

Proposed Trade Guidelines on Preparation of Legible Food Label

**Centre for Food Safety
December 2011**

Purpose

- Legible food label with essential information of product appropriately marked would assist consumers to make informed choices
- To promote good practice, the guidelines aims at assisting the trade to provide legible information on food label

Background

- At present, Cap. 132W requires the following information to be legibly marked on food label unless otherwise exempted:
 1. Name of the food
 2. List of ingredients
 3. Indication of durability
 4. Special conditions for storage or instruction of use
 5. Count, weight or volume
 6. Name and address of manufacturer or packer
 7. Nutrition label

Background

- The trade has the liberty to design the food label of their products
- It is important to note the legal requirement on legibility and show all the mandatorily required information clearly
- When food label is not properly designed, consumers may have difficulty in reading the labels for information they required
- This guidelines provides principles and examples of legible food labels for reference

Reference sources

- When drafting the proposed guidelines, reference was made to the legibility requirements of various jurisdictions (including the Mainland China, USA, Canada, EU, Australia, etc.) as stated in food labelling or nutrition labelling regulations, or as recommended in relevant guidelines

[Elements of legible food label]

1. Suitable font size

- Words should be clearly shown
- In general, type size of ≥ 8 points (about 2.8mm in height) is considered easily readable
- Type size of 5 point (about 1.8mm in height) is acceptable when it is not practical to use larger fonts (e.g., when total surface area of package is $< 200\text{cm}^2$)

[Elements of legible food label]

2. Good contrast

- It is suggested to use all black or single dark colour type, printed on a white or other single light colour contrasting background whenever practical
- It is also acceptable to do it vice versa as long as the words are clearly shown

[Elements of legible food label]

3. Enough spacing

- Words and characters should be displayed in such a manner that they never touch each other or the lines and borders surrounding or separating the information, if any

Good examples of legible food labels

- Example 1:
Black type on white background, type size of at least 8 point

洋蔥湯 ONION SOUP	
成份： 水、洋蔥、粟米油、鹽、乳清蛋白質(奶類製品)、 增味劑 (621)	
Ingredients: Water, onion, corn oil, salt, whey protein (milk product), flavour enhancer (621)	
用法： 將一罐清水拌入湯內，煲滾後方可飲用。	
Directions: Blend soup with one can of water. Boil before serving.	
製造商/包裝商： ABC 有限公司，香港健康路 123 號	
Manufacturer/Packer: ABC Ltd. 123 Healthy Road, Hong Kong	
此日期前最佳： <div> 日 月 年 DD MM YY </div> 淨重： 300克	
Best before: 15 12 2011 Net weight: 300g	
營養資料 Nutrition Information	
每 100 克 / Per 100g	
能量 / Energy	77 千卡 / kcal
蛋白質 / Protein	2.2 克 / g
總脂肪 / Total fat	3.0 克 / g
- 飽和脂肪 / Saturated fat	0.8 克 / g
- 反式脂肪 / Trans fat	0 克 / g
碳水化合物 / Carbohydrates	10.4 克 / g
- 糖 / Sugars	3.6 克 / g
鈉 / Sodium	637 毫克 / mg

Good examples of legible food labels

- Example 2: Single dark colour type on light colour contrasting background, type size of at least 8 point

洋蔥湯 <u>ONION SOUP</u>	
成份： 水、洋蔥、粟米油、鹽、乳清蛋白質(奶類製品)、增味劑 (621)	
Ingredients: Water, onion, corn oil, salt, whey protein(milk product), flavour enhancer (621)	
用法： 將一罐清水拌入湯內，煲滾後方可飲用	
Directions: Blend soup with one can of water. Boil before serving.	
製造商/包裝商： ABC有限公司,香港健康路 123 號	
Manufacturer/Packer: ABC Ltd. 123 Healthy Road, Hong Kong	
此日期前最佳： 日 月 年 DD MM YY	
Best before: 15 12 2011	
淨重： 300 克 Net weight: 300g	
Nutrition Information 營養資料	
Per 100g / 每 100 克	
Energy 能量	77 kcal/千卡
Protein 蛋白質	2.2 g /克
Total fat 總脂肪	3.0 g /克
- Saturated fat 飽和脂肪	0.8 g /克
- Trans fat 反式脂肪	0 g/克
Carbohydrates 碳水化合物	10.4 g/克
- Sugars 糖	3.6 g /克
Sodium 鈉	637 mg /毫克

Good examples of legible food labels

- Example 3: (for product with total surface area of less than 200cm²)
Black type on white background, type size of at least 5 points

洋蔥湯 ONION SOUP		日 月 年
成份：水、洋蔥、粟米油、鹽、乳清蛋白(或乳製品)、增味劑 (E621)		此日期前最佳：DD MM YY
用法：將一杯湯水拌入湯內，攪勻即可飲用。		Best before: 15 12 2011
製造商/包裝商：ABC 有限公司，香港健康路 123 號		
營養資料 (每 100 克)：能量 77 千卡，蛋白質 2.2 克，總脂肪 3.0 克，		
飽和脂肪 0.8 克，反式脂肪 0 克，碳水化合物 10.4 克，糖 3.0 克，		
鈉 637 毫克，淨重：30 克		
Ingredients: Water, onion, corn oil, salt, whey protein (milk product), flavour enhancer (E621)		
Directions: Blend soup with one cup of water. Boil before serving.		
Manufacturer/Packer: ABC Ltd., 123 Healthy Road, Hong Kong		
Nutrition Information (Per 100g): Energy 77kcal, Protein 2.2g, Total fat 3.0g, Sat.		
Fat 0.8g, Trans fat 0g, Carbohydrates 10.4g, Sugars 3.0g, Sodium 637mg		
Net weight 30g		

Examples of illegible food labels

- Example 4: Words could not be clearly shown on patterned background

洋蔥湯 ONION SOUP	
成份： 水、洋蔥、粟米油、鹽、乳清蛋白質(奶類製品)、增味劑 (621) Ingredients: Water, onion, corn oil, salt, whey protein(milk product), flavour enhancer (621) 用法： 將一罐清水拌入湯內，煲滾後方可飲用 Directions: Blend soup with one can of water. Boil before serving. 製造商/包裝商： ABC有限公司,香港健康路 123 號 Manufacturer/Packer: ABC Ltd. 123 Healthy Road, Hong Kong 此日期前最佳： 日 月 年 DD MM YY Best before: 15 12 2011	
Nutrition Information 營養資料	
Per 100g / 每 100克	
Energy 能量	77 kcal/千卡
Protein 蛋白質	2.2 g /克
Total fat 總脂肪	3.0 g/克
- Saturated fat 飽和脂肪	0.8 g /克
- Trans fat 反式脂肪	0 g/克
Carbohydrates 碳水化合物	10.4 g/克
- Sugars 糖	3.6 g /克
Sodium 鈉	637 mg /毫克
淨重：300 克 Net weight: 300g	

Examples of illegible food labels

- Example 5: Lack of contrast between text and dark colour background

洋蔥湯 ONION SOUP

成份：水、洋蔥、粟米油、鹽、乳清蛋白質(奶類製品)、
增味劑 (621)

Ingredients: Water, onion, corn oil, salt, whey protein
(milk product), flavour enhancer (621)

用法：將一罐清水拌入湯內，煲滾後方可飲用。

Directions: Blend soup with one can of water.
Boil before serving.

製造商/包裝商：ABC 有限公司 香港健康路 123 號

Manufacturer/Packer: ABC Ltd. 123 Healthy Road,
Hong Kong

此日期前最佳：DD MM YY
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碳水化合物/ Carbohydrates	10.4 克/ g
- 糖/ Sugars	3.6 克/ g
鈉/ Sodium	637 毫克/ mg

淨重：300 克
Net weight: 300g

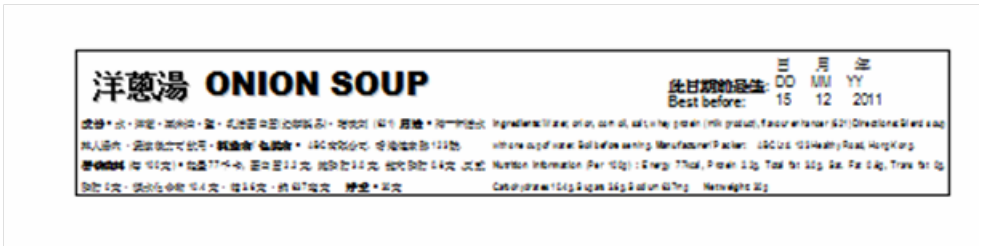
Examples of illegible food labels

- Example 6: Light colour type on white background; words are not clearly printed

洋蔥湯 ONION SOUP	
<p>成份：水、洋蔥、粟米油、鹽、乳清蛋白質(奶類製品)、 增味劑 (621)</p> <p>Ingredients: Water, onion, corn oil, salt, whey protein (milk product), flavour enhancer (621)</p> <p>用法：將一罐清水拌入湯內，煲滾後方可飲用。</p> <p>Directions: Blend soup with one can of water. Boil before serving.</p> <p>製造商/包裝商：ABC 有限公司 香港健康路 123 號</p> <p>Manufacturer/Packer: ABC Ltd. 123 Healthy Road, Hong Kong</p> <p>此日期前最佳：DD MM YY Best before: 15 12 2011</p>	
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碳水化合物/ Carbohydrates	10.4 克/g
- 糖/ Sugars	3.6 克/g
鈉/ Sodium	637 毫克/mg
淨重：300 克	
Net weight: 300g	

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Recommendation

- In order to comply with the legibility requirement of the food labelling regulation-
 - Traders are strongly recommended to observe the elements of legible food labels and
 - Make reference to the above examples when preparing food labels for the prepackaged products

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