

ISDI reactive statement

WHO Europe reports on Baby Food

Brussels, 5 August 2019

ISDI notes the release of the WHO Europe Reports on commercial complementary foods for infants and young children in Europe: 'Ending inappropriate promotion of commercially available complementary foods for infant and young children between 6 and 36 months of age' and 'Commercial foods for infants and young children in the WHO European Region'.

It is essential that infants and young children receive the necessary nutritious foods to help set them on a path to a long, healthy life. When transitioning to the family diet, there is increased need for nutritionally adequate and safe complementary foods that provide the energy and essential nutrients for optimal growth and development.

ISDI, and the manufacturers it represents, are committed to providing the best nutrition to infants and young children. For more than a century, the infant and young child nutrition industry has supported proper nutrition during this crucial period of life through science-based, nutritious products.

The WHO Europe report refers to Recommendation 3 of the WHO Guidance on inappropriate promotion of foods for infants and young children stating 'foods for infants and young children that are not products that function as breast-milk substitutes should be promoted only if they meet all the relevant national, regional and global standards for composition, safety, quality and nutrient levels and are in line with national dietary guidelines. Nutrient profile models should be developed and utilized to guide decisions on which foods are inappropriate for promotion. Relevant Codex standards and guidelines should be updated and additional guidelines developed in line with WHO's guidance to ensure that products are appropriate for infants and young children, with a particular focus on avoiding the addition of free sugars and salt'. Recommendation 3 allows to place on the market commercially complementary foods if they comply with existing Codex and national regulations.

ISDI strongly supports a strict legislative framework, which regulates appropriate Complementary foods allowing high quality and nutritious products while safeguarding innovation to appropriately address babies and caregivers' needs.

Note to the editors:

ISDI is the leading international expert association on special dietary foods, including foods specifically designed for infants and young children. ISDI members are national and international associations that are active in this sector from more than 20 countries over 6 continents. Our members manufacture and market foods that are formulated, in accordance with applicable Codex Alimentarius standards, to meet the compositional criteria, quality requirement and nutritional needs of infants and young children.

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