

To: Interested Parties

15 September 2008

Reference: CPD/0008

**European Commission's Proposal for a Food Information Regulation
Council Working Group meeting**

Dear Interested Party

A Council Working Group meeting took place on 2 September 2008 at which nutrition labelling aspects of the proposal for a Food Information Regulation were discussed.

Discussion at the meeting covered the following aspects of the proposal:

Form and content of the Nutrition declaration

- Whether nutrition labelling should be voluntary or mandatory.
- Which nutrients should form part of the nutrition declaration.
- Where on pack the declaration should appear.
- The form of expression of the declaration (per 100g/ml or per portion).
- Whether %RIVs should form part of the declaration.

There was general support from Member States for some form of mandatory nutrition declaration and for all nutrition information to appear in the same place.

Member States expressed a desire to maintain the status quo in terms of the form of expressing the nutrition declaration i.e. mandatory per 100g/ml declarations with additional per portion and %RIV information on a voluntary basis. There were also a number of calls for EFSA to validate the RIV figures contained in the proposal to ensure they have the appropriate scientific basis.

There was general agreement between Member States that all alcoholic drinks should be subject to the same requirements with regard to nutrition labelling.

National schemes

The majority of Member States expressed concern that national schemes could result in barriers to trade, increased monitoring and enforcement costs and a proliferation of schemes appearing on the market. A preference for harmonised action, possibly at a later date, was expressed by several delegations. The Commission asked Member States to consider the implications of not having a national schemes provision (which goes wider than nutrition labelling) and noted that it would mean the future of labelling schemes and logos currently in use would be

under threat and that it would prevent future innovation designed to help consumers make healthier dietary choices.

Exemptions from nutrition labelling

There was general agreement to the list of foods exempt from having to carry a nutrition declaration (Annex IV), with requests for definitions of some of the terms used.

Technical amendments to Directive 90/496/EEC

The Commission confirmed that the proposal to amend Directive 90/496/EEC Nutrition Labelling of Foodstuffs, agreed at SCoFCAH on 23 June 2008, is currently undergoing scrutiny procedures. Once scrutiny is complete, it is expected to be published within approximately one month, subject to comments received from the European Parliament.

Next Steps

The next Council Working Group meetings are scheduled for 30 September and 1 October 2008.

Yours faithfully

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