



January 6, 2022

Dear CRN Colleagues & Friends,

**Happy New Year!** As we “call a wrap” on 2021, it’s worth reflecting on what the Council for Responsible Nutrition (CRN) has accomplished on your behalf in the final three months of the year. Each quarter, I have updated you on our efforts during the preceding three months, and our Q4 was busier, and just as productive, as ever.

As I observe other associations, I’m struck that some are full of bluster and puffery, but don’t have a lot that’s tangible to show for it. Others seem to be mostly an extension of their staff’s interests and priorities without providing the rank-and-file membership the ability to shape and direct policy and action. CRN is neither.

**CRN members are proactively shaping the industry they want.** Our fourth quarter activities aptly demonstrate both our ongoing commitment to advancing the industry with real solutions and strategies for success, and our processes and commitment for assuring all members have input into our initiatives and our policy decisions.

Once again, we ask:

**“What has your trade association done for its members lately?”**

*Here is a summary of our fourth quarter achievements:*

### **Survey says...**

CRN announced the results of its yearly [Consumer Survey on Dietary Supplements](#), revealing a new high-water mark for supplement usage:

- 80% (or four out of five) Americans say they have used a dietary supplement in the past year.
- 50% of supplement users reported a change to their supplement routine since the COVID-19 pandemic started.
- Among non-users, 44% say the primary reason for not taking dietary supplements is that they don’t feel a need.

The entire survey is [available for purchase](#) too.

— MORE —

## **Just what the doctor ordered**

The [Healthcare Practitioner \(HCP\) Channel Forum](#) was created to provide a unique setting to address issues for companies who primarily market to healthcare practitioners. At the inaugural event, industry experts explained the legal status of N-acetyl cysteine (NAC) and introduced nearly 100 registered practitioners to the [Vitamin D & Me!](#) program that educates consumers on the relationship between Vitamin D levels and the incidence and severity of COVID-19.

## **Fighting for consumer access to NAC**

CRN aggressively pushed back on FDA's inaction concerning the legal status of [NAC](#). The association [called out FDA](#) for failing to respond to CRN's citizen petition and further pressed for a swift reply on the legal issues. In trade interviews and [bylines](#), we cautioned that the outcome of this matter involving NAC could set a dangerous precedent for other ingredients. And CRN continued its outreach with both retailers and payer platforms who have removed NAC from their offerings.

## **Educating consumers on the value of vitamin D**

CRN Foundation work continued on the [Vitamin D & Me!](#) program, a collection of resources for consumers that provide scientific resources addressing the link between low vitamin D levels and the incidence and severity of COVID-19. New research summaries, expert interviews and background content were all uploaded as several new meta-analyses were published that strengthen the growing support. This consumer education program is designed to raise the profile of vitamin D and the emerging evidence of the role vitamin D plays in immune health.

## **Fine-tuning proposed Mandatory Product Listing provisions**

Our government relations team conducted intensive negotiations with a Senator's office on potential [mandatory product listing](#) (MPL) legislation. While CRN is on record strongly supporting MPL, we also aggressively represented our members' interests to prevent inclusion of burdensome provisions in the bill (like reporting requirements for claims beyond those on the label, a potential listing of all ingredient suppliers, and a catch-all provision that would have invited regulatory creep from FDA).

## **New Healthcare Cost Savings Study data on the way**

CRN completed fundraising and began development of a new healthcare cost savings study that will examine the potential financial savings to the healthcare system from the targeted use of certain supplement regimens demonstrated to reduce disease risk, inpatient care and ER visits. Results are due by mid-2022.

## Leading the conversation on China customs requirements

On the [international front](#), CRN advocated with the U.S. government to assist companies faced with new requirements from China's GACC for exporting supplements and their ingredients into China. Our efforts included outreach to FDA, USDA, the Department of Commerce and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. Although the situation is not yet resolved, we have made great progress in calling attention to the issue, and getting U.S. officials to focus on the impact for trade.

## 'Vet'-ing EFSA's vitamin D requirements

We advocated for revisions to new requirements on [vitamin D in Europe](#). Perhaps inadvertently, EFSA now considers vitamin D an animal-derived product that is subject to veterinary certification before the ingredient can be imported to European countries.

## Advancing alternatives to age-restrictions

CRN has led the fight against [age restrictions](#) on weight management and sports nutrition in the states. In the last quarter, New Jersey introduced its version of the legislation. We continued negotiations on an alternative solution in California and strengthened our case for the safety of these ingredients.

## Science-backed support of weight management supplement safety

The Board of Directors authorized a new research initiative to explore the safety profiles of the top-selling weight management supplement ingredients. The project was funded in response to growing calls in some states to place age restrictions on weight management products. These efforts cite unfounded safety concerns, so CRN has commissioned this evidence-based review to settle the question.

## Presenting top experts in person and online

We delivered our annual conference, **Now, New, Next**, at the Ritz-Carlton Laguna Niguel, with an A-list line-up of speakers like political commentator Ron Brownstein, business visionary Suneel Gupta, economist Marci Rossell, and Dr. Freda Lewis-Hall, along with the networking and social events that remind us we are one community. Plans are already underway for the 2022 event to be held at the [Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix this coming Oct. 12–14](#).

## Sharing the 'Science Behind the Supplements' on women's health—and developing the next generation of nutrition scientists, practitioners

CRN held its highly-acclaimed **Science in Session** addressing women's health issues with keynote speaker Tieraona Low Dog, MD, and a range of speakers who examined the unique needs of women for sleep health, dietary intakes, weight management, eye and brain health, estrogen balance and chronic disease risk reduction. CRN and the American Society for Nutrition Foundation Scholars Program (CASP) provided [five ASN student members](#) with educational awards to virtually attend.

## Delivering educational content to help you lead

CRN takes industry education seriously: In addition to our annual conference, we produced episodes of a new podcast, [Washington Watercooler](#), in conjunction with Supplyside 365, and hosted a December webinar on Leadership Issues for 2022—including supply chain disruptions, staff shortages and meeting the changing consumer demand. [Now available on demand.](#)

## Connecting stakeholders across the globe to promote science-based nutrition policy

The global trade arm of CRN, CRN-International, conducted a series of educational symposia attracting regulators from around the world in November and December. [Nutrition Throughout the Lifecycle](#) (available on demand) gave these policy makers “live” exposure to new research and highly regarded academics, as well as industry scientists, who explored nutrition and micronutrient needs across a healthy lifespan.

## Thoughtful commentary on our most important issues

Strengthening our role as industry thought leader, CRN staff published five bylines and trade articles, just in the past three months:

- [Industry Needs Consensus in 2022, CRN Says](#) (NutraIngredients-USA)
- [Healthy Innovation Must be Nourished](#) (Nutrition Industry Executive)
- [Leadership Demands Empathy, Agility and Resilience](#) (Natural Products Insider)
- [Companies Serving Health Care Practitioners Need Specific Support](#) (Nutrition Industry Executive)
- [Quality as an Opportunity, Not a Risk](#) (Whole Foods magazine)

Throughout all of this activity, we are constantly reaffirming CRN as the center of innovation, self-regulation, thought leadership and policy development for the dietary supplement industry.

**CRN is a staff of 20 professionals who start every day with the singular goal of improving the climate for responsible companies to develop, source, manufacture, and market science-backed dietary supplements, functional food, and their ingredients**—and a collection of over 180 companies who share that passion.

If you have any questions or concerns about your company’s membership, please let me know. You can reach me at [smister@crnusa.org](mailto:smister@crnusa.org) or 202-204-7676.

Warm regards,



Steve Mister  
President & CEO