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International Council of Beverages Associations Position on Nutrition Labeling

Overview

The International Council of Beverages Associations (ICBA) is an international nongovernmental organization that represents the interests of the worldwide nonalcoholic beverage industry. The members of ICBA operate in more than 200 countries and produce, distribute, and sell a variety of nonalcoholic beverages.

ICBA and its members recognize the importance of providing meaningful and understandable nutrition information on beverage packaging. In addition, as a tool to assist consumers, many of our members have made voluntary commitments or adopted labeling practices regarding front of package labeling for energy and other key nutrients as a way of enhancing consumer understanding of nutrition information. ICBA members believe beverage labeling should be objective and grounded in scientific evidence, presented in a legible, clear and visible format, and understandable to consumers to enable them to make informed dietary decisions about the beverages they choose.

ICBA Position

We believe it is important to provide nutrition information about our products that supports consumers in their efforts to make sensible, balanced dietary choices, as part of an active, healthy lifestyle. In conjunction with robust consumer education programs, such information can be an effective tool to help consumers meet their individual nutritional needs.

1. We believe emphasis on the importance of the overall diet best serves consumers.
2. We believe it is essential to provide nutrition information as part of the product package. Whenever nutrition information is provided—whether as part of the product package or through advertising, brochures or other media--such information should be provided in a format that is easily understood by consumers.
3. Nutrition Information (back- or side-of-package)
 - Nutrients listed in the provision of nutrition information should be in line with applicable regulatory requirements in the country where the product is sold. Where regulations have not been established, the Codex Alimentarius Guidelines on Nutrition Labeling (CAC/GL 2-1995) should be followed.
 - Nutrition information should include, at minimum, energy (as calories, kilocalories, kilojoules, or any combination of these), protein, total carbohydrate, total sugars, total fat, saturated fat, and sodium, as well as any nutrient which is added to a beverage, or for which a nutrition or health claim is made. Nutrition information such as fiber, vitamins or minerals in meaningful levels can also be provided.
 - Nutrition information should be provided per 100 ml and/or per serving or per package, in line with applicable regulatory requirements.

4. Front-of-Package (FOP) Labeling

ICBA supports transparency in nutrition labeling and believes it is essential that complete nutrition information be provided on all products. In addition, we support voluntary front-of-package (FOP) labeling that is fact-based and assists consumers in making appropriate dietary choices. All FOP programs, fact-based or interpretive, should rely on evidence-based recommendations (dietary/food/nutrients), support provision of full nutrition information and follow related regulations for nutrition and health claims. Accordingly, the following general themes should guide the development of any FOP labeling proposals or programs:

- FOP nutrition information includes fact-based information from provision of nutrition information about energy and nutrients.
- Interpretive FOP programs must be grounded in widely-agreed evidence-based nutrient, food, and dietary recommendations:
 - Developed with transparent and open collaboration with stakeholders;
 - Not in conflict with nutrition labeling and claims regulations, such as established Codex guidelines or national laws/regulations;
 - Applied to all packaged food and beverage products without discrimination of ingredients or sources;ⁱ
 - Presented in a reasonable size for consumer understanding (neither excessive nor illegible) and provide sufficient context to make informed dietary choices.
- Supported by FOP and nutrition labeling education programs, developed collaboratively by government, industry, and other stakeholders.
- Does not create barriers to trade.

5. Percent (%) Daily Guidance Information

- Where permitted by applicable regulations, percent (%) daily guidance information should:
 - Be provided on product labels, placing the quantity of energy and selected nutrients, per serving or per package, as appropriate, in context of population-based food and dietary guidance;
 - Include percentage information for energy (calories, kilocalories or kilojoules), and as applicable, information for total fat and/or saturated fat, total carbohydrate, sodium/salt; and for fiber and other nutrients for which daily guidance information is established;
 - Be included as part of the provision of nutrition information, or where this is not allowed, near the nutrition information provided;
 - Be presented using relevant national terms, e.g., Daily Value (DV) in the US, Canada, and parts of Latin America; Reference Intakes (RI) in Europe, Daily Intakes (DI) in Australia.

6. Exemptions

- Where nutrition labeling is not feasible on product packages, e.g., small or irregularly-shaped packages, returnable glass bottles, it will be provided by alternate means (e.g., websites)
- Unless required by applicable regulations, plain, unflavored and unsweetened bottled or mineral water is exempt from nutrition labeling.

7. Consumer Education

- We support consumer education about nutrition and nutrition labeling. We share the goal of building consumers' awareness, understanding, and use of nutrition information in making overall dietary choices that meet individual needs as part of a healthy lifestyle.
- ICBA and its members will engage with other stakeholders as appropriate to develop such programs at the national, supranational, and international levels.

ⁱ For example, but not limited to, total sugars versus added sugars; use of low- and no-calorie sweeteners; regulatory definitions of "natural."