

# IADSA CODE OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE FOOD SUPPLEMENT SECTOR

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IADSA

International Alliance of Dietary/  
Food Supplement Associations

Population growth and increased longevity have combined to create new opportunities along with new risks to the well-being of individuals and society. Healthcare systems across the globe are under pressure to respond to these demographic trends and offer better health and nutrition to their citizens.

In response to these changes, the food supplements sector has evolved to become a valued stakeholder to address the enormous challenges facing the world. The engagement of companies and trade associations on every continent – with a firm commitment to integrity – has helped create a framework where safe and beneficial supplements can help people of all nationalities and ages to lead healthier lives.

The International Alliance of Dietary /Food Supplement Associations (IADSA) is the global association of the food supplement sector. IADSA recognizes that engagement with government officials, government bodies and other stakeholder organizations is of utmost importance.

IADSA continues to lead by example, through helping set and implement standards and guidelines, sharing existing best practices, and engaging collaboratively with government and the scientific community to help build the resilience, health and wellbeing of populations. IADSA is also committed to following high ethical principles and practices.

This Code of Ethical Principles has therefore been developed to help guide the conduct of all involved in the food supplement sector. This set of principles does not replace national or regional laws, regulations or codes.

# Objective

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The IADSA code is a foundation of the food supplement sector's commitment to ethical excellence. It has been developed to continue to drive our ethical culture and integrity. It is intended for all those engaged in international trade in food supplements and thereby to protect the health of the consumer and promote fair trade practices. It should help achieve the highest ethics and behaviour in contacts with consumers, in business dealings with suppliers, vendors, competitors and customers, and interactions with government and other policy makers. All IADSA members are encouraged to promote the aspirational principles established in this code in the jurisdictions in which they operate in accordance with their legal and administrative procedures.

# Terminology

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For the purpose of this code, the term “food supplement” should be understood as referring to products which are defined in different jurisdictions as food supplements, dietary supplements, health supplements, nutraceuticals and health foods or by any other terms used to describe the category.

# General principles

- 1 International trade in food supplements should be conducted according to the principle that all consumers are entitled to safe and beneficial products and to protection from unfair trade practices.

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No food supplement should be in international trade which:

- a. has in or upon it any substance in an amount which renders it poisonous, harmful or otherwise injurious to health;
- b. is adulterated;
- c. has not been manufactured in accordance with good hygiene and manufacturing practices;
- d. is labelled, or presented in a manner that is false, misleading or deceptive;
- e. is sold, prepared, packaged, stored or transported for sale under unsanitary conditions or conditions that would negatively alter the contents and its properties;
- f. is labelled, presented or advertised in a manner that attributes to the food supplement the property of preventing, treating or curing a human disease;
- g. is labelled, presented or advertised in a manner that discourages the consumer from achieving a balanced diet or that states or implies that the product is a substitute or replacement for a healthy diet.

3 Businesses should develop appropriate procedures to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations. Where national or regional requirements do not exist, the business operator should refer to those international standards and guidelines that have been developed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and are applicable to the food supplement category. A range of resources have been developed by IADSA and its member associations that can also help guide business operators in the absence of or in addition to specific legal requirements.

4 Business interactions should be conducted in a fair and transparent way, accountable to the laws of the jurisdictions in which they operate and to the highest standards of international business practices, including accepted practices to avoid conflicts of interest, anti-trust or anti-competitive activities, and to embrace anti-bribery and anti-corruption practices.



5 Relations with government and other stakeholders should be respectful and collaborative and should contribute to maintaining and building trust. Where divergent positions exist, the sector should seek to address them through constructive and balanced dialogue.

6 In addition, all businesses in the food supplement sector should strive to integrate sustainability practices into their operations and to embrace efforts to reduce inequality, discrimination and injustice.

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