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# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Voluntary - Public

**Date:** 8/2/2018

**GAIN Report Number:** TH8103

## Thailand

**Post:** Bangkok

### **Thailand Bans the Use of Partially Hydrogenated Oils in Foods**

**Report Categories:**

FAIRS Subject Report

Sanitary/Phytopsanitary/Food Safety

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**Report Highlights:**

On July 13, 2018, The Ministry of Public Health Notification No. 388 Re: Prescribed Prohibited Food to be Produced, Imported, or Sold, which bans partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs), and food products containing PHOs, was published in the Royal Gazette. The Thai Food and Drug Administration (FDA) aims to ban PHOs in food, yet has not further promulgated any new regulations on trans fats.

## **Thailand Bans the Use of Partially Hydrogenated Oils in Foods, Not Trans Fat**

On July 13, 2018, The Ministry of Public Health Notification No. 388 Re: Prescribed Prohibited Food to be Produced, Imported, or Sold was published in the Royal Gazette. This notification bans partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs) and food products containing PHOs. To allow for an orderly transition in the marketplace, the Thai FDA has given a 180-day grace period, with the official enforcement date in January 9, 2019. The notification has generated widespread market concern among Thai consumers and retailers after its publication in the Royal Gazette. Several news articles have incorrectly portrayed the notification as a ban on trans fat. Articles identifying food products that frequently contain trans fat have also appeared in newspapers and social media platforms.

Key provisions of the ministerial order are as follows:

- Under the new requirement, PHOs are banned for foods that are produced, imported for sale, and sold in Thailand;
- The regulation will be officially enforced beginning on January 9, 2019. Importers or food manufacturers that violate this regulation by importing, manufacturing, or selling PHOs and products contain PHOs will be fined THB 5,000 to THB 20,000 and face prison sentences ranging from six months to two years;
- This regulation prohibits PHOs and foods containing PHOs due to evidence indicating that the intake of trans fats derived from partially hydrogenated oil increases the risk of coronary heart disease. However, trans-fat still can be found naturally in foods, especially products derived from ruminants;
- Importers of food products to Thailand have to ensure that imported products do not contain PHOs or use ingredients containing PHOs. Importers may request from U.S. suppliers evidence to guarantee that their products do not contain PHOs. Acceptable evidence would be a letter of confirmation, product specification, or a certificate of analysis;
- Thai FDA inspectors at the port may request proof that the products do not contain PHOs for the following products or ingredients:
  - Margarine,
  - Shortening
  - Creamer
  - Whipping cream
  - Bakery products (i.e. biscuits, cakes, pastries, and cookies).
- The Thai FDA permits the display of actual amounts of trans-fat only in the nutritional facts box on the food label and prohibits the display of wording alike or akin to “trans-fat free” or “0 gram trans fat” outside the designated nutrition facts box. However, the Thai FDA is in the process of drafting regulations on the requirements and conditions of trans fat free claims.

Below is a translation of the Ministry of Public Health Notification No.388:

(Unofficial Translation)  
**Notification of the Ministry of Public Health**  
**No. 388 B.E.2561 (2018)**  
**RE: Prescribed Prohibited Food to be Produced, Imported, or Sold**

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Based on obvious scientific evidence, it is indicated that Trans fatty acids derived from partially hydrogenated oils have an effect on increasing the risk of coronary heart disease.

By virtue of the provisions of section 5 and 6(8) of the Food Act B.E.2522 (1979), the Minister of Public Health hereby issues the Notification as follows:

Clause 1 - Partially hydrogenated oil and food products containing partially hydrogenated oil are prohibited to be produced, imported, or sold.

Clause 2 - This notification shall come into effect after 180 days from the day following date of its publication in the Government Gazette.

Notified on 13th June B.E.2561 (2018)  
Signed Piyasakol Sakolsatayadorn  
(Mr.Piyasakol Sakolsatayadorn)  
Minister of Public Health

(Published in the Government Gazette Vol.135, Special Part 166 (Ngor), dated 13th July 2018)

**Note:** This English version of the notification is translated to meet the needs of non-Thai people with little to no proficiency in the Thai language. In the event of any discrepancy between the original Thai version and the English translation, the original Thai version shall take priority in any capacity.

Photo featured in one of the many news outlets (Bangkok Post) disseminating information on the trans fat ban from PHOs.

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BUSINESS > BUSINESS NEWS

## Facing the trans fat ban

Most fast food players say they are ready

17 Jul 2018 at 04:00 11 comments

NEWSPAPER SECTION: BUSINESS | WRITER: PITISNEE JITPLEECHEEP



The ban on trans fats is to take effect on Jan 9, but most large food producers have already taken steps to switch.

Bakery and fast food companies are ready to comply with the Public Health Ministry's new regulation to ban the production, import and distribution of food containing trans fats.

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(Photo courtesy from Bangkok Post newspaper)

End of report.