



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME  
CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING**

**Forty-eighth Session  
Quebec City, Canada  
27 October – 1 November 2024**

Comments from Jamaica

**Agenda CX/FL 24/48/9 - LABELLING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

## Justification

### Non-communicable Diseases

The Minister of Health and Wellness in Jamaica announced a package of policies targeting non-communicable disease prevention. The draft National Alcohol Policy focuses on:

- Reducing alcohol harm
- Controlling marketing of alcoholic beverages
- Driving under the influence of alcohol policies and countermeasures
- Reducing youth alcohol use
- Reducing the negative consequences of alcohol use and intoxication; and
- Promoting law enforcement

According to the Minister, consumers must know what is in their food and front of package labelling is going to be a critical area of advocacy and hopefully policy change overtime. 70% of all deaths in Jamaica are due to NCDs. The new measures are targeted to prevent the risk factors of NCDs which include alcohol use.

### Alcohol Use

Alcohol continues to be the most widely used drug in Jamaica, with 40 per cent of the population or four out of every 10 people reporting that they currently use the substance. WHO also reports, over a third (40.8%) of all Jamaicans who consume alcohol (15+ years of age) engage in binge consumption. Almost half (48.4%) of the alcohol-using youth between 15 to 19 years of age engage in binge alcohol consumption. The alcohol-attributable death rate is 6.2 and 23.7 deaths per 100,000 for Jamaican women and men, respectively. The 2016 National Drug Use Prevalence Household Survey revealed that an estimated 15% of the population is at a medium to high risk of alcohol dependence. This translates to over 370,000 persons in the population being at risk.

Alcohol labels are a key component of the branding of alcoholic beverages but they are also a fundamental vehicle to inform the consumer about the ingredients, nutritional value, caloric value, alcohol strength, number of standard drinks, and other health and safety information.

## Detailed Requirements

The labelling requirements specified in this standard shall be in the official language(s) of the country in which the product is being sold and in addition, shall show the following on the principal display panel of the label:

- a) brand name;
- b) product name;

c) alcoholic content; and

d) net content.

The net content shall be stated in appropriate units in accordance with the labelling requirements of the country of origin.

The net content shall be the average net content as determined by the sampling and measurement procedure set out in the most recent edition of International Recommendation OIML R87 of the International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML).

The following additional statements shall appear on any part of the label:

a) the name and address of the manufacturer; and

b) the country of origin.

The country of origin shall be prominently and clearly stated, and it shall be immediately preceded by the words "Product of....".

The name and address of the manufacturer shall be the name and address of the place of business of the distiller or bottler of the product. It shall be preceded by the words "Manufactured by....", "Distilled by....", "Bottled by...." as applicable.

All beverages containing 0.5% or more ABV must include information on the label about the alcohol content.

For alcoholic beverages containing more than 1.15% alcohol by volume (ABV), the label must include the alcohol content as a percentage of ABV or mL/100 ml.

For example, the label might read that the beverage contains 5% ABV or the alcohol content is 5ml/100ml of the beverage.

For alcoholic beverages containing 1.15% ABV or less, the alcohol content must be written in words to the effect 'contains not more than X% alcohol by volume'.

For example, the label might read that the beverage contains not more than 1.0% alcohol by volume.

There must be a pregnancy warning for alcoholic drinks intended for retail sale. The application of the mandatory pregnancy warning must be on beverages containing 0.5% ABV or more. For products above 150 ml, the minimum font size required for all alcoholic beverages >150ml should be 3mm. This will ensure readability and prominence.

Warnings about potential health risks, including risks of excessive consumption (e.g., liver disease, addiction). Effects on pregnancy (e.g., foetal alcohol syndrome). Interaction with medications.

Nutritional warning is not required on alcoholic beverages unless a claim is made. Alcoholic beverages may voluntarily include a Nutritional Fact Panel.