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Healthy Oil May Help Reduce the Risk of Cardiovascular Disease

WASHINGTON, DC – Canola oil is now eligible to bear a qualified health claim on its ability to reduce the risk of coronary heart disease (CHD) due to its unsaturated fat content, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced today. The claim, which canola oil bottlers and makers of eligible products* may use on labels, states:

Limited and not conclusive scientific evidence suggests that eating about 1½ tablespoons (19 grams) of canola oil daily may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease due to the unsaturated fat content in canola oil. To achieve this possible benefit, canola oil is to replace a similar amount of saturated fat and not increase the total number of calories you eat in a day. One serving of this product contains [x] grams of canola oil.

“The type of fat consumed is as important as the amount,” said John Haas, president of the U.S. Canola Association (USCA). “Availability of this claim will promote public health by informing consumers about a simple, affordable and convenient strategy to reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease. The claim may also encourage food manufacturers and food service providers to substitute canola oil for other oils with less favorable nutritional profiles.”

Canola oil is high in healthy unsaturated fats (93%), free of cholesterol and trans fat, and the lowest in saturated fat (7%) of any common edible oil. This composition helps reduce the risk of CHD by lowering total blood and low-density lipoprotein (“bad”) cholesterol, according to Guy H. Johnson, PhD, who wrote the qualified health claim petition on behalf of the USCA.

“There is ample scientific evidence to demonstrate these benefits from the unsaturated fats in canola oil,” he said. “By using it in place of other common edible oils, consumers can increase their compliance with the latest dietary recommendations.”

In addition, canola oil is multi-functional with a high smoke point, neutral taste and light texture.

“The lack of consumer barriers to using canola oil at the table and in cooking with respect to cost, taste, convenience and availability makes it very attractive,” Johnson concluded.

* Criteria for foods eligible to bear the claim include containing at least 4.75 grams of canola oil per reference amount customarily consumed, no more than one gram of trans fat and low levels of saturated fat and cholesterol.

Canola Oil: Good for Every Body!

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