

***NATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON
MICRONUTRIENT FORTIFICATION OF FOOD
Jaipur, February 8-9, 1999***

JAIPUR DECLARATION

The Problems :

The gravity and enormity of the problem of micronutrient deficiency in India is evident from the following facts:

- The dietary intake of 350 million people is inadequate to meet their nutritional needs.
- More than 320 million people suffer from Iron deficiency anaemia, prevalence being highest amongst women and children (40-88% of pregnant women, 60-70% of children, 50% of adolescent girls) seriously affecting the health and productive faculties.
- Over 200 million people suffer from Iodine deficiency resulting in a series of mental and physical disorders. On an average, 13 IQ points are lost on account of this deficiency.
- 30,000 children go blind every year due to Vitamin A deficiency. It also results in mortality and morbidity in young children.

The Strategies :

Recognising the serious health and socio-economic implications of these micronutrient deficiencies resulting in death, disability and national productivity loss, amounting to a GDP loss of Rs.75,000 crores per year, it is recommended that a combination of the following intervention strategies need to be considered:

- Encourage the use of balanced diet within the current food habits.
- Supplementation to take care of specific needs of high risk groups such as pregnant women and children etc. as a sustainable strategy.

- Food fortification with the right choice of vehicles to deliver the necessary fortificants to the population at large and the target groups in particular. While pursuing this strategy, the remarkable progress made in establishing the impact of salt iodisation and fortification of hydrogenated oil with Vitamin A need to be duly recognised and need be extended to the use of other commonly consumed staple commodities such as wheat flour, rice, sugar, fats & oils and milk etc.

Action Plan :

Keeping in view the gigantic nature of the task of addressing the problem of micronutrient deficiencies, there is an urgent need for networking amongst the three major players – Industry, Government and the Scientific Community to focus on the following action points :

- Constitute a Food Fortification Committee under the Secretary, Ministry of Food Processing Industries having representatives from other concerned ministries of Government of India like HRD, Health, Food and others; Food Processing Industries and Scientific Institutions to outline a time bound action program, ensure implementation and monitoring.
(Action by Government)
- Consider support to the development and promotion of broad based nutrition education initiatives.
(Action by Government/NGOs/Industry/Scientific Institution)
- Create public awareness about fortified foods through media, education, training etc. by forging a dynamic partnership among all sectors including industry, government and other national & international agencies.
(Action by Government/Industry/Institution)
- Provide the scientific basis for harmonisation of food safety, regulatory and quality standards with well established scientific international norms such as Codex Alimentarius etc, and set up specialised laboratories to test nutrient content of fortified foods.
(Action by Government/Scientific Institutions)

- Develop most appropriate fortification processes and technologies particularly for small and medium sectors.

(Action by Scientific Institutions/Industry)

- Encourage the development of appropriate institutional mechanism to facilitate technology transfer in food fortification.

(Action by Government/Scientific Institution)

- Develop and promote appropriate marketing strategies to ensure wide spread distribution of fortified foods particularly to the vulnerable sections of population.

(Action by Industry)

- Consider how to create enabling environment to accelerate food fortification programs

(Action by Government/Industry/Scientific Institutions)