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SUNSWEET GROWERS TO RETURN AS OFFICIAL SPONSOR OF WORLD OSTEOPOROSIS DAY

Sunsweet Promotes the Positive Role of Prunes in Protecting Bone Health and Teams up with International Osteoporosis Foundation for Global Awareness Campaign

Yuba City, CA (July 19, 2016) – The International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) has officially launched their annual World Osteoporosis Day (WOD) campaign, and Sunsweet Growers Inc. is excited to pair with the IOF as an Official Partner for the second year in a row. WOD is celebrated on October 20, and this year’s theme, *Love Your Bones: Protect Your Future*, calls upon the public to take preventative action now to have a greater impact in protecting bone and muscle health down the road.

An osteoporotic fracture occurs every three seconds worldwide, and approximately one in three women and one in five men over the age of 50 will break a bone due to osteoporosis.¹ Bones are formed of living tissue and nutrition and exercise are key components to developing and maintaining bone strength.

Prunes are emerging as a surprising fruit that can have a positive impact on bone health. Not only do prunes contain a variety of nutrients that play a role in bone building, structure, maintenance and breakdown – like vitamin K, phosphorus, boron and potassium - but research continues to show that prunes help support healthy bones. Sunsweet Growers Inc. is a proud supporter of WOD and incorporating bone-building habits – like eating a daily serving of prunes (4-5 prunes) – into a regular lifestyle routine.

“The connection between prunes and improved bone health that I’ve seen in my research is fascinating, and continues to drive research interest in ongoing studies as we attempt to learn all we can about strengthening bones through nutrition,” says Shirin Hooshmand, PhD, Assistant Professor of Nutrition at San Diego State University. “Adding a serving of prunes to your daily diet is an easy lifestyle change that may help to improve your bone health.”

¹Hernlund, E, Svedbom, A, Ivergård, M, Compston, J, Cooper, C, Stenmark, J, McCloskey, E V, Jönsson B, & Kanis, JA 2013, “Osteoporosis in the European Union: medical management, epidemiology and economic burden”, Arch Osteoporos, vol. 8, no.136.

Despite effective advances in diagnosis, assessment and interventions to reduce fracture risk, a minority of men and women actually receive treatment. Paired with appropriate treatment and physical activity, nutrition plays an important role in optimizing bone health and reducing the risk of osteoporosis. A study found that osteopenic, postmenopausal women who ate 50 grams of prunes per day (about 4-5 prunes) for six months experienced improved bone mineral density at the end of the clinical trial.² This finding supports previous research with similar results from participants who ate 100 grams of prunes per day (10-12 prunes). Researchers discovered that the participants who ate prunes actually experienced increased bone mineral density in the spine and forearm.³

“The progressive bone loss that occurs with osteoporosis may be invisible and painless, but this ‘silent’ disease results in fractures which cause pain, disability, and ultimately loss of independence or premature death,” states Prof. John Kanis, President IOF. “We therefore urge people with osteoporosis to protect themselves against fractures by adopting a bone-healthy lifestyle in tandem with appropriate medical treatment.”

About SUNSWEET

Sunsweet Growers Inc., established in 1917, has 99 years of experience and heritage in producing the highest quality dried fruits. The Yuba City, Calif.-based cooperative of 250 grower/members is the worldwide leader in prunes and related products. Most recently, the product portfolio has been expanded to include a full line of dried fruit snacks and juices, all designed to fit today’s need for healthy and convenient food choices. For more on Sunsweet products, visit www.sunsweet.com

About International Osteoporosis Foundation

The International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) is the world's largest nongovernmental organization dedicated to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis and related musculoskeletal diseases. IOF members, including committees of scientific researchers, leading companies, as well as more than 230 patient, medical and research societies, work together to make bone, joint and muscle health a worldwide health-care priority. www.iofbonehealth.org; www.facebook.com/iofbonehealth; <https://twitter.com/iofbonehealth>

IOF Risk Test:

One-minute osteoporosis risk test: <http://bit.ly/29fssXJ>

WOD, observed annually on 20 October, marks a year-long campaign www.worldosteoporosisday.org
#LoveYourBones

WOD Official Partners: Amgen, Fonterra, Lilly, MSD, Sunsweet

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² Metti D, et al. Effects of low dose dried plum (50g) on bone mineral density and bone biomarkers in older postmenopausal women.

³ Arjmandi BH, Khalil DA, Lucas EA, et al. (2002) Dried plums improve indices of bone formation in postmenopausal women. J Womens Health Gen Based Med 11, 61–68.