



Asian and Pacific Coconut Community

Jakarta - Indonesia

Statement from the Asian and Pacific Coconut Community (APCC) on the Claim that Coconut Oil is "Pure Poison"

Given during the 48th COCOTECH Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, August 22, 2018

Yesterday, a vicious attack on Coconut Oil was made by Dr. Karin Michels, Adjunct Professor of Epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health, where she claimed that it was "pure poison" and "one of the worst foods" that one can eat. The APCC, which represents 18 coconut-producing countries, refutes this statement as sensationalist, contrary to the truth, and damaging to the welfare of millions of people.

Today, Coconut Oil and Coconut are consumed by over 1 billion people and are the basis of the best cuisines in the world. Clearly, if Coconut Oil and the Coconut itself are "pure poison" as claimed, then the world's population would be at least 1 billion people less. The Coconut has a tradition dating back several thousands of years and is unique in being revered by many cultures as the "Tree of Life". Dr. Michels' claim is an insult to so many cultures.

There is no evidence that Coconut Oil consumption is linked to heart disease, inflammatory diseases and obesity (Kaunitz, 1970; Prior, 1981). In fact, recent studies have shown that Coconut Oil is healthy (Khaw, 2018). On the contrary, people who shifted from their traditional coconut diet have become obese (WHO, 2003).

On the other hand, it is the trans-fats from the Western diet that is the poison. Trans-fats have been estimated to have caused 30,000 premature deaths a year in the US (Ascherio, 1999) and is implicated in diabetes (Willett, 2006). It is the Dietary Guidelines for Americans that has been making the Americans obese since it was first published in 1980 (Cohen, 2015); this diet is making the rest of the world obese as well (WHO, 2018).

"Repeat a lie often enough and it becomes the truth", such is the practice of propagandists. This attack on Coconut Oil is an old lie that is once again being repeated.

The truth is that Coconut Oil is one of the healthiest oils in the world.

Finally, this irresponsible statement threatens the livelihood of millions of poor Coconut farmers. Dr. Michels should apologize and retract her statement.



URON N. SALUM
Executive Director

References:

Asherio et al., 1999. <http://www.drtime delivers.com/EEasy122605/Harvardtransfats/transfats.html>
Cohen et al., Nutrition 2015;31:727-732
Kaunitz, JAOCs 1970, vol. 47
Khaw et al., BMJ Open 2018;8:e020167

Prior et al., Am. J. Clin. Nutr., 1981;34:1552-1561.
WHO, Diet, food supply and obesity in the Pacific, 2003.
WHO, 2018. <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight>
Willett, Atherosclerosis Supplements 2006;7:5-8