

# UNPA

UTAH NATURAL  
PRODUCTS ALLIANCE

## Statement of Utah Natural Products Alliance Office of Dietary Supplements, National Institutes of Health 2004-2009 Strategic Plan Public Meeting May 20, 2005

Utah Natural Products Alliance (UNPA) very much appreciates the opportunity to provide its views as to new opportunities and emerging needs for possible action by the Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS). UNP A commends the ODS and its leadership for its willingness to listen to and consider the views of its stakeholders on a regular and on-going basis. .

ODS carries a crucial mission given it by the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994 (DSHEA). Its two guiding mandates are set for in DSHEA. First, ODS is to "explore more fully the potential role of dietary supplements as a significant part of the efforts of the United States to improve health care..." And second, ODS is to "promote scientific study of the benefits of supplements in maintaining health and preventing chronic disease and other health-related conditions....."

UNP A views the role and work of ODS as vital to the interests of the American public. We have regularly supported expansion of funding for ODS activities and will continue to do so. We believe that high quality scientific research is a vital underpinning to good health care and quality products.

We would like to share the following comments and suggestions on how we believe the ODS can build on the solid foundation of activities and achievements it has built.

First, UNP A commends the excellent work ODS has been supporting to speed up the development and dissemination of validated analytical methods and reference materials for botanicals and other dietary supplements. We share the view of ODS that precise, accurate and reliable analytical methods and reference materials are an essential underpinning to successful implementation of Good Manufacturing Practices standards soon to be promulgated by the Food and Drug Administration. UNP A believes that this activity should continue be a top priority of ODS and urges that funding dedicated to it be at least doubled in the coming year and beyond. While considerable progress has been made since ODS began its support, much work remains both in development and dissemination of methods and in training of lab professionals.

Second, UNP A urges that ODS increase its support of research into the potential health benefits of several specific categories of dietary supplements. There is great potential in work being done on the relationship between fish oils and other dietary supplements in combating anti-inflammatory diseases. This also applies to work being done on the potential for selected botanicals to reverse the development of insulin resistance, the key pathophysiologic feature of metabolic syndrome. Given the obesity epidemic we face, expansion of this area of research is clearly warranted. And UNP A strongly supports continuation and expansion of crucial work being supported by ODS on the health benefits of natural products such as black cohosh and Traditional Chinese Medicine on the health of women as they age:

Third, UNP A believes that ODS should substantially expand its support for research into herb-drug interactions. ODS, NCCAM and other ICs at NIH are supporting important work in this area and recent reports of this research highlights the need for increased focus and attention to the topic. Improved dissemination of results of this research to the public, health professionals and other interested parties is also needed.

Fourth, UNP A believes that ODS should continue and expand its outreach to industry stakeholders to share information, gather ideas and assure better coordination of privately and publicly funded research. Today's meeting is an excellent starting point for such an expanded outreach effort.

Finally, believes that consideration should be given to providing ODS with independent grant making authority. This has proven a great benefit to the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) and would provide additional capacity, flexibility and autonomy to ODS in carrying out its public mandate. .

UNP A again thanks ODS and its leadership for this opportunity to share our views today. We look forward to continuing to work with ODS and the other stakeholders here today on these and other issues important to its mission and our shared commitment to the promotion of good health for all Americans