This statement issued by the National Nutritional Foods Association, confirms several of the points covered in AMP 19, about issues with the conclusions of "State-of-the-Science" Conference on Multivitamin/Mineral Supplements and Chronic Disease Prevention.

NNFA Statement in Response to NIH State-of-the-Science Conference on Multivitamin/Mineral Supplements

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

Panel irresponsible and uninformed in theorizing risk of multivitamins

Washington, D.C. (May 17, 2006) In response to today's findings by the State-of-the-Science Conference on Multivitamin/Mineral Supplements and Chronic Disease Prevention, the National Nutritional Foods Association (NNFA) maintains that multivitamins and other mineral supplements taken by more than 100 million Americans daily are a safe, affordable and effective way to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

NNFA agrees that more research into the benefits of vitamins is important. But while waiting for conclusive clinical data, observational data and cohort studies should not be ignored. For instance, in the time spent determining conclusively that folic acid prevents birth defects, many women and their children would have benefited from taking this safe B vitamin daily.

NNFA takes issue with several of the panel's claims, which do not accurately reflect the true nature of multivitamins and multivitamin usage in the United States. Specifically, NNFA maintains that multivitamins do not pose a health risk as the panel theorizes and asserts that serious adverse health reactions would have long since been apparent. As an example, according to the most recent data from the American Association of Poison Control Centers, adverse reactions to all vitamins represented only four percent of the category that includes prescription and over the counter (OTC) drugs. An adverse reaction is an unintended result, such as an allergic reaction, of taking a product according to directions.

In addition, NNFA believes the panel's claim that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), doesn't have enough regulatory authority is irresponsible. While it certainly may be true that the agency that regulates dietary supplements is both underfunded and understaffed, it is not powerless to enforce the law. Among the powers granted by the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994 (DSHEA), the FDA has the authority to seize products determined to present an unreasonable or significant risk of injury or illness or an imminent hazard to the public health. Additionally, DSHEA authorized the FDA to establish good manufacturing practices (GMPs) for dietary supplements.

Furthermore, NNFA urges the panel to further investigate the so-called lack of MVM compositional databases. NNFA currently houses the largest such database in the world with approximately 30,000 labels.

Source: NNFA website http://www.nnfa.org/site/News2?page=NewsArticle&id=7219