

Food Safety Seminar 2009

Implementation on Nutrition Labelling Scheme and Small Volume Exemption Scheme

Background

The Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) (Amendment: Requirements for Nutrition Labelling and Nutrition Claim) Regulation 2008 (Amendment Regulation), which introduces the Nutrition Labelling Scheme for pre-packaged food, will come into force on 1 July 2010 after a two-year grace period. The Nutrition Labelling Scheme requires all prepackaged food to label the content of energy plus seven core nutrients, namely: (i) protein, (ii) carbohydrates, (iii) total fat, (iv) saturated fat, (v) trans fat, (vi) sodium and (vii) sugars, as well as any nutrient for which a claim is made, and regulates different types of nutrition claims.

2. To facilitate the food trade and to minimize the impact on food choice, a number of exemptions from the nutrition labelling requirements are provided in the Amendment Regulation, e.g. exemption for prepackaged food packed in a container which has a total surface area of less than 100 cm² and fruit or vegetable, whether fresh, chilled, frozen or dried, packed in a container which contains no other ingredient and to which no other ingredient has been added.

Small Volume Exemption Scheme (SVE)

3. In addition, there is a Small Volume Exemption (SVE) scheme for food products with annual sales volume not exceeding 30 000 units and do not carry nutrition claims. Food manufacturers/importers need to apply to the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (DFEH) for SVE, which is subject to conditions imposed by DFEH, including the requirement of monthly reporting of sales volume of the exempted product at the importer's/manufacturer's level.

4. In response to requests from the trade to process SVE applications early, the CFS has advanced the date of accepting SVE applications to 1 September 2009. Manual and electronic versions of

application forms have been made available since mid August 2009. The CFS will process the applications as quickly as possible, and for applications submitted before 31 October 2009, the applicants will be informed of the results before 18 December 2009 if all necessary information is submitted.