

HFMA - The Voice of the Natural Health Industry. For information on HFMA membership, or enquiries, call 0208 481 7100 or email office@hfma.co.uk



Bulletin Board

— News, information and comment



The HFMA is the voice of the industry – a loud and clear one!

As I write this we are preparing to gather for the annual industry event at Olympia, significant in so many ways because we all hope that the real shoots of Spring recovery are on the way and that this annual get-together will act as a rallying call for all the industry to join forces and fight off the threats posed by both the economic climate and the continuing EU regulatory assault on our industry.

It is also significant as the HFMA holds its AGM at the show and, as Treasurer of HFMA, my report for 2012 will show that the HFMA made a substantial deficit in 2012 and this was a direct result of a significant reduction in subscriptions which account for about 80% of our income. We lost some of our long-standing members through a combination of takeover and commercial circumstances and whilst we were able to recruit no less than 15 new members, this did not make up for the shortfall in subscriptions. Indeed, there is some evidence that suggests that 2013 may already be a continuation of this worrying trend where subscriptions will continue to decline and it is deeply regrettable that there will be some companies who will not survive this year and therefore their membership of the HFMA will lapse.



Tom Moses

Founder of Natural Trade Brokers and HFMA Council Member

The competitive environment that we continue to trade in and the great challenges that are thrown up by an increasingly threatening torrent of bureaucracy means that the HFMA continues to offer a safe haven for manufacturers who require their best interests to be represented at all levels. Regrettably there remain too many substantial companies in the industry who refuse to contribute to this effort and they should reflect on the hard work of the HFMA in continuing to represent and support an industry from which they derive so

much benefit, and yet make no contribution.

You can join the HFMA for as little as £10 a week and the return on your investment will be substantial. If you're unsure, come to one of our workshops and see for yourself – we really are the 'voice of the natural health industry' and we speak with a very loud and clear voice!

In the great tradition of the Queen's Birthday honours, I have awarded the following:

Lady Lindy Loo for reaching a significant milestone and not being totally insufferable about the Six Nations.

Viscount Aldis of Leicester for continuing services to grand hospitality.

Sir Gus of Bushy for walking
Lord Keen for being a good lad
And **Quins** for rugby that is truly wonderful...

GETTING THE BEST FROM THE HFMA...

Professional Networking

The natural health industry, like many others, relies on a strong network of contacts and advisers to support and promote your individual business interests. The HFMA provides its members with a busy calendar of industry and member events, giving you an opportunity to build valuable relationships with your counterparts from other member companies, and also key industry stakeholders. HFMA members also benefit from its key contacts with key regulatory officials, government departments and agencies, and partnerships with other national, European and global industry associations.

NEWS...

HFMA AGM

On the 8th April the HFMA hosted its 47th annual meeting at the Natural & Organic Products Europe Show. With a record attendance of 48 people representing 35 companies, the event featured a speech by HFMA Chairman Martin Last, marking the end of his final year as chair, and a review of the previous year's activities by Executive Director Graham Keen. Martin Last announced and presented the HFMA's two prestigious annual awards, the Maurice Hanssen Award of Honour to Barry Vickers for his dedication and passion for the industry throughout his professional life, and the Health Journalist of the Year award to Jerome Burne, a highly acclaimed health and medical journalist.

THE KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The natural products industry faces a twin threat of a harsh economic climate and continuing regulatory assault
- Tough trading conditions and business consolidation is putting serious strains on HFMA finances – yet the Association's work has never been more needed
- Substantial players are still failing to play their part in this but seem happy to gain from the benefits

HFMA SPOTLIGHT

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Working in a medium size family business, the ability to meet constantly shifting challenges and deal with them in short order, without being hidebound by layers of bureaucracy, committees, and office politics as was so often the case in previous corporate life. It's about not being a small cog in a big wheel.

What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Commercially, seeking out and growing the opportunities that will ensure continued sales growth into the future. Professionally, ensuring the



George Latham

Managing Director, GR Lane Health Products Ltd.

commercial success of the business is in harmony with the aspirations and values of the family owners. Managerially, developing succession planning to ensure smooth transitions as senior people move on or retire.

Where do you see your business in 10 years' time?

Remaining family owned, continuing along the healthy growth pattern

seen in the doubling of the business in the last 12 years, with Lanes recognised as one of the major ethical family owned businesses in the healthcare sector.

What's the best piece of business advice you've ever been given.

Prior to taking up my first post as a managing director 25 years ago, the outgoing md said, in response to my question on what was the single best piece of advice he could give me, "never forget, it's all about people." He was right, carry the people with you and you have the power to move mountains.

What do you find most useful about being a member of the HFMA?

Individuals are less powerful and less effective than teams. Individual companies are more powerful and effective when they are part of a team. The HFMA is such a team – strength in teamwork.

If you could change one thing in the world, what would it be?

For people to respect the rights and opinions of others. In my opinion, almost every problem the world faces stems from people trying to impose the rightness of their view on others.