



BRAZILIAN SUGARCANE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

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Global Alliance *for* Sugar Trade Reform and Liberalisation

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Global Sugar Alliance clears record on India Subsidy and Health Misinformation

MEDIA RELEASE

Amid the 5th consecutive year of a global surplus and challenging world market conditions at below the cost of production in their member countries, The Global Sugar Alliance members from the major sugar exporting nations met together in Sao Paulo, Brazil earlier yesterday (23 September) to tackle this and a multitude of issues impacting on the global sugar industry currently.

The group is concerned that the current world market prices have overreacted to the recent announcements by the Indian government that they will be supporting their local sugar industry. At this point, the Indian government has not yet made any payments to their industry. Consequently, exports will only occur if commercially viable. The market will need to move to India export prices before we see any of this sugar appear on the market. Chairman of the Thailand Sugar Millers Corporation, Mr Vibul Panitvong said, "The Global Sugar Alliance is determined to vigorously challenge any export subsidies on sugar from India or other countries."

The group has also united to counter the claims springing up in every corner of the globe of recent times on the negative impact and singling out of sugar as the main cause of problems in people's diet. The group has described the push as uninformed at best, and strongly backs that the focus needs to be brought back to science – which still firmly supports a balanced diet and exercise regime.

"The Global Sugar Alliance joins the many leading nutrition scientists and health groups in saying that singling out one component of our diet is unhelpful and will not solve the problem," says Elizabeth Farina, President of UNICA, attending the talks on behalf of the world's largest sugar exporting nation, Brazil.

But is the alliance protecting the market for sugar for their members by suggesting that managing dietary intakes is not important? A resounding no is the answer to that very good question. While consumption is growing in developing countries with population growth across Asia and the Middle East, in many developed markets like Australia, consumption of sugar is actually on the decline. Warren Males, attending the talks on behalf of the Australia, shared that "In Australia, there has been a drop in consumption of 23% since 1980 while over the same period obesity has doubled and diabetes has tripled. It is no wonder then, that nutritionists, doctors and even the head of Diabetes Australia have come out strongly saying that this does not support a correlation between sugar and obesity on Australian soils."

“Similarly, consumption of added sugar in Canada has been declining over the past 20 years,” said Sandra Marsden, President of the Canadian Sugar Institute. “In fact, worldwide consumption of sugar has been either declining or stable according to a recent peer reviewed publication.”¹

Sugar is a carbohydrate. It is a natural sweetener grown by farmers in regional areas, and used within the dietary guidelines, is a source of energy within a healthy diet. Sugar is no different than other calorie sources in the diet – it is about energy balance, in other words energy-in from foods and, energy out through physical activity.

The group encourages a science-based discussion about sugar in relation to diet and health, focussing on balanced dietary patterns with strong input from public health and nutrition experts. The single focus on sugar as responsible for today’s health issues only serves to detract from comprehensive and integrated global solutions to obesity and related health problems. The global sugar industry needs to unite to defend our naturally produced product and will build a closer collaboration between members to promote an evidence based discussion.

¹Nutr Res Rev. 2014 Dec; 27(2):330-45.

Websites for science-based factual sugar nutrition information

www.sugar.ca

www.srasanz.org

www.wsro.org

www.campanhadoceequilibrio.com.br

Further information

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The Global Alliance for Sugar Trade Reform and Liberalization brings together 85% of the world cane sugar exports. Global Sugar Alliance members (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, India, Guatemala, South Africa and Thailand) are active advocates to improve the world sugar trading environment. Members work to ensure fair and equal treatment of sugar and ethanol in WTO negotiations on agriculture on governments to remove restrictions that prevent fair access to competitively produced sugar and ethanol and www.globalsugaralliance.org

UNICA is the leading trade association for the sugarcane industry in Brazil, representing 60 percent of the country’s sugarcane production and processing. UNICA’s priorities include serving as a source for credible information and analysis about the efficiency and sustainability of sugarcane products, particularly ethanol. The association works to encourage the continuous advancement of sustainable practices throughout the sugarcane industry and to promote sugarcane-based biofuels as a clean, reliable and renewable alternative to fossil fuels (www.unica.com.br).