

February 8, 2013

Anna Maria Chávez Chief Executive Officer Girl Scouts of the USA 420 Fifth Avenue New York, New York 10018

Dear Ms. Chávez:

We were disappointed to learn about the Girl Scouts of the USA's newest cookie, Mango Cremes with NutriFusionTM. According to the cookie's baker, ABC Bakers, this new vanilla and coconut cookie with mango-flavored "creme" contains all the "nutrient benefits of eating cranberries, pomegranates, oranges, grapes, and strawberries." Unfortunately that cookie does not have the "nutrient benefits" of eating fruit, but does have 4 grams of heart-disease-promoting saturated fat and 11 grams of tooth-decaying sugars per three-cookie serving. We are concerned that by marketing these cookies as a "delicious new way to get your vitamins," the Girls Scouts is misleading its members and supporters and undermining their health.

As you surely know, childhood obesity rates are at record-high levels. Obese children are at greater risk for numerous illnesses as they grow into adulthood, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, certain cancers, and other debilitating diseases. Teaching our children healthy eating habits is of critical importance.

With over 2.3 million participating girls and a goal of encouraging its members to "adopt healthy fitness and eating habits early in life," the Girl Scouts should support healthy eating through all of its educational activities, including fundraising. Sweet baked goods, including cookies, are a leading source of calories, sugars, and fats in Americans' diets. Fortifying cookies with vitamins does not make them much healthier. Instead, it is misleading and sends the wrong message to Girl Scouts and its customers.

We encourage the Girl Scouts to immediately stop promoting Mango Cremes with NutriFusionTM as healthful, and find a healthier way to raise funds. We look forward to your response and welcome the opportunity to work with the Girl Scouts to promote healthy lifestyles.

Sincerely,

Michael F. Jacobson, Ph.D.

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Executive Director

Margo G. Wootan, D.Sc. Director, Nutrition Policy