

# News Release: The Great Australian Health Mystery

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## Why is there a Great Divide between the Australian People and Their Government on Health

Australia is the continent-nation that we all know is full of healthy, sun-loving, active people who once tamed a continent and now bask in the glory of their sun-drenched outdoor world. When someone mentions Australia to us, do we automatically think of their cities? Of unhealthy urban masses? No. Absolutely not. We think of outdoorsmen and -women who go for a morning swim, run a marathon, drop a charging croc with a single shot at 500 paces, and all while carrying a baby on their hips. Well, perhaps the baby-carrying part is a bit of an exaggeration; but Australians *are* thought of by the rest of the World as generally healthy and health-oriented individuals.

And this view is not without a basis, for many Australians themselves try to do the right thing when it comes to health. As of the year 2000, Australians spent AU\$1671 million on dietary supplements, herbal medicines, and natural products, which exceeded the expenditure on pharmaceutical drugs.<sup>1</sup> Last year that figure reached at least AU\$1.8 billion.<sup>2</sup> Clearly Australians are interested in maintaining their health.

So, why is it that the Australian government ***consistently*** pursues and pushes policies that would reduce Australians and the rest of the World to ill-health? It is amazing, really, to see the dichotomy between the Australian people and their government on this issue.

### The Australian Government Track Record

The Codex Alimentarius Commission was created fifty years ago by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to create food standards and guidelines that the World would use in international food trade. Australia was one of the original founding members of Codex and has very actively participated in its numerous meetings over the years.

So, what lofty and noble accomplishments can the Australian Codex Office claim? Let's see ... from personal observation on my part at the meetings I have attended over the last fourteen years, these are Australia's accomplishments for health:

1. Successfully opposed labeling of Genetically Modified/Genetically Engineered (GM/GE) foods at the Codex Committee on Food Labeling in Canada, so that consumers could not make informed choices about whether or not to buy GM foods.<sup>3</sup>
2. Successfully pushed Ractopamine-doped meat products on the rest of the World through a forced vote at the Codex Alimentarius Commission meeting in Rome, in July 2012.<sup>4</sup> (Ractopamine is a steroid-like vet drug, the residues of which remain in the slaughtered animal to then be consumed by meat-eaters, and which is banned or prohibited in most countries because of its likely carcinogenicity and harm to animals.)
3. Successfully pushed for maximum upper limits on “dangerous” vitamin-and-mineral supplements in actual contravention of what was allowed in Australian health-food stores at the time.<sup>5</sup>
4. Unsuccessfully pushed for a “the sky’s the limit” industry exemption for infant-formula contamination by the proven-killer contaminant Melamine in the 2009-2011 sessions of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods, to be thwarted only by the National Health Federation and an ad-hoc alliance of Central and South American countries at the very last minute.<sup>6</sup>
5. Partially unsuccessfully opposed removing toxic Aluminum as a food additive at the Codex Committee on Food Additives meetings, the most recent of which took place in Beijing, China, in March 2013.<sup>7</sup>
6. In a contest not yet resolved, has strongly and repeatedly pushed for the “dumbing down” of Nutrient Reference Values for vitamins and minerals<sup>8</sup> from already abysmally low levels to even lower levels that will prove nutritionally worthless for consumers.<sup>9</sup>

The above list of Australian government positions on health is by no means exhaustive. If I were to take the time, I could easily come up with at least another half-dozen instances of anti-health stances taken by Australia at Codex meetings – and that is just at Codex. That does not include any other health-organization meetings.<sup>10</sup>

### **Time for Some Answers**

In fact, I cannot recall ever having seen Australia push any pro-health agenda at Codex. Australia seems to **always** be on the wrong side of the health issues at **all** Codex meetings. Put more bluntly, Australia has **never** met an unhealthy Codex standard that it did not **love**. What's up with that? Is it ignorance or is Australia simply the point man for the United States or Big Industry on all of these issues – an eager lap dog that goes out and does the Empire's bidding?

It is time that Australians found out. Why can the pro-health Australian people not bring the Australian government to heel? Is Australia just another one of those hollow democracies that parades around the World talking as if it were democratic when in fact it is all just a charade? Are certain government people in the pocket of Big

Industry or are they simply ignorant of basic nutritional and toxicological science and do not care what harm befalls the Australian people?<sup>11</sup>

I suggest writing anyone and everyone in the Australian government who is responsible for this travesty and demanding to know exactly **why** the Australian government representatives – particularly those in the Australian Codex Office – are not (1) supporting the removal of toxins and contaminants from our foods, (2) supporting the labeling of GM food products, and (3) supporting the **increase** of healthy vitamins and minerals in our diets at the precise time when we need them the most with modern diets that are full of toxins and already lacking in nutrient content that was present in our grandparents' day.

Before contacting your Member of Parliament or the Australian Codex Office, I would suggest that you read Bill Sardi's excellent article, "Here We Go Once Again," which deconstructs the Australian government position favoring lowering nutrient values in foods and supplements. You can cut and paste at will from his arguments (and mine) in order to make your own to your government officials.

### **Contact Information**

First of all, let me emphasize that I am only asking Australians to exercise their right as Australian citizens to petition their own government. Please do not threaten, cajole, or even be impolite. Janine Lewis, for example, is a smart, personable woman who, like the rest of us, will respond more positively to polite and well-thought out critiques than to threats or rants and rages. So, in your letter, e-mail or call, please be polite, make your point as succinctly as possible, and then bid them a good day. Don't get me wrong, what the Australian government is doing in health regulation is absolutely infuriating; but, as they say, "you'll catch more flies with honey than with vinegar."

**Australian Codex Office.** The Australian Codex Office resides within the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The main actors in its office appear to be Ms. Janine Lewis and Dr. Paul Brent.<sup>12</sup> There are others, but these two will do as they seem to currently attend the most Codex meetings. Their bosses would also be appropriate contacts, but I do not have their names at present. The contacts that I do have, though, are:

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**Parliament (Senate and House).** The Australian Government makes it very easy for you to contact your Senator and Representative. Simply go to [http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Guidelines\\_for\\_Contacting\\_Senators\\_and\\_Members/Address\\_labels\\_and\\_CSV\\_files](http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Guidelines_for_Contacting_Senators_and_Members/Address_labels_and_CSV_files) and you can find their current (as of July 2013) contact information. Properly set-up

address files are there so you can even print out sheets of labels on Avery labels. To search your particular Member of Parliament, try also: [http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators and Members/Members](http://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Members).

### **Solve the Mystery, Cure the Problem**

So, again, one asks why the disconnect between the Australian people and its own health ministers and bureaucrats? Why does the Australian government promote a sickness agenda at every turn? We would love to know. And we would love to change Australia's position, at Codex and at all World food forums everywhere.

For those Australians reading this article, inform yourself intelligently on this issue and then contact your government representatives and officials alerting them to this disconnect and your displeasure with it. Be polite but firm. Above all, be persistently vocal. After all, they are supposed to be your servants, not your masters. They should be doing your bidding, not some secret masters'.

If you are not Australian, then please still distribute and post this article where it will be widely seen and read by Australians. Urge them to take action.

Yes, there are other bad players at Codex. The United States and Canada are two of them. The arguments made here could – and do – apply just as equally against the U.S. and Canadian government positions. But this article has been written for Australians because Australia has been the driving force for pushing through the “dumbed down” Nutrient Reference Values for vitamins and minerals, which values are still in play at Codex.

Finally, in interacting with Australian officials, you might come across some important information about their motivation or their string-pullers that could help us understand why Australia acts the way it does at these Codex meetings. Any such information should be sent to me immediately, please (at [thenhf@thenhf.com](mailto:thenhf@thenhf.com)). You can never tell, what you found out might just be important enough to make a health difference for all of us.

1 Brownie S, “Predictors of Dietary and Health Supplement Use in Older Australians,” *Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 2006, Vol.23, No.3, at p.26, at <http://www.ajan.com.au/Vol23/Vol23.3-4.pdf>.

2 Euromonitor International, *Vitamins and Dietary Supplements in Australia*, March 2013, at p. 42, at <http://www.euromonitor.com/vitamins-and-dietary-supplements-in-australia/report>.

3 See Scott Tips' article “The Codex Committee on Food Labeling Meets in Quebec,” December 19, 2010, at <https://thenhf.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/The-Codex-Committee-on-Food-Labeling-Meets-In-Quebec.pdf>. After the GM-labeling guideline could not be agreed upon due to strong opposition, the two opposing camps compromised on an “each country can do what it wants” document.

4 See Scott Tips' article “The Death Star Arrives” at <https://thenhf.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Death-Star-Arrives-Ractopamine-revised.pdf>.

5 See NHF News Release “Codex Alimentarius Commission (28th Session) Rome, Italy NHF Update on Codex Proceedings Currently in Session,” July 5, 2005, at <http://www.thenhf.com>.

6 See NHF News Release “Codex Sends Melamine Back to the Drawing Board,” July 16, 2011, at <https://thenhf.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/NEWS-RELEASE-Codex->

[Sends-Melamine-Back-to-the-Drawing-Board.pdf](#). See also NHF News Release “Victory at Codex on the Melamine Issue,” April 03, 2012, at <https://thenhf.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Victory-At-Codex-on-the-Melamine-Issue.pdf>.

7 See Scott Tips’ article “Who Needs Healthy Food When We Can Eat Cash?” April 27, 2013, at <https://thenhf.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Who-Needs-Healthy-Food-When-We-Can-Eat-Cash.pdf>.

8 The Codex NRVs proposed by Australia are: Vitamin A (dropped from 800 mcg to 550 mcg); Vitamin D (5 mcg or 200 IUs); Vitamin E (8.8 mg); Vitamin K (60 mcg); Vitamin C (dropped from 60 mg to 45 mg); Thiamin (dropped from 1.4 to 1.2 mg); Riboflavin (dropped from 1.6 mg to 1.2 mg); Niacin (dropped from 18 mg to 15 mg); Vitamin B6 (dropped from 2 mg to 1.3 mg); Folate (**raised** to 400 mcg); Vitamin B12 (2.4 mcg); Pantothenate (5 mg); Biotin (30 mcg); Calcium (**raised** from 800 mg to 1000 mg); Magnesium (dropped from 300 mg to 240 mg); Iodine (150 mcg); Iron (14.3-43.1 mg depending upon bioavailability); Zinc (dropped from 15 mg to 3.6-11.9, depending upon bioavailability); Selenium (30 mcg); Phosphorus (700 mg); Chloride (2.3 grams); Copper (900 mcg); Fluoride (3.5 mg); Manganese (2.1 mg); Chromium (30 mcg); and Molybdenum (45 mcg).

9 See Scott Tips’ article “Codex Nutrition Committee Chooses Malnutrition,” December 14, 2012, at <https://thenhf.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/CCNFSDU-12-13-12-Article-.pdf>. The Australian delegate specifically told the author that she had arrived at the proposed value for Vitamin C (at 45 mg/day) because it was the “halfway point between no Vitamin C and tissue saturation,” essentially then, the halfway point between Death and Life! Yes, let’s just compromise to arrive at a “healthy” number!

10 Keene N, “Bad Habits Feeding Our Soaring Obesity Rate,” *The Telegraph* (*news.com.au*), July 18, 2012, at <http://www.news.com.au/national-news/nsw-act/bad-habits-feeding-our-soaring-obesity-rate/story-fndo4bst-1226428512035>.

11 See, e.g., Sepp Hasslberger’s well-done article, “Australia, New Zealand - Codex Alimentarius and Trans-Tasman Harmonization,” May 9, 2005, at <http://www.thenhf.com/article.php?id=1625>, which incorporates Eve Hillary’s excellent article, “Codex – The Sickness Industry’s Last Stand,” April 1, 2005.

12 For an example of Food Safety Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) and its thinking, see Brent P, “From the Desk of the Chief Scientist – Building Food Safety Across the Globe,” *FSANZ website*, March 2013, at <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/science/chiefscientistdesk/Pages/default.aspx>.