National Nutritional Foods Association
125 East Baker Street, Suite 230
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
Telephone: 714/966-6632
Fax: 714/641-7005

NNFA Probiotic Labeling Standard March, 1989
(Probiotics: Acidophilus-Like Products)

1. Introduction

The Committee for Product and Label Integrity of the National Nutritional Foods Association (NNFA) has adopted this labeling standard for probiotics to assure retailers and consumers of the quality of the products sold in our stores. The standard requires that distributors of probiotics provide information on the label giving the quantity and identity of living microorganisms present, a suggested final date for use (or *"BETTER IF USED BEFORE"* date), a statement of storage requirements and a listing of additional ingredients.

2.0 Viable Cell Count

2.1 The label shall contain a statement of the minimum number of viable cells or colony-forming units (CFUs) per unit of measure such as capsule, tablespoon, gram, etc.

2.2 In mixed cultures the label statement shall include minimum numbers for each species present over the guaranteed shelflife of the product. The method used for this enumeration shall preferably be a published method; if not

published it shall be made available to NNFA upon request.

2.2.1 If a manufacturer wants to protect a proprietary mixture, a label statement guaranteeing potency of all species to a final date will be acceptable, provided that actual numbers for each species are submitted to NNFA when required for testing purposes. All species shall be listed on the label in decreasing order of numbers present.

2.3 An expiration date or a suggested final date for use shall be provided on the label. The manufacturer/distributor shall assure minimum viable cell numbers for each species present up to this date when proper storage conditions are provided.

2.4 Laboratory data of cell numbers and species for each lot of product shall be maintained by the manufacturer/distributor and shall be made available on request.

3.0 Species Identification

3.1 Microorganisms included in any probiotic shall be identified to the genus and species level, using a method of identification which conforms to Bergey's Manual of Systematic Bacteriology. Such terms as "lactic acid bacteria" or lactobacillus species" shall not be used.

3.2 The manufacturer shall certify the absence of pathogens in 500 mg. of product, a total yeast and mold count of not more than 100 per gram and a maximum non-claimed bacterial count of 10,000/gram.

3.3 The long-term constancy of the culture organism(s) shall be guaranteed to the distributor by the actual manufacturer of the material. Any mutation or other change in the strain must be detected and reported. Distributors or private labelers shall require proof of genetic constancy at least annually from their suppliers.

4.0 Storage Requirements

4.1 The required storage conditions for reaching the guaranteed shelf-life shall be listed on the label.

4.2 If refrigeration is not required, a statement to that effect should be present on the label.

5.0 Other Ingredients

Additional materials present, such as lactose, milk powder,, starch or modified starches, etc., shall be included on the label in descending order of quantity present. A dried product shall contain no more than 7% moisture.

Adopted by the Board of Directors, National Nutritional Foods Association, July 13, 1989.