

Jonathan: Welcome, everyone. Jonathan Hunsaker here with TeriAnn Trevenen, my co-host.

TeriAnn: Hey everyone.

Jonathan: And we are on the Empowering You Organically Podcast. This is Episode 7 of Season 1. Thank you for joining us. Listen, I wanted to let you know also, you can go to empoweringyouorganically.com and you can download all the transcripts of every episode. We also put the cliff notes up there. And you can even watch us on video if you're so inclined. So, be sure to check out empoweringyouorganically.com if there's anything you missed in this podcast or just want any additional information.

Today's podcast, we're going to talk about Prop 65. Now, if you live outside of California, you may not even know what it is. You may have started seeing Prop 65 stickers on some of your products that you've ordered from Amazon lately. And we get a lot of questions at Organixx because few of our products have Prop 65 stickers on them. So, we just wanted to do a podcast to educate you at home. To help you understand what is Prop 65. Why do some products have Prop 65 warnings on them and why do some not have it?

So, TeriAnn, tell us, what is Prop 65?

TeriAnn: Yeah. So, I mean just to kick it off, Prop 65 was formally titled the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986. It was a California proposition that was passed by direct voter initiative in 1986 by a 63 percent to 37 percent vote. And its goals are “To protect drinking water sources from toxic substances that may cause cancer and birth defects and to reduce or eliminate exposures to those chemicals generally, for example, in consumer products, by requiring warnings in advance of those exposures.” So, that's a little bit of the background behind what Prop 65 is.

Jonathan: Yeah. When it started, Prop 65 had really good intentions, and I think it was really to put out there to help inform the public. I think at this point, 40 years later, 30 years later, it's gone a little overboard, right? So, now, there are 900 different chemicals that are listed on Prop 65. And some of what they require safe limits are just unreasonable, almost aren't even possible to hit those limits just in everyday life.

So, let's talk a little bit more about that. Let's talk about some of the different ingredients and heavy metals, and what the FDA determines is safe, and what Prop 65 determines is safe.

TeriAnn: Yeah, and before we do that, another thing around Prop 65 is that they mandate that foods, dietary supplements, and other consumer products have these warnings. And you'll see two different types of warnings; one is cancer and one is birth defects. Sometimes you'll see cancer on one, sometimes you'll see birth defects on one, and sometimes you can see both on one, if they feel that the product exceeds certain limits, which as you mentioned; some of these are outrageous as far as how low they are.

They're just some of these things that we're testing for, naturally occurring every day, and things that we're consuming, and things in the environment. And their testing levels are so low that you have to warn on things that you would just consume and food that you're eating. And so, the warnings are there only for the state of California. It's only something that happens in California.

And there's another side to this. We already have the FDA regulating supplements and other products that we're consuming, and their testing levels are much higher. You and I had talked about this before, and I can't remember what you told me, but what was it Prop 65 versus the FDA is how much lower is the Prop 65?

Jonathan: Let's use lead for an example, right? So, the FDA determines that 75 micrograms is safe for an adult. For pregnant women, they possess 25 micrograms, and for children, 6 micrograms, whereas Proposition 65 says 0.5 micrograms is the safe limit. And let's put that into a little perspective here. If you just step outside in Los Angeles and breathe the air, or test the air, it would fail Prop 65 lead limit of 0.5 micrograms.

TeriAnn: Yeah.

Jonathan: If you drink the tap water in California, it's going to fail it. And listen, if—

TeriAnn: People should be walking around wearing stickers.

Jonathan: Exactly.

TeriAnn: Because they failed the test. I mean truly, it's that funny when you think about it. It's that comical that you would have to test for that, so crazy that you have to test for that, but you're consuming that just through what you're naturally in taking and ingesting every day just by drinking water, by breathing the air.

Jonathan: Exactly. And listen, I understand that there's very good intentions behind Prop 65. I think there's very good intentions behind a lot of things that are put out there with rules and regulations, but then they end up just spiraling out of control. It just becomes more and more regulated to the point to where it's not even reasonable. So, let me give you some examples of what some other—I'm just talking about lead specifically.

So, if you take a raw avocado, it has 4.5 micrograms of lead. It is eight times higher than what Proposition 65 would deem as healthy. Now, because it is a whole food, it is not required to have a sticker. Now, if you have avocado in a processed food, right? It would likely be over the top of that lead limit, and then you would have to put this sticker on there, but being a whole food, you don't need to. Honey has 4.5 micrograms, of lead raw watermelon – 4.5, dried raisins – 3.5 micrograms, raw cucumber

– 3.4 micrograms, or raw peach – 3.4 micro grams, or raw red apple – 2.6, 7, 8 times the limit of what Prop 65 determines is safe, and these are naturally occurring.

I mean these plants are getting it from the soil, and it's naturally occurring inside of the plant itself. There is no way to rid that plant of the lead unless you were to grow it in a soil that is so depleted of minerals and vitamins that there's no nutrient value in that plant or vegetable or fruit or whatever you're consuming anyway.

TeriAnn: Right.

Jonathan: And if we if we go just kind of further down the rabbit hole here, dry wine, red wine is 6.8 micrograms, boiled spinach – 7, fried beef liver – 9 micrograms. That's 24 times, is that right? I'm sorry. That's 18 times higher, Italian salad dressing – 12.2 micrograms. So, it's just helping to share the reality of the limits that they're putting on there, right? These are all well below FDA regulations, but again, every single one of these goes above Prop 65.

And where this comes into conversation around supplements and why we're having this conversation is all of our supplements are whole food supplements, right? So, when our supplements contain mushrooms, right? Which can have a little bit higher lead or arsenic that just happens naturally when they're grown in the soil.

TeriAnn: They will have higher arsenic when it comes to mushrooms. There's no question about it. You can't avoid that.

Jonathan: Absolutely. And so, if you get one of our products and it has a sticker on there, and this is what we're fighting as a company, we're fighting the rules that our supplements are made from whole food ingredients, and whole foods are not required to have the Prop 65 sticker. So, I'm fighting that we're not required to either, for the simple fact that all of our ingredients are whole food.

TeriAnn: Whole food organic.

Jonathan: Exactly.

TeriAnn: By the way, which is just an interesting part of the conversation as well. You look at organic whole food supplements, and we have to test for some of these things – arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury, and beyond – and even organic whole foods are going to have some trace of those in there. And so, it goes back to what you're saying is we have to defend to people all the time, our products, even though they're extremely clean.

We work hard with our manufacturer to make very high-quality products, but you're going to find this in there, and putting that warning on there for people confuses people. They think that the products are bad.

They think that what they're taking is bad, but really, these are products that have nutritional value that people aren't getting in their everyday food.

Jonathan: Absolutely. And that's the challenge. And we're not just talking about Organixx, our company specifically. I mean this is happening across the board that you're seeing this. Now, if you see a supplement out there that doesn't have a sticker on it versus one that does, it doesn't mean that the one that doesn't have the sticker is healthier. It could mean many things, right? That company just may not be abiding by Prop 65, rules and regulations for the state of California.

TeriAnn: They may not even know it exists.

Jonathan: They may not know it exists.

TeriAnn: Yeah.

Jonathan: Which is something that we learned, right? I mean we got approached it like, “Hey, you need a sticker on a couple of your products.” And then we started down this whole rabbit hole, because I live in Texas, you live in Texas, we manufacture out of New York. I mean everything is done here in the US, but we're not in California. So, we were not privy to all of the different rules and regulations that happen inside of California.

So, I say all that to say if you're holding two bottles, and one has a Prop 65 and one doesn't, it doesn't mean that the one that doesn't is healthier. There could be many reasons, right? The company may not be labeling it properly. Two, there's a lot of things that go into it. What if the ingredients in the one that doesn't have this sticker was grown in soil that was depleted of vitamins and minerals and nutrients, and so, it—maybe it tested lower, but it's a lower quality, lower nutrient-dense ingredient anyway?

And this is where the entire confusion comes in. This is where my big argument comes in, is we're talking about a whole food. I mean if you've got avocado or if you've got apple or you've got watermelon, and not that any of our supplements have those in those, but talk about mushrooms specifically, right? We put mushrooms in our Turmeric 3D. Obviously our 7M+ is seven different mushrooms.

There's no way we're passing the Prop 65, yet they are organic. They are clean. They're nutrient dense. They're tested. And the testimonials, I mean we're 4 ½-5 stars for hundreds, if not thousands of reviews on our 7M+, and how it's really helping people's immune systems and all of that. So, that's why we're making this podcast today to inform people and just open up the conversation so that you really understand what is Prop 65.

So, I've gone down a few rabbit holes there. Let's back out just a little bit here. And should we talk a little bit more kind of about Prop 65 versus national standards? Should we compare a little bit I guess with the FDA and the EPA?

TeriAnn: Yup. Well, and that's the interesting aspect of this conversation. We already have the FDA, who is regulating so many different things in the industry. In fact, if you go to—by the way, I want to give people some information so that they can check it out for themselves. If you want to read more about Prop 65 and everything that we've been talking about, you can go to OAG.ca.gov/prop65, and you'll find all of the things that we're talking about here. We're not just saying all this. It's fact, and you can find the information behind it there. So, I think that's important, but you can also go and look at the Food and Drug Administration, who's also regulating what's going on in the supplement industry.

And so, just from their website, FDA regulates both finished dietary supplement products and dietary ingredients. FDA regulates dietary supplements under a different set of regulations than those covering conventional food and drug products. More specifically, they are regulating dietary ingredients such as vitamins, mineral, herbs, or other botanical and amino acids, dietary substances for use by man to supplement the diet by increasing the total dietary intake or concentrate metabolite, constituent extract or combination the preceding substances.

So, we already have the Food and Drug Administration regulating the supplement industry and beyond. There's a lot of different administrations who are regulating different things that we're consuming. And that's not to say that we don't need better regulations and standards across the board. However, California is the only state that has a proposition like this, where they're requiring testing at such low levels that we're getting that in what we're taking every day, just through our food and our drinking water and what we're breathing in in the air.

And so, it just brings up the question of like where is that balance when it's coming to California and what they're mandating and regulating based off of their voters versus what's happening in the rest of the country? I think in the rest of the country, like I mentioned, we could definitely look at better standards for supplements, for food, for everything across the board, but Prop 65 has taken it to an extreme.

And when people aren't educated on Prop 65 or the Food and Drug Administration, and we're not being responsible in what we're consuming, the question comes into play, how do you know what you shouldn't be taking? And just the other day, I was having a conversation with someone who's out of California, who has a degree in holistic nutrition, and had no idea that Prop 65 was even a thing. And why are these warnings on the bottles? Why do we have this information on our bottles? And so many other people.

And so, I think people need to be educated on what Prop 65 outlines, what the FDA outlines, and where's that happy balance in the middle, and demanding that the products you're taking are being tested for these things, but at a healthy level that makes sense for everyone.

Jonathan: Yeah. I agree with you. I love the idea of making sure that the products that are going out on the market are clean and good and high-quality, right? The supplement industry is not regulated very much in the sense that there's all kinds of stuff that you can find online. It's hard to know what to trust,

what's good. So, I am for, and I'm fine testing and showing the results and showing where things measure up, but we've got to be reasonable, right?

Now, and I'm not saying that the FDA regulation is the one to go by either. I think that is probably a bit on the high side when it comes to what's healthy. We say 75 micrograms and 25 for pregnant women micrograms and 6 for kids, that 75 might be a little bit high. So, I think there's a happy medium somewhere in there.

So, and let me just kind of share. I was just looking this up here. So, Prop 65 safe harbor, talking about lead itself, right? At 0.5 micrograms per day. The FDA is 75 for adults, 6 for children. The European Food Safety Authority estimates the average adult consumes around 50 micrograms per day. That's 100 times the Prop 65 limit. So, that's what they're doing over there in Europe, just seeing if I could find some other stuff around here, some of the EPA talks about, and we're just talking about lead in general.

According to the EPA, natural levels of lead and soil can range from 50 parts per million to 400 parts per million. When you count for the amount of lead in the soil from man-made pollution, some areas can contain up to 10,000 parts per million. Granted, these are contaminated areas, usually near factories. So, there needs to be something there, right? To help make sure that we're not growing a bunch of our ingredients for supplements right next to a factory that has 10,000 parts per million of lead in the soil. But there's also got to be a happy balance there, where we're not growing it in such depleted soil that there's no nutrients left in the plant.

And I want to go back to something you were talking about, because what continues to stick out to me here is the lack of education and the confusion that happens in the marketplace and all the small businesses that suffer from. We're a small business. I've been an entrepreneur since I'm 17, and I've seen time and time again where regulations come in to squash out the small business.

I'm not saying this is one of those, but if you get a sticker on one of our products it says, "May cause birth defects." Right? Because the arsenic is a fraction higher than what Prop 65 allows or, "May cause..." Trying to think of the other warning label that's on there. "May cause birth defects." It may cause cancer, right? Because of the amount of lead that's in there. It's just not even in context, right?

Our Turmeric 3D, I was looking at our testing results. The testing on our Turmeric 3D was 0.515 micrograms. We were over by 1/100 over what Prop 65 says. And they said, "Well, you got to put a sticker on there." Well, let's put this in context. You get our Turmeric 3D in it, which I'm not saying that our Turmeric 3D does anything, it doesn't cure anything, I can't make any statements like that, but a lot of people take it for healthy inflammation.

You see a sticker that says, "May cause cancer." I mean we have a lot of cancer survivors that take a lot of our supplements, and all the sudden you get scared. You get worried like, "Oh, no. I don't want to take something that I thought was nutritious for my body. Now, all the sudden, I'm getting a warning sticker

on here, and you know, don't want this.” And it's just absurd, right? Because you don't even know what amount it went over, number one.

Two, you don't understand the context, because it's not widely known. It's just Prop 65. You're required to have the sticker. They're going to sue you or shut you down. So, I go down little tangents like this because it hits home for me being a small business, right? And it hits home for me when things get over regulated. And I also understand the balance that's needed to ensure that the quality of products that hit the market go through some sort of standard as well, because there is just a lot of garbage, in my opinion, that's out there that's for sale.

TeriAnn: Yeah. Well, and I think you touched on a few interesting points. You talked about Europe's standards. So, obviously people across the world are paying attention to this and it matters to people. They're calling for regulation around testing, heavy metals, toxins, and chemicals that can impact us negatively.

And in previous podcasts, we've talked about the soil. We've talked about how it's just unavoidable to ingest or consume some of these toxins or these heavy metals. And I think as consumers, this is a call to action for us to be educated on what we're taking. Some of our food products in the grocery store aren't even food. There's no food. There's no nutritional value in them.

Jonathan: Walk down the cereal aisle and point to me one box of cereal that is—

TeriAnn: Yeah, exactly.

Jonathan: You know.

TeriAnn: And so, some of these things like supplements that are so heavily regulated, it's like they're companies like Organixx and other supplement companies, and people beyond supplements were putting amazing products out there that have so much value to you from a nutritional standpoint that really are changing your overall health, and you get scared to take them because of things like stickers on a bottle from Prop 65, and that specifically pertains to California, but across the board, people should be more educated on what levels of toxins, heavy metals, chemicals are their products containing.

And I think to your point on the FDA and what the regulations are there, there's got to be a happy balance. I think Europe's a little bit lower than the FDA, just from what they stated, from what you stated earlier. I think California is extremely low to the point where it doesn't even make sense in some ways to not be taking some of these nutritional products, like supplements, whole food supplements that can really impact you in a positive way, and it does go beyond California.

When you talk about the small business owners, there are some things that are very restrictive when it comes to getting your product out into the mainstream. For example, we sell products on Amazon, and

Amazon does our fulfillment. They won't pick and choose when we send things to California, "Oh, we'll put a sticker just on the California bottles." They have to put it on every bottle that we send out or we can't do it at all.

So, to be in compliance with California, we have to put the sticker on every single bottle that goes to Amazon to do fulfillment by Amazon, because we'll be breaking the violation or in violation, excuse me, of the regulations and requirements around Prop 65. And so, everyone who's getting our products off of Amazon is getting the sticker, and they're like, "What?" Especially people who are—

Jonathan: Well, everyone that's getting the product that—the few products that are over the limit, right?

TeriAnn: Exactly.

Jonathan: We have plenty of products that don't require this sticker, right?

TeriAnn: Yeah, exactly. But again, our levels are so low in our product, but we still have to warn people, and people who aren't educated on Prop 65 have no idea what they're getting. We're trying to educate people on what this is. Not only because you're still taking a product that benefits you tremendously, but because I think people need to be aware of levels, and what a healthy level is when it comes to lead, mercury, toxins, chemicals, heavy metals, and what you can still consume. I think people need to be educated on that, which is why we're talking about this today.

It's so important. It impacts small businesses. It impacts the consumer. It impacts how things are regulated. It impacts how we should be voting on things. It impacts on how people should be active in advocating for better regulations, but regulations that make sense, that are not so far-fetched that it's just like people aren't even taking products that benefit them, and they truly do benefit them, right? So, it's a far-reaching issue on people need to be educated across the board.

Jonathan: Yep. I agree 100 percent. And to put things into context here, there's 900 different chemicals, minerals, whatever, you want to—you know, elements that are on the Prop 65 list. And so, the ones that really pertain to us as a supplement company are lead and arsenic, right? And so, which again, they naturally occur in the food, and it's different. You were reading me something before we started this podcast, and I'd like for you to read it to the entire audience.

Let's talk about lead for a second, because lead by itself, yes, can be dangerous, but let's talk about the difference between lead as a standalone versus lead that occurs inside of a plant or that is bonded with another element, and the difference and the health levels between the two.

TeriAnn: Yep.

Jonathan: I put you on the spot to find the one that we read.

TeriAnn: You are putting me on the spot. I'm going to have to pull it up. So, give me just one second.

Jonathan: Perfect.

TeriAnn: But it is really important. I think there's something interesting information when it comes to this.

Jonathan: And so, while we're waiting for you to pull that up, again, I mean it's a tough place to be in as myself as a consumer and as a business owner, because listen, I'm very conscious of the levels of mercury, right? That is in our fish and that comes from seafood, especially from the Pacific Ocean, and the radiation and mercury levels that come from over there now. And you see the FDA continued to raise those healthy limits, likely so they can—so companies can continue to sell products that are under those limits.

And so, I think that there—again, it's all about finding that balance. I think that 75 is probably high, and nothing that we have comes anywhere remotely close to that, but again, the 0.5 micrograms is absurdly low. When you can't even breathe the air in Los Angeles, Los Angeles itself should have a Prop 65 sticker over top of it, because you can't even breathe the air without being over the limit.

TeriAnn: Yeah.

Jonathan: I just want to put things into perspective. I mean it's just absurd.

TeriAnn: I think it's important to put it into perspective so people understand. So, we found this really interesting. This is a company called Redmond, Live Your Journey. And they provide clay, some powders with peppermint, charcoal, just naturally occurring things, cinnamon. So, they just have these different things that they sell and—

Jonathan: And by the way, no affiliation with anything here. We're just sharing information.

TeriAnn: No. We just loved how they talked about Prop 65. It made so much sense. And this is a company that's clearly been impacted, similar to our company and a lot of companies are, and they're having to explain themselves to their consumers. They sell a great product, but they have to explain themselves. And they talk about just the what—one of the things that we have to test for. So, we've talked about arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury but they specifically have issues with lead when it comes to Prop 65.

So, they say this is on their website, “Lead is a natural part of our planet in sea water, fresh water, and soil, and even in air. Every time you take a walk along a beach or breathe fresh mountain air, you are being exposed to the tiniest amount of lead, 50 to 400 parts per million of the surface of our planet,

according to the EPA. Should we be worried? Trace amounts of lead might sound like a very bad thing, but the FDA has determined that consuming less than 75 micrograms of lead does not lead to health complications.”

For pregnant women and children, as we talked about before, that number is 25 micrograms. I think you were just saying in Europe they claimed people consume 50 micrograms per day and I don't know what the regulations are in your—but if there's anything around—

Jonathan: But that's what they say is the healthy—

TeriAnn: The healthy range?

Jonathan: Yes.

TeriAnn: Okay. “The really good news is that, on a chemical level, lead likes to make friends. Nearly all the lead in our environment is bound to other elements like zinc, copper, silver, and others.” And they talk about, in their product, “There's a trace amount of lead that bonded long ago with clay molecules and other trace elements. That bond prevents lead from accumulating in our bodies.”

Super fascinating, because here, we have to warn people because of the levels of lead in our product, but lead isn't always a bad thing, and sometimes people look at it, we've gotten comments from people. “You have lead in your products, you're warning me because of lead.” But they need to be educated on lead and what happens with lead.

“Why does a bond matter? Natural chemistry is pretty amazing. Each cell in our bodies depends on a specific compound to stay alive, one part sodium and one part chloride. Potentially deadly by themselves, these ions combined to create sodium chloride, or salt, without which we couldn't survive. Similarly, lead by itself is very different from lead that has already bonded to other elements or molecules.”

“Ingesting lead that isn't bonded is dangerous for the same rare reason. Ingesting already bonded lead isn't; the bond is really hard to break. The nature of Bentonite clay,” which is a product they sell, “means any lead is already bonded, which is why the FDA agrees it's unlikely that any lead in Bentonite clay would remain in the body if ingested.”

“The existing molecular bond remains in place in any lettuce flushed from your system, along with other toxins that bond to neighboring clay molecules. Summary, if chemistry was never your thing, here's the big picture. Tiny amounts of lead are in our planet's water, soil, and air. Lone lead molecules pose health risks when bonded with other elements and compounds,” which is the case with their product, “the bond is too strong for our bodies to break. Any bonded lead leaves the natural way still bound to the same molecules as when we ingested it.”

This reminds me of on an earlier podcast we talked to Doc about filling the dam and filling our body with good products. One of the things that I have issue with, with having to warn people about our products and then them not taking good products for them, not just ours, but other people as well, is that you're going to get some levels of these things that we've talked about – arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury and beyond. The list goes on and on.

And instead of taking products that fill your body with these good nutrients and good things that we're not even getting in our soil anymore, which actually helps to rid your body of toxins and helps your body to fill itself with good things, people, just in some cases, aren't even taking products that could really benefit their health because of these warnings, lead. I think there's a big misunderstanding around lead and what it truly is and how it occurs and what happens with it, just as they explained here. A lead alone can be really dangerous. Lead bonded to other things isn't necessarily a bad thing.

Jonathan: Everything is in context, right? And understanding it. And I'm looking, I mean we have—we get all of our products tested, right? For the heavy metals – arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury. None of them get even close on the Prop 65 levels for mercury, or even cadmium. One, just a little bit over on the arsenic, and then lead appears on a few of them. And there's just no way to avoid it, because we use a whole food ingredient, right? And not only that, now you see the whole food ingredient, but then it's highly concentrated, right? So that you can fit it inside of that small pill.

And I don't know that I want to rid of the lead, quite frankly, because, like I've said probably five times on this podcast already, that means it was grown in soil that was barren of all kinds of vitamins and minerals and elements and things that actually make that ingredient, that plant nutritious, that gives it its value. And yeah, I think there's a better balance to have here.

And what I ask the audience to do is if you get a product that has a sticker on there, reach out to that company and ask them “Why? What is it that failed, and can you please put it in context? What were your test results? What's the Prop 65 limit? What's the FDA limit, and what were your test results?” And then make a decision for yourself.

Now, listen, if you feel that Prop 65 is the line, and that's where you draw the line, that's your prerogative. That's your choice. This is one of the reasons why we chose to put Prop 65 stickers on. There's a lot of supplement companies out there that would rather not put this sticker on, and take the risk of being sued, and because the cost to sales they feel would be much higher by having the sticker on than paying a lawsuit, right?

It's the same thing that you hear about in the automotive industry, where you wonder if there should be a recall or not on something, and they wait out. They're like, “Well, if we're going to get lawsuits, and it's only going to cost us \$100 million in lawsuits, but it's going to cost us \$150 million to recall it. Let's just stick with the lawsuits.”

TeriAnn: Well, and I think with Prop 65, I think when you say people not having stickers on the bottles, are they even testing their products? Which being a responsible manufacturer of products, or someone who sells products, whatever industry you're in, you've got to have something to test against. And specifically for us in the supplement space, people should be responsible, should be testing.

If someone doesn't have a sticker on their bottle, they may have tested, and the results are so high, they don't want to put it on there. They may have tested, and their results are so close that they're like “We'll just risk getting a slap on the hands for not having it on there.” But I think that's one of the benefits to Prop 65 overall is that it's pushing more people to test, and I think that's really important. I think the FDA has some regulations that people have to be careful of. I think one of the big things is marketing, and what you're saying about your products and what you're claiming in your products, because supplements and food-based products are not a drug.

That's very different in the claims you can make about drugs versus food-based supplements. And we had a whole podcast around pharmaceuticals versus nutraceuticals, which you can listen to and find out more about that and what defines those two things, but I think that Prop 65 is not all bad, because it is pushing people to test. But what you have to question if you're getting a product in California specifically, is like you said, the sticker's not on there. If the sticker is on there, are you educated enough to know what questions to ask, to know what you're getting in your product?

Jonathan: Exactly, and I think it's a question that should be asked regardless if you get this sticker on your product, right? What are your test results? We just launched a brand-new collagens product called Clean Sourced Collagens. And we launched it a month ago. And of course, we went through our heavy metals testing, and we came through with flying colors, right? It was zeros across the board and—

TeriAnn: It's probably one of the cleanest collagens on the market.

Jonathan: I think it's the cleanest collagens on the market, but I can't make that claim, right?

TeriAnn: Yeah. Well, we don't know for sure, but it's very clean.

Jonathan: Right. And you know that matters to us, right? So, back to what I was saying before, is I think that one, if there is a sticker, find out what were their test limits. If there isn't a sticker, ask, “Are you tested? And if so, what are your testing results?” It's something we're working on. We want to publish all of our testing results online. We have to find that—there's legal ways to do that as well, to protect the labs that are putting out the information, but we want to publish—

TeriAnn: Well, you have to seek permission to post the results.

Jonathan: Exactly.

TeriAnn: And which is important I think, too. I think it gets out of hand if you don't have that in place.

Jonathan: And you got to know that you're using a reputable lab and all of that. But my whole point being is this just comes back to the conversation of a company putting a sticker on versus not. We do put the sticker on so that you do know that “Hey, this did go over in one of the things around Prop 65,” and because like I was saying before, you've got to determine what is your level of comfort, right?

And if you think Prop 65, I hope you don't live in California and breathe their air or drink their water, but if Prop 65 is where you want to draw the line, then we want you to know that with the stickers on our products. So, just want to close up that thought, or it was going to stay twirling around in my head.

TeriAnn: Yeah, and I think the whole purpose, just to wrap this conversation up, the whole purpose of doing this podcast, this is a very controversial topic when it comes to Prop 65, but I think for each individual consumers, we've mentioned many times before in the podcast, know the FDA limits, know your Prop 65 limits, know what they claim a safe amount of these specific heavy metals, toxins, all of those are to consume, what you're just going to get on a daily basis, and look at your products. Are your manufacturers, are your companies who are selling you products doing testing, being responsible, putting out high-quality products?

In this day and age, when we have access when it comes to food, supplements, and beyond, cosmetics and beyond, where we have access to organic products that are cleaner than ever before, because people are demanding higher quality products, you should be educated. You should know what is in your products. You should know if your company is testing and being responsible, and they should have answers for you when you go to them and say, “Why do I have the sticker?” Or, “What are your test results on this product?” “Even if it's not pertaining to Prop 65, what were your test results? Is your product clean?”

And they should be able to explain to and help you understand in a way that makes sense to you where they're at. And I know that's something that we're working to do all the time. And it takes quite a bit of work and understanding to do that, but it's important as a consumer to demand that in the products that you're taking.

Jonathan: Yep. I agree 100 percent. I was while you were talking, I decided to go down just a little bit of a—not a rabbit hole but go down. We've talked a lot about lead. Let's talk about arsenic. And so, I went fda.gov. The link will be in our cliff notes and in the transcript at empoweringyouorganically.com if you want to go there and check this out.

And so, I'm right on the FDA website. “What is arsenic? Arsenic is a chemical element, present in the environment from both natural and human sources, include an erosion of arsenic-containing rocks, volcanic eruptions, contamination from mining and smelting ores, and previous or current use of arsenic-containing pesticides.”

“Are there different types of arsenic? There are two types of arsenic compounds in water, food, air, and soil – organic and inorganic. These together refer to as total arsenic. The inorganic forms of arsenic are the forms that have been associated with long-term health effects. Because both forms of arsenic have been found in soil and groundwater for many years, some arsenic may be found in certain food and beverage products, including rice, fruit, juices, and juice concentrates.”

Then we talked a little bit about the arsenic. And then, “How does arsenic get into foods? Do all foods have arsenic?” This is also from the fda.gov website. “Arsenic may be present in many foods, including grains, fruits, and vegetables, where it is present due to absorption through the soil and water. While most crops don't readily take up much arsenic from the ground, rice is different, because it takes up arsenic from soil and water more readily than other grains. In addition, some seafood has high levels of less toxic organic arsenic.”

And this is where—and let me just read this last thing really quickly, and we'll talk more about it. “Do organic foods have less arsenic than non-organic foods?” “Because arsenic is naturally found in the soil and water, it's absorbed by plants regardless of whether they are grown under conventional or organic farming practices.” This is the challenging part of Prop 65, because the even the FDA website is talking about the difference between organic and inorganic arsenic, whereas Prop 65 is just testing arsenic overall, and it's the inorganic that's unhealthy for you.

The organic is healthy for you, or it's not unhealthy for you, I should say, and it even says here, I mean, “In addition, some seafood has high levels of less toxic organic arsenic because it just occurs.” Right? In that plant, it's there in the soil. It's coming up through there. And so, I wanted to talk about arsenic, because we have one product specifically that does fail Prop 65. Now, it's not by much. I'd have to look at the exact numbers, but it's just a little bit over, like our Turmeric 3D. That's our 7M+. That's our mushroom blend. It's the very first product that we ever created.

And the only ingredients are non-organic mushrooms. I mean it is extremely nutritious, right? It's very nutrient dense. It's something that everybody should be taking. But then you get this Prop 65 sticker on it and you think, “Oh, no. There's something wrong with it.” And it's like, “No, it's just we haven't determined the difference, and we're not allowed to determine the difference between organic and inorganic arsenic.” Just the arsenic overall is higher, but mushrooms naturally absorb more arsenic from the soil, and it naturally occurs in them. There's no way to get rid of that.

Now, it does bring up the conversation, right? Between organic and non-organic still, right? Because non-organic can have high levels of arsenic that isn't naturally occurring. Maybe it came from a pesticide, or it was sprayed on the plant or some other inorganic source of arsenic, which causes it to be high. And this is why it's important for us that we do get organic ingredients. This is why all of our mushrooms and our 7M+ are organic mushrooms, right?

And I say that, because the challenge here is I don't have a way to tell you the difference. I don't have a way to say, "Hey, this sticker's on here because our organic arsenic is a little higher than Prop 65, but our inorganic is nil because we don't have any inorganic arsenic in there, because we get all organic ingredients."

And we're very proud of how clean our products are, how effective our products are. And again, I'm not just saying this for us, because there's hundreds of other small businesses out there that are struggling with the whole Prop 65 labeling. "What do I do?" "What don't I do?" It's causing all kinds of confusion.

Just take some time and reach out to your company. Ask them if you take a product that you really love and then you finally find it as a sticker on it. Call them up. Send them an email. Get educated on it. Because I'd be willing to bet that, 9 times out of 10, if it's a reputable company that is committed to organic and different things like that, it's still a very healthy product, right? And there's a lot of them out there.

Now, again, if it's a cheap synthetic supplement, or if it's the cheapest product on the shelf and it has a sticker, eh, maybe you want to question how high-quality it actually is. But I think for the most part, I mean if you've been taking it, you've been feeling a difference, and you know it comes from a good company, and then all of a sudden, you see a sticker, just take 30 seconds and give that company the benefit of the doubt and reach out and ask for their testing results. Let them explain themselves like we're doing right here on the podcast.

TeriAnn: Yeah. And just to mention too, you talked about synthetics. We talked about that in an earlier episode. We talked about pharmaceuticals versus nutraceuticals. We talked about synthetics and just being educated there. So, if you want to know more about that, outside of the Prop 65, you can go to our earlier episodes on empoweringyouorganically.com and check those out.

I just think this is such an important conversation, and I think again, pros and cons to Prop 65, pros and cons to the FDA, I think that there needs to be some standard and regulation out there, but ultimately, the power rests in the consumer and individuals being educated. And we wanted to face this issue head-on today because it's not something that's widely talked about right now to the consumer.

We don't talk to the consumer enough about this, because as a business, and many businesses out there trying to provide these amazing products, but they're impacted by things like this, and I think educating the consumer allows businesses to grow. It allows us to be competitive in the market. And putting out amazing quality products, because that's what so many small businesses are after. They really care about the quality. They really care about what people are getting. And I think that it allows people to have better products in their life.

So, we again—addressing this head-on was important to us. We get so many questions about it. It was just time to speak out about it and talk about what we're facing as a business and what other businesses

are facing. We obviously love to see other companies that are doing things like us grow, and people being educated about this is really important for that growth and important for the conversation. And again, I'll take it one step further. The more people that know can also push for better policy and regulation overall.

It's not some that are so far-fetched. Not some that are so—just so out of this world as far as like, “Oh, you can have these high levels of all of this garbage in your life.” Because that's where some of the regulations lie as well. Or, “These are so bad for you.” When really, they're so good. It's that education and people knowing, it's just so-so critical, and it's, again, why we tackled this this topic today.

Jonathan: I agree. I agree 100 percent So, one last bit of tangent before we end the podcast, but it's just interesting to me when you see a company like ours, or product like ours, that's requiring a Prop 65 sticker. To me, it feels very familiar with all of the organic products that are out there that have to label themselves USDA-certified organic or label themselves Non-GMO, right? Where I feel that the organic version is the real version. That's the version that's been around for a long time, right? The Non-GMO, that's the original.

So, all of these products that have genetically modified organisms in them, GMOs, they are the ones that should be labeling, right? They're the ones that should be. I mean the stickers that are on there, that lets you know, “Hey, we have altered plants. We have altered ingredients in here. We don't know what the effects of them are. We altered them so that they could be resistant to pesticides and glyphosate and all kinds of stuff.”

They're not required to label it, right? And it feels the same way. It feels like we're put on that side, “Well, okay. Well, you're healthy. You're organic. You're Non-GMO. Now, you need to put a sticker on here about this.” As opposed to all of those companies out there that have fought to require companies not to label that they require GMOs.

So, I'll get off my soapbox on that, and I will say if, if you're going to the voting booths any time soon, and there is something about having to label products that have GMOs in them, vote for that labeling, because we need to know what's in our foods, right? We need to know if it has GMOs in it. And I fight really hard for the organic movement and to get us back there because that's the healthy place that we need to be. We need to be organic. We need to be Non-GMO. We need to be whole food, right? We need to just get away from all the processed garbage and junk that fills up 90 percent, 95 percent of the grocery stores, and just get back to our roots of eating good, clean, healthy food.

TeriAnn: Yup, absolutely.

Jonathan: So, that's all I'll say on and I could probably rant on this for another hour, but I won't. So, thank you, everybody, for listening. TeriAnn, thank you so much for joining me on this podcast.

TeriAnn: Thank you.

Jonathan: Again, go to empoweringyouorganically.com. You can get transcripts of this episode and any of our previous or future episodes once they get done. Please go to iTunes as well, subscribe. That way you don't miss any one of our future podcasts. When you subscribe, it helps reach even other people, right? So, the more subscribers that we have on iTunes, if somebody is listening to a podcast that's similar to ours, it will recommend our podcast to them. So, I appreciate you listening, if you're listening to empoweringyouorganically.com, but I also ask that you subscribe. It helps us reach more people. It helps us educate more people and get the world healthier.

TeriAnn: Yeah. And let us know what you want to hear about as well. You can always go to empoweringyouorganically.com and leave us feedback. You can go on Facebook and leave us comments. We want to hear from you in any way that makes sense to you, what we can address for you. Prop 65 today came directly from people asking questions, and something that needed to be addressed. And so, please give us your feedback so that we can get more information out there that's meaningful for you.

Jonathan: Absolutely. Thanks again, TeriAnn.

TeriAnn: Thanks.

Jonathan: Thank you at home for listening, whether you're listening at home, in your car, on your morning walk, at the gym, wherever you're listening, thank you for tuning in, and we'll see you on the next show.

TeriAnn: Thanks, everyone.