

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

**Date:** July 09, 2021

**Report Number:** RP2021-0038

**Report Name:** Philippines Bans the Use of Trans Fat

**Country:** Philippines

**Post:** Manila

**Report Category:** Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety, Oilseeds and Products, FAIRS Subject Report, Trade Policy Incident Report

**Prepared By:** Pia Ang

**Approved By:** Morgan Haas

**Report Highlights:**

On June 18, 2021, the Department of Health issued Administrative Order No. 2021-0039 (AO 2021-0039) “National Policy on the Elimination of Industrially Produced Trans-Fatty Acids for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases.”

## **General Information:**

On June 18, 2021, the Department of Health issued [Administrative Order No. 2021-0039](#) (AO 2021-0039) “National Policy on the Elimination of Industrially Produced Trans-Fatty Acids for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases.” The Order took effect on July 6, 2021, 15 days following publication. Meanwhile, there are about seven (7) bills pending in Congress to regulate the use of trans-fatty acids (TFA).

AO 2020-0039 aims to provide a policy framework to eliminate industrially-produced TFAs in the Philippine Food Supply by 2023, providing a transitory period not to exceed two years. Specifically, the AO aims to reduce TFA intake among Filipinos to less than 1% of the recommended total energy intake through the following strategies:

1. Regulating pre-packaged food products containing TFA
2. Enabling the replacement of TFA with alternative oils, fats, and oilseeds
3. Increasing awareness of the negative impacts of TFA to the public.

Under the AO, industrially-produced TFA and processed food products containing TFAs shall be prohibited from being produced, imported, and distributed for commercial sale. Specifically, the manufacture, importation, distribution, and sale of the following shall be prohibited:

1. Partially-Hydrogenated Oils (PHO) to be consumed alone or used in preparation of processed food products;
2. Oils and fats made blended with PHO;
3. Oils and fats with TFA content more than 2g per 100g; and
4. Processed and prepackaged food with PHOs and high TFA content.

As the competent authority of pre-packaged food products, the Philippine Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will be in charge of issuing the appropriate regulatory procedures to ensure compliance. Moreover, the regulation states that the FDA shall not issue registration, license to operate or permit to any food manufacturer, importer or distributor of any processed or pre-packaged food that do not comply with the regulations.

Front-of-pack labelling claiming that a product is TFA-free shall also be prohibited following current FDA food labelling guidelines.

In an online briefing on July 8, the DOH Health Promotion Bureau (HPB) said that the Philippines is vulnerable to the dumping of TFA-rich products in the absence of sufficient regulations, as neighboring countries implement bans on PHOs and set mandatory limits on TFA content in food. According to the DOH-HPB, industrially-produced TFAs are common in prepackaged goods such as chips, cookies, biscuits and spreads.

## **Attachments:**

No Attachments.