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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**CANADA'S FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY SUPPORTS HEALTH CANADA'S INITIATIVES TO EDUCATE CONSUMERS ON HEALTHY EATING**

TORONTO, February 5, 2007 — Food & Consumer Products of Canada (FCPC), the national association representing Canada's food and beverage industry supports Health Canada's initiatives to educate consumers on healthy eating. The association, which represents companies who make and distribute nearly 80 per cent of all food, beverage and consumer products available in grocery channels, believes the advice provided to Canadians in the Food Guide is consistent with recent initiatives by the industry to reformulate products to reduce fat, sugar and salt and to provide different portion options.

In addition to offering consumers 'healthier for you options' the food industry has been on the front line of nutrition education including funding of initiatives supporting the Food Guide and the promotion of the nutrition facts panel, since December 2005, on all packaged food products. The nutrition facts panel provides complete calorie information as well as information about 13 core nutrients essential to a healthy balanced diet. "Seventy seven per cent of consumers today consult the nutrition facts panel when purchasing a food or beverage product," said FCPC President & CEO, Nancy Croitoru. "The revised Food Guide and the nutrition facts panel are essential tools Canadians can use, together with new product options, to make choices that will lead to healthier lifestyles," she added.

In 2005, FCPC launched a report entitled *The Canadian Food and Beverage Industry Committed to Healthy Active Living* (<http://www.fcpc.ca/issues/hal/index.html>). This report, the first of its kind, provides a snapshot of what the food and beverage industry in Canada is doing to provide product options as well as insight into future formulations which are in development. Based on recent industry data*:

- 62% of companies have introduced new healthy products, including:
 - 13% reformulated products with omega-3s;
 - 13% added calcium;
 - 9% added fibre; and
 - 9% added vitamins.

- More -

The report also highlights the following reformulation:

- 41% of companies introduced products with less fat: 13% introduced products with no fat, and 19% introduced products with no trans fats, and
- 22% of companies introduced new products with less sugar or 13% introduced products with no sugar.

In addition, companies are continuing to innovate with functional ingredients such as probiotics.

"FCPC supports recommendations on a healthy balanced diet based on sound science," said Registered Dietitian, Phyllis Tanaka, director, food and nutrition policy, FCPC. "This guide is one vehicle to help consumers, the nutrition facts panel is another valuable resource that industry has rallied behind to help Canadians make informed decisions," she added. Recent surveys show that the nutrition facts panel is fast becoming Canadians' go-to source for nutrition information.

In addition to food and beverage reformulation, the industry in Canada has also been providing consumers a range of portion sizes. According to the *Committed to Healthy Active Living* report, two per cent of companies made packaging changes to address concerns about large portions, half made smaller packages and 42 per cent introduced smaller portions. FCPC's members continue to work with government and consumers to innovate and work towards solutions for a healthy lifestyle for all Canadians.

Food & Consumer Products of Canada (FCPC) is the largest industry association representing Canadian-operated food, beverage and consumer product companies that make and market retailer and national brands sold through retail and foodservice. In 2005, the industry employed 291,000 Canadians across the country, making it the largest employer in the Canadian manufacturing sector, and generated \$24 billion annually in GDP (13% of the Manufacturing Gross Domestic Product). On an annual basis, the industry donates an estimated \$100 million to charitable causes and over 5 million bags of groceries to food banks in Canada. The industry has a record of embracing world-class regulatory standards and is governed by 442 federal and provincial pieces of legislation, as well as thousands of regulations and self-imposed standards.

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** The survey was conducted in the summer of 2005 and was completed by 52 out of 78 FCPC food and beverage companies (67% response rate). These companies produce food and beverage products targeted to food retail and/or food service.*