

MEDIA RELEASE

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NATURAL HEALTH INDUSTRY HAILS BILL'S PROGRESS TOWARDS BECOMING LAW

New Zealand's natural health sector has hailed the Ministry of Health's announcement that the Natural Health and Supplementary Products Bill will progress to its third reading later this year and most likely come into force in 2016.

The news was announced by Ministry officials at industry umbrella group Natural Products NZ (NPNZ)'s annual summit. Alison Quesnel, NPNZ Executive Director, says its members welcome the new legislation because it will better protect consumers and support exports. NPNZ represents New Zealand's natural products, functional foods, complementary medicines, cosmeceuticals and nutraceuticals industries.

Once the Bill – which has been nearly two decades in the making - becomes law, the Natural Health and Supplementary Products Bill will regulate the manufacturing and selling of natural health products in this country. It will strengthen regulation around which ingredients and health benefit claims will be permitted / not permitted, and what product information must be provided.

"It is an important piece of legislation, which we believe will benefit consumers, the natural health and supplementary products industry and New Zealand as a whole," says Ms Quesnel.

The new regulation is timely due to consumers' growing demand for alternative options to maintain health and assist disease prevention.

Recent research showed that the natural health sector contributed \$1.4 billion per annum to New Zealand's economy – a 40 per cent growth since the last sector survey was conducted in 2008.

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“Local and global consumer demand is accelerating so New Zealand therefore needs a modern regulatory environment that recognises consumers’ right to information about natural health products and their functions, and the right to access products that are safe and effective,” says Ms Quesnel.

The new regulations will do this by providing all parties with a higher level of assurance that the natural health and supplementary products available here are safe, approved, effective and contain what is stated on the label.

Increased transparency means that consumers will also be able to find out more about the products they are buying and to therefore become better informed about how best to use them.

“The new regulations will make it far more difficult for questionable products to be marketed and sold here we are greatly looking forward to this legislation coming into force next year,” says Ms Quesnel.

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Natural Products New Zealand (NPNZ) is a national industry organisation representing this country’s natural products, functional foods, complementary medicines, cosmeceuticals and nutraceuticals industries within New Zealand and internationally.

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