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NATIONAL YOGURT ASSOCIATION TO ENHANCE LINKS TO PROBIOTIC FOOD INDUSTRY

MCLEAN, VA – The National Yogurt Association (NYA) today announced that it is increasing its involvement within the probiotic food industry, while still maintaining its primary focus on cultured dairy-based food products.

The organization’s board of directors agreed to undertake this effort after considering the tremendous growth in the probiotic food market over the past decade – in both the number and variety of products, and the wealth of new research.

“Our increased participation in the field of probiotic foods will bolster the cultured dairy industry’s current role as the originator and leader of the probiotic food movement,” said Leslie G. Sarasin, president of the National Yogurt Association.

Probiotics are living microorganisms, which upon ingestion in sufficient numbers, exert health benefits beyond basic nutrition. Yogurt is regarded as one of the first probiotic food products.

Today’s actions by the National Yogurt Association reflect the importance of contributing and informing on the latest developments in probiotic foods – especially as more manufacturers incorporate a wider range of beneficial cultures in their products. This includes advances in understanding the biological and physiological interactions of probiotic cultures within the human intestinal tract, as well as the resulting health benefits. The organization’s increased participation in these areas will be critical to anticipating and proactively engaging in any legislative or regulatory actions, as well as any industry standardization or certification initiatives regarding foods containing probiotic cultures.

The National Yogurt Association has established the *Probiotics Council (PC)*, which consists of NYA staff and representatives from its member companies. Members of the working group will participate in technical meetings and conferences, meet on a regular basis to discuss the latest scientific developments regarding probiotic cultures, and establish links with other probiotic industry organizations. Organizations interested in learning more about today’s developments may contact NYA staff for more information.

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The National Yogurt Association (NYA) is the national non-profit trade organization representing the manufacturers and marketers of live and active culture yogurt products, as well as suppliers to the yogurt industry. Its purpose is to sponsor health and medical research for yogurt with live and active cultures and serve as an information source to the trade and the general public.