



November 13, 2023

Dr. Jorge Alcocer Varela  
Minister of Health  
Lieja No. 7 piso 1, Col. Juárez, D.T. Cuauhtémoc,  
C.P. 06600,  
Ciudad de México

Via electronic communication: [jorge.alcocer@salud.gob.mx](mailto:jorge.alcocer@salud.gob.mx)

RE: American Herbal Products Association request regarding COFEPRIS issuance of import permits for dietary supplement products

Dear Dr. Jorge Alcocer Varela,

The American Herbal Products Association (AHPA) is the leading trade association and voice of the herbal products industry. AHPA is comprised of U.S. domestic and foreign companies doing business as growers, collectors, processors, manufacturers, marketers, importers, exporters and distributors of herbs and herbal products. AHPA's members are engaged in the commerce of herbs and herbal products and numerous AHPA members market dietary supplements and other types of herbal products within Mexico.

We are contacting the Ministry of Health following reports from AHPA member companies that the Government of Mexico, specifically COFEPRIS (Comisión Federal para la Protección contra Riesgos Sanitarios), an agency within the Ministry of Health, has stopped issuing import permits for dietary supplements as of several months ago. This sudden action impacts many businesses who provide safe and reliable products to maintain and enhance the health of the citizens of Mexico. Many of these products have had a long presence in the Mexican market and have been purchased and used by Mexican consumers for many years. These AHPA member companies have well established dietary supplement products that are sold widely not only in Mexico, but also in the United States, Europe and elsewhere in compliance with the relevant regulations of the respective competent authorities.

It is not clear why COFEPRIS has ceased granting import permits for dietary supplement products. AHPA understands that the importation of dietary/food supplements in general is being affected, so this situation does not appear to be linked to a quality or safety concern for a specific ingredient or product threatening the health of Mexican consumers. AHPA is also not aware of any specific changes in the Mexican regulations governing these products that could explain the sudden halt to the issuance of import permits.

AHPA member companies have indicated they have only weeks or even days of dietary supplement inventory left in Mexico. As these inventories are depleted, companies will lose market share, and the wider economy of Mexico may experience losses from the interruption of this \$1.5 billion USD business in the country. The inability to replenish inventory creates a hardship for not only importers, but also the distributors and customers in Mexico who rely on these products. It will also have a negative impact on those contemplating entering the Mexican market.

For these reasons, AHPA respectfully encourages the Ministry of Health to enable COFEPRIS to expedite the issuance of import permits for dietary supplements. If COFEPRIS has re-interpreted the existing dietary supplement labelling and ingredient laws, AHPA requests that companies with established business in Mexico to be immediately informed of these reinterpretations and given a reasonable amount of time to implement any required changes to labelling and reformulation processes. In the meantime, AHPA strongly suggests that the Government of Mexico allow import permits to be issued to these reputable companies, so as to ensure the business operations of Mexico-based distributors are not irreparably damaged.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this critical matter and would be grateful for any action to address this urgent issue impacting the dietary supplement supply chain into Mexico and hampering trade with its U.S.-based partners. AHPA welcomes any questions the Ministry of Health or COFEPRIS may have on these requests.

Respectfully submitted,



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