



## INTERNATIONAL FORMULA COUNCIL

5775 Peachtree-Dunwoody Road, Bldg. G, Ste. 500 ■ Atlanta, GA 30342  
(404) 252-3663 ■ Fax (404) 252-0774 ■ E-mail: [ifc@kellencompany.com](mailto:ifc@kellencompany.com) ■ [www.infantformula.org](http://www.infantformula.org)

### For Immediate Release

**Contact:** Marisa Salcines, [msalcines@infantformula.org](mailto:msalcines@infantformula.org), (678) 520-6429  
Robert Rankin, [rrankin@infantformula.org](mailto:rrankin@infantformula.org), (404) 252-3663

### **KEY NUTRIENTS CRUCIAL FOR OLDER INFANTS' DEVELOPMENT** *CONFERENCE AT EXPERIMENTAL BIOLOGY EXPLORES ADVANCES IN INFANT FEEDING OVER PAST 25 YEARS*

SAN FRANCISCO (April 6, 2006) – According to Nancy Krebs, M.D., a professor of Pediatrics at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center and former Chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Committee on Nutrition, it can be difficult to meet the nutritional needs of older infants. Since human milk alone is no longer adequate to meet infant nutritional requirements after 6 months of age, the importance of complementary foods was stressed. In older infants, Krebs showed that meat could be a critical complementary food for providing recommended zinc and iron levels.

John L. Beard, Ph.D., a professor of Nutritional Sciences at Pennsylvania State University, stressed iron is critical in the developing nervous system. "All data to date, in three species, suggest a critical period exists in early life that requires the adequate delivery of iron to the brain," he said.

Krebs and Beard, along with other international and U.S. speakers presented yesterday to nutrition scientists at the Experimental Biology\* meeting. The special session, *Advances in Meeting the Nutritional Needs of Infants Worldwide*, highlighted achievements and challenges in infant nutrition and health outcomes over the past quarter-century, stressed the importance of breastfeeding infants in the first six months of life and also provided an overview of opportunities for further research and progress.

Kim F. Michaelsen, M.D., Ph.D., a professor of Human Nutrition at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University in Denmark described improved breastfeeding rates over the past 25 years as well as the benefits of human milk. In a new analysis of United States Agency for International Development data from 20 developing countries, Bernadette M. Marriott, Ph.D., from RTI International, confirmed the high prevalence of breastfeeding throughout the first year of life yet also noted the common use of water, sweetened beverages, and solid foods as well as the less common use of animal milks and infant formulas over this same period in these countries.

As noted by the AAP in its 2005 Policy Statement *Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk*, "Infants weaned before 12 months of age should not receive cow's milk but should receive iron-fortified infant formula." Conference participants, moderated by William C. Heird, M.D., professor of Pediatrics,

Children's Nutrition Research Center at Baylor College of Medicine, underscored the importance of nutrition throughout infancy, particularly the need to improve the nutritional quality of complementary foods in older infants' diets. In that respect, Dr. Heird noted the progress made in infant formulas with the addition of important nutrients like taurine, carnitine, nucleotides, and long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids over the past 25 years.

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Note to Editors: Experimental Biology is a multi-society, interdisciplinary, scientific meeting attended by 12,000 independent scientists and sponsored by the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB). This research was presented as part of the American Society for Nutrition section of FASEB on April 5.

\*This conference was sponsored by the International Formula Council (IFC), an international association of manufacturers and marketers of formulated nutrition products (e.g., infant formulas and adult nutritionals) whose members are predominantly based in North America. IFC members include all U.S. manufacturers: Mead Johnson Nutritionals; Nestle USA, Inc., Nutrition Division; PBM Products, LLC; Ross Products Division, Abbott Laboratories; Solus Products; and Wyeth Nutrition.