

ALINORM 66/22

JOINT FAO/WHO CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING

REPORT OF SECOND MEETING

OTTAWA, CANADA

25-29 July, 1966.

MR/50410

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JOINT FAO/WHO CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING

SECOND MEETING

OTTAWA, CANADA

25-29 July, 1966

1. The Second Session of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling was convened by the Government of Canada in Ottawa, Canada, 25-29 July, 1966. The Session was opened by Mr. S.C. Barry, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, and Dr. R.A. Chapman, Director-General, Food and Drug Directorate, was the chairman of the Committee. The Session was attended by 35 participants including the representatives of 12 countries and 3 international organizations. (See Appendix 1 for the list of participants.)

2. The Committee adopted the provisional agenda after inclusion of an item dealing with the documents "General Food Labelling Provisions" (SP 10/82 and SP 10/82 (1)) prepared by the FAO Legislation Research Branch.

3. After examining the comments which had been made by governments and interested international organizations on the Report of the First Session, the Committee proceeded to elaborate general principles and requirements for the labelling of all foods and to consider specific labelling matters referred to it from various Codex Commodity Committees.

4. The Committee decided that in addition to a statement of general principles, it would be necessary to prepare a standard on labelling requirements applicable to all foods which would be sent to governments for comment at Step 3 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure for the Elaboration of Standards.

General Principles of Food Labelling

5. The Committee reaffirmed that the primary purpose of food labelling was to inform the purchaser of the nature and amount of the food present in the container. While proper labelling should protect the honest trader and facilitate international trade, the interests of the consumer should be paramount.

6. In general, the following mandatory information must be presented in a manner that is clear, prominent and readily legible, and in no way deceiving or misleading to the purchaser :

- (a) the nature of the product ;
- (b) the substances contained therein ;
- (c) the amount of the product present ;
- (d) the name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor, importer, exporter or vendor of the food ;
- (e) the facts required to demonstrate the suitability of any food offered for a special dietary purpose.

7. While there was considerable discussion regarding item (e) above, particularly regarding the meaning of the word "dietary", it was agreed that the statement should remain.

8. It was agreed further that in addition to the requirements stated in paragraph 6, no false or misleading statements, designs or pictorial devices in relation to foods should be present on labels or in labelling.

Definition of Terms

9. For the purposes of this document, the terms listed below shall be defined as follows:

- (a) "label" includes any tag, brand, mark, pictorial or other descriptive matter, written, printed, stencilled, marked, embossed or impressed on, or attached to, a container of food;
- (b) "labelling" includes the label and any written, printed or graphic matter relating to and accompanying the food;
- (c) "container" means any form of packaging of food for sale as a single item, whether by completely or partially enclosing the food, and includes wrappers and confining bands;
- (d) "pre-packaged" means packaged or made up in advance, ready for retail sale in a container;
- (e) "ingredient" means any substance used in the manufacture or preparation of a food and present in the final product.

10. The Committee agreed that the word "labelling" does not include advertising matter which is not attached to or accompanies the food.

Name of the Food

11. The Committee agreed in regard to the naming of foods that in general, when standards of composition or identity have been established for a food in the Codex Alimentarius, a name (or names) should be designated which should be used on the label to describe the product. Where no Codex standard exists, but a standard has been established on a national basis or between a number of countries, the name in these standards should be used. In the case of foods, for which a standard has not been established, the common or usual name, if one exists, should be used. Where no common or usual name exists, an appropriate descriptive name should be employed where possible, but if such a name is long or complicated, a "coined" or "fanciful" name could be used provided that it is not misleading. However, it was the opinion of the Committee that "coined" or "fanciful" names alone would not adequately inform the consumer as to the true nature of the product. The delegates of Switzerland and Israel indicated that in their opinion such names should be accompanied by a list of the main ingredients in close proximity to the name.

12. Where a descriptive adjective is necessary to identify a product adequately, it should always be used. Normally, class names (e.g., fish, meat, fruit) are not acceptable common names for foods since they do not provide adequate information to the consumer.

List of Ingredients

13. After considerable discussion, the Committee agreed that all foods must carry a declaration of ingredients on the label except as otherwise provided in a Codex standard. The Committee also recognized that a declaration of ingredients would not be necessary for some non-standardized foods when its omission would not be prejudicial to the interests of the consumer. It agreed that a list of exemptions should be added to the standard and that governments be asked to consider what foods should be listed in this way. The delegate of the Federal Republic of Germany stated that in his country's opinion, the mere listing of ingredients without giving absolute or relative quantities of each ingredient would not be meaningful to the consumer.

14. When an ingredient of a food, which itself is not standardized, has more than one component, the names of the components should normally be declared on the label of the food. It is recognized, however, that in some cases this would be either impracticable or unnecessary. Where the ingredient is a standardized product, it would normally be sufficient to declare the name of the standardized product and not the names of its components.

15. The Committee recommended that governments be asked to suggest any foods for which a listing of components of ingredients is not required.

16. Designated or common names should normally be used in preference to class names for the declaration of ingredients on the label although it is recognized that class names may be acceptable especially when the named ingredient forms only a minor proportion of the complete food. Class names may be used for certain groups of ingredients.

17. Examples of class names for ingredients considered acceptable by the Committee are as follows:

Animal fat; vegetable fat or oil; fish oil; hydrogenated or hardened fish, vegetable or animal fat or oil; starch; spices and herbs; vegetable gums; anti-oxidants; bleaching and maturing agents; colours; flavours; emulsifiers and stabilizers, and preservatives.

18. The Committee suggested that governments be asked to comment on these class names, to suggest any additions or deletions, and to state whether they consider these names should be the only ones permitted or whether alternate names, e.g., "colouring" or "colouring matter" as well as "colour", should also be allowed. If governments consider that there should be alternatives, they should indicate what they might be.

19. The Committee then considered the desirability of qualifying certain food additives with the terms "natural" and "artificial". The Committee agreed that in general it was not necessary to differentiate between "natural" and "artificial" food additives if the compounds were identical. The Committee did agree, however, that when artificial flavours and artificial sweeteners were used they must be so designated on the food label. The delegate of Switzerland expressed the view that it would be necessary to indicate what was meant by "artificial flavour". In his view, this should mean flavours which do not occur as such in nature.

20. When a list of ingredients is required to appear on a food label, the ingredients should generally be listed in descending order of proportion as they occur in the final product. In dehydrated foods, the ingredients might alternatively be shown in order of proportion of the reconstituted product, if only water were added and if the method of reconstitution is clearly indicated. In this case, the list of ingredients should be headed by a statement such as "ingredients in order when reconstituted".

21. Water, when added to a food product, should be declared on the label if such a declaration would result in a better understanding by the consumer of the product's composition. It is recognized, however, that in some cases this would be difficult or impractical. Where declarations of ingredients such as brine, syrup or broth are made, the declaration of water is not required.

22. References to or claims made on a food label to the presence of vitamins and minerals should be sufficiently factual to demonstrate to the consumer the suitability of that food for a special dietary purpose as mentioned in the introduction.

#### Net Contents

23. The Committee then turned its attention to the net contents declaration. It was agreed that all food labels must carry a correct declaration of the net contents by volume for liquid foods, by weight for solids, by either weight or volume for semi-solid or viscous foods and by numerical count for those foods usually sold by number. The requirements for the declaration of net contents shall be deemed to have been complied with when the net contents from an adequate sample of the containers meet, on the average, the net contents declaration, provided that there is no unreasonable shortage in individual containers.

24. In general, the declared net contents shall be present at the time of retail sale. The Committee recognized, however, that there were a number of products for which exemptions may be required, especially where there may be unavoidable loss of moisture after packing.

25. The Committee agreed that for those foods packed in a liquid medium which is normally discarded, a declaration of the drained weight of the product is desirable. However, the consumer interest might best be served by a requirement for a minimum drained weight in the standard for the food. In the case of those foods for which no Codex standards are likely to be elaborated, but which come within the terms of reference of a Codex Commodity Committee, the Commodity Committee should give consideration to drafting a requirement for the declaration of net contents in a manner likely to provide the consumer with adequate information concerning the net contents of the product.

26. The net contents may be declared in the metric or avoirdupois system of measurement according to the requirements of the country in which the food product is sold. No objection should be taken to the use of both systems on the same label.

#### Name and Address

27. When considering this subject, the Committee agreed that all food labels must carry the name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor, importer, exporter or vendor. A registered trade mark, together with the name and address of the holder of the trade mark, would also be acceptable.

#### Country of Origin

28. A majority of delegates considered that a declaration on a food label of the country of origin is only required when its absence would result in deception. When a food has undergone processing which has changed the nature of the product in a second country, the country in which the processing was performed will be considered the country of origin. This, of course, would not affect the obligation to state the country of origin in compliance with custom or fiscal regulations.

29. The delegates of the Federal Republic of Germany and of Switzerland stated that the country of origin should always be declared.

#### Language to be Used on Label

30. The Committee agreed that the mandatory information required on a label of a food for sale in a particular country shall be in a language acceptable to that country. If the language on the original label is not acceptable, a supplementary label containing the mandatory information may be used.

#### Grade Designations

31. Grade designations are not considered to be necessary for all food products. Codex Commodity Committees should refer any proposed grade designations to the Food Labelling Committee for review in order that uniformity may be maintained as far as practicable. Any grade designations used should be readily understood.

#### Date Marking

32. The Committee expressed the wish that the remarks reported in the Report of the First Meeting (Alinorm/65/22, July, 1965) be repeated in this Report, as the statement clearly reflected the views of the Meeting.

"The Committee, considering the question of date marking on perishable and semi-perishable foods, agreed with the statement in the United Kingdom Food Standards

Committee Report on Labelling <sup>1/</sup> which reads as follows :

'We have considered whether the date of manufacture, packaging or despatch should be indicated on all pre-packed foodstuffs. This is an attractive proposition which would, it is claimed, enable both retailers and consumers to determine quickly and easily whether foodstuffs are fresh or likely to be fit to eat. In our view, however, such a requirement is not practical, since so much depends not on the date the product was made but on the quality and freshness of the food from which it was prepared or on the conditions under which it is transported or stored. In certain cases a date stamp might give purchasers a sense of security which is not justified by the conditions under which the food has been kept since manufacture.'

However, some delegations suggested that Codex Commodity Committees, when preparing standards for highly perishable foodstuffs, might consider whether or not the date of packaging or the date beyond which the food should not be consumed, taking into account the normal storage life of the products mentioned under prescribed storage conditions, should be indicated on the label.

#### Coding

33. The Committee concluded that the marking of food containers in code to indicate the date and place of manufacture or packing is considered to be a desirable commercial practice to permit proper stock control and to facilitate the rapid recall of foods from the market should this become necessary.

#### Size, Location and Presentation of Mandatory Information

34. After considerable discussion, the Committee agreed that the mandatory information should be clear, prominent and readily legible under normal conditions of purchase and use. Such information should not be obscured by designs or by other written, printed or graphic matter and should be in contrasting colour to that of the background. The Committee further agreed that in general, the name and net contents of the food should appear on that portion of the label normally intended to be presented to the consumer at the time of sale.

35. The delegate of Canada expressed the view that in general, all mandatory information should be in a type not less than 1/16 of an inch in height. The Committee concluded that the question of the size of type of the mandatory information should be considered at its next meeting.

36. With regard to the "plane" of the mandatory information, the Committee agreed that on any one panel of a label it is desirable to print the mandatory information in the same general plane. It was recognized, however, that there might be many exceptions to this principle.

#### Labelling of Bulk Containers

37. The Committee agreed that it was desirable to provide the mandatory information either on the label of bulk food containers or in the documents accompanying such containers.

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<sup>1/</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Food Standards Committee Report on Food Labelling. London, H.M.S.O., 1964, p. 42, para. 167.

38. Such complete labelling is not necessary on cartons or cases which are used only for the purpose of transporting or storing a number of smaller, properly labelled, retail containers.

#### Labelling of Foods Package from Bulk

39. The Committee was in general agreement that foods packaged from bulk out of sight of the consumer should carry on the label all the required mandatory information. The delegate of Canada expressed the view that such foods when packaged on the premises where they are sold, need declare only the name of the food and net contents on the label.

#### Irradiated Foods

40. In discussing the question of labelling requirements for irradiated foods, several delegates stated that they were unable to comment effectively since such a treatment was still not permitted in their respective countries. It was generally agreed, however, that foods which have been treated with ionizing radiation should be so labelled.

#### Special Storage and Handling Requirements

41. The Committee agreed that where special storage or handling procedures were required for a food, such information should be indicated on the label. The Committee expressed the wish that governments be invited to comment on foods which might be required to carry such explanatory guidance for storage and handling.

#### Net Contents of Aerosol Containers

42. Reporting on a review requested by the First Meeting of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling, the delegates of Canada and the U.S.A. recommended that the net contents of aerosol containers should reflect the amount of the contents which is delivered from the container when the directions for use are followed. The Committee agreed with this recommendation.

#### Labelling Requirements Referred by Codex Commodity Committees

43. The Committee next turned its attention to the labelling requirements referred to it by Codex Commodity Committees as contained in document SP 10/82 (2nd Meeting) Comments-1, May, 1966, which is attached to this report as Appendix III.

44. The Committee noted the reference from the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (See Appendix III, Page 2, Part II, Paragraph 3) without any specific comment. It was pointed out, however, that the reference to the declaration by volume for small containers was intended to refer only to liquid oils and not to solid fats.

45. A further statement relating to the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (See Appendix III, Page 5, Part III, Paragraph 10) was also considered.

46. The statements contained in paragraphs 10(a) and (b) of Appendix III were considered by the Committee to be consistent with the general principles being enunciated on food labelling and required no further consideration.

47. In considering the questions raised in paragraph 10(c) of Appendix III, the Committee had before it a letter received from the International Federation of Margarine Associations requesting that the Committee consider recommending deletion from the margarine standard of the words contained in paragraph 10(c)(i). In making the request, the International Federation of Margarine Associations expressed the view that the statement was "superfluous and not appropriate in the provisions with regard to the labelling of the product margarine."

48. The Committee concluded that the statement contained in Appendix III, paragraph 10(c)(i), was not inconsistent with the general principles enunciated by the Food Labelling Committee. Some delegates considered the statement to be unnecessary. Others however, thought that it was required and that it contained provisions not covered by the draft standard on food labelling. The Committee recognized that the margarine standard was at Step 5 in the Procedure for the Elaboration of Standards. It, therefore, considered that it would be necessary for the Commission to decide in the light of the draft standard for food labelling, whether the statement was required in the margarine standard.

49. With regard to the statement in Appendix III, paragraph 10(c)(ii), the Committee considered that it was consistent with the general provisions on food labelling. The Swiss delegation, however, considered that the listing of butter among the ingredients for margarine containing less than 10 per cent butter would tend to mislead the consumer.

50. The Committee then considered the statement contained in Appendix III, paragraph 10(c)(iii). Again the Committee concluded that it was not in conflict with the general principles on food labelling. The Committee did suggest, however, that any reference to the presence of vitamins in margarine or other foods should be in accord with the requirements for vitamins to be established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

#### Joint ECE/Codex Alimentarius Group of Experts on Standardization of Fruit Juices

51. In considering paragraph 4, page 2 of Appendix III, the Committee indicated that no action was required other than to refer the Joint ECE/Codex Alimentarius Group of Experts on Standardization of Fruit Juices to the statement in the Report of this meeting dealing with date marking.

52. The statement contained in paragraph 7, page 3 of Appendix III was also considered by the Committee. Some delegates expressed disagreement with the requirement that the name of the nectar must be qualified by the term "pulpy type". It was pointed out, however, that this Commodity Committee would probably be developing standards for non-pulpy type nectars.

53. The Committee's attention was drawn to the requirement contained in the Tomato Juice Standard with regard to the naming of the characterizing spice if such is present. It was agreed that the general provisions on food labelling prepared by the Food Labelling Committee be drawn to the attention of the Commodity Committee and that they be asked for a clarification of this requirement. In addition, some delegates of the Food Labelling Committee felt that the statement contained in the Tomato Juice Standard to the effect that "only tomatoes and tomato juice may be represented on the container" might require re-examination.

#### Codex Committee on Dietetic Foods

54. The Food Labelling Committee noted the progress being made by the Codex Committee on Dietetic Foods as contained in paragraph 5, page 2 of Appendix III.

#### Codex Committee on Sugars

55. The Food Labelling Committee agreed that the remarks from the Sugar Committee contained in paragraph 8, page 4 of Appendix III, needed no consideration at this time.

#### Codex Committee on Cocoa Products and Chocolate

56. The Food Labelling Committee agreed that consideration of the statement in paragraph 9, page 4 of Appendix III, should be deferred to a future meeting when more precise labelling requirements for these products will be placed before it.



Codex Committee on Food Additives

57. The Food Labelling Committee took note of the statements in paragraph 11, page 6 of Appendix III, and considered them to be consistent with the general principles being enunciated on food labelling.

Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables

58. The Food Labelling Committee, in considering the statements in paragraph 12, page 6 of Appendix III from the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables, wished to suggest that all labelling requirements in the standards being elaborated on processed fruits and vegetables be placed together in one section of each standard. The Committee considered that until this had been done, it was not in a position to ratify the labelling provisions of the standards.

Joint FAO/WHO Committee of Government Experts on the Code of Principles Concerning Milk and Milk Products

59. The Food Labelling Committee examined the statements contained in paragraph 13, page 7 of Appendix III. The Committee noted that many of the milk product standards had already been accepted by a large number of countries. The Committee, therefore, wished to suggest to the Milk Committee that it might wish to examine the draft standard on food labelling as it might apply to milk products. In addition, the Food Labelling Committee agreed that it might wish to consider the labelling requirements for the general cheese standard at the same time that the proposed standards for processed cheese were before it.

Coordinating Committee for Europe - Draft Standard for Honey

60. After examining the statements in paragraph 14, Corrigendum I, Appendix III, dealing with the labelling of honey, the Food Labelling Committee expressed the view that the labelling requirements for honey in this standard were in conformity with the general principles of food labelling enunciated by the Committee and ratified these provisions.

Coordinating Committee for Europe - Codex Committee on Natural Mineral Waters

61. The Food Labelling Committee was advised that the statements in paragraph 15, page 8 of Appendix III were presented at this time as information and that more detailed labelling requirements would be submitted later.

Executive Committee

62. Mr. J.H.V. Davies, Vice-Chairman, Codex Alimentarius Commission, reported to the Committee that the Executive Committee at its recent meeting expressed the wish that the Food Labelling Committee be asked to comment upon whether or not item (g) of paragraph 15 of the Report of the First Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Alinorm 63/12) should be included in the draft guidelines for Codex Commodity Committees. (See also paragraph 10 of the Report of the Third Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission-Alinorm 65/30) Paragraph 15 (g) reads as follows:

"In general, subject to appropriate labelling, no product should be required to bear a different designation by reason solely of the presence of permitted food additives."

63. The Committee agreed that the draft guidelines should contain such a statement which should read as follows:

"In general, it should not be necessary to change the name of a food solely because of the presence of a permitted food additive. However, in some instances,

where the additive results in a significant change in the product, appropriate labelling may be required in addition to the listing of the additive among the declaration of ingredients."

General Food Labelling Provisions - SP 10/82 and SP 10/82 (1)

64. In considering the "General Food Labelling Provisions" prepared by the FAO Legislation Research Branch, the Committee expressed its appreciation for these documents. The delegates indicated that they had found this material to be of considerable assistance and expressed the view that they would like to consider on a future occasion the desirability of recommending that these documents be brought up to date.

Terms of Reference

65. Mr. H.V. Dempsey, Vice-Chairman, Codex Alimentarius Commission, introduced a discussion on the terms of reference of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling. These terms of reference at the present time are as follows:

- "(a) To draft provisions on Labelling applicable to all foods.
- (b) To draft provisions on labelling concerning products given priority by the Commission, namely products referred to specific Codex Committees for the elaboration of standards.
- (c) To study specific labelling problems assigned to it by the Commission."

66. In respect of reference (b) above, the Codex Alimentarius Commission at its Third Session in Rome, October 19-28, 1965, approved a recommendation of the Committee concerning the review of labelling provisions for specific foods as follows:

"Schedule of reviewing labelling provisions of standards

The Committee considered at what stage it should deal with labelling questions arising on individual Codex Commodity standards. It agreed to recommend to the Commission that these standards should be referred to the Committee at Step 3 of the Procedure for the Elaboration of Worldwide Standards. It recognized that where a standard was substantially revised after Step 3 it might be necessary for the Committee to reconsider labelling aspects and requested that the Secretariat of the Commission be instructed to consider in each case whether re-submission was required and to take the necessary action. The Committee further considered that its study of the labelling aspects of a standard should not be allowed to delay the progress of that standard from Step 3 to Step 4 or to any subsequent step of the procedure. For standards which have already passed Step 3, the Committee proposed that such standards be forwarded as soon as possible."

67. The Committee concluded that Sections (a) and (c) of the Terms of Reference above were satisfactory. The Committee agreed to recommend to the Commission that Section (b) of its Terms of Reference should be amended to read as follows:

"To consider, amend if necessary, and ratify draft specific provisions on labelling prepared by the Codex Commodity Committees in drafting commodity standards."

Guidelines for Commodity Committees

68. The Committee considered that it was most important that Codex Commodity Committees should prepare a section on labelling in each draft commodity standard and that this section should contain all the labelling provisions in the standard.

69. The Commodity Committee should only include in the draft standards provisions which were exemptions from, additions to, or which were necessary for the interpretation of the general standard on food labelling in respect of the product concerned.

70. It was also considered that it would be helpful if the draft commodity standards, when sent out to governments for comment, contained a statement that the labelling provisions were subject to ratification by the Codex Committee on Food Labelling and that the general standard on food labelling would apply unless to commodity standard specifically provided otherwise.

71. In addition to the general standard for food labelling, the following paragraphs of this Report are drawn to the attention of Codex Commodity Committees for their guidance in drafting specific labelling requirements in Codex standards: 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 22, 23, 25, 28, 31, 32, 41, 63, 66, 67, 68, 69 and 70.

#### Program of Future Work

72. The Committee drew up the following list of subjects which would constitute the greater part of the agenda for the next meeting:

- (a) Consideration of General Standard for Food Labelling in the light of Step 3 comments.
- (b) Foods for which the declaration of components of ingredients might not be required.
- (c) Foods for which exemptions from a list of ingredients should be provided.
- (d) Consideration of further class names for ingredients including additives.
- (e) Minimum size of type of declarations of mandatory information.
- (f) Standards developed by Codex Commodity Committees and referred to the Codex Committee on Food Labelling for consideration of labelling matters.
- (g) Claims and misleading names and descriptions including pictorial representations.
- (h) Labelling which may be necessary for foods normally sold without labels (non-pre-packaged foods).
- (i) Labelling which may be necessary on food vending machines,
  - (i) where the food is in individually labelled packages, and
  - (ii) where the food is not in individually labelled packages.
- (j) Foods for which label statements might be necessary to inform vendors and consumers of any special requirements for storage and preparation of the food for safety and maintenance of quality.

#### Date of Next Meeting

73. The Committee expressed the view that it would be necessary to hold a meeting next year, the date of the meeting to be coordinated with other Codex Meetings to be held in the U.S.A.

ALINORM 66/22

APPENDIX I

JOINT FAO/WHO CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Second Meeting

Committee on Food Labelling

Ottawa, Canada

25-29 July, 1966

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APPENDIX II

JOINT FAO/WHO ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

GENERAL STANDARD FOR FOOD LABELLING

Purpose

1. The purpose of food labelling is to provide the consumer with the following information in a clear, prominent, readily legible manner on the label of the food:

- (a) the nature of the product;
- (b) the substances contained therein;
- (c) the amount of the product present;
- (d) the name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor, importer, exporter or vendor of the food;
- (e) the facts required to demonstrate the suitability of any food offered for a special dietary purpose.

Definition of Terms

- 2. (a) "label" includes any tag, brand, mark, pictorial or other descriptive matter, written, printed, stencilled, marked, embossed or impressed on, or attached to, a container of food;
- (b) "labelling" includes the label and any written, printed or graphic matter relating to and accompanying the food;
- (c) "container" means any form of packaging of food for sale as a single item, whether by completely or partially enclosing the food, and includes wrappers and confining bands;
- (d) "pre-packaged" means packaged or made up in advance, ready for retail sale in a container.
- (e) "ingredient" means any substance used in the manufacture or preparation of a food and present in the final product.

General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods

3. The labels of all pre-packaged food shall bear the information contained in paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g) below, as appropriate to the food being labelled, except to the extent otherwise expressly provided in a specific Codex standard.

- 4. (a) The name of the food:

The name should indicate the true nature of the food and normally be specific and not generic. Where a name has been established for a food in a Codex standard, this name shall be used. In other cases a common or usual name shall be used, if one exists. Where no common or usual name exists, an appropriate descriptive name should be used unless such a name would be either too long or complicated. In such a case a "coined" or "fanciful" name may be used provided it is not misleading. Where a descriptive adjective is necessary to identify a food adequately, it should form part of the name of the food.

5. (b) List of ingredients:

- (i) A complete list of ingredients shall be declared on the label in descending order of proportion in which they are present in the final product, except
  - (a) as otherwise provided in a Codex standard;
  - (b) in the case of other foods listed by the Commission where an exemption from a declaration of ingredients would not be prejudicial to the interests of the consumer, or
  - (c) in the case of dehydrated foods which are intended to be reconstituted by the addition of water, the ingredients may be listed in order of proportion in the reconstituted product, provided the list of ingredients is headed by a statement such as "ingredients when reconstituted."
  
- (ii) Where an ingredient of a food has more than one component, the names of the components shall be specified, except
  - (a) where the ingredient is a product for which a Codex standard has been established, or
  - (b) in the case of other ingredients, where such ingredients are listed by the Commission.
  
- (iii) A specific name as indicated in paragraph (a) above shall be used for the declaration of ingredients except that the class titles listed by the Commission may be used to describe a particular group of ingredients in a compound food. The following is a partial list of such class names: animal fat; vegetable fat or oil, fish oil; hydrogenated or hardened fish, vegetable or animal fat or oil; starch; spices and herbs; vegetable gums; anti-oxidants; bleaching and maturing agents; colours; flavours, the class title shall be "artificial flavour"); emulsifiers and stabilizers; preservatives; artificial sweeteners.
  
- (iv) Added water shall be declared in the list of ingredients if such a declaration would result in a better understanding by the consumer of the product's composition, except when the water forms part of an ingredient such as brine, syrup or broth used in a compound food.

6. (c) Net contents:

A correct declaration of the net contents in either the metric or avoirdupois, or both, systems of measurements as required by the country in which the food is sold must be made by volume for liquid foods, by weight for solids, by either weight or volume for semi-solid or viscous food, and by count for those foods usually sold by number. Foods packed in a liquid medium normally discarded before consumption should carry a declaration of the drained weight of the food.

7. (d) Name and address:

The name and address of the manufacturer, packer, distributor, importer, exporter or vendor of the food shall be declared.

8. (e) Country of origin:

The country of origin of a food shall be declared if its omission would mislead or deceive the consumer.

9. (f) Irradiated foods:

Foods which have been treated with ionizing radiation shall be so designated.

10. (g) Foods for a special dietary purpose:

In the case of a food offered for a special dietary purpose, including foods for which claims for vitamin or mineral content are made, the facts required to demonstrate the suitability of the food for the purpose shall be included on the label.

11. (h) Presentation of mandatory information:

Statements required to appear on the label by virtue of this standard or any other Codex standard shall be clear, prominent, and readily legible by the consumer under normal conditions of purchase and use. Such information should not be obscured by designs or by other written, printed or graphic matter and should be in contrasting colour to that of the background. In general, the name and net contents of the food should appear on that portion of the label normally intended to be presented to the consumer at the time of sale.

12. (i) Language:

The language used for the declaration of the statements referred to in paragraph (h) should be a language acceptable to the country in which the food is intended for sale. If the language on the original label is not acceptable, a supplementary label containing the mandatory information may be used.

13. (j) Grade Designations:

If grade designations are used, they should be readily understandable, of uniform nomenclature and not be misleading or deceptive in any way.

14. (k) Optional labelling:

Any additional information or pictorial device may be displayed on the container provided that it is not in conflict with the mandatory requirements nor would mislead or deceive the consumer in relation to the food.

15. (l) Additional requirements for specific foods:

Nothing in the foregoing Sections, (a) to (j), of this standard shall preclude the adoption of additional provisions in a Codex standard, in respect of labelling, where the circumstances of a particular food would justify their incorporation in that standard.