

Saving Us from Ourselves – Codex

Written by National Health Federation

Category: Codex

Published: 09 July 2010

Crux of the matter is that:

.."The EU Directive classifies vitamins and minerals in Europe as "medical drugs" rather than dietary supplements, which means that they're subject to government regulation in terms of dosage and availability.

It gets worse: There are **many nutrients known to be vital to optimal health that are not on the government's RDA nutrient list** including chromium picolinate, lysine, and selenium. Under the directive, these types of supplements are banned from over-the-counter sale. Put simply, **it will be illegal to buy them without a prescription.**

The supplements that will be available will be restricted to multi-vitamins containing no more than 100 percent of the established RDA amounts, which are usually useless, trivial quantities -- and they'll be far more expensive than what we have now.

This directive, for all intents and purposes, makes it illegal for people to keep themselves healthy by supplementing with essential nutrients.

Plus, the directive only allows supplements to be made from a list of 15 minerals and 13 vitamins. That leaves out at least 40 minerals important to the human metabolism and forbids the use of the most bio-available forms of vitamin complexes. In essence, **it means that all nutritional supplements will be virtually the same. The specific combinations might vary, but the types and amounts of nutrients will be identical, no matter what product they're formulated into.**

So, for instance, a middle-aged woman in Liverpool, England, who has a dangerously elevated homocysteine level will no longer have the option of reducing her risk of heart disease with a vitamin B dosage of her own choosing. If she's currently taking 5 mg of folic acid daily, under the new directive, she will be legally restricted to a prescription of 1 mg per day.

If she's taking a 100-mg dose of B6, she'll be restricted to 10 mg. And her pantothenic acid (B5) intake of 500 mg will drop to 200 mg. These maximum dosage levels have been chosen to "protect" her (so we're told), when, in fact, the protection she needs the most will be unavailable.

In addition to these essential B vitamins, low maximum dosage levels have also been set for vitamin C, niacin and vitamin E. But at least they made it on the list of allowed nutrients.

Approximately 350 supplement ingredients are missing from the list. If they are not added to the list by June 2005, they will be deemed illegal throughout the European Union. Supplement manufacturers may submit "technical dossiers" to support applications for the inclusion of individual elements or formulations on the so-called "positive list." But the EU has made this process **so expensive and time consuming** that many manufacturers simply can't afford the costs involved.

As a result, **around 5,000 safe formulas and nutrients that have been on the market for decades will soon be banned.**"

Clarifications and summary - kindly provided by Paul Taylor.

Codex Guidelines for Vitamin and Mineral Supplements, and the EU Food Supplements Directive - An important clarification:

The European directive (the EU Food Supplements Directive, or FSD) and Codex (the Draft Codex Guidelines for Vitamin and Mineral Supplements) are actually separate entities. The former was drafted by the European Commission (EC), and the latter is being drafted by the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU). As such, the FSD is a piece of EU legislation, whilst Codex is a UN Food and Agriculture Organization/World Health Organization sponsored body. In other words, the EU sets European legislation, whilst Codex sets global standards on behalf of the FAO/WHO. In this respect it is important for people to understand that whilst there are of course some similarities in the style and intent of the FSD and the Codex Guidelines (primarily due to the strong influence of the EU at Codex) the two are most definitely not one and the same thing.

Codex Guidelines for Vitamin and Mineral Supplements

The Codex Guidelines are currently at step 7 of the 8-step Codex approval process, and the CCNFSDU (the current text of the Codex Guidelines can be found on pages 48-49) will be meeting in Bonn from 1-5 November in an attempt to complete them. If they reach step 8 the Guidelines would then be discussed at the next meeting of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, in July 2005, in order to be ratified as a finalised global standard. The CCNFSDU, incidentally, is actually but one of over 20 different Codex committees currently engaged in setting harmonized' global food standards. The Guidelines are currently in the form of a 'framework' text. The maximum permitted nutrient levels for these Guidelines have not yet been set, and will be added at a later (currently unspecified) date.

EU Food Supplements Directive

The EU Food Supplements Directive (FSD) has not yet been fully implemented. Since 1 August 2003 however, trade between EU member states has been 'permitted' in products complying with the FSD. Nevertheless, from 1 August 2005 onwards trade in products which do not comply with the FSD will be prohibited between EU member states. Essentially speaking, it is this second part of the FSD implementation, from 1

August 2005 onwards, that ANH are challenging in the European Court of Justice, on the basis that the FSD should be the minimum standard for trade between EU member states, rather than (as things currently stand) a ban on trade in non-compliant products. As yet there have been no maximum permitted nutrient levels set for the FSD. On the subject of these, for example, the text of the FSD states the following: The adoption of the specific values for maximum and minimum levels for vitamins and minerals present in food supplements, based on the criteria set out in this Directive and appropriate scientific advice, would be an implementing measure and should be entrusted to the Commission. Thus far there has not been a date set for the implementation of any restrictions on maximum permitted nutrient levels under the FSD, nor is it known for certain what those levels will eventually be. The EU Scientific Committee on Foods (SCF) have published their Opinions and Guidelines however; for convenience these can now be downloaded from the ANH website at: [Food Supplements](#).