

The Caribbean Experience Moving Towards Front-Of Package Nutrition Labels

Revision of the CRS 5- Specification for Labelling of
Pre-packaged Foods to include FOPL

Composition of the Regional Technical Committee

- Regional Technical Sub Committee (RTSC) established May 2018 and work commenced August 2018
- RTSC comprise representatives of 11 Member States
- Representatives include health personnel, regulators and industry professionals
- Currently being chaired by Barbados
- Committee meetings operated principally via online medium

Committee Representation



Antigua and Barbuda

Bahamas

Barbados

Dominica

Haiti

Guyana

Jamaica

St. Kitts & Nevis

St. Lucia

Suriname

Trinidad & Tobago

Content of the Specification

- Scope
- Terms and definitions
- General Principles of food labelling
- Labelling requirements - general and specific
- Additional labelling requirements such as foods for special dietary uses, organically produced foods, etc
- Front Of Pack Labelling requirements

What is the new CRS5?

- The specification has been updated, inserting the requirements of the 2018 version of the CODEX Alimentarius Standard for the labelling of prepackaged foods
- FOPL Warning label system with criteria for defining products excessive in the nutrients of concern. Supported by Nutritional Facts panel



Process Update

- Secretariat for work assigned to the Member state of Suriname
- Working draft developed with FOPL(warning label) included and circulated to RTSC members for review and comments
- Member States hold national mirror committee meetings to develop national positions

Process Update

- 1st Face-to-face consensus meeting held in Guyana
- All comments disposed and working draft being amended accordingly . Amended draft to be circulated as a CARICOM Regional Draft Standard (DCRS)to MS for comments
- Original deadline for comments was extended from 11 January, 2019 to 31 March, 2019 upon requests from Member States.

Process Update

- 113 pages of comments received from 14 Member States.
- Consultant engaged to assist with disposition of comments process.
- Comments disposition commenced with editorial comments at 2 Online meetings.

Process Update

- 2nd Face-to-Face meeting held in Suriname 14 – 15 May, 2019 to continue disposition of comments.
- Time insufficient to address all comments, disposition of comments continued via online meetings
- 3rd Face-to-Face meeting held in Trinidad and Tobago 24 – 25 May, 2019 to continue disposition of comments.

Challenges:

- Availability of RTSC members to attend online meetings for the timely completion of the comments disposition.
- Availability of funding for the face-to-face consensus meeting
- Arriving at consensus re: FOPL
- Possibility of shifting FOPL requirements to the Nutritional Labelling standard based on a comment received from two MS.

Next Steps

- Completion of the comments disposition was proposed for by July 23, 2019 however was extended to August 2019
- Updated Draft CARICOM Regional Standard (DCRS) to a Final Draft CARICOM Regional Standard (FDCRS)
- Circulate FDCRS to Member States for acceptance (October - December 2019)

Next Steps Continued

- Submission to CROSQ Editorial Committee for editing and TMC for validation of the process (September 2019)
- Submission of recommendation to the CROSQ Council (Early 2020)
- Submission to COTED for approval (proposed for April 2020)

Upon approval of regional standard: –

- Member States to adopt nationally – Administrative provisions to be put in place nationally to give legal effect for mandatory implementation
- Good regulatory practices to be employed in this regard.
- Necessary education and awareness campaign developed and implemented

Recommendations

- Proposed joint COTED COSHOD Meeting
- Special engagement with the Private Sector in each Member State with presentations on the evidence supporting the “High In” warning label.
- Garner support for the initiative among consumers at the national level through an extensive public education and awareness campaigns.
- Meetings at the national level between Health and Commerce/Trade Ministers

Goal





Thank you!

Cheryl Lewis
Technical Officer
Barbados National Standards Institution
Email: cheryl.m.lewis@barbados.gov.bb

Email: crosq.caricom@crosq.org