



## 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)

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Contact: Mardi Mountford  
Rachel Spector  
(404) 252-3663

**In response to the Resolution on Infant and Young Child Nutrition adopted by the 58<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly, the International Formula Council offers the following statement:**

“The International Formula Council (IFC)\* has a long-standing commitment to improve the nutritional status and health, and thus the survival, of infants and young children. IFC members support health professionals’ position that breastfeeding is the preferred method of feeding infants, and if a mother cannot or chooses not to exclusively breastfeed for six months – an iron-fortified infant formula is the only safe alternative.

“Today’s infant formulas are much different than early formulas, and are modeled on breast milk and the breast-fed infant. Years of development, careful clinical and other research, and continuing refinement have resulted in commercially available infant formulas that, like breast milk, provide the appropriate levels of protein, fat, carbohydrate, vitamins and minerals for a baby to sustain a rapid rate of growth and development without stressing the infant’s delicate and developing organ systems.

“IFC recognizes the World Health Organization’s (WHO) efforts regarding the Resolution on Infant and Young Child Nutrition, which was adopted by the 58<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly. The infant formula industry is dedicated to providing the safest and highest quality infant formula possible. As an industry, we work diligently to ensure that all infant formulas, including powdered formulas, are as safe as possible. Specific efforts relating to powdered formulas include increased routine testing and control measures within the production facility as well as emphasis on education of consumers and health care professionals about the importance of proper handling and use of powdered infant formula. We agree that parents and caregivers should be informed of the need for safe preparation, handling, and storage of all infant formulas, including powdered infant formulas.

“Powdered infant formula has been safely consumed by tens of millions of infants for more than half a century and constitutes over 80% of the infant formula used worldwide.

“Powdered infant formula is inherently safe when used as directed by the manufacturers’ instructions on the label. Like most commonly consumed foods, powdered infant formula must be properly handled, prepared and stored in order to prevent or minimize any potential bacterial growth.

“Thus, the IFC believes the objective of any infant formula labeling efforts should be to further educate consumers on proper preparation and use of the product. IFC believes the most effective way to ensure the integrity and safe usage of powdered infant formula is through appropriate labeling, and the training of health care professionals and community workers on

appropriate use and handling of the product. Providing such information is consistent with the underlying principle of food safety management and health policies advocated by the WHO.

“Second only to safety, the infant formula industry’s goal is to create formulas that provide the most appropriate nutrition and support for infant health – knowing that those who rely on breast milk substitutes deserve the best we can give them. In that regard, IFC further believes health and nutrition claims substantiated by solid science should be permitted on foods for infants and young children as a component of the information which women and health care professionals need in order to make informed decisions about infant feeding practices.

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\*IFC is 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 major U.S. manufacturers: Mead Johnson Nutritionals; Nestle USA, Inc., Nutrition Division; PBM Products, LLC; Ross Products Division, Abbott Laboratories; Solus Products; and Wyeth Nutrition.