



Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition
Public Health England
4th Floor Wellington House
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29th August 2014

Dear SACN

Scientific consultation on the draft Carbohydrates and Health report

Potato Council welcomes the opportunity to submit a response to the consultation on the recently published draft SACN Carbohydrates and Health report.

Potato Council is a division of the Agriculture & Horticulture Development Board, which is a Non-Departmental Public Body. It was established via the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board Order 2008. Potato Council is funded by potato growers and the supply chain through statutory levies and seeks to address the specific needs of the potato industry in Great Britain.

We have specifically considered the information relating to potatoes in the draft report and, following comments from within the industry about apparent inconsistencies, we have discussed these with the British Nutrition Foundation. On our behalf they have provided comment about the inconsistencies and this has helped the development of this response.

Given the report's findings in terms of positivity towards the fibre content and overall health benefits of consumption of potatoes, coupled with the recommended increase of the NRV of fibre to 30g (AOAC) and the recommendation that 50% of the nation's diet should comprise of all carbohydrates, it was concerning to read, amongst others, the statement made on page 111, paragraph 7.2, "*The direction of association indicates that greater consumption of potatoes is detrimental to health*".

There appears to be an inconsistency in that T2DM and potatoes in table 7.1 have been included (indicating insufficient evidence, i.e. 'too few studies or trials that meet the inclusion criteria') but evidence for four studies earlier in the chapter have been reviewed (sections 7.21 and 7.22), suggesting there was sufficient evidence (albeit described as 'limited') to justify consideration of these studies.

There is equally reference throughout the cohort studies that increasing consumption of potatoes is associated with an increase in the incident of cardiovascular disease which is also of concern. For example, table 7.3 states that there is inconsistent evidence for the role of potatoes in CVD.

We would ask you to review the consistency of the statements surrounding potatoes and T2DM and CVD and offer some clarity over the apparently conflicting language and presentation of the evidence base. Perhaps section 7.26 could be modified to make it clear that the association with T2DM is borderline and consider adding a summary sentence within the report and conclusions section on page 113 that interprets the findings in the context of the recognised limitations of

cohort data and the recommendation to consume about 50% of energy as carbohydrate, Certainly in chapter 12 section 12.32 potatoes are referred to in a very positive light and for consistency it would be helpful if this were also reflected in 12.15 and in the conclusions for chapter 7.

Yours sincerely

Dr Rob Clayton
Director PCL
(For and on behalf of AHDB)