

News Release

Communicating the human health benefits of soy protein

Health claim provides marketing opportunities for Canadian soy food

Guelph ON – A Health Canada-approved health claim linking the consumption of protein-rich soy food to lowering cholesterol levels is central to new marketing opportunities for soy food products in Canada.

Oilseed Innovation Partners (OIP – formerly Soy 20/20) led the submission of the claim, which is based on scientific evidence that shows consumption of at least 25 grams of soy protein per day helps reduce cholesterol, 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. The health claim was approved in 2015.

Now, the organization has taken the lead in helping Canadian soy food companies communicate those health benefits to consumers by developing a word mark logo that can be added to product packaging alongside the health claim statement. This was part of larger project funded through *Growing Forward 2* to create consumer awareness of soy food product use and benefits.

“The versatility of soy – tofu, yogurts, cheeses, textured proteins, edamame – lends itself to endless uses for every lifestyle,” says OIP CEO Jeff Schmalz. “The word mark we’ve developed helps ensure we’re consistently communicating the benefits of consuming 25 grams of soy protein daily.”

As part of the project, four major soy packaged goods brands – WhiteWave Foods, Sunrise Soya Foods, Earth’s Own and Hain Celestial – have added the Health Claim statement and the word mark logo to numerous products in their offering.

“Numerous soy food and beverage products now carry the soy word mark and the health claim statement,” explains OIP Director of Marketing Nancy Cogger. “This generates millions of consumer impressions annually.”

OIP also developed videos featuring soy recipes and health claim information, as well as updating the Soy for Life website and running a four month digital media campaign to grow awareness of the health claim.

“Our goal is to promote the health claim along with the benefits and versatility of soy. The videos are a great resource for health and nutrition specialists, as well as for their patients,” adds Cogger. “Our digital marketing banners, which are live, don’t focus on the health claim specifically, but they’ve resulted in the greatest amount of traffic to the health claim page on the Soy for Life website.”

The digital marketing campaign has generated a significant growth in traffic to the www.soyforlife.ca website compared to a year ago when the site traffic was very low.

“Soy has long been considered a healthy food option, but Health Canada’s acceptance of the science has given us tools to help consumers make healthy food choices,” says Schmalz. “This directly benefits Canadian manufacturers of soy food products as well as Canadian soybean growers.

“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.

Oilseed Innovation Partners is funded by *Growing Forward 2*, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative. Visit www.oilseedinnovationpartners.ca.

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