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Consensus of leading toxicologists declare: BPA poses no noteworthy risk to human health

By Posted by Lisa McTigue Pierce -- *Packaging Digest*, April 20, 2011

The North American Metal Packaging Alliance Inc. (NAMPA) urges policymakers and media to take heed of a decisive analysis by independent toxicologists that concludes bisphenol-A (BPA) poses no risk to human health. In a comprehensive study published this month in the peer-reviewed *Critical Reviews in Toxicology*, a group of leading independent toxicologists from Germany thoroughly evaluated the full complement of current scientific research on BPA. Based on their analysis, the scientists determined that existing scientific evidence indicates there is no risk to human health, at any age, from exposure to BPA.

"This independent analysis cannot be ignored and, in fact, should be required reading for all policymakers and those in the media who are entrusted to provide the public with a thorough scientific perspective and sound scientific policy," says Dr. John Rost, chairman of NAMPA. "It is imperative that public policy be constructed on a foundation of sound science and comprehensive toxicological assessments, rather than on the basis of fear. These authors, who have no interest in the issue other than seeing that the science is objectively evaluated, now reaffirm what regulatory experts across the globe have stated consistently—BPA poses no risk to human health, including infants and children."

As part of its review, the authors, who serve on the Advisory Committee of the German Society of Toxicology, also looked at the actions of various countries regarding the science on BPA. Based on their thorough review of current scientific research on BPA, the German scientists concluded that government actions to ban BPA are politically motivated and not based on any sound scientific risk management policy.

On the specific issue of the proposed "low-dose effects" that have dominated the debate around BPA, the German committee found flaws with the low-dose studies routinely cited to support the hypothesis. Their findings are consistent with reviews by other scientific boards, including the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Specifically, the committee asks pointedly, "whether it is time to end concerns over the estrogenic effects of BPA, particularly since it has repeatedly been impossible to reproduce the initial positive effects." (emphasis added).

The committee also evaluated several large, multi-generational studies used for regulatory guidance and funded in part by industry. The authors vehemently rejected the idea of bias, or the practice of weighing the number of positive studies versus negative studies, as is so often done in reports on BPA, labeling such efforts as "naive."

Their review found no evidence of bias and instead offered a comprehensive explanation of the causes behind the varied findings. In short, the committee pointed out that academic research is conducted to find positive results of health effects, making researchers more likely to get these studies published. In fact, according to the German authors, these explorative studies are over-represented due to publication bias in academic research.

The conclusions of the Advisory Committee of the German Society of Toxicology follow a comprehensive and thorough review of all available scientific research on controversial issues associated with BPA. The authors leave no question as to their motivation for this analysis, stating clearly that they seek "to contribute to a balanced and well-founded resolution of the seemingly dead-locked situation..." adding that they reviewed the background and the cutting-edge questions at the center of the BPA controversy to offer "an independent judgment."

The full study can be found in the peer-reviewed journal, *Critical Reviews in Toxicology*, Vol. 41, No. 4. For additional scientific perspective or explanation of terms, studies, or reviews included in the report, please contact NAMPA at info@metal-pack.org to schedule an interview or briefing.

Source: North American Metal Packaging Alliance Inc.