

THE NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS DIRECTORATE – OUR DEMISE AS AN INDUSTRY

Who Has Benefited, and Who Has Lost?

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For years, Marilyn Nelson, former President of Freedom for Choice in Health Care, and now Co-Executive Director of National Health Federation Canada, fought vigorously in favor of keeping our supplements as foods under the banner, "Foods Are Not Drugs." Thanks to Health Canada, our supplements, vitamins, minerals, herbs, homeopathic medicines, and probiotics are now drugs – drugs that require a Natural Health Product Number. Now, to acquire this NHP number, each manufacturer or company must apply for a site license that costs approximately \$1,000 per product. In 2006, the negative consequence for the consumer was the loss of many tried and true American natural-health products. Companies such as Jarrow, Herb Pharm, and Nutricology buckled at the expense of thousands of dollars to keep selling their products in Canada with no guarantee that they would get approved. Even though most of these products met all approved standards through years of testing and scientific studies at US Universities and laboratories, Health Canada felt it needed to keep you safe from them, at a price.

Through years of intimidation, abuse, harassment, threats and gun-drawn raids, natural-health companies have struggled to stay in business, cowing to the irrational whims and dictates of Health Canada. Many have gone under, unable to pay astronomical lawyer fees to mount a proper defense. To further weaken the industry's position, in 1997, the Canadian Health Food Association (CHFA), was hijacked after 30 years in Vancouver and moved to Toronto. The new President was a man with no experience in the industry. He did, however, have a background in public relations and a father who was a pharmacist. The writing was on the wall. Then, the next CHFA President worked for a company that had been bought by a German pharmaceutical company. To pull off such a takeover takes money, strategy, time, and the abuse of power. To add further insult to injury, these same people have created their own flourishing natural-health and consulting businesses. Follow the money!

If I buy a watch from you for \$100 and six years go by and I still do not have the watch, this is called fraud or extortion. This is what NHP site licenses are about. More politely, it is a make-work project for Health Canada, its underlings and overlords. According to some industry members, there is a company of former Health Canada employees who charge \$9,000 per product for the immediate granting of a site license and NHP number! There is more going on here than just cutting through bureaucratic red tape. It is time that this corruption and greed at the expense of a much-valued industry is exposed.

We are in this mess because powerful drug cartels benefit from sick people, not healthy people. There is a war on for your health; and if the pharmaceutical industry and our co-opted government have their way, you are the loser. What stands between them and the unhealthy consumer is the natural-health industry. Naturally, it has been the target for elimination for decades. A mixture of willingness to comply and naivety has



kept the industry on its knees for this time period. With the ramping up of the final takedown of the industry underway, through bills like C-36 and trade agreements like CETA, we are all on the threshold of tolerance.

So who has benefited? Large supplement companies such as Quest (sold to a German pharmaceutical company in 1997), Sisu, Natural Factors (Webber), Jamieson, and Nu Life. These companies have been around a long time, some over 35 years. Through buyouts by the corporate pharmaceutical industry, many of the products associated with these companies are now just synthetic vitamins and minerals. These large companies had their NHP site licenses granted immediately. The Byzantine-structured, multi-headed hydra known as Codex Alimentarius (incepted in 1963 by the World Health Organization and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations) will insure that these synthetic supplements are of such low dosages to be of no value to you at all. Did you know that in Germany, Norway, and Denmark you can only purchase 100 mg of Vitamin C by prescription for a cost of \$50.00?

Natural, raw, high-enzymatic vitamins and minerals could no longer be available by the end of 2011 under the new rules. Herbal combination products and food supplements like Royal Jelly, Algae, and Aloe Vera, classified as drugs, must comply with strict testing for each ingredient at the manufacturer's expense. Health Canada and the National Pharmacy Association know that these small companies will not be able to pony up. Thus, the product is eliminated forever.

There is no other industry more concerned with self-regulation than the natural-health industry. Indeed, its very founding is based on well-being. Is there anyone left out there who believes that the Canadian government is bending to these "international standards" working for years in secret, ramming through legislation against strong opposition, just to keep us safe?

Who has lost? It is the retailers who have been forced out of business and manufacturers without money to pay for site licenses. The biggest loser of all, though, is you, the Canadian consumer. You will simply not be able to get natural vitamins and minerals anymore. This has been a very devastating situation for our industry. Remember, we went through the same situation when the government brought out the DIN (Drug Identification Numbers). These numbers are still in effect and companies are paying \$1,000 per product each year *in addition to* the NHP licenses in Canada.

What can we do as an industry? Other countries, such as South Africa, New Zealand, and Chile, have fought back these same-styled laws and won. Here in Canada we must first understand what is being done under a mainstream-media blackout. Then, we must quickly wake up Canadians through alternative-media and public-service announcements by celebrities and