



FOOD LEGISLATION

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Labelling and Nutrition: 2003/04 Work Programme

Overall objective:

Ensure a high level of consumer protection and facilitate informed choice.

⇒ Help consumers make food choices consistent with their individual needs and dietary goals.



Labelling and Nutrition: 2003/04 Work Programme

Four key initiatives:

- **Food labelling evaluation: how can legislation be improved to better address consumer needs?**
 - ⇒ **Nutrition and health claims: new Regulation to allow science-based messages regarding health benefits of foods/diets & define nutrient content claims**
 - ⇒ **Nutrition labelling: revision of current rules to facilitate consumer understanding and selection of healthy diets**
- **Addition of nutrients to foods: new legislation to harmonise national rules re voluntary fortification.**



Claims

Draft Proposal for a Regulation of the EP and of the Council on Nutrition and Health Claims



Claims-Objectives

- To achieve a high level of consumer protection;
- To improve the free movement of goods within the internal market;
- To increase legal security for economic operators; and
- To ensure fair competition in the area of foods.



Claims-General Principles

- Nutrients + other substances with a nutritional or physiological effect
- “Disqualifying criteria” for foods??
- Compulsory nutrition labelling for all foods with claims
- Communication of claims



Nutrition Claims

List of permitted nutrition claims each with its relevant conditions of use, based on existing provisions of EU Member States, Codex Alimentarius Guidelines and on existing European Community provisions.



Health Claims

Claims that describe a relationship between a category of food, a food or one of its constituents and health.

- Health claims that are based on long-established and generally accepted scientific data and which describe the role of a nutrient/other substance in normal bodily functions
- Other health claims, including reduction of disease risk claims



Approval Procedure-Principle

Two different procedures:

- a positive list of allowed claims describing the role of a nutrient/other substance in normal bodily functions
- scientific assessment by European Food Safety Authority and a decision by the Commission for other health claims



Specific conditions (health claims)2

For reduction of disease risk claims:

a statement indicating that diseases have multiple risk factors and altering one of these may or may not have a beneficial effect



Claims-Future Steps & Timing

- Draft Proposal for a Regulation, for adoption by the Commission
- Adoption by the Commission (first half of 2003), and consequent
- Transmission to other European Institutions (first half of 2003)
- Final adoption foreseen for approx. 2 years later



Future Revision of EC Nutrition Labelling Directive

Current status:

- Questionnaire forwarded to Member States and stakeholders to seek views re future revision.
- Over 50 comments received from government authorities (EU/EFTA/Australia), consumers, health NGOs, industry and retailers.



Addition of nutrients

Preliminary Draft Proposal for a Regulation of the EP and of the Council on the addition of vitamins and minerals and other substances to foods



Addition of nutrients

Vitamins and Minerals may be added for:

- restoration
- nutritional equivalence of substitute foods
- fortification or enrichment



Addition of nutrients

The Regulation will set:

- Definitions
- Disqualifying criteria for foods??
- Positive lists of vitamins and minerals
- Criteria for setting minimum and maximum levels
- specific labelling requirements



Promotion of public health Nutrition and physical activity

Commission supported activities under:

- **Health Promotion Programme**
- **Health Monitoring Programme**
- **Cancer Programme**

- **Health Council Initiatives**



Promotion of public health Nutrition and physical activity

Public Health Programme-New action

**Establishment of
Nutrition and Physical Activity Network
(NPA)
consisting of expert institutes of
Member States**



Commission activities

Status Report on the European Commission's work In the field of nutrition in Europe