

CHINA UPDATES

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USCHPA Signs Magazine Deal with CCPIT

On April 2, 2013, the US – China Health Products Association signed an agreement with the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT). This agreement is a partnership between CCPIT's "Foreign Trade Magazine" division and the association to publish a magazine in China focusing on dietary supplements and other natural health products and services. The association's executive director Jeff Crowther is pictured above shaking hands with CCPIT's Foreign Trade Magazine Vice

President Li Yinghong. This is a huge win for the association, its members and non-members. The new magazine entitled, "膳食与健康", which roughly translates as "Nutrition and Health", will be published in both English and Chinese. However, its main focus will be Chinese readers. The magazine will be in electronic format going out to over sixty thousand readers in Mainland China. It will also have a smaller print run of around five thousand that will go out to some key officials and industry leaders. It is expected that readership will grow quickly once publishing begins.

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The association is now actively seeking out natural health product companies to submit articles for consideration in the first issue, which is scheduled for release in June 2013.

The association is also looking for companies that would like to advertise in the magazine to help support its mission. As the association is a non-profit organization, the association is looking to break even on publishing each issue and thus ad rates are very reasonable.

The magazine will be the ideal place for companies to launch new ingredients and products, introduce services and highlight expos, conferences or training sessions. The magazine's reader base is made up of government officials, industry leaders and consumers, so all articles will be written in layman's terms, so as to be accessible and interesting to all. The main point of the magazine is to spread education and promote the development of the dietary supplement and overall natural health product industry.

If you are interested in getting involved, please contact the association at news@uschinahpa.org (Source: USCHPA)

SFDA Becomes CFDA

On March 14, 2013, China's State Food and Drug Administration (SFDA) transformed into a new stronger agency complete with a new name, "China Food and Drug Administration" (CFDA).

For foreign producers of dietary supplements, many are wondering will CFDA's new role complicate matters when it comes to exporting dietary supplements to China. Chris Hickey director of US FDA's office in Beijing was quoted as saying, he doesn't see CFDA's role changing much in regard to imports and exports. That role will still remain mostly with China's Administration for Quality Supervision Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ). The association has spoken with representatives in customs, who also stated that CFDA's focus will be to strengthen the domestic market's food safety and not to oversee food imports, which will remain the responsibility of AQSIQ.

With the name change, CFDA will be elevated to a ministry level agency and consolidate oversight of food safety. Previously there were thirteen agencies involved in food safety, which is seen as one of the main reasons for government difficulties in safeguarding the public. There will now be only three agencies covering food safety, CFDA, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture.

New Name New Regulations?

Since 2009, SFDA has had draft regulations poised to reform the dietary supplement industry. However, these regulations never got off the ground. Since 2006, both foreign and domestic organizations and industry players have been working to develop the industry and move it towards a notification-based system similar to that of the United States' "Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act" (DSHEA).

US – China HPA together with the U.S. International Trade Administration has been leading the government-to-government level exchange while industry has been encouraging change from the grass roots.

At present, the regulatory system is extremely difficult to deal with for all involved. Registrations require large investments of both capital and time. A typical registration for a single SKU can soar over fifty thousand dollars and take upwards of two to three years to complete. This system has done nothing to safe guard consumers in fact it has created a robust unregulated black market. Chinese consumer demand for healthy products in particularly dietary supplements has grown together with the country's GDP. However, with the current regulations, many consumers turned to the black market to fill the void.

With the creation of the CFDA, it is likely that dietary supplement regulations will also be getting a much-needed overhaul. USCHPA is hopeful that CFDA will take this opportunity to restructure the current regulatory system to a more transparent and manageable one based on notification, which will benefit regulators, industry and most importantly consumers. *(Source: USCHPA).*



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