

## Tradedeer

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**From:** Mark O'Connor [mark.oconnor@deernz.org]  
**Sent:** Friday, 1 February 2013 6:48 p.m.  
**To:** Mark O'Connor  
**Subject:** Fwd: Comments to producers re deer velvet

## Dear friends of the deer industry

Over the last couple of days, there has been a lot of media attention on deer velvet. I wanted to provide you some background to the issue, DINZ's position on it, and what has been done.

### **Background**

On Wednesday, a company called "S.W.A.T.S" reported, in passing in a [Sports Illustrated article](#), that golfer Vijay Singh (world ranking: 46, and was 1<sup>st</sup> for 32 weeks in 2004-5) uses a products by S.W.A.T.S called [the Ultimate Spray](#) which purportedly contains New Zealand deer velvet. It appears that Singh was one of the very few athletes to have actually paid for the product, and from Singh's comments, it appears that he was unaware that the product is likely to not meet the requirements of a number of regulators.

The S.W.A.T.S product is marketed as an [IGF-1\[1\]](#) product. The use of IGF-1 is banned by the [World Anti-Doping Agency](#) and the US PGA. It is considered a Performance Enhancing Drug.

The matter has been widely reported in the US by [Yahoo! Sports](#), and many others. In New Zealand, it has been reported by TVNZ, TV3, Radio New Zealand, Radio sport, in [Stuff.co.nz](#), and [herald.co.nz](#).

Sir Bob Charles, a long time advocate of deer velvet, provided some comments that he thought he may have breached anti-doping laws by taking a couple of capsules of velvet powder per day ([reported by Radio New Zealand](#)). DINZ's understanding is that this is not the case at all. Sir Bob's consumption of a whole deer velvet powder is very unlikely to result in a positive result for IGF-1.

### **DINZ's position**

- Deer velvet is not a banned substance. Deer Velvet is a natural product with a long history of legitimate use.
- IGF-I is a substance banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and the US PGA.
- Deer velvet does contain IGF-I, but at very low levels. IGF-1 is a naturally occurring substance found in many food products including milk and meat – also at low levels. For example, a person drinking a 200ml glass of low fat milk would ingest more IGF-1 than a person consuming a fairly large dose of velvet (1,000mg). Also the chances of IGF-1 surviving the stomach environment unmodified or denatured is very low.

- S.W.A.T.S has reportedly refined deer velvet to concentrate IGF-1. This changes the material from deer velvet (which is not banned) to an IGF-1 product (which is banned by WADA and the US PGA). This is where the problem lies, rather than a pure velvet capsule, sliced velvet or whole piece product.

### **What DINZ has done**

- A position statement was immediately provided to DINZ board by the Executive based on DINZ's issues response plan.
- DINZ advised the Ministry for Primary Industries immediately, took their advice and agreed to work together on the issue
- DINZ spoke with Sir Bob Charles to advise him that DINZ's clear view is that the consumption of a whole velvet product is very different to an IGF-1 product administered sublingually, and he should certainly not assume that he would have failed any doping testing.
- DINZ also provided background material to representatives of the company he endorses for their use in media statements they plan to make.
- DINZ spoke to NZ Golf and provided background material for their use in a media release that they are issuing this afternoon.
- DINZ spoke to the CEO of Drug Free Sport New Zealand. We advised him of DINZ's position and provided written information. We provided scientific literature showing no statistically significant changes in IGF-1 levels following supplementation with deer velvet.
- DINZ spoke to Radio New Zealand and provided commentary which was used on the Nine-to-Noon show, Rural Report and afternoons with Jim Mora. We also spoke to TVNZ and provided DINZ's position.

From here, the Executive will be watching the situation over the weekend and will respond as appropriate.

If you have any specific concerns, please contact me.

Kind regards  
Mark

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[1] Insulin-like Growth Factor stimulates systemic body growth, and has growth-promoting effects on the body. It is not a growth hormone, rather a small protein called a growth factor.