

## PRESS RELEASE

Monday, 11 December 2017

**IPA<sup>1</sup> considers that the development of guidelines and a harmonized framework for probiotics is necessary to ensure and sustain quality probiotic products on a global scale.** *IPA activity took place at the 2017 session of the Codex committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU), which was attended by Government representatives, observers and experts from 66 Member States and 41 international organizations, in Berlin from 4 to 8 December 2017.*

The current FAO/WHO expert panel definition for probiotics from 2001/2002 is the accepted reference, not only for the probiotic community, but also for the scientific and regulatory communities since its inception. However, it only provides a very general guidance for the recognition of the health benefit and consumer demand for probiotic foods, in a world where a global regulatory landscape is not harmonized. Due to the technological and scientific advances within the probiotic industry since the FAO/WHO work, the International Probiotics Association (IPA and IPA Europe) considers that we are now at a crossroads and a broader scope is required to include these advancements into new guidelines.

On Wednesday evening, 6 December, during the CCNFSDU, the International Probiotics Association introduced the proposal to initiate a dedicated New Work on Harmonized Probiotic Guidelines for Use in Foods and Dietary Supplements. The proposal was supported by Argentina, who requested to take the lead on the activities and committed to preparing a structured document on the content and scope of the New Work on Probiotics for the next CCNFSDU meeting next year. The IPA delegation was successful in obtaining a positive reaction to this proposal from many national delegations, herewith securing the initiation of this New Work on probiotics.

As the activities within Codex are strictly regulated, this work will be long term, but we consider it to be an essential part in the process of harmonization of the probiotic framework. It will provide essential requirements and specifications for probiotics, will inform the consumers and will ensure fair practices in food trade with the elaboration of the Codex definition and the possible development of a Standard at the Codex level.

**Rosanna Pecere**

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<sup>1</sup> IPA Europe is the European chapter of IPA, the International Probiotics Association; it was established in Brussels in 2015. The members of IPA Europe are Companies directly engaged in the manufacture of probiotic cultures or probiotic foods, supplements, nutritionals or therapeutic products: BioGaia, Chr. Hansen, Danone, DuPont, IPA, Lallemand, Lesaffre, Probi and Yakult.