape that regulation, and there is no international definition of functional foods, therefore an alternative description would be helpful.

One questions what role, if any, *food-type dietary supplements* (FTDS) play.

Items such as therapeutic goods, medicines, complimentary medicines, dietary supplements and foods all seem to be regulated by different Acts, however confusion may result regarding which Act and standard various products should be considered under. The definitions of these categories need to be clear and unambiguous for industry in addition to providing a public health advantage.

...2/

**Office**  
10th Floor  
Queensland Health Building  
147 - 163 Charlotte Street, Brisbane  
QLD 4000

**Postal**  
GPO Box 48  
Brisbane QLD 4001

**Phone**  
(07) 3234 0953

**Fax**  
(07) 3234 1480

Although we are not in favour of FTDS, if it is intended that a standard is required this should include regulation of issues such as vitamins and minerals (nutritive substances) taking into account the revised NHMRC Recommended Dietary Intakes (RDI - anticipated completion in 2004).

It is also recommended that a percentage of the RDI upper safe limit should be applied so that no serve size of a product could exceed a specified conservative percentage of the upper safe limit.

The labelling of FTDS is an issue, which requires careful consideration. It is considered that labelling of FTDS with added vitamins and/or minerals should include in the Nutrition Information Panel (which will obviously result in an expanded Nutrition Information Panel), useful information about products for consumers such as:

- the percentage of RDI of all added vitamins and minerals included,
- consumption limit warnings such as the following warning statement suggestion - 'this food is a *Food-type dietary supplement* (or alternative name) and should not replace a healthy balanced diet', and
- the prohibition of health claims labelling - this is recommended to minimise public health implications with the added factor that these products could be less attractive for industry to produce if health claims were not permissible.

Queensland Health would also like advice on the progress of the review of the New Zealand Dietary Supplements Regulation. It is our belief whilst this Regulation remains in place it compromises the entire binational food standards setting approach.

Yours sincerely

  
Principal Adviser, Foods