

FREE (Continued from p. 11)

health from toxic substances. in the name of good manufacturing practices, New Dietary Ingredients (NDIs and other such regulations. The FDA invited the supplement industry and the public to submit written comments by December 3, 2004 on the subject. These written comments in support of not so stringent standards were ignored.

Q: Shouldn't good manufacturing practices be required for food supplements?

A: Laws already on the books are sufficient to protect public health. The regulations about to be implemented are for the protection of the pharmaceutical companies and their subsidiaries from smaller competitors. FDA strategies also include data-mining to track adverse reactions to supplements using data from government agencies and private businesses, including personal information, but not requiring consent of the individuals involved.)

Q: Isn't adverse reaction reporting a good idea?

A: Adverse reaction reporting hasn't worked very well to protect the public from side-effects of pharmaceutical drugs because doctors and patients are discouraged from reporting unless they can prove that a drug or a vaccine is the only possible cause of the reaction. However, when attributing liver damage to a dietary supplement, the Centers for Disease Control overlook evidence of alcoholism and/or long-term use of analgesics known to cause liver damage.

Q: What does European law have to do with U.S. access to dietary supplements?

A: Under the name Codex Alimentarius, which translates to food code, committees have been meeting annually for years, drafting a set of

proposed regulations to harmonize the laws of other countries with those of Germany. Codex negotiations have reached the point where all it will take is one more meeting for them to vote restrictive regulations into international law, unless the Alliance for Natural Health lawsuit is successful.

Q: What is the Alliance for Natural Health lawsuit?

A: The Alliance For Natural Health is an organization in the UK, dedicated to access to dietary supplements. They filed a lawsuit against the European Vitamin Directive which will require the UK to harmonize its regulations with those of Germany including restrictions on ingredients, vitamin dosage restrictions, and prescription requirements for any dosage high enough to be effective.) Because this is a global issue the Alliance of Natural Health is also helping at grassroots level to activate and put into action individuals, organizations, health food stores i.e. to speak out against the move to harmonize dietary supplements while there is still this small window of opportunity.

Q: How can you be sure whether or not your trade association is representing your interests?

A: Check their board-members for potential conflicts of interest especially related to pharmaceutical companies. Do their actions match their words?

For more information:

See: <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/news/2004/NEW01130.html>

See: <http://www.fda.gov/ohrms/dockets/98fr/04/nm00001-v011.pdf>

See International Advocates for Health Freedom, www.iahf.com

See Alliance for Health Freedom, <http://www.alliance-for-natural-health.org/>.

What can you do:

Submit written comments to: <http://www.fda.gov> Letters in opposition can be sent from these two web sites: <http://www.stoptheftaa.org/> and <http://www.citizen.org/trade/cafta/> and www.citizen.org/trade/cafta/