

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



Moses' mid-summer musings

For the last time we have left the great greenhouse that is Olympia – having enjoyed the diffused sunshine like over-ripe tomatoes – and, having just visited Excel, we look forward to the next Natural & Organic Products Europe at the new venue with much less trepidation. No doubt Carol, George and the gang will do another splendid job. They certainly did this year, even allowing for some unusual characters who crept into the show!

On the Monday of this year's show, at the HFMA AGM, it was my pleasure as treasurer of the HFMA to deliver some good news with regard to our accounts – though the final outcome lay more in the unwitting deeds of the UK banks rather than the government's efforts to restore confidence in the economy. However, we have had a good start to the year and there was certainly a general air of optimism around Olympia for the coming year, and this has continued into the start of the summer.



Tom Moses
is the founder of
Natural Trade Brokers
and an HFMA Council
Member

As Treasurer of the HFMA – and thanks to those who voted for my continued presence on the Council for another two years – I was delighted to deliver the financial report to our members, showing a good result for the year despite a substantial reduction in member subscriptions, which represent over 80% of our income, but thankfully a corresponding and larger reduction in our overheads.

The signs for 2014 remain optimistic, with subscriptions looking better than the same time last year, but equally we are still faced with many challenges ahead and now more than ever we rely on the strength of our membership to resist the unrelenting tide of bureaucracy. The HFMA is always

there, ready willing and able to respond to these challenges.

Regrettably, walking the Olympia Hall, there remain too many companies who refuse to contribute to this effort, and they should reflect on the hard work of the HFMA in continuing to support an industry from which they derive so much benefit, 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.

Casting aside the Queen's Birthday honours for some personal observations:

- Lord Aldis of Leicester for services to hospitality and karaoke
- Sir Gus of Bushy for 1,000 miles on my clock
- Saint Gram for grandfatherhood and supporting lost causes
- Lady Lindy Loo for services beyond the call
- And England for rugby that will be truly wonderful...

GETTING THE BEST FROM THE HFMA...

Maintaining media relationships

As well as keeping the industry's political interests represented across Whitehall, Westminster and Brussels, the HFMA – with the help of PR consultancy Pegasus – maintains important relationships with influential health, science and news journalists across the national news media, providing valuable expert contributions to ensure accurate reporting for consumers.

Regular face-to-face meetings with national news editors mean that the HFMA can successfully communicate news stories and significant new research developments from across the industry to outline what's currently on the agenda.

The close relationships also make the HFMA the first to be called upon to provide balance for any negative stories which may be on the immediate or longer-term horizons.

IN THE NEWS...

NICE vitamin D guidance.

There has been some debate ahead of the forthcoming public health guidelines on vitamin D supplementation from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), as a group of independent specialists and pharma companies called for the guidance to state that only licensed vitamin D products should be recommended, prescribed and dispensed – disregarding all other vitamin D products such as a food supplements.

In defence, the HFMA issued a statement to express concern over these unnecessary pharma-backed pressures which have the potential to cause confusion over what is an extremely important public health issue, as well as threaten existing work to help increase essential supplementation consumption.

The HFMA has defended the industry by reiterating that there are a wide range of vitamin D products, including food supplements, that have an exceptional record of safety and efficacy, and which play a big role in helping prevent deficiencies here in the UK and should continue to do so in the future.

NDNS findings give compelling evidence of need to change diet

RECENT results released from the National Diet and Nutrition Survey have provided a range of new, interesting insights on the diet, nutrient intake and nutritional status of the general population.

The survey accentuated the need for updated guidance on vitamin D, as results showed an increase risk of vitamin D deficiency in all age groups and for both sexes. In addition, risk of iron deficiency was shown in girls aged 11-18.

Children in particular showed a concerning trend of poor diet, with boys eating an average of only three portions of fruit and vegetables a day rather than the recommended

five, with girls only achieving 2.7 portions. Consumption of oily fish was also well below the recommended 140g portion per week in all age groups – while older adults and the majority of children ate more than the daily maximum 6g salt limit.

The lack of nutritional understanding in children and their parents across the UK was echoed in the HFMA's most recent Health of the Nation Survey, where results showed that 59% of UK parents are not giving vitamin supplements to their children, with 64% believing their children get enough nutrients from their normal diet alone. 46% consider vegetables as important for vitamin D

intake – despite not being a recommended or suitable source of the 'sunshine vitamin'.

In addition, only half of those questioned in the HFMA survey think it is particularly important to have sufficient intake of these nutrients for bone health in childhood and only 57% think it important for infancy. Almost a third of UK adults could not recognize any of the signs of vitamin D deficiency.

Reflecting on the National Diet and Nutrition Survey, Dr Alison Tedstone from Public Health England, said: "The data provides compelling evidence that we all need to make changes to our diet to improve our health."