

Industry Coalition Advises Against Use of Dietary Supplements as Swine Flu Remedy, Cure

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WASHINGTON, D.C. *May 1, 2009* – The dietary supplement industry is aware of public concern regarding H1N1 flu virus (“swine flu”) and of the desire of the public to protect itself against this virus. The trade associations of the dietary supplement industry support the responsible sale and use of health-promoting vitamins, minerals, herbs and other dietary supplements. We are unaware of any scientific data supporting the use of dietary supplements to treat swine flu. Furthermore, federal law does not allow dietary supplements to claim to treat any diseases, including swine flu.

The American Herbal Products Association (AHPA), the Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA), the Council for Responsible Nutrition (CRN), the Natural Products Association (NPA) and the United Natural Products Alliance (UNPA) are therefore endorsing the following unified advisory for marketers and retailers, as well as for consumers of dietary supplements:

Marketers and retailers of dietary supplements are urged to refuse to stock or sell any supplements that are presented as treating or curing swine flu, and

Marketers and retailers should refrain from promoting any dietary supplement as a cure or treatment for swine flu.

Anyone who believes they may have swine flu or may have come in contact with the virus should contact a healthcare professional. More information on swine flu and the proper actions to take if you suspect you are ill is available on the Centers for Disease Control Web site: http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/swineflu_you.htm.

There are dietary supplements that have much to offer in terms of enhancing general immune function. However, therapies for the treatment of swine flu should only be recommended by qualified healthcare professionals or public health authorities.

The organizations supporting this advisory represent the majority of dietary supplement manufacturers. Each of the associations and its member companies remain committed to providing the American public with high quality products for supporting personal health and permitting “self-care” choices. Each of the associations is also committed to recognizing that there are some health conditions for which the choice of self-care should be actively discouraged. The current global outbreak of swine flu is such a condition.

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The American Herbal Products Association (AHPA) is the only national trade association devoted to herbal issues. AHPA's mission is to promote the responsible commerce of herbal products, and its committees generate self-regulations to ensure the highest level of quality with respect to the way herbal products are manufactured, labeled, and sold. Website: www.ahpa.org.

Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA) is the 128-year-old, not-for-profit association representing the makers of over-the-counter medicines and nutritional supplements, and the consumers who rely on these healthcare products. Information on the Association can be found at www.chpa-info.org.

Council for Responsible Nutrition (CRN), founded in 1973, is a Washington, D.C.-based trade association representing dietary supplement manufacturers and ingredient suppliers. CRN members agree to adhere to voluntary guidelines for manufacturing, labeling and marketing and CRN's Code of Ethics. Visit www.crnusa.org.

The Natural Products Association, founded in 1936, represents more than 10,000 retailers, manufacturers, wholesalers and distributors of natural products, including foods, dietary supplements, and health/beauty aids. Association members meet annually each July in Las Vegas at the association's official tradeshow, Natural MarketPlace (<http://www.naturalmarketplaceshow.com/>).

The United Natural Products Alliance (UNPA), founded in 1991, is an association of dietary supplement and functional food companies that share a commitment to provide consumers with natural health products of superior quality, benefit and reliability. Information on the Association may be found at www.unpa.com.