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USP Granted Observer Status by Codex Alimentarius Commission

Standards-Setting Body to Provide Expert Guidance in the Development of International Food Standards

Rockville, Md., September 11, 2012 — Joining an international community dedicated to protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade, the U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention (USP) has been granted observer status by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. In this capacity, USP will provide expert information, advice and guidance to the Commission, along with other international governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The Commission was established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1963. Today, it has more than 180 members, and more than 200 inter-governmental and international non-governmental organizations are accredited as observers. The Commission's main work is the development of international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice. The Commission also promotes the coordination of all food standards work undertaken by international governmental and non-governmental organizations.

"The increasingly globalized food industry, the associated supply chain complexities, consumer interest in new, complex ingredients with purported health and nutritional benefits, economic pressures to keep food costs low—all call for strong international standards," said Roger L. Williams, M.D., chief executive officer for USP. "USP's mission and work in the area of food standards align closely with those of the Commission, and we are honored to now serve in an accredited NGO capacity. Food ingredients, which represent a key component of the food supply, are particularly important and remain our focus."

Through its *Food Chemicals Codex (FCC)*, USP develops internationally used standards for the identity, quality and purity of food ingredients including colorings, flavorings, emulsifiers, nutrients, preservatives and processing aids. Building on nearly 200 years of standards-setting expertise in the areas of pharmaceuticals, dietary supplements and excipients, USP began establishing food ingredient standards in 2006, when it acquired *FCC* from the Institute of Medicine. Today, *FCC* is published every two years in print and online formats and is offered as a subscription that also includes three intervening supplements. *FCC* standards are developed by the Food Ingredients Expert Committee (FIEC), chaired by Dr. Andy Ebert, through an open, transparent process in which all proposed new and revised standards are available for public review and comment for 90 days via the free *FCC Forum* to any interested party. The FIEC is composed of 20 volunteer expert members who are supported by strong scientific and technical staff from USP's headquarters and USP's international sites. The work of the FIEC aligns closely with manufacturers innovating and marketing foods throughout the world and with the work of FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition.

For more information on USP's food standards work, please visit www.usp.org/food-ingredients. More information about the Commission may be found at www.codexalimentarius.org/codex-home/en/.

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USP – Advancing Public Health Since 1820

The United States Pharmacopeial Convention (USP) is a scientific, nonprofit, standards-setting organization that advances public health through public standards and related programs that help ensure the quality, safety, and benefit of medicines and foods. USP's standards are relied upon and used worldwide. For more information about USP visit <http://www.usp.org>.