

# HFMA UPDATE

Martin Last, Director General



## The year 2025: growth, development and a celebration

**M**ay I wish you all a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. At this time of year, it is only natural to look forward and foresee what the new year holds, but not having a crystal ball, there are things we will have to wait and see how they pan out. However, there are some things we can be certain of as we head into 2025.

This year will see the HFMA celebrate 60 years since its formation, bringing support and expert advice to our trade. Sixty years in existence is no mean feat and we look forward to celebrating with members and industry in due course. The natural products arena has seen many changes in that time, we have overcome many obstacles, and no doubt there will be more in the future, but one thing we can be certain of is the HFMA will continue to support members and the industry as a whole. We will continue to be involved in all aspects of business, whether regulatory, European matters and the wider world as we may see a difference in trading terms with the US as they inaugurate their new President this month.

Something important to us is the views of members, and at the end of 2024, we conducted a member survey. As we evaluate the responses, it gives us a perfect opportunity to check we are offering what members want and more importantly, what they need from us. As rules and regulations change and

demands on businesses alter, it is vital we as an organisation manage those requirements so we can continue to offer effective support.

Education and discussion are always hot topics in this industry, with constant developments not just in regulatory but also in product development areas that bring their own complications and demands. In 2024, we introduced monthly 'Coffee Mornings' via Zoom, which proved popular, and we will continue these in 2025, providing an informal and relaxed space for members to listen and be part of a discussion on a particular topic for 45 minutes, a chance to chat, gain insight, share information and ask questions. Designed to be informal, informative and not take up too much of your day, topics will be announced soon.

Our Technical and Working Group is another opportunity for member companies to come together, share information and experiences as well as catch up with the HFMA team, advisors and network with colleagues. For many years, these meetings have been held at the Coram Campus in London, where their facilities served us well. However, as of this month, we will be moving to No 11 Cavendish Square. The reason is simply we can't fit everyone in at the previous venue. We extend our thanks to the Coram Campus for looking after us so well, it is a great venue should you be looking



for one, but the meetings are now so well attended that we need more space and look forward to welcoming members to the new venue.

Another development is the Pet Supplement Regulatory Partnership, and we now offer label approval on pet care products in association with Amanda Stringer, from AJS Compliance Solutions. You can now expect specialist reviews of pet and animal products that will be signed off by CLEAR CHECK. This is an area where demand is increasing, so is the perfect time to connect with Amanda and offer this service to members and non-members.

We are planning a number of webinars on a variety of topics throughout the year. We will also attend NOPEX in May, and look forward to meeting up with many of you there, helping us to start celebrating our 60th anniversary. NOPEX is a great opportunity to meet many people in the trade, be they suppliers, manufacturers or retailers. A perfect place to discover what the HFMA does and how we might support you.

One thing I and the whole team at the HFMA are passionate about is talking to members and non-members. I actively encourage you to get in touch if you would like to have

a chat about your business, regulatory issues or the industry as a whole. We are always keen to learn if there is something you would like from us that we are not doing. If you are not a member but would like an informal chat about

how the HFMA might be able to support you, then I extend the offer of a call, a Zoom, an email, whatever works best for you.

This year, we will continue to work closely with our political advisors and keep knocking on the Government's door to push for the acceptance of sensible supplementation, keep the pressure on for changes in the use of the word probiotics and build positive relationships with ministers and Government departments. Our links with Europe, especially via the EHPM, remain as strong as ever and we will continue to work closely with them and exchange information relevant to all sides. Our office team, our Scientific and Technical Advisors and our Council members will continue to support businesses and promote best practices.

Our underlying mission has always been to support, educate and negotiate in all areas and on all aspects of our industry. As we enter our 60th year, you have my personal assurance that we will continue to do this into 2025 and beyond.

If you would like to know more about the benefits of membership, visit our website, [www.hfma.co.uk](http://www.hfma.co.uk), to learn more or contact me on 020 8481 7100.