

NEWS RELEASE

Codex NRVs are Thrown Back in the Oven for Reheating

The NHF's Report on the Codex Nutrition Committee Meeting in Santiago, Chile

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Category: News Releases

Published: 11 November 2010

At last year's meeting of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) in Dusseldorf, Germany, the National Health Federation (with help from the Indian and Iraqi delegations) was able to stop the advance of those Guidelines on Nutrient Reference Values (NRVs) that would have set low numerical values for vitamins and minerals. Some delegations, especially Australia, were strongly pushing for these "dumbed down" NRVs to go forward. Had they gone forward at that time – as they very nearly did – then we would now be looking at well-advanced Codex NRVs of, for example, 45 milligrams for Vitamin C and 200 IUs for Vitamin D as providing 100% of an adult's daily nutritional needs.

This week of November 1-5, 2010, the CCNFSDU met once again to debate this and other NRV texts. Some 250 delegates from 80 countries were in attendance, comprised of country functionaries and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) representatives. The Committee covered other topics too, such as draft guidelines on the addition of essential nutrients to foods and formulated supplementary foods for older infants and children. The latter was a hotly-debated topic.

But for NHF, the NRV issue was the critical one, especially given the victory at the meeting last year. Could we repeat our success? We had thought this year's fight would be a long, drawn-out one in the full session of the Committee, and had even prepared and submitted extensive written comments to the Committee.

Instead, in just one afternoon, at the special Saturday (October 30th) meeting of the CCNFSDU *Working Group* on NRVs, we were able yet again to keep the dumbed-down NRVs from advancing even one step.