

GUIDELINES FOR VITAMIN AND MINERAL FOOD SUPPLEMENTS

The Codex Alimentarius Commission, the final Codex decision-making body, adopted on 4 July in Rome the Guidelines for Vitamin and Mineral Food Supplements (VMS Guidelines).

The Chair of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses, Professor Rolf Grossklaus, made an introduction to the discussion indicating that the VMS Guidelines regulate food supplements as foods and recommended their adoption to the Commission.

The Chair of the Codex Commission, Dr Stuart Slorach, then referred to the written comments submitted by countries such as Australia, China and Venezuela:

- Australia requested that the word “only” was inserted in the sentence regarding the scope of the VMS Guidelines to emphasise more that they only apply to countries where food supplements are regulated as foods and that they do not apply to those where they are regulated under medicines law.
- China proposed to add a sentence in the VMS Guidelines to emphasise that countries could also decide categories of vitamins and minerals that should be present in food supplements dependant on the dietary habit of their populations.
- Venezuela suggested some editorial amendments to the preamble to make reference to balance and varied diet and to the composition to say that to determine the quantity of vitamins and minerals this should not reach the established therapeutic values.

The Codex Secretariat took the floor to clarify that the wording in the scope of the VMS Guidelines clearly states that they do not apply to countries regulating food supplements under medicines law. The Codex Nutrition Committee Chair, Prof. Grossklaus, answered to the comments of the Chinese delegation indicating that their concerns are justified when dealing with international regulation but not guidelines for the regulation of vitamin and mineral supplements by member countries.

50, Rue de l'Association

B-1000 Brussels

Belgium

Telephone: +32 (0)2 209 11 55

Facsimile: +32 (0)2 223 30 64

Email: secretariat@iadsa.be

Website: <http://www.iadsa.org>

Consequently, the Chair of the Commission recommended to adopt the VMS Guidelines and proposed to:

- Insert the word “only” as proposed by Australia as this did not cause any difference but only editorial to the content of the Guidelines.
- Include the comments of China in the report of the Codex Commission meeting.
- Venezuela and Spain to work together on the editorial changes necessary for the Spanish language (one of the official working languages in Codex).

This recommendation and proposal were welcomed unanimously by the Commission and the Guidelines were adopted.

6 July 2005