

main principle FoP labelling in line with national guidelines

Guiding principles and framework manual for front-of-pack labelling for promoting healthy diet



Box 1. Overarching principles for FOPL systems

Principle 1: The FOPL system should be aligned with national public health and nutrition policies and food regulations, as well as with relevant WHO guidance and Codex guidelines.

Principle 2: A single system should be developed to improve the impact of the FOPL system.

Principle 3: Mandatory nutrient declarations on food packages are a prerequisite for FOPL systems.

Principle 4: A monitoring and review process should be developed as part of the overall FOPL system for continuing improvements or adjustments as required.

Principle 5: The aims, scope and principles of the FOPL system should be transparent and easily accessible.

a front-of-pack label...

- should endorse and encourage consumption of products that are recommended
- should discourage consumption of products that are not recommended
- takes into account the role of the product in the dietary pattern
- uses category-specific criteria rather than an across-the-board algorithm

how an across-the-board algorithm works (1)



Points	Energy (kJ)	Sugar (g)	Saturated fatty acids (g)	Sodium (mg)
0	≤ 335	≤ 4,5	≤ 1	≤ 90
1	> 335	> 4,5	> 1	> 90
2	> 670	> 9	> 2	> 180
3	> 1005	> 13,5	> 3	> 270
4	> 1340	> 18	> 4	> 360
5	> 1675	> 22,5	> 5	> 450
6	> 2010	> 27	> 6	> 540
7	> 2345	> 31	> 7	> 630
8	> 2680	> 36	> 8	> 720
9	> 3015	> 40	> 9	> 810
10	> 3350	> 45	> 10	> 900
TOTAL	1 point	0 points	0 points	7 points

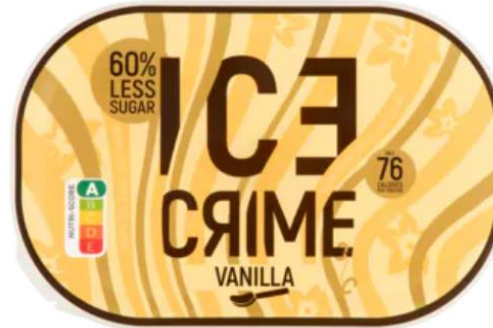


Points	Fruit, vegetables (%)	Fibers (g)	Proteins (g)
0	≤ 40	≤ 0,9	≤ 1,6
1	> 40	> 0,9	> 1,6
2	> 60	> 1,9	> 3,2
3	-	> 2,8	> 4,8
4	-	> 3,7	> 6,4
5	> 80	> 4,7	> 8,0
TOTAL	0 points	5 points	5 points



8 - 10 = -2 = A

how an across-the-board algorithm works (2)



how an across-the-board algorithm works (2)





Consumentenonderzoek Motivaction

Verschil logo en Schijf van Vijf

Er is ook gekeken hoe consumenten reageren wanneer bij de logo's wordt vermeld dat een product wel of niet in de Schijf van Vijf past. Hieruit blijkt dat circa vier op de tien respondenten het verwarrend vindt als producten gezond zijn volgens de logo's, maar niet in de Schijf van Vijf zitten. Je ziet dat veel respondenten dan zowel het logo als de Schijf van Vijf niet meer vertrouwen. Opgemerkt moet wel worden dat de respondenten in het onderzoek over de logo's geen voorlichting hebben gehad.



Consumentenonderzoek Motivaction

Verschil logo en Schijf van Vijf

Er is ook gekeken hoe consumenten reageren wanneer bij de **discrepancies affect credibility** in de Schijf van Vijf past. Hieruit blijkt dat circa vier op de tien

~40% of consumers find it confusing if a product is healthy according to a FoP label but not according to dietary guidelines. It negatively affects their trust in both label and dietary guidelines

voorlichting hebben gehad.

we plead for a label ...

- that is easy to understand
- that is in line with national dietary guidelines
- that uses category-specific criteria
 - thus makes a clear distinction between basic nutritious products and discretionary products

...that really helps consumers with a healthier diet

presentation summary (1)

This presentation shares the point of view of many nutritionists in the Netherlands. For us as nutritionists it is very important that a front-of-pack label aligns with the national dietary guidelines, as recommended by the WHO in their guiding principles and framework manual on front-of-pack labelling. We would like to see a label that encourages the consumption of the products that are recommended in those guidelines, while discouraging consumption of products not recommended. So it should take into account the role that products have in the dietary pattern and the nutrients they provide; is it a basic nutritious food, like bread, or nuts, or fruits or vegetables, or is it a discretionary product, an indulgent product like cookies, or snacks, or ice-cream. To be able to make that distinction we think a label should use category-specific criteria rather than an across-the-board algorithm.

To explain this better, the presentation shows an example of how the across-the-board algorithm of Nutri-score works. It shows the score calculation for a meat alternative. As shown on the slide, the product gets points for negative components like energy content, sugar, sodium, etcetera, and points for positive components, like fiber and proteins. The 'positive points' are subtracted from the 'negative points' to get the final score. But should we give points for protein in a product group that is basically high in protein? And how relevant are fibers for a meat (alternative) product? What we see now is that the positive points for fiber and protein can actually compensate for the high amount of sodium in the product.

presentation summary (2)

So, an across-the board algorithm merely shows which products score high enough to get the stamp, be it a green A or something else, but that doesn't necessarily make it a healthy choice. Ice-cream is not a choice that we would want to stimulate, even if it contains less sugar or is a better choice perhaps within ice-creams. And also in the within-comparisons an across-the-board algorithm has its flaws, not discriminating enough between truly healthy products that are recommended in dietary guidelines and the less healthy alternatives.

Of course these are examples and there are also examples where it works fine, but the thing is that such discrepancies will affect consumer trust. This is something we have learned in the Netherlands in the past, with a front-of-pack label that needed to be phased out, because consumers didn't trust it anymore, but it was also shown in recent research commissioned by our Ministry of Health. In this study it was found that approximately 40% of consumers find it confusing if products are healthy according to a front-of-pack label but not according to the dietary guidelines, and that this negatively affects their trust in both label and dietary guidelines.

So, as nutritionists, we plead for a label that is of course easy to understand, but that is also in line with the dietary guidelines and uses category-specific criteria that really take into account the role of products in the dietary pattern and the nutrients they provide, and thus make a clear distinction between basic nutritious foods and discretionary products. Because only then a label may really be able to help consumers with a healthier diet.

thank you!

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