

MINUTES	Ref: NWG/24/014
Meeting date: 20 February 2024	
Group Meeting: Nutrition WG meeting	
Location: Teams	

ATTENDEES

Hayley Marson	Morrisons
Claire Foden	Iceland
Grace Ricotti	Marks & Spencer
Ellie Howard	Asda
Fleur Key	Costa
Bryonie Hollaert	Co-op
Laura Farrell	Tesco
Miranda Shelley	Lidl
Ruby Herman	Lidl
Holly Watson	Lidl
Becky Shute	Sainsbury's
Vicky Pennington	Boots
Emer Lowry	Waitrose
Amanda Gillies	Spar
Orla Prendiville	Starbucks
Katie Hipwell	Starbucks
Charlie Parker	Ocado
Jessica Martin	McDonalds
Caroline Trotman	Aldi
Helen Allan	Dominos
Garce Sargent	Fortnum & Mason
Alexandra Howard	Krispy Kreme
Andrea Martinez-Inchausti	BRC

1. STRATEGY

The group briefly discussed the fact that this was an election year and over the next few months the debates between the main parties will intensify. Public health is likely to be part of the topics which will feature heavily on those debates. Media outlets, etc will also comment and challenge parties on their suggested policies. The Times Health Commission has been outspoken about what a good health policy should look like.

Another big change is the Northern Ireland Assembly. NI has not had a government for a long time and officials have been leading on policies. They will now have more political direction, however, as we have experienced in Scotland and Wales, politicians may have a strong view to do things a little different.

2. FDTP

No update from last time. DHSC still believes they are on track to set up a stakeholders' meeting in May to update wider industry and seek comments.

3. FOP EXEMPTIONS

The Labelling & Legislation group felt very strongly that this work should not be progressed. Front of pack is a voluntary initiative, and every company should make their own decision about the products they include it on. A BRC paper would not make companies change their internal policies. A summary of what was discussed to date will be included as an Annex to this meeting note. The issue will not be discussed again.

4. OHID BABY FOODS

A few members had not had the chance to look at the document and the implications. BRC will wait a couple of weeks to hear members' view before we start drafting a position.

Those who had had a chance to look at the document were concerned with the suggestion to move from a suitable from 4 months statement to 6 months, especially in the suggested 18 months. Baby foods are a long-life line, and it will take longer to get labels changed. Furthermore, this advice is contradictory to what is permitted by law, and the advice which parents receive from GPs and health professionals about feeding their children.

There are presentational elements in the document, such as the use of the symbol less and equal than, which are confusing. The previous version of the document made it clearer that concentrated lemon juice used for antioxidant purposes was exempt from the rules about fruit juice from concentrate.

5. CALORIE PROGRESS REPORT

Members would like to see the change in the timing for publication of the next sugar and calorie report officially confirmed in the GOV.UK website or in a short circular letter to the industry.

Members felt the report did not provide any interesting information. They are reporting on 2021 data in 2024. Too much time has passed and too much has changed. 2021 was the post COVID period. The report has not had any pickup by the media.

Members explained that historically they had considered the calorie reduction strategy in their internal policies, however the NPM has changed reformulation approaches for many companies. Traders and buyers are focused on the NPM and whether products are HFSS or not. This is now the driver.

Some out of home members explained that a per 100g approach to sugar does not encourage any reduction. Several members agreed that due to heavy product turn around sales weighted average targets are impossible to work with. Previously categories were more stable. Calculating a sale weighted average also has string implications on nutritionist resource, for the information to be inaccurate shortly after it has been calculated.

A member explained that since the calorie targets are set for a wide range of products, many are very high, and all their product meet them, so again there is little encouragement to do anything.

All members mentioned that the level of awareness and knowledge on any government reformulation strategy or even NPM amongst suppliers to the out of home industry is non-existent.

6. SALT

The salt targets continue to be a fundamental part of product development and internal retail policies. They are part of the development brief for suppliers. These targets are easier to communicate.

Regarding the use of averages or maximum targets, a couple of members use the average target as a maximum and if unachievable, they would agree an exemption to use the maximum target with suppliers. The rest of the members ask suppliers to use the maximum target.

It was generally felt that suppliers were less focused on salt over the last 12 months and that was felt it was largely to do with lack of Government reporting.

Currently the next salt report is expected at the end of 2024, with Kantar data being collected in August-September 2024. There is a urinary analysis report expected in February 2025. They are currently considering whether to push this report to end of 2025.

The group also discussed as sold and as consumed. Some on pack info is as consumed, however the targets are set as sold, e.g. sausages. Everyone used the declared information on pack.

The group was briefly made aware of the issue encountered by a supplier to a member with AFS. They claimed that the red tractor logo cannot go on pack unless the salt targets have been met. When we challenged this, they pointed out to a BMPA standard. The standard states companies should work towards the salt targets, but it does not say these must have been met. BRC got in touch with BMPA and will be writing back to AFS jointly to try to resolve this misunderstanding.

7. IGD restructure and review

The group briefly discussed IGD restructuring some of their group including INSG. It was too early to understand how this will change things going forward, what is the work IGD will do and what will they drop.

We will discuss it again once things are clearer with the purpose of understanding if there is anything this Nutrition WG needs to pick up.

8. QUADRAM

They have won the contract to update McCance and Widdowson. A member had a chat with them recently and concluded that their knowledge on the types of foods for which reference data is used by industry is limited.

The funding includes money to be put towards testing. They are developing a testing schedule which is likely to include composite foods. The group felt that most companies use analytical data for composites and the variation of versions is large, so an average value for products like a lasagna are not very representative. It would be much more helpful for them to update the data on unprocessed or lightly processed foods. The member who discussed it with them suggested they got it touch with product trade organisations like Dairy UK and BMPA to understand products, ranges, values, used of reference values etc. Where retailers can help is on fruit and vegetables.

They are keen to hear more about how we use the data and if any of that thinking could shape some of their further work.

It was agreed we would invite them to a nutrition WG meeting. Ahead of this, we will collate some information on the types of products where members use reference data.

9. SACN Vitamin D fortification paper

They do not have specific timings for the publication of the SCAN report, but it will be in 2024 and will be linked to the general conditions strategy. Therefore, it will hopefully include advice on all relevant areas including supplementation and application of sunscreen.

A member explained that the daily supplementation recommendation in Ireland is 15 µg versus 10 µg in the UK. This disparity is unhelpful.

[Vitamin D - Scientific Recommendations for 5 to 65 Year Olds Living in Ireland | Food Safety Authority of Ireland \(fsai.ie\)](https://www.fsai.ie/~/media/124426/20190624_Vitamin_D_Scientific_Recommendations_for_5_to_65_Year_Olds_Living_in_Ireland.pdf)

FOP EXEMPTIONS

	Exemption for products which do not require nutrition information		Exemptions based on small pack size	Exemption based on purchase purposes	Exemption based on the composition of the food or purchase	
Rationale	In the absence of nutrition panel FOP cannot be calculated		Physical limitations	Products purchased for gifting	Full nutrition info not required	Specialist products (Adult RIs may not be relevant)
Applies to	Products covered in Annex V of FIR	Alcohol	Small packages in which full FOP does not fit	Products presented and clearly aimed at gifting.	Alcohol	Children product Supplements
Policy	FOP not required unless Nutrition BOP is provided voluntarily	Possible energy lozenge	Where possible energy lozenge to be included	No FOP despite full nutrition panel present on back of pack	Possible Energy lozenge	No FOP to be provided

The table above is not a BRC position. It reflects the broad consensus of the circumstances and products on which front of pack nutrition labelling may not be used.