



EUROPEAN DAIRY ASSOCIATION
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PRESS RELEASE

New Studies provide further support that there is no evidence of negative health effects from the consumption of *trans* fatty acids (TFA) naturally occurring in dairy products

Conclusions of last month's European Dairy Association's TFA policy conference confirmed by results of human studies*

Brussels, 14 March 2008 – *The two first human intervention studies designed for specifically comparing different TFA sources provide no scientific evidence that consumption of naturally occurring TFA has a negative impact on health. The results have been published in the most recent issue of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition (AJCN) together with a commentary of leading scientists in the field which conclude that the remaining public health issue is the reduction of industrially produced TFA. EDA is pleased that this significant scientific research confirms the main conclusion of its conference held earlier this year in Brussels, namely that naturally occurring TFA poses no health concerns to consumers, and therefore states that dairy TFA should not be considered for labelling or nutrient profiling for claims.*

New Studies

Previous studies have indicated that the consumption of industrially produced TFA increases the risk for CVD. Whether this risk also occurs in the case of consuming naturally occurring TFA, was until recently not clearly established.

The results of the TRANSFACT study by Chardigny, Destailats et al., which had been presented during EDA's TFA policy conference, have now been published in AJCN. The main conclusions are that TFA from dairy fat have a different impact on various CVD risk markers than industrially produced TFA. Results suggest that the HDL lowering effect of TFA is specific to industrially produced TFA. Further results indicated a different response to TFA between men and women; a finding which requires further investigation. The authors concluded that there is no scientific evidence that dairy TFA have a negative effect on human health. The scientists and policy-makers debating at the EDA TFA policy conference last month reached the same conclusion.

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The study of Motard-Bélanger et al. published in the same issue also compared the effects of intakes of ruminant and industrially produced TFA on CVD risk factors and found the same results. The intake of industrially produced TFA decreased levels of HDL cholesterol and increased levels of LDL cholesterol, thereby leading to an enhanced risk of CVD. In contrast to that, intakes of ruminant TFA well above the upper limit of current human consumption had neutral effects on CVD risk factors. The authors concluded that the current intake of ruminant TFA in the population does not pose any CVD risk.

An accompanying editorial by Willett and Mozafarian** from Harvard University points out that the critical public health question remains the identification of ways to reduce the intake of industrial TFA in a healthful and safe manner. As such, they insist on continued efforts to eliminate consumption of industrially produced TFA worldwide.

EDA Reaction

Joop Kleibeuker, EDA's Secretary General, is pleased that the positive outcome of the TRANSFACT study is now confirmed by another peer-reviewed publication: *'EDA more than welcomes the scientific evidence that dairy TFA are not harmful. The results of the two studies are in line with the conclusions of our TFA policy conference last month. Clearly, these studies found real differences between naturally occurring and industrially produced TFA. There are no negative effects on relevant CVD risk markers from dairy TFA consumed in the diet. This makes us confident to state that dairy TFA should not be taken into consideration for labelling or nutrient profiling for claims to avoid confusing the consumer and that consumption of dairy products should be promoted for their significant contribution to the nutrient supply such as high quality protein and several key minerals and vitamins.'*

Notes to editors

* Chardigny J.-M., Destailats F., et al. Do trans fatty acids from industrially produced sources and from natural sources have the same effect on cardiovascular disease risk factors in healthy subjects? Results of the *trans* Fatty Acids Collaboration (TRANSFACT) study. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 2008;87:558-566.

Motard-Bélanger A., Charest A., Grenier G., et al. Study of the effect of *trans* fatty acids from ruminants on blood lipids and other risk factors for cardiovascular disease. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 2008;87:593-599.

** Willet W., Mozafarian D. Ruminant or industrial sources of *trans* fatty acids: public health issue or food label skirmish? *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 2008;87:515-516.

About EDA

The European Dairy Association represents the interests of dairy processors in the European Union. The membership of the EDA consists of the national trade associations for dairy processors in each EU Member State.

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