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Thailand

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

Additional Food Labeling Requirements for Processed Foods

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Report Highlights:

The Thai FDA has proposed the modification of Food Labeling Requirements to be endorsed by the Public Health Minister. This report will summarize the major changes and update the possible effects of this new regulation on the export of U.S. processed foods to Thailand.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Bangkok [TH1]
[TH]

Summary of additional changes on the new food-labeling requirement

On August 30, the Thai Food and Drug Administration (FDA) notified an addendum to its measure on food labeling requirements and announced that it was withdrawing its proposed requirement of traffic light labeling logos on snack foods and that it would no longer maintain requirements for “processed foods.” The Thai FDA proposed that the issues concerning snack foods should fall under the domain of the Ministry of Public Health. In addition, the warning message on food labeling is modified to “Should take less, and exercise for a better health” so as to encourage the consumer awareness on the importance of exercise and limited the consumption level of some food products that lead to the obesity problem.

The following list of processed foods are subject to the new labeling requirement:

1. Potato chips
2. Corn chips
3. Extruded snack foods
4. Biscuits/crackers
5. Assorted wafers

According to the notification draft, the new labeling requirement is scheduled to be in place 90 days after it was officially proclaimed in the Royal Gazette. Based on the Thai FDA, the grace period for rule enforcement is one year. From the importers’ perspective, the minimal effect from this change toward the import of U.S. food is projected as the importers have already abided by the food labeling regulation previously enforced and only the warning message of “Should take less, and exercise for a better health” will be added to the label. After the enforcement of this labeling requirement, the consumption of the mentioned U.S. finished foods will not be affected from this regulation.

Translation of the Notification Draft

(Translation)

(Draft)

Notice of Ministry of Public Health
(No.....) A.D.

On Labeling Requirement for Certain Finished Foods

In order to provide nutritional value information to consumers and to prevent malnutrition caused by consuming certain finished food products,

By virtue of Sections 5 and 6(10) of the Food Act B.E. 2522 (1979), the Minister of Public Health, with the suggestion by the Food Committee, hereby notifies that:

Clause 1. The following finished foods in sealed container ready to be sold to consumers shall be the foods subject to nutrition labeling:

- (1) Potato chips
- (2) Corn chips
- (3) Extruded snack foods
- (4) Biscuits/crackers
- (5) Assorted wafers

Clause 2. The labeling as indicated in Clause 1 must comply with the Notification of Ministry of Public Health on Labeling and Specific Food Labeling as well as this notification.

Clause 3. The labeling as indicated in Clause 1 must comply with one of the following guidelines:

- (1) Full detailed nutrition labeling based on item (1.1) under Appendix No. 1 on Format and Conditions on Label in the Ministerial Notification on Nutrition Labeling OR
- (2) Brief nutrition labeling based on item (1.2) under Appendix No. 1 on Format and Conditions on Label in the Ministerial Notification on Nutrition Labeling. Nutritional information required are Total Energy, Total Fat, Protein, Total Carbohydrate, Sugar, Sodium and Additional Cholesterols if that certain food contains more than 2 milligram of Cholesterols per a unit of serving.

In case of Nutrition Labeling according to Clause 3(2) contains nutritional reference or claims for commercial promotion purpose or targeting consumer groups, a detailed labeling will be required based on item (1.1) under the Appendix No. 1 on Format and Conditions on Label in the Ministerial Notification on Nutrition Labeling.

Clause 4. The labeling as indicated in Clause 1 must contain a statement “Should Limit Consumption and exercise for a better health” in bold, noticeable and colored letters. The color of the letters should stand out against the background and color of the flame should be distinctive.

Clause 5. Any producer or importer of the food product as indicated in Clause 1 must comply with this Notification within one year after the Notification is officially effective. The old label can be valid for a period of time, but no more than one year after the Notification is officially effective.

Clause 6. This Notification will be effective 90 days after the Notification be published in the Royal Gazette.

Announce on the date of -----

End of the Report.