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consistent with the Negotiated Rulemaking Act (5 U.S.C. 561).

[58 FR 44051, Aug. 18, 1993; 58 FR 60109, Nov. 15, 1993, as amended at 59 FR 371, Jan. 4, 1994; 59 FR 24039, May 10, 1994; 62 FR 40598, July 29, 1997; 62 FR 49848, Sept. 23, 1997; 63 FR 14818, Mar. 27, 1998; 64 FR 12890, Mar. 16, 1999; 66 FR 56035, Nov. 6, 2001; 81 FR 34041, May 27, 2016]

§ 101.13 Nutrient content claims—general principles.

(a) This section and the regulations in subpart D of this part apply to foods that are intended for human consumption and that are offered for sale, including conventional foods and dietary supplements.

(b) A claim that expressly or implicitly characterizes the level of a nutrient of the type required to be in nutrition labeling under §101.9 or under §101.36 (that is, a nutrient content claim) may not be made on the label or in labeling of foods unless the claim is made in accordance with this regulation and with the applicable regulations in subpart D of this part or in part 105 or part 107 of this chapter.

(1) An expressed nutrient content claim is any direct statement about the level (or range) of a nutrient in the food, e.g., ''low sodium'' or ''contains 100 calories.''

(2) An implied nutrient content claim is any claim that:

(i) Describes the food or an ingredient therein in a manner that suggests that a nutrient is absent or present in a certain amount (e.g., ''high in oat bran''); or

(ii) Suggests that the food, because of its nutrient content, may be useful in maintaining healthy dietary practices and is made in association with an explicit claim or statement about a nutrient (e.g., ''healthy, contains 3 grams (g) of fat'').

(3) Except for claims regarding vitamins and minerals described in paragraph (q)(3) of this section, no nutrient content claims may be made on food intended specifically for use by infants and children less than 2 years of age unless the claim is specifically provided for in parts 101, 105, or 107 of this chapter.

(4) Reasonable variations in the spelling of the terms defined in part 101 and their synonyms are permitted provided these variations are not misleading (e.g., ''hi'' or ''lo'').

(5) For dietary supplements, claims for calories, fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol may not be made on products that meet the criteria in §101.60(b)(1) or (b)(2) for ''calorie free'' or ''low calorie'' claims, except, in the case of calorie claims, when an equivalent amount of a similar dietary supplement (e.g., another protein supplement) that the labeled food resembles and for which it substitutes, normally exceeds the definition for ''low calorie'' in §101.60(b)(2).

(c) Information that is required or permitted by §101.9 or §101.36, as applicable, to be declared in nutrition labeling, and that appears as part of the nutrition label, is not a nutrient content claim and is not subject to the requirements of this section. If such information is declared elsewhere on the label or in labeling, it is a nutrient content claim and is subject to the requirements for nutrient content claims.

(d) A ''substitute'' food is one that may be used interchangeably with another food that it resembles, i.e., that it is organoleptically, physically, and functionally (including shelf life) similar to, and that it is not nutritionally inferior to unless it is labeled as an ''imitation.''

(1) If there is a difference in performance characteristics that materially limits the use of the food, the food may still be considered a substitute if the label includes a disclaimer adjacent to the most prominent claim as defined in paragraph (j)(2)(iii) of this section, informing the consumer of such difference (e.g., ''not recommended for frying'').

(2) This disclaimer shall be in easily legible print or type and in a size no less than that required by §101.7(i) for the net quantity of contents statement, except where the size of the claim is less than two times the required size of the net quantity of contents statement, in which case the disclaimer shall be no less than one-half the size of the claim but no smaller than one-sixteenth of an inch, unless the package complies with §101.2(c)(5), in which case the disclaimer may be in type of not less than one thirty-second of an inch.

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(e)(1) Because the use of a ''free'' or ''low'' claim before the name of a food implies that the food differs from other foods of the same type by virtue of its having a lower amount of the nutrient, only foods that have been specially processed, altered, formulated, or reformulated so as to lower the amount of the nutrient in the food, remove the nutrient from the food, or not include the nutrient in the food, may bear such a claim (e.g., ''low sodium potato chips'').

(2) Any claim for the absence of a nutrient in a food, or that a food is low in a nutrient when the food has not been specially processed, altered, formulated, or reformulated to qualify for that claim shall indicate that the food inherently meets the criteria and shall clearly refer to all foods of that type and not merely to the particular brand to which the labeling attaches (e.g., ''corn oil, a sodium-free food'').

(f) A nutrient content claim shall be in type size no larger than two times the statement of identity and shall not be unduly prominent in type style compared to the statement of identity.

(g) [Reserved]

(h)(1) If a food, except a meal product as defined in §101.13(l), a main dish product as defined in §101.13(m), or food intended specifically for use by infants and children less than 2 years of age, contains more than 13.0 g of fat, 4.0 g of saturated fat, 60 milligrams (mg) of cholesterol, or 480 mg of sodium per reference amount customarily consumed, per labeled serving, or, for a food with a reference amount customarily consumed of 30 g or less or 2 tablespoons or less, per 50 g (for dehydrated foods that must be reconstituted before typical consumption with water or a diluent containing an insignificant amount, as defined in §101.9(f)(1), of all nutrients per reference amount customarily consumed, the per 50 g criterion refers to the ''as prepared'' form), then that food must bear a statement disclosing that the nutrient exceeding the specified level is present in the food as follows: ''See nutrition information for ____ content'' with the blank filled in with the identity of the nutrient exceeding the specified level, e.g., ''See nutrition information for fat content.''

(2) If a food is a meal product as defined in §101.13(l), and contains more than 26 g of fat, 8.0 g of saturated fat, 120 mg of cholesterol, or 960 mg of sodium per labeled serving, then that food must disclose, in accordance with the requirements as provided in paragraph (h)(1) of this section, that the nutrient exceeding the specified level is present in the food.

(3) If a food is a main dish product as defined in §101.13(m), and contains more than 19.5 g of fat, 6.0 g of saturated fat, 90 mg of cholesterol, or 720 mg of sodium per labeled serving, then that food must disclose, in accordance with the requirements as provided in paragraph (h)(1) of this section, that the nutrient exceeding the specified level is present in the food.

(4)(i) The disclosure statement ''See nutrition information for ____ content'' shall be in easily legible boldface print or type, in distinct contrast to other printed or graphic matter, and in a size no less than that required by §101.7(i) for the net quantity of contents statement, except where the size of the claim is less than two times the required size of the net quantity of contents statement, in which case the disclosure statement shall be no less than one-half the size of the claim but no smaller than one-sixteenth of an inch, unless the package complies with §101.2(c)(2), in which case the disclosure statement may be in type of not less than one thirty-second of an inch.

(ii) The disclosure statement shall be immediately adjacent to the nutrient content claim and may have no intervening material other than, if applicable, other information in the statement of identity or any other information that is required to be presented with the claim under this section (e.g., see paragraph (j)(2) of this section) or under a regulation in subpart D of this part (e.g., see §§101.54 and 101.62). If the nutrient content claim appears on more than one panel of the label, the disclosure statement shall be adjacent to the claim on each panel except for the panel that bears the nutrition information where it may be omitted.

(iii) If a single panel of a food label or labeling contains multiple nutrient

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content claims or a single claim repeated several times, a single disclosure statement may be made. The statement shall be adjacent to the claim that is printed in the largest type on that panel.

(i) Except as provided in §101.9 or §101.36, as applicable, or in paragraph (q)(3) of this section, the label or labeling of a product may contain a statement about the amount or percentage of a nutrient if:

(1) The use of the statement on the food implicitly characterizes the level of the nutrient in the food and is consistent with a definition for a claim, as provided in subpart D of this part, for the nutrient that the label addresses. Such a claim might be, ''less than 3 g of fat per serving;''

(2) The use of the statement on the food implicitly characterizes the level of the nutrient in the food and is not consistent with such a definition, but the label carries a disclaimer adjacent to the statement that the food is not ''low'' in or a ''good source'' of the nutrient, such as ''only 200 mg sodium per serving, not a low sodium food.'' The disclaimer must be in easily legible print or type and in a size no less than that required by §101.7(i) for the net quantity of contents statement except where the size of the claim is less than two times the required size of the net quantity of contents statement, in which case the disclaimer shall be no less than one-half the size of the claim but no smaller than one-sixteenth of an inch unless the package complies with §101.2(c)(5), in which case the disclaimer may be in type of not less than one thirty-second of an inch, or

(3) The statement does not in any way implicitly characterize the level of the nutrient in the food and it is not false or misleading in any respect (e.g., ''100 calories'' or ''5 grams of fat''), in which case no disclaimer is required.

(4) ''Percent fat free'' claims are not authorized by this paragraph. Such claims shall comply with §101.62(b)(6).

(j) A food may bear a statement that compares the level of a nutrient in the food with the level of a nutrient in a reference food. These statements shall be known as ''relative claims'' and include ''light,'' ''reduced,'' ''less'' (or ''fewer''), and ''more'' claims.

(1) To bear a relative claim about the level of a nutrient, the amount of that nutrient in the food must be compared to an amount of nutrient in an appropriate reference food as specified below.

(i)(A) For ''less'' (or ''fewer'') and ''more'' claims, the reference food may be a dissimilar food within a product category that can generally be substituted for one another in the diet (e.g., potato chips as reference for pretzels, orange juice as a reference for vitamin C tablets) or a similar food (e.g., potato chips as reference for potato chips, one brand of multivitamin as reference for another brand of multivitamin).

(B) For ''light,'' ''reduced,'' ''added,'' ''extra,'' ''plus,'' ''fortified,'' and ''enriched'' claims, the reference food shall be a similar food (e.g., potato chips as a reference for potato chips, one brand of multivitamin for another brand of multivitamin), and

(ii)(A) For ''light'' claims, the reference food shall be representative of the type of food that includes the product that bears the claim. The nutrient value for the reference food shall be representative of a broad base of foods of that type; e.g., a value in a representative, valid data base; an average value determined from the top three national (or regional) brands, a market basket norm; or, where its nutrient value is representative of the food type, a market leader. Firms using such a reference nutrient value as a basis for a claim, are required to provide specific information upon which the nutrient value was derived, on request, to consumers and appropriate regulatory officials.

(B) For relative claims other than ''light,'' including ''less'' and ''more'' claims, the reference food may be the same as that provided for ''light'' in paragraph (j)(1)(ii)(A) of this section, or it may be the manufacturer's regular product, or that of another manufacturer, that has been offered for sale to the public on a regular basis for a substantial period of time in the same geographic area by the same business entity or by one entitled to use its trade name. The nutrient values used to determine the claim when comparing a single manufacturer's product

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to the labeled product shall be either the values declared in nutrition labeling or the actual nutrient values, provided that the resulting label is internally consistent to (i.e., that the values stated in the nutrition information, the nutrient values in the accompanying information and the declaration of the percentage of nutrient by which the food has been modified are consistent and will not cause consumer confusion when compared), and that the actual modification is at least equal to the percentage specified in the definition of the claim.

(2) For foods bearing relative claims:

(i) The label or labeling must state the identity of the reference food and the percentage (or fraction) of the amount of the nutrient in the reference food by which the nutrient in the labeled food differs (e.g., ''50 percent less fat than (reference food)'' or ''1/3 fewer calories than (reference food)''),

(ii) This information shall be immediately adjacent to the most prominent claim. The type size shall be in accordance with paragraph (h)(4)(i) of this section.

(iii) The determination of which use of the claim is in the most prominent location on the label or labeling will be made based on the following factors, considered in order:

(A) A claim on the principal display panel adjacent to the statement of identity;

(B) A claim elsewhere on the principal display panel;

(C) A claim on the information panel; or

(D) A claim elsewhere on the label or labeling.

(iv) The label or labeling must also bear:

(A) Clear and concise quantitative information comparing the amount of the subject nutrient in the product per labeled serving with that in the reference food; and

(B) This statement shall appear adjacent to the most prominent claim or to the nutrition label, except that if the nutrition label is on the information panel, the quantitative information may be located elsewhere on the information panel in accordance with §101.2.

(3) A relative claim for decreased levels of a nutrient may not be made on the label or in labeling of a food if the nutrient content of the reference food meets the requirement for a ''low'' claim for that nutrient (e.g., 3 g fat or less).

(k) The term ''modified'' may be used in the statement of identity of a food that bears a relative claim that complies with the requirements of this part, followed immediately by the name of the nutrient whose content has been altered (e.g., ''Modified fat cheesecake''). This statement of identity must be immediately followed by the comparative statement such as ''Contains 35 percent less fat than _____.'' The label or labeling must also bear the information required by paragraph (j)(2) of this section in the manner prescribed.

(l) For purposes of making a claim, a ''meal product shall be defined as a food that:

(1) Makes a major contribution to the total diet by:

(i) Weighing at least 10 ounces (oz) per labeled serving; and

(ii) Containing not less than three 40-g portions of food, or combinations of foods, from two or more of the following four food groups, except as noted in paragraph (l)(1)(ii)(E) of this section.

(A) Bread, cereal, rice, and pasta group;

(B) Fruits and vegetables group;

(C) Milk, yogurt, and cheese group;

(D) Meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, and nuts group; except that;

(E) These foods shall not be sauces (except for foods in the above four food groups that are in the sauces), gravies, condiments, relishes, pickles, olives, jams, jellies, syrups, breadings or garnishes; and

(2) Is represented as, or is in a form commonly understood to be, a breakfast, lunch, dinner, or meal. Such representations may be made either by statements, photographs, or vignettes.

(m) For purposes of making a claim, a ''main dish product'' shall be defined as a food that:

(1) Makes a major contribution to a meal by

(i) Weighing at least 6 oz per labeled serving; and

(ii) Containing not less than 40 g of food, or combinations of foods, from

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each of at least two of the following four food groups, except as noted in paragraph (m)(1)(ii)(E) of this section.

(A) Bread, cereal, rice, and pasta group;

(B) Fruits and vegetables group;

(C) Milk, yogurt, and cheese group;

(D) Meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, and nuts groups; except that:

(E) These foods shall not be sauces (except for foods in the above four food groups that are in the sauces) gravies, condiments, relishes, pickles, olives, jams, jellies, syrups, breadings, or garnishes; and

(2) Is represented as, or is in a form commonly understood to be, a main dish (e.g., not a beverage or a dessert). Such representations may be made either by statements, photographs, or vignettes.

(n) Nutrition labeling in accordance with §101.9, §101.10, or §101.36, as applicable, shall be provided for any food for which a nutrient content claim is made.

(o) Except as provided in §101.10, compliance with requirements for nutrient content claims in this section and in the regulations in subpart D of this part, will be determined using the analytical methodology prescribed for determining compliance with nutrition labeling in §101.9.

(p)(1) Unless otherwise specified, the reference amount customarily consumed set forth in §101.12(b) through (f) shall be used in determining whether a product meets the criteria for a nutrient content claim. If the serving size declared on the product label differs from the reference amount customarily consumed, and the amount of the nutrient contained in the labeled serving does not meet the maximum or minimum amount criterion in the definition for the descriptor for that nutrient, the claim shall be followed by the criteria for the claim as required by §101.12(g) (e.g., ''very low sodium, 35 mg or less per 240 milliliters (8 fl oz.)'').

(2) The criteria for the claim shall be immediately adjacent to the most prominent claim in easily legible print or type and in a size in accordance with paragraph (h)(4)(i) of this section.

(q) The following exemptions apply:

(1) Nutrient content claims that have not been defined by regulation and that are contained in the brand name of a specific food product that was the brand name in use on such food before October 25, 1989, may continue to be used as part of that brand name for such product, provided that they are not false or misleading under section 403(a) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (the act). However, foods bearing such claims must comply with section 403(f), (g), and (h) of the act;

(2) A soft drink that used the term *diet* as part of its brand name before October 25, 1989, and whose use of that term was in compliance with §105.66 of this chapter as that regulation appeared in the Code of Federal Regulations on that date, may continue to use that term as part of its brand name, provided that its use of the term is not false or misleading under section 403(a) of the act. Such claims are exempt from the requirements of section 403(r)(2) of the act (e.g., the disclosure statement also required by §101.13(h)). Soft drinks marketed after October 25, 1989, may use the term ''diet'' provided they are in compliance with the current §105.66 of this chapter and the requirements of §101.13.

(3)(i) A statement that describes the percentage of a vitamin or mineral in the food, including foods intended specifically for use by infants and children less than 2 years of age, in relation to a Reference Daily Intake (RDI) as defined in §101.9 may be made on the label or in labeling of a food without a regulation authorizing such a claim for a specific vitamin or mineral unless such claim is expressly prohibited by regulation under section 403(r)(2)(A)(vi) of the act.

(ii) Percentage claims for dietary supplements. Under section 403(r)(2)(F) of the act, a statement that characterizes the percentage level of a dietary ingredient for which a reference daily intake (RDI) or daily reference value (DRV) has not been established may be made on the label or in labeling of dietary supplements without a regulation that specifically defines such a statement. All such claims shall be accompanied by any disclosure statement required under paragraph (h) of this section.

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(A) *Simple percentage claims.* Whenever a statement is made that characterizes the percentage level of a dietary ingredient for which there is no RDI or DRV, the statement of the actual amount of the dietary ingredient per serving shall be declared next to the percentage statement (e.g., ''40 percent omega-3 fatty acids, 10 mg per capsule'').

(B) *Comparative percentage claims.* Whenever a statement is made that characterizes the percentage level of a dietary ingredient for which there is no RDI or DRV and the statement draws a comparison to the amount of the dietary ingredient in a reference food, the reference food shall be clearly identified, the amount of that food shall be identified, and the information on the actual amount of the dietary ingredient in both foods shall be declared in accordance with paragraph (j)(2)(iv) of this section (e.g., ''twice the omega-3 fatty acids per capsule (80 mg) as in 100 mg of menhaden oil (40 mg)'').

(4) The requirements of this section do not apply to:

(i) Infant formulas subject to section 412(h) of the act; and

(ii) Medical foods defined by section 5(b) of the Orphan Drug Act.

(5) A nutrient content claim used on food that is served in restaurants or other establishments in which food is served for immediate human consumption or which is sold for sale or use in such establishments shall comply with the requirements of this section and the appropriate definition in subpart D of this part, except that:

(i) Such claim is exempt from the requirements for disclosure statements in paragraph (h) of this section and §§ 101.54(d), 101.62(c), (d)(1)(ii)(D), (d)(2)(iii)(C), (d)(3), (d)(4)(ii)(C), and (d)(5)(ii)(C); and

(ii) In lieu of analytical testing, compliance may be determined using a reasonable basis for concluding that the food that bears the claim meets the definition for the claim. This reasonable basis may derive from recognized data bases for raw and processed foods, recipes, and other means to compute nutrient levels in the foods or meals and may be used provided reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the method of preparation adheres to the factors on which the reasonable basis was determined (e.g., types and amounts of ingredients, cooking temperatures, etc.). Firms making claims on foods based on this reasonable basis criterion are required to provide to appropriate regulatory officials on request the specific information on which their determination is based and reasonable assurance of operational adherence to the preparation methods or other basis for the claim; and

(iii) A term or symbol that may in some contexts constitute a claim under this section may be used, provided that the use of the term or symbol does not characterize the level of a nutrient, and a statement that clearly explains the basis for the use of the term or symbol is prominently displayed and does not characterize the level of a nutrient. For example, a term such as ''lite fare'' followed by an asterisk referring to a note that makes clear that in this restaurant ''lite fare'' means smaller portion sizes than normal; or an item bearing a symbol referring to a note that makes clear that this item meets the criteria for the dietary guidance established by a recognized dietary authority would not be considered a nutrient content claim under § 101.13.

(6) Nutrient content claims that were part of the common or usual names of foods that were subject to a standard of identity on November 8, 1990, are not subject to the requirements of paragraphs (b) and (h) of this section or to definitions in subpart D of this part.

(7) Implied nutrient content claims may be used as part of a brand name, provided that the use of the claim has been authorized by the Food and Drug Administration. Petitions requesting approval of such a claim may be submitted under § 101.69(o).

(8) The term *fluoridated*, *fluoride added* or *with added fluoride* may be used on the label or in labeling of bottled water that contains added fluoride.

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