



Ontario Society of Nutrition
Professionals in Public Health

La société ontarienne des professionnel(le)s
de la nutrition en santé publique

Lawrence Square
700 Lawrence Ave. West, Suite 310
Toronto, Ontario
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September 5, 2006

Canadian Parks and Recreation Association
Clem Pelot
Chief Executive Officer
404-2197 Riverside Drive
Ottawa, ON K1H 2X3

Dear Mr. Pelot,

On behalf of the Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health (OSNPPH), we are contacting you to express our concern in the type of product that is being distributed in the General Mills Special Events-Product Sampling Program.

OSNPPH is the independent and official voice of Registered Dietitians in public health in Ontario representing over 140 members working in every Public Health Unit/Department in the province. A priority for public health in Ontario is promoting healthy eating and active living and setting the foundation for healthier families.

As registered dietitians working in the community we frequently encounter parents who mistakenly believe that products such as Fruit Roll-ups and Fruit Gushers are nutritious alternatives to fruit. This type of common kids “treat” can be high in sugar and low in nutrients. The claim of added vitamin C is included to make them appear nutritious; however, the products are really more like candy and lack the nutrients naturally found in fresh fruit.

The Canadian Community Healthy Survey 2.2 (Stats Canada, 2006) found that Canadians currently are not consuming enough fruits and vegetables. Seven out of 10 children aged 4 to 8 do not eat the minimum five serving a day recommended. In addition, 22% of calories eaten by children are from “other foods”. Other foods are generally high in fat or sugar and low in vitamins and mineral. High sugar consumption and low intake of vegetables and fruit have been linked to poor nutritional status, poor dental health and obesity in children.

OSNPPH would like to suggest that your Association reconsider the type of product that is being distributed at your members' events. General Mills and other food companies manufacture many products that are nutritious and dentally healthy.

OSNPPH would be happy to provide suggestions for more nutritious food tasting options to be offered at events. Feel free to contact us if we can be of assistance.

Yours truly,

Dianne Oickle, MSc, RD
Chairperson, OSNPPH