

Overview of the Food Labelling Standard

I Purpose of the Standard

The Food Labelling Standard shall be established under the Food Labelling Act (Act No. 70 of 2013) promulgated on 28 June 2013, in order to provide specific labelling requirements.

The purpose of this Act is to develop a comprehensive and integrated food labelling system in compliance with all labelling provisions in Food Sanitation Act (Act No. 233 of 1947), Act on Standardization and Proper Quality Labeling of Agricultural and Forestry Products (Act No. 175 of 1950) and Health Promotion Act (Act No. 103 of 2002).

In establishing the Food Labelling Standard pursuant to this Act, as described in Paragraph II, as well as the revision and improvement of the current labelling standard, a new system will be established to allow food function claims to be made based on scientific evidence submitted under the responsibility of manufacturer (manufacturer/producer).

II Main revisions

1. Nutrient Reference Values

Nutrient reference values target 18 years of age and older of both sexes and, as a general rule, are calculated based on DG or RDA of dietary reference intakes for Japanese.

Abbreviation

DG, tentative dietary goal for preventing life-style related diseases

– the value for prevention of noncommunicable diseases

RDA, recommended dietary allowance

– an intake that covers the needs of 97-98% of the population

Table. Nutrient Reference Values for Japanese

Energy	kcal	2200
Protein	g	81
Total fat	g	62
Saturated fatty acids	g	16
Omega-6 fatty acids	g	9.0
Omega-3 fatty acids	g	2.0
Total carbohydrate	g	320
Fiber	g	19
Vitamin A	μg	770
Vitamin D	μg	5.5
Vitamin E	mg	6.3
Vitamin K	μg	150
Vitamin B ₁	mg	1.2
Vitamin B ₂	mg	1.4
Niacin	mg	13
Vitamin B ₆	mg	1.3
Vitamin B ₁₂	μg	2.4
Folate	μg	240
Pantothenic acid	mg	4.8
Biotin	μg	50
Vitamin C	mg	100
Sodium	mg	2900
Potassium	mg	2800
Calcium	mg	680
Magnesium	mg	320
Phosphorus	mg	900
Iron	mg	6.8
Zinc	mg	8.8
Copper	mg	0.9
Manganese	mg	3.8
Iodine	μg	130
Selenium	μg	28
Chromium	μg	10
Molybdenum	μg	25

2. Conditions for Nutrition Claims

Reference amounts for “contain,” “high” and “enriched” claims are calculated based on the newly established nutrient reference values. The conditions for these nutrition claims are established in accordance with CODEX Guidelines (Guidelines for use of nutrition and health claims, CAC/GL 23-1997).

3. Food with Nutrient Function Claims:FNFC

3-1. Target Nutrients

Nutrient function claims for 12 vitamins and 5 minerals are allowed under the current self-certification system.

In addition to these nutrients, vitamin K, potassium and omega-3 fatty acids are newly incorporated into this self-certification system.

3-2. Target Foods

Under the current standard, only prepackaged processed food and hen’s egg are within the scope of the target foods. The Food Labelling Standard newly includes prepackaged fresh produce (besides hen’s egg). However, for potassium, to avoid the risk of excessive consumption in individuals with impaired renal failure, food in such as tablet or capsule form are excluded from the scope of this standard.

4. System allowing claims for function of food ingredients (not applicable to nutrients)

Under the current standard, only Food for Specified Health Uses (FOSHU) and FNFC are allowed to make function claims. While FOSHU and FNFC remains to be allowed under their respective systems, functional claims on prepackaged processed food and fresh produce will be allowed under the responsibility of manufacturers, without government approval if they submit certain amount of scientific evidence on safety and effectiveness.