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EHPM Supports Internet Sales Crackdown

EHPM is concerned with the [results](#) published on Friday by the European Commission of the first coordinated official controls of Internet marketed foods carried out by 25 EU Member States, along with Switzerland and Norway. The results highlighted numerous cases of food supplement products being sold over the internet carrying fraudulent and, at times, medicinal claims.

Shortly after the current Commission took office, EHPM communicated in March 2015 a list of key policy priorities that needed to be addressed, and the risks associated with internet sales was strongly emphasised. EHPM has also prepared guidance for members companies selling over the internet and our national associations have also been active in providing advice to companies on how to use this channel of distribution correctly. Our UK Association, the Health Food Manufacturers' Association (HFMA) has been particularly proactive in this regard by making the UK authorities aware of illegal products being offered for sale and our Italian association FEDERSALUS has also issued [guidance](#) to consumers on how to shop online safely.

EHPM has also been active in bringing the risks associated with internet sales to the attention of MEPs and EU regulators. A European Parliament workshop co-organised by EHPM and Belgian MEP Marc Tarabella on 10 December 2014 saw a [presentation](#) from Dr Philippe Mortier from the Belgian authorities on a system developed by Belgium to 'police' the internet sales market. Belgium has been one of the most active Member States in tackling this issue.

We welcome the Commission's efforts to act as a coordinating point for a crackdown by national authorities. Up to now, the primary focus has been on products being sold into the EU from third countries but the Commission's report reveals a worrying growth in EU-origin products. Any EU companies placing fraudulent products on the market are not only endangering the health of consumers, they are also damaging the reputations of law abiding companies active in the sector.

EHPM Chair Michel Horn responded to the publication of the Commission report stating, "We encourage the Commission and national authorities to crack down strongly on any company using the internet to sell products with fraudulent claims and/or potentially dangerous ingredients."

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For Further Information

Michel Horn EHPM Chair Email: m.horn@ortis.com GSM: +32 475265710	Patrick Ahern EHPM Director General Email: p.ahern@ehpm.org Tel: +32 721 64 95 GSM: +32 470 66 69 26
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