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Edited by Janice Albert



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Foreword

Food producers in many countries are keenly interested in finding ways to inform consumers about the qualities of their products at the point of purchase. Many consumers actively seek information about products that have qualities that serve their health needs and are consistent with their values. As a result of these varied interests, food labels are increasingly being used to provide consumers with information about the environmental, technical and socioeconomic conditions under which the products were produced, as well as the health and safety aspects of food products.

The growing consumer and industry interest in food labels presents challenges for government authorities, which must ensure that the information that appears on food packages is useful, credible and presented clearly so that it does not mislead the consumer. With the increase in global trade in food, there is a need to harmonize food labelling so that product information is easily understood and is relevant to consumers in different markets.

Developing and implementing food labelling policies is a complex undertaking that presents many challenges. This book illustrates the multiple purposes food labelling serves and the many steps that different actors must take to implement a successful labelling policy.

FAO, with its breadth of technical expertise and practical experiences in many areas of food production, nutrition, food safety, marketing and trade as well as social development, and its key role in developing global food standards, food laws and international treaties related to food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry, is uniquely positioned to assist governments, food producers and consumers in understanding the dynamic role of food labelling in the global food system today.

FAO is pleased to collaborate in producing this publication with Woodhead Publishing Limited, which specializes in scientific and technical advice related to food. We would like to express our appreciation to the authors who have generously shared their expertise and experiences in this effort. In addition, we would like to thank a number of colleagues who provided important technical advice and

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