

Voluntary - Public

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New Inner Package Labeling Requirements for Food

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Report Highlights:

The Korea Food & Drug Administration (KFDA) announced a revision of Labeling Standards for Food et al. on May 18, 2009. According to the revision, confections, chocolates, and other products that are double-packaged are required to label certain information on the inner packaged product when the largest side of the inner package is over 30cm². The revision prohibits the use of a picture or photo of an ingredient such as fruit and a term “taste” is restricted for products that contain synthetic flavors.

General Information:

The Korea Food & Drug Administration (KFDA) announced a revision of Labeling Standards for Food et al. on May 18, 2009. Major changes included in this revision are new labeling requirements for inner packages of double-packaged products and a restriction of the use of images such as pictures photos of fruit for products that are made with synthetic flavors only.

Inner Packages of Double-Packaged Products

Confections, chocolates, and other products that are double-packaged when sold through the retail stores to consumers are required to label certain information on the inner packaged product. This new requirement only applies to inner packages for which the largest side of the product is over 30cm². The labeling information required on the inner package includes the product name, the net content with calories corresponding to the net content, the shelf life or the best before date, and the nutrients using the font sizes listed below.

Labeling Information	Font Size (point)
A) Product Name	6 or larger
B) Net Content (calories corresponding to net content)	12 or larger
C) Shelf life or Best Before Date	10 or larger
D) Nutrients	8 or larger

For D) nutrients, information on calories, carbohydrates, sugars, protein, fat, saturated fat, trans-fatty acids, cholesterol, and sodium shall be indicated.

KFDA initially proposed to require the mandatory labeling of all inner packaged products regardless of size due to the public's concern that the outer packaging of was removed and the individual units of double packaged products were being sold individually without important labeling information . However, due to the technical difficulties involved in labeling such small packages, KFDA modified the initial proposal and limited this new requirement to products whose area of the largest side of the inner package is over 30cm². Mandatory labeling of inner packages of double packaged products is to ensure consumer's right to know and to prevent individual products with no labeling information from being sold.

Restriction of Use of Picture Images for Products with Synthetic Flavors

The use of a picture or photo of an ingredient such as fruit and a term “taste” is restricted for products that contain synthetic flavors. For example, if a candy product is made with strawberry flavors, the label shall indicate “strawberry flavored candies (adding synthetic strawberry flavor)” surrounding the product name. As a result of the use of synthetic strawberry flavor, no image of a strawberry is permitted on the product label. This is to avoid any confusion or misconception that may arise among consumers who may believe that the product contained real strawberries as a result of the picture.

Implementation Date of This Revision

KFDA granted a grace period until April 30, 2010 for products that have already been imported to Korea according to the previous standards. The new revision will apply to all new to market products that will be imported on May 18, 2009 or after.