

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

**FHB(FE)230**

Question Serial No.

4251

Head: 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene  
Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

It is stated that the Department will “continue to strengthen the promotional activities on nutrition labelling”. Please provide information on the following:

- (a) the plans to enhance the promotional and education activities on nutrition labelling, the details of such plans and the estimated expenditure to be involved;
- (b) the ways to assess the effectiveness of the promotional activities on nutrition labelling; whether indicators will be set to evaluate the effectiveness of the activities; if yes, the details of the indicators;
- (c) the numbers of inspections conducted and non-compliance cases detected each year (i.e. in 2010, 2011 and 2012) since the implementation of the Nutrition Labelling Scheme on 1 July 2010, with a breakdown by the type of food products and nature of non-compliance;
- (d) whether prosecutions have been taken out against non-compliance cases since the implementation of the Nutrition Labelling Scheme on 1 July 2010; if yes, the number of cases each year (i.e. in 2010, 2011 and 2012); and
- (e) the number of complaints regarding the labelling of nutrition information received each year (i.e. in 2010, 2011 and 2012) since the implementation of the Nutrition Labelling Scheme on 1 July 2010, with a breakdown by the type of food products and nature of complaints.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

- (a) Since the passage of the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) (Amendment: Requirements for Nutrition Labelling and Nutrition Claim) Regulation 2008 in mid-2008, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) had launched a three-year Publicity and Education Campaign on promoting nutrition labelling. To sustain the efforts, CFS has launched a two-year enhanced education and publicity programme on nutrition labelling since July 2011 with details as follows -
  - (i) during the academic year 2011-12, CFS and the Education Bureau jointly organised the “Live it, Use it” Nutrition Labelling Promotion Award Scheme (the Promotion Award Scheme). Under the Promotion Award Scheme, a total of 28 teams from 18 secondary schools took part in various creative activities. A sharing session cum award presentation ceremony was held in July 2012. The Promotion Award Scheme for the academic year 2012-13 has started since October 2012;

- (ii) CFS also joined hands with the Hong Kong Council of Social Service to launch the “Live it, Use it” Nutrition Labelling Fun Shopping Award Scheme (Fun Shopping Award Scheme) since December 2011. A total of 18 community service organisations participated in the Fun Shopping Award Scheme with over 900 people joining the activities in the year 2011-12. The Fun Shopping Award Scheme for the year 2012-13 has started since November 2012;
- (iii) CFS launched a mobile application “Nutrition Calculator” (“NuCal”) in October 2011. With “NuCal”, one can set up a personal database on food items for recording the total nutrient intake of their favourite prepackaged food items. As at 1 March 2013, “NuCal” had recorded about 55 000 downloads; and
- (iv) to echo the theme of World Health Day 2013 on high blood pressure, CFS would launch a campaign in 2013 on using nutrition labelling to reduce sodium intake.

The above promotion work is undertaken by existing staff and the expenditure cannot be separately identified.

- (b) In addition to using quantifiable indicators such as the number of visits to websites and the number of participants in publicity and education activities, CFS evaluates the effectiveness of the promotional activities on nutrition labelling by means of two large-scale surveys. The first one was conducted in mid-2008, called the “Survey on Public Knowledge, Attitude and Practice regarding Food Safety and Nutrition Labelling”. The findings were released through a press conference. The second was conducted in 2012 to evaluate the effectiveness of the Campaign. Data analysis is in progress and would be completed in the first half of 2013.
- (c) As at 31 December 2012, CFS had checked 24 056 nutrition labels of prepackaged food products since the commencement of the Nutrition Labelling Scheme (the Scheme) on 1 July 2010, with 246 found to be non-compliant. The overall compliance rate is 98.98%. A detailed breakdown of the 246 cases by nature of irregularity and type of food is as follows -

**Breakdown of the 246 non-compliant cases by nature of irregularity**

<b>Nature of non-compliance</b>	<b>No. of cases (1.7.2010 - 31.12.2010)</b>	<b>No. of cases (2011)</b>	<b>No. of cases (2012)</b>
No or incomplete 1+7 nutrition label	43	24	14
Inappropriate nutrition label format	4	3	3
Inappropriate nutrient claim	7	11	7
Inappropriate language	12	3	3
Involving more than one type of irregularity	0	7	8

Discrepancy on declared nutrient value confirmed after chemical analysis	30	29	38
Subtotal	96	77	73
Total	246		

**Breakdown of the 246 non-compliant cases by type of food**

<b>Type of food</b>	<b>No. of cases (1.7.2010 - 31.12.2010)</b>	<b>No. of cases (2011)</b>	<b>No. of cases (2012)</b>
Bakery and cereal products	23	12	20
Candies and snacks	31	9	22
Drinks	12	9	15
Oils, sauces and condiments	13	19	7
Others	17	28	9
Subtotal	96	77	73
Total	246		

- (d) No prosecution has been made since the implementation of the Scheme. Upon detection of non-compliance, traders have either withdrawn the product concerned from the shelf or rectified the nutrition label according to the statutory requirements of the Scheme.
- (e) From 1 July 2010 to 31 December 2012, CFS received 102 food complaints against nutrition labelling of prepackaged food. A detailed breakdown of the 102 cases by nature of irregularity and type of food is as follows -

**Breakdown of the 102 complaint cases by nature of irregularity**

<b>Nature of complaint</b>	<b>No. of cases (1.7.2010 - 31.12.2010)</b>	<b>No. of cases (2011)</b>	<b>No. of cases (2012)</b>
No or incomplete 1+7 nutrition label	8	10	17
Inappropriate declared nutrient value	5	20	35
Others	0	3	4
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>		

**Breakdown of the 102 complaint cases by type of food**

<b>Type of food</b>	<b>No. of cases (1.7.2010 - 31.12.2010)</b>	<b>No. of cases (2011)</b>	<b>No. of cases (2012)</b>
Bakery and cereal products	5	13	25
Candies and snacks	1	8	4
Drinks	4	2	8
Oils, sauces and condiments	1	4	5
Others	2	6	14
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>		

Name in block letters: Clement LEUNG

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Date: 8.4.2013