

FOOD REGULATION

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FEATURE

The 45th session of the Codex Alimentarius Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL45) succeeded in improving the proposed draft guidelines for countries and business operators on mandatory and voluntary labelling provisions for non-retail containers of food and food ingredients subject to business-to-business international trade significantly enough so that it agreed to send it to the forthcoming July Codex Alimentarius Commission to advance it for half way approval and expected completion at the next CCFL session. CCFL45 returned however the proposed draft guidelines defining principles and lowest common denominator criteria for public and private front-of-pack nutrition labelling schemes while keeping the discussion at a general level. CCFL45 agreed to start new work to upgrade the current allergen labelling provisions set in the core Codex standard on food labelling. It also agreed to develop a new text to frame consumer information for foods and food supplements sold via internet and through e-commerce platforms and review whether the two long-standing Codex Alimentarius definitions for "label" and "labelling" should be amended or not. CCFL45 also agreed that the two discussion papers, on (i) modern information technologies to convey accurate information to consumers regarding their foods, including other means to provide mandatory information than on the label, and (ii) on multipacks or joint presentations, be further revised to frame their scope and the expected new works. CCFL45 agreed to keep on hold for further discussion at a later stage the development of new quantitative criteria to define nutrient-content (negative) claim on "high in" fats/saturated fats, sodium/salt and sugars including the expected role of CCNFSDU in that area, such as setting Nutrient reference values (NRVs-NCDs) or elaborating on nutrition profiles. CCFL45 rejected at this point in time any new work on alcohol beverages labelling, due to lack of consensus about one of the five proposed options. CCFL45 completed its regular agenda items on endorsement and on matters referred to the Committee by the WHO, FAO and other Codex Alimentarius bodies.

By Christophe Leprêtre and Katia Merten-Lenz 17

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