



Statement on WHO Guideline: Sugars intake for adults and children

Today the International Council of Beverages Associations released the following statement on the WHO guideline “Sugars intake for adults and children.”

ICBA fully supports efforts by the WHO to reduce non-communicable diseases and promote active and healthy lifestyles in communities worldwide. However, policymakers need to ensure that dietary recommendations are based on the totality of evidence-based science to address important health challenges such as obesity and dental caries.

ICBA is disappointed that the WHO has confirmed the conditional recommendation suggesting “a further reduction of the intake of free sugars to below 5% of total energy intake”, as it does not reflect scientific agreement on the totality of evidence. In fact, the WHO recommendation is principally based on three studies about sugar consumption and dental caries that were judged to be of “very low scientific quality” by the researchers selected by WHO to conduct the evidence review. Regarding obesity, there is no scientific basis for treating free sugars differently than intrinsic sugars.

ICBA encourages all parties to focus on what the WHO has clearly defined as the primary cause of obesity: an imbalance between calories in (those consumed from all foods and beverages) and calories out (those burned through physical activity and keeping your body’s metabolism going).

ICBA welcomes the opportunity to work with the WHO and other stakeholders to pursue effective and practical solutions to these health issues. The solutions should focus on collective efforts across government, civil society and industry that promote balanced diets, regular physical activity and proper oral hygiene.

Our members will continue to offer innovative ways to help consumers to achieve calorie balance through smaller portion sizes, no- and low-calorie beverages and transparent, fact-based nutrition information.