

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

The message gets through...



Guests at the Nash Conservatory, Kew

Celebrating the recent 60th anniversary of the HFMA became the perfect reminder of just what a special industry we have. It is something we should treasure and make sure that as much as we move forward, our heritage and history is not forgotten.

The anniversary event at Kew Gardens was an opportunity to catch up with friends and colleagues and served as a reminder to many of us how we have grown up in this industry, and just what a vast amount of knowledge and expertise we carry with us.

As an industry, we don't have too many opportunities to gather together in a social setting. We talked about the trade and pertinent topics, but it also gave us a chance to catch up on what we are doing in our personal lives. Many of us have grown up together in this industry, and the one thing that runs through it all is a deep sense of community and that is something very special.

We have an industry full of great enthusiasm, knowledge and vast expertise and have been instrumental in ensuring some important and groundbreaking activity. From Maurice Hanssen back in 1968 getting Section 12 added to the Medicines Act to protect food supplements, through to the



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Food Supplement Directive, the B6 campaign to keep higher levels of the vitamin, the actions of the HFMA with Downing Street at the start of lockdown to 'keep the lights on' and allow health food stores and industry to remain open, Brexit, folic acid fortification and more.

As an industry, we are still facing challenges over import/export, ingredients, health claims – and social media 'health experts' appearing with claims and comments that are off the charts. We can't stand still or sit back and relax.

Communication with government departments and regulatory bodies, and discussions with opinion formers must continue and should be something we are all aware of, whatever sector of the industry you are in. Local MPs, schools and clubs can all be places to make an impact. From a local talk to inviting your MP to visit your company to discuss the challenges we face.

The recent announcement of the Government's 'Fit for the Future: 10-Year Health Plan for England', primarily looking at improving the NHS, included a strong 'from sickness to prevention' message encouraging people to take responsibility for their health and to 'raise the healthiest generation of children ever'.

With plans to introduce stricter restrictions on junk food advertising, soft drink reformulation, and the mandatory health food sales reporting for large companies in the food sector, this is a 10-year drive to boost the health of the nation.

As an industry, we have a vital role to play. Not only by our regular contact with the various decision-makers, but in encouraging the public to follow a healthy lifestyle, educating people about healthy choices and the importance of supplements as part of that healthy lifestyle.

From high street health food stores to food producers and big supplement brands, we all can play a part in promoting this message. We will always have to deal with challenges and crazy TikTok 'experts' but we can present a united front and a cohesive message, and continue to make the impact and differences that we have in the past.

▪ **HFMA 60th in pictures, p30**



More info about the HFMA and membership, www.hfma.co.uk, tel. 0208 481 7100