

**Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene**

**Proposal on Regulation of Konjac-containing Jelly Confectionery**

**Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the Government's proposal to regulate konjac-containing jelly confectionery products.

**Background**

2. Jelly confectionery products in the market may contain the ingredient konjac, which is also known as conjac, konnyaku, yam flour, glucomannan or E425. Codex considers Konjac a safe food additive, which is usually used as a thickener, emulsifier, stabiliser, etc. Compared with gelatin, konjac jelly has a much firmer texture, is less likely to dissolve, and retains its shape even when it is slurped.

3. Konjac-containing jelly confectionery products come in various sizes and shapes, including cups, pouches, and strips. Mini-cup jellies are encased in semi-rigid, dome-shaped mini-cups or mini-capsules. They are typically consumed either by sucking the entire jelly out of the cup in a single bite or by applying pressure to the mini-cup or mini-capsule to squeeze the confectionery into the mouth. The smooth and slippery surface of konjac jelly enables it to slide along the tongue towards the back of the mouth, making it difficult for consumers to control its direction, position, and the time needed to coordinate the swallowing action. As a result, konjac jelly can easily bypass the teeth, making children and the elderly particularly susceptible to choking accidents when consuming mini-cup konjac jelly.

4. On the other hand, non-mini-cup konjac jellies, such as those in pouches or sachets, are usually consumed in multiple bites by either squeezing the contents out through a small opening or by pushing the contents out without the need to suck from the container. Other larger-sized or non-prepackaged konjac jellies are typically consumed with a spoon,

which reduces the risk of choking without the need to suck from the container.

5. While konjac is a safe food additive, improper consumption of mini-cup konjac jellies may increase the choking risk, especially to children, due to their unique product design and firm texture. Fatal incidents related to the ingestion of mini-cup konjac-containing jelly confectionery products have been reported from time to time in different parts of the world. According to the Japanese Authority, there were 54 confirmed cases of accidental choking of konjac mini-cup jelly in Japan between July 1995 and July 2008, resulting in 22 deaths. In Hong Kong, the Coroner recommended the Administration to consider banning mini-cup konjac-containing jelly confectionery products with a height or width of 45mm or less after hearing a case of a girl who died of choking after consuming mini-cup jelly confectionery product at school in late 2024.

6. The Government has been promoting health education messages on prevention of food choking through various channels, including advice on avoiding direct consumption of mini-cup konjac-containing jelly confectionery products. The CFS, having reviewed the potential choking risks associated with the consumption of mini-cup konjac-containing jelly confectionery products, the regulatory practices of major jurisdictions concerning such products and our risk assessment, proposes amendments to the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap. 132W) to prohibit the sale of mini-cup jelly confectionery products containing konjac with a height or width of 45mm or less, and require all konjac-containing jelly confectionery to be labelled with a warning statement on prevention of choking.

## **Market Survey and Possible Impact to the Trade**

7. A market survey conducted by the CFS between December 2024 and January 2025 showed that there were around 80 brands of jelly confectionery products in the local market. These products were mainly from Japan, Taiwan, Korea, and Mainland China, and were sold in various sizes and shapes such as cup shape, tubular shape, and in pouch form. Among the 112 samples collected, only 9 (8% of the total number of samples) were mini-cup konjac-containing jelly confectionery products with a height or width of 45mm or less. Most of them were from Taiwan and Japan. As the product coverage is not extensive, the trade can comply with the proposed regulatory requirements by resizing the package of their

products.

8. Regarding labelling requirement, 59 out of the 112 samples were found to contain konjac, of which 32 (or 54%) carried choking warning labels in Chinese or English. Products without a warning label can still be sold in the market by affixing a warning label on the package. Therefore, we expect that the impact of the proposed amendments on the trade is minimal.

## **Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation**

9. The CFS consulted the Expert Committee on Food Safety on the proposed amendments, and members of the committee supported the proposal. Besides, we consulted the trade in March 2025 via a trade meeting and a Trade Consultation Forum, at which they raised no objection to the proposal. We also consulted the LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene (FSEH) at its meeting of 24 April 2025 and members were generally supportive. We have notified the World Trade Organisation of the regulatory proposal. The CFS has also established a dedicated webpage ([https://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/whatsnew\\_fstr/whatsnew\\_fstr\\_regulation\\_of\\_konjac-containing\\_jelly\\_confectionery.html](https://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/whatsnew_fstr/whatsnew_fstr_regulation_of_konjac-containing_jelly_confectionery.html)) with the regulatory proposal uploaded. Members of the public and the trade are welcome to offer their views on or before 8 June 2025.

10. In addition, the CFS, in collaboration with the Education Bureau, has issued a letter to schools, advising them to stop selling or providing mini-cup konjac-containing jelly confectionery products with a height or width of 45mm or less in places such as tuck shops and canteens.

## **Proposed Amendments**

11. We propose amending the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations (Cap. 132W) as follows –

- (i) If a mini-cup jelly confectionery product is with a height or width of 45mm or less, it shall not contain konjac.
- (ii) To require all prepackaged konjac-containing jelly confectionery

products to be labelled with a warning statement on prevention of choking hazard in both Chinese and English:

“注意：勿一口吞食，長者及兒童需在監護下食用。

Caution: Do not swallow whole. Elderly and children must consume under supervision.”

It is proposed that the amendments to ban the sale of mini-cup konjac-containing jelly confectionery products with a height or width of 45mm or less will take effect 6 months after passage of the amended Cap. 132W, while the labelling requirements for all konjac-containing jelly confectionery products will come into operation 12 months after passage of the amended Cap. 132W.

## **Guidelines**

12. The CFS has prepared guidelines on the requirements under the amended Cap. 132W, and will upload them onto the CFS website for the trade's reference.

## **Health Education**

13. The CFS will continue to collaborate with stakeholders to enhance health education on choking prevention through a series of targeted publicity and promotional activities. The CFS will produce an educational video and a video advertisement to highlight common choking risks and promote safe eating habits on social media platforms. The CFS will continue to collaborate with relevant parties to organise school talks for students, teachers and parents and disseminate relevant information online to raise public awareness on choking prevention. To further strengthen health education among ethnic minorities, the CFS will translate the health advice content on the CFS website and the poster on choking hazards and safe eating habits into multiple languages, including Hindi, Indonesian, Nepali, Thai, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Urdu, to improve accessibility and understanding within these communities.

## **Proposed Way Forward**

14. We plan to gazette the proposed amendments to Cap. 132W, and table the amendment regulation at LegCo for negative vetting in mid-2025.

## **Advice Sought**

15. Members are invited to note the content of this paper and provide comments.

**Environment and Ecology Bureau**  
**Food and Environmental Hygiene Department**  
**May 2025**