

alPHa RESOLUTION A09-4

TITLE: Trans Fat in the Food Supply

SPONSOR: Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

WHEREAS The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that people consume no more than 1% of total calories from trans fat or approximately 2 grams trans fat per day in 2000 calories¹;

WHEREAS The average consumption in Canada is 4.9grams per day, two-and-a-half times the WHO limit, and some boys (5%) aged 6-18 consume 11.6 grams per day²; and

WHEREAS Studies have found that for every two per cent of calories coming from trans fat, the risk of coronary artery disease increases by 23 per cent^{3,4}; and

WHEREAS the leading cause of death in Ontario is cardiovascular disease⁵; and

WHEREAS In 2006 Federal Trans Fat Task Force provided recommendations to the federal Minister of Health on how to reduce trans fat intake in Canadians' diet (Appendix B); and

WHEREAS On June 20, 2007, the Federal Minister of Health gave food industry two years to achieve the trans fat limits specified by the Federal Task force; and

WHEREAS In 2006 and 2007 several Ontario Boards of Health, as well as the Association of Local Public Health Agencies endorsed the recommendations of the Trans Fat Task Force (2006) and urged the Federal Government to regulate trans fat in the Canadian food supply; and

WHEREAS Health Canada's February 2009 survey of trans fat levels in the Canadian food supply⁶ shows continued high levels of trans fat in noodles, crackers, cookies, donuts, pies and other snacks and baked goods. Of the 517 grocery and fast food products examined, nearly one-quarter (117) still fail to meet the limits accepted by former Federal Minister of Health, Tony Clement; and

WHEREAS Some Canadian provinces and municipalities (Appendix A) have recently taken steps to regulate the level of trans fat in the food supply;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) urge the Federal Minister of Health to take immediate steps to amend the Food and Drug Act or regulations to restrict the levels of synthetic trans fat permitted in foods to the limits recommended by the Federal Trans Fat Task Force (2006);

AND FURTHER that alPHa urge the Government of Ontario to take immediate steps towards regulating trans fat levels in foods and beverages available in Ontario food premises, including, but not limited to, supporting Bill 156 Healthy Decisions for Healthy Foods (See Appendix A),

AND FURTHER that alPHa urge the Government of Ontario to, in keeping with recent measures taken by the Government of British Columbia, take immediate steps towards regulating trans fat levels in foods and beverages available in Ontario foodservice operations;

AND FURTHER that alPHa urge the Government of Ontario to expand the trans fat regulations of Bill 8 Healthy Foods for Healthy Schools to include all foods available or provided (not just sold) by Ontario schools;

AND FURTHER that alPHa urge Ontario boards of health and municipalities to consider taking actions to regulate trans fat served in local food premises such as has been done in the cities of Calgary, Montreal and Toronto;

AND FURTHER that alPHa urge the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, and all local boards of health to take actions towards regulating trans fat in the food supply within their jurisdiction.

ACTION FROM CONFERENCE:

Moved: J. Pfaff (Simcoe Muskoka)

Seconded: G. Chartrand (Porcupine)

Resolution CARRIED

References:

¹ Health Canada. TRANSforming the Food Supply. Report of the Trans Fat Task Force Submitted to the Minister of Health. June 2006.

²Health Canada. TRANSforming the Food Supply. Report of the Trans Fat Task Force Submitted to the Minister of Health. June 2006

³Mozaffarian D., Katan MB., Ascherio A., Stampfer, MJ., Willet WC. Trans Fatty Acids and Cardiovascular Disease. New Eng J Med 2006;354:1601-13.

⁴ Health Canada. TRANSforming the Food Supply. Report of the Trans Fat Task Force Submitted to the Minister of Health. June 2006.

⁵ Ontario MOHLTC. Mortality Data 2000-2004, Provincial Health Planning Database (PHPDB) Extracted July, 2007.

⁶ Health Canada. February, 2009. Accessed Online March 24, 2009 at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/gras-trans-fats/tfa-age3-eng.php#results>.