Overview

- Background to Regulation 24/2006/EC on Nutrition & Health Claims
- Current Public Health Nutrition Issues
- Overview of Nutrition & Health Claims Regulation
- Nutrient profiling and the role of food composition data
Background to the Regulation

Television
Radio
Magazines
Internet
Newspapers
Celebrity chefs
Hollywood trends
Diet books
Health Advice
Travel

Nutrition and health claims – confusion?

Sensible eating for a healthy lifestyle!

Heart Health

Concentration

Physical Energy

14/10/2009 Anna Denny – EuroFIR/British Nutrition Foundation
Current Public Health Nutrition Issues

Red meat linked to increased risk of bowel cancer

Reasoning for the Regulation

- Previously no regulation on nutrition or health claims at an EU level
- Various national schemes developed e.g. UK’s JHCI
- Regulation 1924/2006/EC developed in order to:
  - Protect consumers from misleading claims
  - Encourage innovation in the food industry
  - Harmonise rules on claims in the EU allowing free trade
- Applied from July 2007
- Covers any message or representation including pictures and symbols that states, suggests or implies that a food has particular characteristics.
Overview of Regulation - Nutrition Claims

- Any claim that states, suggests or implies that a food has particular beneficial nutritional properties due to:
  - The energy it provides
    - provides at a reduced or increased rate – only 200kcal per bar
    - does not provide, and/or
  - The nutrients or other substances it contains
    - source of calcium
    - contains in reduced or increased proportions
    - does not contain – no added sugar
  - Permitted nutrition claims and their conditions of use are stated in an Annex to the regulation.
  - Examples: ‘source of fibre’, ‘low in fat’, ‘source of vitamin C’

Overview of Regulation - Health claims

- Any claim that states, suggests or implies that a relationship exists between a food category, a food or one of its constituents, and health.

- Article 13 health claims
  - based on ‘generally accepted scientific evidence’ AND is ‘well understood by the average consumer’
  - do not refer to child health or reduction of disease risk.
  - may refer to:
    - the role of a nutrient or other substance in growth, development and the functions of the body
    - behavioural and psychological functions
    - slimming or weight control, reduced sense of hunger or increased sensation of satiety, or the reduction in available energy from the diet.

- Article 13.5 health claims – as Article 13 but where evidence is new

- Article 14 health claims - refer to children’s development or reduction of disease risk
But still a lot of confusion!

- Wholemeal goodness...
- Less than.....
- Only....
- Implies a benefit
- Any statement that implies that the product is low in any nutrient or energy
- Natural, naturally sourced, not artificial
- Depiction of ingredients – must be representative of the fruit content, not just the fruit flavouring
- These turn a statement of fact into a nutrition claim or a health claim
- All expressions are likely to be interpreted as “natural” by Trading Stds

The role of food composition data

Access to accurate up-to-date food composition data is an essential prerequisite of making, verifying and standardising nutrition and health claims

- Food composition data play an important role in helping consumers to make healthy choices when shopping
- EC tasked with establishing nutrient profiles that foods or certain groups of foods must comply with in order to bear nutrition and health claims
- EuroFIR’s work in harmonising the calculation and presentation of food composition data has fed into this process.
Nutrient profiles

- Designed to prevent claims on foods that have an overall 'less healthy' profile
- Thresholds for saturates, sodium and sugar (March 2009)
  - Exceed 1 threshold?
    - No health claims allowed
    - Nutrition claim with derogation (e.g. "high sugar content")
  - Exceed >1 threshold?
    - No health OR nutrition claim allowed

Recipe for Nutrient Profiling

4 Simple Steps!

1. Design profiling tool, agree thresholds for saturates, sodium and sugar (EC)
2. Take one complete, international European food composition database (EFSA)
3. Develop a representative food basket of European foods (EFSA)
4. Apply nutrient profiling thresholds and test foods for their eligibility to bear claims
Not such an easy process of course!

- Thresholds for saturates, sodium and sugar (March 2009 version)
- Still considerable debate about the detail
- Expected January 2009 ........

- Where to find a complete, international European food composition database?
  - EuroFIR work in food categorisation and harmonisation of calculation and presentation of food composition data facilitated EFSA process

- Which foods to test the profiling tool on?

---

### Which foods currently pass the ‘draft’ nutrient profiles? (March 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Sodium (mg/100g)</th>
<th>Saturated fat (g/100g)</th>
<th>Sugar (g/100g)</th>
<th>Health claim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plain biscuit</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Crisps</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate bar</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full fat cheese</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced fat cheese</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full fat flavoured yoghurt</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced fat flavoured yoghurt</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spread</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced fat spread</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef burger</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White bread</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholemeal bread</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain cereal</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweetened cereal</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muesli</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions

- From a public health perspective, it is hoped that the incentive of being able to display a nutrition or health claim on a product will drive reformulation of foods in Europe
  - Either to increase the content of beneficial constituents (e.g. fibre)
  - Or to comply with a specified nutrient profile, to bring about changes in the composition of foods (e.g. reductions in the sodium content of foods).

- The links that EuroFIR is building with the food industry to share food composition data with compilers will help to ensure that available data keep up with these changes in food composition.

- Going forwards, EuroFIR AISBL will offer a single and unique food information resource to industry and regulators for data access and the verification of nutrition and health claims throughout Europe and beyond.

Thank you for your attention

www.eurofir.net
www.nutrition.org.uk