



## Regulations Relating to the Labelling and Advertising of Foodstuffs

*Latest:* On 31 January 2023, the Department of Health published a 238-page set of regulations, called the Regulations Relating to the Labelling and Advertising of Foodstuffs for public comment, which aim to make changes to the way food items are labelled on store shelves in South Africa.

### Summary

Currently, companies in South Africa are not required to provide nutritional labelling on foods. Even though many do, information is not standardised, and some are not user-friendly. Some countries around the world already use some form of front-of-package labels to help consumers better identify unhealthy foods.

### Below are some of the proposed changes:

- To reinforce rules already in place for product packaging such as ingredient lists and sell-by dates.
- To get rid of trendy descriptions for food like calling products “smart” food, or “intelligent” food and terms like “wholesome”, “nutritious”, “nutraceutical” or “super-food”.
- To remove any words, logos or pictorials implying that the food is better or superior in any way – including the name and trade name.
- To clamp down on other claims on the packaging, which may be misleading.
- Products can still use terms like “grain fed”, “grass-fed”, “Karoo lamb”, “natural lamb”, “country reared”, “free range”, “pure”, etc , however they have to be linked to a specific protocol which is approved or registered with the Department of Agriculture, or regulated in terms of the Agricultural Product Standards Act.
- In the case of foods that are not regulated in terms of the Agricultural Product Standards Act, statements like “fresh”, “natural”, “nature’s”, “pure”, “traditional”, “original”, “authentic”, “real”, “genuine”, “home-made”, “farmhouse”, “hand-made”, “selected”, “premium”, “finest”, “quality”, or “best” or words with a similar meaning are still permitted – but this must be reflected in the ingredients.
- Other labels prohibited are endorsements from celebrities, organisations and any medical practitioners, while claims of providing a nutritionally balanced diet are also on the chopping block.
- Any product where the percentage of meat present is less than 25%, the name or description of the end product may not contain the word “meat”.

### Warning labels

Some changes:



- Food items that are high in sugar and fat content come with warning labels attached.
- A mandatory front-of-package labelling (FOPL) to be present on any pre-packaged foodstuffs that contain added saturated fat, added sugar, added sodium and which exceed the nutrient cut-off values for total sugar, total sodium or total saturated fatty acids.



- The FOPL must be clearly visible, be integrated into the packaging. The FOPL may not be partially or completely covered by any other element.
- The relevant foodstuffs must display such logos on the front of the package – and they will have to cover 25% of the front of the package.
- Products which carry these labels may not be marketed to children, and may not make any claim with an energy, health or nutrition message – irrespective of whether their nutritional profile passes the Nutrient Profiling Model used to determine as such.
- The department says:
  - that advertisers cannot portray any happy caring family scenario on a label or package in order to encourage the purchase of consumption.
  - Marketing cannot omit undesirable aspects of a food's nutritional profile, contain any misleading or incorrect information about the nutritional value of the product or be represented as a substitute for meals.



#### Colour

C	M	Y	K
0	0	0	100

The FOPL shall consist of black warning devices and symbols on a white holding strap with white text with the above colour composition for elements indicated in black

#### High Quality Graphics of the Logos

Higher resolution versions of the symbols and devices for use in the FOPL



#### Typography, letter sizes, colour and quality of images

Typography — the name of a foodstuff must appear on the main panel of the label. The font used in the iconography is the "Arial Black" family, specifically its "bold"

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO  
PQRSTUVWXYZ**

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- [Labelling and Advertising of Foodstuffs Summary](#)

**The regulations are open for comment for three months, the deadline for comment is 31 April 2023**  
Any comments, questions can be sent to [kntanzi@printingsa.org](mailto:kntanzi@printingsa.org) on or before 05 March 2023