

CIRCULAR

Guiding the contents of nutrition facts labels and method of nutrition facts labeling of food¹

Pursuant to June 17, 2010 Law No. 55/2010/QH12 on Food Safety;

Pursuant to the Government's Decree No. 43/2017/ND-CP of April 14, 2017, on goods labels; and the Government's Decree No. 111/2021/ND-CP of December 9, 2021, amending and supplementing a number of articles of the Government's Decree No. 43/2017/ND-CP of April 14, 2017, on goods labels;

Pursuant to the Government's Decree No. 95/2022/ND-CP of November 15, 2022, defining the functions, tasks, powers and organizational structure of the Ministry of Health;

At the request of the Director of the Department of Legal Affairs;

The Minister of Health promulgates the Circular guiding the contents of nutrition facts labels and method of nutrition facts labeling of food.

Chapter I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1. Scope of regulation

1. This Circular guides the contents of nutrition facts labels, method of nutrition facts labeling of food, and roadmap for application to packaged foods that are manufactured, traded, imported and circulated in Vietnam.

2. This Circular does not apply to the following ingredients and foods:

a/ Ingredients and foods that are not directly sold to consumers, including also edible ice;

¹ Công Báo Nos 73-74 (16/01/2024)

- b/ Single-ingredient foods;
- c/ Bottled natural mineral water and drinking water (including also those with CO₂ and/or flavorings added only);
- d/ Edible salt and refined salt;
- dd/ Vinegar and vinegar substitutes, including also those with flavorings added only;
- e/ Flavorings, additives and food processing aids;
- g/ Food enzymes;
- h/ Tea and coffee that do not contain any ingredient other than colorings and flavorings;
- i/ Health supplements;
- k/ Alcoholic drinks;
- l/ Foods specified in Clause 2, Article 1 of the Government's Decree No. 43/2017/ND-CP of April 14, 2017, on goods labels (below referred to as Decree No. 43/2017/ND-CP), which is amended and supplemented under the Government's Decree No. 111/2021/ND-CP of December 9, 2021, and foods specified in Clauses 1 and 2, Article 25 of the Government's Decree No. 15/2018/ND-CP of February 2, 2018, detailing a number of articles of the Law on Food Safety (below referred to as Decree No. 15/2018/ND-CP);
- m/ Foods manufactured by small food traders defined in Clause 10, Article 3 of Decree No. 15/2018/ND-CP.

3. The organizations and individuals specified in Clause 2 of this Article that voluntarily state nutrition facts on their food labels shall comply with this Circular.

Article 2. Subjects of application

This Circular applies to organizations and individuals responsible for food labeling (below referred to as organizations and individuals); state management agencies in charge of food safety; and agencies, organizations and individuals engaged in nutrition facts labeling of food.

Article 3. Interpretation of terms

In this Circular, the terms below are construed as follows:

1. *Energy* is chemical energy absorbed by a human body from food to sustain life, perform activities and grow, which is calculated by energy conversion coefficients of energy components of food.

2. *Protein* is a nitrogen-containing organic compound composed of amino acids, which is conventionally calculated by applying conversion coefficients of organic nitrogen values in food.

3. *Carbohydrate* is a compound of carbon, oxygen and hydrogen which are arranged in the form of a monosaccharide or multiple monosaccharides and do not include fiber.

4. *Total sugars* is the total amount of monosaccharides and disaccharides in food (including also natural sugar and added sugar).

5. *Total fat* is an organic compound that does not contain nitrogen with the main components being triglycerides, fatty acids, cholesterol and phospholipids.

6. *Saturated fat* is a type of fat in which the fatty acid chains do not have double bonds in its chemical structure.

7. *Sodium* is an alkali metal whose chemical symbol is Na; sodium exists in salts, seasonings and some other natural foods and additives.

8. *Dietary reference value* means a numerical value which is recommended for Vietnamese people based on scientific data on the daily nutrient intake need in order to maintain optimal nutrition and reduce the risk of diet-related noncommunicable diseases.

Article 4. Principles of inscription of nutrition facts on food labels

1. The nutrition facts labeling of food must comply with this Circular and relevant laws on food labels and food safety.

2. The nutrition facts labeling of food must ensure accuracy and not cause confusions or misunderstandings about nutritional values of food.

3. Nutrition facts information on food labels shall be displayed in a way that makes it noticeable, easy to understand and inerasable.

Chapter II

CONTENTS OF NUTRITION FACTS LABELS AND METHOD OF NUTRITION FACTS LABELING OF FOOD

Article 5. Contents of nutritional ingredients

1. For foods manufactured, traded, imported and circulated in Vietnam, their labels must show the following nutritional ingredients:

a/ Energy;

- b/ Protein;
- c/ Carbohydrate;
- d/ Fat;
- dd/ Sodium.

2. The labels of beverages and processed milks with added sugar specified in Decree No. 15/2018/ND-CP and other foods with added sugar must show the 5 nutritional ingredients specified in Clause 1 of this Article and total sugars.

3. The labels of fried foods must show the 5 nutritional ingredients specified in Clause 1 of this Article and saturated fat.

4. For foods that do not contain the nutritional ingredients specified in Clauses 1, 2 and 3 of this Article or contain these nutritional ingredients with nutritional values lower than those provided in Appendix I to this Circular, it is not required to show these nutritional ingredients on their labels.

Article 6. Nutrition facts labeling

1. Energy value shall be expressed in kilocalorie (kcal); content of protein, carbohydrate, fat, saturated fat and total sugars, in gram (g); and sodium content, in milligram (mg). Nutritional ingredients shall be expressed per 100g or 100ml of food or per serving with the content identified on labels or per pack when the number of packs in a package has been announced.

2. For the nutritional ingredients specified Article 5 of this Circular, it is permitted to additionally show the percentage (%) of dietary reference values. Organizations and individuals that voluntarily show the percentage (%) of dietary reference values shall comply with the guidance provided in Appendix II to this Circular.

3. Nutritional values of the nutritional ingredients specified in Article 5 of this Circular shall be expressed in numbers, with sufficient nutrition facts on food labels under regulations; be displayed in a position so that all prescribed contents can be easily noticeable; and ensure adherence to the principles specified in Article 4 of this Circular.

4. Tolerances of the nutritional ingredients specified in Articles 5 and 6 of this Circular must comply with Clause 1, Article 17 of Decree No. 43/2017/ND-CP.

Chapter III

IMPLEMENTATION PROVISIONS

Article 7. Effect

This Circular takes effect on February 15, 2024.

Article 8. Implementation roadmap

1. By December 31, 2025, organizations and individuals that manufacture, trade in, or import for circulation in Vietnam, foods regulated by this Circular shall carry out nutrition facts labeling under this Circular.

2. From January 1, 2026, organizations and individuals may not manufacture, print, import and use labels that are not conformable to this Circular.

Article 9. Transitional provision

Food without nutrition facts labels specified in this Circular that have been manufactured, traded, imported and circulated in Vietnam before January 1, 2026, may continue to be circulated and used by the end of their shelf-life stated on food labels.

Article 10. Reference provision

In case the legal documents referred to in this Circular are amended, supplemented or replaced, the amending, supplementing or replacing ones shall prevail.

Article 11. Organization of implementation

1. Units under and attached to the Ministry of Health have the following responsibilities:

a/ The Department of Legal Affairs shall assume the prime responsibility for, and coordinate with the Vietnam Food Administration, the Department of Preventive Medicine, the Department of Maternal Health and Children and related units in, disseminating information on, and guiding the implementation of, this Circular.

b/ The Vietnam Food Administration, the Department of Preventive Medicine, and the Department of Maternal Health and Children shall, based on their assigned functions and tasks, coordinate with related agencies and units of line ministries in charge of food assigned in Decree No. 15/2018/ND-CP in, organizing the implementation of this Circular.

c/ The National Institute of Nutrition shall study, review and propose adjustments and updating of the dietary reference values provided in Appendix II to this Circular.

2. Provincial-level People's Committees shall direct the organization of implementation of this Circular in localities.

Article 12. Implementation responsibility

Heads of units under and attached to the Ministry of Health, and related agencies, organizations and individuals shall implement this Circular. Any problems arising in the course of implementation of this Circular should be reported to the Ministry of Health (the Department of Legal Affairs) for consideration and settlement.-

For the Minister of Health
Deputy Minister
DO XUAN TUYEN

** The Appendices to this Circular are not translated.*