

Centre for Food Safety
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Notes of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Trade Consultation Forum
held on 20 March 2009 at 2:30 p.m.
in Conference Room, Room 102, 1/F, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Present

Government Representatives

Dr. Y. Y. HO	Consultant (Community Medicine) (Chairman)
	(Risk Assessment & Communication)
Dr. Anne FUNG	Principal Medical Officer (Risk Assessment & Communication)
Ms. LEUNG Yuen Sheung	Superintendent (Import/Export)2
Ms. Melissa LIU	Scientific Officer (Nutrition Labelling)
Mr. K. W. CHUNG	Chief Health Inspector (Food Labelling)
Mr. H. M. WONG	Superintendent (Risk Communication) (Notes-taker)

Trade Representatives

Ms. Rachel LIU	A & W Food Service Ltd
Mr. Peter Johnston	A.S Watson Group (HK) Limited
Ms. Lina LIM	A S Watson Industries
Mr. Brain CHEUNG	A S Watson Industries
Ms. LEUNG Wing see	Abbott Laboratories Ltd
Ms. HO Ka kuen	Aeon Stores (Hong Kong) Co., Ltd
Ms. CHAN Suk jing	Aeon Stores (Hong Kong) Co., Ltd
Mr. TSE Pak wai	Aeon Stores (Hong Kong) Co., Ltd
Ms. LAU Pui yin	Aeon Stores (Hong Kong) Co., Ltd
Mr. SIO Chi lok	Aeon Stores (Hong Kong) Co., Ltd
Ms. Caroline YUEN	American Consulate General Hong Kong, Agricultural Trade Office
Ms. Ming CHEUNG	Campbell Soup Asia Ltd.
Mr. LAM Sze pui	China Inspection Co., Ltd
Mr. Grace YEE	City Super Ltd
Ms. Karen CHIU	City Super Ltd

Mr. Kim, YAU Ho yin	CMA Testing and Certification Labouratory
Ms. May KAN	Coca-Cola China Ltd
Mr. Charles IP	Dah Chong Hong Ltd
Ms. Emily LAM	Dah Chong Hong Ltd
Ms. Debbt LAW	Fonterra Brands (HK) Ltd
Ms. Charlotte CHAN	Fonterra Brands (HK) Ltd
Ms. Megan LAI	Four Seas Mercantile Holdings Ltd
Ms. Jeannie LOK	Four Seas Mercantile Holdings Ltd
Ms. Grace CHAN	Glaxo Smithhskline Ltd
Ms. K.Y. HO	Hong Kong Catering Management
Mr. CHAN Wah hing	Hong Kong Yakult Co., Ltd
Mr. LEE Kwong lam	Kowloon Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Daphne KWOK	Lucullus Food and Wines Co. Ltd
Ms. Kate NG	Lucullus Food and Wines Co. Ltd
Ms. Jam TING	Master Kong (HK) Trading Company Limited
Ms. Eleanor CHAN	Nestle Hong Kong Ltd
Mr. HUI Yiu kai	Nissin Foods Co., Ltd
Ms. Cactus LAI	Parknshop
Mr. CHAN Wing cheong	Pat Chun Int'l Ltd
Ms. Connie CHEUNG	Ponti Trading Ltd
Ms. Stephanie SHUM	Saint Honore Cake Shop Ltd
Mr. Wellocl LO	Sims Trading Co., Ltd
Mr. Victor KOK	Tai Pan Bread & Cakes Co. Ltd
Mr. Allen PANG	The Chniese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong
Mr. Allen HO	The Dairy Farm Group
Mr. CHENG Chung tak	The Garen Co. Ltd
Mr. LAW Chi sang	The Garen Co. Ltd
Mr. CHAN Chi wai	The Garen Co. Ltd
Dr. Leslie WONG	The Hong Kong Food Council Ltd
Ms. Athena LI	Kampery Development Ltd
Mr. CHAN Chi kong	Vitasoy International Holdings Ltd
Ms. Maggie WONG	whart Flour
Ms. LAM Siu ping	Winner Food Products Ltd
Ms. Amelia YEUNG	YHS Hong Kong (2001) PTE Ltd
Mr. WONG Kin man	Yue Hwa Chinese Products Emporium Limited
Ms. Regina TAM	MeadJohnson Nutritionals

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all trade representatives to the new venue and said that future meetings of the Trade Consultation Forum would be held at the same venue. He introduced Government Representatives to the meeting.

Confirmation of the Notes of Last Meeting

2. The notes of last meeting were confirmed without amendments.

Agenda Item 1

Risk Assessment Study on “Nutrient Contents of Common Non-prepackaged Beverages in Hong Kong”

3. Ms. Melissa LIU introduced to the meeting a Risk Assessment (RA) study on “Nutrient contents of Common Non-prepackaged Beverages in Hong Kong”. This RA study was conducted by the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) to find out the nutrient contents, sugar contents in particular, of common non-prepackaged beverages.

4. Ms. Melissa LIU said that in the RA study, laboratory analyses for energy and nine nutrients of local public health interest were conducted by the Food Research Laboratory of CFS for 73 types of non-prepackaged beverages. The results of the RA study showed that energy and sugars contents of non-prepackaged beverages varied, whilst their cholesterol and dietary fibre contents were generally low. Addition of sugar increased the energy and sugars content of beverage. Less sugar “less sweet”-version cold beverages were generally lower in energy and sugars than their regular versions.

5. Ms. Melissa LIU said that in order to prevent excess intake of energy and sugars from non-prepackaged beverages, members of the public were advised to choose non-prepackaged beverages with lower energy and sugars contents, add less sugar to hot beverages, and order less sugar “less sweet” version of cold beverages instead of regular version. Besides, the public should also maintain a balanced diet and limit the consumption of sugary beverages.

6. Ms. Melissa LIU said that members of the trade were encouraged to provide sugar or syrup to consumers separately instead of mixing them in beverages before serving, add less sugar to beverages if they must be pre-sweetened before serving to consumers, and provide less sugar “less sweet”-version beverages to consumers.

7. The Chairman said that report of the RA study would be announced officially by means of a press release in late March / early April 2009 and uploaded onto the CFS website for reference of the public.

Agenda Item 2

Amendment to the Chinese Rendition of “use by” Date on Labels of Prepackaged Foods

8. Mr. K. W. CHUNG introduced to the meeting the proposal of amendment to the Chinese rendition of “use by” date on labels of prepackaged foods. The amendment was intended to better reflect the legislative intent and to tie in with the Chinese translation of “use by” date in Schedule 6 to the Food Business Regulations, Cap. 132X on the labelling of chilled beef, mutton or pork.

9. Mr. K. W. CHUNG said that the amendment to the Chinese rendition of “use by” date in the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) Regulations, Cap. 132W had been included in the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance 2008. The Ordinance was passed by the Legislative Council on 30 April 2008 and published in the Gazette on 9 May 2008. The amendment aimed at replacing the Chinese rendition for “use by” (i.e. “此日期前食用”) in relevant provisions of Cap. 132W by “此日期或之前食用”. Mr. K. W. CHUNG added that only the Chinese rendition would be amended while the English wordings would not be affected.

10. Mr. K. W. CHUNG continued that the Administration’s latest plan was to have the amendment taking effect on 1 July 2010. In order to allow sufficient time for the food trade to change the labels of their prepackaged food products, the commencement notice for the amendment would be published in the Gazette in early January 2010.

11. The Chairman said that the food trade could take into account the effective date of the amendment when revising the food labels. In reply to enquiries from trade representatives, the Chairman said that the amendment was a response to opinions of the food trade in view that there was a difference of one day between the current Chinese rendition and the amended one.

12. Trade representatives found that it would be convenient to revise the food labels to tie in with the implementation of the new nutrition labelling law. However, they suggested advancing the transition period in order to match with their schedules of preparing their nutrition labels. Mr. K. W. CHUNG promised to consider the request and advise the outcome at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 3

To form a “Working Group on the Use of Aluminium-containing Food Additives”

13. The Chairman said that there was a need to reduce the use of aluminium-containing food additives and informed the meeting that a working group would be formed with the trade to discuss the issue. He invited trade representatives to enroll to the “Working Group on Use of Aluminium-containing Food Additives”. The proposed Terms of Reference of the Working Group were as follows:

- a) To devise measures to reduce the aluminium in products and advise on the minimum usage levels of aluminium-containing food additives that could achieve the technological function and the alternative additives;
- b) To prepare guidelines for assisting the trade for the production of products such as jelly fish, bakery and Chinese steamed bread/bun/cake in order to reduce the aluminium levels in products; and
- c) To advise on the publicity activities related to the guidelines on the use of aluminium-containing food additives.

14. The Chairman said that the Trade Consultation Forum would be briefed in details at the next meeting on a study on the use of aluminium-containing food additives.

Agenda Item 4

Any Other Business

Nutrition Labelling Publicity and Education Campaign

15. Dr. Anne FUNG told the meeting about the various activities to promote and educate the public the Nutrition Labelling (NL) Scheme under a 3-year publicity and education campaign. There were 3 phases in the 3-year publicity plan as follows:

- a) Phase I – From June 2008 to July 2009 aiming at heightening the awareness of the public of the NL Scheme through publicity;
- b) Phase II – From August 2009 to June 2010 aiming at educating the public through education partners to understand the content of nutrition labels; and
- c) Phase III – From July 2010 to June 2011, first year after the legislation taking effect, aiming at promoting the use of nutrition labels to achieve a balanced diet.

16. Dr. Anne FUNG said that campaign was officially launched on 12 March 2009 and the publicity activities in Phase I included announcement of public interest broadcast on television and radio, distribution of a thematic video, announcing result of a joint nutrient study with the Consumer Council, production of souvenirs for the public etc. She further elaborated that activities targeted the trade included issue of technical guidelines, conduct of workshops, provision of a telephone enquiry service and an online calculator on CFS website, and conduct of briefing sessions and seminars for the food trade and laboratory service providers in the Mainland, etc.

17. In reply to an enquiry from a trade representative, Mr. K. W. CHUNG said that application for exemption from nutrition labelling under the Small Volume Exemption Scheme would be accepted starting April 2010.

18. A trade representative reminded that there would be thousands of applications and

CFS should be prepared to process such applications within a short time. Mr. K.W. CHUNG noted the trade's concern and would consider to advance the date of accepting applications if feasible.

Rapid Alert System

19. Dr. Anne FUNG said that a new corner was created in the CFS website to inform the trade about rapid alerts on important food incidents. She encouraged the trade to enroll to the Rapid Alert System (RAS) so as to receive the rapid alerts. She further mentioned that the RAS would not only alert the trade on food safety incidents of possible local impact, but would also inform them of the withdrawal of an alert. She quoted a recent notice on the withdrawal of a recall of an infant milk powder produced in France.

Regional Symposium on Regulation of Pesticide Residues in Food

20. The Chairman told the meeting that a one-and-a-half-day Regional Symposium on Regulation of Pesticide Residues in Food organised jointly by CFS and European Commission would be held in Hong Kong on 27 and 28 March 2009. The content of the symposium would be uploaded to the CFS website for reference of the public.

Food Safety Seminar in 2009

21. The Chairman said that a food safety seminar was scheduled to be held on 17 September 2009 at Hong Kong Central Library. The food trade would be invited to the seminar when the agenda was finalised.

Date of Next Meeting

22. The next meeting would be held on 17 April 2009.
23. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.