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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Natural Products Association West promotes Health at Capitol in Sacramento

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Natural Products Association West demonstrates commitment to advocacy at 5th Annual 'Health Matters!' Advocacy Day in Sacramento

On Tuesday, May 22, 2007, nearly 75 natural products industry members from California gathered in Sacramento for Natural Products Association West's 5th Annual lobbying event. Association members representing all segments of the industry educated members of the Legislature and staff about the association's legislative priorities – access to safe and healthy consumer products.

The eventful day began with a morning briefing and breakfast before adjourning to the Capitol for pre-arranged meetings with Legislators and their staff. President-Elect, David Stouder opened the session commenting on the important role the regional association plays in shaping public policy in California. Stouder emphasized that "although there is currently no legislation that is detrimental to the natural products industry, continuing to build relationships with lawmakers is vital to protecting our future if/when harmful legislation is introduced." Attendees enjoyed presentations by David Seckman, Executive Director and CEO, Natural Products Association, Randy Pollack, Lobbyist for Council for Responsible Nutrition, and Senator Torlakson, Chair of the CA Task Force on Youth and Workplace Wellness. Torlakson, a leader on wellness issues facing California, spoke at Natural Products Association West's Healthy Harvest Show in 2006.

Before adjourning to the Capitol, Executive Director, Dot Boyd reviewed and discussed the presentation materials and just what attendees could expect during their meetings. Boyd commented, "We are so pleased with this year's exceptional turnout! With nearly 60 percent first time advocates, we knew that we needed an 'expert' to train the group on how to deal with the Legislature so we called upon the Governor." In a convincing impersonation of Governor Schwarzenegger, Lyndall Grant interacted with President-Elect Stouder in a role-playing exercise intended to entertain and inform the audience on how to effectively present the association's positions during their appointments. Attendees then spent the afternoon in meetings with lawmakers and staff members presenting industry support of various bills including labeling of products from cloned animals, eliminating trans fats in school nutrition, promoting healthy communities, production of industrial hemp and protection of non-genetically engineered crops.

First time advocates were enthusiastic in their assessment of the event: "As a first time participant, I was impressed with the number of folks who turned out and their dedication to making this industry's voice heard," commented Judy Howard of Retail Alliance. "Lobby Day was one of the coolest experiences in my life!" expressed Michael Moody of Oliver's Market. Bryan Tallman, of Dr. Rath Education Services, said, "Not only did I have a great time, but I

really believe we made an impact at the Capitol. It is reassuring to know that our industry has Natural Products Association West fighting for us." Veteran advocate, Michael LeVesque of Vitamin Express, summed it up this way: "Thanks for a wonderful morning event that helped tremendously in our being effective as we visited each office."

The meetings were enjoyable and productive and reinforced the importance of grass roots advocacy. The day concluded with refreshments and an informal review of the afternoon meetings and what follow-up was necessary by Natural Products Association West staff.

For some participants, this was a two-day event at the Capitol. Nine member companies sampled their products at the Step into Fitness Faire on Wednesday, May 23, 2007. The event, organized by Senator Torlakson's Task Force to promote health and fitness during National Fitness Month, drew at least 2000 people on the Capitol grounds. All participating companies agreed that it was a worthwhile event and aptly timed with Natural Products Association West's 'Health Matters!' Advocacy Day.

For more details and photos of both events, please visit www.naturalproductsassocwest.org or e-mail Dot Boyd at dboyd@naturalproductsassocwestorg or call 866-343-6632.

Natural Products Association West (Formerly NNFA-West)

Representing and Serving the Natural Products Industry in CA, AZ, NV, HI and Guam

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