

Fluor and Iodine Commission: Annual Report 2012

Mission

Initially founded to accompany the developments in connection with the usage of iodized salt in Switzerland, the commission nowadays engages in scientific and technical questions concerning iodine and fluoride intake, monitors intake of these nutrients and concerns itself with political issues in this field.

Members

Prof. Michael Bruce Zimmermann, Zürich, Präsident
Dr. Maria Andersson, Zürich (ab 29.5.12)
Prof. Ursula Ackermann-Lieblich, Basel (bis 29.5.12)
Dr. Michael Beer, BAG representative, Bern
Prof. Hans Bürgi, Solothurn
Prof. Hans Gerber, Bern
Dr. Jürg Lieberherr, Pratteln (bis 29.5.12)
Prof. Thomas M. Marthaler, Zürich
Prof. Christoph A. Meier, Zürich
Dr. Giorgio Menghini, Zürich
Prof. Jürg Meyer, Riehen (bis 29.5.12)
Dr. Katharina Quack Lötscher, Oberrieden
Stefan Trachsel, Pratteln (ab 29.5.12)
Prof. Tuomas Waltimo, Basel (ab 29.5.12)

Activities 2012

1. Eidgenössischen Ernährungskommission (EEK) Expert Report: “Iodine supply in Switzerland: current status and recommendations”.

The major activity of the Commission in 2012 was the writing of the Eidgenössischen Ernährungskommission (EEK) Expert Report: “*Iodine supply in Switzerland: current status and recommendations*”. The Working Group for the Report consisted of Prof. Dr.med Michael Zimmermann (President), Human Nutrition Laboratory, ETH Zürich; Prof.Dr.med. Hans Bürgi, Solothurn; Dr. Maria Andersson, Human Nutrition Laboratory, ETH Zürich; and Prof. Christoph A. Meier, Dept. für Innere Medizin, Stadtspital Triemli, Zürich, all members of the Commission.

The authors (four of whom are commission members) and chapters were:

- Dr. med. Katharina Quack Lötscher, University Hospital Zürich (Chapter 1. Iodine in pregnancy and infancy, and the importance of iodine in weaning foods)

- Prof. Dr.med Michael Zimmermann, ETH Zürich (Chapter 2: The effects of iodine deficiency on cognition and learning in children)
- Prof. Dr.med. Hans Bürgi (Chapter 3. Epidemiology and history of iodine nutrition in Switzerland)
- Dr. Max Haldimann, BAG, Liebefeld (Chapter 4: Sources of iodine in Swiss diets)
- Dr. Maria Andersson, ETH Zürich (Chapter 5: The importance of iodized salt use by the food industry in industrialized countries like Switzerland where most salt is consumed in processed foods)

The highlights of the report were presented at the EEK Plenary meeting on November 15 in Bern by Michael Zimmermann. The report went through several revisions and is now in its final draft form at the EEK.

Publication is expected in mid-2013.

2. Preparation for the planned increase in the iodine content of Swiss salt from 20 to 25 ppm

In discussions with the Rheinsalinen, it was decided that an official letter from the BAG and from the EEK, supporting the increase in the salt iodine concentration to 25 ppm would be needed. If this letter is received at the Rheinsalinen by Oct 2013, then the increase could go into affect on Jan 1, 2014. The current range allowable within Swiss legislation for the iodine content of Swiss salt is 20 to 30 ppm, so no new legislation would be needed.

3. Responding to public and media questions on the Swiss iodine/fluoride salt fortification program

Throughout the year, the medical doctors on the commission answered questions from the media and laypeople on safety and efficacy of the iodine component of the program, while the dentists answered questions on the fluoride component.

Outlook

- Publication and distribution of the the Eidgenössischen Ernährungskommission (EEK) Expert Report: "*Iodine supply in Switzerland: current status and recommendations*" will occur in mid-2013.
- In the second half of 2013, in cooperation with the BAG and the EEK, the preparations for the planned increase in the iodine content of Swiss salt from 20 to 25 ppm will take place, aiming for this to begin on Jan 1, 2014.

Michael Bruce Zimmermann

Zürich, Jan 16, 2013