

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



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AGENDA ITEM NO. 4(A)

CX/FL 09/37/4-ADD.1

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## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING  
THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION  
CALGARY, CANADA, MAY 4 - 8, 2009

**PROPOSED DRAFT REVISION OF THE *GUIDELINES ON NUTRITION LABELLING* (CAC/GL 2-1985) CONCERNING THE LIST OF NUTRIENTS THAT ARE ALWAYS DECLARED ON A VOLUNTARY OR MANDATORY BASIS**

**INFORMATION NOTE  
FOOD COMPOSITION IN RELATION TO NUTRITION LABELLING  
(FAO)**

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**INFORMATION NOTE: FOOD COMPOSITION IN RELATION TO NUTRITION LABELLING (FAO)**

Source of food composition data to be displayed on the nutrient content label

In general, food composition data which are displayed on the label are derived either from direct chemical analysis or are calculated from existing food composition tables and databases to lower the burden of companies to comply with the labelling requirements.

For nutrient content declarations on the food label to correspond to the actual content of the foods, underlying food composition data should be of high quality. For the moment, not all countries have national and/or up-to-date food composition data available to produce high quality calculated nutrient content data for labelling. Therefore, one option to increase the ability of countries to produce high quality nutrient labels would be to update or develop national or regional food composition databases of sufficient quality and coverage of foods and nutrients.

Capacity building on food composition

The Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division of FAO has published an important reference book: **Greenfield, H. & Southgate, D.A.T.** 2003. *Food composition data – production, management and use*. FAO. Rome. It includes major issues on food composition, including analytical methods, and is also available in French and Spanish. It can be downloaded from the INFOODS website [http://www.fao.org/infoods/publications\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/infoods/publications_en.stm)

Based on this book, FAO is developing a Food Composition Study Guide, which is a distance learning tool employing questions and exercises to transmit knowledge on the generation, management and use of food composition data. It will be published in 2009 in English, French and Spanish. More information and the draft of the first module can be found at [http://www.fao.org/infoods/StudyGuide\\_17Oct2007.pdf](http://www.fao.org/infoods/StudyGuide_17Oct2007.pdf)

Regular training courses on food composition are offered and more information is disseminated through the INFOODS website [http://www.fao.org/infoods/training\\_en.stm](http://www.fao.org/infoods/training_en.stm)

Regularly, Technical Cooperation Projects at national or regional level are carried out to enhance the quality and availability of food composition data.

Database with food composition data for labeling purpose

If additional funds are available, FAO could envisage developing a tool to produce the label information as decided by CCFL with data coming from different countries and regions.