

News Release

Health Canada approves health claim for soy food

Consumption of protein-rich soy food proven to lower cholesterol levels

For immediate release

Guelph, ON, March 18, 2015 – Health Canada has approved a health claim linking the consumption of protein-rich soy food to lowering cholesterol levels.

The claim is based on scientific evidence that shows consumption of at least 25 grams of soy protein per day helps reduce cholesterol, which is a risk factor for heart disease. According to Statistics Canada data, 39 per cent of Canadians aged six to 79 years have unhealthy levels of total cholesterol.

“Soy has long been considered a healthy food option, but Health Canada’s acceptance of the science means that we can now include this information directly on packaging to help consumers make healthy food choices,” says Soy 20/20 CEO Jeff Schmalz.

“This decision by Health Canada opens up tremendous opportunity for growth in the Canadian soybean and soy food industries, both domestically and internationally,” he adds. “The versatility of soy – tofu, yogurts, cheeses, textured proteins, edamame – lends itself to endless uses for every lifestyle.”

According to the Soyfoods Association of North America, the soy food market in the United States grew from \$2.28 billion in 1999 to \$4.5 billion in 2013 with many new products coming to market after the health claim for soy was approved in that country in 1999. Brazil, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, and South Korea have also approved the soy health claim in their respective countries.

This made-in-Canada health claim is one more endorsement of Canadian-grown soybeans, which are sourced by Canadian manufacturers for multiple brands.

It is the result of years of effort by Soy 20/20 and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) on behalf of the soy industry, as well as Guelph-based Nutrasource, a contract research organization and consulting firm specializing in regulatory and scientific affairs. Their Regulated Products Division critically reviewed the large body of scientific literature and prepared the food health claim submission according to guidelines established by Health Canada.

“Health Canada’s process for accepting new therapeutic and disease risk reduction health claims for foods is among the most extensive and rigorous in the world. Our scientific and regulatory affairs team worked with Soy 20/20 and AAFC to examine the literature through the regulator’s lens and prepare a strong dossier for consideration,” says William Rowe, President and CEO of Nutrasource. “The acceptance of this health claim is a testament to the strength of the scientific evidence supporting the cholesterol-lowering effect of soy, which can now be communicated effectively to Canadians.”

More information about the claim and how it can be used on soy food products is available from Health Canada at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/label-etiquet/claims-reclam/assess-evalu/soy-protein-cholesterol-eng.php> or by contacting Soy 20/20.

Soy 20/20 brings together government, academic and industry partners to stimulate and seize new global bioscience opportunities for Canadian soybeans. Soy 20/20 is supported by Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative and by Grain Farmers of Ontario. Visit www.soy2020.ca for more information.

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