

**Food and Environmental Hygiene Department**

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**Minutes of a Technical Meeting with Trade on  
the Labelling Scheme on Nutrition Information (Manufacturers' Subgroup)  
held on 6 April 2005 at 2:30 p.m.  
in Room 4331, 43rd Floor, Queensway Government Offices**

**PRESENT:**

**Government Representatives**

Dr HO Yuk-yin	Consultant (Community Medicine), FEHD	(Chairman)
Ms SHEA Wing-man	Assistant Secretary, HWFB	
Mr Stanley NG	Senior Administrative Officer (Food and Public Health), FEHD	
Dr Priscilla KWOK	Senior Medical Officer (Risk Assessment), FEHD	
Dr LEUNG Ka-sing	Senior Chemist (Food Chemistry), FEHD	
Dr Stephen CHUNG	Senior Chemist (Food Research laboratory), FEHD	
Mr YIP Ming-bor	Superintendent (Risk Assessment), FEHD	
Mr LI Ka-kei	Chief Health Inspector (Food Labelling), FEHD	
Ms Jacqueline FUNG	Scientific Officer (Risk Assessment), FEHD	(Secretary)

**Trade Representatives**

Ms Miran NG	Executive Officer The Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong
Ms Eva WONG	Sales and Marketing Manager Advance City Ltd.
Mr Delon SHUM	Assistant General Manager Cheong Kee Special Food Product Ltd.
Ms Natalie SO	Corporate Communication Manager Cheong Kee Special Food Product Ltd.
Mr TSOI Chuen-she	Manager China Profit Development, Ltd.

Mr Bill HUI	Assistant Manager Choi Yue Trading Co.
Ms Rachelle IP	Assistant Manager Home of Swallows Limited
Mr Sandy SUEN	Manager Hop Hing Holdings Ltd.
Ms CHANG Pui-sze	QA Officer Kampery Development Ltd.
Ms Claudia WONG	Technical Manager Lee Kum Kee Co. Ltd.
Ms Debby LAW	Group Brand Manager New Zealand Milk (HK) Ltd.
Ms Debbie HUNG	Administration Manager Nissin Foods (HK) Management Co. Ltd.
Ms KWOK Hoi-yu	Nutritionist Pat Chun International Ltd.
Ms Karen CHENG	Marketing Manager Prosper City International Ltd.
Mr MO Shing-chi	Manager The Tien Chun (Hong Kong) Company Ltd.
Mr Dick CHIANG	Clerk The Tien Chun (Hong Kong) Company Ltd.
Ms Coral LI	R&D Technologist Winner Food Products Ltd.

### **Agenda Item 1**

#### **Adoption of Agenda**

1. The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming the trade representatives and explaining the purposes of the meeting. The agenda was tabled and subsequently adopted by the meeting.

## **Agenda Item 2**

### **Confirmation of Minutes**

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2004 were confirmed without further amendments.

## **Agenda Item 3**

### **Progress Update on the Labelling Scheme on Nutrition Information**

3. Dr P KWOK briefed participants on the results of the public consultation exercise, results of the public opinion survey, results of the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) and the revised proposal on the nutrition labelling scheme (Annex 1).

4. After the presentation, the Chairman remarked that the Administration revised the proposal with an aim to strike a balance between giving the trade sufficient time to adapt to the changes and achieving the long-term public health objectives. He also indicated that according to the proposed timeframe, the soonest implementation time for Phases I and II would be 2008 and 2010, respectively.

5. In the meantime, the Administration would continue to hold technical meetings with various sectors of the trade and discuss with them the technical issues with regard to the nutrition labelling scheme. He encouraged participants to share their views and raise problems, if any, on technical issues. However, he stressed that as the Administration planned to report the results of the public consultation exercise and RIA to LegCo on 15 April 2005, participants were asked to keep the information discussed at the meeting confidential until then.

### **Nutrition Labelling Content Expression and Format**

6. A participant enquired about the basis of nutrient content expression in the latest proposal. The Chairman said that the proposed nutrient content expression remained the same, i.e., energy/nutrients should be expressed in absolute amount in kilocalories/metric unit per 100 g (or per 100 ml) of food. If the package contained only a single portion, then the energy/nutrient content information could be expressed in per package basis. In addition to complying with the above, the information might be expressed in per serving basis.

7. Furthermore, members of the trade showed concern on the nutrition labelling format and asked whether there would be definitions and Chinese translations on nutrition-related terms and whether the trade must follow the use of terms on the nutrition labels (e.g., 熱量 vs. 能量).

8. The Chairman said that the Administration would issue guidelines on the nutrition labelling scheme. The guidelines would provide the Chinese translations of common terms used on nutrition labelling. The Administration inclined to be flexible as far as the terminology to be used on nutrition labels was concerned. However, the Administration encouraged the trade to follow the guidelines if there were no specific rules on certain aspects of nutrition labelling in the future regulations, including the use of terminology.

#### Laboratory Testing

9. With regard to nutrient analysis, representatives enquired about (a) whether the Administration would accept in-house laboratory results; (b) list of recognized laboratory services providers; and (c) whether the testing laboratories needed to be accredited.

10. The Chairman indicated that all enforcement actions would be based on test results conducted by the Government Laboratory. He also said that the Food Research Laboratory had been developing relevant nutrient test methods and conducting analyses for local indigenous foods. A separate technical meeting with private laboratory services providers had been held in early 2005 and the second meeting would be held a week later to further discuss the testing issues. He stressed that guidelines on nutrient analysis, including test methods and tolerance limits, would be made available for the trade's reference.

11. Dr KS LEUNG and Dr S. CHUNG supplemented that test methods in the future guidelines would be developed based mainly on international recognized test methods, e.g. those from AOAC. These test methods would be for the trade's reference only. The Administration would not specify that nutrient testing needed to be conducted by accredited laboratories.

#### Government Assistance and Exemptions

12. A participant enquired about subsidization for SMEs from the Government. The Chairman said that there would be no financial subsidization for impacted SMEs. However, the Administration would consider offering exemption status for some prepackaged food products; some of which might be mainly produced by SMEs. He

welcomed and encouraged the trade to make any reasonable and practical proposals in this regard.

#### Enforcement

13. One of the trade representatives asked whether the manufacturer would be charged if the manufacturer applied false nutrition information provided by the ingredient suppliers. Mr KK LI replied that as the circumstances of each case would be different, the Administration would take into account the merits of each case before making decision on prosecution. However, he added that vendor has the responsibility to verify the truthfulness of the information marked on the label; relevant actions would include performing random nutrient testings and requesting test reports from manufacturers or ingredient suppliers.

#### Education Programme

14. Trade participants were interested to learn about the government education programme on nutrition labelling. Dr P KWOK informed the meeting that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) had published pamphlets and food safety bulletins with articles on nutrition labelling and nutrient-related claims. Furthermore, roving exhibitions had been held in various shopping centers. For schools and students, with the collaboration of the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB), there were talks at different schools and workshops for secondary school teachers. The Chairman added that the Department of Health (DH), the Hospital Authority (HA) and other professional organizations, such as the Hong Kong Dietitians Association (HKDA), were involved in the nutrition education as well. It was planned that an education kit on nutrition labelling would be produced and distributed to health professionals/organizations, schools and relevant organizations in the future.

#### Agenda Item 4

##### **Any Other Business**

15. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.