

Through the Symposium "Sweeteners: Advantages and Applications in the 21st Century"

The 21st International Congress of Nutrition addresses the advantages and applications of sweeteners at present

- **The symposium is organized by the Spanish Foundation for Nutritional Research (FIN) and the Spanish Nutrition Foundation (FEN), within the framework of the 21st International Congress of Nutrition, which brings together around 3,200 experts from around the world.**
- **The encounter will analyze the role of low and no calorie sweeteners in food as potential alternatives to sugar, their safety, regulation and nutrition aspects associated with foods and beverages containing them.**
- **Several meta-analyses from recent years have quite unanimously found that the use of low and no calorie sweeteners may lead to reduced body weight compared with sugar.**

Buenos Aires, 20th October 2017.- Within the framework of the 21st International Congress of Nutrition, which is taking place from 15th to 20th of October in Buenos Aires (Argentina), today, Friday 20th October, the role and benefits of low and no calorie sweeteners in the current diet have been discussed through a monographic symposium. More specifically, this International Congress, titled "*From Science to Nutrition Security*" and which brings together around 3,200 experts from around the world, will host the Symposium "*Sweeteners: Advantages and Applications in the 21st Century*", organized by the Spanish Foundation for Nutritional Research (FIN) and the Spanish Nutrition Foundation (FEN). In this encounter, health and nutrition professionals will analyze and discuss the topics concerning the safety and benefits of low and no calorie sweeteners in a context of alternatives for sugar reduction, obesity prevention, applications and uses in foods and beverages for diabetic people and other issues related to health.

Low and no calorie sweeteners are used in a variety of food products of the food and beverages sector, including frozen desserts, smoothies, vegetable drinks, nectars and juice drinks, yoghurts, soft drinks, biscuits, chewing gum, confectionery, and even in healthcare, making some medicines more palatable.

Safety of sweeteners

During this symposium, **Prof. Lluís Serra-Majem**, Professor of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, Director of the Biomedical and Health Research Institute and at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, and Chairman of the Spanish Foundation for Nutritional Research and of the Spanish Nutrition and Food Sciences Academy, pointed out that "sweeteners have been safely used by consumers all over the world for more than a century", and recalls that "gaining approval for the development of a new low and no calorie sweetener is a long and scientifically thorough process." More specifically, applicants can only apply for approval of a low and no calorie sweetener after extensive tests have been completed and evidence provided of the product's safety and utility."

Sweeteners, adds Serra-Majem, "represents a field of dietetics and nutrition of undoubted and topical interest not exempt from new studies and scientific advances, so similar encounters like this one are needed so as to provide a greater knowledge and to analyze their benefits, safety and current applications."

Sweeteners and weight management

According to **Prof. Anne Raben**, from the Department of Nutrition, Exercise and Sports of the Faculty of Science of the University of Copenhagen (Denmark), "it has been claimed in several studies that low calorie sweeteners increase appetite and thereby food intake and body weight. However, several intervention studies conducted over the past 25-30 years have shown that low and no calorie sweeteners do not stimulate appetite or increase body weight. Comprehensive meta-analyses from recent years have quite unanimously found that the use of low and no calorie sweeteners may lead to reduced body weight compared with sugar."

On the other hand, **Dr. Susana Socolovsky**, Doctor in Chemical Science from the University of Buenos Aires and President Elect of the Argentinean Association of Food Technologists, stresses that "low and no calorie sweeteners are used in a great variety of foods and beverages given the interest that some consumers have in managing their body weight, eating sweet foods by avoiding consumption of sugars in the case of diabetic people or avoiding tooth decay. Thanks to the current rigorous regulatory framework which originates in the assessment of sweeteners from the FAO-WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA), low and no calorie sweeteners are safe components in the general population's diet."

Finally, **Dr. Hugo A. Laviada**, Coordinator of the working group on Obesity of the Mexican Society of Nutrition and Endocrinology and Researcher in Metabolism and Human Nutrition at the University Marista de Mérida, highlighted that "the structured use of non-caloric sweeteners in weight control programmes or in therapeutic nutrition management of diabetic and overweight and obese people, as long as caloric sweeteners are replaced in those programmes, may lead to weight reduction and metabolic control in structured and supervised programmes."

The use of low and no calorie sweeteners is a topical subject and of great interest for the scientific community, both in the field of epidemiology and in that of safety, dietetics and nutrition, and their use dates back in some cases to more than 100 years.

At present, the current variety of low and no calorie sweeteners is making that more and more monographic scientific meetings similar to this one are held to address this issue. In particular, in the month of July a **meeting was held in Lisbon**, which gathered **67 international experts** in food, nutrition, dietetics, endocrinology, physical activity and health in general to build a Consensus on low and no calorie sweeteners. That meeting had the participation of a total of 42 nutrition and dietetics societies and foundations, medical societies, universities and European and Iberoamerican research centres.

IUNS 21ST ICN
International Congress of Nutrition
"From Sciences to Nutrition Security"



Among the conclusions of the consensus document that is currently being finalized, deriving from that meeting, should be highlighted that the use of low and no calorie sweeteners may contribute to the World Health Organization (WHO)'s guidelines to reduce energy from added sugars to less than 10% or even 5%.

For further information:

Ángela Rubio
Tel. 00 34 91 590 14 37 – 00 34 677 82 12 09
arubio@torresycarrera.com