

On Nutrition: by Helayne Waldman, Ed.D., N.E.

Uncertain Times for Essential Nutrients

A storm has been brewing in Europe over the continued use of the use of vitamin, mineral, herbal and other nutritional supplements and it threatens to blow across the Atlantic to our shores. According to the American College for Advancement in Medicine, dietary supplements have been locked in a David vs. Goliath fight for their lives. The focus of the battle? The United Nation's Codex Alimentarius, or in plain English, "food rules." But don't be daunted by the fancy Latin name. While its stated goal is simple -- to protect the food supply, to guard against irresponsible distribution of megavitamins and minerals, and to "harmonize" these activities across the European Union -- its consequences are far from benign.

Please understand. *This is not just about the EU.* It affects all of us, because the CAFTA treaty, due for a vote before the end of the year, obtains wording that virtually mirrors the Codex verbiage, and would bind the U.S. to follow the same guidelines.

Here's a sampling of those guidelines from Rima Laibow, M.D., who's been on the case for months (<http://codexblog.healthfreedomusa.org>). According to Dr. Laibow, the acceptance of "codex" means:

- All animal feed will be treated with antibiotics and growth hormone



To do otherwise will be against the law.

- Upper limits for pesticide use on crops will be reset to levels many times higher than those currently advocated by *pesticide lobbying groups*.
- Any and all foodstuffs can be genetically modified without consumer notification as such.
- Only synthetic forms of certain permitted nutrients will be available, and at ultra-low dosages. For example, it will be illegal to sell Vitamin C in tablets containing more than 300 mg. For context, consider the fact that many practitioners recommend 1000-4000 mg./day and Linus Pauling himself took 16,000.

It takes little more than a cursory glance to see that what is good for Monsanto, Archer Daniels Midland, Merck and Bayer is not the same as what's good for you and me.

A closer look at the supplement issue is revealing.

Nutritional supplements, like Vitamin C, Vitamin E, calcium, magnesium, selenium

and zinc are called *essential nutrients* because our body cannot function without them. They're required for everything from bone, heart, liver and immune health to memory, mood and mitochondrial function (mitochondria are the tiny energy factories inside each and every one of our cells) -- not to mention their role in the thousands of enzymatic reactions that occur in our bodies moment-by-moment, *and* their responsibility in protecting our cells from the over 10,000 free-radical hits they endure on a daily basis (estimate provided by Dr. Bruce Ames, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology at the University of California, Berkeley).

If we don't get the nutrients our cells, tissues and organs need, we risk degenerative disease, infirmity and cognitive decline. Here's one recent example of how nutrients protect our health -- there are thousands. Researchers from the multi-decade Harvard Nurse's Health Study (www.channing.harvard.edu/nhs), reported that women who took a multivitamin containing folic acid showed a 75 percent lower risk of colon cancer!

It goes without saying then, that when we get all of the nutrients that nature intended for us to function on full throttle, we lower our risk of degenerative disease and raise our chances of healthy aging. But how do we get those nutrients? Obtaining essential

nutrients from our food (the optimum choice) means that our crops need to be grown in soil that contains the minerals *it* needs so it can pass them on to our vegetables and fruits. Instead, our soil is sadly depleted, particularly in the essential minerals selenium and boron. What's more, our sources of meat, such as cattle, need to be fed *their* natural diets (pasture grasses instead of hormone and antibiotic-laden corn, soy, and discarded animal parts) so they can be healthy specimens, passing along their high quality protein and fat to us.

Finally, it means that we need to be consuming foods that are nutrient-rich, in order to maximize our chances of obtaining these essentials. Fat chance, considering our daily feast of processed meats, sodas, sugars, white flour and hydrogenated oils. No wonder the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture reports that most of us ingest *less than 70%* of the Recommended Dietary allowance for vitamins A, B complex, C, and the essential minerals calcium, magnesium and iron.

Are we sufficiently nutrient-deficient that we need to be supplementing with these essential nutrients? I'd say so,

and thousands of research studies and practitioners would back me up.

If there was ever a time to invest in your own freedom – that is, the freedom to choose a healthful lifestyle, rather than face a prolonged dependence on pharmaceutical drugs - this is it. The EU Codex and CAFTA are still embroiled in controversy, so the window of opportunity remains open. For the time being.

What can we, as individuals do to have an impact? If I've managed to convince you that your right to purchase essential nutrients, eat hormone free meat and pesticide-free vegetables goes to the very fiber of your well being, there are actions you can take. For starters, visit www.healthfreedomusa.org and www.alliance-natural-health.org for different perspectives and breaking developments.

Second, let your health care practitioner know about this issue, if he or she doesn't already. A practitioner's ability to select remedies of his or her choice is critical to the ability to practice effectively. Make sure this

basic truth is well understood.

Third, let your congressional representative know that you are opposed to any legislation that advocates that the U.S. "harmonizes with the European Codex." You may also wish to state your opposition to HR3156, which also effectively sabotages the ability to use supplements by barring the sale of any nutrient that *might* have once been associated with an "adverse event." Note that no similar adverse event reporting system is required for drugs.

It bears repeating: what's good for Merck, Eli Lilly and Bayer is not what's good for you and me. Let's not criminalize what keeps us alive and ticking. Let's not criminalize nature.

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