

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
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WORLD
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ORGANIZATION



JOINT OFFICE: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME Tel: 39 06 57051 www.codexalimentarius.net Email: codex@fao.org Facsimile: 39 06 5705 4593

Agenda Item 11

CX/NFSDU 01/11-Add.1

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION AND FOODS FOR SPECIAL DIETARY USES

**Twenty-third Session
Berlin, Germany, 26 – 30 November 2001**

DISCUSSION PAPER ON SPORTS AND ENERGY DRINKS

Comments submitted in response to CL 2000/22-NFSDU by Costa Rica and the International Soft Drink Council (ISDC)

Costa Rica

Paras. 139–143 of ALINORM 01/26 of the 22nd Session of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses, Berlin 19–23 June, refer to sports and energy drinks. In our opinion, the definition of sports drinks contained in the Proposed Draft Recommendations for Sports and Energy Drinks (CX/FL 98/11) matches the definition of hydrating drinks. This could lead to confusion since hydrating drinks are consumed by not only sports men and women but also the general public.

The term ‘sports drinks’ is much broader and includes products with an increased energy content.

We believe that sports drinks and hydrating drinks should not be included in the General Standard for the Labelling of and Claims for Prepackaged Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CODEX STAN 146-1985).

Nevertheless, in our view it is important that there be a special standard for sports drinks and hydrating drinks in which questions of definition, composition and labelling are dealt with. This is because these drinks’ special characteristics such as their sodium, chloride and magnesium content as well as the type and quantity of carbohydrates used are not considered in the existing labelling standards.

The International Soft Drink Council

The International Soft Drink Council (ISDC) is an NGO representing the interests of the international soft drink industry. ISDC is pleased to submit the following comments on 1) sports drinks as foods for special dietary uses, 2) the distinction between “energy drinks” and “sports drinks,” and 3) the claim for “high energy.”

1. Sports food and drinks as foods for special dietary uses

Sports and energy drinks belong to the broad category of “soft drinks.” “Soft drinks” have been defined by Codex as “a beverage other than fruit juice, fruit nectar, milk, milk-based beverages, alcoholic beverages, mineral waters, tea and tea substitutes, coffee, chicory, mate, cocoa and chocolate milk.” Sports and energy drinks are intended for everyone and not just for one segment of the population, e.g., athletes. Therefore, **they should not be considered as foods for special dietary uses.** Furthermore, all aspects concerned with sports and energy drinks are covered elsewhere in Codex standards, e.g., the General Standard for the Labeling of Prepackaged Food covers conditions for labeling and claims, and the General Standard for Food Additives addresses composition and the use of food additives.

2. Distinction between “energy drinks” and “sports drinks”

Sports drinks

A sports drink is a beverage that provides some energy and compensates for water and mineral losses in persons who are physically active. The use of the term “sports drink” cannot and does not imply that this type of beverage meets the specific nutritional requirements of persons engaged in intensive physical exercise. The term “sports drink” is meant to imply that these beverages are suitable for occasions where physical activity is involved. The main function of all beverages including soft drinks is hydration. Therefore, these type beverages fit within the definition of a soft drink. A definition for “sports drink” is not necessary to address the issue of a claim. Claims should be based on a nutrient function rather than based on a class of foods or beverage. Furthermore, any definition should be scientifically accurate.

Energy drinks

An energy drink is a beverage used to provide a high level of energy from carbohydrates (also fat and protein) to the body. This beverage is not intended to compensate for water and mineral losses from physical activity and no such claim may be made. As above, we recommend that a definition for energy drinks is not necessary to address the issue of “claims.” All regular soft drinks provide some form of energy, except perhaps “diet” soft drinks. Any soft drink can contain additional ingredients as long as they are safe and suitable for this application, and the permission to use these ingredients should not be specific to or restricted to so-called energy drinks.

3. The claim for “high energy”

The use of the term “energy” should be restricted to the relationship with caloric value. In order to be “high energy,” we suggest that the condition should be a 25% increase over an equivalent product.